

**C**hris Hill of Huntington Beach, California has the best of both worlds when it comes to Volkswagens. He owns a 1962 Deluxe Sedan that was featured in the February 1989 issue of VW Trends and this 1981 convertible Rabbit. Chris decided to build up a 'Vert so he could have a daily driver as well as a tow vehicle to pull his show car to and from the shows.

A minor dechroming job began when Chris had Brian Darnell remove the front and rear running lights and the stock antenna and relocated it to the "A" pillar. Next, Chris had IFG Industries install an aerodynamic body kit. Once the body modifications were complete, the Cabriolet was taken to John Sarna where he sprayed white enamel over the primed metal and fiberglass of the VW. When the paint was dry, Chris purchased and installed some wild vinyl graphics from Santini Paint and Body in Westminster, California.

On the inside, custom mods were kept to a minimum with the exception of having the front and rear seats dyed grey, the stock seatbelts replaced with Deist lap belts and a killer stereo system was installed. The Toy Connection located in Orange California installed an Alpine 7903 CD player in addition to a Fosgate 650 watt power booster. The speaker components include 7-inch Dyne Audio mids, 1-inch Dyne Audio tweeters located in the doors and Pro 12-inch subwoofer located in the trunk.

Since it was Chris' intention to use the Rabbit to pull his show Bug to and from the shows he attends in Southern California, he needed to squeeze some more power out of the stock 1800cc engine. Chris had Ron Wood of VW Specialties take care of all the engine



photos by Henry Z. De Kuyper

## Chris Hill's Radical Convertible Rabbit

# Rad Rabbit

modifications which included having the block machined to accept the larger crankshaft. After the machining work was complete, Ron assembled the engine using Techtonics pistons and rings. Other engine components include a Web Cam III camshaft, 90 amp alternator, ported and polished head with 34mm intake and 40mm exhaust valves. A Neuspeed throttle body was added to increase the flow of the fuel/air mixture. The exhaust gases are routed through a European down pipe and two glass pack mufflers.

With the engine modifications complete, Chris put his attention towards the suspension. First the VW was lowered one inch using Suspension Techniques springs, then fitted with

KYB shocks in the front and Bilsteins out back. Additional suspension components include a Neuspeed upper stress bar and sway bars (22mm front and 28mm rear). This enhanced suspension allows Chris to zip throw curvy roads without any problems. In the tire and wheel department, Chris took an idea from air-cooled enthusiasts by using Porsche rims wrapped in Fulda 195-50 series tires on the front and rear.

Of course Chris couldn't have done all this work without the help of friends and neighbors Cary, Eric and Ray at IFG. Who knows what new and innovative ideas Chris Hill has in his mind, but whenever they come out on a Volkswagen we will be sure to be there.



**LEFT** — For tires and wheels Chris used Porsche 912 15x5½-inch rims on the front and Porsche 356 deep spoke alloys along with 15x6 Fulda 195-50 series tires on the front and rear.

**RIGHT** — Interiorwise the stock seats were dyed grey, with Deist lap belts. A killer stereo system was installed using an Alpine 7903 CD player, Fosgate 650 watt power booster. The speaker components include 7-inch Dyne Audio, 1-inch Dyne Audio located in the doors and Pro 12-inch speaker located in the trunk.



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