# These electric hot rods point the way to future restomods

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- Last year, Chevrolet took a 550kW electric Camaro hot rod to SEMA, so this year Ford brought Mustang Lithium, which boasts 671kW. That’s 900hp.
- We don’t know how fast this will be at the drag strip, but I imagine the answer is “very.”
- Webasto supplied the batteries, among other odds and ends.
- If you look carefully you might see the gear shifter because this is a manual transmission car.
- Ford and Webasto plan to use the Mustang Lithium to test stuff like battery-management software.
- The Chevrolet E-10 has about half the power of the Mustang Lithium, and it’s a lot slower, but that’s OK.
- Chevy is working on the idea of electric crate motors, and the E-10 is helping with that.
- A closer look under the hood.
- But what’s that in the bed?
- Why, a pair of battery packs from the Chevy Bolt!

This week, Las Vegas is playing host to SEMA, an annual trade show and celebration of the custom car. And although multiple reports claim that the show is nothing but wall-to-wall Toyota Supras, each different to the last, a pair of customs from

Ford and Chevrolet caught my eye. (The fact that Ford and Chevrolet both have PR machines that let me know they have pictures to share is entirely not coincidental.) One is a Mustang with even more power than the Shelby GT500 we tested recently. The other is a restored Chevy farm truck. The thing they have in common? Both have been converted to electric power.

Restomodding electric motors and batteries into cars is not a new thing. San Diego's Zelectric has been converting air-cooled German classics over to the way of the electron for some time now. Jaguar developed a drop-in electric powertrain for the E-Type which it will sell from next year for an unspecified (but I'm guessing six-digit) price. Chevy even did the "converted electric muscle car to SEMA" thing 12 months ago with the eCOPO Camaro, which used an 800V architecture and a pair of motors to send 550kW (737hp) and 813Nm (600lb-ft) to the rear wheels.

## Talk about a mood stabilizer

Ford worked with Webasto on its SEMA special, called Mustang Lithium. It's similar in concept to last year's eCOPO from Ford's deadliest rival but with everything turned up just that little bit more. The Lithium is based on a current Mustang fastback, minus the internal combustion stuff. It also uses an 800V architecture, with batteries supplied by Webasto. A single electric motor from Phi-Power sends "more than" 671kW (900hp) and 1,356Nm (1,000lb-ft) to the rear wheels, which should generate plenty of heat, which is good because the Mustang Lithium is destined to be a testbed for things like battery-management strategies.

Where it all gets a bit weird is between the motor and the rear differential. Oddly, Ford and Webasto have gone with a six-speed *manual* transmission, a Getrag MT82 built by Calimer which has machined internals that can cope with so much torque

at the drag strip. For a production electric Ford Mustang you can buy at a dealership, check back later this month for the reveal of the Ford Mach-E.

## Farm truck becomes electric hot rod

Chevrolet's 2019 SEMA offering promises more modest performance—a 0-60mph time in about five seconds and a 13-second quarter mile—but if anything, it's a more interesting project. That's because the E-10, which started life as a C-10 pickup truck in 1962, reimagines the idea of a "crate engine" for the EV age.

Like most production EVs, it uses a 400V architecture. The batteries are actually from a production EV, or two of them to be accurate, because there's a pair of Chevy Bolt battery packs in the bed, one stacked atop the other. With 120kWh in total, that probably gives the E-10 a respectable range for an EV restomod despite the barn-door aerodynamic profile.

The E-10 uses two stacks of Chevy eCrate motors, and the press release says that each stack can have up to three motor assemblies in it and that the hot rod boasts "around" 335kW (450hp). Unfortunately, the release doesn't elaborate much more, and I'm not at SEMA to ask someone. I'm also not there to hear the E-10, which apparently has three speakers and an emulator that can replicate the noise of three different V8s or a futuristic sound depending on what the driver prefers (the car can also be silent). I'm not sure that EVs need to sound like internal combustion engines, but I also don't need to be convinced that electric power is the future.

Although you can't buy a Chevrolet eCrate motor just yet, the fact that the E-10 is using production components suggests that the idea is being taken seriously at General Motors.

*Listing image by Chevrolet*

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