



*Wheels up and headed for another 200-plus-mph run, the carbon-fiber-bodied '63 of Andy Jensen was a consistent winner in Pro Street Racing Association competitions during 2003.*

# Gone In Six Seconds

**Pro Fast '63 Corvette drag car**

by Andy Jensen

**W**hen I first decided to build my car in 1998, I barely had a mental picture of what I wanted it to look like and had a basic concept of how it would ultimately function. It needed to be street-legal, fast, low-maintenance, and it had to have a Stinger hood. With these ideas, along with every penny I could scrape together, I started shopping for parts and the right chassis guy to help put it all together.

We worked on the body first. It had to be lightweight, with a factory

stock appearance. Bruis Glass Works of Joelton, Tennessee, had just the ticket: a '63 Corvette carbon-fiber body with a custom-made Stinger hood. The body was hung on a lightweight chrome-moly chassis. Jon Little of Hanover, Pennsylvania, built a beautiful and lightweight chassis that incorporated the four-link rear suspension he designed. It included double Koni adjustable shocks and a Mark Williams aluminum rearend. This chassis is adjustable and allows us to apply lots of power despite some tricky racetrack conditions.



*With the amazing speed achieved by Jensen's Corvette, a full complement of safety equipment is required, including a full-face helmet and window netting.*

The engine is a Chevrolet all-aluminum 472ci small-block that began as a Brodix 9.500-inch high-deck block. It was bored to 4.170 inches and stroked to 4.320 inches via a Lunati crankshaft. MGP billet-aluminum rods and 15:1-compression JE pistons were installed, along with a Steff's oiling system. The heads are CNC-ported Brodix canted-valve units (milled down 3 pounds lighter to save weight) with 2.250-inch and 1.610-inch Manley titanium valves and Jesel rockers. The Comp Cams camshaft features 0.873-inch lift with fuel and air flowing through the CFE sheetmetal intake manifold and twin Bo Laws 1,050-cfm Holley Dominator carbs.

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The total engine package makes just over 900 hp, normally aspirated. Add in the NOS nitrous oxide Fogger kit and you have a 1,300hp combination built by Jensen's Engine Technology of Nescopeck, Pennsylvania.

The huge power is managed by a 10-inch Ram dual-disc clutch through a four-speed Lenco transmission, an aluminum driveshaft, and a titanium-studded Mark Williams third-member with 4.11 gearing. Duane Stein of PA Paint applied the LeMans Blue paint scheme. The finished Corvette, with driver, weighs less than 2,000 pounds.

To date, the Corvette has logged more than 400 passes over the last five years. The best run was 6.66 seconds at over 208 mph in the quarter-mile. In the past season, we had 48 wins out of 74 races and four Northeast Pro Street Association championships. During 2003, we ran the car street-legal against the Pro Mod cars in the Northeast Pro Mod Association Shootout. While it wasn't always the fastest car of the event, it was the most consistent, and we collected the championship for the 12-race series.



*For this class, NHRA requires parachutes to stop cars capable of such high speeds. Quarter-mile times are in the 6-second range.*



*The rear split-window has been removed to increase visibility when backing up after a tire-heating burnout. Knowledgeable crewmembers are helpful at this point to ensure the car is positioned properly.*



*While the exterior may look plenty stock, the carbon-fiber body never saw a day at the St. Louis plant. The '63 sports a Stinger hood, a Jensen-mandated feature.*

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▲ Any questions as to the true performance of this car? This run was 6.89 seconds at 203 mph. The car has performed a best time of 6.66 seconds at over 208 mph.

Fans love this car, and it goes a lot faster than it looks. None of this could have happened without the help of the dedicated crew and their “never quit” attitude. For example, at the Pro Street doubleheader at Maple Grove, an incident occurred that tore the front of the body off the car, which resulted in a hole in the front wheel. Did we pack up and leave? No way! We welded the hole, pounded the rim straight with a hammer, duct-taped the body back together, and won both of our races. I wasn’t too happy about the circumstances at the time, but it makes a great story now.

## I’ll never forget seeing pieces of fuel-soaked tape flying off the car at 180 mph...

During our race at Cecil County Raceway in Maryland, a nitrous explosion in the semifinal round blew up



The huge 472ci small-block Chevrolet engine makes nearly 1,300 hp on nitrous oxide, 900 without. Note the custom sheetmetal intake-manifold system.

the sheetmetal intake manifold after I left the starting line. Luckily, the other racer redlighted, which meant I passed on to the next round of racing. We got the intake manifold back together with duct tape and ran it in the final round. I’ll never forget seeing pieces of fuel-soaked tape flying off the car at 180 mph and how great it felt to get the win light on the pass.

While it wasn’t a smart thing to do, it does make for another entertaining story. Thank God for duct tape.

After 400-plus passes (most of the runs were in the 6-second range at over 200 mph), we can reflect and enjoy our success. Even with our Corvette’s cracks and nicks, it has something most go-fast cars don’t: personality!

**CF**