



Custom Corner

with Rich Evans

Rich Evans is the owner of Huntington Beach Bodyworks and an award winning painter and fabricator. He offers workshops in repair and customization at his facility to share his unique talents. For contacts and design samples visit www.huntingtonbeachbodyworks.com

'A New Knight is to the Water Born': The H2O Knight



This 2008 GT Mustang is going to be the first numbered car in a series. It's also the first car I've done using a waterborne re-finish, thanks to PPG's Envirobase.

There are going to be 100 numbered cars that I'm going to build, and 1000 kits available to the public to build on their own. I'm going to install the Rich Evans body kit, consisting of 19 body parts. It's going to take this Mustang from an OEM to a Rich Evans design.



It has a little recent collision damage on the quarter panel and the right door. I'm cutting and extending the quarter panel 2-3 inches at the rear wheel well. A normal repair would replace the quarter panel and the door, but I'm repairing it with as little bondo as possible. I'll metal finish most of it.



On the frame rack I pull the low areas out and work the doors, starting with the

hard line, then the quarter panel. I pull out the body lines first because that is the strongest point in a panel.

Using the Unispotter, I weld some nails on there, and pull it using the Chief Easy Liner I've used for over 20

years. I use Martin hammers for all my hammer and dolly access. I get the metal out and skim coat with some bondo using the new 3M pneumatic bondo gun, which works great. The bondo gun allows the bondo and the hardener to intermix and causes you fewer pin holes. It saves time and time is money.

Rich Tip mixing points: when you're adding hardener into bondo you're not going to be able to eliminate all the pin-holes so use poly putty which is like a PCL primer but in a mixing form.



After repairing the panel with the bondo, I use NCP280 primer with NCX285 hardener with mixing ratio 2:1. I apply 2-3 coats max. Two coats is all you need if you finish with 150 grit.

For bondo I use 36 grit for cutting and shaping. I use 80 grit for getting (36 grit) scratches out, then 150 grit. I'm going to feather edge the paint line around where I did the body work with 80 grit first and then feather edge with 150, then 320, about 6 inches out.

We strip the car down, taking the doors, rear bumper, front bumper, scoop, and wing off. I leave the deck lid on because the order is: rocker panels, then rear bumper, so I have a reference when I put the flares on.

After removing all the parts, I cut the wheel wells off and extend them. Once the rear bumper is on and the rocker panels are in place, I take off the existing OEM

rocker panel and grind down all the areas needed to mold the rocker panel with the 36 grit 3M grinding disc. Then grind down the fiberglass rocker panel. I use a product called kitty hair, mixed with a hardener, to bond the fiberglass piece to the body of the car.



Now I have reference holes to put the the rocker panel in the right place. I use the OEM pins so it lines up, and it's easy for the consumer. Pull the rocker panel off and mix up the kitty hair—once it dries it becomes part of the car. It's like a weld. I mix up the kitty hair with the hardener and put it in a ziplock bag, cut the corner and apply it like decorating a cake. I run it down the parts I want to mold in an even layer. Apply an even amount to the rocker panel and the body of the car, push it in, clamp it to the reference holes. Repeat on both sides of the car.



After mocking up my rear flare, now I've got a stable structure to mount my flare to. I grind all that down as with my rocker panel using a 36 grinding disc. Then grind the quarter panel and the area so that I can get ready to bond this fiberglass flare to the body of the Mustang.

As I'm getting ready to do that I have the same reference holes so I'll do the same process. Apply the kitty hair where I need to have my mounting

points. This flare will now become part of the vehicle.

I tape the rear bumper to have a guide where the flare meets the rear bumper. Once I take the rear bumper off, pull that tape off and I'm going to be able to have that perfect fit where those two panels come together. With 3M tape, butt it together without overlapping so it doesn't leave a line. It's like doing cement work. You want it as flush as possible.

Remove the screws and come back with some Duraglass and slightly smooth over the rough areas where the flare meets the quarter panel. I'll tape each side for clean up after I grind up the excess kitty hair with 36 grit. Duraglass again and tape a reference line on both sides of the seam that meets the panel from the flare to the body. Use a green spreader and run Duraglass across there so that it fills the screw holes to give a nice smooth radius for the two panels to meet. Pull the tape away leaving less sanding with the overlap of the Duraglass.

Follow the same process with the rocker panels, connecting the fender to the rocker, the rocker panels to the rocker of the car, and then connecting the quarter panel. Make it one piece with no break off lines or gaps so when you look at the rocker panel you have a perfect radius.

These parts are available for just bolting on, but I want to make more room for a bigger tire. There are scribe marks on these parts so they are made to bolt on to an OEM fit. The extra step shows the result in the best way possible and also show options.



Take the fiberglass pieces, all the accessories, and block them down with 150 grit. The fiberglass pieces are finished in a gel coat. Then go over it the NCP280 and the NCX285 hardener as a primer. I'll put 3 coats on. Make sure you block everything because its going to be critical when

you buff it. You want to use a guide coat after putting the NCP 280 on, either powder form or base form.

I'm painting this car with PPG Envirobase. It will be my first waterborne project and I've got a lot of help from Gil Anchondo. Gil is a phenomenal painter. He's a collision painter for a high-volume shop in Temecula, CA, and he has a passion for custom.

I'm really good at spraying but learning a new product always has a trial and error phase. Having somebody like Gil work with me moves things along faster. Gil's playing a big part in this and he's really helped a lot. We learn from each other and that is what is good about this industry. If you can take the time to learn from each other you can bring the job to another level.

Every painter is different and uses some feel and touch. I always try to share information with other painters. That's why I produce DVDs as well.

After priming all the parts with the NCP280, we guide coat it. I used a black guide coater in powder form to show any imperfections such as highs, lows, waviness. Use a block because 'the block never lies.' I start with 150 grit sandpaper. I like a new product called Hookit clearcoat sanding discs from 3M (PN02088). These are high quality, coated abrasive discs that

attach and remove from the orbital sander with a hook and loop system. Hookits last a bit longer than Stickits I think.

Working with 150, block each and every piece from one end to the other. Wherever the guide coat is removed you're ready for 400 wet. I guide coat it again with the powder, and then come back with 400 wet.

I use a block all the way through the process then wash everything down. Having a clean booth is going to give you a cleaner paint job. I batch the parts together into three groups to put through the booth.

The hood, front bumper, hood scoop, wing, left and right rear scoops, rear bumper, front spoiler and front fender scoops are my first batch.

The first step is to apply the sealer for the Envirobase system. I picked DLV8087, the hardener is DLV8291 and the reducer will be D8767 with a 3 : 1 mixing ratio. I apply 2 coats of sealer. After the first coat I walk around and check it for any flaws before the second coat, then I apply base color.

The tack cloths I use (SX1070) are for the base coat, clear coat tack rag. For any imperfections I use 3M sanding sponges, which are called Micro fine (02600) and Micro ultra fine (02601).

I'm going to go around the car parts with base color T409. The mixing ratio is

10% of the T494. I apply three coats of base. Normally you would apply two, but I always use three, because if this car gets in a wreck I can come back and reproduce the same color whatever it is, pearls, or metallics. I always know the formula for my color. If you do 1 coat on one part, and 2 coats on another, you have to keep track of that.

I call this system 'blueprinting.' I always know the psi used with the base coat. With my SATA guns I'm at 27 psi on basecoat and 35 psi for clear. I shoot everything close-range to improve atomization. I only apply two coats of the T409 because the top coat and the final color is 9700 and I had that specially mixed. I reduce it 10% with the T494 and finish off the 9700 top coat.

The clear coat I chose is called Glamour (D818), the hardener is D8384 and it's reduced 10% with the reducer (D8767). Basically 3 : 1 : 1. Three parts clear, 1 part hardener, 10% reducer. I don't use a lot of reducer in my clear. Here I shoot it without reducer—it seems to be thin enough for me.

I'm using PPS disposal cups made by 3M (16324). It saves a lot of clearing time and is a great product. Time is money so we want to make sure we get the job done faster and still keep our quality. The SATA gun I use is a WSB Jet 3000 HVLP digital.

For clear I'm using the 1.4RP digital. The WSB is like a 1.2 and the clear gun is a 1.4. On this clear coat I lowered it all the way to 32 psi, and even to 29–30 psi, at times.

I'm fluctuating a bit so I don't get in front of the gun. You want to make it flow comfortably. You don't want to be stiff when you're spraying, either ahead or behind of your spray. Adjust your gun to keep up with the spray. I apply three coats of clear. With no graphics, standard for me is three to four coats.

I don't want to cause anything to run or create more work. I use the same process with the car and the body. I'm going to jack the body up in the booth, up, tape it off, mask everything off. So the body is going to be the left and right quarter panels, the roof, the left and right rocker panels, both fenders. Everything else is going to be taped off. I take the emissions labels off and replace them through Ford because when you mask around them it leaves a line which shows that the car has been repainted.

I take a picture of the emission label, take it off, call the dealership and order one. It takes 2–3 weeks to do it but otherwise if you open the door you're going to see that. That's the first sign that the car has been repainted and it doesn't look good. I'm going to put two

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coats of sealer on, 2 coats of T409 and then one coat of the 9700. Then 3 coats of Glamour clear.

We started at 9 o'clock and got the sealer on. Everything is running smooth. I got the base on. With Envirobase you don't really want to watch it but you want to just have a pattern.

I'm use 50% overlap. I found waterborne doesn't work like the solvent when you come to the edges. You have to shoot straight on at the edges. I used 3M's sun lamp to check my work to see if you have any see-through spots before you do your final coats. You can't just do the edges using a normal pattern like you would a solvent base. You have to directly shoot the edges. Especially with black, which shows a lot.

Rich Tip: Make sure you check your work with a sun lamp before you put your last coat on so that you can see if you need some extra color.

Another obstacle came where the door and the rocker panel, quarter panel meet in the corner. I was putting it on pretty wet and with the first base color you want to do a control coat. Put it on at 50% of normal coverage. You don't want it super wet. I call this a control coat. It allows everything to settle, and you're working with droplets which land and flow out. The biggest thing I found about waterborne is when you put it on it dries flat. You don't have any rough areas because the water is evaporating, so if you're putting 3 mils on, 2 mils are going to disappear. What does that tell you?

As I'm learning the waterborne and working with Gil Anchondo I pick up the system that he has developed over the past year. Gil is helping me make the adjustment much quicker.

Where the door, the rocker panel, and the quarter panel meet, I put another coat on after my control coat. I layed it on but I noticed a big run in the corner!

Gil tells me 'just let it dry' and bring in the SATA dry-jet blowguns. Infratech introduced me to a new heat and fan system which works really great, so I use the combination of both of them.

I'm looking at this run thinking it would delay me about an hour to let the water dry. By this point it was late at night so it was a little cooler. After drying, the run that looked huge to me had all but disappeared. So I used some 800 grit to massage it so it wasn't going to peel up. Then 1000 grit, then the 3M sanding sponges, the micro fine (02600) and the ultra fine (02601). Then fog in some color and I'm ready for my final coat at about two in the morning.

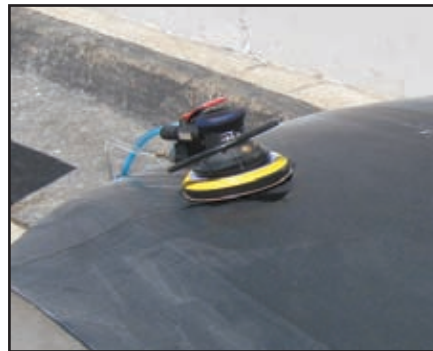
I go around the car again and this time I won't put it on too wet. I watch my gun control and where my paint is leaving off and where I'm starting off. We get the

three coats of clear on. I'm standing back and the Glamour clear is excellent. It's finished about 5 AM Easter morning.

I'm happy with it. I loved the way it flowed out. No orange peel and no solvent pop. I did learn from the first batch of parts and I did leave the air running for a couple hours. It just ensures you won't have any extra work or solvents popping. When you shut down the air and you have a lot of flat surface areas it's going to be releasing gases and the gases fall back down and fall on your final finish. I don't like hair, dirt, or other imperfections in my paint.

After painting, the longest part of the process is color sanding and buffing. Once again Gil stepped up, working hand in hand with me throughout the whole project.

My system is a little different than Gil's. He uses 1000 grit to start, but I prefer a 800 grit. We block every inch of these panels and every piece with 800 grit. We had a lot of obstacles, so we used a quick cut sander on some of the flat areas with 800 grit to flatten everything out. They have dense foam sponge pads so you get a nice true block. Then I come in with the Rich Evans wet wedge, one of the blocks that I helped design (see wetwedge.com). It's got a radius on one side and is flat on the other with more of a trough-like grate finish on the other side for orange peeling.



First step: 800 grit and sand everything then we chase the 800 grit with the 1000 grit. This is all 3M product. We go from 1000 to 1200 grit, then 1500.

Here I used Meguiar's 3000 grit for the first time ever to see if it's going to save time. There's a lot of detail on every piece of this car. Stan from 3M came by and he dropped off some 3000DA wet. He said just apply a little water and go over the surface areas and it should be shiny by the time you're done. This is a great product and a great time saver. It was almost halfway buffed by the time I used that 3000, because the 3000 will show any scratches or any imperfections. It really doesn't take a lot off but it smooths everything out to get ready for buffing.

We use a 1, 2, 3-system that 3M developed for buffing which is great. It's called "A Perfect Finish." First with the

white wool pad, the black polishing pad, then the ultrafine machine polish. There's a new product 3M Perfect Clean and Shine (PN06084) which helps remove all the compounds in between buffing.

Gil taught me a trick here. First we apply the compound using the number 1 wool pad to get the scratches out and bring the shine back. Gil said 'spray a little water in between the buffing.' Just misting it on lubricates and breaks things down a little bit finer. That worked great. It was a great tip.



I've been buffing cars for a long time but this kind of re-wets everything instead of letting it get dry and hard and crusty and it causes you more scratches. Keep a water bottle handy when you're buffing and spray a little bit to lube it. Going through

everything with the 1,2,3-system worked great. The shine and the flatness is deeper than a mirror.

When I pulled the car apart I bagged and labeled everything so I'm able to take everything out of the baggies and lay them out in order. I start with the hood, both doors, the deck lid, the lights, the door handles, the door accessories. I know I need 4 bolts for this and there is a batch of 4 bolts right there. Labeling is a big plus in saving time and making sure all your bolts go back on the car efficiently. I'm very impressed with Envirobase. I'm looking forward to using it more. It's a great product that PPG has put out and clearly they invested a lot in it.



For those still on solvent, 'water is here' guys. I actually like it better than



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solvent already. It's got a lot of pluses. You are dealing with water droplets and it dries flat. Change your technique a bit, and the air pressure and the guns you use. That's all you need to do to adapt to this. Of course, it's not like you can



drink waterborne paint, but it's safer to be around. You definitely want to keep using your mask. A lot of those different techniques you guys will pick up quickly.

The new mustang is called the H2O Knight—see it at richevansdesigns.com. Look for it at the shows and in the mags. You'll see more and more of it.

I have a lot of people to thank. Gil Anchondo was a huge help. Contact him at his shop: TCH Custom Painting, 42387 Avenida Alvarado, Suite 107, Temecula, CA. Phone: 951-765-7443. Gil's email is tecachel@msn.com.

I also want to thank my sponsors: John at Infratech-usa.com for the Speed Dry waterborne drying system. 3M (for a detailed discussion of their product see <http://solutions.3m.com/wps/por->

tal/3M/en_US/3MAutomotive/Aftermarket/Solutions/Body_Dept/Frame-Body-Repair.

PPG (Envirobase supplied by Auto Color Specialist. Thanks to Polly. 714-898-3200) who provided the materials.

Tony at SATA for the spray guns and dry-jets. He provided the WSV jet 3000 HVLP digital and the 1.2 RPB gun.

Chicago Pneumatic (CP.com) and shoot-suits.com.

All these sponsors stepped up for this project. I wouldn't be able to do any projects at all without them. Microflex gloves are the number one glove in the business. Safety is everything. If we don't stay safe, we can't fix cars. Hope you enjoyed the story on the first H2O Knight.

ASA Announces 2009 Collision Committee

The Automotive Service Association (ASA) has announced its 2009 Collision Division Operations Committee. **Darrell Amberson**, AAM, Lehman's Garage, Bloomington, MN, continues his term as Collision Division director. As such, Amberson serves on ASA's board of directors and chairs the ASA Collision Division Operations Committee. The position of Collision Division director is a two-year term.

Additional members of the operations committee have been announced by ASA's board of directors, including **Ron Nagy**, AAM, Nagy's Collision Center, Wooster, OH, who is serving as assistant division director. Nagy also serves on ASA's board as secretary/treasurer.

Rejoining the operations committee this year is **Myron Hazen**, AAM, Collision Repair Center Inc., East Moline, IL. Returning committee members include **Mike Anderson**, AAM, Wagonwork Collision, Alexandria, VA; **Dan Bailey**, CARSTAR Inc., Overland Park, KS.; **Dustin Eckhart**, Hernandez Collision Center, Savannah, GA.; **Roy Schnepfer**, Butler's Collision, Roseville, MI; **Mike Schoonover**, Schoonover Bodyworks Inc., St. Paul, MN; and **Dan Stander**, Jerry Stander's Collision Works, Littleton, CO.

iPhone App Created by Nationwide Ins.

Nationwide Insurance is the first insurer to create an iPhone app that helps those who get themselves (or, find themselves) in a collision claim situation. Using the app on the iPhone, the customer can:

- Call emergency services
- Helps connect Nationwide customers with towing
- Helps you collect and exchange accident info
- Stores your insurance info for easy look up
- Helps Nationwide customers start the claims process
- Locates Nationwide agents near you
- Takes accident photos and lets you record details. Nationwide states that it is not legally obligated to use them.
- Handy flashlight function for rainy nights or anytime

The "Accident Toolkit" is not just for Nationwide policyholders. It's for anyone, although it does help those with Nationwide insurance.

Presently as a Nationwide customer, you have to re-enter all your information needs, but this could easily be tied in to Nationwide's online account services.

Other "accident apps" exist for the iPhone but this one is superior.

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Parts

Chrysler Affected Dealer Blogging

John Isgett is president of Raceway Automotive Group in east-central South Carolina. As a Chrysler Affected Dealer he has started a blog to report on his experience:

"It's been a little over a week since we received the letter from Chrysler, and for the last week I've focused not only on operations of our stores and strategizing our future, but also have diligently been on a local crusade with the media in all available forums to express my opinion.

My message has been simple: As an automotive dealer representing eight franchises today across seven locations, we're in the transportation business ... not the franchise business. Our goal has remained the same, to provide affordable, safe transportation that meets our customer's needs at a great price.

With or without a franchise, will my business fail? Absolutely not. Will it be a struggle for myself and many of us other dealers who are facing these troubling times? Most definitely.

However, I must admit that the biggest challenge lies with the manufacturer.

Imagine Chrysler, facing mounting losses from poor sales, electing to cut off many of the very customers (dealers) who purchase thousands upon thousands of your products, destroying the trust and

confidence of your remaining customers (dealer)? How are you to recover from this?

Yesterday afternoon I received a call from my Chrysler rep. She ever so politely stated that Chrysler will be sending me additional documentation in an effort "to help me" through this transition. The "help" she referenced is for the remaining new units on my lot. Chrysler will assist, not guarantee, in relocating these units to other dealers for, in essence, triple net.

Here's the deal: Give back all floor-plan credit and holdback (never mind that this has already been devoured by interest charges), then provide Chrysler with a small "handling fee" of \$350 per unit that would include the inspection and transportation of the unit from our dealership. This is the "help" Chrysler is offering.

So let me see if I have this correctly: After cutting me off, you'll take back the inventory that I previously agreed to take from you—that you are supposed to support me in selling—if I pay *you*? Where's the justice?

I believe Chrysler has a bigger road ahead of them. If I were not a part of the dealer consolidation, how would I feel knowing this is how they're treating us today?

See blog at www.autonews.com.