

GTO of the Month

By

Eric Ray



As some of you know, I have been obsessed with Pontiacs for all of my life. So naturally, my first car was a Pontiac, a 1963 Tempest. It has been almost 10 years since I got that car. Since then I have managed to blow up my Dad's Grand Prix, and learned how to drive stick on a 05 Sunfire. A little over a year ago I got a lifted Jeep Cherokee as a daily driver. While the Jeep is fine around town and on anything that isn't a road, it wasn't particularly enjoyable to drive out on the highway. The whole tall, brick shape made passing a gas station not an option.

So, I started to search for a GTO. The decision to get another Pontiac stemmed from the financial independence with my new job in Southern Illinois, as well as the yearning I had to drive a manual on a more regular basis. The search began for a GTO, preferably one with an LS2. Unfortunately, my requirements made the search tough. The color had to be Cyclone Gray, it had to have a manual, and it needed to have relatively low miles. Around the 4th of July I found one in Texas with all of the boxes checked, and it had the more desirable 18 inch wheels, but that deal fell through. I was disappointed, but kept looking.



A few weeks later, a 2006 Cyclone Gray, 6-speed GTO came up on EBay that looked very nice. I was hesitant though, because it was located in Detroit and I didn't want to buy it without anyone verifying that it was what they claimed it to be. Luckily my Dad, Brian Ray, remembered that fellow club member Shauna

Wollmershauser was going to school up that way. So, we gave her a call and she was more than willing to go over the next day to take a look at it. After she verified it was good, I contacted the dealer and we worked out a deal. The hard part was figuring out how to get it back to Illinois.

That following weekend my folks drove up to St. Louis and I flew there from my local airport (Marion, IL) to St. Louis. After a few hours sleep, my Dad and I caught a 6am flight out of St. Louis to Detroit, with a changeover in Chicago. Shauna picked us up from the airport and we went over to get the car. The best part was after we got the car I got to cruise down Woodward Avenue to a local eatery, then buy Shauna lunch for all that she had done. From Detroit, we drove my new GTO the 8+ hours (550+ miles) straight back to Southern Illinois.

Now, a little about the car. When we picked it up, the GTO had 19,100 miles on it, but since then I have put a little over 2,000 miles on it and have entered it in two car shows. I am the third owner; the first was a GM executive apparently. Currently it is mostly stock. It came with a K&N cold air intake, and I have since installed Pedders radius rod bushings and Pedders Sportsryder rear shocks and springs at OE ride height. My immediate plans for it are to get a good set of rubber on some factory 18s. As for the future, who knows! All I know is I am going to drive the wheels off of it.

