




There's a very special 1995 ZR-1 running around the streets of Michigan with the license plate "Z REX". It belongs to the former Corvette Chief Engineer Dave McLellan, and it's a bit more potent than it came out of Bowling Green.

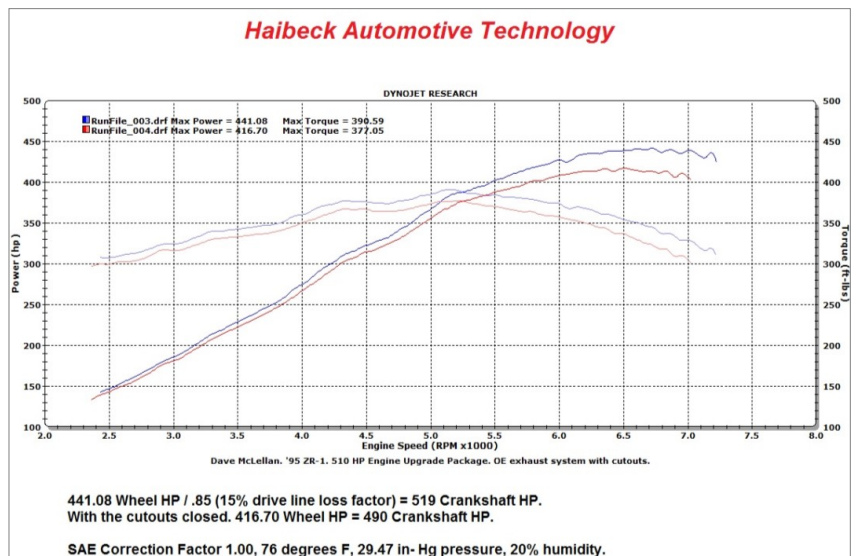
Those who are familiar with Latin will quickly discern the meaning of "Z REX" translated to "Z KING". When the ZR-1 was introduced to the media across France in 1989, one of the license plates included the letters "REX", which was fitting for the "King of the Hill." When Dave McLellan purchased his 1995 polo green ZR-1, he'd already had the perfect license plate in mind.

To make it even more special, the Corvette Chief opted to have his bone stock ZR-1 modified with a 115 horsepower engine upgrade, giving this very special ZR-1 a respectable 520 horsepower. So how does "Z REX" make its power? Here's the breakdown in round numbers.

To further sharpen "Z REX's" edge of performance, a 4.10 rear axle gear set was installed. This adds 16% more torque to the wheels, makes sixth gear a usable gear. By removing the stock exhaust manifolds and dual-mass flywheel, we've also lightened the ZR-1 by 28lbs. At this power level the OE mufflers have so much backpressure that 29 horsepower are lost when the flow is 100% through the mufflers. Unlike the '90 - '92 OE exhaust systems, the '93 - '95 systems have a nearly straight through resonator. With the cutouts open, the '93 - '95 exhaust systems are straight pipes to the cutout valves and make for a very nice sounding ZR-1 when you want to be announced.

All of these enhancements to "Z REX" will keep our Corvette Chief far ahead of all the other naturally aspirated Corvettes in Dave's area, and remind them who the King really is. 

Stock engine.	405 hp
Performance calibration chip.	10 hp
Long tube headers.	25 hp
Top End Porting.	20 hp
Cylinder head porting.	30 hp
Aluminum flywheel.	15 hp
OE exhaust system with cutouts.	15 hp
Total	520 hp



From the Chief

by Dave McLellan



At 4.2 seconds 0-60 the ZR-1 never took second to anything other than a couple of exotic cars when it was new. I'm referring to the Porsche 959 and the Ferrari F40. When we introduced the ZR-1 in Europe in 1989, one of the European writers told us about a comparison road test they did with these two cars. Porsche was claiming 3.8 seconds for the all wheel drive 959. The writers verified this time on their 4th try. On the first 3 tries they exploded the transaxle.

Marc has tuned Z-REX for the last 3 years, but now it was time to add another 100 hp. So we did a number of things to enhance performance aggressiveness and bring ZREX up to current technology where it mattered.

From the driver's seat, the engine now starts and free revs with instant responsiveness because of the much lower inertia aluminum flywheel. It takes off in first gear and is almost instantly on the 7,200 rpm rev limiter. The 115 hp and the 4:10 axle (16% higher numerically) are felt together. The shift gate is tighter and precise with the Hurst shifter modification.

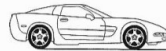
From my book "Corvette From the Inside," the horsepower that the rear tire/road interface can absorb crosses 500 flywheel horsepower at about 80 mph. Thus, Z-REX is traction limited all the way to 80 mph even on a high mu (friction) road surface.

New Goodyear F-1 tires have noticeably enhanced grip. The electrically controlled muffler bypass allows ultimate performance to be achieved and then it's time to back to quiet. Even lighting is dramatically improved by technology with the new GE LED low/high beam headlamps.

Overall I would describe the car as much more aggressive in its performance delivery and certainly fun to drive. Corvette didn't have Active Handling until 1998 but we did have Traction Control on '92 to '95 ZR-1s, making power delivery safe. Spinning rear tires at 80 mph is not easy to control and without Traction Control the car is directionally stable going backwards.

With performance tuners like Marc around, the ZR-1 is an exciting performance car to own when you commission him to breathe even more into it.

Z-REX is now at his Stage 1. How high do you want to go?



CORVETTE FROM THE INSIDE

HORSEPOWER REQUIRED TO ACCELERATE A 3,400 POUND CAR

