

WHO WRECKED/DAMAGED A CLASSMATE'S CAR?

Marty Stytz (*To set the story in context; Bouf Bouffard had always wanted his Z real bad. Since I met him, Day One of sophomore year, his Z was going to be his baby. So, came Winter 1975. That week, Brian had just lost his final appeal for a CDB he received for refusing to dive in scuba class the morning before he was to fly. He thought he was safe, following the Regs. But he was written up and our AOC threw him to the wolves. Come Friday, Brian's last weekend before restrictions & cons -- my stereo needed to be fixed in Denver, so Brian and I decided to take Gayl and his girlfriend out to dinner at the 94th Aero Squadron restaurant (by Stapleton) in Denver since I was up there. Since the stereo shop closed early, I borrowed Bouf's Z to take my stereo up to Denver, and Brian would use my Mustang to bring Gayl and his girl to Denver. We would meet up at the Holiday Inn by Stapleton airport and leave from there for the 94th, since I could not be relied upon to find the 94th on my own -- and its hard to miss the Holiday Inn by the old Stapleton airport. Plan in place, I set off for Denver and dropped off the stereo just fine. Running early, I took my time getting to the Holiday Inn. At the time, the exit from I-70 to the road that passed in front of the Holiday Inn came down north of I-70 on the far side of a blind curve at a stoplight-controlled intersection. I missed the green light, so I sat out the light, first in line. The light changed, I waited and started forward. A little way through the first lane, I saw a red pickup truck with a huge forward bumper coming straight at me from the left (driver's side). I hit the gas, which probably saved my life (along with the seat belt) since the truck hit just behind the driver's seat right above the wheel. The poor Z went 150 feet sideways and did a complete 180. I gradually got my senses back -- first thing I remember is the pickup driver coming up to see if I was OK, and then realizing that my left shoulder hurt really bad. The cops showed up, took our conflicting stories, could not find a witness, and helped the paramedics to help me get out of the car via the passenger's side of the car. I went to Denver General, got X-rayed, some sort of pain shot, and a harness for my broken collarbone. I remember telling the hospital to call the Holiday Inn and let Brian and Gayl know I was OK (at the Inn, they were wondering where I was since I was late, even for me.) Finally, Gayl asks if there are any notes for her, and the desk clerk tells her I am at Denver General. They start out for the Hospital not knowing how I am, fearing the worse for me and Bouf's car. I remember them showing up -- I am in no pain, yet. Poor Brian, I told him about the car, and he has never, ever, once said anything about it. What a guy! The car was, basically, destroyed. But his insurance insisted upon rebuilding it, windows blown out, rear drive train knocked off, wheels blown off, whole rear-end crumpled. I am sure it just broke his heart. I still feel bad about it.)*

Jim Carlson (*Sometime during the winter our senior year, I borrowed Dean Cox's Firebird because mine was at the dealership downtown getting some work done. I asked one of the doolies in our squadron to accompany me on the way out, and to drive my car back to the Academy while I drove Dean's back. Being a southern California boy, I had never driven in the snow and ice before, so I was unprepared when turning onto Academy Drive, I hit a patch of black ice. We spun 180 degrees and were stopped by a guardrail which left a huge dent in the rear fender. After the fear and panic settled, the doolie in the passenger's side turned to me and said, "You've never driven where it snowed before have you?" I just shook my head, got out to inspect the damage, got back in, and drove the rest of the way into town without saying another word. When I got back and had to tell Dean, it was the first time as a Firstie that I felt like a*

doolie again reporting to my element leader in Service Alpha, under arms. What a sorry excuse of a squadron-mate was I.)

Dean Cox (Carlson wasn't the only one to have wrecked my car. The reason I asked him to agree to get me a new car when he asked to borrow It, in the event he wrecked it, was because I had earlier lent it to Ric Lewallen, who managed to drive it into a tree . . . I had also lent it to a 2-degree, who also managed to wreck it. I finally totaled that car by driving it over a cliff in northern British Columbia on a PCS from MacDill to Elmendorf.)

Brian Bouffard (Mike Roznovsky and I were driving back to the zoo in Roz's Lotus. Taking a back road to the gate, I asked Roz to "Show me what this baby can do". So he hit the gas and we went screaming down that road. When we got to a curve, known by the locals as a place where cadets crashed on a regular basis, we hit a patch of gravel and spun out, going through a ditch and hitting a fence at somebody's house. Almost of the damage was on my side. But to this day, Roz still says I made him wreck his car by goading him into showing me what it could do.)