18 The only thing that remained on this side was the installation of the brake line (provided in the kit) from the junction to the crossover hard line. Then Parry repeated these steps for the passenger-side rear brake.

19 Almost done! Parry mounted the high-volume master cylinder included with the kit.

spring has a pullback ratio of 13 psi. Ambrose's kit offers a pullback ratio of 31 psi. "With a stock spring kit, when you take your foot off the brake pedal, the shoe has a tendency to stay in the positive position and ride against the drum, creating drag," he said. "With our heavier springs, when you take your foot off the brake, the shoe goes back into the neutral position much quicker, and it stays there. The tighter spring also keeps the shoe from rattling, creating less vibration."

When all of these components are used in one brake system, Ambrose likes to refer to the kit as a "poor man's disc brake system." MCB's 10-inch systems retail for $850; the 11-inch kits are $950.

We got a firsthand look at one of these systems thanks to Brent Parry of Pahoa, Hawaii. Last year, Parry bought an 110,000-mile '70 Challenger with a 340 V-8 and the optional 11-inch drum brakes. He was less than impressed with its mushy brake pedal, chronic fade and lazy stopping distances of 172 feet. The previous owner insisted the brakes had been rebuilt, but Parry found the cheapest possible components had been used, and the Mopar's brake lines and master cylinder hadn't been touched. Parry's solution was an MCB kit.

The accompanying photos show the installation's major steps. Before we begin, here are a few housekeeping tips: Since this is a Mopar, there are left- and right-hand threads on the components. Muscle Car Brakes clearly marks its parts bags to avoid any confusion.

On certain Mopars that have been in severe climates or subjected to numerous brake rebuilds, the wheel cylinder mounting bolts may be frozen or the heads may have been rounded off. Such was the case with Parry's Challenger, which required the removal of the entire backing plate assembly. This was quite time-consuming and required jacking up the suspension, as the lower half of the backing plate is secured at the bottom of the control arm/ball joint assembly. Once those two bolts had been removed, the top two bolts were easy.

There are two ways to press the front hubs off the old brake drums. Since the Challenger's front hub is swaged to the brake drum, you may need to have a machine shop re-swage these hubs to the new drums if you're going for show points. However, if you're upgrading a driver, you may want to leave the hubs free-floating, which is much easier to maintain. Parry chose to do the latter.

Replacement soft lines are included in the MCB kit, and you should also inspect the hard lines and replace them if necessary. Once again, there are two options. Restoration requires the use of OE-style hard lines; however, for a street machine application, your local parts store may stock a pliable, yet hard brake line material called Poly Armor that can be hand bent to fit.

Now, what about results? After three 60-0-mph runs, Parry achieved a best stopping distance of 123 feet, 49 feet shorter than with the old system. Ambrose said as these cryogenically treated drums bed in, those distances will only get better. ***MCR***

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20 When he evaluated his Challenger for a brake upgrade, Parry realized his car's OE hard lines had to be replaced. Since this car is a driver and not going for concours judging, he picked up a set of Poly Armor lines from the local parts store. No fancy benders were needed to get them to fit; they can be fashioned by hand.

21 With the system fully installed, Parry conducted a series of three 60-0-mph brake tests, achieving a best stopping distance of 123 feet, a full 49 feet shorter than with the antiquated OE system. As the brakes bed in, that distance will get even shorter.