

# Wise Guy Wednesday

Wise Guy 25-16: **Going for Benchmark**

**Q:** I've owned a '72 bryar blue small block convertible for seven years. It is documented with its protecto plate, window sticker, dealer invoice, a partial tank sticker, and has only 26,158 miles. I've had it judged at several events locally and at a couple NCRS meets. The '72 did well at each event, and I keep getting told to take it further. The judges at the last meet told me the car is pretty much unrestored and original. My friends are telling me that I should go to Bloomington and go for *Gold* and for Benchmark!



I've read your Advisories and Guidelines and I am studying up. I know the interior is pretty much untouched from new. The seat cushions are old, and the yellow dust is coming out. I can have them redone or just leave them as is. The judges told me the only big changes to the chassis were the mufflers and ball joints had been changed out. And on the engine, the alternator, air cleaner, and a couple hoses/belts were replaced. Otherwise, most of those sections are correct and original! Here's the issue; the exterior is not as perfect. It seems that the old blue had a fender-bender some years ago and the left/front fender was repaired and repainted. You can even see where the paint is blended between the two front headlights. And I think the repaint goes back to the fender grill. So, she's not near 100% original on the exterior. I think that even the bumper has a different sheen and may have been replaced. So, if the old '72 cannot score near 100 then can it not qualify for Benchmark? Or if it can't do that, should I just consider a respray and frame-on cleanup? I'm not sure which way to go!?!? *Bob*

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**A: Benchmark Bound Bob:** Congratulations on the '72 convertible! You've gotten some good reviews and feedback. Before you go down the path of repainting and some degree of restoration,... take a deep breath. There is a saying; "It (your '72) can only be original once!" So, let's first focus on preserving the great car you have and keep it out of the paint booth for now.

It sounds like you have a great shot at achieving Bloomington Gold Certified® and possibly, also achieving SURVIVOR® and Benchmark® awards. You do NOT have to achieve near 100% in originality (SURVIVOR Judging) to qualify for Benchmark. In fact, to achieve Benchmark, a Corvette needs to attain a Gold Certificate (scoring 95% or higher in authenticity of the major components compared to when it left the factory), and Silver or Gold SURVIVOR (scoring 66% or more of all sections of the car being unrestored). So, let's start with the three sections of the car you are confident to be highly unrestored. Your description of the interior, chassis, and engine compartment sound as though those sections have no significant items replaced/ restored. But take a harder look at components of each. Where it is possible, check the dating and part number on components to make sure they are period perfect to the assembly date of your car. Check dating on the carburetor, the window glass, the seat belts, transmission, etc, etc. On the exterior of your car, you describe that a portion of the front fender of the car has been restored/ repaired. From your description it sounds as though about 15-18% of the exterior was restored after the fender-bender. Carefully go over the rest of the exterior to see if there may be any more of this section has been restored. Check for glass replacement, wheels, tires, chrome and trim. If the entire exterior can be determined to be more than 66% unrestored, the '72 blue convertible may still achieve a Silver Survivor or even a Gold Survivor and qualify for a Benchmark certificate. Be slow to restore, stay hold to preserve. The '72 is only original once!

Any questions..... contact Wise Guy [guy@bloomingtongold.com](mailto:guy@bloomingtongold.com)

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