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# 40 Horses and a Test Mule

## JBA Puts the Power to the Pavement

Text and Photos by Jeremy Cook



One of the first things you notice when you begin to shop for performance products to upgrade your truck's powerplant is the "EZ horsepower" or "guaranteed gains" that most companies claim. The truth is you just can't tell which brand of part is going to make the most horsepower or torque for your ride unless you buy, install and dyno each and every one of them. If you go for the tried and true air intake, cat-back, reprogrammer method, then the question of best combination for bang for your buck becomes even more complicated.

JBA has a long-standing reputation for walking their talk and standing behind their horsepower claims. Unlike most companies, they're able to hedge their bets a bit by offering a header and plug wire combo to take your standard upgrade package to the next level. How much can this help? Read on and find out!

Our test vehicle for the day was a good-running '97 Chevy C-1500 with nothing going for it engine-wise other than being well maintained. After a trio of initial dyno runs at JBA's facility in San Diego, we installed a set of JBA's ceramic-coated Cat 4ward smog-legal headers. We followed that up with a set of their Power Cables that were custom-tailored to the truck, then finished off the install with a stainless steel cat-back exhaust system. In just a couple of hours we were back on the dyno and were amazed to see a peak gain of 40-HP and over 29-HP overall! We are so impressed with these JBA products and this Chevy's new found performance that we're going to install an air intake and computer reprogrammer in a month or two and head straight back to the JBA dyno for some more numbers. By the way, if you're in the SoCal area you, too, can dyno your truck at the JBA performance center, as well as have a ton of performance products installed. Check it out. ■

1



First on our JBA install list for our Vortech-powered C-1500 were the Cat 4Ward headers. They feature 3/8-inch laser-cut flanges, 1 1/2-inch primaries, the patented Firecone collector, and best of all, they're ceramic-coated and 50-state smog-legal.



2



Next was a set of JBA Power Cables ignition wires. They're less than half the resistance of factory wires and have been known to make 5-HP extra by themselves. They're cut for your specific vehicle and labeled to take any confusion out of installation.

3



Third on our list was a JBA performance exhaust system. It features 3-inch mandrel bent stainless tubing, a stainless muffer, and a chromed tip with a rolled edge.

4



Our first stop was the JBA Performance Center in San Diego, for the initial dyno pulls.

5



The test mule made a respectable 208-HP at the wheels. From there it was down the road to the install center at JBA headquarters.

6



Our first order of business was removing the stock exhaust manifolds. The '96-00 C/K trucks are actually pretty easy, relatively speaking.

7



First we went below the truck and removed the three flange bolts from each side.



Next, the EGR tube was removed from the rear of the driver's side manifold.



After pulling the plug wires off and out of the way, we removed the six bolts from the manifold. We ended up removing the plugs, too, just to be safe and check that they were clean.



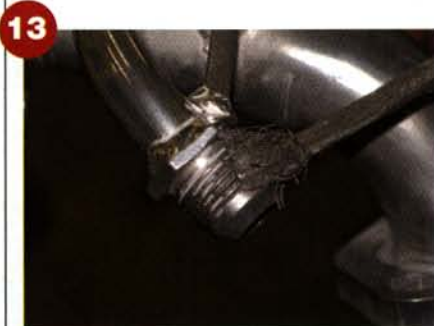
Now the manifold could be pulled out, allowing any debris left on the mounting surface of the head to be cleaned off.



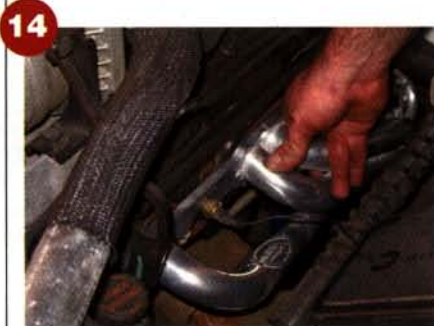
A side-by-side comparison makes the superior flowing capabilities of the JBA unit pretty obvious.



Check out the high quality, thick-style gas-gaskets that come with every set of headers.



A dab of anti-seize was placed on the new EGR attachment.



The header was dropped into place on the head.



New hardware is used throughout to attach the header to the head.



On the passenger side we removed the stock air box to make room for the swap.



We also removed the dipstick by wiggling it out of the block.



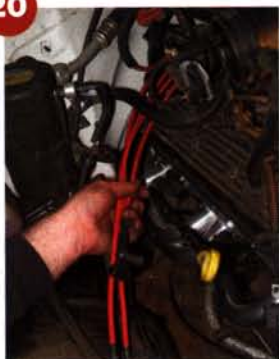
The manifold was removed and the header quickly replaced it.



We installed the Power Cables one bank at a time, reattaching the stock separators along the way.



20



Once they were in the right order, we plugged them onto the reinstalled spark plugs.

24



Then the three bolts on the Y-pipe flange were removed.

28



The head pipe was slid onto the flange and bolted up.

21



Even in an otherwise stock and dirty engine compartment, the JBA headers and cables make a vast visual improvement.

25



Next, the stock rubber grommets were removed from the hangers.

29



The hanger was attached to the other end.

22



New flange bolts were installed, attaching the Y-pipe to the new headers.

26



This hanger definitely wasn't stock, nor is the rotted muffer, but we removed them, too.

30



Next, the JBA stainless muffer was slid into place.

23



With the truck back in the air, we moved right into the exhaust. First the O<sub>2</sub> sensor was removed.

27



A side-by-side comparison shows that we're definitely making some improvements.

31



A clamp holds it in place fore and aft. The rear clamp also acts as a hanger.

32



Since the old exhaust was hacked off to accommodate the low stance, a new hanger had to be made for the tailpipe — simple, yet trick.

33



Now all of the clamps were tightened down snugly.

34



We placed a few tack welds to make doubly sure everything stayed in place.

35



The trick chrome exhaust tip looked right at home on the C-1500.

36

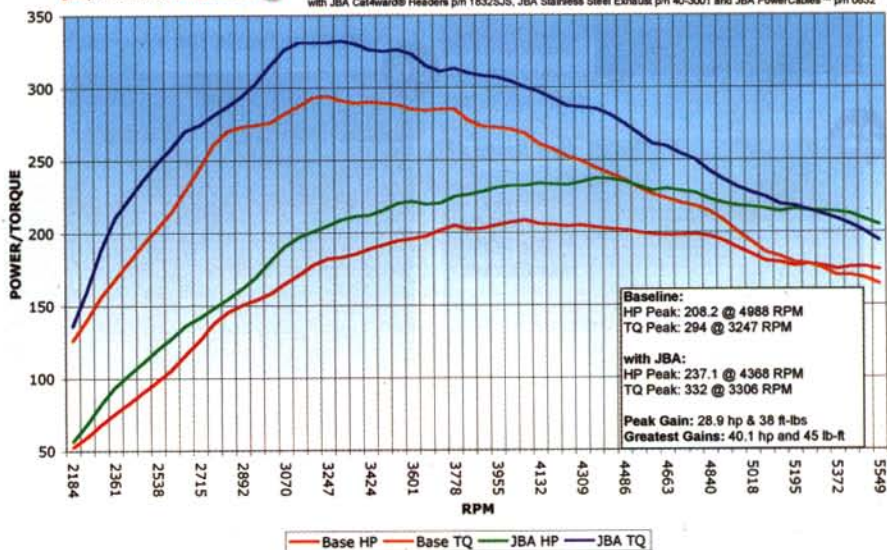


After a couple of hours of installation, we were back on the dyno. Check out the awesome results.

**JBA**  
jbaperformanceexhaustco

### 1997 Chevrolet 1500 5.7L Dyno Test

with JBA Cat4ward® Headers pin 1832SJS, JBA Stainless Steel Exhaust pin 40-3001 and JBA PowerCables™ pin 0832



## SOURCE

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