

## DIFFERENT ISN'T ALWAYS FUN

by Terry & Sudi Jones  
Photos by Leonard Howard

"Look at that 1968 coupe, someone has tried to make a Shelby look-alike out of it." "There isn't a pony and coral in the grill of that 1968." "I've never seen stripes like that on a 1968." "Oh yea, a California Special. I've seen them before. No, of course they did not make a six cylinder California Special. They all came with big V8's and loaded with options."

These are only a few of the comments that Dean and Kathy McDaniel must listen to and explain about their 1968 California Special at every Mustang show and event they attend.

Yes judge, Ford did make a California Special in 1968 and it did come with a six cylinder engine, special stripes, a

plain grill with fog lights and a rear spoiler with special Shelby-type taillights.

Dean and Kathy purchased their rare pony from the original owners in 1982. Kathy spotted the CS/GT in Cassville, Missouri while visiting relatives. Even Kathy had mistaken the car for a Shelby at first sight. Fortunately, the car was rust free and had no major damage to the body or interior. However, like most ponies that have been ridden for 100,000 miles plus, it was in sad shape. The interior was worn ragged, all the chrome was rusted and pitted and what little of the original paint that remained was dull and weathered. Recognizing that they had found a rare car the

McDaniels purchased the car and began the task of restoring the car to original specifications.

As luck would have it, Dean is the owner of a salvage yard and was able to locate some of those hard-to-find parts that others of us look a lifetime for. Dean with his mechanical expertise began repairing, replacing, and restoring. With the help of a lot of good friends and many hours of "TLC" the CS/GT was ready for the paint shop, if you want to call painting in an old chicken house with a dirt floor a paint shop. However, having luck on his side again, the Sunlit Gold paint came out sparkling just as it did from the factory.

Then came the new carpet, up-

*Distinctive features of a California Special — rear spoiler, Shelby taillights, Shelby side scoop, and rear quarter California Special emblems.*



holstery, door panels, and headliner to make the inside as beautiful as the outside. Of course no project is complete without the hours of painstaking detailing done by Dean, Kathy, and another handful of good friends.

After three years of work, "TLC", and a multitude of four letter words, this CS/GT is one of the finest of its breed to be found anywhere as evidenced by their 1st place finish at their first National show at the Southern National in Biloxi, Mississippi in 1985.

Before purchasing that "unusual pony" remember different is distinctive but different is not always fun! **MT**



*Standard 1968 Nugget Gold interior.*

*The base model version of the California Special is equipped with a six cylinder engine.*

