

## An IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS Update

by Jim Smart

If you've been following *In Search of Mustangs* since its beginning in 1979, you're well aware of the project's intended purpose — to educate and enlighten the Mustang enthusiast on production from 1965-73. How does one accomplish that — educate the enthusiast on production? By asking for the assistance of literally thousands of Mustang owners and enthusiasts from around the globe. These enthusiasts, thousands of you out there, have participated by submitting the warranty/serial number and data information from your respective Mustangs and any you happen to come across in your travels. The result of this activity over the past seven years has been well over 10,000 separate entries since things began — and would you believe the list is still growing?

New Mustangers enter the hobby everyday, most who've never heard of *In Search of Mustangs*. These excited enthusiasts bring with them a host of new information — some of it pretty exciting. Art Mulkey of Billings, Montana certainly isn't new to the hobby — but he's new to *In Search of Mustangs*. He sent us 6T09K100002, a 1966 GT fastback with leaded seams and other types of show car treatment. We're still working on this one through Ford.

As a follower of *In Search of Mustangs*, you're probably well aware of the roller coaster ride that has plagued this project since the beginning. A lot of it simply couldn't be helped. Since 1981, I've been attempting to get this project organized and to press for all the hobbyists to see. In 1981, there were only about 2,000 entries to deal with. Today, we're approaching the 12,000 mark. The complexities of the project have multiplied through sheer numbers. We started cataloging this information on 3x5 cards and swiftly found it to be an impossible task after a while. We needed the computer age and fast. In 1984, negotiations were under way

with a local printer in the Salisbury, Maryland area (where I was living at the time) to produce the *Mustang Production Guide*. At last, it looked as though *In Search of Mustangs* was finally going to press. We found that to produce a book of this caliber would cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20,000 for about 5,000 copies. This, of course was within reach if advance orders could be taken.

I could have envisioned all possibilities, getting a bank loan to finance this undertaking, all the sweat involved in getting it right and even looking at the final copies as they came off the press. *In Search of Mustangs* was well into its fourth year at that point and I was ready to see a finished product. I'm sure a lot of you were ready too. I never realized that *In Search* was about to encounter yet another delay.

It was a chilly January morning when Donald Farr, the Editorial Director for *Mustang Monthly* magazine, called and asked about the possibilities of me coming aboard as the editor of *Mustang Monthly* while he kicked off a new magazine called *Car Review*. To say the least, I was overwhelmed. Although *In Search of Mustangs* was close to reality, I had to look at the big picture. It was a golden opportunity to earn a living at something I truly enjoyed and an opportunity to share a vast knowledge of this subject with still more people. Diane and I pulled up stakes and moved to Florida.

For the nearly three years I served as the editor of *Mustang Monthly*, *In Search of Mustangs* was placed on the back burner to simmer and accumulate more data. During that time period, we set up a program on the computer system at Dobbs Publications (the publishers of *Mustang Monthly*) and began keypunching information. Suddenly *In Search of Mustangs* came to life, there was a vast information bank right before our eyes. At long last, *In Search* was finally going somewhere. Although a lot was going on behind the scenes, not much was going on on the surface. *Mustang Times* readers like yourself weren't being informed simply due to

time and my involvement as the editor of *Mustang Monthly*. Little, if any, publicity was given to *In Search of Mustangs* for nearly three years — leaving a lot of you wondering whatever happened to this project. In recent times, things have changed for *In Search*.

The publishing business being what it is, not always a stable industry in many respects, things have a way of changing literally overnight. My role as the editor of *Mustang Monthly* magazine came to an end just a few short weeks ago. I feel very fortunate in that I had the opportunity to serve the hobby as I did for nearly three years. The experience gained, coupled with the opportunity to meet many of you, made being the editor of a well respected special interest publication well worth the effort.

Now that I'm back to a more normal lifestyle, *In Search of Mustangs* will surely see the attention it has long deserved. The backlog of mail and countless other items will be handled as quickly as possible. As *In Search of Mustangs* enters its eighth year, I'm looking to the vast knowledge that exists out there in the hobby. I'd like your feedback on what you'd like to see in the *Mustang Production Guide*. How can *In Search* better serve the needs of the hobby? No letter bombs, please.

Beginning November 1, 1986, we began a service as a result of *In Search of Mustangs*. For \$10.00 per warranty/serial number, we can tell you your Mustang's build date in cases where data plates are missing. This has become necessary to support the expenses involved in operating a project like this. We'll be leasing computer time somewhere here in central Florida in order to make *In Search* complete. Computer time is costly. With this service, we can help those of you out there who need the information while helping *In Search* to survive as a project.

At this time, we hope to make *In Search of Mustangs* updates more common in the *Mustang Times*, possibly on a quarterly basis. And we invite your feedback. Should you desire more information on *In Search*

of Mustangs, please submit a self-addressed stamped envelope and \$2.00 to *In Search of Mustangs*, Dept. MT, P.O. Box 6226, Lakeland, Florida 33807-6226. A quarterly newsletter is planned for mid-1987.

## THE MID OHIO FINALE

BURBANK, CA, October 20, 1986 . . . The exhausted wink from Steve Saleen's bloodshot eyes was a fitting end to a hard fought season. The last race of the 1986 SCCA Showroom Stock Endurance Championship Series had just come to an end. For Saleen Autosport, 74 hours of racing had come down to the last 14 minutes, the outcome being second place in the overall championship standings.

Saleen told reporters: "Coming so close to winning makes second place a little hard to take right now, but for a first year team, we have a lot to be thankful for." Understatement is a Steve Saleen specialty!

For Saleen Autosport sponsors, General Tire, Ford Motorcraft, Escort Radar Detectors, Kenwood Stereos, Koni Shocks and Riken Wheels, it proved to be a fruitful relationship, as the team placed third four times, second once, and won the grueling 24 hour event at Mosport, Canada. Saleen was quick to point out: "We use all these products on our Saleen Mustang street cars, so coming into a racing series this competitive and proving they can run up front, qualify on the pole and lead the majority of race laps, as well as endure the test of three 24 hour faces, I think will show a lot of people just how good these products are." As we said, understatement is a Saleen trait.

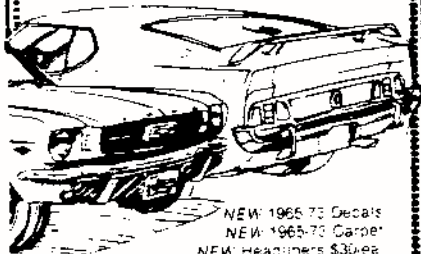
The team's two car effort was led by Ken Brown, Crew Chief and Rex McCoppin, Lead Mechanic, who did a super job of preparing and developing the race cars in three weeks for a series of six races that saw the team travel to Sears Point Raceway in Northern California, to Portland, Oregon, to Nelson

Ledges, Ohio, down to Atlanta, Georgia, up to Mosport, Canada and back to the Mid Ohio road course in Lexington, Ohio.

Winning the GT Class Championship the first year was a lofty goal, but team drivers Steve Saleen, Rick Titus, Lisa Caceres, Desire' Wilson, Skeeter McKitterick and Tom Winters gave it a heck of a shot, and as a group would like to thank the crew and sponsors for a super effort. They will be back in 1987 . . . with winning on their minds.

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## EDITORIAL CORRECTION

In my response to a letter from Mr. G. B. Kenny (December 1986 MT) I indicated that the GT stripes for a 1967 Mustang are on the rocker panel and extend to the fender. I should have stated that the stripes run along the rocker panel and extend on to the fender. The stripes are on the bottom edge of the door as indicated by Mr. Kenny in his letter. My response as to positioning of the GT letters remains the same.

Editor

## REGIONAL GROUP LOGOS

Several times during the year *Mustang Times* features "Pony Plates" as seen in this issue. In the near future "Regional Group Logos" will be added as a feature several times during the year. The layout will be similar to "Pony Plates" but group logos will be featured rather than license plates. If you would like to see your regional group logo featured in this layout, send it to National Headquarters as soon as possible.

