

Ford Mulls Options For Future Mustangs

The next generation of the ever-popular Ford Mustang may be built on an all-wheel-drive derivative of the "world car" platform planned for the 1993 Tempo/Topaz, *Automotive News* has reported.

Quoting Kenneth R. Dabroski, program manager for small-car and specialty-vehicle programs for Ford Motor Company, *Automotive News* noted that the automaker is giving some consideration to using the CDW27 platform which will be shared with Ford of Europe's Sierra successor.

"The trouble is, the CDW27 is a front-wheel-drive platform," Dabroski was quoted as saying. "You'd have to put all-wheel drive on it to take the large engine. That's certainly one of the alternatives."

Automotive News also reported that Ford is considering keeping the rear-wheel-drive platform currently being used for the Mustang and improving it.

"It's old but good. You don't necessarily have to change something that's pretty good. You just keep on refining it until it is better."

Dabrowski reportedly indicated that the MN12 platform which is used on Thunderbird and Cougar, is too large for the next generation Mustang. Although an MN12-type Mustang has been seen at Ford World Headquarters in Dearborn, MI, Max L. Jurosek, vice president of car product development, was quoted by the magazine as saying that though the prototype has "tested well" it is "just a toy" that Ford is studying.

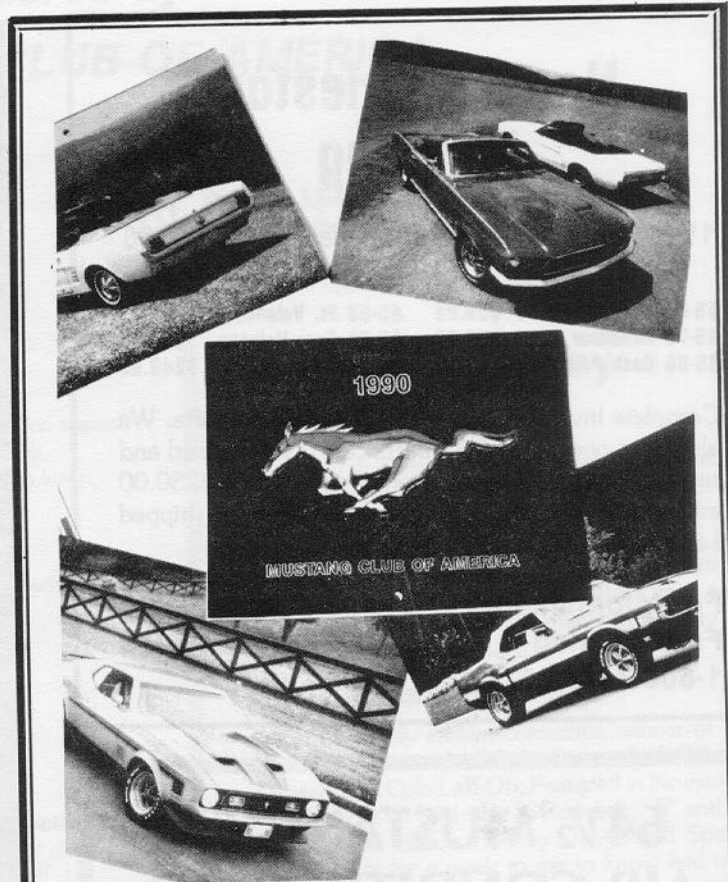
Automotive News indicated that the future of the Mustang nameplate remains cloudy. Ford product planners and executives say Mustang's destiny may become clearer after Congress makes its final decisions on fuel economy and emission standards for the coming years.

Some fear that tough corporated average fuel economy rules could prevent Ford from offering the V-8 engine in the Mustang. About half of all Mustangs sold are equipped with Ford's 5-liter V-8 engine. It is standard on the Mustang GT.

"Without the GT, you wouldn't have a Mustang," Dabrowski was quoted as saying.

The Mustang has reportedly become the center of controversy among Ford executives over the past few years. However, a Ford Motor Company spokesman told those attending a banquet in Tulsa, OK held in conjunction with the MCA Western Grand National over Labor Day Weekend that a front-wheel drive Mustang is definitely in the company's future plans.

Dabrowski was quoted as saying taht Ford has no intentions of handing the development of its next-generation Mustang over to a foreign manufacturer.



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