

Mustang's Future Slowly Gaining Focus

The murky future of the next generation of Mustang seems to be slowing gaining focus at Ford Motor Company headquarters in Dearborn, MI.

Reports at both factory and supplier levels now indicate Ford is leaning toward program that would replace the current Mustang with a newer version in the 1995 model year.

However, the company seems to have rejected the idea of building a new \$2 billion rear-wheel-drive platform and is tentatively planning to use an updated version of its present platform.

The Mustang platform now in use was introduced in 1978. Sources close to the company say the new version of the Mustang will have an all new exterior vastly different from the current one.

While Ford engineers apparently favor an improved version of the present Mustang platform for the next generation, their second choice seems to be an all-wheel-drive version of the Tempo-Topaz replacement platform called the CDW27. That platform will be introduced in Europe in 1993 and in the United States in 1994.

The drawback to use of the CDW27 platform in the next generation Mustang is the fact that it weighs and costs more than the current car. Weight is critical because higher Corporate Average Fuel Economy mandates seem likely.

The future of the Mustang has been cloudy since 1988, when Ford decided to introduce the Mazda-based Probe as a replacement for the Mustang. A nationwide outcry from Mustang supporters, however, convinced the company that there was still a market for the rear-wheel-drive sports car.

Some Mustang enthusiasts have continued to speculate that Ford would end production of the pony car by the middle of this decade, but the company's latest planning seems to indicate the nameplate will continue at least into the late 1990s. Nevertheless, sales of new Mustangs continue to decline. Ford sold 81,910 Mustangs through May of 1989 but sales dropped to 52,925 through May of 1990. Mustang sales continue to outpace Probe sales, however.

Indianapolis Mustangers Parade At Carmel Independence Day Event

Members of the Mustang Club of Indianapolis participated in two outings in July.

The club had 39 Mustangs participating in the Carmel Independence Day parade held July 7. Mustangs ran the gamut from 1964½ originals to brand new 1990 models.

Following the parade, the group gathered at Schmidt Stables for a car show and entertainment.

Later that same month, 35 members of the Indianapolis group took to the road to visit the Huber Family Orchards and Winery in Starlight, IN. The outing hosts, Steve and Peggy Jones, led the caravan through the scenic countryside of southern Indiana enroute to the winery.

The winery also features a restaurant, craft store, petting zoo and live country music.

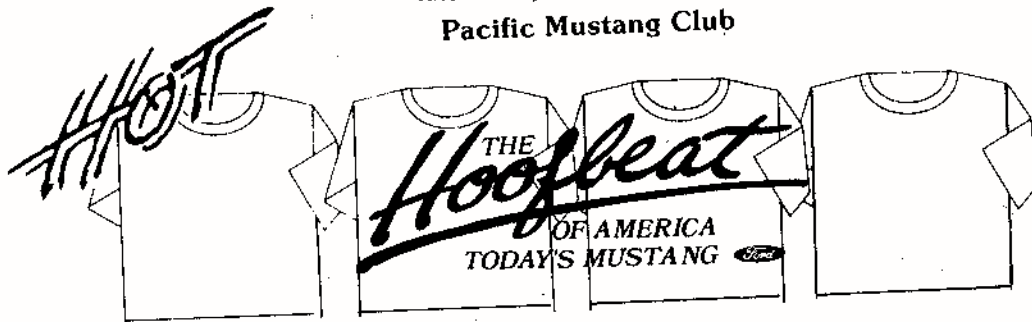
Stephen Schonegg is president of the Mustang Club of Indianapolis.



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