
In Search of

"Documenting Ford Mustang Production Since 1979"

Jim Smart - Jim Haskell

Mustangs -----

This month, we'll present some previously unpublished information on "Special Use" Mustangs assembled at Dearborn beginning in March of 1964.

It's certainly not unusual, even to this day, for automobile manufacturers to produce a number of vehicles for reasons other than immediate sale to the general public. Included are vehicles that will never see a new car lot, built specifically for special testing purposes. Special testing includes highway durability or performance testing (especially for new models), perfection of engineering changes, crash tests, racing purposes, advertising, executive loaners, promotions, and hundred of others uses within Ford Motor Company.

Most of us know a little about Mustang production history, such as that the first production Mustang was **5F08F100001**, and that it was sold by an eager Ford dealer salesman in New Foundland, Canada to a Captain Stanley Tucker, an airline pilot. And some of you have read about **5F08F100006** in our column, one of the 1964 World's Fair cars unearthed in 1981 by Ed White and Toby Hildabrand of South Georgia.

But what about the other early Mustangs with single- and double-digit consecutive unit numbers? What were they used for and where did they end up?

What's more, what about Pilot Plant Mustangs as well as actual production units assembled at Dearborn? Read on, this gets even better.

Consider **5S08K100002** (yes, that's an "S" plant code), a pilot vehicle which never witnessed private ownership. This 289 Hi-Po pilot Mustang's history within Ford is unknown to us today, however, we do know that it was officially scrapped and had its platform converted to a show car and named the **Mustang III** by insiders at Ford. This unusual show car was used for display purposes at Ford Motor Company sponsored Rod and Custom shows throughout 1964

and 1965. Where the car went after that is anyone's guess.

The "S" plant code stands for Pilot Plant, known today as "Body and Assembly" at Ford. This is Ford's Body and Assembly Division at Allen Park, Michigan bordering on the Dearborn Test Track and the vast engineering complex. The Pilot Plant was, and still is, a mini assembly line where pilot vehicles are hand assembled. Tooling is tested, procedures checked and rechecked, then the process is picked up by the assigned plant.

We're not certain just how many Pilot Plant Mustangs were assembled, but we have evidence of at least 12 units. For example, another test vehicle, **5S07U100012**, that was used for performance testing. Since most of us understand that the "U" engine code means the 170 cubic-inch six, we'll have to assume that "performance" meant something other than flat-out jaunts at speed on the quarter-mile.

In Search of Mustangs has photographic evidence of at least two other Pilot Plant vehicles, **5S08F100008** and **5S08F100009**. But we've seen no proof of their disposal by Ford Motor Company. We'll leave the rest to your imagination - and prayers.

Pilot vehicles were never intended to be sold due to the tremendous liability they could be given winding up in the hands of a private owner. We'll never know how many slipped out the back door in 1964.

Not only were Pilot Plant Mustangs considered pilot vehicles, so were "pre-production" units built at Dearborn prior to Job 1. Ford built nearly 150 pre-production units prior to **5F08F100001**, some of which possess higher consecutive unit numbers. For example, we have some reason to suspect that **5F08F100001** was a "token Job 1" VIN to officially launch production, but we're reasonably certain that it wasn't the first Mustang unit off the Dearborn line in 1964. *next page please*

Most Mustangers dream of owning a low serial number example, but frankly, most of them were taken for in the early going. For example, 07F100023, 5F07F100024 and 5F07F100031 were used for Independent Rear Suspension development which never really got off the ground for a Mustang. All three Mustangs were scrapped according to Ford, however, the VIN plates were retained.

Eleven more Dearborn examples were shipped through Ford of France to Alan Mann Racing Limited of Surrey, England. Their VINs were 5F07F100025, 100026, 100027, 100030, 100055, and 07K208109, 208110, 208111, 208112, 209109, 19110. These Mustangs were used in the European Rally Program, then most of them were shipped back to the United States for other "General Use" purposes and resale to the public.

Holman and Moody of Charlotte, North Carolina received 5F07F100033, 100034, and 100036 for use in their own racing program. They also received F08F100240 and 5F08F100241 in July of 1964 for go programs. Number 100240 was shipped to Watkins Glen, New York, and 100241 went to the Automobile Racing Club of Florida.

Other special use early Mustangs abound. The **Airline Hostess Panel**, which utilized Mustangs in magazine and television ads used F08F101202 in the Twin Cities district, 5F08F102356 and 5F08F104849 in the Chicago district, F08F103125 in the Los Angeles district, F08F106499 in the Denver district, and F08D100866 and 5F08D100867 in the Dallas district. Can you spot your Mustang's VIN in this group?

Four 1964 1/2 Mustang convertibles were given away in a Southern California promotion at Disneyland. The winners received 5F08D135097, 35098, 135104 and 135105 respectively.

These Mustangs are but a few of the many intercepted back in 1964 for special uses designed to promote the new marque. Today, a few of them may be in the hands of lucky owners who may not even be aware of what they have. More detail on Mustangs like these will be in the new **Mustang Production Guide** due off the presses before Christmas.

If you would like to know more about **In Search of Mustangs** and the exciting and informative **Mustang Production Guide**, drop us a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

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