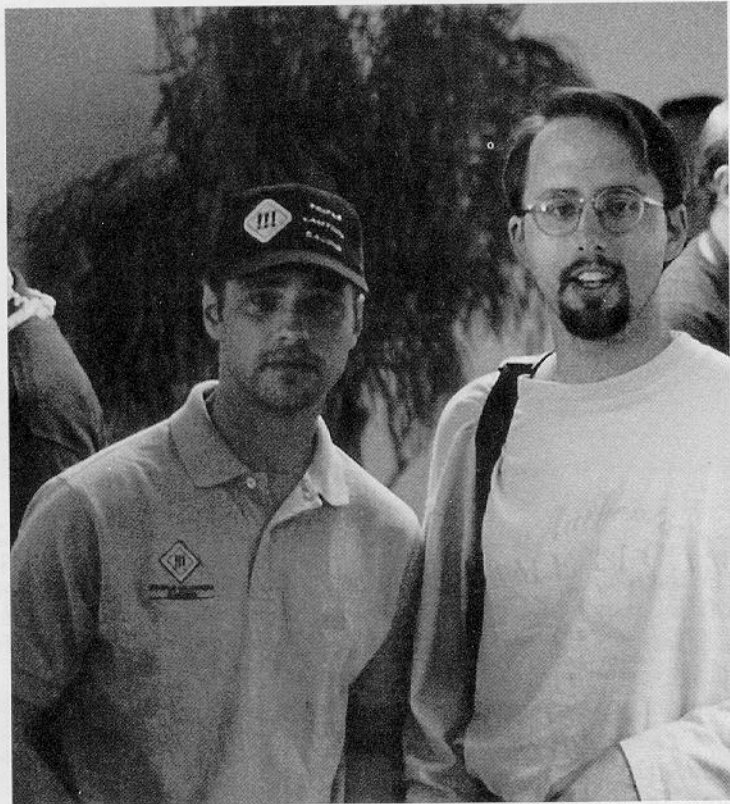


An Interview with "Beverly Hills 90210" Star Jason Priestley



Television star Jason Priestley (left) is also a Mustang owner and race driver. MCA member Greg Stanley (right) recently had the opportunity to interview Mr. Priestley.

Auto racing, once looked upon as something more suited for mechanics or those fool-hardy individuals who carried a death wish, has now become an extremely popular sport backed by a science that can meld man and machine into a nearly unbeatable force. Along with this ever-widening acceptance, it is becoming increasingly common to view the faces of celebrities behind the wheels of these incredible machines.

Jason Priestley, star of the hit television series "Beverly Hills 90210", is one such celebrity who enjoys an association with fast cars. His vehicle of choice? An R-model Cobra Mustang.

MCA member Greg Stanley had the opportunity to interview Mr. Priestley during the NAPA Auto Parts Grand Prix of Atlanta held April 18-20 at Road Atlanta in Braselton, Georgia. Three top-five finishes as of that time had proven that Jason, his co-driver Andy Pilgrim, and the Triple Caution Racing team were serious contenders.

MT: You just finished fifth at Road Atlanta. Any thoughts?

JP: It's kind of disappointing because we wanted to be on the podium, but fifth is good. We had a couple of problems during the race. We're happy with fifth. We're running for the championship this year and fifth gives us a lot of points.

MT: You drove for the first half of the race. Were there any prob-

lems?

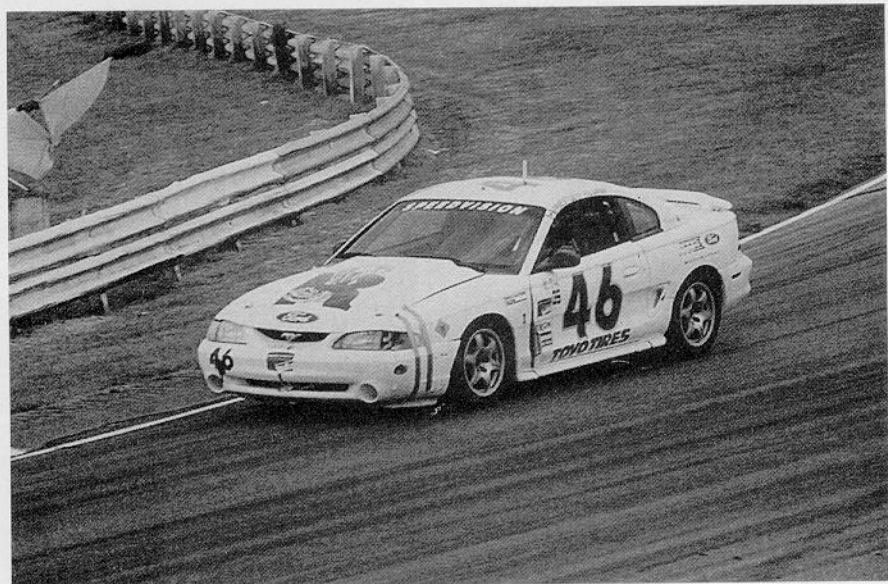
JP: It went well. We started sixth and I worked my way to fourth. It was a good race, an exciting race.

MT: Were you driving when it began to rain?

JP: No, we had just pitted and our drivers changed.

MT: How are you in the rain?

JP: I'm fine in the rain. I don't mind the rain at all. Your times



are slower and you do a lot more driving by the seat of your pants because you really don't know what the limit is and it changes from lap to lap.

MT: Haven't you been racing for two years now?

JP: This is our second season. I raced three years in the Michelin Pro series.

MT: How did you get into this? Did you race go-karts?

JP: I didn't race as a kid. I didn't race until I was 22. I'd always loved racing and an opportunity came my way about five years ago to get into it and start racing rally cars.

MT: Why do you race Mustangs?

JP: I race Mustangs because I'm a fan of the car. I drive a Mustang on my show and I own a 1996 Cobra. I knew they weren't up to speed yet and I thought that that was a good opportunity to go into Ford and say "hey, I want to race the cars for you." So I ended up doing a lot of stuff with SVT and SVO. Obviously we've got a

car that's up to speed now and that's doing really well. We're happy with it, really happy to be racing the Cobras.

MT: Tell us about the car on your show. Aren't there two of them?

JP: Yeah, I've got two of them. One is setup to be towed and the other one isn't. They're 1995 convertibles with 302s and five-speeds.

MT: How about the 1965 Mustang you previously drove on the show?

JP: It was a 289. What was that color called?

MT: Springtime Yellow.

JP: Springtime Yellow. We did have two of them. They were both automatics and they were fun. I would throw those things around all the time.

MT: Will you continue to race the Cobras for a while?

JP: I'm racing another Mustang this weekend, a GTS-1 Mustang which is the next series up. I don't know what's going to happen next year. I'm trying the

GTS-1 car to see if that's maybe the direction I want to go in.

MT: If Ford were to build more Cobra R-models, what would you change?

JP: I'd have a lighter car and I'd have more horsepower. The 351 cid is fine but I'd make it a four-valve, four-cam engine. That would give you a much freer revving engine.

MT: How does racing fit in with your shooting schedule?

JP: Well, I make the time in my schedule. I have to make a lot of time for practice. It's a big commitment running this series. It's not easy. There are a lot of really talented drivers out here and the field is really competitive.

MT: How long do you plan on racing?

JP: I'll do it as long as I can. It's been great so far and I look forward to getting better.

MT: What kind of cars do you have in your own personal collection?

JP: I've got the 1996 Cobra, an Expedition, a 1967 Sunbeam Tiger MKII, a 1967 Healey 2000 MKIII, and an Escort Cosworth.

MT: Tell us about the St. Jude's Ranch for Children that you are involved with.

JP: It's a nonprofit home for abused, abandoned, and neglected children. My cars will carry the Ranch's logo for the 1997 season to increase visibility. If putting decals on my cars and offering some time can increase exposure for this organization, it's definitely worthwhile.

MT: Best of luck with it and your racing career.

JP: Thanks.

MT: One last question. How would you like one of your cars to be featured in *Mustang Times*?

JP: That'd be great. Especially if it were on one of the race cars.

For additional information on the St. Jude's Ranch for Children mentioned by Mr. Priestley, write to P.O. Box 61695, Boulder City, NV 89006 or phone (800) 492-3562.

MT

