

Ask Fred

Do you have a problem with your Mustang that no one seems able to fix? Are you confused by the various replacement parts that are currently on the market? Do you have a technical or mechanical-oriented problem that seems impossible to answer?

Then --

Ask Fred
c/o Glazier's Mustang Barn
531 Wambold Rd.
Souderton, PA 18964

Dear Fred,

My car is a 1965 coupe. I'm planning a total rebuild of the front suspension as a winter project and would like to know your opinion of the following mods:

Relocate the upper arm 1 1/2" below and use a negative camber wedge kit to relocate the outer ball joint (from the spindle) down 1 inch. A lot of folks pretend that these mods upgrade the handling a lot.

I like my '65 Mustang look but I found that the car handling is not that great (I've driven a few E-types and currently drive a Jaguar XJ6, so I guess I am a little spoiled!).

Being at those mods, I've been told that the car steering will be quite stiffer. Is there any way to adapt a modern rack and pinion power steering (else than the expensive \$1000 kit advertised in *Mustang Monthly*)? I know that the mods I plan would look like sins to some guys, but I'm ready for it since I really like the Mustang '65 look but not its stock handling.

I would appreciate any comments.

Boucher Guy-Pierre

Dear Boucher,

The 1965 Shelby Mustang GT 350 had the upper control arms lowered 1". This modification was developed to match the geometry of the prototype Mustang indepen-

dent rear suspension which was cancelled. However, it was noted that lowering the roll center reduced body roll on the "live axle" production model. Lowering the arm 1 1/2" requires a negative wedge camber kit (\$199.95) to keep the ball joint from binding. Any more than 1 1/2 " would cause excessive wheel tramp. A side effect of this modification is it lowers the front end about 1". I would also change to 1970-73 rebound bumpers on the front end. The 1" modification was performed on one of the daily drivers here and the difference felt like adding a 1" front sway bar. Then adding the 1" front sway bar (\$102.95) further improved the handling.

Steering "stiffness" is more a function of wheel alignment than suspension, specifically, caster. If the car is equipped with the standard "five turn" steering gearbox, changing to the quicker "four turn" will bring you up to the Mustang GT standards. If you want quick, the quick steering kit (\$145) as used on the 1965-66 Shelby, will make it even quicker, but NOT easier. We have not installed the rack and pinion conversion you refer to and there is no cheap alternative. The Shelby modifications described above were good enough to dominate SCCA-B Production racing in 1965, 1966, and 1967.

Installing our rear spring kit (\$159.95), which includes 289 hp leaf springs and attaching hardware, will bring you up to the GT/Shelby rear spring standards.

"Progressive rate" front coils (\$95) will make your front better than Shelby. Add KYB self-adjusting gas shocks (\$35 each), Traction-Master traction bars (\$125), as used on the 1966 Shelby, and a 3/4" rear sway bar (\$102.95) would complete the modifications.

If you do not mind a harsh ride, changing from neoprene suspension bushings to urethane bush-

ings would be about as far as you can go, although I would not recommend them for a daily driver.

If you follow this simple formula, you will end up with a Mustang that is dramatically improved.

Fred

Dear Fred,

Hi, just wondering if anything can be done to speed the steering on my 1966 Mustang. The car has a stock two-barrel V8, disc brakes without a booster for power and the steering is slow, about five turns lock to lock. Oh, and by the way, can any later model FoMoCo larger disc brakes be fitted to my car replacing the stock discs? I do a wide variety of driving and the '66 design standards don't stand up to today's traffic.

John Rowett

Dear John,

It sounds like you have the standard "five turn" steering gearbox. First, switch to the "four turn" gearbox. If this is not enough, install the "quick steering" kit (\$145) used on the GT 350 Shelby. In street use, this guarantees quick steering and strong arms.

Like the above steering, the disc brakes on the Mustang were used on the Shelby when they dominated SCCA-B Production competition in 1965, 1966, and 1967. These brakes will stop the car any time anywhere. They do, however, have fairly high pedal effort, compared to modern cars, which almost invariably have power boost. Don't confuse stopping ability with pedal effort. If, however, you want the best of both, add the power booster to your 1965-66 disc brake. This was not offered by the factory, but will work with the stock disc brake master cylinder and costs about \$465.

Fred

Fred,

Thanks for the letter with the

good info. I have power steering. I wonder if the "quick steering" kit will work with the power steering.

The brakes I have are unboosted disc, single piston. Do you have any suggestions for a pad, metallic, cera-metallic? I'm by no means a racer, too old, but do appreciate good performance.

John Rowett

Dear John,

Factory installed power steering already has the "four turn" gear-box, but dealer installed does not. Also, a hobbyist may have installed the power steering without changing the box. We have never tried the "quick steering" with power assist. There may not be enough clearance between the tie rod and the assist valve.

If you have single piston brakes, they are NOT original. The question then is, what master cylinder do you have? If it is not the 1965-66 cylinder, a change is in order. If you still prefer to change to power brake, the booster can be ordered with this master cylinder as a substitution. I would not recommend metallic brakes for the street. They may be useful for racing, but very high pedal effort makes them impractical for street use.

As for being too old, I understand Carroll Shelby can still tear up the track.

Fred

Dear Fred,

I have a 1965 coupe. I'm wondering what color the trunk catch is supposed to be? I'm talking about the lower piece of squared-off metal that the latch "grabs" onto. At car shows I've seen them the following ways: natural metal, painted flat black, painted silver-gray, painted car color completely, natural metal with car color overspray, chromed (hee hee). Thanks

Sean Mattingly

Dear Sean,

Wow! We really dig the chrome job! The catch was lightly galvanized and installed AFTER the car was painted, thus is natural (galvanized).

Fred

Dear Fred,

Comments: I have a 1966 Mustang three-speed manual transmission and want to convert it to a four-speed manual transmission. If you know where I can get a four-speed for a good price and if I need a conversion kit, please E-mail me. Thanks.

Jonathan Vargo

Dear Jonathan,

Assuming you have the V8 engine, you can convert to four-speed, or even five-speed quite easily. A rebuilt four-speed, with linkage, runs about \$1,000. Used four-speed transmissions can be installed, of course, but you must be very careful. Used four-speed transmissions are usually pretty rough. To change to four-speed, you need transmission, shifter, speedometer cable, and speedo cable gear. You must also, on 1964 1/2 - 66 cars, drill a new hole for the cable above and to the right of the accelerator pedal. To install the 1986-93 five-speed, you need the transmission, transmission mounting plate, special shift lever, speedo gear, and special crossmember. Six cylinder cars can be converted to four- or five-speed almost as easily.

Fred

Dear Fred,

Sometimes my 1966 Mustangs (200 six-cylinder, automatic transmission) starts when it is in drive or reverse. Is this an electrical

problem or a linkage problem.

Mike

Dear Michael,

Your problem sounds like an adjustment or two is off. If the shift lever is "sloppy" or "wobbly", you should replace the lever bushings before you do anything else. Then, you should adjust the shifter (the rear end of the shift rod is slotted for this) to ensure that the detents in the transmission match the detents in the shifter (park is park, neutral is neutral, etc.). Then the neutral safety switch should be adjusted. This switch has two functions - it allows starting in park and neutral only, and switches on the backup lights. These adjustments are outlined in the Factory Service Manual.

Fred



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