



RED RACER

Text and photos by Mary Jean Wesche

MCA member Jay Seligman was a stand out on open track days at the Mustang's 45th Anniversary Celebration in April. His 1966 Mustang is red with white skunk stripes. It was a joy to watch Jay pilot his Mustang around Barber Motorsports Park's track.

I caught up with Jay to photograph his car at the event, and then a few months later we talked again by phone. His Mustang has an interesting history, and hopefully you'll enjoy his story as much as I did.

As with most teens, Jay acquired his driver's license at 16. He learned to drive in a 1962 MG. His parents got him into a first generation Mercury Capri. The only modification his dad allowed was a Cherry Bomb muffler. Having always been a fan of road racing, Jay enjoyed the curvy roads in his neighborhood behind the wheel of his Capri.

Looking for a project car, Jay bought the Mustang for \$100 in 1973, when he was just out of high school. Even as he purchased it, he had the idea in the back of

his mind that he wanted to race it. He was 18 years old at the time. While looking for a Mustang, he and his father, a Ford dealer at the time, passed on an AMX, a '67 Shelby GT500 that had been badly damaged on the side, and a '67 Fairlane GTA, before purchasing his coupe.

The Mustang was a basic black coupe; no air, no power steering, and no power brakes. It had a V8 with a Pony interior, 289cid 3-speed with 123,000 miles on it. The coupe had been owned by a family of five. It ran, had four different size tires, and had been hit on every corner and repaired. Jay said, "...it was rough but it ran." He has its original set of Firestone Wide Ovals. They were well worn, but they matched.

When Jay went off to study engineering at Texas A&M, he took the Mustang with him. In 1975 the coupe was totaled by a hail storm. Jay began a restoration on the Mustang and began to race it in the 1980s.

After college, Jay got married and has four children, a 26-year-old who recently got married, a 22-year-old in the U.S. Air Force, and two teenagers at home—a 17-year-old daughter and a 13-year-old son. None of his children have yet been

bitten by the "racing bug." Meanwhile, the Mustang was put into storage in 1987 for about 10 years.

After Jay completely restored the car, finally finishing in 1999, he hit the show circuit in the Houston, Texas, area and was, in his words, "fairly successful in Modified." Through a good friend, Robert Cobb, who was restoring a Boss 302, Jay met Ed Hockaday. Both gentlemen influenced Jay's desire to restore his Mustang into a "grown up, show car" while still racing it on weekends. He began by attending the Mid-America Shelby meet in Tulsa in 1999 and became hooked on racing open track at Hallett. He has missed only two events through 2009. In 2007, he joined Corinthian Vintage Auto Racing Corporation (CVAR) where events are held in Oklahoma and Texas. All groups are regional, and belong to the Vintage Motorsports Council (VMC).

Jay decided that it was too difficult to keep the coupe in show-car condition while racing it at the same time. Jay says he races the Mustang "hard," and decided that since he enjoyed racing it more than showing it, that is where he'd place his efforts. One other factor in Jay's decision was his move



JAY SELIGMAN'S ROADRACING 1966 MUSTANG

two-hours southwest to Victoria, Texas.

About 15 years ago, Jay began to have serious health problems and underwent a kidney transplant. He told me it gave him a new lease on life. He took daily walks as part of his recuperation. On one of those walks, Jay befriended a neighbor who had a 1965 Mustang. It was a black coupe with a V8, and his neighbor was having trouble getting the '65 running. Jay began to help his neighbor with the motor, and his friend handled bodywork for Jay. Working on the two Mustangs became Jay's physical therapy.

Although Jay's Mustang had been repainted several times, it was repainted again in 1988, this time by a professional. The body had already been redone. It had the original 3-speed 289, but the engine block was destroyed last year due to an OEM harmonic balancer failure. It has been replaced with a 306cid, 5.0L block.

The Mustang is painted red to match the red Pony interior; it has the original dash pad, pedal covers, and engine compartment wiring. The fenders were opened up in a unique way to preserve the side view of the original '66, however they allow



for much larger tires than original fenders would. (See complete Specs in the Side Bar on page 18.)

Jay attended a driving school at Texas World Speedway but, for the most part, he's a self-taught racer. CVAR handles its own licensing and it also stresses safety and racing courtesy; even assessing hard penalties if there is too much metal to metal rubbing on the track.

Usually running mid-pack Jay says family obligations took him off the track much

of this year. He did run in the 24 Hours of LeMons in February in an '85 Mustang Fastback which had been burned. Last year Jay's team came in sixth out of 80 cars. This year, the Mustang overheated and they didn't make it past lunch on the second day.

All in all, it's obvious Jay Seligman enjoys road racing. He's usually a one-man operation, serving as owner, driver, and crew. His Mustang turns heads on the track, and I hope I get a chance to watch him race again soon! **MT**

RED RACER SPECS:

- 1966 Coupe
- 8-inch stock rear axles
- Panhard Bar from Maier Racing
- Ford GT rear leaf springs
- 8-inch rear differential w/ Detroit Locker
- 3:80 and 4:62 Yukon/Richmond gears
- Koni single adjustable front & rear shocks
- Hoosier TD front and rear tires
- American Racing wheels
- Granada front spindles
- Stock, manual steering
- Granada disc front brakes
- Ford Fairlane drum rear brakes
- Porterfield brake pads and shoes
- Brake cooling ducts
- Two chamber master cylinder portioning valves for back brakes
- "New" used 5.0L block, bored .30 over, 306 cid
- 1965 heads reworked by MPG Head Service
- Mechanical solid lifter cam by Cam Research
- Zero Balance steel crank & rods by CNC Motor Sports
- Keith Black flat top pistons (forged)
- Stud girdle
- Comp Cams push rods & steel full roller rockers
- S.P.E.C. aluminum flywheel & light weight clutch
- Weiland dual plane intake
- Oil cooler
- Ford toploader transmission
- Hurst Competition Plus shifter
- Ford/Holley 600CFM Vacuum secondaries "R" code dated before 1970
- Melling high volume oil pump
- Original dual point Ford distributor w/Pertronics pickup, HE coil, stock ignition system
- Underdrive pulleys
- '68 Galaxie radiator + Coolin

