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THE 2009 SHOW SEASON

It seems to me that each new year rolls around more rapidly than its predecessor. This year is no exception. Our 2009 show season will begin shortly with the 45th Mustang Anniversary celebration in April at the Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama. Those of you who have been at this venue before will agree, it is a great place to show Mustangs, and for the more adventurous, an ideal track to burn a bit of rubber. The Anniversary Show committee has pledged a fine outing and many events are already sold out. Another MCA National Show with race overtones is to be held in mid June at O'Reilly Raceway Park in Indianapolis, Indiana. It will be followed on the 4th of July weekend at the American Stampede in Raleigh, North Carolina. This season's final show in late August is the Western United States National in lovely San Fernando Valley, California. This all-American slate of show sites stretches all across our great nation, and that pleases the MCA judging community greatly.

Looking back at last year's show season, it was hugely successful with one Grand National and four National shows. In spite of spiraling fuel costs and an economic slowdown, each show was well attended with a total of 1,580 cars, well above the average of 1,164 cars the previous four years. As with each show year, we find ways to improve judging techniques and become ever more responsive to members' requirements. There are always lessons learned which provide the agenda for the year-end judges meeting. The 2008 show season led to consideration of 16 items on last October's Judges Meeting agenda. These were covered in the News and Notes section of the December issue of *Mustang Times*. In the January issue, Wally Short highlighted the proceedings of the 2008 Judges Meeting and I'm pleased that the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Judges recommendation at their January Board of Directors meeting in Dallas, Texas.

We are watching trends in the hobby as well. Much to our pleasure, the number of Young Mustang Owners at MCA shows is growing. Modified Mustangs are increasingly represented as owners choose to make style and performance changes to suit them. The Mustang provides a very popular platform for innovative modifications. And while it is impossible to provide a separate class for every Mustang, new

initiatives are being explored such as a Racecar class and venues to host MCA-sponsored track events.

There are subtle changes in the judges' organization too. President Steven McCarley has tapped our erstwhile National Head Judge, Wally Short, for a newly created position of Chief of Judges. In this job, Wally will be responsible for a host of old and new tasks related to judging, not the least of which is the responsibility for the budget of the judging community. He will also initiate means to gather resources to support that budget. Wally will chair the MCA Board's Judging Committee and act as liaison between the judges and the MCA executive committee as well. President McCarley has named Charles Turner and me to be your new National Head Judges for the 2009 season. And he has named Bob Perkins to continue as the Technical Advisor to MCA. The assistant national head judges will be the same this show season.

What's in store for this year's show season? We want this to be our best year ever. We want to enlist the aid of new certified and gold card judges and will initiate ways to make it simpler to qualify for these sought-after credentials. One of the ways to accomplish this is to fully utilize the opportunity to conduct seminars both on and off the show site. Chuck Wiltens, the Assistant National Head Judge for the 3rd Generation Mustangs, has addressed the use of seminars in his article in the December 2008 issue of *Mustang Times*, and has prepared a "how to" outline, which will appear on the MCA website. We will be streamlining the method of writing, administering, and grading of certified judges exams for all classes. Speaking of classes, there are some minor changes to the approved 2009 Show Classes. These are on our website.

We are eagerly anticipating the 45th Anniversary Show, and look forward to seeing you there and/or all of MCA's shows this year. Ours is a truly a family organization—help us make it grow.



ALLEN STEWART
Head Judge
3rd-5th Generation