



THE IACOCCA MUSTANG

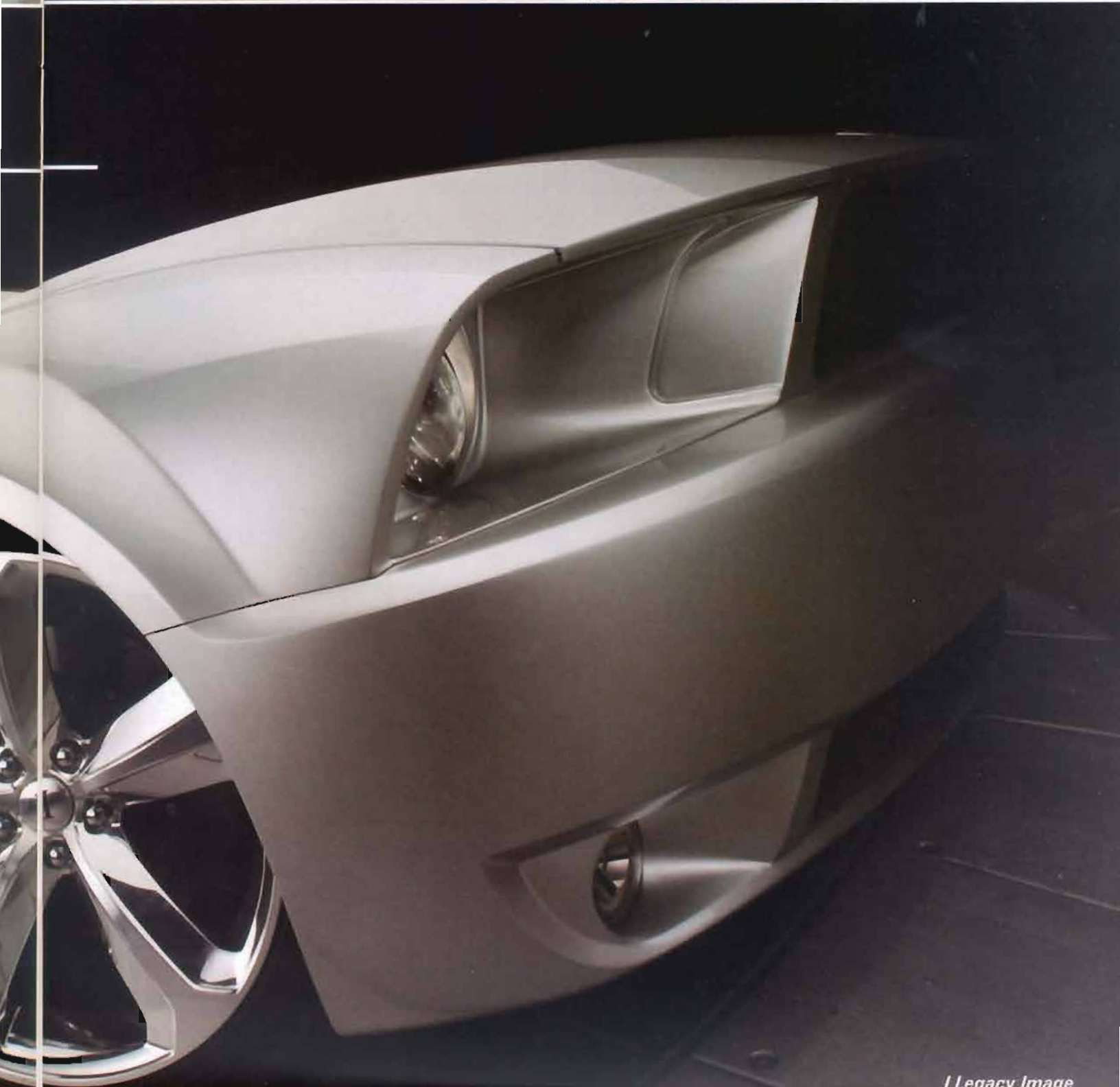
Text and Photos by Mary Jean Wesche

The August 2009 issue of *Mustang Times* had photos of Lee Iacocca's Silver 45th Anniversary Edition Mustang in John Clor's column, Ford Performance Corner. Shortly after that issue was mailed to our members, I was fortunate to attend the formal Reveal of the Iacocca Mustang at Galpin Ford in North Hills, California. Meeting Lee Iacocca at the first-ever presentation of the Iacocca Award was a thrill. The invitation to the reveal provided an opportunity to visit with him a second time. And, receiving a personal phone call to complete an interview with this wonderful gentleman was just icing on the cake, for me!

We all recognize Lee Iacocca as the "father of the Mustang," and it's quite fitting for him to finally have his own edition. Mr. Iacocca said that this project was a collaborate effort by himself, designer Michael Leone and his partner Denice Halicki, and the Gaffoglio Family Metalcrafters, long-time associates of Mr. Iacocca located in Fountain Valley, California. They chose Galpin Ford as the exclusive dealer. Additionally, Galpin handled all performance upgrades. They aptly named the business venture I Legacy.

The Iacocca Mustang is based on the 2009 GT but features a redesigned hood, fenders, rearend, and front end with receding headlamps. The body panels are made from a composite material from the aerospace industry. The exterior design speaks for itself, boasting an Iacocca-chosen silver paint. The unique roofline—a sloping fast-back—was a particularly important feature for Mr. Iacocca. "It's what I always wanted the Mustang to look like," he stated. He also told me, "Although the Mustang looks longer than a stock one, it's actually the ex-





Legacy Image



▲ Lee Iacocca and Designer Michael Leone debut the lacocca Mustang.

act same length." He said the design is one he always wanted to see on a Mustang. "It's the 45th anniversary of the Mustang so we said let's just do a run of 45, and the limited number will help them grow in value. They'll be true collector cars," said Mr. Iacocca. When asked how much involvement he had, he said he was totally involved, making numerous trips to the Metalcrafters' facility. He would not hesitate to comment on changes he wanted to see. The result is as classy as the gentleman it's named for.

Mechanically, two power plants are offered: a naturally aspirated 4.6L rated at 320hp, and a supercharged version delivering 400hp. The transmission is a five-speed manual. The suspension has been upgraded and Ford Racing's handling package was utilized adding firmer springs and re-valved shock absorbers. Also optional is a 14-inch Ford Racing Braking Package. And, all of this is covered under the factory Ford warranty!

Galpin Ford installs the suspension, brakes and a cold-air kit, and optional supercharger. Mr. Iacocca has "... known Bert Boeckman and his family for about 50 years. They sell more Mustangs than any other dealership in the world," he included. The Iacocca-design, 20-inch wheels are shod with Goodyear Eagles.

The Iacocca heritage is further enhanced by the magnificent and luxurious interior. The leather seats are diamond-pleated, and embroidered with the Iacocca crest. The steering wheel is leather wrapped, and proudly wears an "I" badge. The sill plates bear Iacocca's name and the numbered dash plaque bears his signature!

When I closed the door after photographing the interior it was like closing a vault; it's that finely crafted.



▲ (L-R) Denice Halicki of I Legacy and Lee Iacocca discuss the recent unveiling of the Iacocca Mustang at the Aston Club in Galpin Ford.



▲ Principals of the Gaffoglio Family Metalcrafters talk with Iacocca Mustang Designer, Michael Leone (R).



▲ Lee Iacocca shakes hands with Steve Sularski. Sularski offered the highest bid for the number six Iacocca Mustang—\$125,000, after a dramatic back and forth bidding between two other bidders. The number six Iacocca Silver Edition Mustang was the first car delivered to a private buyer.

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Evident of the relationship with the Galpin family, the reveal of the Iacocca Mustang was held at the Club Aston, an exclusive area for Aston Martin customers of Galpin. It has a vault for a door—how perfect a setting for such a beautiful Mustang. Two Mustangs remained covered outdoors on the patio and inside the Club, one was elevated on a mirrored turnstile. As Mr. Iacocca welcomed the invitees and Michael Leone proudly unveiled the masterpiece, the curtains around the turnstile were opened, and the car covers were lifted off. Cameras were flashing, and the Sinatra-singing-in-the-background commercial played on the numerous televisions.

All in all, the experience and the Mustang are much like Mr. Iacocca's personality—quintessentially elegant. Every the consummate gentleman, interviewing Mr. Iacocca is also an interesting venture. In his mid-80s, he is as sharp as a tack with a memory to be envied at any age. He's kind, inquisitive, friendly, and just plain nice. He remembered our earlier meetings, and was asking me as many questions as I would ask of him. My interview was with Mr. Iacocca interspersed with questions from him about my family, our mutual Italian heritage, my grandchildren, my career, the MCA; you get the idea! I read Donald Farr's February editorial in *Mustang Monthly* and his article about Mr. Iacocca. I fully agree with his comments. The experience is delightful, yet leaves you wondering who is the one being interviewed.

The last information I heard regarding sales of the Iacocca Limited Edition was that all 45 were spoken for. The first sale was made on the night of the reveal where a spirited auction was held immediately following the unveiling.

Auctioneer Drew Donnen began the bidding at \$80,000. Mr. Iacocca offered the winning bidder a private lunch with him as part of the sale. After a dramatic 15 minutes back and forth between two bidders, a third surprise bidder, Steve Sularski, stepped in offering the highest bid—\$125,000. The number six Iacocca Silver Edition Mustang was the first car delivered to a private buyer.

Actual sticker price was not information that I ever had a handle on, but I'd imagine it was in the \$65-\$75,000 range.

Forty-five years after being dubbed "Father of the Mustang," finally Lee Iacocca has an elegantly powerful Mustang bearing his name—keeping the "I" legacy alive.... **MT**



SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINES

- 4.6-liter V8 with 320 HP (Ford Racing Cold Air - under WARRANTY)
- 4.6-liter V8 with 400 HP Supercharger Optional (Ford Racing Supercharger - under WARRANTY)

DRIVETRAIN

- 5-speed manual transmission

SUSPENSION

- Ford Racing Handling
- 14-inch rotor, 4-piston caliper Ford Racing Brake upgrade Optional

WHEELS & TIRES

- Iacocca Design 20" Chrome wheels with "I" Design center cap
- 20 x 9 1/2
- Goodyear Eagle RSA 245 X 45 X R20

INTERIOR

- Iacocca Diamond Design Leather Seats with Embroidery Stitching
- Iacocca Signature Dash Plaque with Serial Number
- Iacocca Leather-Wrapped Steering Wheel with "I" badge
- Iacocca Aluminum Door Still Plates
- Power Windows
- Two Power Outlets
- Variable-Speed Windshield Wipers
- Rear Window Defroster
- Air-Conditioning

EXTERIOR

- Iacocca Design Fastback
- Iacocca Design Hood Emblem
- Iacocca Design Trunk Cap "I" Emblem
- Iacocca Design Trunk Lettering

OPTIONAL FORD RACING AFTERMARKET ACCESSORIES

- 85 MM Cold Air Kit (320HP)*
- Supercharger (400HP)*

* These Aftermarket Accessories can only be installed after the vehicle sale is finalized and the vehicle is delivered to customer.

