

PEGASUS TAKES FLIGHT



Text and Photos by Bob Seawell

This is a mostly home-built, highly customized '66 Mustang. It is a one-of-a-kind creation and we are proud of what we have created. With Lambo doors, the roadster has been nick named Pegasus, and man, can this horse fly.

Having spent a lot of time on various race tracks when I was younger, I wanted to build a car that could hold its own on a road course, auto cross, or drag strip, and be a nice driver for the street. We drive the Mustang every chance we get. Nearly everything has been changed, updated, or modified except the windshield and bumpers. It's a blend of old school performance and modern upgrades.

The project was done on a small budget with the car and most of the parts being purchased on eBay, or local salvage yards. Living in the Sacramento area, there are quite a few Mustang part suppliers and speed shops to call on for hard-to-find items. The car was originally a 6-cylinder, purchased on eBay. The previous owner had already started making a few body modifications, so we decided to build a custom restomod. With my wife's support (permission), we cleared out some room in our garage, and over the next three years performed a complete nut-and-bolt restoration as we modernized and customized everything on the car, except for the bumpers and the windshield. The Mustang was also driven most of the time between the various updates.

I have owned 36 Mustangs and three Shelbys over the last 35 years and I like to keep it all in the Ford family, so most of the updated parts were from newer model Ford products. Under the hood, the factory shock towers, suspension, and steering were removed and replaced with more modern Mustang II components. It now features a fun-to-drive home-built stroked 347 ci engine with a modern Ford Racing 5-speed manual transmission. The engine was assembled in my garage by my

teenage sons and nephew (with my supervision) who wanted to learn how to work on cars. They also helped with the body tear down and coating the undercarriage and interior in Por-15 sealer, sound proofing, and reassembly of the suspension and brakes. Now they know enough to work on their own future Mustang projects.

The car has 4-wheel power disc brakes with SS hoses, and power rack & pinion steering. I added vacuum, fuel pressure, tachometer, and O2 gauges under the hood in a custom-made firewall panel for easy tune-ups and fine tuning of the carburetor. I hid all of the brake lines and electrical wires by running them under the fenders and enlarged the radiator opening for a larger 1990 GT radiator. The interior features custom ordered carpet and door panels. We cut out the ashtray area and added a custom made center console with a 7-inch DVD, TV, GPS, stereo. I relocated the parking brake handle to the center console. It has push button start, and custom, white-faced dash gauges. I removed the factory dash pad and covered the dash in leather.



The lightweight racing seats have four-point seat belts for safety.

I always like to personalize my cars, no matter what type of car or truck it may be. When it came to this car, I went a little wild on the body. At first we were happy with a slightly custom four seat V8 convertible, but after a year or so, I felt a need to do something different. After seeing a good deal on some Lambo door hinges on eBay, I got the crazy idea to turn it into a 2-seat roadster with Lambo doors. Against the advice of my kids and friends, we tore it all apart again and sent it off to be media blasted. The door handles, locks, and emblems were all shaved and filled in. We even removed all side windows and welded in the window channels and openings. We removed the convertible top and the back seat where we welded in a 4-point roll bar for added safety and body stiffening, and we covered the back seat area with a custom tonneau cover and added the stainless steel roll bar humps. This is now a permanent two-seat, open-cockpit roadster. We added a fiberglass hood and front valance and I had custom grilles made to fit. We designed the graphics and ghost stripes that were expertly applied by our painter Steve Gonzales of RedStar Custom Auto Body in Sacramento, CA, to stay in the same Ford family paint scheme. The hood and side stripes are a modified version of Boss 302 stripes and the graphics on the rear seat cover resemble the side air vents on a 1965-'66 Mustang fastback. The undercarriage has been stiffened up and has a HD Lincoln 9-inch Posi rear end with disc brakes. The tires keep their traction on the ground with welded under rider traction bars. The front end has a polished billet, coil over, Mustang II-type suspension with an oversized sway bar. Customizing the car has been challenging, rewarding, and enlightening. It has truly turned into a labor of love. The custom trunk and interior was reupholstered by Jims Custom Upholstery in Folsom, CA.

My wife and I have a blast driving it on the weekends and it draws attention everywhere we go. We're always being told that it looks fast, just sitting still, or asked "does it Fly" when the doors are opened. It's fun to hit the electronic exhaust cutout button whenever someone pulls up besides us and wants to race to the next light. Usually the sound of the engine's open headers revved up is enough to make them concede any thoughts of getting there before me. Then we close up the exhaust and drive away under the speed limit.

The car is never trailered and we recently won the "Best Workmanship" and best custom at Mustangs Plus annual car show and took first place at the Sacramento Autorama in the highly customized convertible class, a fact that we are quite proud of. **MT**



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