



LAP 38—IT'S TRAILER TIME

Enjoying your Mustang out on the road where it belongs is something Mustang Club of America members have been doing for years. The excellent standards set by the MCA in the various judged classes produce some incredible Mustangs that are correct in every detail, right down to orange peel in the paint. The proud owners spend countless hours perfecting their Mustangs and it's understandable why they would want to minimize potential road rash and trailer their cars to the event. There are other reasons to trailer your ride: reliability, security, and lastly maybe your Mustang isn't street legal because it's your dedicated track car.

There are many things to consider when trailering your Mustang and since the tow vehicle determines if you can use a gooseneck or bumper tow design let's briefly describe the substantial difference. If you've never pulled a large gooseneck trailer it's hard to imagine without experiencing first hand. In a gooseneck design, the load is centered directly over the rear axle which minimizes the influence the trailer can have on the tow vehicle. In a bumper tow design, the distance from the center of the rear axle to the trailer ball creates a moment arm that amplifies the effect the trailer can have on the tow vehicle. We routinely trailer two cars in a gooseneck trailer loaded with spares to races more than a 1,000 miles away and it's easy to forget the trailer is back there. It's just that good. If you can afford a gooseneck trailer buy one. If not, buy the largest bumper pull you can afford because we're going to load it up with stuff shortly.

Before we load it up, let's talk about two types of popular enclosed bumper pull trailer designs, flat nosed and V-nosed. Originally designed for aerodynamic advantage, the V-nose design should also be considered for the increased storage area achieved without lengthening the frame. This is accomplished by utilizing the existing front A-frame created by the bumper tow design. Because it's a V shape and not square, the V-nose design appears at first glance to provide negligible additional useful space. But, try comparing it to a flat nose design and where you'll notice significant unused space in the V shaped area between the hitch and front wall that is inside the V-nose design. This additional area is great for storing fuel jugs, portable coolers, folding tables, hanging clothes and best of all it's free.

A good place to start the trailer layout is with the bulkiest items carried to the track, your spare tires. Whether using an open or closed trailer a good tire rack will greatly simplify the operation and improve your race weekend. Try to keep the tire rack located such that either it or the vehicle can be loaded or unloaded independently. In an open trailer, a good tire rack located in the front provides both ease of use and protection

for your car. In enclosed trailers, it's popular to use fold down racks mounted high on the sides locating the tires above your car. Some racers have found this to be a problem after arriving at the destination to find the rack and tires laying on the damaged car. A better idea is to stack your tires along the side of the trailer and strap them to the wall where the potential for damage to the vehicle is minimized.

Tool storage, while important, is probably secondary to tool access. It is common to see racers jumping in and out of the trailer all weekend retrieving needed tools when a simple cart could solve the problem. Try to design a system that gets your most common tools located outside the trailer and close at hand. You'll probably want to include an air pressure gauge, lug nut socket, torque wrench, glass cleaner and towels on this cart.

At the track, the trailer is your home base. Storage, work, rest, relaxation and new friendships all occur in the pits near the trailer. It's a good idea to include a few convenience items that will make the area more inviting and useful. A couple of folding tables for use both inside and outside the trailer are helpful. You'll appreciate the convenience of having a combination work and storage surface available that keeps things off the ground and accessible. If you have an

enclosed trailer, install a few hangers inside for hanging extra clothes, your driving suit and helmet.

One more thing, an inexpensive battery-powered clock is useful for making grid and a wall thermometer keeps everyone honest when commenting on just how hot it really is outside!

Next lap.

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Charlie Jones, a.k.a.

Roadracer

