

The news for November is that the "In Search of Mustangs project has discovered a new candidate for the earliest production Mustang. And, fittingly, it resides in Georgia, headquarters state for the MCA. The car carries warranty number 5F08F100006 and a date code indicating its construction on March 5, 1964.

The car also has a DSO of 840027, which means "Home Office Reserve." In other words, Ford kept this very early production Mustang for their own use, perhaps as a car show unit or, in view of the car's condition today, as a test vehicle of some kind. In fact, if it were not for the fact that there was no federal crash test required in 1964, we'd say that's just what it had been: a crash test car. In a word, the car when found was a complete wreck, as befitting its years in a junkyard. The photos here should tell the story about the sorry condition.

The lucky locaters (and now owners of this prize) are Ed White and Toby Hildabrand of the Georgia region. The car is pretty close to unrestorable by most viewers' reckoning, with not only extensive rust damage but having been stripped to the bone as well. However, Ed and Toby are taking the challenge and have begun restoration of this diamond in the rough. We wish them luck and hope they will keep us informed of their progress.

As a recap, we will list the earliest Mustangs in the project to date. The very earliest is 5F08T383386, which was built on February 15, 1964. "Wait a minute," you say, "isn't February 15th earlier than March 5th?" Of course, it is, but we claimed that Ed and Toby's car is the earliest *production* unit now listed. The February car is a *prototype* unit, built to test tooling and parts fit, and to provide show units and material for the styling department to begin work on future models. Almost all of a company's prototypes can be expected to remain in their hands, at least in the beginning, and this was true

of 5F08T383386, as evidenced by its DSO of 84 (Home Office Reserve). This car's high consecutive unit number (383386) tells us that it was the 283,386th car built on the 1964 model line in Dearborn. Wouldn't it be interesting to find a picture of these prototypes being built in between 1964 models?

This very earliest of all Mustangs is owned by Gary Schweitzer of Michigan and is presently undergoing restoration. It was displayed at the 1964 New York World's Fair.

Now the second earliest production unit, but previously our first, is Jack Cornely's 5F08F100122, also manufactured on March 5, 1964. Evidently



Ford took their units off the front of the line on the 5th, for this car has a DSO of 26, which deciphers to a delivery in the Washington, D.C. district. One of the interesting things which we can tell from the discovery of this new earliest production unit that was built on the same day as the former earliest is that on the 5th of March the Dearborn line had already begun to get up to speed. We now can say that Dearborn produced *at least* 116 cars on that day. Remember, Mustangs were built on the same line as the Falcons and Fairlanes, so we can't say that 116 Mustangs were built that day. As we accumulate more and more data we might be able to say that every fifth car was a Mustang, or every fourth. This is the kind of thing we can do as our statistical base grows and is another reason for urging all of you

reading this today to send in your warranty plate information.

A fantastic example of what we can do if we try is given by Al DeYoung of Illinois. Al works at a local Ford dealer and has access to the new car delivery files for that dealer for the 1964-68 period. Evidently Al kept himself busy over the summer combing through those files for he recently submitted complete information on nearly *four hundred cars!* They range from 1964½ models through early 1968 Mustangs, including many 1967s listed as Sprint and Sport Sprint models.

This dealer is in the midwest and it is therefore somewhat surprising to find quite a few 1966 and later Metuchen, New Jersey, built Mustangs in the sales roster. The concentration of Mustangs from the Metuchen plant is highest in the 1967 model year, while 1965 was exclusively Dearborn units and 1966 was a mixture of Dearborn with a few Metuchen cars. Beginning in 1967, Al's dealer received a few cars constructed at San Jose, too.

Another thing is that these cars sported DSOs from a number of different districts. It is becoming obvious that Ford assigned the DSOs on the basis of initial production and delivery schedules and was not at all hesitant about letting the sales branch redirect, say, a Washington DSO car to Atlanta if they needed the cars and Washington didn't. Dealers have been known to swap cars around as well, so one should put too much emphasis on the DSO code if it is not a "Home Office Reserve", "Ford of Canada," etc.

Again, we make our monthly plea: please send us your warranty plate information. Response from local and national officials, as well as regional groups as a whole, continues to be very, very disappointing. What can we do to get all of you to support your *club's* project?

Of course, thanks to all of you who have done so!