

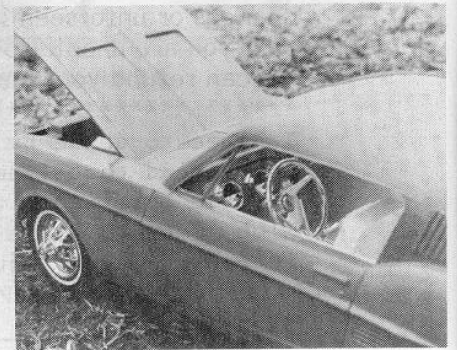
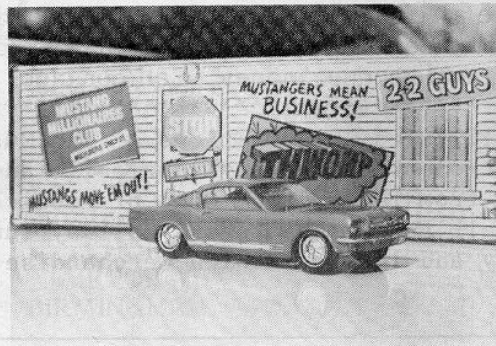
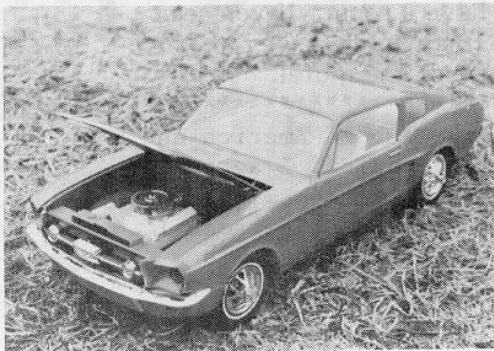
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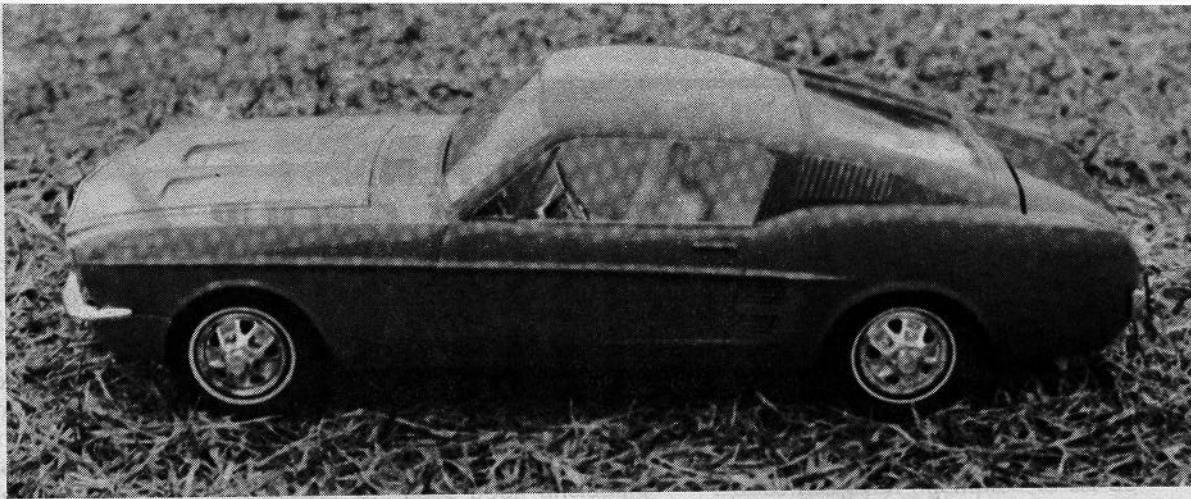
Not So Miniature Mustangs

The Ford Motor Company missed few opportunities to promote the Mustang once they realized the kind of impact it was having upon the American public after its phenomenal introduction in April of 1964. One of the more obscure promotional ploys was the large scale plastic models shown in the accompanying photos. Ford's marketing experts knew very well that these models would help create Ford buyers in the future, aimed as they were at the young of non-car buying age. It is certain that a few were sold to "children" who were of car-buying years, too!

These models were the products of a company called AMF-WEN MAC in Los Angeles, California, a firm which went out of business in 1968. Virtually nothing is known about the volume or distribution of production of these "miniatures." No history is available, and other than the name of the manufacturer, little else concrete is known either.

The 16 inch plastic replicas were advertised in national magazines, *Ford Times*, and through dealer display posters. All of the ads suggested that the models would be ideal Christmas gifts and available only for a limited time through Ford dealers. The background in the photos is one of the post-





ers that was used in the promotion of the 1966 models. The 1967 units most probably were supported by a similar poster.

The 1966 GT model pictured is Poppy red in color and is driven by a rear mounted electric motor powered by two C batteries. The car even features forward and reverse speeds! The interior is black plastic with vacuum-aluminized "chrome" dash and shift lever. The doors are non-opening but the hood is hinged and functional to allow access to the replica plastic V-8 engine. Head, tail, and dash lights work through the principle of "edge-lighting." The car's direction can be controlled for left or right turn at the front axle. An .049 cid gas engine and racing slicks were offered as a conversion kit for competition purposes. These original models were priced at \$4.95 each at your friendly local dealer!

The 1967 2+2 in Brittany blue followed the same basic design but carried a white interior. A customizing kit was available this year which included a rear view mirror, antenna, hood scoop, side scoops, personalizing initials, decals for GT stripes and racing stripes, and license plates. Included in each garage-style box was a driver's license to be filled in by the young owner and

an order form for the .049 gas engine. Price of the 1967 models was \$5.95.

These are very large models compared to the usual plastic model kit. Common automotive model scales are 1/32 and 1/24, with a few 1/16 and 1/12 scale models. These Mustang models compute out somewhere close to 1/8 scale. Surprisingly enough, the large size was not used to make the models particularly super-detailed, again, as compared to normal model standards, even those of that time. Regardless of this nit-picking, the models do serve as fairly good representations of the cars they aim to portray.

The rarity of these units is dictated by the facts that they were sold only through Ford dealers, and that they were meant to be played with as toys, not kept on some collector's shelf, and consequently were broken at a high rate. Either model is hard to find in any condition, but of the two, the 1966 GT seems to be the scarcest.

After the obvious flea markets and national car publications, which occasionally will have one or the other of the miniatures buried in some ad, another possible source that is often overlooked is an ad in the local media, for example, your daily paper. My first ad produced two GTs and a 2+2! These were not in

very good condition, but were an excellent source of parts. Regardless of where you find them, any models (that is, unless they are NOS, you lucky dog) models probably will need parts. Thus, finding one in any condition at all is cause for rejoicing.

More often than not, these Mustang miniatures will surface in the most unexpected places. I purchased my first one from a "it's not for sale" owner. When confronted with this problem, I kept increasing my bid by increments of \$25 until the owner felt he had a "Godfather" deal. After buying this NOS first one, I ran into another, more personal problem with it, one which I did not anticipate in my wildest thoughts. The problem was that I had a very difficult time justifying the price I had paid for the GT to my wife because she thought the things were a dime a dozen. After all, didn't her son have an identical, though admittedly not NOS, one in his closet? He certainly did, as his grandmother had given it to him for Christmas back in 1966! As I said, these models turn up in the most unexpected places!!

Ron Alcott
Groton, Massachusetts

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