



## Rogers' Mighty Mach I

By Josie Knowles

Working in a world where beautiful cars are commonplace and near-perfection is almost a norm, you come to believe there will never be another car to make you catch your breath and intone softly, involuntarily, almost reverently, "Wow!"

Then you visit the home of John and Elizabeth Rogers and their son, Johnny. You walk through the colorful, superbly decorated main floor, down a short flight of basement stairs, and then it happens.

Wow! The Mach I knocks your eye out.

Maybe its the incredible metallic gleam of Acapulco blue; perhaps its the enormous appeal of the body style. But

I think its more that you know, under that crazy hood, lies sleeping the secret power of a million erstwhile drags.

Officially called a "1969 Mach I with 428 CID 4V Super Cobra Jet Ram Air V8," the Rogers' Mustang has seen worse days. A few years ago, its permanent residence was behind a chicken barn in Lithonia, Georgia.

"Someone had sold off most of the high performance parts," said John, "but there was more than enough left to make it a good buy at \$600. That's what the man wanted, and that's what I gave him. I knew I could make \$1000, just selling off the parts.

"When I started to drive it, a rod was knocking real bad, but I figured I could

make it home. I was wrong. Johnny was following me in his car, and I had to send him for the pick-up, so we could tow the Mach I home."

John and Johnny began the task of disassembling the parts, preparing to sell them.

One day, Don Cumbie, a neighbor who works in the body shop at Stone Mountain Ford, came in and said he'd like to take the car — now a parted-out hull — to the body shop and see about painting it.

Don kept the car three months. He got the body in good shape and painted it. One day, John went down to look at it.

"That's the day I decided. I said to

myself, 'I'm going to keep that thing!'" said John.

Then began the real work. From February through June of 1980, John and Johnny painstakingly re-assembled the Mach I in their basement. They cranked it up the end of June, their father-son relationship all the better and closer for the shared project.

John did extensive work on the engine, including detailing. A lot of parts were missing, and he got these from FoMoCo. The interior was not too bad; only the dash and carpet were replaced.

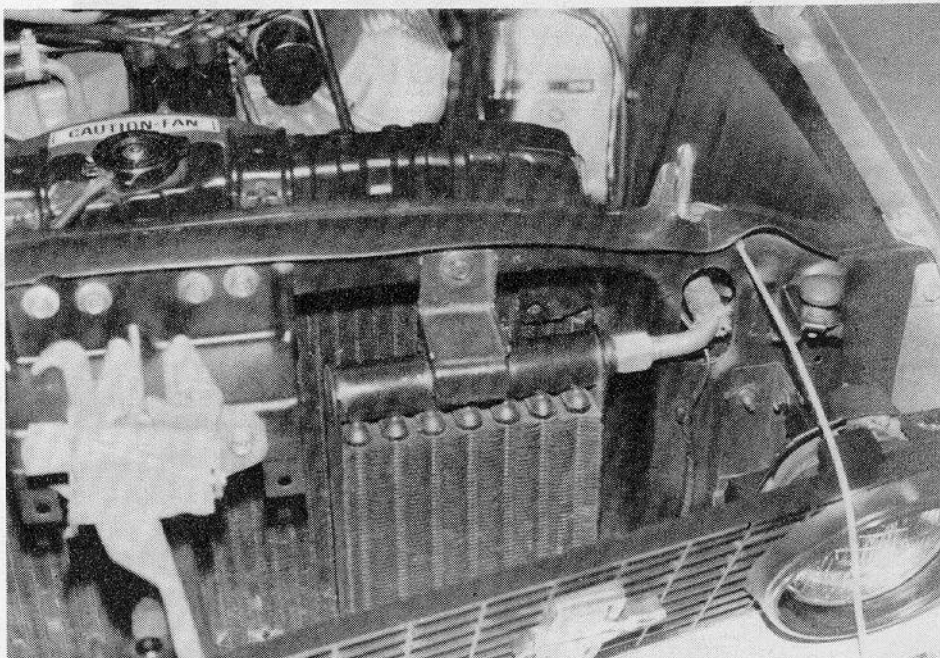
John, who is in the publications section of the U.S. Forest Service's Office of Information, and Johnny, who is just completing his second year at DeKalb Community College, where he is a Dean's List student, plays basketball and majors in Business Administration, like to show their car, but enjoying it is more important to them than winning prizes.

"If I want to compete nationally, there're some things we need to do to contend. But doing them would take too long; we enjoy taking the car out for a spin too much to keep it down that long," said John, and Johnny laughingly agreed, adding that everytime he takes the Mach I cruising to nearby Stone Mountain, it draws an admiring crowd.

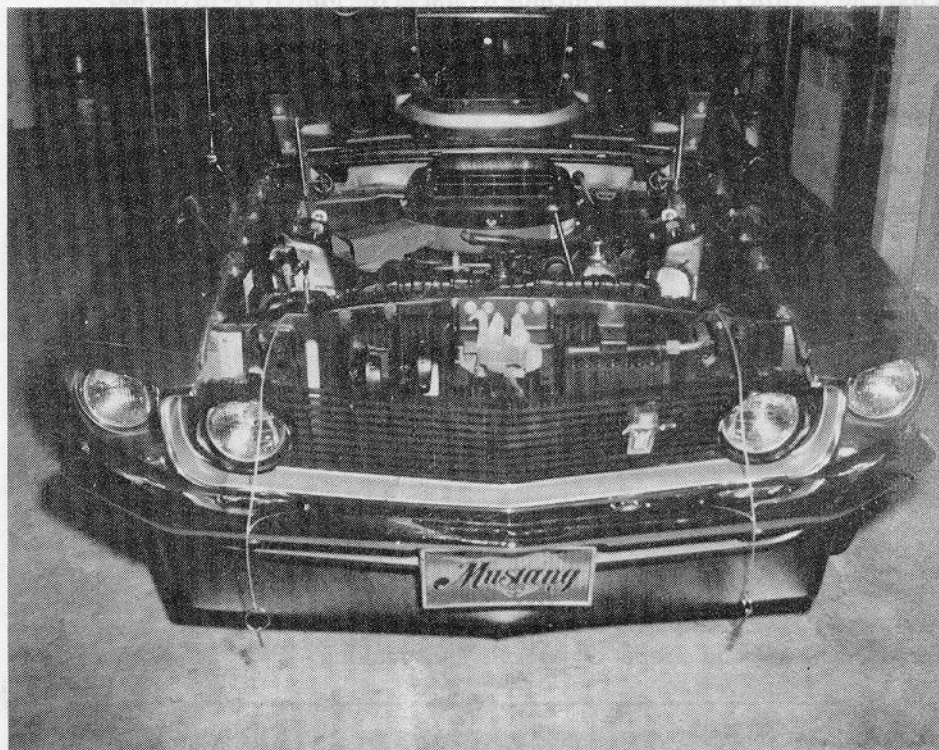
The Rogers figure they have in it just about what the Mach I cost new in 1969. That is exactly \$3,746.43. It is interesting to speculate about how much such a car would cost today, if one were produced.

The Rogers were giving a party the evening of the afternoon I interviewed them. Their tasteful home, located on a wooded tract of land in Redan (near Atlanta), Georgia, was immaculate. Attractive, blond Elizabeth, who is Registrar at Clarkston High School and who thought her husband and son were "completely crazy when they paid \$600 for that old car," was arranging party goodies in the dining room.

As I left, the thought struck me that, if the Rogers took their guests downstairs for a peek at the Mighty Mach, this was one party that definitely wouldn't end up in the kitchen.



Part of the Mach I's Drag Pac is the external oil cooler, mounted in front of the radiator.

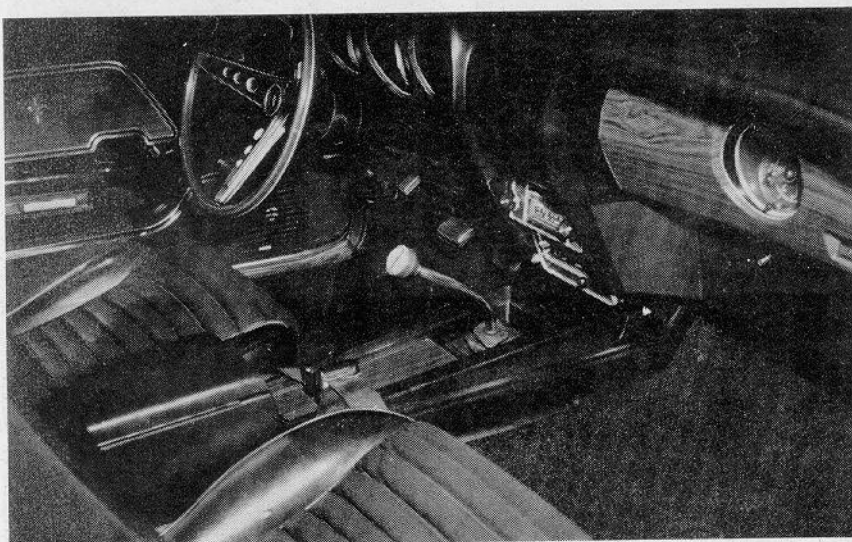


Mach I is equipped with Drag Pac 428 Super Cobra Jet Engine, Ram Air "Shaker" hood scoop, 3.90:1 ratio Traction Lok differential, four-speed top loader close ratio transmission, external oil cooler, staggered shocks.





The Rogers' Mach I at Wade Ford Show in Atlanta last July where it won First Place. Other recent wins include a First at the March 11-13 Spring Invitational Mustang Show, hosted by the Scenic City Mustang Club, in Chattanooga, Tenn.



Interior was in good shape, comparatively speaking.

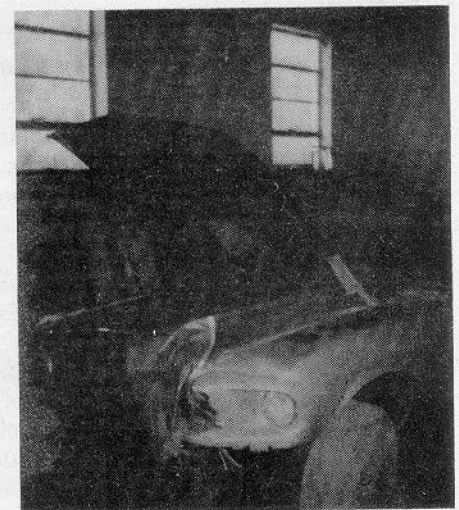
#### MIGHTY MACH I STATISTICS

**ID Number: 9F02R200844. Warranty Data: body, 63C; color, 65; trim, 3AA; date, 21E; D.S.O., 33; axle, V; trans, 6.**

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Engine, re-assembled and painted, in Rogers' basement.



When the Rogers found the Mach I in Lithonia, it was decked out in grey primer paint. It is shown here in the body shop of Stone Mountain Ford.