



FUTURE CLASSICS?

BY
Jim Smart

Little did many of us realize back in the days of crew cuts, sneakers, whitewalls and beach party movies that the new Ford Mustang would be such a collectable car one day about 15 years up the road.

So many people today in 1982 say to me, "Yeah, I used to have a '65 Mustang convertible, traded it in on a Chevy Camaro in 1967" or "Boy, I wish I'd never traded off my ol' yellow '66 convertible . . . Just breaks my heart, you wanna sell that Mustang?"

About 90% of these people never realized just how popular the mid and late '60 Pony Cars would be in years to come.

Mustang popularity has varied much since its introduction in 1964. In the mid sixties, Mustangs were selling like hot cakes, and people were beating down the doors of Ford Dealers all over the globe to get their hands on one.

We've heard all the stories, some humorous, some tragic, of people that were so taken with FOMOCO's new brainchild, that very strange things took place. One such story involves a truck driver in San Francisco. The driver in question was so taken with the sight of a Mustang on a showroom floor that he drove right in, literally! Not to mention one Mustang owner who slept in his new Mustang to be sure it was not sold out from under him. These are just a few of the many Mustang war stories in existence.

Mustang popularity faded a bit on the showroom floors as 1970 neared, and even the used car lots were not selling Mustangs as fast as they did in previous years. People were buying Camaros and Firebirds and Mustang's Mercury cousin, Cougar. In the early 1970's, Mustangs could be had for next to nothing. You could pick up a fair condition 1965-68 Mustang for \$400 or less, and if it were really rough, \$150!

I myself picked up a '65 Mustang hardtop from a friend entering the service in 1975 for ("Make me an offer, Jim"). \$30!!! He was in a hurry to sell. Just kidding, I said, "\$30.00,"

and he took it. After all, it was just an ol' Mustang, right? I sold it for \$150.00 (tears!) Used Mustang popularity through the mid 1970's was good, but people would not pay a big price for them. My father picked up a '67 Hardtop (your run of the mill 65A 289 2V automatic, heater and AM radio special) for \$400. That was the general area, price wise, that you could expect to pay for a mid sixties Mustang in 1974.

As the late 1970's rolled in, and catalytic converters became as commonplace on showroom floors as 440 inchers in the sixties, people's interest began to turn to the past and older "classics." High interest rates and smogged out automobiles pushed people to turn to what was tried and proven. Some turned to the old Firebirds and Camaros, but far more have turned to the Original Pony Car, our beloved Mustang. Mustang value and popularity have skyrocketed since 1977. Now, in 1982, finding a really good buy on a Mustang is not easy, but they still exist.

I look at the new 1982 Mustangs and wonder if they are the "classics" of tomorrow. The new 302 H.O. GT Mustang for 1982 is a step in the right direction for Ford, and many of us are pleased to see the words "Performance and High Output" back in Detroit's vocabulary. Looking back into the 70' and the COBRA II for 1976, is this a collector car of the future? How about the 1979 Mustang Indy Pace Car Replica. You can bet the two just mentioned will be collector cars on day. The latter is a popular item, even today.

The 1966-81 Carroll Shelby GT-350 Convertibles (12 built) are a very popular item right now, but mostly out of anyone's price range. These Mustangs, you'll not see in heavy circulation, but their value will do nothing but, GO UP! Very few people will ever really get to see one. These 12 Shelby convertibles are an afterthought on Mr. Shelby's part, and built only last year, it just goes to show, a little bit of the "Performance Years" still lives!