

*A Birthday-Christmas Present that Keeps on Giving*

## Teresa Vickery's Mach I

By Josie Knowles

Teresa Vickery is an attractive enough young lady that she doesn't mind your knowing her age, and she will tell you quickly that she received her 1972 MACH I as a sixteenth birthday present.

Actually, she got the MACH I for Christmas, just after she turned sixteen in October.

"Mama and Daddy had hidden the keys under the Christmas tree," Teresa explains. In her yellow pre-registration 1982 Eastern National T-shirt and blue jean cut-offs, she sits on a leather ottoman in her pleasant living room and gets excited all over again, remembering that Christmas morning.

"I saw the keys, but I wasn't going to let them know I saw them," she laughs, "I just kept looking at my other presents and ignored the keys. But when they left the room, I grabbed the keys and ran outside. I started hollering when I saw the car, but I was afraid to start it. They heard me hollering and came outside, and Daddy started it for me."

Did she know she was going to get the MACH I for Christmas? Sure. She had even boasted to classmates at Gordon High School that, when she returned from Christmas vacation, she would be driving her own car.

"There was a black '71 Daddy wanted to get me, but the dealer wouldn't come down on the price. So, he ordered me a pewter metallic 1972 MACH I with sports interior and the instrumentation group, a 351 engine, four barrel carburetor and dual exhaust. But, when it came, it had a two barrel carburetor and single exhaust. Daddy didn't want it. There was a metallic pewter early 1972 MACH I on the lot. It didn't have the sports interior or the instrumentation group, but it had a four barrel, dual exhaust and a 351 Cobra Jet Cleveland engine. Daddy cranked it up, and he knew from the way it sounded that I would like it."

As she talks, Teresa bounces around, tossing her long dark hair and laughing a lot, her lively personality lighting up her spacious, neat-as-a-pin living room. She is off on her favorite subject

— the sleek 1972 MACH I she has carefully tended and petted for ten years and which has repaid her kindness with nine first place trophies, six of them from national shows.

Before each show, Teresa does most of the work on her MACH I herself, and she comes by her engine expertise naturally. "When I was growing up, Daddy always repaired his own cars, unless it was something major. And I was always right there, helping and pestering him to death. I liked to get out there with him and get all greasy and dirty. When other little girls were playing with paper dolls, I was making model cars, and my idea of a big afternoon was when Daddy took us to the stock car races." Teresa smiles at the good memories.

"Every Sunday, I helped Daddy wash and wax his cars — he always had a Ford and an Oldsmobile — and he's the type who does the job right, washing the engine and everything. I guess that's when I learned to take super good care of a car."

Teresa freely admits that she is, and always has been, "picky" about her car. When she was a teenager, did she take it to the Varsity and let people eat hamburgers in it?

No.

"Mama and Daddy didn't let me have free reign with the MACH I, and I'm glad now. I didn't drive it to school, because I didn't want it to get dinged up in the parking lot. Very occasionally, I would drag with somebody or other — my car has an unusual 4:11 ratio gear in the rear end that makes it great for dragging — but I always knew my car was something special, and, if I took good care of it, it would be worth money someday."

What about Bob Vickery, long suffering Head Judge of MCA? When did she meet him, and what did he think of the MACH I?

Teresa laughs again at fond memories. "Bob was in my home room at Gordon. When I first met him, he had just moved to Decatur from California, and he had long hair and wore big

sunglasses and drove a beat-up white 1965 Mustang convertible with big wide tires and a jacked-up back end. I really didn't like him. He thought I was too particular about my car." Another laugh. "He still does."

But, as time passed, Teresa and Bob became friends. Then more. They graduated from Gordon and went on to DeKalb Community College together. In May, 1975, they were married.

After Teresa graduated at 18 from DeKalb, she went to work for IRS. (Imagine, a nice person like Teresa!) Quickly, she was promoted several times and spent five years in IRS' downtown Atlanta office.

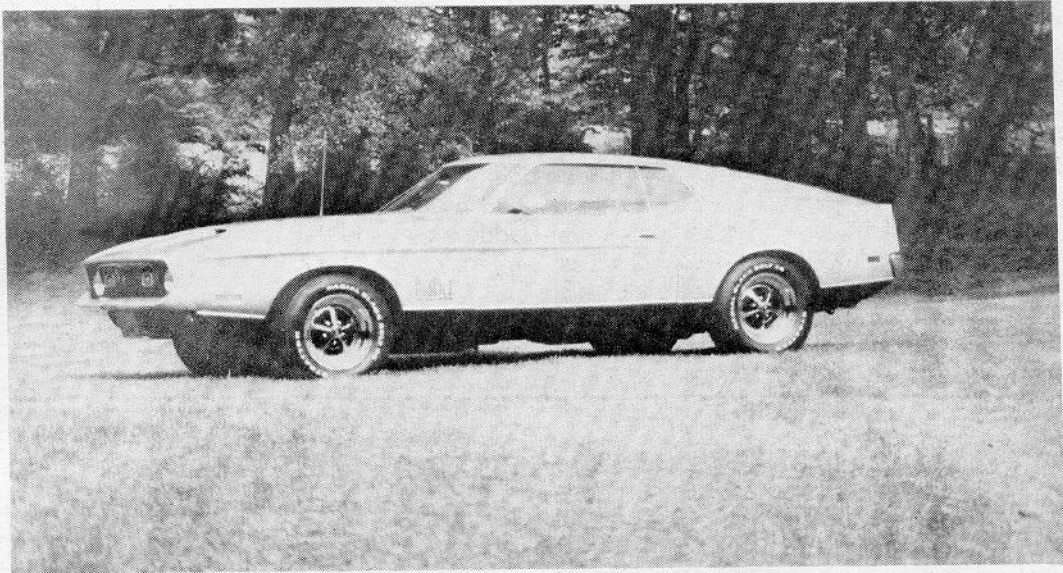
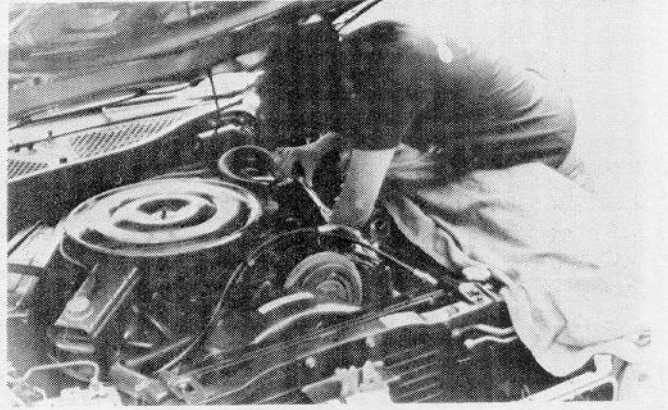
The price of gas was going up, and when Teresa and Bob moved from their Clarkston apartment to Teresa's grandparents' former home in Lithonia in 1976, she began driving the Vickerys' other car — a 1976 Oldsmobile Cutlass Salon — to work, and the MACH I began just "sitting up."

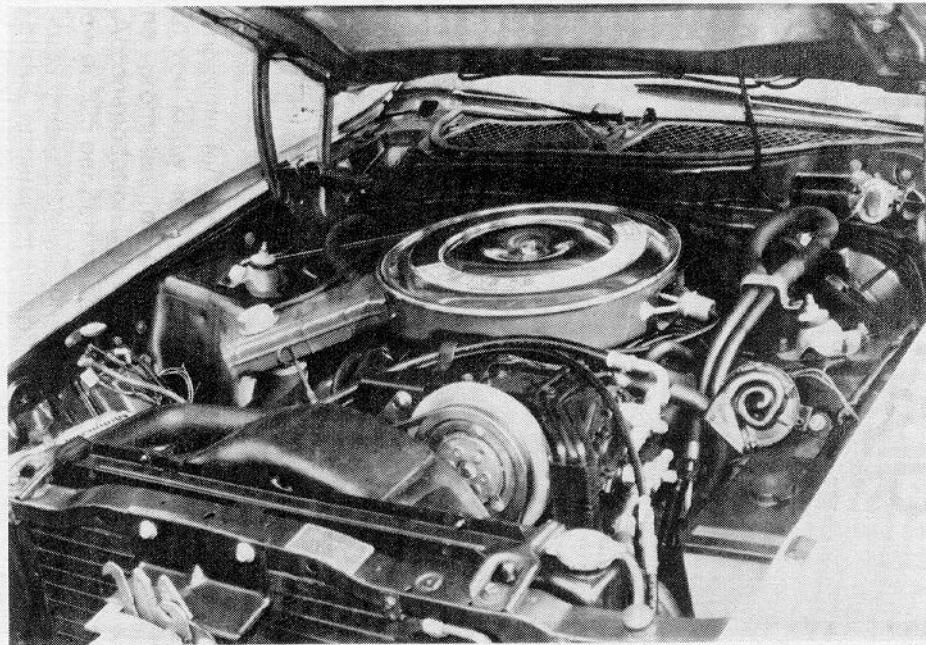
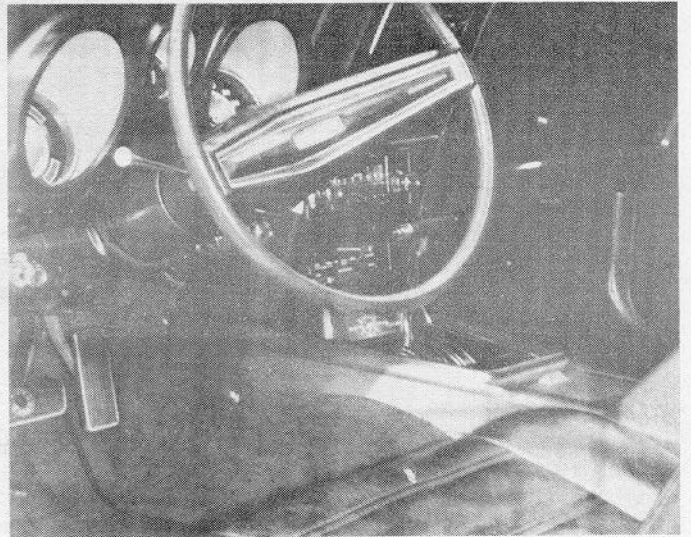
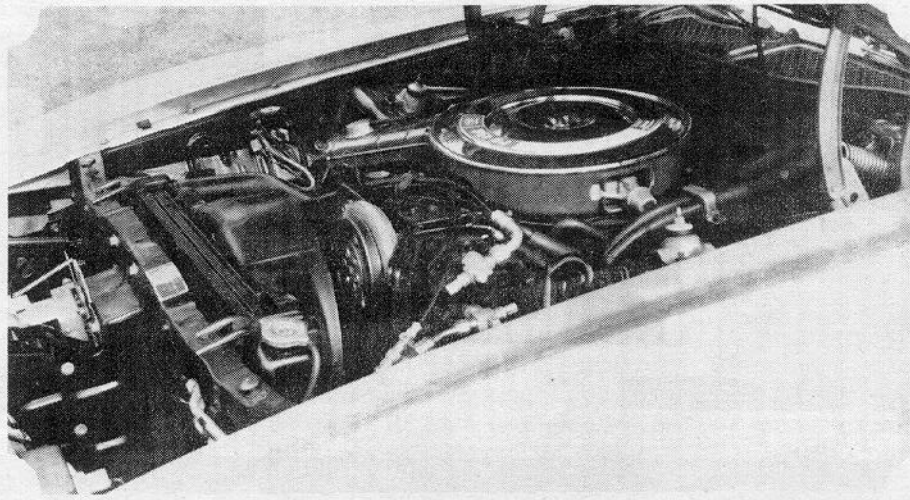
"It had been rear-ended, and it looked awful," Teresa smiles ruefully. "I really felt bad about the whole thing. I used to go out to the garage and talk to it."

Around this time, Bob was buying parts for his various cars from Gus Winchester at his Pine Lake Auto Parts store. One day, when Bob was in the shop, Gus mentioned that he had seen Teresa's MACH I on "Mustang Row" (Lithonia's Stepheson Road where the Winchesters, the Vickerys, Jim and Brenda Wilson, and Arnold and Jerry Teasley, Teresa's parents, all live and must have thirty Mustangs between them; although, at the time, they were unaware of their shared interest.)

Gus told Bob about the Mustang Club and an up-coming show to be held at Perimeter Mall. He suggested that they enter Teresa's MACH I.

"We just cleaned it up, and it took third place. Probably the reason it did so well was because the interior was perfect and original, except for an FM radio I had added. They took points off for that.







"I was really surprised at winning a trophy. We joined the club, and I set out to find out what needed to be done to my car to make it a first place winner." More smiles. Good memories again.

Teresa began the work on her car; Bob helped her. The engine compartment had to be re-done and re-detailed. The under carriage had to be cleaned. The body was straightened and painted. The MACH I never took another third. From then on, it was First Place Only, beginning with the 1980 Eastern National in Knoxville.

Teresa and Bob became stalwart members of MCA, serving on the Board of Directors and in various other capacities. They are the kind of loyal, hard working, "grass roots" members who are not afraid to tackle the difficult jobs or to put forth the extra "beyond the call of duty" effort that lies behind

MCA's fantastic growth and success. Good humored and cordial, the Vickers have been called by other members "MCA's ambassadors of great good will."

Being the energetic kind of person she is, Teresa goes full tilt in her double role of MCA Office Manager and Advertising Manager of *Mustang Times*. She knows and likes everybody, and everybody knows and likes her.

"I enjoy knowing and working with Mustang people," Teresa says. "There are a lot of members who do whatever they can to help fellow members. Like Doug Owen. There was a lot of work, more than I could do alone, that needed to be done on my car before the Eastern National this year, and Bob was too tied up in business to have the time to help me. Doug Owen came down with a truck and trailer and

hauled my MACH I and me to Knoxville. We worked on that car one whole weekend, and then he brought the car and me back home."

Nestled far from the road on the large acreage tract that has been in Teresa's family for years, the Vickers' home shows the same TLC as does Teresa's MACH I. All around are special touches — her Elvis decanters and other memorabilia of him, hand-done ceramic animals and wildlife wall prints, the old piano and the bright powerful stereo, an "adoption doll", the decor that is, at the same time, both comfortable and stylish, the wide mantel that overflows with huge trophies, the MACH I's addition to the decorating. Each reveals a little of the multi-faceted personality of Teresa Vickery, a living advertisement for MCA and one of its greatest assets.

*A Birthday-Christmas Present that Keeps on Giving*

# **Teresa Vickery's Mach I**



*Photos courtesy of Bob Vickery, who also took photographs of last month's cover car.*

