



Meeting the Boss on holiday

Sounds like a nightmare but for Graham Barrs it turned into a special treat in the Florida sun

WHAT are the chances of coming across two very rare Mustangs owned by the same person when you're on holiday? That was exactly the case when I was in America recently visiting friends in Seminole, a nice area just south of Tampa on the Gulf coast of Florida.

While there I installed some new seats in my friend's wife's car after the originals had fallen victim to the strong Florida sunshine. This car was a red '92 Mustang 5.0 LX convertible Ltd. Edition with a white hood, white 16-inch wheels and white leather seats. A few days earlier while looking round Blue Oval Corral, a Mustang specialist in Clearwater, we spotted a set of seats in very good condition that had come out of a standard 1992 convertible. The only difference was the original seats boasted four-way power adjustment with a switch cut into the leather seat swab and these ones didn't. As all the guts and motors were mounted into the seat runner frame, if we added the switch and swapped the runners it should all work, which it did.

Having finished the swap my friend said he had often seen a nice old Mustang parked up outside a local garage so we set off on a hunt.

For a 24-year-old vehicle, the original interior of the Boss 429 was in excellent condition, proving its 45,000 miles were genuine



A few miles down the road we pulled into a Mobil gas station and outside the workshop was a Grabber blue 1970 Boss 429. We went in and met owner John Daminato who bought the car since 1971 when in Chicago, moving down to Florida in 1974.

The car was very straight and original having covered only 45,000 miles from new and is an all-numbers matching example – the proof being

the original exhaust which had only been replaced a week earlier. The old system was still lying in the corner of the workshop, tin-worm having finally eaten away at the mufflers. The chosen replacement was a stainless steel Magnaflow set-up with a built in X pipe and it seemed to fit really well.



Above: Ford's big block 429 literally fills the engine bay on the Boss



Original except for a respray in Grabber blue

The white interior was in very good condition considering its age. Two more accurate gauges for oil pressure and water temperature had been added as well as a period Sun Tach. The factory fitted 3.91 LSD 9-inch is still working hard. The paint was good – having been resprayed about 15 years ago. The stick-on snakes, fitted to the rear lights, were added many years previously,



When the electric hood is lowered, the windows drop too

and John said he is used to them now. The pop open gas cap is another part he fitted many years ago, as he preferred it to the plain screw type.

When John first came to Florida he ran the car on a local drag strip with low profile race tyres (not slicks) and had run a best of 12.30@126mph! For those not familiar with drag racing that speed is just amazing. Apparently the engine will run well past 7000 rpm, again incredible for a stock big block. The drag strip performance shows just how low the factory quoted power figure of 375bhp was, when in all probability 450 would be more accurate.

As we were leaving, John said he was about



The new Mustang's interior can be tailored to an owner's tastes – this one sports the red interior colour accent package



to pick up his new car the next day – a new 2005 convertible GT – and did I want to come back to see it?

A few days later I returned to John's garage and outside next to the Boss 429 was his new black '05 rag top. It was first convertible I had seen and turned out to be the first privately titled example in the state. The red interior color accent package fitted to this car went really well with the black exterior and soft top, as did the optional 17-inch brightly machined alloy wheels. I was busy snapping away when John came over and asked if I would like to take it for a run! Hell, the things I have to do for the club! The GTs are fetching up to \$5000 over book in Florida, so I have no idea how John managed to get this one at list, but he said he did have to drive way up state to some obscure dealer to get it.

Initial impressions were the car has a lot more room all round than the model it replaces, especially headroom. When you fire it up, the first thing you notice is the exhaust note, it's much louder and throaty than the old model, mostly because the mufflers are now at the very rear with the tailpipes attached directly to them. This example had the new five-speed auto gearbox which shifted

very smoothly. As the car was showing less than 200 miles, I respected the fact it was probably not even run in, but on partial throttle it still went very well. The road-holding and ride felt great, as it should, as the wheelbase is nearly six inches longer than the previous Fox-platformed model. The factory-fitted optional 1000-watt stereo could properly explode a raw egg if you wanted it to. The power roof is much improved over earlier cars and now folds back on itself to cover the mechanism when retracted with the windows dropping automatically when you lower the roof – clever. Overall I was very impressed with the new Mustang – the panel fit and finish both inside and out has improved greatly. It would appear Henry's boys have another success story on their hands as a local dealer told me he had over 180 V8 cars on order with deposits paid and had just found out he was only getting 25 more this year!

To save you asking, no, I haven't ordered a new Mustang and John's Boss is not for sale. He has already turned down six figure offers for it. He seemed very impressed with the copies of *Round Up* I left with him and was surprised how many Mustangs we have in the UK.



Looking fast standing still: the new '05 Mustang GT

Pony book reviews

Mustang Recognition Guide 1965-1973

CALIFORNIA MUSTANG publishes (as well as sells) this, its biggest selling book, and you can see why it is so popular when you first flick through the pages.

Since its debut in the eighties, the guide has become universally renowned as the most comprehensive and authoritative book on classic Mustangs you can get.

Written by such Mustang luminaries as *Mustang Monthly* editor Donald Farr, Larry Dobbs, and Jerry Heasley, the pages are packed with both colour and black and white photos which show exterior and interior detail of all model variations and years. Yes, even Shelbys are included!

The text meticulously outlines features of the various models, types and special editions in each of the years covered, making it an invaluable tool for research, restoration, or the Mustang fact-junky! I personally found the book useful for discovering what parts my '69 sportsroof was missing when I was tidying it up.

I have been able to secure a deal with Highway Classics, the wholesale division of California Mustang, to bring this book into the UK. Although this book usually sells itself, I am offering it to *Round Up* readers at a special price of £12 – a 25% saving over my usual online price.

You can email me at books@mustang.me.uk – make sure you mention this article to get the special price (cheque payments only).

MOCGB member Andy Holten sells a selection of brand new books at discounted prices to other members including manuals, guides, decoders, fact books, gift books etc. All books are much cheaper than the recommended retail price, plus there are many hard-to-find titles sourced directly from California Mustang in the States.

View his website at <http://mustang.me.uk/books> and browse or order online, or you can email Andy direct at books@mustang.me.uk

NB: Further discounts may be available for MOCGB members paying by cheque or cash!

101 Projects for Your Mustang 1964½-1973

PUBLISHED in 2003, '101 Projects' has lots to offer all classic Mustang owners. This book was created 'with the weekend mechanic in mind' and is handily divided into colour-coded sections, from 'maintenance' (e.g. basic lubes and filter changes), through such sections as engine assembly, ignition, fuel, electrical systems, and ending with 'safety, cosmetics and ownership'. The latter section covers useful subjects such as three-point seatbelt installation, rust repair and anti-theft devices.

The book wins over other, older books by the inclusion of modern, off-the-shelf performance and safety features like Pertronix electronic ignition, fuel cells, and even nitrous oxide installation! With over 100 projects packed into just 224 pages, the detail can be a bit lacking in some cases however, and you may need to do more research before getting your hands dirty.

Projects are graded by estimated time to complete, tools and parts required, level of talent you will need (!), the years of Mustang that the project applies to and expected performance gain afterwards. There are over 350 colour photographs to illustrate the products used and procedures outlined in the text.

This book will soon become a firm favourite with UK Mustang owners and is recommended to those looking to tidy up, modernise, personalise or upgrade their ride or indeed any owner who loves tinkering with their classic Mustang but wants to know what products are out there to help them bring their car into the 21st century.