

Another CP Exclusive—

FIRST FULL REPORT ON FORD MUSTANG

COMPETITION

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Spin Ends Chaparral Threat at Augusta

By Brock Yates

AUGUSTA, Ga. — King Cobra driver Dave MacDonald of El Monte, Calif. repulsed a determined charge by Texan Jim Hall in his Chaparral-Chevy and drove off with the victory in the SCCA's 1964 U.S. Road Racing Championship opener at the new Augusta Intl. Speedway.

Inspired by the white form of Hall's Chaparral looming in his rear-view mirror for most of the race, MacDonald toured the banked, unforgiving Augusta circuit at 97.653 mph to win the 156-mile Drivers' Championship event. MacDonald nearly made a clean sweep of the festivities, having led the earlier Manufacturer's Championship 156-miler until he spun on the 35th lap. He finished that one 1:25 behind teammate Ken Miles. Both were driving conventional Cobras, unchanged from the 1963 campaign.

Though a surprising amount of

hot machinery appeared for the program, the Drivers' Championship was never more than a three car race. Hall qualified at 100.8 mph (1:47.2) with MacDonald close behind at 1:48.2. Bob Holbert clocked 1:49.0 in the second King Cobra to fill out the front row.

As starter Jesse Coleman's flag fell against the backdrop of a gray, late-afternoon sky, the Cobras screeched off the line, leaving Hall furiously spinning his wheels in overflow from his fuel tank. As the 28-car field swooped out of sight, Jim was seen charging through the middle of the pack in grim pursuit of MacDonald and Holbert.

Running very smoothly in his Chaparral, which incidentally, has shed its snowplow for a lovely, streamlined beak, Hall steadily gobbled up space between himself and the leaders, picking off Holbert for second place on lap 30 and then striking out after MacDonald. With two laps to go Hall had nib-

bled his disadvantage from 16 seconds to four seconds and appeared to be setting the stage for a rousing stretch run. Then, alas, he overcooked on one of the circuit's many tricky corners and executed two brodie's in the red Georgia clay. He recovered to take second, leaving little doubt among the gathering of 8,000 that the race would have been his, barring the difficulties at the start and at the finish.

PORSCHE SCORE

The under two-liter class was dominated by Elva-Porsches, of which no less than four appeared. Charlie Hayes took seventh overall (yes, this is a big-car race track) and first in class; Hap Sharp was second (9th overall) and George Wintersteen was third (10th overall). Chuck Dietrich ended chances for a four car Elva-Porsche sweep when he made an unrehearsed departure from an ugly series of undulations known locally as "Alligator Gulch." He bent up his car considerably but escaped with a cut arm.

Dietrich was not the only man to succumb to the vagaries of this
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LATE NEWS

● Hot rumor has Chrysler Corp., getting into the sports-type car swim with a high-performance fast-back coupe to be called the Barracuda. The best guess is that it will be Valiant-sized and utilize Chrysler's 273 cubic inch, 180 hp V-8 engine. Look for an official announcement on April 2.

● At the end of CP's scoop on the new Honda Formula I Grand Prix in the last issue, the question was raised about suitable drivers, and the first race appearance for the new V-12. American Honda has signed California's Ronnie Bucknum to fly to Japan to test the new car on March 23 on the Suzuka circuit. At that time he will be considered as one of several drivers, mostly from the U.S., being considered for the team. Indications are that Honda will not be ready for the first 1964 GP at Monaco on May 10.

● British Motor Corporation has announced that the latest versions of the Austin-Healey Sprite and MG Midget will have increased horsepower (up to 59 from 55), wind up windows, new dash board, altered lights, 1098cc displacement, 91 mph top speed, and an increase in price of about \$75. (Roll up windows alone are worth that.)

Long Option List Makes Mustang Car for Grandma or Race Driver

DETROIT—Enough information has leaked out on Ford's new sports-type Mustang for Competition Press to bring you the first complete report on the surprise car of the year.

Probably the biggest and most expensive goof in years occurred when Buhlie Ford, nephew of Henry Ford II, took a Mustang convertible his uncle had loaned his mother, for a little spin and parked it right out in the open in a downtown Detroit parking lot. Before 20-year-old Buhlie got back to the car, the Detroit Free Press had it on film for the biggest automotive scoop in years.

Ford will formally introduce the long-awaited car on April 13 at the New York World's Fair (not at the New York International Auto Show in the Coliseum, April 3-12) and the Mustang is scheduled for dealer showrooms on April 17.

You may remember the cute little Mustang I that was originally shown by Ford at Watkins Glen at the time of U.S. Grand Prix in October 1962. It was a nice little machine with a V-4 Cardinal engine in the rear, two seats, several cute mechanical innovations, and an emblem showing a running horse.

Ford's new Mustang retains the name and the emblem, but that's about all.

The new car is a full 2-door, 4-seater, steel-bodied front-engined car that is being built as a hardtop and as a convertible.

It is built on the same basic dimensions as the Falcon but it is a different, better and better looking car. It's a handsome machine, one of the most pleasing designs to come out of Detroit in years. Good lines, uncluttered, ungimmicked.

In size, with a 108 in. wheelbase, 56 in. track and a 182 in. overall length, the Mustang isn't small. Doing a little comparison, the Corvette is 98-56-175 in the same dimensions, and the Corvair measures 108-54-180. Nor, at a curb weight of 2560 lbs. for the hardtop, is it a lightweight. But it is a fully practical size for the American market and, viewed by itself, seems smaller than it actually is, one of the tests of good design.

In the mechanical department the Mustang becomes even more interesting. There are three basic engines, the 170 cu. in., 6-cyl., 101-hp engine; there is the 260 cu. in. V-8 with 164 hp and there is the 289 cu. in. V-8 with 210 hp. And added to these, of course, is a full list of Cobra options that will bolt right on.

When asked during a press conference if the Mustang would be suitable for road racing, Ford vice president and general manager Lee Iacocca recently stated, "With the optional equipment available, you can do anything you want with the car, from grocery shopping to running LeMans." A sort of "do-it-yourself" car, as it were.

A full range of transmissions is offered to go with the various engines, all the way from the little English Ford 4-speed for the 6-cyl. engine to the 3-speed automatic to go with the V-8s. And there is, naturally, a full-sized 4-speed manual transmission available with the V-8.

Suspension is straight Detroit with A-arms, coil springs, tube shocks and sway bar at the front and traditional beam axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs and tube shocks at the back. The brakes aren't very impressive with a maximum of 250 swept sq. in. available which is only slightly better than a Volkswagen.

But the secret weapon is going to be a competition option list that is expected to include things like disc brakes and independent rear ends that can turn the Mustang into a wild, wild pony.

Wheel sizes will also come with options, 13-in. rims being standard with 14-in. rims optional and you may be sure that wide-base 14-in. rims will be made available.

Performance of the Mustang, depending on the option package, can be anything from mild as your grandmother's Falcon with its 20-sec. in a standing-quarter-mile, down to something in the 14 to 15-sec. bracket with the 289 cu. in. engine. With the mild V-8 and automatic transmission, it should do the standing quarter in about 18 secs.

Top speeds are going to be equally variable depending on the engine, but the aerodynamic shape looks pretty good, and with its relatively low weight, almost any version should see 100 mph and the hotter versions should get closer to 150.

As a sports car for production car racing, which the Mustang will be in 1965, the new Ford should go pretty well in class B Production, along with the 289 cu. in. Corvettes and Jaguar XKEs. With the basic weight starting at over 2500 lbs., there seems little chance that the Mustang is going to stomp on many Cobras.

The price hasn't been announced, one of the few secrets that has been kept. It is expected to be competitive with the General Motors "sporty" line, however, with the basic 6-cyl. Mustang with all syncro 3-speed going for less than \$2500.



Joy ride to downtown Detroit ended with newspaper scoop on new Ford. (Detroit Free Press Photos)