

WHEN THE MUSTANG WAS PRESENTED IN EUROPE it received a great welcome, in a sort of friendly, sceptical manner, by the motoring press. Most of us liked the idea of the car and its styling. On paper its European inspired chassis and suspension seemed fine, but, although we knew that the car had been tested on several occasions, none of us had been on the road with a Mustang. Frankly we were dubious about its possibilities on our roads, as well as its handling and performance, compared to some of our better sports-GT cars.

"It is a nice American gadget," but would it work from our own European point of view? Do not misunderstand me, we have great admiration for many of the US realizations in the big car field, and this year the heavy Ford Galaxie frequently trounced the Jaguars in England in a most convincing manner. But, and there is a "but", up to now no small, practical sports cars had come over to us from America.

It is widely known that Ford is making a great push in Europe, both in sales promotion and in the competition field, their latest move being the purchase of Lola and the hiring of ex-Aston Martin team manager John Wyer. Since the Mustang uses the German Ford Taunus 1500 V-4 engine, it was logical for Ford to show this car in some of the more important European auto shows, and after the recent Frankfurt Show Ford went even further in arranging for test of this car by some of the European journalists. The Mustang operation was carried out in a quick, efficient manner, and on a fine day of October (Thank God, since the Mustang has no top!) I landed at the Stuttgart airport where I found a shiny blue and white, fast looking spyder waiting, surrounded by a crowd of curious Germans. Herr Zenmann from Ford Cologne, in his own improvised English, explained to me that the car was mine until the next day, and that I could go anywhere I wanted with it. Naturally he would keep me company, just in case the car required any servicing along the way, and this was fine with me.

The first thing I discovered when I examined the car was that I was lucky to have come with only two briefcases instead of a suitcase, as the trunk compartment, located above the engine in the rear, had a very limited amount of space. Getting into the Mustang requires suppleness, as you have to sort of sink deeply into the cockpit, but once installed the sitting position is very good. The leather covered seats are built around the frame and are not adjustable. The most suitable driving position is found by using the adjustable steering wheel and the pedals which have an adjustable length by means of a sort of brake lever. It is quick and simple to use. Visibility through the plastic windshield is poor and it is necessary to look slightly above it in order to drive properly. Fortunately the top part of the windshield is slightly curved in such a way that very little wind actually hits you, but I doubt if this arrangement would be as good when it rains.

The general finish of the car is of good quality but quite a few body rattles could be heard during our test, particularly on bad roads. Only one fully running Mus-

tang has been made so far. The body is aluminum, and the car has been used extensively for one year now, which may explain part of that defect. Our readers are familiar with the general data and conception of the Mustang (see December 1962 SCG), so I will not go into too much detail on that. Let me remind you, however, that the Mustang is a rear engined, open sports car only 154 inches long, 61 inches wide and 39 inches high. Its wheel base is 90 inches. The chassis, designed by ex-Aston Martin engineer Roy Lunn, is of the tubular type and makes a very sturdy frame for the car. The car has independent suspension front and rear (double wish bones, telescopic shocks, coil springs and torsion bars) and disc brakes are used in front. The engine is the V-4 1500-cubic centimeter ex-Ford Cardinal, now called the Taunus 12 M. It is a good, compact engine giving 65 horsepower in the TS production version built in Germany, but in the States 89 and 109 DIN hp versions of this engine were developed for the car before it was sent to Europe. A four-speed gear box, operated by an excellent stick shift, is used. This box is mounted behind the engine, which, incidentally, is well up in the

middle of the frame. Steering (2.9 turns from lock to lock) is rack and pinion type and a very good one, too. Ford Germany told me that the Mustang I drove was equipped with the same 65 hp engine used in their Taunus TS. The idea of saying that to the press is a clever one, but after I drove and recorded figures on this Mustang I am convinced that the car had closer to 85 horsepower than 65, these figures, incidentally, being quite common for 1500 cars today.

Curb weight with gas is 1550 pounds which explains why I had such good acceleration figures, but I doubt if they could have been achieved if it had 65 horsepower.

As soon as I started the car and hit the open road I was surprised by the ease with which the Mustang could be driven. The steering is light and pleasant, the quick action gear box is a joy to use, and the pedals are well placed although, unfortunately, there is no real space in which to rest your left foot — which can be tiring after a while. The engine was very peppy, with its liveliness being emphasized by the healthy sound coming from two large exhaust pipes.

As soon as I started along a curvy road I noticed that

in spite of a certain general feeling of lightness over cambered roads, the Mustang is a marvelously handling car, giving a great confidence to its driver, almost immediately. It would follow a very precise line around a curve, and when using brisk steering correction around tight corners, taken at speed, I could hardly make the back break away, and it was only on really bad surfacing that the car felt jumpy.

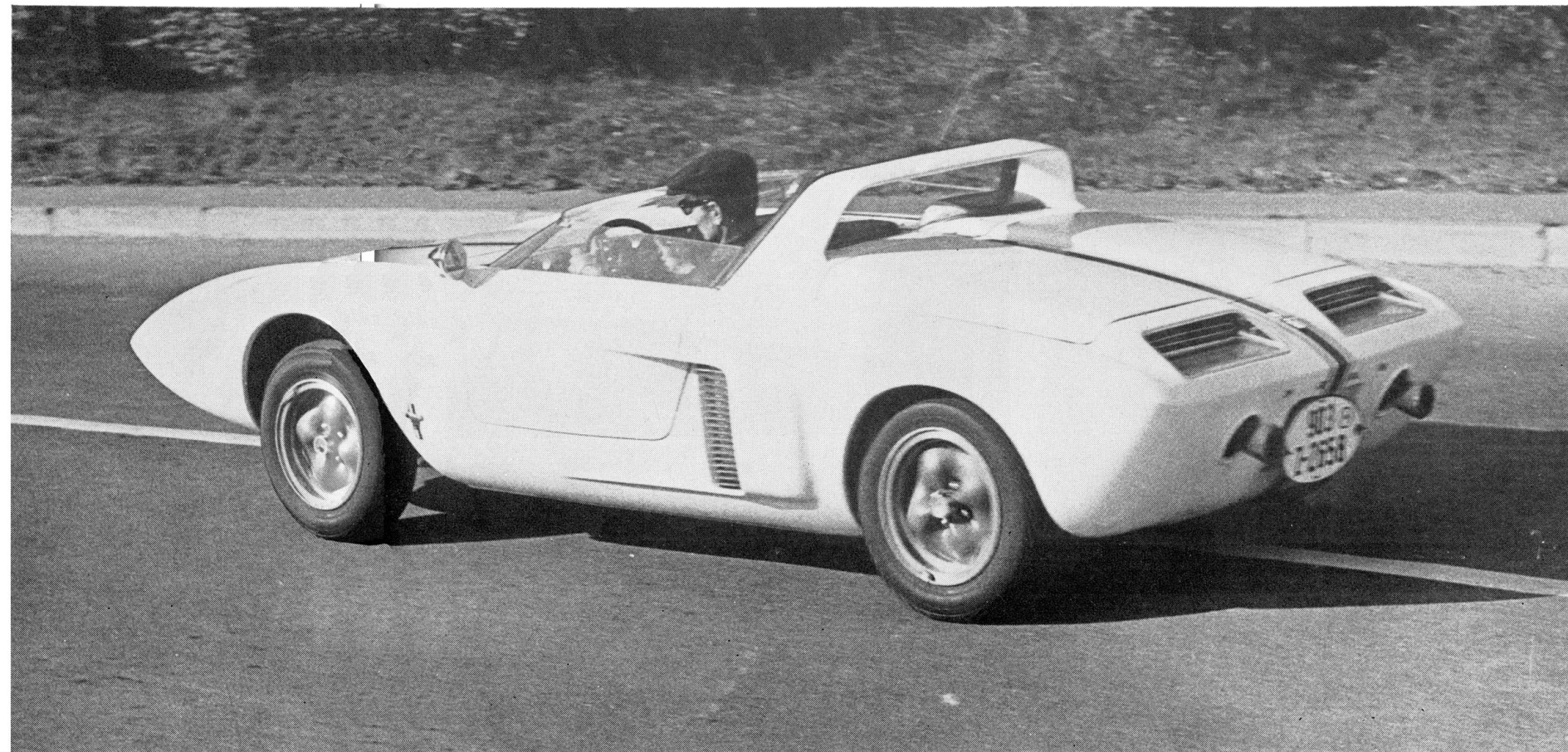
My journey eventually took me to the fast and tricky course of Solitude, where many long laps around it convinced me that Ford had produced, in the Mustang, a first class, good handling sports car with all-around excellent performances. Even under hard driving conditions the car always reacted in a safe, clean manner, and this even when voluntarily taking a bad line in a curve, or, even worse, braking in the middle of it. Fast, medium and slow turns were all absorbed beautifully and with the Mustang I discovered all the joys of a true fun, safe sports car with real spirit.

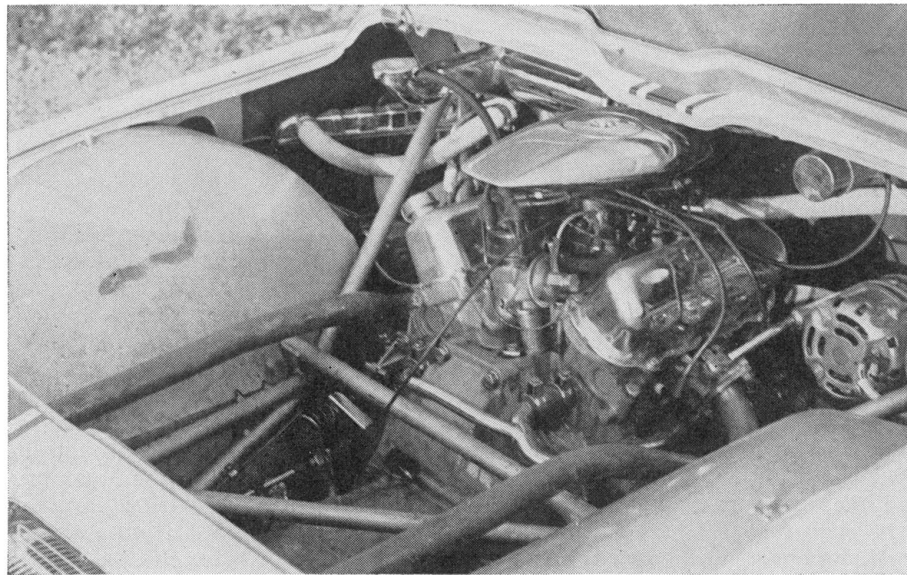
The ride was all right but I would not call it one of the best features of the car. Also, the back part of the seat does not have enough padding, I believe, and there-



FORD MUSTANG

A truly excellent American sports car...now, if we can only talk the Ford Motor Company into producing it!

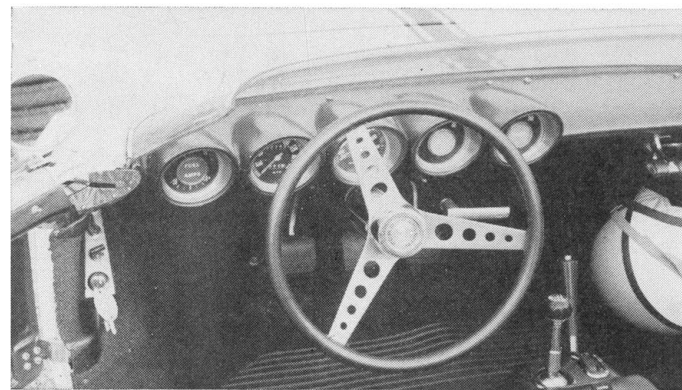
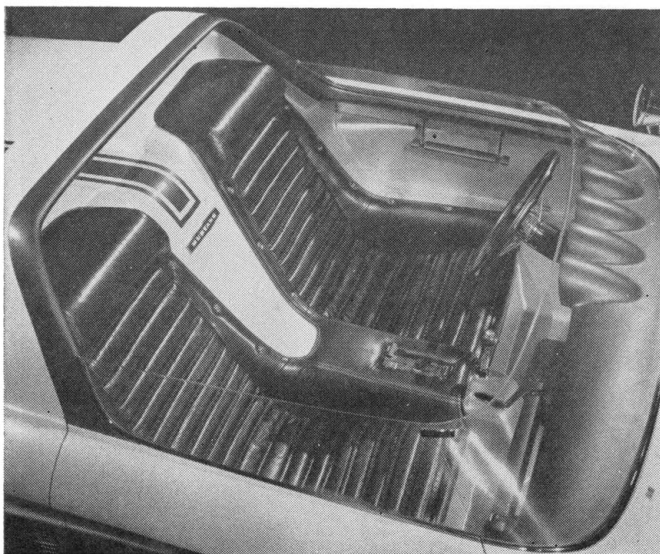




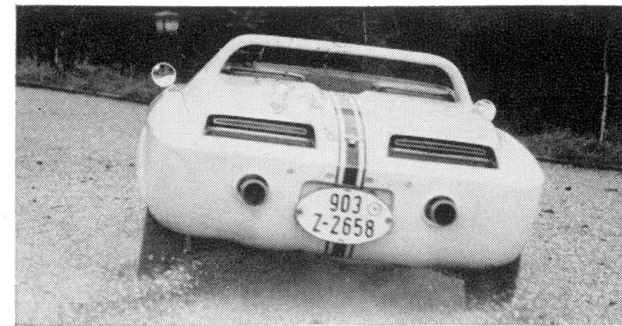
The considerably small space required by the sturdy, little V-4 is apparent in the photo at left. One of two radiators is visible. Cahier, directly below, found the Mustang extremely pleasant to drive and quite a performer for its size. In other photos, details of front compartment and cockpit area show quality work.



FORD MUSTANG (continued)



FORD MUSTANG: ROAD TEST 1/64



PERFORMANCE:

0-30	4.1 sec.	0-70	15.0 sec.
0-40	6.1 sec.	0-80	19.4 sec.
0-50	8.0 sec.	0-90	2.6 sec.
0-60	11.1 sec.	0-100	34.1 sec.

Standing 1/4 mile 17.4 sec. @ 76 mph Standing KM: 32.5
 Top Speed (av. two-way run) 111 mph

Speed Error	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
Actual	30	40	50	59	69	79	88

Fuel Consumption Test29 mpg Average 22/24 mpg
 Recommended Shift Points: Max. 2nd 60 mph
 Max. 1st 38 mph Max. 3rd 80 mph
 RPM Red-line 7,000 rpm

Speed Ranges in gears:
 1st 0 to 38 mph 3rd 10 to 80 mph
 2nd 5 to 60 mph 4th 15 to top mph
 Brake Test: 75 Average % G, over many stops.

REFERENCE FACTORS:

Bhp. per Cubic Inch 1.09
 Lbs. per bhp. 15.5
 Piston Speed @ Peak rpm 2513 ft./min.
 Sq. In. Swept Brake area per Lb. 0.183
 No real fade encountered, but brakes pulled after relatively hard use.

ENGINE:

Type V-4 water-cooled
 Head Iron, removeable
 Valves OHV, pushrod, rocker actuated
 Max. bhp 100 @ 6500 rpm
 Max. Torque 89 lbs. ft. @ 3800 rpm
 Bore 3.54 in. 90 mm.
 Stroke 2.32 in. 58.8 mm.
 Displacement 91.4 cu. in. 1488 cc.
 Compression Ratio 9.5 to 1
 Induction System One double-throat downdraft Solex
 Exhaust System Two into one; two separate exhaust, one on each side
 Electrical System 6-volt, distributor ignition

CLUTCH: Single disc
 Diameter 7.50 in.
 Actuation Hydraulic

DIFFERENTIAL: Sprung
 Ratio 3.3 to 1
 Drive Axles (type) Open, 2-joint

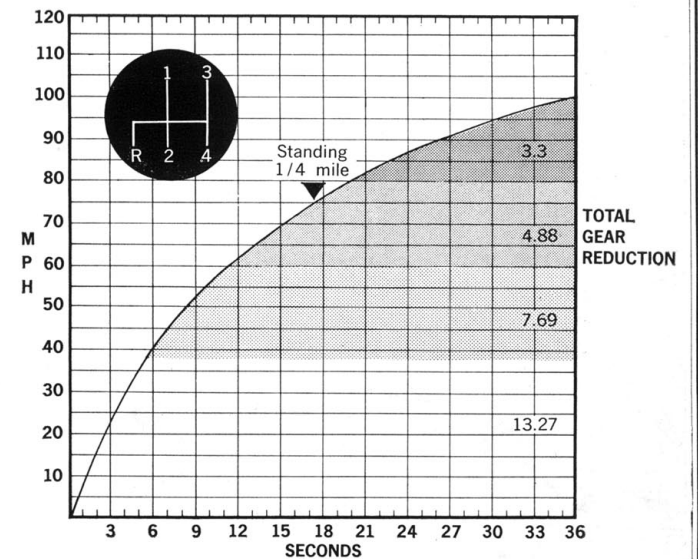
STEERING: Rack and pinion
 Turns Lock to Lock 2.9
 Turn Circle 30 ft.

TRANSMISSION: 4-speed, all synchronized
 Ratios: 1st 4.02 to 1
 2nd 2.33 to 1
 3rd 1.48 to 1
 4th 1.00 to 1

BRAKES: Disc in front — drum in rear
 Drum and Disc Diameter 9.5 in. front; 9 in. rear
 Swept Area 283 sq. in.

CHASSIS:
 Frame Multi-tube, chrome-moly
 Body Aluminum
 Front Suspension Independent, twin wishbones, torsion bar, telescopic shocks and coil springs.
 Rear Suspension Unequal length wishbone, single torque arms
 Tire Size & Type Dunlop SP 550 x 13

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES:
 Wheelbase 90 in. Ground Clearance 5.5 in.
 Front Track 48 in. Curb Weight 1550 lbs.
 Rear Track 49 in. Test Weight 1900 lbs.
 Overall Height 39.4 in. Crankcase 4 qts.
 Overall Width 61 in. Cooling System 8.5 qts.
 Overall Length 154.3 in. Gas Tank 13 gals.



fore you feel the bumps even more. After a couple of hundred miles on the road I went to work on the acceleration figures, which were taken on the Mercedes timed test track and on the Autobahn. The Mustang gave us more pleasant surprises in both departments and we recorded an average maximum speed of just over 111 mph, with the car showing good, steady handling at that speed. In acceleration I did zero to 50 mph in 7 seconds, zero to 60 in 11.2, zero to 80 in 19.4 seconds, while the standing kilometer and standing quarter of a mile were done respectively in 32.5 and 17.4 seconds. Considering that the Mustang is an open sports car and that it only has something around 80 hp under the hood, all those figures are remarkably good, and place the Mustang in a very favorable position in the 1500 Production Sports Car class. A fine 1500 cc performer, the Mustang has the advantage of having a very docile power plant for city driving, and if wanted the car can be driven in top gear at as low as 2,000 rpm.

If Ford's purpose it to find out from the public, by the interest shown, and from the journalists' criticisms, if the Mustang is worth being put into production, the answer is definitely YES from both parties. The car is different and quite exciting in appearance (the public

interest was tremendous everywhere I went), it performed extremely well in town and on the open road, and its handling qualities can be ranked among the best European sports automobiles.

Ford must, of course, fit the car with a sturdier body, a true glass windshield, and a top, without forgetting, if possible, more space for baggage. Most of the rest, in my opinion, should not be touched, and I hope that Ford does not alter any of those good points which made those two days of driving so enjoyable. I arrived rather sceptical, and I must say that I left impressed by the car. With the Mustang, Ford could create a different type of production 1500 sports car and, naturally, with all kinds of speed options available to make it truly competitive in its class. I do not know if the car can take as much as 120 horsepower, or more perhaps, but if it does the Mustang could put on a convincing performance in the much more difficult field of pure sports car racing, and this at a low cost that only a powerful American company could afford. But to succeed, they will have to move fast, and I sincerely hope they do so without too many of those inevitable and mistaken production changes which all too often alter the original good points of a well-proven prototype.

— Bernard Cahier