

MEL BURNS' Shelby GT-350 Mustang holds the AHRA national record for XE-Sports. Driven by Don McCain, director of the Shelby American drag racing program, it is just about the hottest in the 289-cube horse around.

This blue bomb, which is seldom beaten on the quarter-mile strips of the West Coast, started out in life as a Shelby GT-350 Mustang but later became the pilot machine for the GT-350 racing program.

Just prior to the 1965 AHRA Nationals in Long Beach, the then white GT-350 of Mel Burns' Ford in Long Beach was delivered to Performance Associates for a complete reworking. The amount of work required to re-vamp the car for the strip doesn't look like much on paper, but it is the "little" things that can make or break a drag machine.

The 289-inch mill in the GT-350 record-holder is almost stock Shelby. A completely set up minimum-clearance engine, the heads are legal AHRA running $1\frac{3}{8}$ and $1\frac{7}{8}$ valves and a compression ratio of 11.5-to-1. The dual valve springs are from Isky and the intake system is the standard Shelby high-rise 715-cfm Holley four-barrel.

The camshaft is the same unit that Performance Associates has been using in their 260/289 Fords. The stick is known as the "Sully cam, and what it

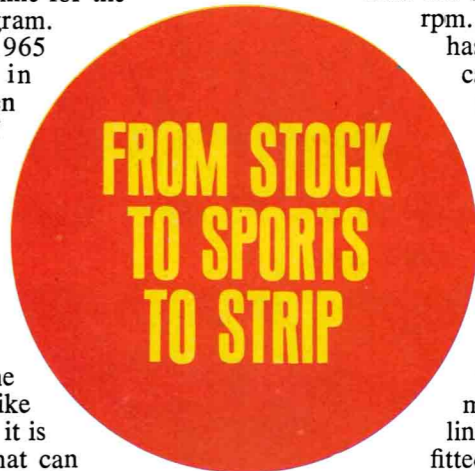
does to a little Ford engine is almost unbelievable! Strange as it sounds, it is a stock Ford cam—that is, if you have the right parts book. For the record, it was designed specifically for 260/289 Fords with the single 4-barrel Holley carb which is flow-rated at 715 cfm. This camshaft, available from Performance Associates and Shelby American, is listed as the S1-CR-6250 "Cobra Race Cam." It has a full half-inch life and red-lines at 7500

rpm. The engine was re-hashed by PA for the cam. Everything from the ignition curve to the length of the exhaust was re-worked. The carburetor was also re-jetted.

The power is transmitted to the rear wheels via a PA-modified T-10 transmission with a modified Hurst shift linkage. The rear end is fitted with PA lift bars,

plus a Ford third member with 31-spine axles. The times of the Mel Burns GT-350 are currently 12.51 seconds and 112.50 mph, the AHRA national record for XE-Sports. Not content with AHRA record, the Mel Burns Mustang also took strip records for its class at Lions, Fontana, Irwindale and San Fernando, and also the 1320 record for A/Stock-Sports.

In the looks division, the car, crew, tow car and trailer won the "Best-Appearance Award" at the AHRA Winter-nationals.



BY GORDON CHITTENDEN

Performance Associates turns a Shelby-ized GT-350 Mustang into a national record-holder







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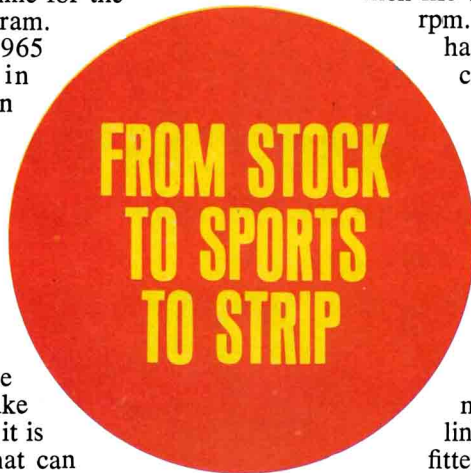
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