

Restoration of my 1973 Mach 1

by Rex Mayor

Back in 1979 I bought a written-off 73 Mach1 351 4V manual. It required a R/F mudguard, R/H door, windscreen, 2 wheels and the front suspension out of a Falcon to get it back on the road.

It was a nice car after I repaired it, and a close look at the photo shows that it was actually two-toned. It had a lighter green through the bonnet and along the tops of the doors, which hooked up around the rear 1/4 window and then across the roof.

So the front of the roof was light green and the back 1/3 was dark green. All we did was chuck a bit of white into the dark green to finish up with the light shade. My painter mate said he didn't know what sort of a colour we had concocted and I reckoned it looked about the shade of a Punga tree, so that's what it was called and I've still got a tin of paint in the shed with Punga written on it.



Around that same time I invented a tool for use in panelbeating and did many enjoyable miles travelling the length and breadth of the country in the Mustang selling these tools, and it was at Opio, heading for Nightcaps on 18/8/81 (not hard to remember that date) when the brakes failed and I put the virtues of the crash absorbent front bumper to test against a road sign and concrete power pole - at a reasonable rate of knots. The car was towed to an Invercargill panel beater where it was pulled back into line and I limped back to Taumarunui in a dejected state, and with sore ribs.

Having already repaired the car once, it was hard to get enthused at doing it all over again, so it was sold, needing a bonnet, grill, L/F guard and windscreen. I had given the guard a 95% quality repair job, as it looked pretty crappy just hammered out. The bumper was perfect.

“If only I knew what I know now.” Guess a lot have said that.

In 2005 I had canned my occupational direction and was at a loose end when an old workmate, friend and Mustang owner in Tauranga, Thomas Cook (alias Cook'e, coz he hates an 'e' on the end) suggested that there were some restoration jobs that needed to be done.

Why not! – 4 hours work, and 4 hours fishing sounded all good, so most of 2005 was spent fishing, truck driving and doing resto work on a 56 Thunderbird, Jude Habib's cute little 64 ½ Coupe, Bruce Warren's 65 Fastback and Dale Mathers Boss race car. It was therefore inevitable that I would become all “Mustang'd out” once more, so I later asked Dale's LA accomplice Rex Kelland (alias Kiwi) to find me a 73 Mach1 in need of some work.

This in my view was the cheapest way to get hold of a fastback as anything from 70 back was beyond what I was prepared (or allowed) to pay, and if I was going for the next model, it might as well be the last, of which I already had a soft spot for. Kiwi could see my point and after looking at a few he told me that he knew of a mint Californian one family owned 73 Mach1, but it would be worth 5K more than the original figure we had decided on. I weighed the options of: - 5K less, lots of work - against 5K more and next to no work. A sensible decision wasn't too hard to make.

Kiwi phoned me extremely early one Sunday morning saying he was standing looking at a very tidy 71 convertible that would be a lot cheaper than the Mach1. At this stage he still hadn't viewed the Mach1, but I had made the decision and even though the convertible sounded good, I really

wanted a car that could have a tow-bar fitted to tow my boat, and I didn't fancy putting a tow-bar on a ragtop. Kiwi couldn't resist the convertible, so he nailed it for himself for a run around.

The photo's arrived

It was built in Dearborn, 14th Dec 72, seven days behind schedule, and sold by Robert H Loud Ford, Pasadena, CA, on 5th Jan 73. It changed hands from the original owner to his brother, and was then passed onto a son in 1999, when the colour was changed from Wimbledon White to the 35th anniversary colour Performance Red. It has just clocked over 82,000 miles.



VIN 3F05H156145

Ordered with the following options.

351-2V Ram Air.

California Emission.

FMX Cruise-O-Matic.

2.75: 1 Traction-Lok Rear Axle.

Radial Whitewall Tyres.

Convenience Group.

Black Knitted Vinyl Trim.

Selectaire, Air Conditioning.

Power Steering.

Tilt Steering Column.

Rim-Blow Steering Wheel.

Console.

Power Front Disc Brakes.

Bumper Rub-Strips.

AM/FM Stereo Radio.

Interior Decor Group.

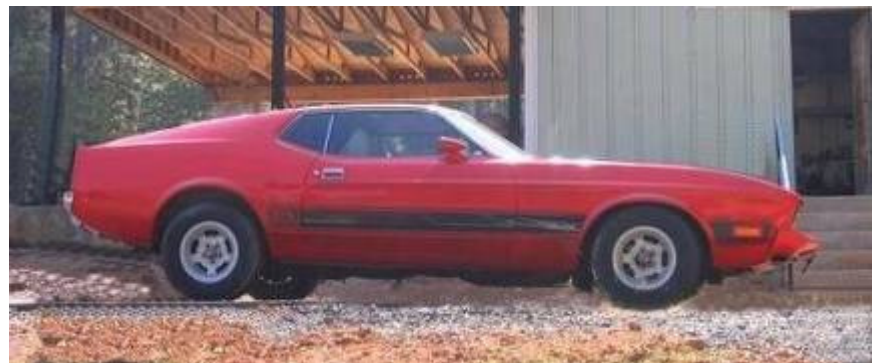
Tinted Glass.

Forged Aluminium Wheels.

Rear Window Defroster.

Sport Deck Rear Seat.

Space Saver Spare.



The only drawback was being a 2V instead of 4V. If my wish list could have been fulfilled, it would have been a 4V and had power windows as well. But this car was too good to miss out on, so the deal was done. It decoded as a Ram Air but doesn't have Ram Air fitted... Yet. Air con was a plus.

After settling the dollars at a bonus rate up around 80 cents! The car was delivered to Kiwi's place in Modesto to wait for a full container to be made up, and arrived at Tauranga on Jan 25th 2008 in a 40' container with 3 other cars for Dale's clients, plus a shopping list of parts inside comprising of carpets, front seat covers, front spoiler, bonnet lock-downs and brake hoses. But my excitement had to go on hold until Feb 7th as Dale was in the S.I. racing the Boss. "Suppose that's fair."

I travelled to Tauranga on Waitangi Day and called into Dale's workshop where he and a friend were going over some of the S.I. racing photos on a laptop.

After viewing the photos Dale said to the friend – "Now the first cars we want tomorrow are the red Mach1 and the blue Falcon Coupe."

No worries said Mike – There were heaps of cars sitting on the wharf needing to be steam cleaned and we just went to the top of the list. First thing next day Cook'e and I fronted up at an office with a great view, to pay all the costs, but nothing had been finalised and nor would it be until the next day. But we walked out of there with all the papers to extract the cars from the wharf, and the bill would be sent to Dale if I didn't front up to pay. This really reinforced the fact that it's better to be working with someone in the loop when importing cars, instead of bumbling around like a chook with its head cut off.



It was then just a matter of waiting for a phone call to say it was done and we scorch over to the wharf with Dale's Ute and trailer, fired the Mach1 up and drove it onto the trailer, then took it back to the Coastline workshop where I washed it and checked over all the essentials.

I had borrowed a set of 'D' plates so it was then a very "cheesy" trip out to Cook'es place at Te Puna where a lot more grooming took place. Kiwi had told me that it was running rough, probably due to the fact that it hadn't been

used for a while and the fuel in it would no doubt be stale, so I had taken a 20lt container of Av-gas with me to tweak up the octane a bit and by the time I got to Te Puna it was running sweet-az.

The next day we dropped Dale off at the airport as he was heading back down south for more racing, then I paid the customs bill to save Dale from getting it, and then collected the other two cars from the wharf. The least that could be done in Dale's absence. We had arranged for the local Dents man to call in so he could hook out the few parking dents around the car. He couldn't do much with a small scrape through the R/H door and ¼ panel, as it was right on the edge of the extrusion bar. (That's the technical name for the crash bar inside the door) But he was able to pluck it out enough to look a little better than it does here. It can't be seen in most of the photos due to computer trickery.



The following day was Saturday, so we got up for a daylight start and headed home to Taumarunui with Cook'e following in my car. With a full tank of fresh fuel at Tokoroa the trip through the forest and Western Bays was a good time to enjoy a little tonk along – mainly a lot. The 2.75 diff is a bit on the tall side for NZ driving, although it could be a big help with escalating fuel prices. The car is definitely not a bundle of fire off the line, but a 4-barrel and extractors with twin pipes might sort things out at some stage. While the trip home was a definite buzz, I was oblivious to the fact that the fumigation gasses were still extremely strong inside, so I finished up with a bit more of a buzz than bargained for. A slight leak in the carburettor probably didn't help much either.

The largest amount of rust in the car was in the left rear quarter panel and this didn't amount to much either, and



was easily patched. Even though the right hand side had a spot no bigger than a beer bottle top, a similar operation was undertaken in order to get at the inner panels and properly repair them.

Another small patch was required in the front of the left rear quarter - all done in three Saturdays, which included cleaning and painting some of the floor underneath, fitting the new front spoiler, welding up the leaks in the exhaust, polishing the wheels and taking time out to talk to those that called into the workshop coz they new it had arrived.



One positive bonus that I immediately noticed was that it had white-wall tyres fitted inside out, so flipping them was one of the first things done during that first week.

The paintwork is exactly as seen, straight off the boat. I haven't even polished it! Although it's a little orange-peely it will be lived with for a while, and I can enjoy using the car until it will finally get the better of me. Some have suggested that a rub down with 1200 grit paper and a polish might get rid of the peel but I'm not that convinced there is enough clear coat on there to do that, and I don't want to risk backing myself into the point of no return just yet. I also won't mind the chance of ripping the decals off and applying new ones to my satisfaction. It even arrived with a litre tin of touch-up paint, with the paint code attached, and a bag containing 4 Shop Manuals, and various Maintenance and Parts books. The paint will be handy to touch up the repairs.

The original rear bumper was fitted with rubber bump strips and had been damaged and replaced with a new plain chromium one, but the old bumper and rubber strips were also in the car.

There were a few funny clonks going on in the front suspension and the shocks were obviously dozy, so when I saw the local recycling truck heading past with a dead XF Ute on the back, I was quick off the mark to offer a box of brown bottles for the opportunity to pilfer the front suspension for parts before it got turned into a pancake. The Coon had a fairly new set of gas shocks and replacement bottom ball joints, and the radius rod rubbers are a lot firmer than the Mustang ones. Even though the original ball joints on the Mustang were still tight, the rubbers were perished and they had been lovingly over indulged with grease by the previous owners, hence it was just as well to replace them. Getting the gas shocks was also fortuitous as the left shock in the Mustang feel apart on removal – so no wonder it was a bit spongy and making funny noises.

The new brake hoses were fitted and the whole system flushed out. The rear adjusters were seized and needed to be removed, cleaned up and oiled, and new brake pads had only just been fitted to the front. A few fuses were replaced to get the interior lights and front seat releases going, plus the instrument lights. The horn fuse kept blowing and I traced that to a problem in the horns. Fortunately a set of un-needed air horns were chucked away where I could actually remember, so they were ferreted out and fitted. Those Shop Manuals were handy.

While working on the electrics under the dash, I decided to remove the driver's seat to allow for easier access. (Getting old) In doing so I noticed that there were extensions added to the seat mounts that lifted the back of the seats up by about an inch. Either this was done to fit the seats over the added thick underlay, or the previous owners weren't over endeared with height. I had wondered why the seating position felt weird when I first got in the car, but put it down to years of memory loss. The seats need to come out again to have the new covers fitted and if possible, more likely probable, these extensions will disappear.

As wiring was needed for a high-stop light, I thought it was a good idea to run a recycled wiring loom from an obsolete car phone, through to the back. It provides wires for the brake light and an electric boot release at the moment, and will enable a trailer plug to tap into the front indicators and avoid the complications of the standard brake/indicator system. There are also 4 light gauge wires suitable for speakers if required. Don't know why that would be necessary, those original push button Radios are magnificent – just can't play a CD.

On returning Cook'e after bringing the car home, we stopped off at the local Wreckers looking for a set of 7" headlights, and he didn't have any left! We then called in to see Stu Brown at his workshop in Putaruru. He had taken the lights out of Jude's convertible and fitted some semi-seals that he scored from a Wrecker, so he gave me the old units. I recently called at the local Auto Sparkie and he has new semi-seals with Halogen bulbs included for \$30 each. I've got a set of them.

The leaking carburettor became worse, in fact real bad, and a closer inspection under the aircleaner (it does help to take it off and have a good look) revealed that a new filter had been fitted without a copper washer, the rubber fuel line was perished and the clips were snookered, and the accelerator pump diaphragm was perished and leaking. With all this rectified there are no more leaks, and it even seems to run better.

After driving vehicles with decent sized steering rims it was quite uncomfortable driving with the skinny horn rimmed standard wheel. The horn rim contacts needed replacing along with the plastic insert and two of the plastic inserts in the spoke pads were missing, but I was able to procure an after market leather spoked wheel that needed a horn boss and as I had a Momo horn button, the engineer next door turned a boss up on the lathe out of black plastic - at the cost of another box.



The Dilemma

After seeing the photos that Kiwi sent, the first thoughts were that it needed a front spoiler and bonnet lockdowns. It could also do with a set of 17-inch wheels to allow a decent set of tyres to be fitted, and the bonnet needed to be blacked out. It's got the front spoiler and the locks are about to be fitted, but the painted bonnet is starting to grow on me. They do look meaner with it blacked out though, but this car was never done from the factory. Black would take care of the peel though.

The wheels are a problem. It would be simple if they had been curbed and had scratches all over them, but they are perfect and have polished up like new pins. Being that they are the genuine 73 optional mags and that they were ordered with the car I wouldn't feel good about taking them off at the moment. Perhaps once the near new Michelin tyres are worn out it won't be so hard to bear. Although with the 2.75 gearing the final wheel profile will become an important issue.

Further

Due to an operation and being off work for 2 months meant that working on the car was out of the question. The one thing that spare time did allow was for the first part of this story to manifest. However, I did sneak a chance to fit the bonnet lock-downs and headlight units - and risked getting reprimanded. (Like I did) The 3 little wire loops on the light units that locate into slots in the bucket bases need to be bent out a bit in order for the units to hold in firmly. The first unit I put in was loose, but I immediately knew what the problem was from the old days of fixing 50's & 60's model cars, so that was rectified while fitting the second one and the first unit was removed to fix that as well. Carefully as so not to break them.

Up until this time, I hadn't taken a lot of notice of the grill badge and while fitting the headlights I saw that the red, white & blue vertical strips were missing from behind the badge. When I pranged the first Mach1 down south, I was sure the Insurance Co would write it off, until we got a chance to have a good look over it the next day. But due to my first impression, I had grabbed hold of the grill badge in the remnants of the smashed grill and ripped it out by the roots, and to keep as a memento. The excess bits of plastic were later trimmed off and it's spent the last 27 years on the shadow board in my shed as a treasure, and as I quite liked the idea of needing to fit something from the old car to the new one, it was fortuitous that the badge wasn't up to scratch, so changing it was necessary and that has been done with a great deal of satisfaction.



Pity that I'd turfed the bonnet front moulding only not long ago— the very outside stud on the right is broken off so I could've used that too.



While on the subject of mementos: Five days before the prang in 81, I had walked into a Model Shop in Dunedin and brought a model 73 Mustang which later finished up stashed away in a wardrobe for many years. At some stage it had fallen down and lost its bonnet, grill and front bumper, and it was probably only my sentimentality that rescued it from being dumped on a number of occasions. At the time of considering the purchase of another Mustang, a search unearthed the model and front bumper, and it was placed as an inspiration on the shelf above my computer, where it now resides permanently. I couldn't find the bonnet and grill though, they'd obviously got past my checkpoint at some time. It's unreal, or should that be "positive visualisation" that the model is the same year, practically the same colour and has the same wheels.

Light Duties

At the stage of testing out work by doing afternoons for a week, then 6-hour days for the next week, the progression to a full week was quite taxing by the end of Friday, and that symptom remained for quite a lengthy period. Hence the possibilities of working on the car over the weekends were out of the question (more likely forbidden) but priorities needed to be addressed and common sense totally ignored, hence a further month down the track I felt brave enough to attack the repaired patches with a rubdown and prime-up - with the car elevated on ramps. The extensions on the rear of the seat mounts were also removed and the seating position is now much better. The most daunting task was to fit the second lower ball-joint, as this would require a certain amount of grunt, but my workmates have accepted that I won't hesitate to ask them to lift, undo or tighten something that could cause something to pop, so the ball-joint was done with a little help and it was booked in for a wheel alignment.

Problem:- there are no Mustang specs in the wheel alignment computer, but once again those Shop Manuals have come in handy. The toe-in is in inches though! The mechanic will sort it out. Amazing that I had only refitted the radius rods by measurement and the caster was perfect. Didn't tell him that, otherwise he wouldn't have admitted to them being right.



While searching through "the Spare Light shelf" at work for a Toyota Ute rear reflector for a customer, I stumbled across a mag wheel centre cap with a blue oval in it. It looked about the right size to fit the vacant badge area of the fuel cap, and with the spring and plastic clips cut off, it turned out to be a perfect fit, so it's been secured in place with double sided tape, and has made the cap look a lot more presentable until a decent one can be procured.

My daughters partner sussed out a Trident wheel at the Palmy swap meet and while not a perfect match, a few more bottles will get it machined to look similar to the forged wheels, but good enough to have as a spare with the largest possible low profile tyre fitted that will fit in the boot, which will avoid having to use the space saver. A mate who manages the local Beaufort - owns a Z28 without its space saver, but with an inflation canister, so he has donated it to me. But the space saver that I have is a virgin so I will never use it. And the canister needs a blue oval sticker attached. They will only ever be ornaments from now on.

I realize that if I get a flat on the rear, I'll have to go to the trouble of fitting the low profile to the front and then put that front wheel on the back to prevent the diff from tying itself in knots. I have also fitted a normal sized tyre to an old Falcon rim, and that will be kept in the shed as another option - most flats are found in the light of day.

For those that don't understand what the hell that's all about: - With the Sport Deck Rear Seat option a normal size wheel won't fit in the boot unless the hatch between the boot and rear seat is opened, thus allowing the wheel to protrude into the car interior. Hence the reason for a space saver with a Sport Deck. Or as I have done, by fitting the largest low profile tyre that will squeeze into the boot space without needing to open the hatch. I remember it being quite a squeeze to get a beer crate into the other car and I had welded a Falcon centre into a 13" rim to use as a spare in that car. Low profile 14's were a rarity in the early 80's, and I'm not too sure if the 13" fitted on the front. I think I had the centre fairly well offset to the inside so it would clear the tie rod end.

Painting

I had not intended repairing the dent through the right door and ¼ panel until after VINing but while making adjustments to the right door handle I decided to hammer the door out a bit more while the trim was off - which finished up to be a lot, or until it was completely fixed within the

next hour. Upon getting to this stage it seemed sensible to spend another hour to repair the rear ¼ and prep them both for painting at the same time as the other repairs. A couple of rubdowns and repriming of all the patches and it was time for painting and while delivering a customers car to the painters I noticed that they weren't very busy – and as they are the experts, a deal was struck up to have them give it a final sand, apply the base coat that came with the car, and blend some clear over the top. It was all over within 3 days, something that would have taken me more than 3 weeks of weekends and nights. Plus it's a certainty while trying to paint something in the shed, that a bug or two will turn themselves into suicide dive-bombers just after the last coat is applied, and then makes a last gasp effort at making crop circles. So having the car touched up in a spray-booth was a definite plus to the temperament.

Now it was time for the first photo that didn't need a computer hack to hide the dents in the right hand side. And the bonnet lock-downs are fitted - and the bonnet is still all red. For now.



Fortunately (or maybe unfortunately) the colour blended so well that only 2 days after getting the car back from the painters, I couldn't resist sanding back the normal rough lead filling at the seam where the left rear ¼ and turret meet. So the painters will be getting it back – I can just imagine their response at being told they're "ruff people" for not painting all the patches. There is a small patch on the right side of the roof that needs attention and the rest of the roof is orange-peely, so it might be an opportune time to squirt out the whole roof. The right side seam on Mustangs is never rough so that didn't need fixing.



Fuzzy Logic?

It has been convenient that the trip from home to the workshop is short, so it's relatively easy to run the gauntlet pre VIN. It covers a zigzag course and requires a U-turn to be executed outside the Beaurepairs shop. However, the local cops decided the Sat 13th would be a good day to stuff up someone's day and where running spot checks right where I needed to U-turn and they were gleefully watching my approach. Seeing as they were inconsiderately in the way, I pulled over before reaching them, turned around and headed over the railway fly-over then turned off to head back to the workshop on the other side of the railway lines, almost opposite to where they were fleecing Joe Public. One of the boys was already at work so the door was open and I drove straight in and started work on the car. We were having a good laugh at what had just happened and a few minutes later a patrol car went past, then went back again - then Wayne from Beaurepairs turned up in his Camaro wondering if they'd "got me" as he was at work and had seen me coming. He said there was a mad scramble when I turned around, and apparently two cars headed off in hot pursuit with red & blues flashing and sirens screaming. Had I known this, the workshop door

would have definitely been closed to hide the car - but it was still wide open, as I had no idea they'd chased me and perhaps the cop that cruised past did see where the car was and realised that they should go and find some real crims instead of making unpopular dorks of themselves.

The following Monday required another dash to the paint shop, and it turned out to be far easier to squirt out the whole left ¼ instead of blending to the guard hip. There was a transparent patch towards the back of the hip-line that had been annoying me, so it was just as well to do the whole panel, thus relieve any future anguish. Pity the bottoms of the ¼ had just been painted.



Jude Habib was at this stage touring the States and had brought a box full of bits for her 64 ½. She has also been able to procure a rear ¼ window rubber and a pop-open fuel cap for my car. There are some other bits that will be required one day, but those would be the most glaringly and annoying items that couldn't be ignored. Guess that's gonna cost some more drinks.

The final jobs

Right from day one, it seemed like the right rear brake was locking-up under hard braking so I had called at the local brake specialist for advice. Thinking that it could be a dozy cylinder and due to the fact that new ones are only \$24, I ordered 2 - but after fitting them the problem still existed. So what was intended to be the last weekend of work before VINing, needed an extension. The next suggested solution was to chamfer off the leading edges of the brake linings. That didn't work.

It was time to look for more information, and it was suggested that the vacuum bleeding used might not be sufficient and that perhaps pressure bleeding was required so I booked it in. But later remembered that I'd pulled the battery out to inspect the state of what is normally a rusted out battery tray to find that I wasn't a moment too soon. The tray was half snookered so I emailed a well-known parts supplier, and then phoned a day later leaving a message. But after 3 days of non-contact, I folded one up out of panel steel. Therefore it wasn't possible to move the car for a bleed until the battery could be replaced. In this time, Dale had returned from the States and suggested that I check that the shoe springs were all in the right place and of the same size. This I did, and they all looked OK, so I swapped the main top springs from side to side. "And it was better."

The right brake just locks up a gnat's nut ahead of the left, but a few thousand miles will probably sort that out. The problem is trying to leave things as original as possible for VINing, after which a heap of parts can be replaced. Pretty stupid regulations!

Also evident since the beginning has been the mandatory Classic Car oil leak. I had squizzed a brief look way back and ascertained that it was coming from the vicinity of the difficult to get at fuel pump and as the time had come for an oil & filter change before the trip back to Tauranga for compliance, it was grouse to discover that the fuel pump was only loose and just needed the bolts tightened to stop the leak. It was easier to get at the top bolt with the filter removed. Although still difficult.

The rear view

I guess back in 1980, the view from the right hand door mirror was about as good as could be expected, but after being conditioned to modern wide angle mirrors, that view is now quite poor and has never been well suited to merging with right side traffic. This became alarmingly obvious

when needing to do a quicker than normal U-turn to avoid the fuzz. So with a little time to spare, another scratch through the “Saved Parts Dept” unearthed a suitable mirror with a curved glass. I cut a cardboard template that filled the mirror housing cavity more adequately than the original glass did and transposed that onto the re-cycled mirror glass, then I visited the local glazier to see if it could be cut without breaking into bits. No one was too sure, but it didn’t matter if the bin was the next destination – it was worth a try, and it worked spot-on. The old glass was removed from the base - to reduce weight mainly, otherwise the mirror could become self-adjusting with vibration and bumps, and the new mirror was fixed in place with double-sided tape and urethane around the edges. The tape served to hold it in place until the urethane went off, and the end result is excellent. It needed a little bit trimmed off the outside corners to allow for the further outwards adjustment that was now required. And the mirror is tinted too, so I might even need to do the left one as well - one day.



With everything up to VINing state, Sunday 5th Oct was the first shakedown run. A group of Monaro owners were taking a run through The Forgotten Highway via Whangamomona and then calling at a friends Lavender Farm/Café for lunch, so I contacted a number of local classic car owners to arrange a trip out there to meet up with them. I had borrowed a set of D Plates as it now felt quite twitchy running back and forth to the workshop after being chased. Besides, this was to be an extended sojourn and best done above board. Sunday dawned wet and one by one those that were keen to join in started reneging, and then admitting after a prod that it was far too wet to take their babies out of the shed. I could understand as those were my thoughts too – one thing that I hadn’t yet attended to was the water leak in the boot, but there was nothing in there to get wet and the bungs weren’t in the inner guards, so any water was going to run straight back out again. And so what – I’ve never faltered from going Jet Boating in weather far worse than that, and boats haven’t got a roof... Or heater.

I picked up a mate Andy who had a genuine excuse - his Daimler rates next to nil as far as efficient windscreen wipers and demister goes, and we cruised out to the Lavender Farm for a coffee and to meet up with the Monaro’s. Even had another skirmish with the law. They went past as we were ready to pull out of Andy’s driveway and we finished up following about 3 cars behind. They must have thought I would be doing a runner for home so they took the next street on and doubled back around the block probably expecting to meet me head-on at my driveway, but we just kept on cruising up the main drag – laughing our socks off. Later that afternoon I ventured on a 20 mile trip up the main north highway but soon realised that there were heaps of crazy skiers heading home so thought it better to get the hell out of there and returned home to a safe haven.

Update on the rear brake problem from Dale; - It wasn’t uncommon for Mustangs fitted with 9” diffs to suffer from exciting rear brake lock-ups, and it was more common with the 71-73 models. I do remember reading that the 9” was originally built for trucks and big heavy cars, but obviously as Yanks do, someone decided that bigger and better meant they could be fitted into Mustangs, but never considered that the beefy brakes are much too good for the lighter bum, hence they tend to lock easy. The successful remedy is to fit a bias adjuster into the rear brake line and that will be

done at a point where it can be. He also suggested fitting some metallic Metal King front pads to see if that helped. I don't remember the first Mach1 having such a problem, but since then I've done hundreds of thousands of quick kilometres in cars with ABS, so perhaps expectations are a little higher now.

✦◆M&E

Guess Wal isn't allowed to print that heading is if wasn't changed to Wingding font.

I had not been near the right hand side of the car in the shed for two days after the maiden run, but upon needing to remove the borrowed D Plate to return it to its rightful owner, I noticed a large lever that should have been hanging on the wall, was now lying against the newly painted right ¼. It had fallen and dented the rear window surround moulding and then scraped all the way to the rear of the car.

There were a lot more Wingdings aired for the rest of the morning, but a closer inspection at lunchtime followed by a furious cut & polish and unprintable mutterings resulted in most of the marks polishing out, which resulted in a slightly more settled afternoon. A deep scratch in the clear coat about 3 inches long will require some further attention, but all the other marks and yellow paint from the bar have polished off OK. There is a slight dent in the top edge of the ¼ panel at the initial point of impact, but luckily most of the force was absorbed by the window moulding. The left side window moulding has a similar dent in it, and that was already on the list to be replaced one day, so now two mouldings will be required. And I wouldn't have only just replaced one anyway. The dent in the ¼ is hardly noticeable and probably most people wouldn't even know it was there without having it pointed out.

When I left the car for a wheel alignment the mechanic told me it was hard to start. I didn't take a lot of notice as I assumed he was just being his normal picky contrary self, but when we went to leave the Lavender Farm it took a bit of cranking to fire up. I was telling Cooke this and he questioned as to why I didn't know what the problem was. That ribbing caused the light to flick on instantly – the coil is probably heating up from the engine heat after the car is run and then left standing for about an

hour. This was an inherent problem with the flat-head V8's if the coil was mounted on top of the engine, as most were. And I've had and seen this happen with Jet Boats on many occasions, which is why I have a square type Bosch coil in my boat. Correction – I used to have such a coil in the boat, it's now under the Mustang bonnet to see if that cures the problem



The final bit of tinkering involved modifying a jack handle to operate the only scissor-jack that I could find that would fit into the box-section bracket under the spare wheel. And that happens to be a Toyota jack that has a squatter lower base compared to others. I had been considering modifying the base of another jack until finding the one that was a perfect fit – probably saved a

lot of skin. I also adjusted the left door window so it would wind up without fouling with the ¼ window rubber.

It's all ready - so Cook'e will book a suitable VIN date.
30th Oct 2008 it is.

That was until a request to visit Waikato Hospital became the priority, so a new date will be required once that's all sorted.



Waiting for the Hospital to get back – and waiting – might as well adjust the right door window too, as that tends to rattle on the front keeper if wound right up. And the paint on the bonnet scoops is a bit shoddy. Cook'e wanted to paint them on day one, but we ran out of time - so they have now been removed and painted Saturn Black. Suppose that's a start to the bonnet blackout.

It's now just a case of "Hurry up and wait some more." 30th Nov is the USA day at Tauranga, so if the waiting continues I can feel a new VIN date materialising a few days before then.

Later

The big call-up from Waikato has put paid to the above plans, so it looks like VIN time will be early in the New Year.

Must be getting bored, as I'm now looking for any simple chores requiring little time. The Trident spare has an oval ended Cheviot centre cap, but I have the Ford emblemed disc out of an 80's model Laser centre cap, which had originally been tried for size on the fuel cap until the better option was found - so the Laser disc got cut to fit the Cheviot cap and the raised Cheviot lettering was ground out to allow the disc to glue onto a flat surface. The following day the space saver rim was sanded and repainted Saturn Black.



Needing to spend weekdays away for a prolonged period necessitated the making of a bracket to bolt onto one of the jacking pots in my garage floor that were used for pulling out cars back in the days when I was buying and repairing write-offs. The bracket will allow the Mustang to be chained and padlocked to the floor. The bracket fits neatly into a notch in the floor pot and a couple of welds will prevent the nut from being undone.

Buggar It

The Waikato appointments involved being totally committed 5 days a week until January, with a recovery period possibly extending to the end of the month. I had cancelled two VIN appointments due to these pressing matters and it was somewhat disappointing to shelve further progress.

Cooke and Dale had put their heads together and had offered to look after the process for me and undertake any chores that needed doing, so a new date was booked and I dropped it off on Mon 8th Dec then hitched a ride to Ham with a BOP friend, and back on Fri to pick it up all done. Good to have it road legal and get some enjoyment at last.

It needed a new drop-arm, which Dale had in stock. (The last one at old prices) The rear brake linings were riveted, thus some didn't have enough meat from the top of the rivets to the outside of the lining, so they needed replacing, and that was good as I wanted to do that anyway. The Hi-Stop light didn't show enough of the red stuff due to the acute angle of the rear window and I had already considered this might be a problem, so told Cook'e of my plan to rectify it by cutting away the bottom edge of the base - which he did. Pity he didn't put it back in the middle, or straight, but he knew I wanted to refix it with good quality double-sided tape so he is forgiven. Hence I can't really complain - but it was, and will forever provide good mileage for me in reminding him periodically. He did turn up with the fuel cap that Jude had collared for me in the US, so that was instantly fitted when I arrived on Monday morning. And I had removed the horn button and given it to the sign guru next door to Dale's workshop to have the Momo insignature overlayed with Mach 1. And as I had to leave for Hamilton before it was completed, good old Cooke refitted it later.

But the real bonus of the exercise was that Dale instantly noticed while taking the car to get VIN'd that it didn't go anywhere like it should - he later plugged a timing light on to find that it was running 10° retarded instead of 12° advanced. Someone had run out of adjustment and didn't think to turn the dizzy back and relocate the leads into the cap so everything would align and allow for an accurate setting. It goes much better now and uses heaps less gas. And even sounds better! With a result like that I guess the pie for lunch hasn't really covered things yet.



I had become resolved to the fact that it would never be a ball of fire, but that was wrong, and Jappa's don't pass me on hills any more, and the poor starting is better, so it might not have been the coil after all.

It's just so great to walk out the back door and have a choice of which car. Eeny, Meeny, Miney - there's no Mo so just take Meeny.

[Post VIN?](#)