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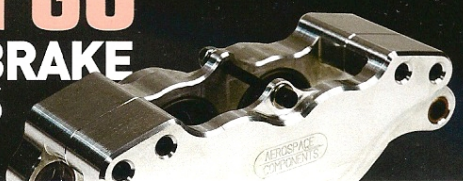

JANUARY 07 $4.99 U.S., $5.99 CAN

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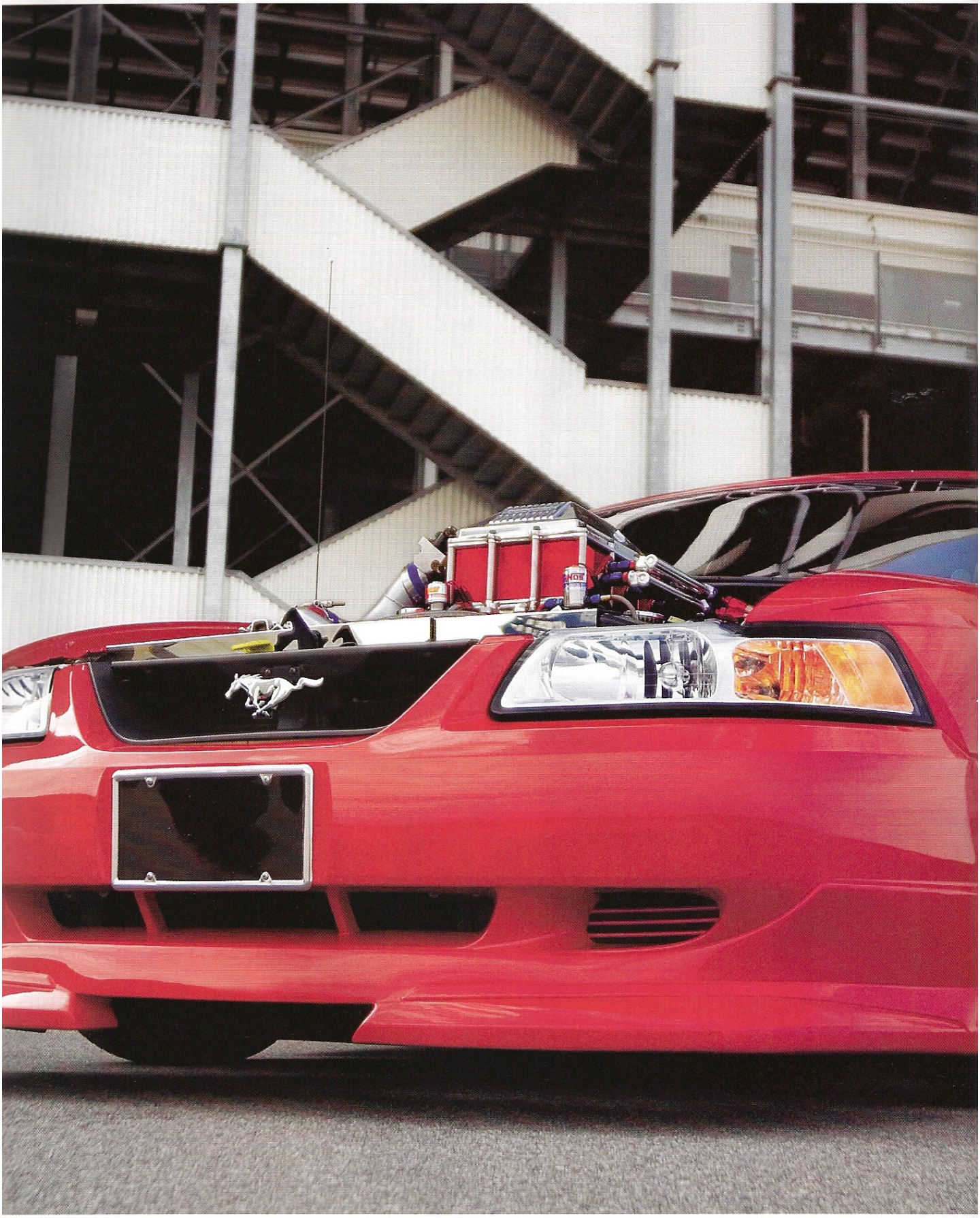
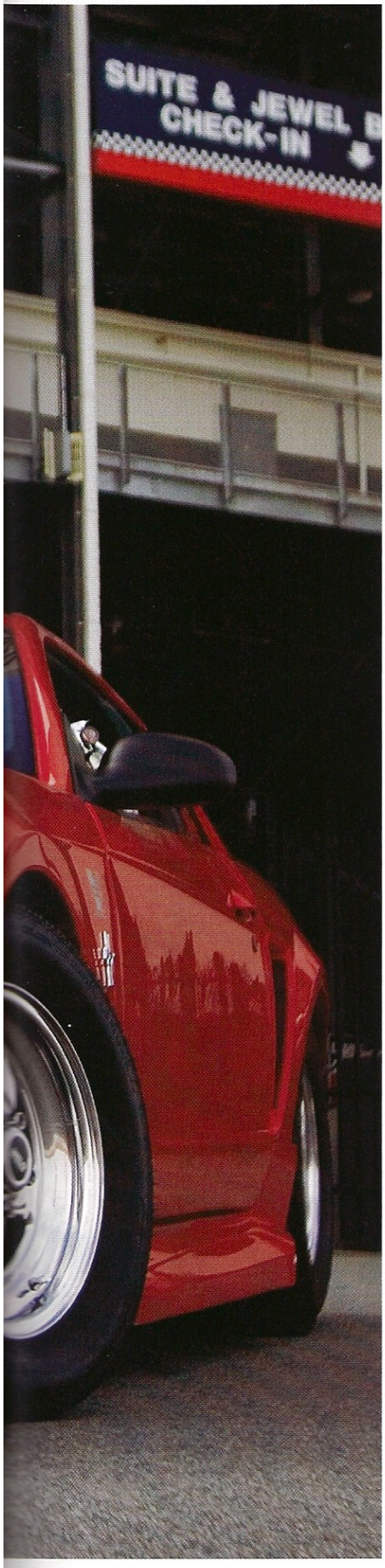
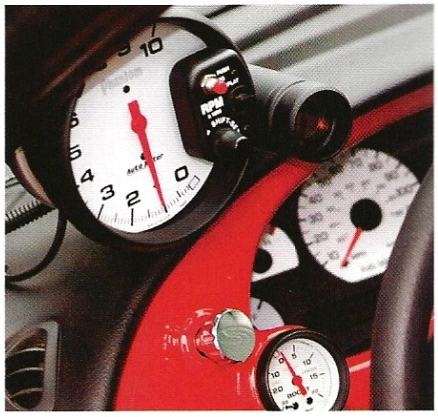
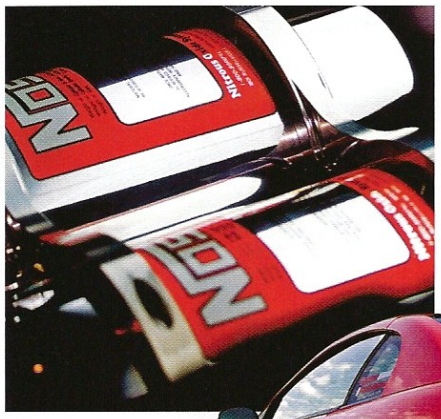


Story by **Don Roy** Photos by **Tracy Stocker**







When You're Building a **Play Toy**, It's Easy to Find Yourself On a...

SLIPPERY SLOPE

SLIPPERY SLOPE

RONNIE FURR'S 2000 MUSTANG V6

It all started one Thursday. Ronnie Furr had bought a Y2K Roush Mustang for his wife, equipped with a 3.8-liter engine and five-speed transmission. That contribution to their married bliss lasted all of about 1,100 miles when the missus let Ronnie know that she didn't care so much for the car. Rather than taking a bath trying to sell or trade the six-banger in, Ronnie decided that he would turn it in to a project car. Actually, this one would be just another in a long line of Ronnie's projects – projects that all share one thing in common. Big power.

If you looked through Ronnie's automotive family tree, you would see what I mean. In 1975, there was a 1969 BOSS 302 Mustang ... that was followed a couple of years later by a 1923 T-bucket hot rod that carried a Chevy 350 with a couple of quads on top. In between Ronnie owned a 1955 and – 1957 Chevy ... then came a spate of Trans Am's. That phase of his resumé started with a 1973 Trans Am 455 Super Duty model and followed up with four others later on. As the '80s progressed, along came a 1979 Corvette Anniversary Edition.

To begin the conversion process, Ronnie got his hands on a Vortech V-2 SQ-Trim supercharger. Now, at nine pounds of boost, these units are factory rated to add 85 flywheel HP, bringing the total to about 260. What Ronnie soon found out was that wasn't enough to back up some of the 'conversations' he'd had at his local eighth-mile competition park. With the V-2 doing it's best, the car would only turn in 8.90 runs and that surely wasn't enough to walk the walk.

STAGE TWO

Having spent some time in the racing scene, Ronnie had more than once seen the work of a shop called Custom Performance and decided to check them out. Located in the shadow of Lowe's Motor Speedway in Concord, NC, Ronnie got into a conversation with Dale Sciranko, the owner. Because Dale likes doing some different things, particularly when there's a challenge involved, he agreed to work with Ronnie to get this red rocket into a respectable performance zone. The initial target was being able to run 7.5's in the eighth-mile. At some point in the two-and-a-half year process, they blew by that target and left it smoking at the side of the road. Nobody quite remembers when that was, though.

On this aspect of the job, Ronnie explained, "I never intended for the car to turn out so radical. It just kind of happened that way. One thing led to another and I ended up with this beast for a V6." And what a beast it is! One of

"I never intended for the car to turn out so radical. It just kind of happened that way."

INTERIOR / EXTERIOR

Ronnie Furr's 2000 Mustang V6

EXTERIOR

Roush Performance body kit, including side skirts, rear spoiler

INTERIOR

Hooker 4-point roll bar; Corbeau seats, 4-point seat belts

CHASSIS

Optima battery, relocated to trunk; QA1 front K-member

SUSPENSION

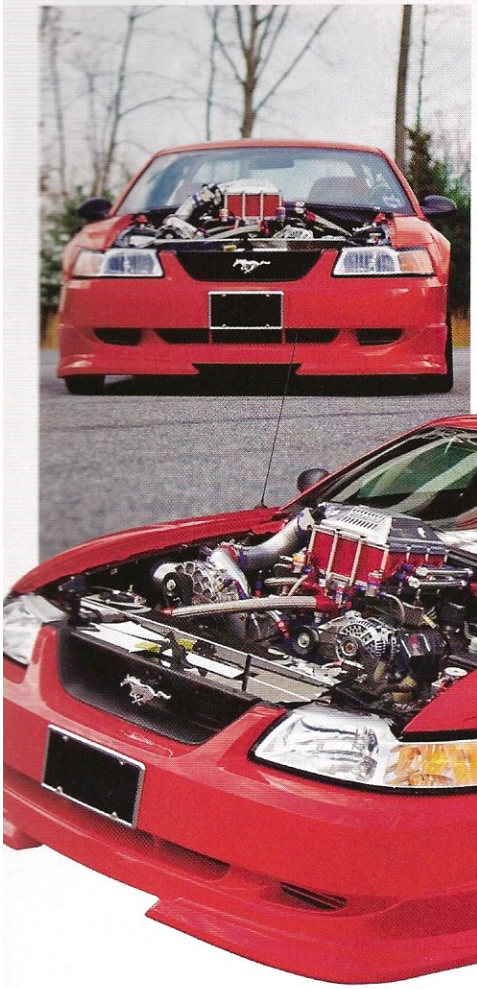
QA1 adjustable front coilover springs and struts; Lakewood 50/50 rear shock absorbers; Steeda adjustable upper control arms, aluminum lower control arms, rear anti-roll bar

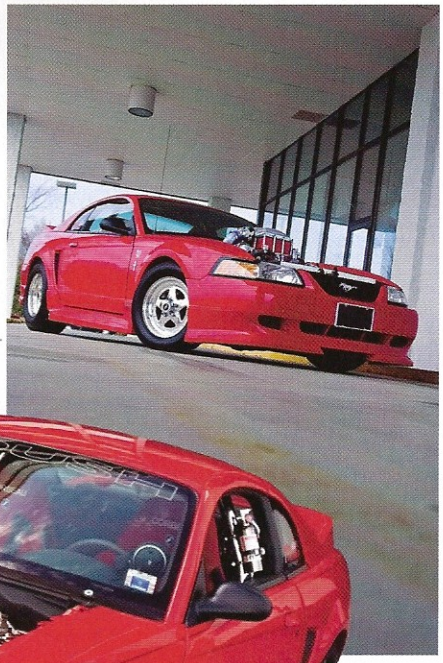
WHEELS AND TIRES

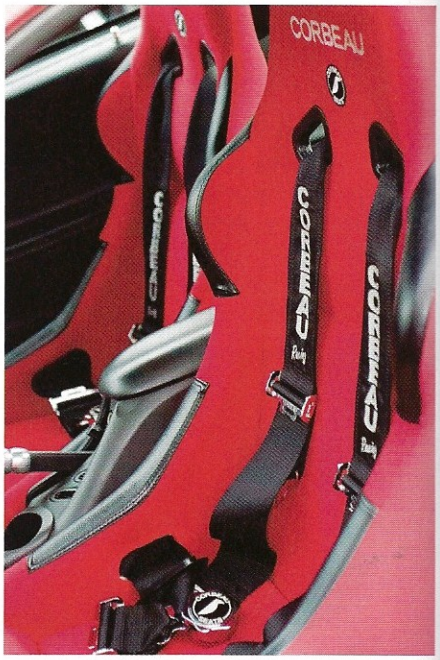
Weld Racing Drag Lite wheels, 15 x 3" front, 15 x 10" rear; American Tire 165R15 front, 275/60-15 rear

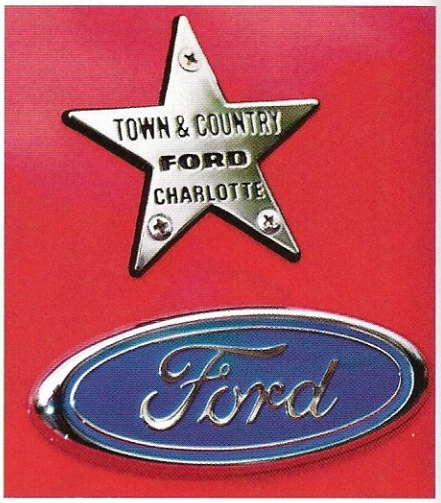
SLIPPERY SLOPE

RONNIE FURR'S 2000 MUSTANG V6









It all started with the long-favored **Thunderbird Super Coupe crankshaft**.

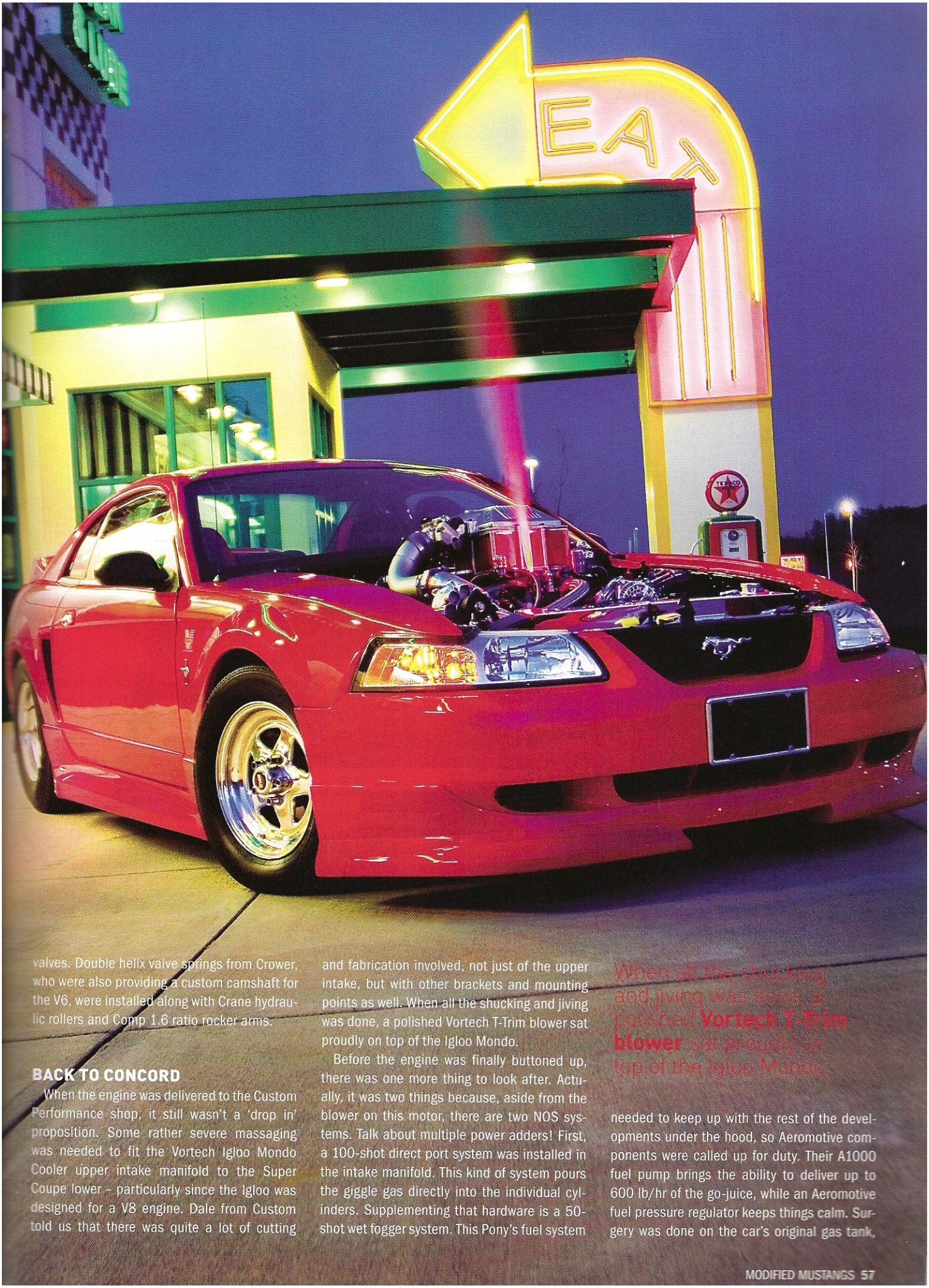
the first things that Custom Performance did was to remove the engine and source a shortblock from Coy Miller Racing in Harrisonburg, VA. Miller is well known within the V6 community for his expertise in supplying 'built' engines at all levels. In the case of Ronnie's shortblock, it all started with the long-favored Thunderbird Super Coupe crankshaft. This forged steel piece can take just about anything that six pistons can throw at it and still keep things intact. Still, a thorough preparation of the crank is mandated by Miller.

This includes vat cleaning and then magnafluxing the piece to ensure that it isn't too far out of line. Loaded into a crankshaft grinder, they are indexed and re-ground to better than factory specifications. Special attention is paid to maintaining correct tolerances for bearing clearance and clearing oil passages. With critical surfaces then micropolished, the crank is ready for duty.

The block itself is reworked by first decking the top surfaces. The purpose of this machining operation is to get the decks (the surfaces that the cylinder heads sit on) square with the centerline of the crankshaft. Once that surface can be depended on, the cylinders were bored .030-over, then honed for final preparation. The honing process is so critical to the engine's performance that Coy Miller does each block personally. Thick plates to simulate cylinder heads are installed, including head gaskets, and torqued down exactly as in final assembly of the engine. Several steps of honing are used, representing a pattern that Miller has developed over the years.

With the crank and block ready, a package of Carillo connecting rods was opened. All connecting rods are fitted with high tensile hardware and balanced to within one half gram at both ends. Center distances were checked and machined, as needed. This particular six-banger was getting CP billet pistons and pins, so these along with the piston rings were weighed up and piston weights adjusted as necessary. All of this preparation and attention to detail yields a shortblock that doesn't fall short in any area and that would end up being a very good thing.

Ronnie, in the meantime, knew that Thunderbird Super Coupe cylinder heads were also going to be needed to keep up with the new bottom end. A set were on order from Miller's shop as well. A good dose of porting had been laid on the candidates, first to match the intake ports to the lower intake manifold, then to reshape the bowls and increase their size, lowering the compression ratio a bit to the 9.5:1 target. Once the metal grinding and polishing was complete, Ferrea was called on to provide the 2.02" intake and 1.60" exhaust



valves. Double helix valve springs from Crower, who were also providing a custom camshaft for the V6, were installed along with Crane hydraulic rollers and Comp 1.6 ratio rocker arms.

BACK TO CONCORD

When the engine was delivered to the Custom Performance shop, it still wasn't a 'drop in' proposition. Some rather severe massaging was needed to fit the Vortech Igloo Mondo Cooler upper intake manifold to the Super Coupe lower - particularly since the Igloo was designed for a V8 engine. Dale from Custom told us that there was quite a lot of cutting and fabrication involved, not just of the upper intake, but with other brackets and mounting points as well. When all the shucking and jiving was done, a polished Vortech T-Trim blower sat proudly on top of the Igloo Mondo.

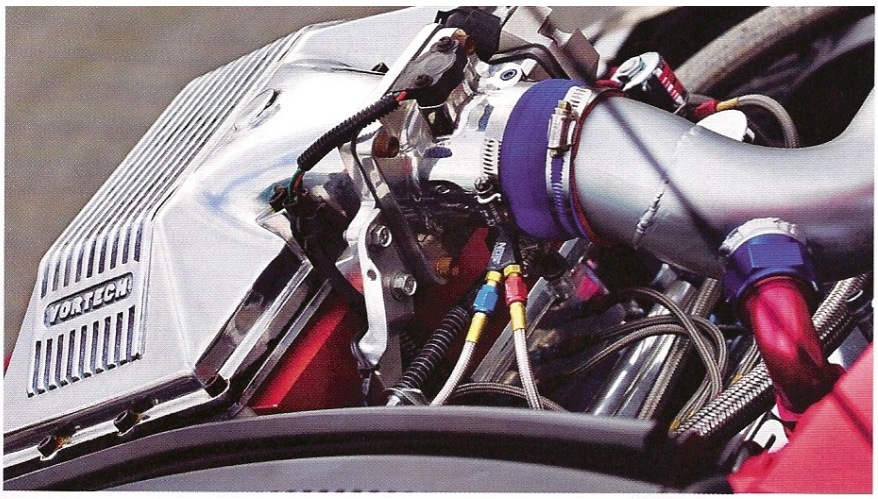
Before the engine was finally buttoned up, there was one more thing to look after. Actually, it was two things because, aside from the blower on this motor, there are two NOS systems. Talk about multiple power adders! First, a 100-shot direct port system was installed in the intake manifold. This kind of system pours the giggle gas directly into the individual cylinders. Supplementing that hardware is a 50-shot wet fogger system. This Pony's fuel system

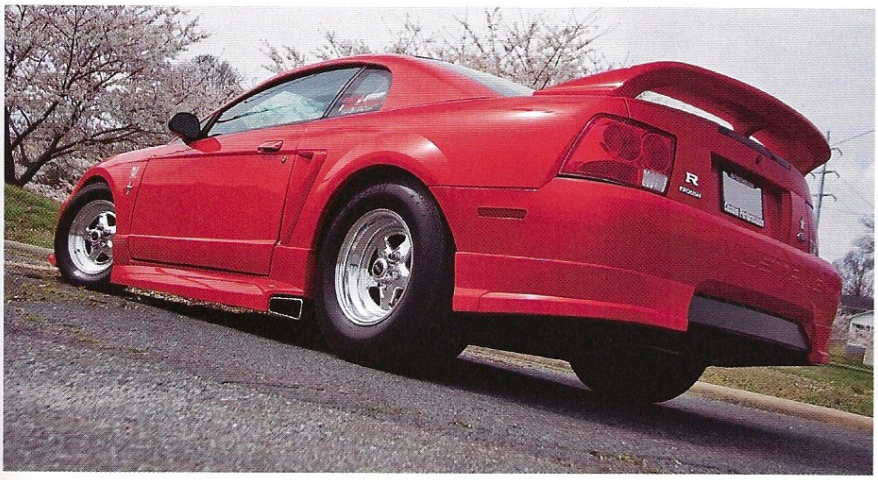
When all the shucking and jiving was done, a polished **Vortech T-Trim blower** sat proudly on top of the Igloo Mondo.

needed to keep up with the rest of the developments under the hood, so Aeromotive components were called up for duty. Their A1000 fuel pump brings the ability to deliver up to 600 lb/hr of the go-juice, while an Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator keeps things calm. Surgery was done on the car's original gas tank,

SLIPPERY SLOPE

RONNIE FURR'S 2000 MUSTANG V6





welding in a Comp. Eng. sump to keep the pipeline open. All of this is dedicated to feeding a voracious set of Siemens Deka fuel injectors, rated at 83 lbs/hr. An Accufab throttle body and Anderson Ford Power Pipe look after the early portions of the intake system.

MAC Performance supplied the long tube headers that start the exhaust procedures. Their 2.5-inch output feeds an off-road intermediate and in to a pair of Flowmaster's best. Electromotive's Tec3 direct fire ignition coils deliver the sparks when needed, supervised continually by the Tec3 ignition control box.

One of the keys to achieving consistent straight line performance lies in keeping the driver as focused on driving as possible. To help make this happen, Dale had ordered a race-grade C4 automatic transmission from JW Performance in Rockledge, FL. The tranny came equipped with a trans-brake, steel flex plate and 3600-rpm stall torque converter.

A new three-inch driveshaft had to be made up for the driveline, so an 8.8" axle was also readied, with a Moser 33-spline spool and axle shafts. Suspension and body supplements were also going to be a big part of making this car go faster. A QA1 tubular K-member replaced the original engine and suspension hanger. A front coilover conversion was set in place, along with QA1 struts. Steeda supplied adjustable upper

One of the **keys to achieving consistent straight line performance** lies in keeping the driver as focused on driving as possible.

control arms for the stern along with billet aluminum lowers, supplemented with Lakewood 50/50 shocks. Classic Weld Drag Lite big 'n' little wheels adorn the corners of the evolving Pony, with American Tire skins all around.

Corbeau supplied the seats and four-point restraints for inside the car, while Auto Meter looked after the IT side of things. Their five-inch monster tach dominates the interior view, while boost and air/fuel gauges deliver the 411 to show that things are staying healthy. Hooker delivered the four-point roll cage that was going to be needed if Dale delivered on his promises.

When it came time to verify the results of their work, a portable Dynojet dynamometer was flagged to stop by. Topping up the gas tank with 110 octane gas and making sure that the dual ten-pound bottles were full, the storming V6 punched out 598 WHP along with 557 lb-ft, Those incredible V6 numbers were delivered with the air fuel ratio sitting at 12, while the boost gauge would show 21 pounds of combustion assistance. When Ronnie took the car to Rockingham Dragway, he managed to turn in a more-than-respectable run of 10.44 @ 126 mph, In the short version, the newly minted monster was now turning 6.5 second runs and that put an end to the smack talk, for sure.

Looking back, or when people ask Ronnie why he did all this with a V6 engine, he gives them his most honest explanation. "I don't have a good answer, it just started out that way. If I knew I was going to have so much money in it at first, I might have decided to build the V8." And that, my friends, is exactly what a slippery slope is all about. Still, Ronnie is sanguine about his project. "I think the car gets a lot more looks and attention, being a V6." We'd have to agree. MM

SPECIFICATIONS

Ronnie Furr's 2000 Mustang V6

ENGINE

3.8-liter V6

ENGINE MODIFICATIONS

Ford Thunderbird Super Coupe cylinder heads, crankshaft, lower intake manifold; Carillo connecting rods; CP flat top pistons; Crower custom ground camshaft, double coil valve springs, retainers; Crane hydraulic roller lifters; Comp Cams 1.6-ratio rocker arms; Ferrea 2.02" intake and 1.60" exhaust valves; Engine block bored .030" over, decked and line honed; Cylinder head bowls reshaped and resized to lower compression; Accufab throttle body; Anderson Ford Motorsports Power Pipe; Siemans Deka 83 lb/hr fuel injectors; Aeromotive A1000 fuel pump, fuel pressure regulator, fuel filter; Vortech T-trim supercharger, with Mondo Igloo intercooler and modified upper intake manifold, race bypass valve; MAC long tube headers; Flowmaster 2.5" mufflers; NOS 50-shot fogger system, plus 100-shot direct port injection system, dual 10 lb. bottles; Tec3 Direct Fire ignition coils, ignition control box; NGK spark plugs; MSD 8.5mm ignition wires; ARP mains bolts and head studs

DRIVELINE

JW Performance-built Ford C-4 automatic transmission, including trans brake, steel flex plate and 10", 3600 rpm stall torque converter; Ford 8.8" rear axle; Custom built 3" driveshaft; Moser 33-spline spool

NUMBERS *

598 RWHP, 557 RWTQ
BEST ET TO DATE: 10.40 @ 126 mph
* @21 lbs boost (no nitrous)