



One Trick Pony

CLASSIC
DESIGN
CONCEPTS
CAN MAKE
ANY MUSTANG
SPECTACULAR

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One of the best aspects of the Mustang's latest generation is the speed at which the aftermarket addressed the customizing and personalizing needs and desires of owners. This was no accident; but a well-planned and orchestrated effort between Ford, SEMA and its member companies, right from Job 1.

Fast forward from the car's introduction and some of those early-build Mustangs are now used cars. A quick look at the Kelly Blue Book numbers shows that while the cars have held their values quite well, some early six-cylinder versions are now approaching \$10,000 as used cars. The actual trade-in values, for Southern California, for a 2005 Mustang with

28,000 miles, about average for a six-cylinder coupe with typical equipment look like this:

Excellent Condition - \$14,350
Good Condition - \$13,435
Fair Condition - \$11,850

If you look hard, are not too picky and

are willing to consider a car with above average mileage or in less than stellar condition, you should be able to find a six-cylinder coupe for right around the magic \$10,000 price point.

That scenario brings us to the car you see here, the mildly customized, real-world six-cylinder coupe that did booth duty for Classic Design Concepts (CDC) at the 2006



SEMA show. We can honestly say, after driving the car all around car crazy Southern California for more than two weeks, that few current Mustangs (save for Shelby GT500s and obviously highly modified show cars) draw nearly as much attention as this little white six-cylinder fastback. It's just that arresting.

We took it to the weekly Saturday morning "Cars and Coffee" cruise at the Ford, Mazda and Premier Auto Group campus in Irvine. We were swamped by showgoers who wanted to know what was up with the car that had two different rear quarter-scoops (that's so CDC could show off both options that they offer). We quickly ran out of leftover brochures from

the SEMA show that we found stashed in the truck.

Almost every time we stopped for gas, not that often since it was the V-6, we were hounded by people wanting to know about the car. There are two visual elements - the 20-inch wheels from California Pony Car, emulating the classic look of the original styled steel road wheel, and the updated version of the shaker hood (propped up with a set of CDC's hood struts). While we're up front, we should note that the car sports a Pony Edition with integrated fog lamps and an aggressive front chin spoiler.

The most dominant element of the CDC Mustang is its Glassback roof. With its narrow greenhouse and dark cabin

appointments, many have characterized the current Mustang's interior as dungeon-like. The Glassback roof, installed only through a nationwide network of CDC-authorized sunroof installers (price determined by local installer but expect to pay around \$3,500, installation included), really serves to make the Mustang's interior more inviting.

Because the car was equipped with the Shaker 500 six-disc CD changer system, we tried to upgrade the audio system and turned to Q-Forms and Alphasonik. Q-Forms supplied the QL-K2014B01 kick panels which became the home to a set of 5.25-inch Alphasonik component separates. In the trunk, we installed a Q-Customs QL-C1MST112A01 2005-2007





12-inch subwoofer enclosure in which we stuffed a 12-inch Alphasonik subwoofer.

Because we knew that the Shaker system's output in the real world left something to be desired, we opted to add an Alphasonik PMZ12005A five-channel amplifier. The only problem was where to install it; the Mustang's cabin and trunk configuration really doesn't lend itself too well to adding an amplifier with a footprint this large. This was solved by Alphasonik's Rick Andersen, who fabricated a custom amplifier cover molded to match the contours of the Q-Customs subwoofer enclosure and covered it in perfect-match vinyl. The result is a totally factory-look installation

that sacrifices a minimum of the trunk's utility. A PAC iPAC-OEM2 direct iPod interface allows us to directly control our iPod with the controls of the head unit, displaying the track information on the head unit's front panel display.

While we're at the back of the vehicle, look at the three-piece ducktail spoiler, the matte black rear trim panel, and CDC's Dynamite Stick sequential taillights. Underneath the car, Eibach lowering springs and a Borla dual exhaust system reside, giving the car a very V-8-like growl, adding to the illusion that this is more than just another six-cylinder Mustang. It also provided the additional benefit of adding a few horsepower and sharpening up this

pony's handling characteristics. Of course, the reasonably priced, Chinese-sourced Wanli 245/35ZR20 95 WXLs up front and meaty 275/40ZR20 106 WXLs in the rear can't hurt the handling either.

Any current generation Mustang can be outfitted almost identically to our test car, without paint or graphics, for well under \$10,000, including the audio upgrade. Throw in a few custom touches of your own and you'll have a truly distinctive, one-of-a-kind Mustang for about the price of a bone stock 2007 six-cylinder coupe...and there's always the option of adding one of the superchargers now available for the V-6. Something to think about. ■



SOURCES

AIRESEARCH (Q-FORMS, Q-CUSTOMS)

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