

No, You Don't Know What It Is

By Wallace A. Wyss

Here we are—enthusiasts all. We subscribe to all the big-time car mags and we know everything. Right? Wrong.

First question: What's the Ford Mach 2 C? Wasn't that the little mid-engine job with the Mustang floor pan and...no, that was the Mach 2. The Mach 2 C has never been seen, by anyone, anywhere outside of Ford.

In a dusty file bin in Detroit, we happened across these pictures—relics of days gone by, before 5mph bumpers and roof strength requirements were sapping the nimble minds of Detroit's pencil pushers.

Ford pictures show the Mach 2 C parked between a Mangusta and Ford's own Mach 2 show car. It is, symbolically, a "missing link" between the Pantera and Ford's own "in-house" efforts at a *mittel-motor*. What happened was that Henry Ford, then in his Italian period, bought a ready-made from boutique owner-and-car-tycoon expatriate Argentine Alessandro DeTomaso. But before that, unknown to all but those who were there, Ford had been trying like blazes to come up with its own Corvette stomper.

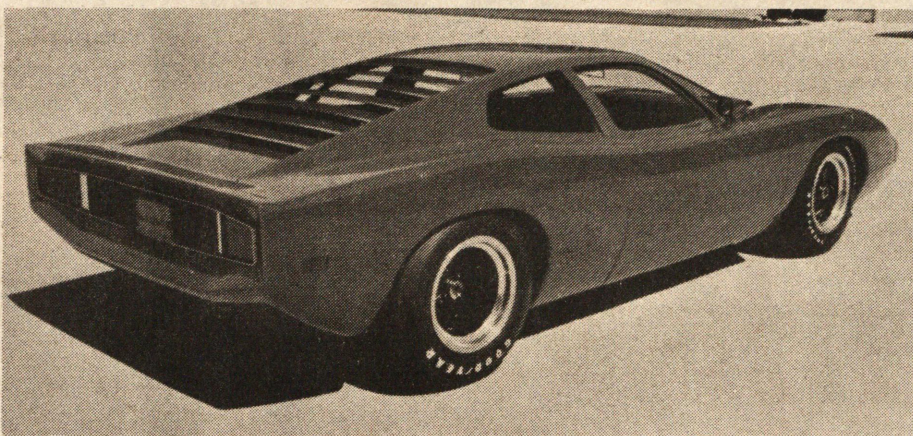
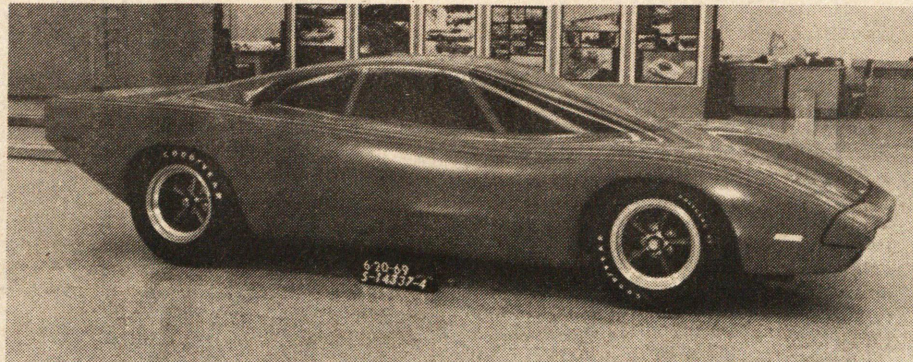
Ford's first mid-engine project was the Mustang I, built way back in 1963 using a German Ford Taunus four-banger. About that time Eric Broadley built his first Lola mid-engined GT coupe and Ford latched onto him to build the GT-40.

Even while the race cars were abuilding, Ford engineers wanted to build something streetable along the same line. They toyed with the idea of using GT-40 parts but finally decided a Mustang floor plan would be the best starting point.

With Ed Hull the design engineer, a hole was cut in the back of the floor pan for a Mustang V8 and heavy crossmembers put in to support it. A ZF transaxle was affixed and a Lotus-style suspension installed with coil shocks all around.

Oddly, the Mach 2, as it came to be called, had drum brakes in the back just like the stock Mustang. The fiberglass body was unstressed, glued onto the frame.

The Mach 2 styling was very much Lotus Europa-inspired, particularly its sloping nose with the pop-up headlights. The tunnel-back room style was a trifle



Filed away before it ever lived, the Ford Mach 2 C might have been our own Pantera.

Corvette-ish as was the placement of the side "wastegates" but, then, why not? Larry Shinoda, a Ford stylist at the time of the Mach 2, also designed the Corvettes from '63 on.

The Pantera was originally only the second phase of the Mangusta, even though the Mangusta, at only 400 and some-odd units overall, was not what you call a fantastic market upsetter.

According to Tom Tjaarda, an Italian-based car designer, the way it happened was thus: DeTomaso had Tjaarda build him three quarter-scale clay models of new Mangusta body styles. Tjaarda did so.

Then these men from Detroit show up, with talk of millions of lire if only there were a car fit for the King.

DeTomaso pulls back the magic curtain, shoves two of the clay models back and presents—voila—the new Pantera.

(name change: "Panther" better than "Mongoose" despite political overtones; Eldridge was in Algeria anyhow).

But Ford engineers knew that the Mangusta was not an engineering wonder. Something about the frame being brittle. They changed the Pantera to a unibody design. And built a modern assembly line. And sent accountants. And even after that, when the cars got to

America, the first few had to be rebuilt all over again, because one good wringing out of the engine caused the chassis weaknesses to reveal themselves.

DeTomaso got the last laugh. After selling Ford his company, including Ghia and Vignale, he moved down the road and set up a factory building...Panteras—for the European market. Where does he get the bodies? He knows these boys with hammers. Who needs an assembly line, huh?

The Mach 2 C was styled by Larry Shinoda, who during his long tenure at GM, working in the "secret styling studio" doodling dream cars for Bill Mitchell, managed to squeeze out such unsullied wonders as the Corvair SS and Monza GT and the original Sting Ray shape.

When "Bunky" Knudsen took the job of president of Ford Motor Company, he brought Shinoda along with him. Shinoda has Japanese ancestors but was born in California, where he spent a lot of time racing hot rods. He spawned the era of "Boss Mustangs" at Ford.

When Henry Ford was deuced at not being able to buy Ferrari, he still wanted to have an Italian GT. While a team was in Italy being waltzed by Alessandro DeTomaso, Shinoda and crew whipped up the Mach 2 C around a 400 cu. in. engine. Specs called for a four-speed transaxle and IRS. The body appears to be fiberglass on the prototype, which had not only an engine but a fully upholstered interior!

Now, we all hear about mark-up and manufacturer's cost but the figures touted for the Mach 2 C on a confidential memo are too good to be true. Ford planned to sell the thing for \$6500!

Look at the pictures and weep, Ford fans. Our own home grown Pantera. Stillborn before it had a chance to make its first tire squeal...

Do-It-Yourself Engine Tuning May Be Ended

By Jake Kelderman
Washington Editor

WASHINGTON—As you did to 427 Hemis and rag tops, say goodbye to the back yard tune-up; say goodbye to Saturday afternoons spent making the family buggy run so fine.

In a move designed really to get control of auto emissions the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is proposing to make the auto manufacturers build cars by 1980 that will need little if any adjustments; cars that will go 50,000 miles with little more than a new set of plugs and a few oil changes.

The EPA has been studying emissions from vehicles in use on the road for a couple of years now and much to its disappointment has found those cars to be polluting considerably more than the vehicles the manufacturers gave them for certification purposes. In fact fully 63% of the 1975 models tested by the agency failed to meet the current emissions standard.

Most of this can be blamed on improper tuning, the agency found. Nearly half of the vehicles tested were discovered to have broken or missing idle adjustment caps, one-quarter had choke settings

different than those recommended by the manufacturer, and another one-quarter had misadjusted ignition timing.

EPA believes much of this is purposeful, done by owners or mechanics to bring back lost car performance whether real or imaginary. EPA investigators also found a lot of evidence of fiddling with emission control systems, such as exhaust gas recirculators and air pumps, for the same reason. Interestingly though, the EPA technicians found that when these misadjusted cars were returned to manufacturer's specifications they ran better and more economically and as cleanly as they were designed to.

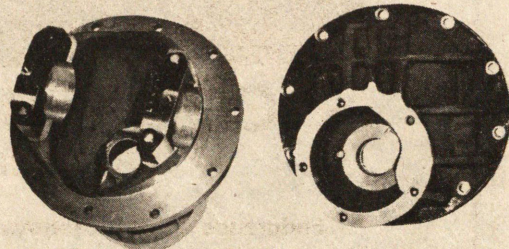
What EPA is proposing to keep this misguided fiddling from continuing is to test new cars for emission levels at all settings within the range provided for by the manufacturer and to require those cars to pass the emission standard when this is done.

EPA says the purpose of the proposal "is to require these vehicles to meet the emission standards even when maladjusted," but in the same breath the agency admits it is more likely "to motivate the manufacturers to effectively reduce the feasibility and likelihood of vehicles being adjusted to other than manufacturer's specifications."

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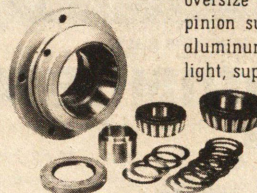
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