

SIMPLY

RED

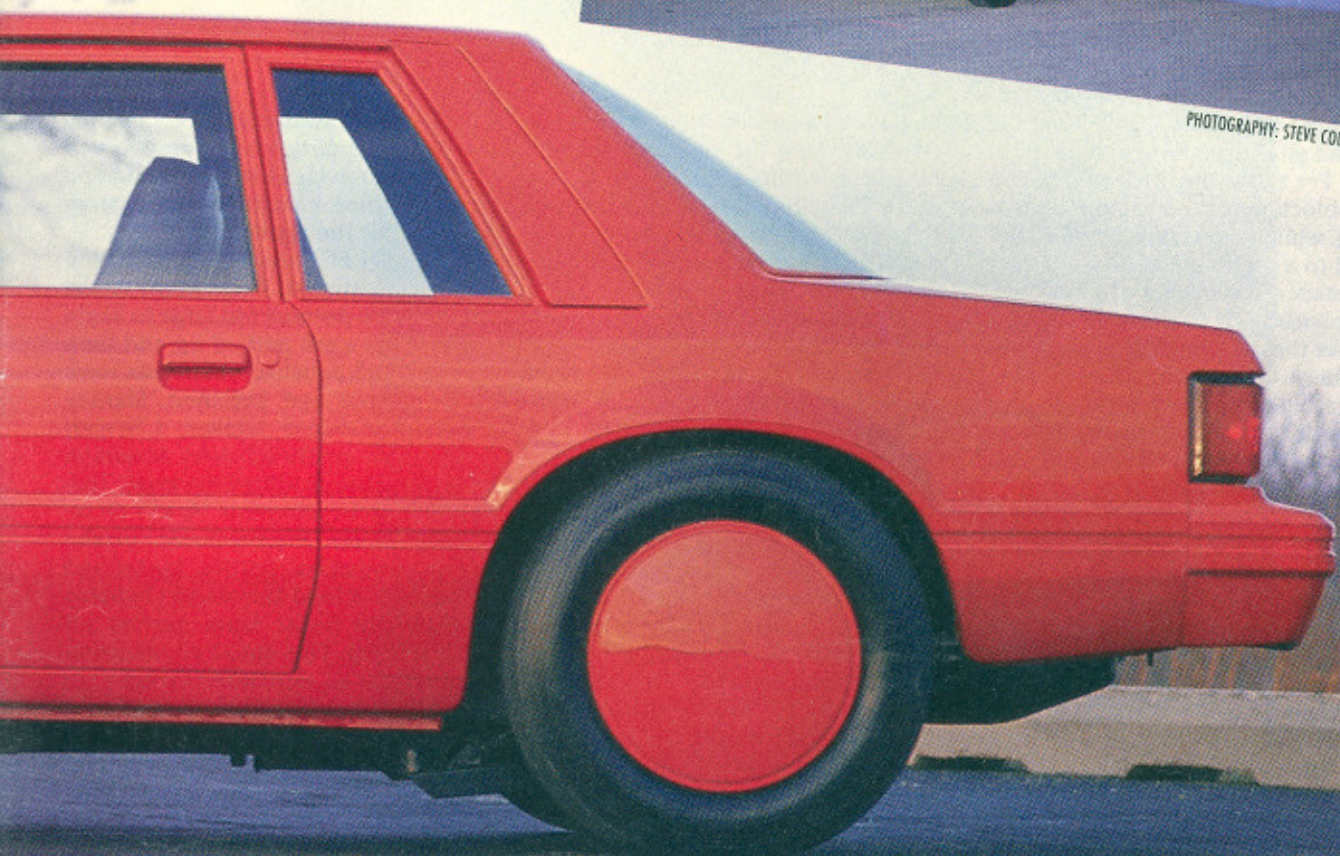


Rick Anderson's 499-cube '79 Mustang street stomper is simply awesome!

By Jeff Bauer



PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE COLLISON



Picture a Mustang: an immaculate 1979 4-cylinder, 4-speed, one-owner Mustang that's been garaged all its life and gets great gas mileage. Nothing to get excited about, right?

Now picture an engine: a 575-horsepower, 1971 429 Super Cobra Jet megamill that's been poked and stroked to 499 cubic inches and fitted with top-drawer Ford and aftermarket hi-po hardware.

Put these two together, and what have you got? A 499 SCJ '79 Mustang that's as

much at home on the street as it is on a low 11-second pass!

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," you're saying. "We've heard this one before. Squeezing a 499-cube powerplant into a late-model Mustang is one thing, but making this combination a happy little daily driver is a bit hard to believe." Well, you're going to have to believe it, folks, because Rick Anderson drove this bad boy on the street for more than 2,000 trouble-free miles last year, and it was a few months into the year before the rowdy

Rick Anderson is proud of his unique Mustang, built by him and his brother, Ron Anderson. So reliable is the 499 that Rick lets his wife drive it!

red 'Stang was even completed. In fact, even though it was built for speed, this car has been to a drag strip only twice in its life, with a low ET of 11.07 at 126 mph. And there's no nitrous anywhere.

In a roundabout way, this Mustang was the product of a friendly sibling rivalry. It all started back in late '87, when Rick and his brother Ron each decided to build superquick Mustangs for the street. Since Rick is the parts manager for the family-run Anderson Ford Motorsport Performance Center in Clinton, Ill., and Ron runs his own engine building shop, Anderson Performance, in nearby Lexington, the two had all the resources they would need. For reliability, Rick decided on a big-block/automatic setup for his 'Stang, while Ron went with a 5-speed mated to a small-block.

Because Ron had raced an '85 SVO 'Stang with a 351 Cleveland in it, and because the Cleveland is very close to the same width as the 429/460, Rick knew a big-block Ford would fit in a late-model Mustang body with minimal hassles. He didn't have any 'Stangs sitting around the garage at the time, so the search began for a clean and straight late-model body. Rick looked at a slew of rusty and otherwise unsuitable candidates for his 499 project before he came across the '79 pictured here.

The car was owned by an elderly gentleman who purchased it new in '79 and treated it well. The garaged '79 was a 4-cylinder, 4-speed car, but that didn't matter to Rick. What did matter was the straight and solid body. In



fact, Rick was so sure that this was the right Mustang for the part that he bought it without benefit of a test drive. That original owner had no idea that Rick was going to turn his economical daily driver into a fire-breathing street monster.

The engine came from a '70 Torino that Ron used to own. Ron had sold the car in '77, but Rick had fond memories of that engine from when his brother worked on it. So he took the time and effort to trace the Torino through umpteen owners before finding it just 40 miles from home. Soon the powerplant was back in Clinton, Ill., and Project 499 was quickly becoming a reality.

The 429 was rebuilt at Rick's brother's shop, and it was first-class performance parts all the way. For starters, the SCJ block was bored and stroked for a total displacement of 499 cu. in. A Ford 460 crank was offset ground by Torque-Man of Glennville, Ga., for maximum stroke. Venolia flat-

top pistons and Mopar 440 connecting rods do the dirty work. Compression ratio is an even 11.0:1. An Anderson Performance camshaft was custom ground for the application.

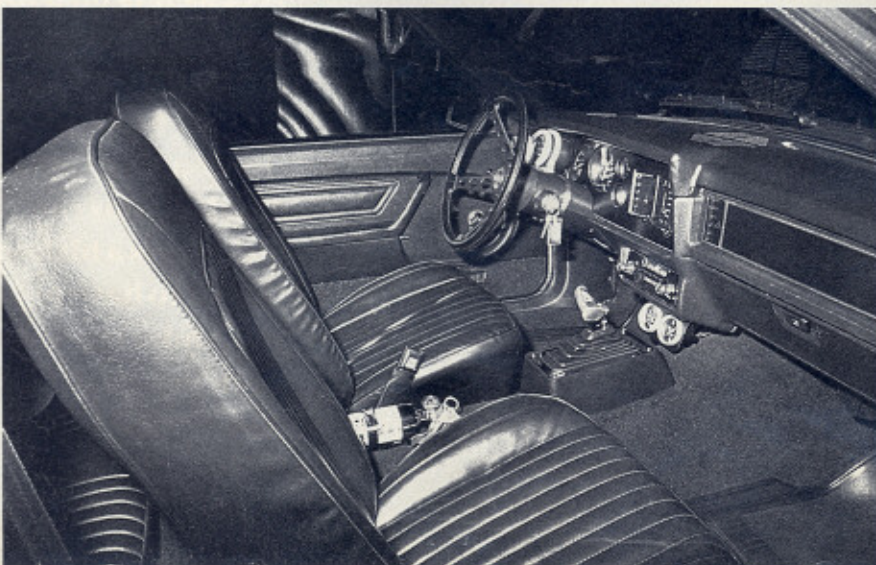
The '71 SCJ heads were given the special treatment. Because the intake ports were deemed too large to begin with, they were puttied up and then ported and polished. Exhausts were also ported and polished. Manley valves—2.25-inch intakes, 1.76-inch exhausts—get the job done. Anderson Performance modified the single Holley 900-cfm carburetor. It sits on an Offenhauser Port-O-Sonic intake manifold that was puttied, ported and polished. A Ford Motorsport radiator keeps the beast from getting all steamed up. This entire combination is good for an estimated 575 hp!

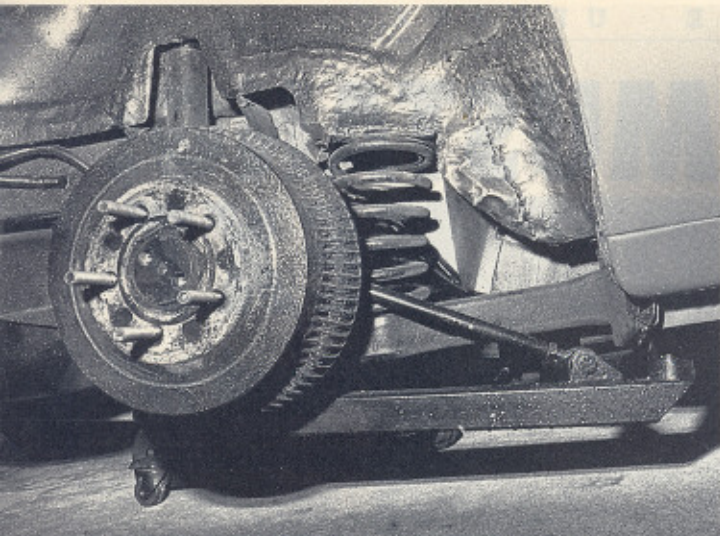
All that power passes back to a C-6 3-speed automatic transmission that employs a GER 3500-rpm torque converter. It's topped by a B&M Megashifter. The SCJ rear was narrowed by Currie Enterprises and houses a Traction-Lok differential that spins relatively mild 3.50 gears. Lakewood slapper bars do their part to get this baby to hook.

Rick didn't want to tub the wheelwells, but he also wanted to run some fairly meaty skins, so he devised a clever solution. He had some 6-inch-wide wheels lying around, so he took them to a machine shop and had the machinists cut them into two and weld together a set of 9½-inch wheels for the rear. They're shod with a pair of 15x9½-inch M&H Racemasters. Up front, two 15x4-inch space saver spares work just as well as any high-tech setup.

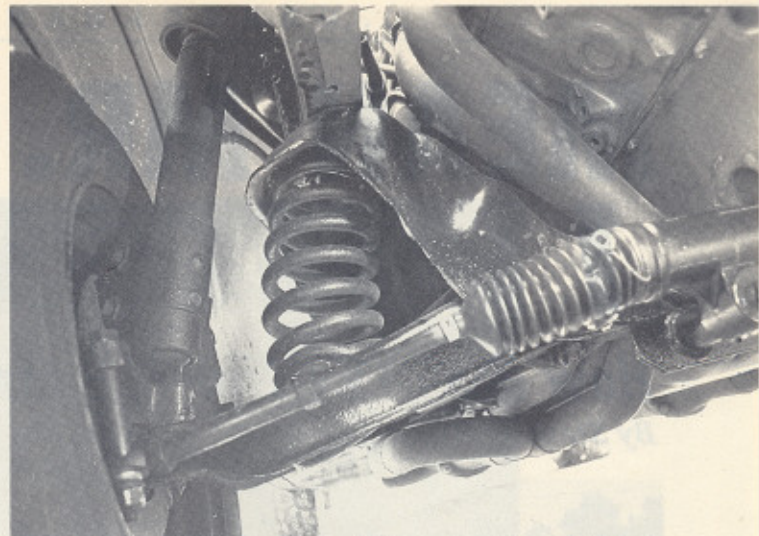
Dropping the 499 into the car required more than a large shoehorn. In keeping with a street theme, Rick

With the exception of the Auto Meter gauges and B&M shifter, interior was left stock. A roll bar is next.





Lakewood slapper bars do the best they can to get this baby to hook.




In order to fit the 499 cube mill, the rack and pinion was cut and lowered 2 3/4 inches.

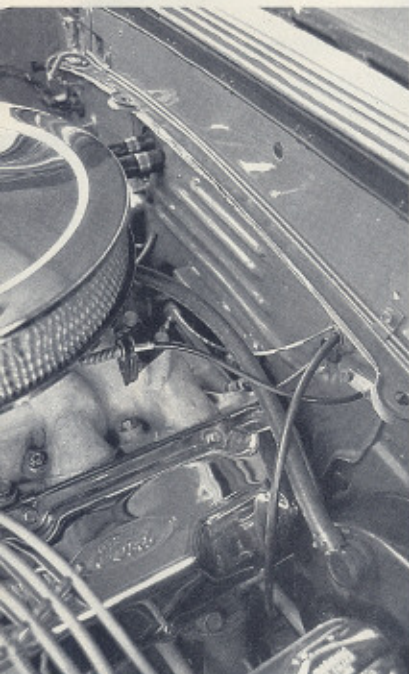
decided he didn't want a hood scoop, so everything had to fit under the unmolested hoodline. The rack-and-pinion hardware was cut and lowered 2 3/4 inches. The entire car was lowered a total of 3 inches. A Jack Roush motor plate allowed the motor to be seated as far down and back as possible. This also made it much easier to build and fit a set of headers. Because of the 429's position, both the oil pan and a support at the back of the engine had to be fabricated pretty much from scratch.

The rest of the car was given as

much attention as the powerplant. The mint stock black vinyl interior needed just a set of Autometer gauges to be perfect. Rick wanted a tasteful custom look, so he had his baby sprayed with '79 Bright Red enamel paint. All molding was removed, sanded and painted to match the rest of the car. Rick originally put on a set of red wheelcovers because he didn't want to spend a lot of money on trick aftermarket wheels, but the covers turned out to be the perfect finishing touch for his monochrome monster.

In addition to his brother Ron and

the folks at Anderson Ford Motorsports Performance Center, Rick credits his good friend Brian Detweiler for helping him finish the project. The car went to two auto shows last year and won second and third place trophies. Rick runs his Red Rider at cruise nights an average of twice a month during the good months, and these little jaunts are for 50 to 60 miles apiece! At 8 mpg, stops at the gas station are frequent (regular unleaded works just fine), but that's a small price to pay for a 575-hp legitimately streetable Mustang! 



Even though late-model Mustangs have a relatively large engine compartment, the 499 still had to be positioned as far back as possible. Firewall clearance is minimal, but it fits!

Where once lived a low-po four-banger, now resides a '71 429 SCJ powerplant that's been bored and stroked to 499 cubic inches and topped off with a single 850-cfm Holley 4-barrel carb. Despite its obvious displacement advantage, this big-block Ford is quite content to putt around town on unleaded fuel, yet can boil the hides at the slightest touch of the throttle. Note neat engine ID on chrome air cleaner.

