

PURPLE PEOPLE PLEASER

**Extra effort shows
on this street
driven Stang.**



By Rod Short
PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR

Almost everywhere in life, spectacular results are always preceded by unspectacular preparation. In sports, that can be seen by the hours of constant training. For the musician, it's endless practice. For the student, it's relentless study and preparation. All that holds true as well in the case of this 1989 LX, as it took Jay Tucker of Virginia Beach, Va., a good eight years of time, money and effort to get this car to where it is today.

"For me, it was actually more of an affordability thing," Jay said about the time spent in building up his car. "Over the course of those eight years, my income increased from the beginning to the end. It started out buying the fifty dollar parts, then the hundred dollar parts, the five-hundred dollar parts and on up from there."

In between expenditures, Jay spent a lot of time massaging the bodywork and getting a quality paint job on the car. Much of that was done at night at Carman Body Works in Rotterdam, N.Y., where Jay worked at the time. Jay shaved the door handles, filled in the antenna cutout and fabricated a 4-inch cowl induc-

tion hood out of steel. All of that was followed by a generous coating of Sikkens basecoat/clearcoat, which Jay also did by himself.

While that was going on, Jay went through a learning curve in getting all the right parts in all the right places under the car. That, coupled with some occasional bad luck, led to some valuable lessons in putting together a performance drivetrain.

"I wish I had read more to put the right combination of parts together," Jay said frankly, in looking back on the experience. "I think I have that now, but throughout the years I went through a lot of parts and tried throwing money at the car. From the beginning, I just wanted what everybody else had, but I wish I'd looked at some other people's cars. It took a lot of years, mistakes, and trial and error to get this far and I wish I didn't have to do that."

Jay gave his 306-cid engine combination a solid foundation with a DSS Bullet short block assembly that packs a stock crank and shot-peened rods with TRW fly cut 9.3:1 pistons. A Comp Cams roller stick is used to open and close 1.94/1.64 stainless steel valves contained within the GT-40 aluminum heads. Topping off the assembly is a Vortech S-trim that stuffs the C&L 80mm mass air and 70mm throttle body matched with a GT-40 upper/lower intake with 15 psi of Vortech air pressure. Adding fuel to the mix is a 190-lph in-tank pump coupled with an external T-Rex unit that feeds the Lucas 38-lb/hr injectors.

Helping to keep the combination streetable is a Ford Racing 3-core radiator. MAC 2.5-inch diameter shorty headers provide plenty of clearance under the hood and work well with the matched H-pipe and Flowmaster 2-chamber mufflers. Jay has found that the Tremec 3550 and Centerforce dual friction clutch provides an extra measure of reliability in performance driving along with the Moser 31-splines axles that mesh with 3.73:1 gears within the 8.8-inch Ford Racing rear end.

Although this car rarely ever makes it to the track, Jay has reported a best ET in the low 12-second range at almost 120 mph, which means that this Stang can more than hold its own on the street. Yet, it's the meticulous cleanliness and attention to detail that really jumps out when this purple people pleaser passes by.

With a potent mill and looks to kill, it appears Jay's eight years of toil and trouble was definitely worth the wait.

