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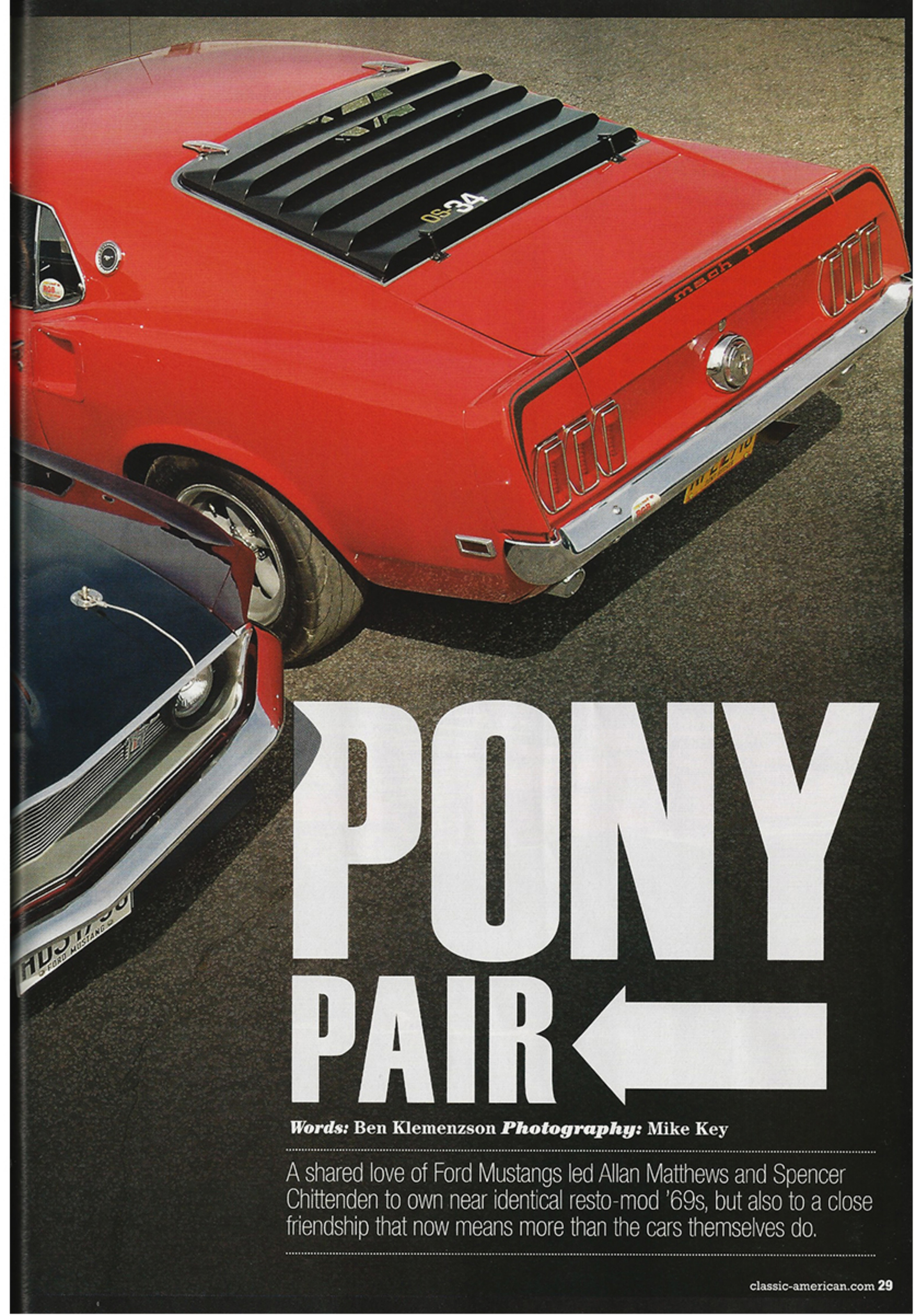


Building Perfection
1963 Studebaker



Forties Finesse
1941 Buick





PONY PAIR ←

Words: Ben Klemenzson **Photography:** Mike Key

A shared love of Ford Mustangs led Allan Matthews and Spencer Chittenden to own near identical resto-mod '69s, but also to a close friendship that now means more than the cars themselves do.

Ask most people how they select godparents for their children and the answer rarely involves skill at working on classic Mustangs. To be fair, that's not really why Spencer Chittenden asked Allan Matthews to take up the role for his daughter Scarlet, but considering it's only six years since Spencer and Allan met in a chilly supermarket car park, they must have bonded pretty fast.

"It was at Tesco's in Hatfield," remembers Spencer. "I was there with a 1967 fastback I had at the time and with another mate called Dave, who asked Allan along. Allan turned up in his '69 Mach 1, which I liked, and we hit it off." They were off to the Mustang Stampede at the Ace Cafe, which was not improved when it started snowing. But the two 'Stang fans got talking and less than a year later were on their way up to Glasgow together to view another '69, this time a 351 manual fastback for Spencer. Having seen Allan's car, he couldn't resist something similar himself.

Allan's Mustang is the red one. He acquired it in a way that will be familiar to many readers: "It was on eBay in New York... my finger slipped," he says. "This was about seven years ago. I imported it and did the body and paint at the business I had at the time, as it was in black primer when it arrived."

Allan used to run a bodyshop, but it was forced into liquidation around three years ago, though it's now reincarnated in the work Allan does for Adam Longmore at Mustang Maniac. He needed to re-skin the doors and replace a wing, then he bare-metalled the remainder and shot it with Ford candy apple red. The interior was substantially renewed although to (more or less) original specification. Being a Mach 1, it had a fairly lively 351 cu in V8 as standard, and it was in this form that Spencer first met the car.

His, having returned from Glasgow after a 20 year lay up in the States and a ride on a ship, was also in primer. It had a 351 cu in V8 as well, but the wrong Cleveland type



Spencer Chittenden's '69 contrasts nicely with Allan Matthews's Mach 1.

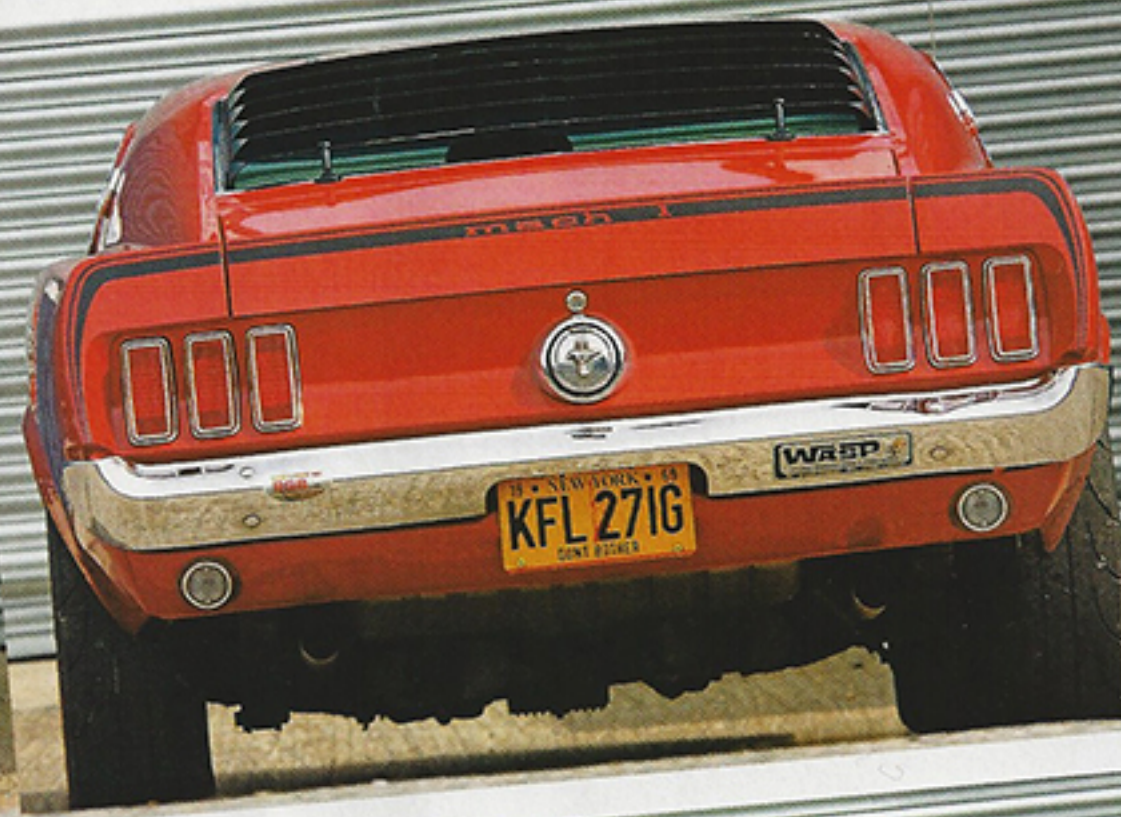
Chin spoilers lend the pair a menacing air...



from a later Mustang. It went straight to Allan's place, because by then Spencer was saying "You know what I like - you build it for me." Bodywork was limited to a new door skin before the candy flip paint was applied. "It's really hard stuff to paint," says Allan. "You need to do about four complete applications to get it to work." The end result is pretty spectacular, especially when set off by the black bonnet and boot spoiler. The car had wheel-arch extensions fitted back in America, which Spencer likes because it lets him run 10in wide rims on the rear and 8in on the front, as opposed to the usual limitations of 8in rear, 6in front.

The interior of Spencer's car arrived in the boot, but went back in with few new parts apart from a carpet set. When his car was on the road, he and Allan wasted no time in heading out to Santa Pod together. They were both a little disgusted with their times, although high 14 second passes feel quick to most civilians and are perfectly respectable for a more-or-less standard 351 Mustang. Neither man says who first decided the

next step was an engine swap, perhaps because they think along such similar lines it was obvious to both of them. >



Allan chose Paul Waying to build the motors. The 351 Windsor V8 can be expanded considerably with a stroker kit, and if you opt for a more race-orientated Dart cylinder block, as Allan did for his own car, you can get to almost eight litres from the original 5.9. Allan went for a 427cu in (7.0-litre) kit, but when he got on with building up Spencer's car, he was a little more restrained with a 408cu in (6.7 litre) version.

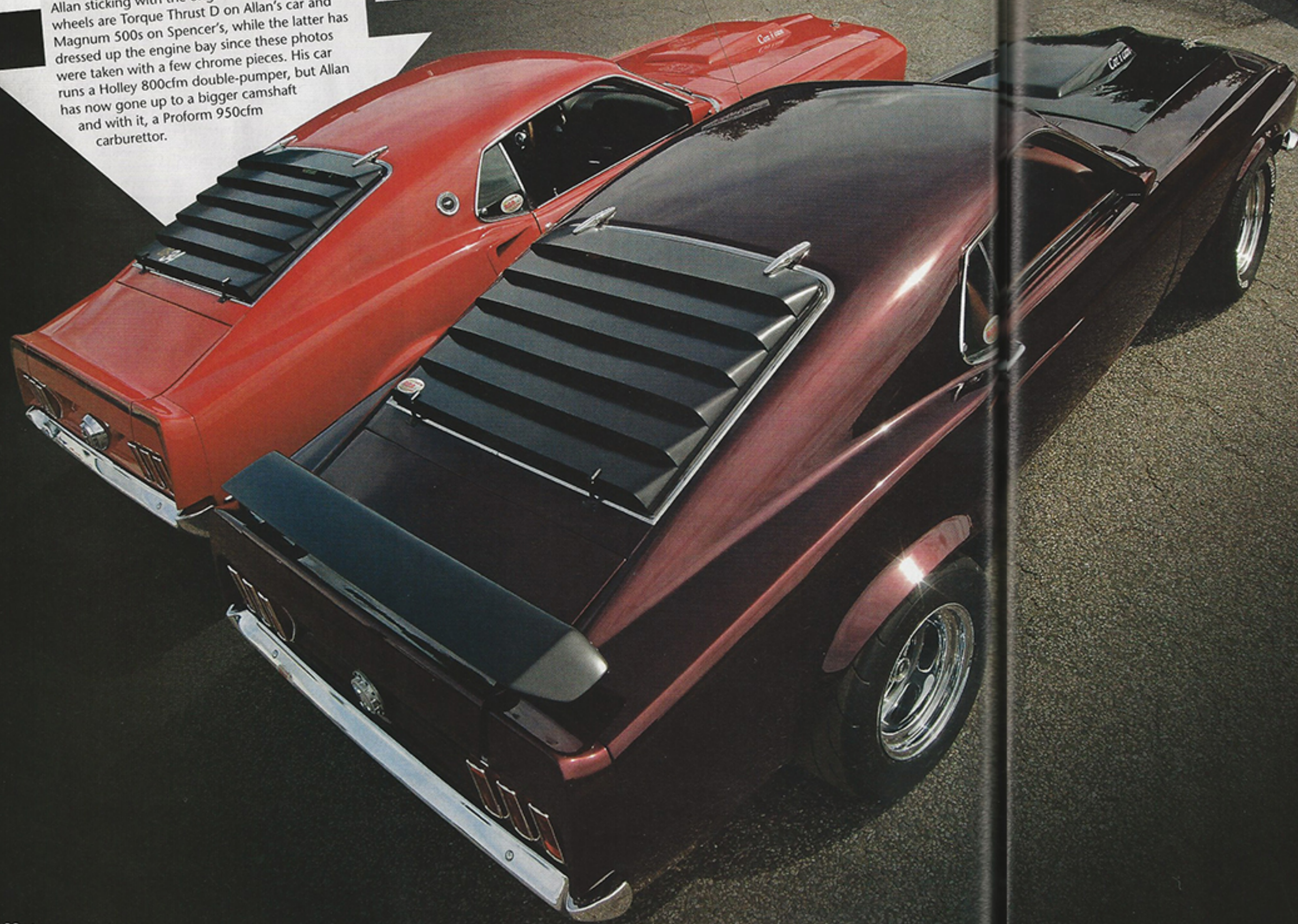
"Well, I couldn't have him beating me, could I?" jokes Allan. At least we think he's joking. This sudden step change in power, from somewhere in the mid-200s to around 500bhp for Spencer's car and perhaps 550bhp for Allan's required a good deal of other work. At this point, Allan's choice for the specification that would work best on the two Mustangs was almost identical across both of them: Willwood brakes, bigger, stiffer anti-roll bars and springs, Tru-Trac differentials in Ford 9in rear ends built by Hauser Racing and transmissions by Performance Automatic. Parts came from Chris at WASP and of course Mustang Maniac.

There are minor differences between them, of course, with Spencer opting for a Hurst shifter (he never liked the manual box anyway) and Allan sticking with the original Ford item. The wheels are Torque Thrust D on Allan's car and Magnum 500s on Spencer's, while the latter has dressed up the engine bay since these photos were taken with a few chrome pieces. His car runs a Holley 800cfm double-pumper, but Allan has now gone up to a bigger camshaft and with it, a Proform 950cfm carburettor.



Allan's Mach 1 pre-paint.

Rear window louvres big in the late Sixties.



Spencer's '69 gets the bare-metal treatment. Body looks straight...



...rust-free...



...and straightforward to sort!



Those back axles are now at 3.00:1 rather than the original 3.50:1, giving a considerable advantage on the strip. When the pair got back to the Pod, the difference was staggering. "I went from mid-14s to mid-11s in one fell swoop," says Allan. Spencer's car also soon cracked the 12 second mark, hitting 11.99. Happy? You bet. "I wanted something that would do street, strip and shows with equal ability," says Allan. "I think I've got it."

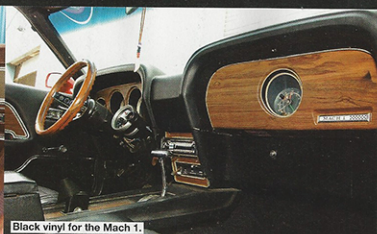
Spencer agrees, though his taste for Mustangs has always left room for convertibles, like the first one he bought in 2002 – a '69 model he still has. He also has a '67 GT390 in Ford Ultimate Green that's in Allan's shed, awaiting completion towards the end of this year, plus two newer SN95 Mustangs. Happily, his other half Kerry is also a Mustang enthusiast.

This growing collection is at the root of the little slogan on the power bulge of each car. Spencer was at a show when he got talking to someone about Mustangs and he happened to mention that he had three (back then) which caused the person he was talking with to ask why, as you can only drive one at once. Most of us would think 'well, if you have to ask, you'll never understand,' but Spencer summed it up in three words: "Coz I can." Allan liked the story so much he jumped on the bandwagon (Spencer's words, not ours) and applied the same slogan to his own car.

Regular trips to the drag strip were earning the two friends a bit of recognition, or perhaps notoriety. Another regular face at Santa Pod known as the Red Baron (AKA their pal Sean) started using nicknames related to the Wacky Races cartoons. Allan made the mistake of turning up in a plaid shirt one day and was instantly christened Rufus Ruffcut after the burly lumberjack character. Poor Spencer had to put up with being Big Gruesome, after the larger of the Gruesome Twosome characters. Together, Spencer and Allan are the Bully Brothers. >



Spencer's '69 wears red vinyl inside.



Black vinyl for the Mach 1.

1969 AND '70: THE ULTIMATE MUSCLE MUSTANGS?

The cars owned by Allan Matthews and Spencer Chittenden certainly suit their role as pumped-up muscle machines, maybe better than any other Mustang shape would do. The '64-'66 cars are a little dainty, the '67 and '68 models were getting there but miss the extra headlamp on each side and the bunched 'hips' that seem to beg for those air scoops. From 1971 and beyond the long-nosed, long-wheelbase styling perhaps lost some tautness.

It's no accident that Ford offered the most muscular look yet for 1969. This was the year of the first Mach 1, with a 250hp 351 V8 as standard but options right up to a Super Cobra Jet 428, rated at 360hp. The Boss 302, also new for '69, was more focused thanks to its role as a homologation special for Trans Am racing. It extracted more 'go' from a high-winding small-block V8 than any

previous Mustang and the handling improvements created maybe the best all-round Pony of the Sixties, even if it tended to live in the shadow of its big brother.

The Boss 429 was a very different animal. It was only there to homologate an engine: the 429 cu in V8 with hemispherical combustion chambers that Ford wanted to run in its NASCAR Torinos. It was detuned for sale but underrated even so: 375hp was way under the 450-ish a well set-up car would make, with 515hp or more waiting for you after a quick change of camshaft, headers and carburettor.

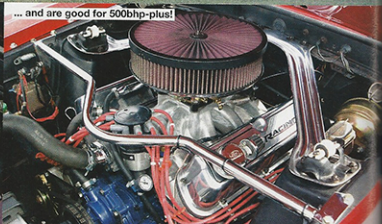
Nowadays, good ones cost more than £150,000 but they're still nose-heavy, truculent monsters with lousy brakes. Using a bit of 21st century know-how, Allan and Spencer have cars that update the Boss 429 concept without sacrificing user-friendly character, performance or classic appeal.



1969 Boss 429.



Both 351 Windsor motors were built by Paul Weylins.



... and are good for 500bhp-plus!