

# TURNKEY *TERROR*



**Duane Powell took the futuristic road to performance but did it with Fox-bodied flair.**

**By STEVE BAUR**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES "CANNONBALL" CAMPISANO

With the Ford 4.6L modular motors finally gaining some respect (and power too), these engines are muscling their way into the Mustang movement. With the '03 Cobra, Ford pressurized the peppy 32-valve engine with an Eaton supercharger, thereby creating one of the most explosive engine combinations ever and, in the process,

giving Mustang maniacs blasphemous full-throttle power, while maintaining a docile nature like your grandmother's AMC Pacer.

This Emerald Green '91 Mustang coupe is not the first thing one might think of when discussing modular engines and such, but it represents people's trust in the Romeo powerplants' ability to make horsepower. Former owner "Turbo" Joe Spiteri and Lidio Jacobelli of Alternative Auto stuffed four cams of Cobra motor between the fenders of this Fox and topped it off with a

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Vortech supercharger. The duo (Joe and Lidio) pushed the performance envelope of the 32-valve engine and produced 9-second elapsed times with the stock short-block. However, a priority change for Joe put the notchback up for sale.

One of Lidio's other customers, Mike Borso, stepped up and purchased the car as a rolling chassis. He then ordered a 2001 Cobra crate motor from his local Ford dealer, and the car was back in modular action running low-10s in the quarter, not to mention the fact that Mike still occasionally drove it on the

street. When the new motor spun a bearing, Mike had it replaced under warranty, but one problem arose. There were no more 2001 engines to replace it with, so Ford offered a 2003 motor.

By this time, the powerplant of the new Cobra had already been established, and the only question was if it was a complete assembly. When the supercharged snake engine arrived, it was decked out from supercharger to pan and also came with the factory electronics. Mike and Lidio dropped the engine in, but

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with the power level rising and the coupe's never-ending urge to hit the strip, Mike decided to sell the Stang rather than buy a trailer. Lidio then turned to yet another of his customers to find the pony a new stable.

Duane Powell's '95 Mustang convertible had visited Alternative Auto many times, most recently for a 392-inch stroker engine. Making 604 rear-wheel-horsepower with the help of a Vortech supercharger, the drop-top was quite the performer but not what Duane wanted to be blasting down the track with.

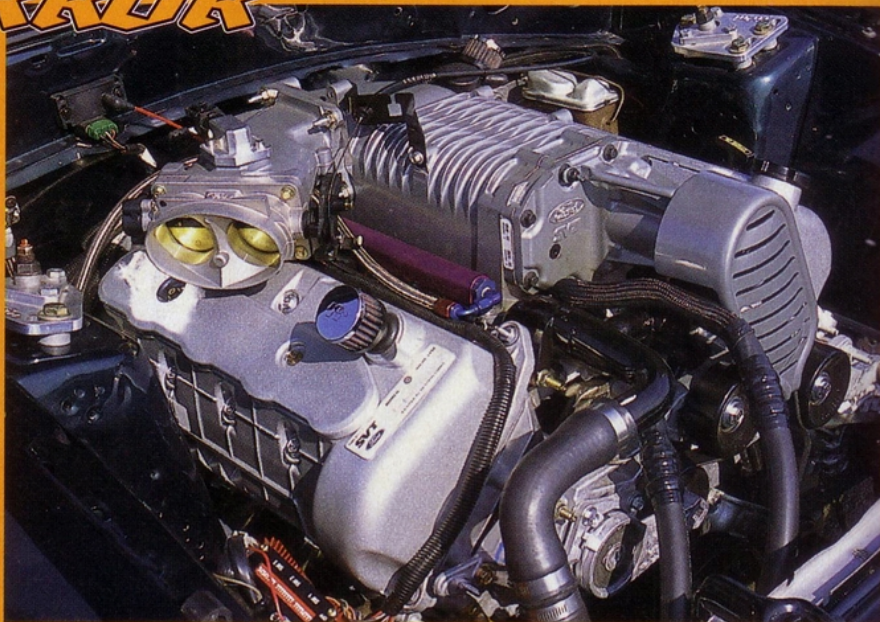
Duane had seen the green coupe at the shop and watched it on various occasions at the track; he was more than interested when Lidio told him the car was for sale. "I think I opened the hood, but that was probably it," noted Duane. "I wasn't worried about it because I knew Lidio built the car." A deal was made, and two days later, the title was transferred.

Shortly thereafter, Duane took the car to the 2002 Fun Ford Weekend

in Norwalk, Ohio, where he ran 11.183, 11.182, and 11.175, with just stock Cobra propulsion.

Recently, Duane and Lidio added a transbrake to the '98 4R70W transmission, a bigger throttle body, and 4.56 gears. They also popped on a 2.8-inch pulley for 11 pounds of boost, all of which has allowed the coupe to traverse the quarter-mile in a speedy 10.56 seconds at 127.58 mph. As this goes to print, plans for another throttle body, intake system, and possibly a supercharger are in the works. A lock-up torque converter is another option as Duane looks for 9-second timeslips. "I want to get into the high-9s, but reliably," said Duane.

Now that Duane Powell purchased a turnkey terror, his convertible shall be "detuned" to a mere 500 hp or so. The coupe however will continue to rip up the pavement at tracks everywhere, be it in Modular or bracket classes. Combining the best of both worlds has allowed this Mustang to do more than it ever could before.



The four-cammer fits in with help from a Griggs Racing tubular K-member and Alternative Auto custom, full-length 1 7/8-inch headers. A F.A.S.T. (formerly Speed-Pro) engine management system allows easy tuning. After Duane makes runs at the track, he can e-mail the data to Lidio, who can then make changes if needed and e-mail Duane the new program.



where ice is stuffed in the tank to chill the incoming air charge.

Since the car is a drag beast, the intercooler has been plumbed into the trunk,



The immaculate interior is very uncluttered until Duane gets in. At 6-feet, 6-inches tall, Duane barely fits between the dash and the rollcage and with his helmet on, has to tilt his head. Now you know why he has a convertible.



(Left) The coupe carries an 8.8 rear axle, which is restrained by Ground Pounder control arms and Koni shocks. Weld Pro Stars, 10.5-inch ET Streets, and Aerospace brakes keep the car moving and grooving down the track.



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The chassis has been pretty much perfected, and along with the transbrake, allows this pony to rip off 1.44-second 60-foot times.