

# An Equitable Arrangement

Lidio Iacobelli got paint,  
Steve Mulligan got power



Steve Mulligan missed a yellow '98 Cobra he had previously owned, so he changed this '97 ragtop from red to its current striking yellow just as soon as he bought it. He likes yellow so much, he just resprayed his '93 Lightning to match—all the better to attract attention. One neat invisible touch is that the convertible's doors can be opened via solenoids activated by the Viper alarm's remote control.

Text and Photos by Dale Amy

Steve Mulligan makes his living as an auto painter. That he must be a good one is evidenced by the fact that Alternative Auto's Lidio Iacobelli—otherwise known as Mister Meticulous—turned to Steve when it was time to repaint his beloved pale-yellow Fox coupe. Perhaps Lidio noticed the young bodyman's considerable refinishing

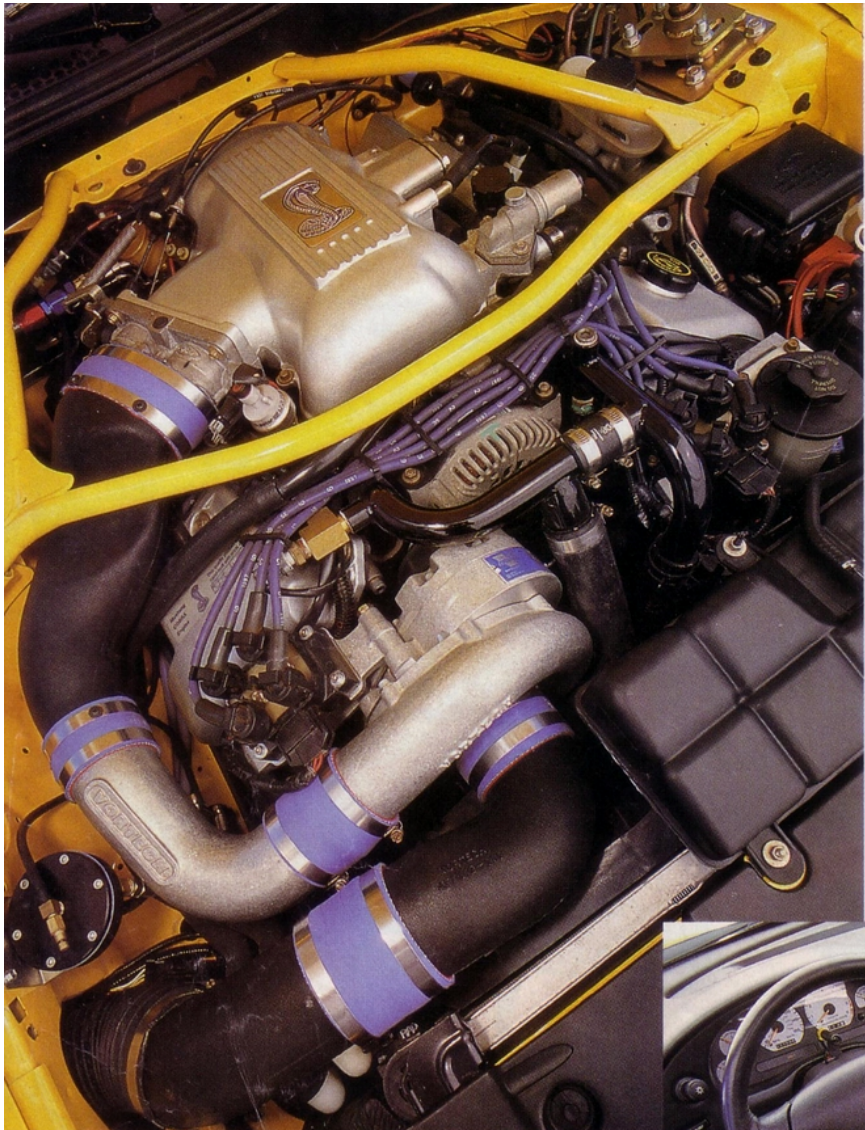
skills when he saw this—Steve's own strikingly yellow Cobra convertible, which had started life painted red. Steve, we have to tell you, is an unabashed proponent of the attention-grabbing qualities of yellow paint. In his words, "Yellow just says, 'Hey, look at me.'"

In fact, the first thing Steve did after

acquiring his used '97 SVT—already the 28-year-old's ninth Mustang—was take it home and strip practically everything down to the bare unibody. Off went the doors, the interior, the hood, the trunk, the engine, the front suspension, the wiring, the front clip,

**Horse Sense:** With a 2.87-inch pulley, Steve's current Vortech S-Trim produces an ungodly 18 psi of boost—at a cost: "I can only run Turbo Blue 110-octane fuel, but go for a ride and \$3.70 a gallon is well worth it."





# An Equitable Arrangement

and nearly everything else that wasn't welded on; on went the Spies Hecker yellow paint, garnished with chrome Cobra R rims and a Classic Design Concepts lightbar. Still not satisfied the drop-top would garner enough stares, Steve then added Saleen ground effects, a Speedster tonneau, and a Steeda wing. But his skilled handiwork had by then created something of a gnat-in-yellow-jacket's clothing, since mechanically the DOHC 4.6 remained basically stock.

It wouldn't remain that way for long, though, because that's about when Steve got the call to paint Lidio's Windsor coupe, and the two soon came to agreeable economic terms. "After finishing Lidio's car," Steve says of his method of payment, "we traded my services for his." Now, Lidio's services almost invariably involve a Vortech centrifugal supercharger—he figures an S-Trim and a Four-Valve go together like Charlton Heston and the Second Amendment. So, in return for his skills with a spray gun, Steve now has a supercharged saffron snake that will run 11.80s at 117 mph.

▲ Steve's internally stock modular wore a Vortech S-Trim when we shot it. By the time you read this, it will have been replaced by a T-Trim with boost-improving Anderson Ford Motorsport Power Pipe. With installer Lidio already coaxing as much as 18 psi from the smaller S-Trim, we hope Steve's boost gauge has a lot of range.



### 5.0 TECH SPECS

Block.....	Stock alloy 4.6L
Heads.....	Stock, unported
Intake.....	Stock
Throttle Body.....	Stock (soon to be FRPP oval)
Camshaft.....	Stock
Power Adder.....	Vortech S-Trim
Exhaust.....	BBK full-length headers, two-chamber Flowmaster mufflers
Fuel Pump.....	Bosch 255-lph, Kenne Bell Boost-a-Pump
Mass Air Meter.....	Stock (soon to be Pro-M 80mm)
Engine Management.....	Autologic chip, tuned by Lidio Iacobelli
Transmission.....	Stock T45
Rearend.....	FRPP 8.8 with 4.56 gears
Springs.....	'95 Cobra R
Struts/Shocks.....	Stock with FRPP caster/camber plates



▲ Steve tossed his original seats in favor of these Cobra Daytonas, which come with tracks having far more aft travel adjustment than the legroom-stingy factory setup. These good-looking, supportive buckets, combined with CDC's lightbar and Saleen's Speedster tonneau, really spice up the Cobra's interior.

◀ One of these cool, covered rocker switches controls the Cobra's non-functional nitrous system. Non-functional? That's right—the N<sub>2</sub>O's not plumbed to the engine at all, just to the hoodscoops where Steve can purge the lines for show, "like a snake hissing, ready to strike out and bite those pesky rodent SS Camaros." **5.0**