

RAREST SALENS: Find 'em if you can!



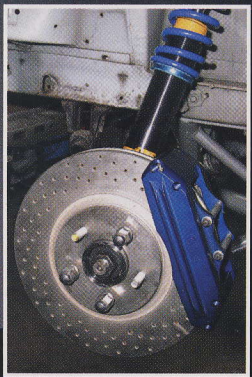
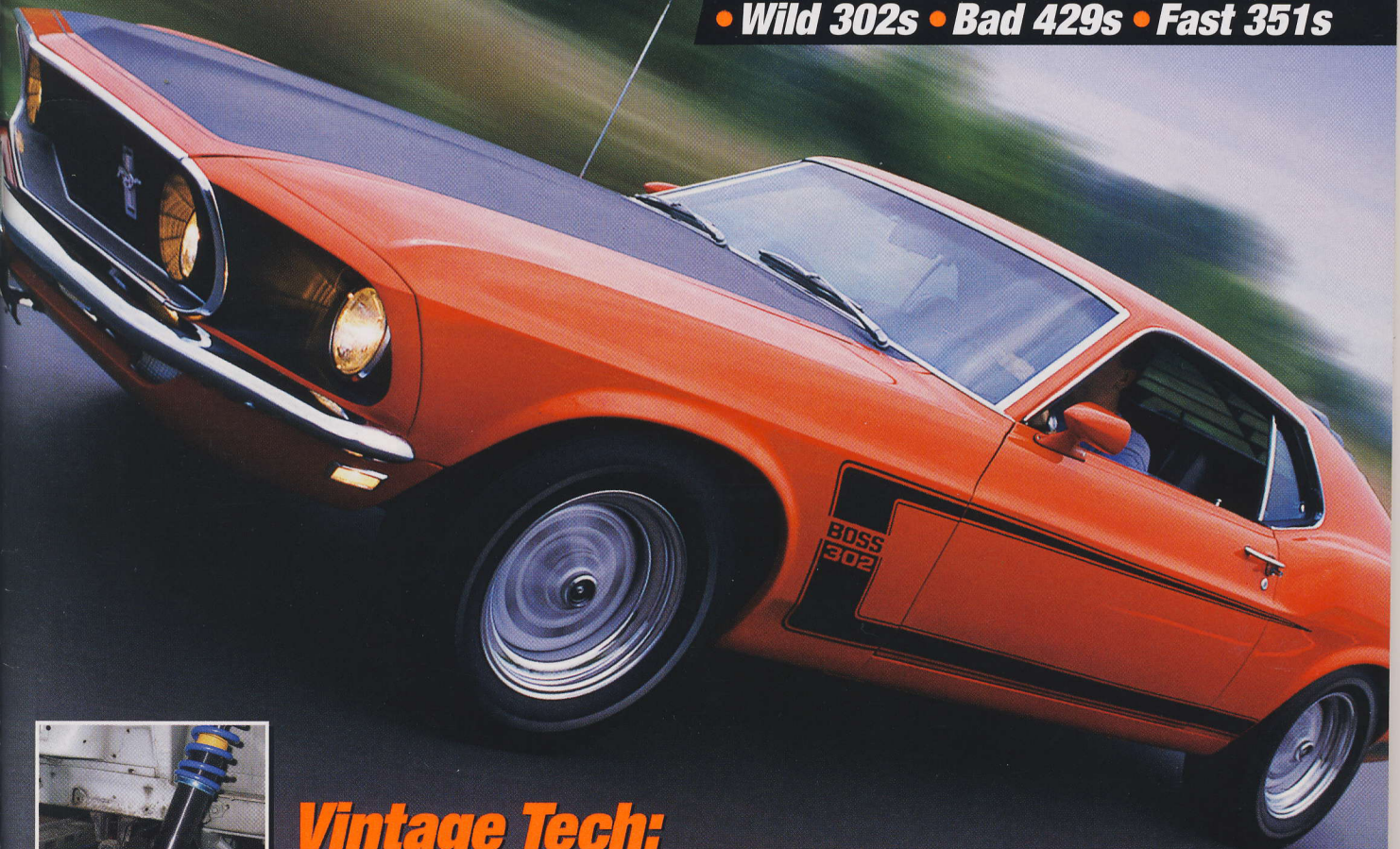
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Cadillac Boss

Rick Parker's '69 Boss 302 is loaded with options.

Text and photography by Jerry Heasley

The way it was ordered," Rick Parker said, "this Boss was more like a Cadillac."

Apparently, whoever ordered the Calypso Coral '69 Boss 302 went whole hog. The fastback is loaded

in a Boss kind of way. Don't look for air conditioning or an automatic transmission because they weren't available on the high-revving Boss 302.

The four-speed was a must-order, in close- or wide-ratio. Power steering was an option and

it's present on this car. It also has the optional in-dash tach and 3.91:1 gears in a Limited Slip differential. The interior is deluxe, as if standard wouldn't do for this car. The tilt-away column still works; open the door and the wheel pops out of the way to give you room to get in and out.

The rear sport slats are a big deal, too, but not in the sense of seeing them on a Boss. Today, a Boss 302 appears naked without them. But in '69, the optional slats were radical, to say the least. So few buyers ordered them. According to Kevin Marti's book, *Mustang... By the Numbers*, only 902 '69 fastbacks came with the Backlite Louvers. Rick has documented that these

slats came from the factory on his Boss 302.

Finding this Calypso Coral Boss began with a letter of inquiry about value. Rick owns Signature Auto Classics in Columbus, Ohio, where he specializes in Ford musclecars, especially the Boss 302, Boss 429, Mach 1, and Cobra Jet breed. So, such queries are common. The difference is, Rick is such an enthusiast he really doesn't concern himself if a call leads to a buy or a sell. His business is an outgrowth of his love for Mustangs and he maintains his own private collection. The Boss is one of his keepers.

"It's a good story. A fellow in Denver wrote me a letter and sent me some pictures asking what I thought his car was worth and what direction he should go with it," Rick says.

Later, during a trip through

Denver to check out an original-paint Boss 429, he stopped to see the Boss 302. His advice was to try to take the car "to the next level." The engine bay and interior were dirty, but the odometer stood at 51,000 miles. The Boss was complete and in great condition. Best of all, the factory drivetrain had never been out of the car.

Rick echoed an opinion often heard in the hobby: "It's hard to find nice '69 Boss 302s with the original drivetrain. Let's face it. If the '69 engine blew up, and many of them did because of the piston-skirt problem, you either bought a '70 engine or went to the parts counter where everything was serviced with '70 parts. It's all interchangeable. But it's hard to find a '69 with the original serial-numbered transmission and





original serial-numbered engine."

Rick got back on the plane, but stayed in contact with the owner. They started "talking Mach 1s and Cobra Jets." Eventually, Rick managed a trade for the Boss, sending a '70 Cobra Jet Mach 1 to Colorado in exchange for the Boss 302.

According to Rick, "restored" is not the right word for this Boss. He says, "I think it would be more like going to the beauty parlor. It's just had a nice makeover."

The hair-do included fresh black paint on the hood and rear spoiler, which were too glossy. Rick pulled the engine too, making sure it was "good"

inside (fortunately, no machine work was needed) before putting it back together. He put the smog equipment back on, as well as the original carburetor.

The surprise came when Rick removed the worn original carpet.

"You never know what you're going to find under carpet. You find screws, gum wrappers, pennies,

and nickels." Instead,

Rick found the original dealer packet, in pristine condition, containing the owner's manual. Normally, this packet goes in the glovebox.

Rick also found the buildsheet, documenting the many options and accessories. This '69 has to be one of the highest-optioned Boss 302s ever constructed by the factory.

