

PECULIARITY

THE WEIRD TALE OF A '70 MEDIUM LIME METALLIC 428 SCJ SPORTSROOF. WITH WHITE INTERIOR, EVEN

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DALE AMY

ANYONE ELSE MIGHT HAVE BEEN DETERRED. COLUMBUS, OHIO, COLLECTOR-car dealer and all-round Mustang aficionado, Rick Parker, was not. He had received a nebulous tip, consisting of a name and scribbled phone number, on a "possible Boss Mustang." Against Rick's better judgment—knowing this type of "heard-it-from-a-guy-who-heard-it-from-a-guy" tip almost never pans out—he called the number anyway.

This led to yet another phone number and a conversation with a gentleman who professed to have for sale something he referred to as a "Boss Shelby Mach 1 GT Special" because it seemed to contain parts from each. Under the hood was nothing more special than a 351 Cleveland. At that point, most of us would have hung up and returned to more useful pursuits, but Rick persevered, asking whether the vendor had the VIN. Upon hearing the alphanumeric combination "0T02R," a potential waste of time turned into a potentially interesting Mustang—a '70 Metuchen-built, body-code "02" SportsRoof model (not a "05" Mach 1) with a ram-air, R-code 428 Cobra Jet. Hardly the sort of combination one stumbles across every day.

It got even weirder when Rick visited the Florida basement (kind of rare in itself) where the remnants of the muscular Mustang were holed up. After scrutinizing the body buck tag and door data plate, he realized the car's "V" axle code translated into a 3.91 Traction Lok, available only as part of the \$155 Drag Pack—meaning this had once been not just a 428 CJ, but a 428 Super Cobra Jet, with its external oil cooler, beefy LeMans cap-screw rods, additional crank counterweight (for the heavier rods), and 5,800-rpm rev limiter. This supreme CJ had been factory mated to a "6"-code,

close-ratio Toploader four-speed gearbox.

Despite the scruffy small-block then taking up residence under hood, Rick was taken by the car's eccentricities. Here was a bare-bones SportsRoof someone had ordered up with 428 SCJ power, presumably for drag or street racing. But then why the unusual Medium Lime Metallic finish and flashy white interior? Ultimately, the original purchaser's reasoning was not particularly important to Rick. What was important was that he had nearly all the necessary parts back at home to duplicate the original SCJ, so he came to terms with the seller and hauled the SportsRoof back to Columbus.

As restoration got underway in Rick's home shop, he acquired a copy of the Mustang's original invoice, which spelled

out exactly how it had been delivered to Wayne Akers Ford in Lake Worth, Florida, so many years, and 44,000 miles, ago. The way you see it here was the way it was optioned: rear spoiler (\$20), slats (\$65), color-keyed racing mirrors (\$26), white-letter F70x14 rubber (\$77 on body-color wheels with poverty caps), AM radio (\$61), and, believe it or not, no tach. After a life apparently spent in the sunny Southeast, the car was rough, sun-baked, and just generally abused. It took all of Rick's parts-hunting and restoration skills, along with the paint and body expertise of Back to Original, in Lima, Ohio, to return this potent oddball back to its eccentric glory. Judging by the reaction it got at last spring's 35th Anniversary Show at Charlotte, the result was worth the effort.

Next time somebody gives you a quirky lead on a Mustang, best not dismiss it too lightly. **M&F**



