



30th Anniversary Entry Form

Official Publication of the Mustang Club of America

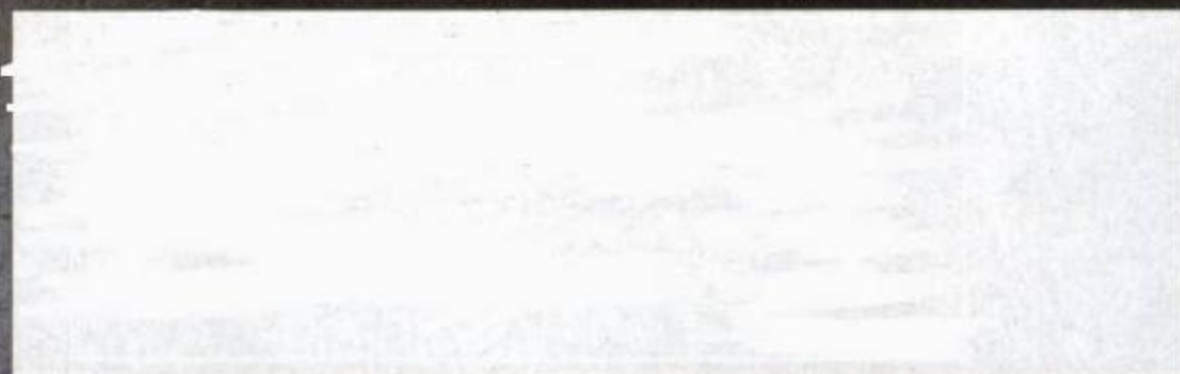
MUSTANG TIMES

February 2006 / Volume 30 / No.2

GOLD RUSH!



- **NAIAS 2006**
- **Ultimate Road Trip**
- **Rachel's '67**





Gold Rush

Casey and Sarah Hill's GT/CS is a little-known piece of history.

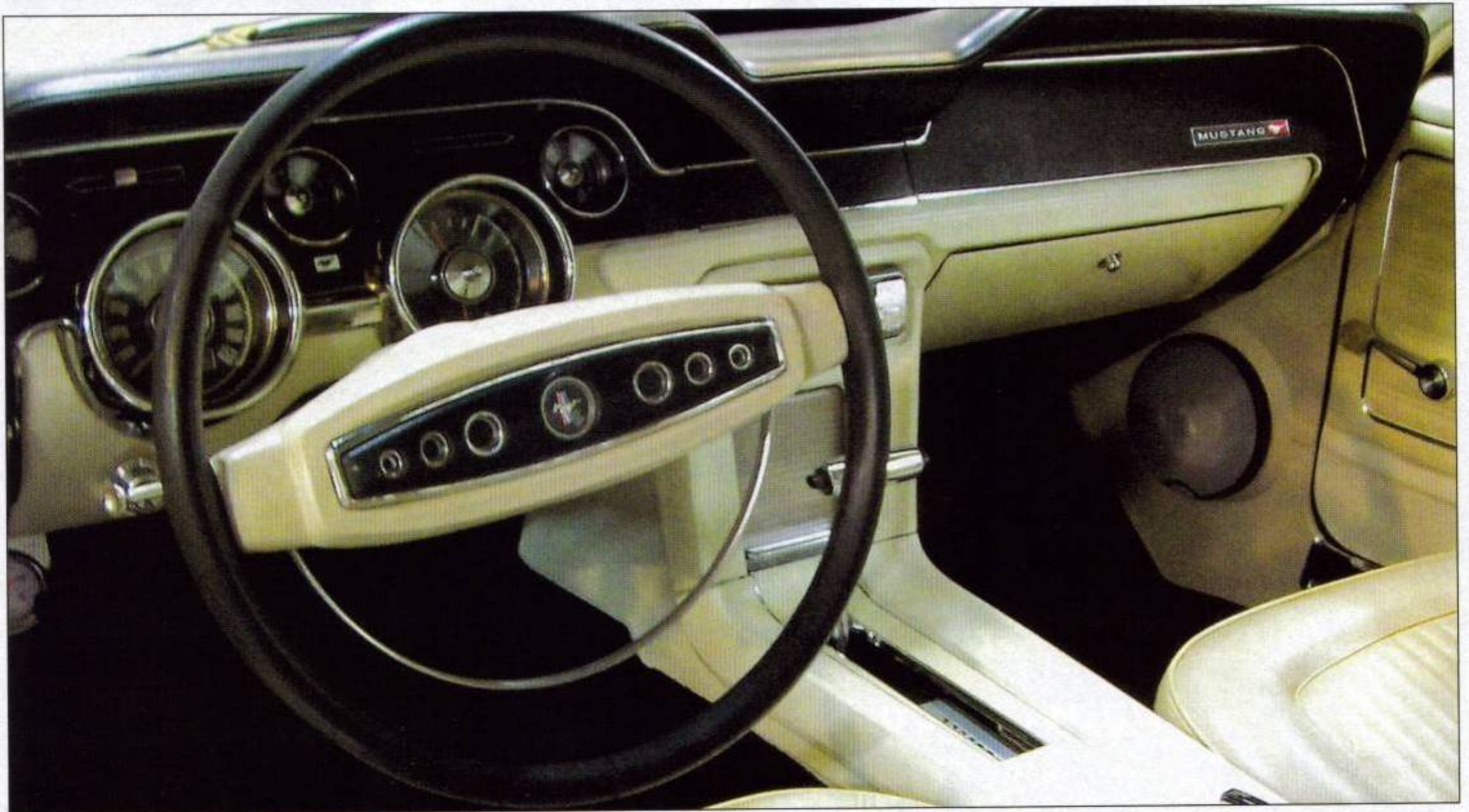
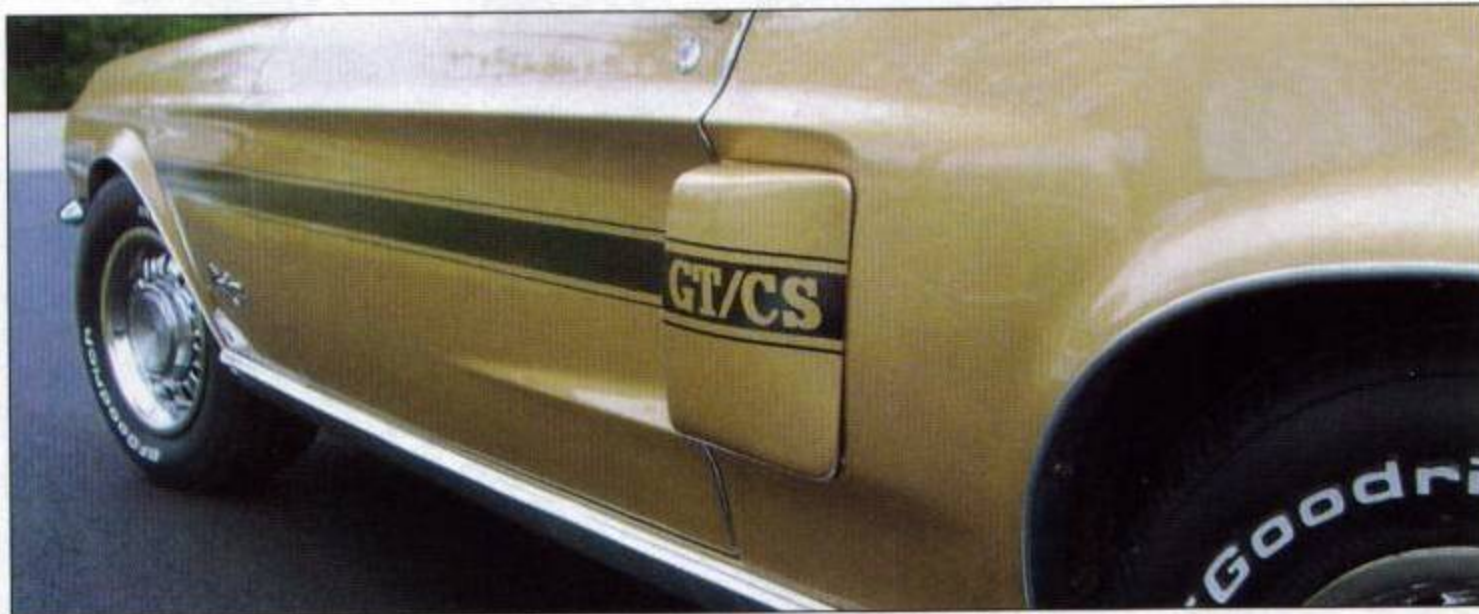


Text by Casey Hill and Mary Jean Wesche Photos by Casey Hill

***The GT/CS is a relatively rare
Mustang that not many beyond
the west coast have seen,
or know about.***

"Little Red"—a 1967 GT-500, Paxton-blown 428 Notchback prototype built by Fred Goodell Chief Engineer for Shelby American, was the inspiration for the GT/CS, also known as the California Special.

Sales of 1967 Mustangs exceeded 472,000. However, in early 1968 many factors indicated that Mustang sales were down 25-30 percent. Between a



factory strike, the introduction of the Torino and Cougar, and the competition-built ponycars, Mustang sales were projected to be "very soft." In Southern California, sales of the Mustang equaled more than 20-percent of the USA Mustang production. Faced with declining sales numbers, Los Angeles sales District Manager, Lee Gray, who broke sales records with the 1965 and 1966 Mustang as one of Ford's best sales managers, led Southern California Ford Dealers to Shelby American's Los Angeles facility looking for something to bolster the Mustang market.

Lee had seen "Little Red" at Riverside Raceway in 1967. He asked to borrow the coupe for about a week and showed it to his staff, local Ford dealers, and the general public to see what the reaction would be. His original idea for the coupe was to buy parts directly from Shelby and have the dealerships modify 1968 coupes. After much thought regarding logistics of mods being factory production or handled by the dealership, Lee Grey decided to approach Ford directly and contacted Lee Iacocca. Lee's idea was to produce a Mustang specifically for the California market to boost sales. A meeting with Iacocca was held in downtown LA, and Lee Grey brought "Little Red" along to promote his thought process. The presentation was successful. Iacocca was impressed and promoted the California-only project to the Ford powers-that-be in Dearborn. Carroll Shelby was asked by Henry Ford II to ship "Little Red" to Michigan as the idea of a California-only Mustang was taking root. The "California Special" was born!

Shelby Automotive was contracted to build the California Special prototypes (Paul Newitt, author of *1968 1/2 Ford Mustang GT/California Special Recognition Guide and Owner's Manual*, has copies of the blueprints). All California Specials after the first prototypes were built in the San Jose plant along side other 1968 Mustangs.

What makes the GT/CS different? The GT/CS Equipment Package option added \$194.31 in 1968 and included the Shelby fiberglass deck lid spoiler, Shelby fiberglass body-side scoops, Shelby fiberglass lower back panel, Shelby horizontal tail lights, Shelby fiberglass quarter panel extensions, functional louvered hood, rear deck stripes and side stripes with "GT/CS" on the side scoops, pony corral pop-open gas cap, Shelby exposed "twist" hood locks, and "California Special" chrome script on the rear quarter panels. Also there was a unique "blackened out" front grille without the Mustang corral or chrome trim, and with Lucas or Marchal fog lights mounted in the grille. Oddly enough, a GT/CS could come with, or without, the GT option and could come with ANY engine combination from a six cylinder to the coveted 428CJ, though most came with the C code 289.

Sometimes the question is asked, "Is the 1968 GT/CS considered a 'poor man's Shelby?'" Beyond the prototypes, the California Special was not directly built by Shelby Automotive, but was built in the San Jose plant. Paul Newitt notes in his book that while Carroll Shelby did not have direct influence on the GT/CS, his chief engineer, Fred Goodell, and Shelby American/Shelby Automotive did as the developers of the "Little Red" coupe and the first few California Specials. Later in 1968, Fred Goodell took a GT/CS and prototyped another Shelby coupe called the "Green Hornet." To further add to the Shelby 'connection,' 1968 advertising for the GT/CS included the verbage "Inspiration by Shelby GT" on a dealer brochure; "Inspired by the Shelby GT" on a dealer post card; and "The GT/CS design was obviously influenced by the 1968 Shelby Cobra" printed in *Motorcade 1968* magazine. The GT/CS is the only non-Shelby built vehicle in 1968 to use Shelby parts. A total of 4,325 GT/CS Mustangs were built.

Owned by Casey and Sarah Hill, this GT/CS is Sunlit Gold with Parchment interior and black GT/CS stripes. Built in February

Ask your Dealer for
AMK Products

online catalog www.amkproducts.com

Mustang & Shelby Master Kits

- ✓ Body
- ✓ Engine
- ✓ Interior
- ✓ Chassis

Restoration fasteners with the correct markings, finishes, strength and quality you demand.



FASTENERS

SCREWS	FITTINGS	SEALER	CLAMPS
NUTS	RIVETS	TAPE	PLUGS
BOLTS	PINS	STRAPS	CLIPS
STUDS	SPACERS	SHIMS	METRIC
RETAINERS	SPRINGS	WASHERS	STAINLESS



New Catalog 2005

- ✓ Master Kits
- ✓ Individual Kits
- ✓ Bulk Fasteners
- ✓ Detailing Parts

440 pages + 2500 photos

USA & Canada **\$8**
Overseas (Air Mail) **\$20**

AMK inc
PRODUCTS

800 Airport Road, Winchester, VA 22602
www.amkproducts.com 540-662-7820 fax 540-662-7821



1968, it was originally sold at Pasadena Motors in California during October of 1968. It is a 289 automatic and spent its entire rust-free life in Pasadena until the Hills bought it from the third owner last year and had it shipped to Illinois. The Hills were thrilled to find the purchase included the original manual, warranty cards, warranty booklet, and even the original build sheet. It is in excellent driver condition, with a mild restoration. Casey and Sarah love to take it to shows in the Midwest and have people ask, "What is a California Special?" Apparently many Mustang enthusiasts in their region have not heard of it before. Casey states, "It is fun to have Shelby owners come drool over our rare California Special! We have even had Carroll Shelby sign the passenger visor to recognize its Shelby inspiration."



Sarah suggested the license plate "GLD RSH", which explains it all—a Sunlit Gold California Special.

More information on the California Special can be found in Paul Newitt's books, *GT/California Special Recognition Guide & Owners Manual* and the *GT/CS Registry* or at the www.CaliforniaSpecial.com web site. **MT**

