

BY PAUL G. MCLAUGHLIN

When it comes to high-performance Fords, Lorin and Dean Poepe's enthusiasm knows no bounds. Over the years, this father and son team from Torrington, Wyoming, have had their share of outstanding Fords, but their '68 Mustang hard-top is certainly "special," in more ways than one. This one is beautiful, rare, and powerful. Very simply, it has all the right stuff.

Their beautiful Acapulco Blue metallic Mustang is one of the rare *High Country Specials* distributed only in the Denver, Colorado, area. Since the market area was limited in size, production was kept low, and total production is estimated at around 1000 cars. With the production figure for '68 Mustangs at over 300,000, 1000 cars is like a drop in the bucket. So, as the name implies, this High Country Special is truly a horse of a different breed.

Out of the 1000 models produced, only a few received the '69 Mustang-type hood scoop placed in the center of the hood. This hood scoop was a standard item on legendary 428 Cobra Jet cars; these cars made a name for themselves both on the street and the dragstrip. Lorin and Dean's '68 got pretty lucky; it's one of the few with an original factory Cobra Jet engine.

In 1968, Ford installed only 4448 Cobra Jet engines, or 1.4 percent of total production. Nine percent, or 2853, were given four-speed transmissions, and 1585, or 0.5 percent, were equipped with beefed C6 automatics.

So exactly how rare is this car? After some multiplication, it turns out that this '68 is one of five, so the odds of finding a similar car are very slim indeed. Dean dug up some background on the car and found out that it was originally ordered by a Ford sales representative from Denver, which could explain how it came to be built in the first place. Somebody had to have some clout! Lorin and Dean are the third owners.

The High Country Specials could be compared with the *California Specials* that were available during the same period. Both cars were built in the Ford plant in San Jose, California, and share the same components. At the front, the horse and corral are deleted, and a set of driving lamps have been installed. The hoods are tied down with the twist pins found on Shelby models,

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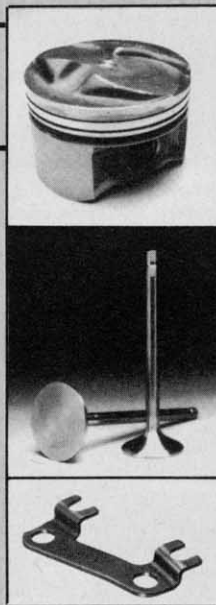
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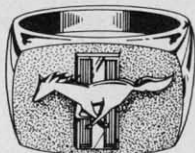
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