

Wild Horse

Text by David Zhang // Photos by RCH Designs



Having been around the JDM scene for many years, enthusiast Mike Hyun concluded it was a time for a change. After accumulating extensive knowledge on VTEC power plants and putting it to good use on a custom Civic build, the quest for a new project car began.

With an abundance of potent platforms in the market, Hyun wanted his next project to be more unique and powerful than his last. This extensive search was brought to a close after taking a rip in a custom built Ford Mustang Cobra, worlds away from what he was used to. Although switching brands from Japanese to Domestic can be seen as a form of automotive treason, Hyun saw it as a new opportunity.

For one to jump from JDM tuning to domestic muscle is indeed rare, but we have to admit, at one time or another, we've all fantasized of what it would be like behind the wheel of a V8 Mustang or Camaro. The main difference between domestics and Japanese sports cars rests in the engine size and design. The bigger displacement, additional cylinders and beefier pistons provide big power and massive torque. This 2005 Mustang GT >>



is not shy when it comes to the motor. Factory fresh, the 2006 Mustang sports a 4.6L SOHC V8, producing 300 horses at the crank and an astonishing 320 lb/ft of torque. This is a definite leap from most Japanese motors whose engine capacity is often less than half of this Mustang motor. While Japanese motors rely on sophisticated technology like variable valve timing to produce power in the upper RPMs, these big domestic motors rely mainly on sheer displacement.

We first received word on this striking Mustang through our good friends at Carbon Creations and HotWheels. Having produced numerous feature vehicles in the past, the guys at Carbon Creations are always at the forefront of the scene and carbon fibre styling. According to Carbon Creations, the amazing structural properties of carbon fibre composite are nearly ten times stronger than steel, yet five times lighter. When combined with a mixture of epoxy resin, the composites can be made into sheets or any other desired shapes suited for applications that would require strength, stiffness, reduced weight, and outstanding fatigue characteristics. In the tuning scene, these reasons make carbon fibre an ideal upgrade, and it doesn't hurt that it also happens to look "oh so good."

Leigh Guarnieri, director of sponsorships and special projects at Carbon Creations, secured a concept of HotWheels' extreme Ford Mustang. Modeled after the famous die-cast Mustang, the team at Carbon Creations went to work and designed a complete Carbon Creations wide-body kit based on the HotWheels car, but for real-world application on an actual car! The heavy factory body parts on Hyun's Mustang were quickly replaced with full carbon fibre body armor including a Carbon Creations HotWheel's widebody front bumper, rear bumper, side skirts and fenders. The factory hood and trunk were also swapped for Carbon Creations' OEM carbon fibre hood and trunk, plus the OEM spoiler was traded in favour of a carbon fibre wing. The remaining parts of the car that have not been dressed in carbon clad material were repainted in BASF flat black by the experts at SPS and decorated with graphics by Modern Image. The pairing of carbon fibre parts alongside the



clean BASF flat black paint result in a subtle yet aggressive blend of colour and style.

Now that the Mustang is dressed to impress, it was time to go to work under the hood. With the addition of a Paxton Novi supercharger bolted onto the 4.6L V8 by Eric at XMP, this Mustang pumps out an estimated and claimed 530whp of bone-crushing power. A Magnaflow exhaust system enhances performance and howls in sync with the big, bad blower, while Torco Oils lube keeps the V8 running strong and smooth.

In order to handle the increased torque capacity,

the OEM clutch was replaced with ACT's extreme clutch system. The additional clamping capacity of the ACT pressure plates ensure that Hyun's Mustang is at the top of its game when lined up against any competitor at the track or the street. When it needs to go the extra distance, this pony car packs another punch thanks to a Nitrous Express 150 shot nitrous system. Regardless, this Mustang rides like a rocket and looks sick doing it.

An integral addition to any show car is its wheels, so the rim gurus at DPEngineering supplied the enormous 20-inch forged wheels, >>



offering a wider stance of 20 by 10-inch fronts and massive 20 by 12-inch rear wheels. The Mustang translates all its power to the road through a set of sticky Pirelli high-performance tires, while a Stoptech big brake kit brings this brute to a halt. The perfect ride height is achieved with a set of Eibach coilovers and further handling improvements are improved through Hotchkis sway bars and panhard bars.

After addressing the exterior, performance and handling aspects of the car, the last item on the list was to upgrade the interior and create a custom mobile entertainment system. Selecting the right audio / video components and interior products can make or break a properly built show car. For the purpose of this build, the interior was tastefully modified. The stock leathers were replaced by red carbon fibre Laguna Seca Seats from Status Racing that comfortably hug Hyun during hard driving or mild cruising. Interior and dash modifications were kept clean and feature a few AutoMeter gauges to monitor the condition of the force-fed engine along with a B&M short shifter. A custom In Car Entertainment (ICE) system was exceptionally installed by the team at OC Elite Customs. The crew designed a full sound system consisting of impressive ARC Audio gear. OC Elite Customs used three ARC Audio KAR 265 12D subwoofers

and two sets of ARC Audio KAR series component speakers in the doors. Meanwhile, two ARC Audio KAR series 900.1 and two ARC Audio KAR series 200.2 amplifiers supply the juice from the Optima red top battery provided by Interstate Battery. The head unit installed into the dash is a neat piece from Valor DVD and features a touch-screen display and the crew at OC Elite Customs also added an ARC Audio KAR series 6022 coaxial set in the rear of the car. Providing additional entertainment are four crystal clear VIVO monitors fitted into what used to be the rear seating area.

Being a loyal Honda tuner myself, (and after owning two different generations of Preludes) I do not foresee ever owning anything else but a Honda. This attitude seems to be common among many tuners, as they seek to promote the supremacy of their preferred brand, but this is clearly not the case for Mike Hyun. The growth of countless car clubs and online communities is attributed to the undying love/hate relationship with our Hondas, Nissans, Toyotas, or whatever your choice may be. At the end of the day, the ultimate satisfaction is gained through the feeling of belonging to a collective with one passion and drive. Expect to see this carbon-clad Mustang on display at SEMA 2006, CES, Extreme Autofest, HIN, and NHRA Stylefest show. **PAS**