

PONY

Wild



AN OLD CAR GIVEN A NEW LEASE ON LIFE, AND A NEW KID ON THE BLOCK, HAS TCM TONGUES WAGGING

Touring Car Masters followers may not immediately recognise the lovely 1964 Mustang Coupe gracing these pages, but squint and you may just spot the DNA of retired TCM stalwart Ian McAlister's well-known red and white Pony Car.

In short, that car, and indeed McAlister himself, were absolute favourites among rusted-on old-car buffs. But when McAlister decided to hang up his race suit last year, there was a good chance the lovely ol' 'Stang

may languish in the Young car dealer's NSW shed forever more.

That's when collector Don Dimitriadis stepped in, with the help of TCM guru Dick Savy from Savy Motorsport. You see, Dimitriadis is a Ford-oriented collector (with a special love of Mustangs in particular), and he was keen to give a kid a start at TCM level in a Blue Oval beast. The choice was then easy. Savy cast about to see what was on the market, and Ian McAlister's looked like a no-brainer.

The car that took the 2006 Group N championship and was upped to TCM spec in 2007 was on the market at precisely the right time.

"We had a look at it and purchased it with the full intentions of a total rebuild to bring it up to the sort of standard for which Dimitriadis is renowned. He's a known perfectionist," Savy says.

While the car was a long way from being in the sort of condition that was going to get it noticed on the grid in 2013, Dimitriadis put his faith in Savy, who suggested the car could indeed be brought up to showcase standard.

After two-time TCM champion John Bowe gave the car the thumbs up following a run at Winton late last year, a handshake to buy the car followed, and the car was shipped to

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the Savy Motorsport headquarters in Campbellfield, Victoria.

"It was a bit out of line. It had seen a few hits in its race lifetime and there were a number of things that needed tidying up," says Savy.

The car was sent to 2011 Class B Champion and Touring Car Masters veteran Gary O'Brien's Paint and

rebuild. "Every nut, bolt and screw was pulled out of it and replaced," Savy says.

The car required stiffening, as the '64 Mustang is not known for its structural rigidity. "We made some new bracing under the bonnet – including a tower brace – and added a couple of bars to the rollcage to try and stiffen it up a bit in that way. The simple fact is they are

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Accident Repair Centre in Bendigo, Victoria to straighten the car, and for application of the pristine paintwork.

The black and gold livery pays tribute to Don's own genuine 1965 GT350H (Hertz rent-a-racer), although it has to be said that the Hertz cars were never offered in coupe form. Dimitriadis also wanted to doff his hat to Pony car royalty in Carroll Shelby with this car, after the Ford doyen passed away in May last year.

Paint applied, it was then back to Savy Motorsport for a complete rotisserie

not as strong as the later-model cars in the front," Savy says.

With an aim to bring the car up to current TCM spec, it required a full brake refit. This involved four-piston Brembo calipers fitted up front along with Alcon four-pots at the rear.

The existing 302 Windsor engine was utilised, but with a complete freshen-up with high-quality componentry and a no-expense-spared approach. The Jericho gearbox got the heave-ho in favour of a state-of-the-art GSR 4 G-Force Nascar-spec item.

Like many of the front-running TCM cars, the Mustang was fitted with Penske dampers at both ends and a new Watts Link went in. At the front the car received an entirely new coil spring package, and new top control arms.

The '64 represents a canny choice, especially with a newcomer at the wheel. The upside is to be found in the availability of parts. With the current market-hunger for Mustangs of just about any ilk, reproduction parts are plentiful, and this is an all-important element when it comes to choosing a TCM car. After all, as last year's season closer at Sandown, which resulted in a multitude of cars battered

- 01** Good parts availability makes the early Mustang Coupe a solid TCM choice
- 02** More bars were added to the rollcage to improve the '64 Coupe's rigidity
- 03** A recent shakedown at Winton Raceway ironed out any potential bugs ahead of the 2013 season
- 04** Quality braided lines were part of the extensive refit at Savy Motorsport



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and bruised (including the previously immaculate Javelin of Jim Richards) ably demonstrated, parts supply can mean the difference between a championship chance or just making up the numbers. A situation that particularly affects things like the two-door XB Falcon coupes, with rear quarters for the lovely big two-doors almost non-existent now.

And the lucky bloke who gets to sit

behind the wheel? That honour goes to debutant Will Vining-Falvey. With TCM more hotly contested than ever, he has been thrown in at the deep end to some extent, his experience comprising mostly regularity events.

While that's pressure enough, Savy isn't placing false expectations on the newcomer. "No one expects him to do too much. He just needs to run around and gain experience," he says.

And he ought to know. After all, Savy Motorsport's dance card is pretty well-filled when it comes to Touring Car Masters campaigners in 2013. His stable now includes both the HQ Monaro Coupe and Falcon XB Coupe of Keith Kassulke, the '64 Mustang Coupe featured here, Paul Freestone's 1968 Chev Camaro SS, and Graham Alexander's HT Monaro. 🚗

07 TCM newcomer Will Vining-Falvey enters the battlefield of historic racing

08 Blue triangle marks re-located battery, done for weight distribution

09 Vining-Falvey heads out for a few more laps to acquaint himself with his new charge; TCM is a tough category



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Fast Facts

1964 FORD MUSTANG

ENGINE 4942cc V8, OHV, 16v,

750cfm Holley carburettor

POWER 373kW @ 7200rpm

TORQUE 542Nm @ 5600 rpm

GEARBOX 4-speed manual

SUSPENSION independent coil springs, telescopic Penske shocks (f); live axle, leaf springs, telescopic Penske shocks (r)

BRAKES Brembo 4-piston calipers, 300mm Alcon rotors (f); Alcon 4-piston calipers, 295mm Alcon rotors (r)



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