

HOW-TO: FLUSH-MOUNT ACRYLIC WINDOWS



Mustang MONTHLY THE CLASSIC MUSTANG AUTHORITY

Super-Rare PROTOTYPE



▲
PREPRODUCTION
G.T. 500 CONVERTIBLE

KING OF THE IIs
1978 KING COBRA

SUBLIME 69 ▶
DARK HORSE CUSTOMS'
1969 SPORTSROOF

**SPECIAL
INTERIOR
TECH SECTION**
•HOW TO DYE CARPET
•LOWER YOUR SEATS
•COMPLETE A RESTOMOD
INTERIOR



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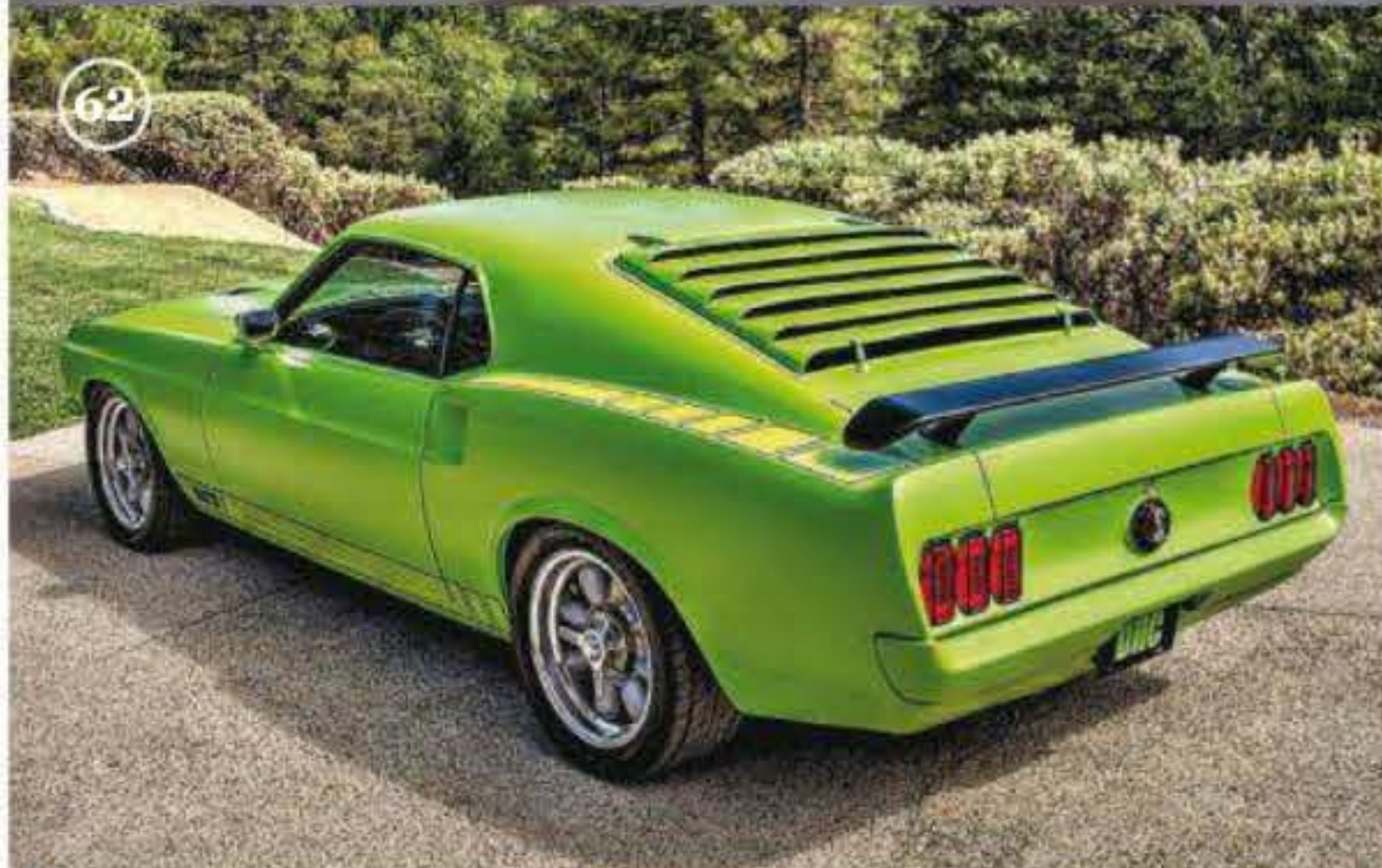
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On the Cover

Al Rogers broke into his super-secret airport somewhere in Oklahoma to catch **Tony King's** super-rare prototype Shelby G.T. 500 under power and rollin' along. This is a one-of-three car, but it's even rarer than that. Read all about it on **page 20**. **Dark Horse Customs** supplied the photos of their retina-burning Sublime 69 fastback. **Nelson Cardadeiro** caught the King Cobra napping, and editor **Kinnan** snapped **AM HR Glass's** **Carmen Belanger-Martin** installing the acrylic flush-mount windshield in our Week To Wicked 1966 hardtop.

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Sublime 69

DARK HORSE CUSTOMS BUILDS A WICKED 1969 MACH 1 THAT CANNOT GO UNNOTICED



If you were to look up the word “sublime” in Mr. Webster’s book, you would find that it means “beautiful, excellent, complete, and morally worthy.” A secondary definition says “convert then reconvert” and to “make something pure.”

All of those fairly accurately describe the latest piece of jewelry to roll out of Dark Horse Customs’ (DHC) shop in Northern California, a 1969 Mach 1 that they call Sublime 69. The obvious reference to the name is the blinding, in-your-

face color choice—Hot Rod Flatz Sublime Green with high-gloss Sublime Green and Black Onyx striping. The car is not only beautiful and worthy, but is a great example of making something pure. They took a nice, but stone-stock, 1969 Mach 1

and sublimated it to the machinations of DHC’s craftsmen to convert it into the awesome-driving and retina-burning ride you see here.

Sublime 69 is the latest in Mustang SportsRoofs to be customized by DHC. The shop specializes in

TEXT BY Rob Kinnan • **PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY** Dark Horse Customs

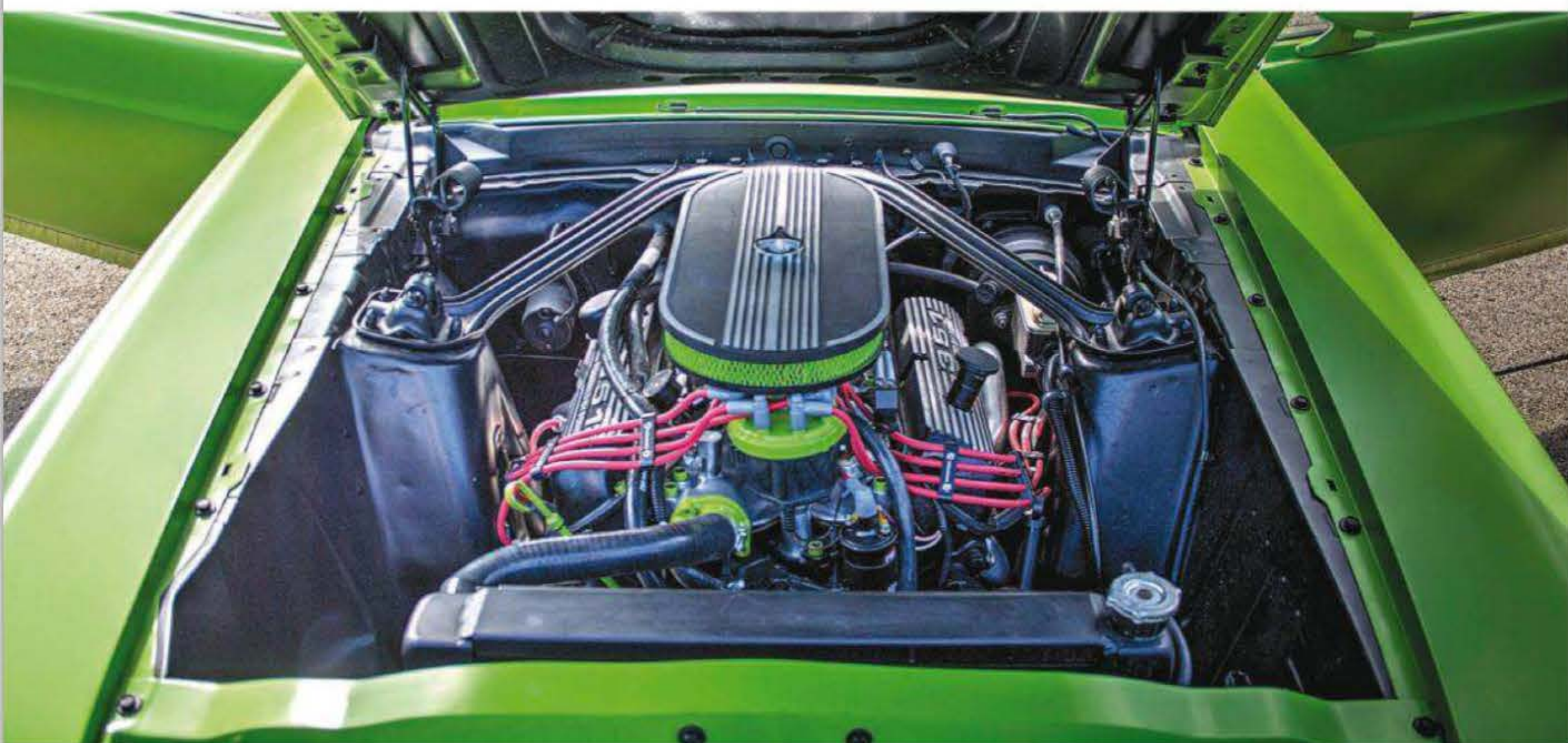
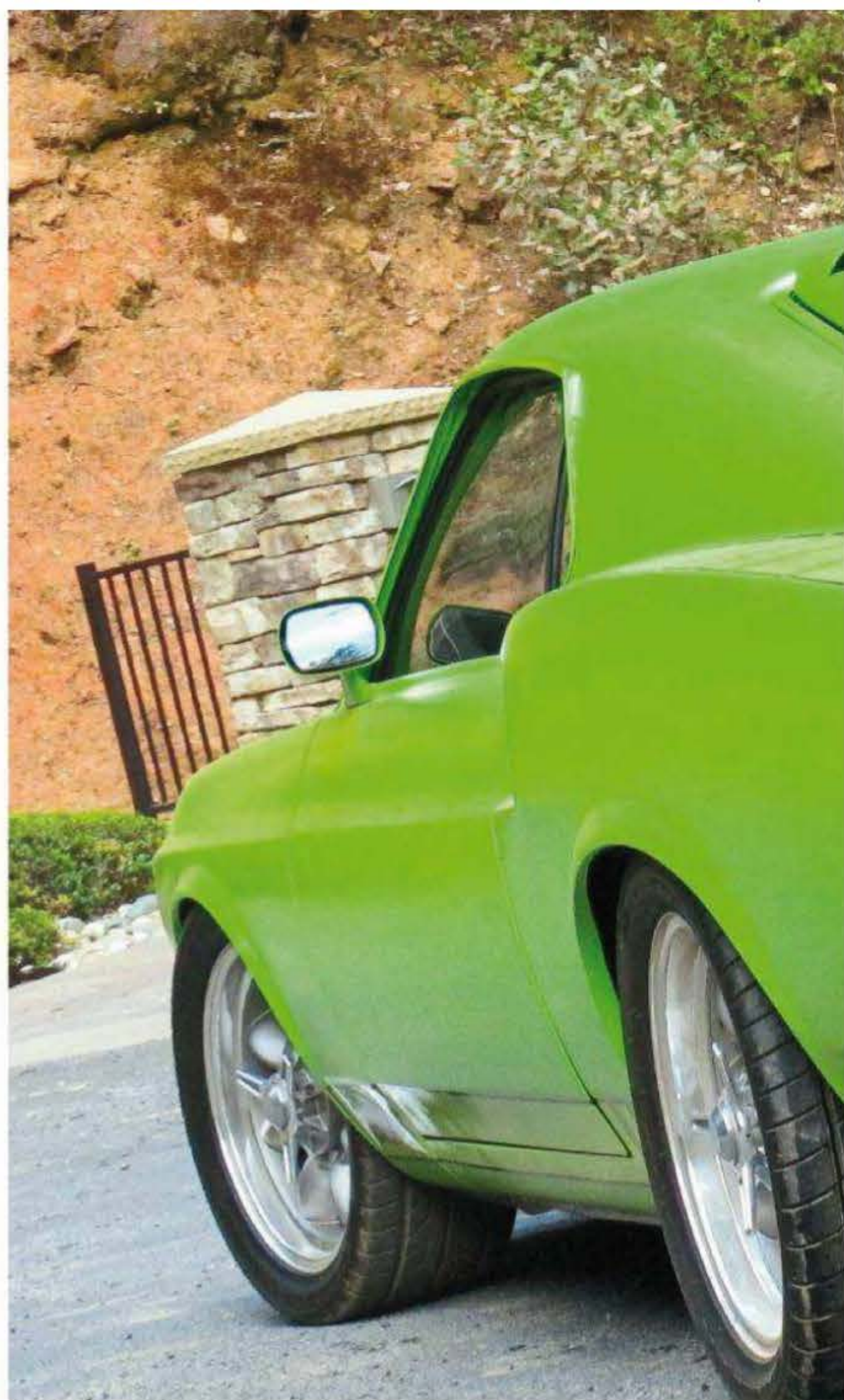


Mustangs, specifically SportsRoofs, and always has three or four in the shop in various stages of completion. They scour the country in search of 1969 Mustang SportsRoofs that are rust-free, and hopefully, real Mach 1s with a clean history. They then build the SportsRoofs based on their 351 or 545 Series cars. Consider these a turnkey restomod Mustang. Specify a few options, write a check, and drive it home to enjoy. Sublime 69 is an example of DHC's 351 Series, and if you go to their website (www.darkhorsecustoms.net), you can see Madd Maxx, the prototype for the 545 Series, except it used a 545ci 460-based engine and had a few other differences like a Tremec six-speed, a Monster Moser rear end, Trick Flow port-matched heads, and a whole lot more.

Sublime 69 began life as a numbers-matching,

rust-free and complete 1969 Mach 1 that DHC tore down to the bones. They upgraded with everything they could throw at it to make it drive like a wicked-fast new car. "Sublime 69 drives like a brand-new car," DHC's main man Warren Croyle says. "The improved aftermarket parts, latest innovations, and technical advancements enable us to overcome many of the operating and performance problems that these cars had in 1969. Every bushing, clip, belt, and hose is brand new and installed by our certified mechanical team. This vehicle has been coddled from start to finish. From the paint to the engine, to the suspension and interior, this ride is a one-of-a-kind, muscle-car dream come true."

Starting with the body, DHC did their custom tricks throughout. This includes reshaping and tucking the front and rear



■ The original, numbers-matching 351W was rebuilt with beefy rotating parts and a ceramic-coated Edelbrock Performer intake with a Holley 750-cfm Double Pumper, a Comp Cams 270H hydraulic cam, a MSD Pro Billet distributor, a Blaster 2 coil, and MSD wires. Hedman ceramic-coated headers and dual 2 1/4-inch exhaust with Flowmaster mufflers make up the exhaust. The fuel system is all hard lined. There's a 100-amp alternator, aluminum radiator, and a Hitachi high-torque starter.



■ The interior has as much carbon-fiber material as possible, including the headliner, sun visors, door and sail panels, package tray, rear speaker boxes, and trunk close-off panels. The seats were made for DHC and are stitched in green and black to match the exterior paint. The six-speaker stereo system is from JVC with a Grant tiller. Restomod gauges have a green LED Mach 1 clock and all-new sending units. New wiring from Painless Performance has been added, as well as a new stock heater. Most of the interior switches and accessories are new reproductions. The rear seat is upholstered to match and resembles the seating arrangement in an offshore racing boat.

bumpers, molding in the side scoops, making custom-molded front headlight and rear taillight brows, and molding in the extension panels so that they're seamless. "We wanted to give it a full Alien-Darth Vader DHC look," Croyle says. There is also a one-of-a-kind steel underhood grille cover, custom-vented hood with stainless-steel hood pins, and "Evil Red" running and reverse lamp lenses.

Getting the stance just right was easy with Summit Racing 2-inch lowering leaf springs with 3-inch lowering block and old-school air shocks, and Eibach 5-inch drop springs and Ride Tech shocks in front. A Global West heavy-duty sway bar kit keeps it flat in the corners. The front-disc and rear-drum brakes were left in place but rebuilt with all-new components. The wheels are a vintage-looking Trans Am-style from ET Team-III, 17x7 in front (4 1/4-inch backspacing) and 17x8 rear (4 3/4 inch), and the tires are Nitto 555 drag radials, P245/45ZR17 and P275/40ZR17.

Because it's an example of DHC's 351 Series cars, they eschewed the Coyote route that's all too common these days to power Sublime 69, and stayed with the tried-and-true pushrod small-block. It's an original numbers-matching 351W that they rebuilt with speed parts from Edelbrock, Holley, MSD, Ford Performance, and more. And because automatics can be boring, they stuck a World Class T-5 five-speed manual behind it with a

3.90:1-geared Ford 9-inch in the rear.

There are many different forks to take on the custom restomod Mustang path. You can spend the time and money to build it yourself. Buy a finished car that someone else built (and possibly end up with whatever cost-cutting or inept things they did in the build. Or buy a turnkey car built to order. That's what Dark Horse Customs is all about, and Sublime 69 is a prime example. According to Croyle, the price for this 351 Series car is roughly \$80,000 (depending on several options and factors). Add another 50 percent or so for the more radical 545 Series with the big-block. For that money, you get a professionally built car with all the best parts and a look that you most certainly won't pull up next to at a stoplight. **MM**





■ Dark Horse Customs' cars have some unique but consistent custom design features, which were, of course, incorporated into the Sublime 69. Beyond the striking Sublime Green paint, you see tucked and re-shaped bumpers front and rear, molded-in side scoops, molded headlight and taillight brows, a custom hood (a slightly different design on the 545 Series), and a custom under-hood shroud to hide the radiator and other stuff that takes your eyes away from the car. The gas cap is billet aluminum. One of DHC's trademarks is the stance, which is much lower than stock but not so low that the tires rub or the car is not drivable. That's thanks to lowering a combination of the coil and leaf springs.

