

(R)MITCHELL MOTORSPORTS - ISSUE NUMBER 236 - NOVEMBER 2025

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MITCHELL MOTORSPORTS

Issue Number 236 - November 2025

DEDICATED TO ALL FORD MUSTANGS

SENT TO OVER 570 MUSTANG OWNERS AND CLUBS

Welcome to the latest issue of our MITCHELL MOTORSPORTS e-newsletters with feature articles and other items of interest for our members. In this issue, we present more stories with pictures and other items for your review. Thank you for joining our Association. Tell others about us.

WE VISITED THE FORD'S GARAGE RESTAURANT IN RICHMOND, VA! - BY RICK MITCHELL

I enjoy reading the Ford Authority e-newsletters that are published daily. This excellent, free publication covers a wide variety of topics related to many different Ford products, with feature articles and other helpful information. I usually look for Mustang or Fusion related stories, but I also scan all of their other interesting material. There was an article written by Brett Foote that was published on April 16, 2025 noting that an officially Ford-licensed restaurant chain, called Ford's Garage, was expanding into northern Virginia, specifically to Alexandria, Fairfax and Woodbridge, which is about an hour away from my home in west Baltimore, in addition to its current 30 locations across eight states in the U.S.



The article also noted that there already was one Ford's Garage location in Richmond, which I was not aware of. I have followed the progress of this franchise's expansion, and I was thrilled to read that one location already existed that was somewhat close by. By coincidence, I have family living in Richmond, and my wife and I were spending Easter Saturday with them and staying for dinner. We were then leaving on Easter Sunday, April 20, to drive home. With just a slight detour, we could drive to this Ford's Garage location, actually in Glen Allen, near the Short Pump Mall, and have lunch there. A quick call confirmed that this restaurant was open on Easter Sunday. How lucky could we get!.



These Ford's Garage restaurants are designed to resemble a 1920's or '30's garage, as if you were sitting in a restored repair shop with wooden slats on the walls letting in outside light. There were converted gas pump handles used as front door latches. They had at least four restored 1930's Ford Model A's, either parked outside the building, or with one inside hanging from the ceiling with its wheels slowly rotating. Their outside wooden benches used F-150 tailgates as seat backs!



The waiters were dressed in replica shop shirts that said Ford's Garage on one patch with their names on another. Each place setting had a light blue shop towel napkin folded up with a hose clamp wrapped around it. There was memorabilia hanging everywhere with enlarged pictures of Henry and Edsel Ford on the walls. There was a separate bar area near the dining room. The atmosphere was terrific!



The menu was extensive with different types of burgers and fries. I ordered a mushroom swiss burger that was excellent, and they served some of the best fries with my meal! The bun had the name of Ford's Garage seared into its top! Within the extensive menu there was a drink section that was referred to as their 'Ford Fusions'! The meals were reasonably priced, and the selections could be modified to meet your needs. Finally, there was a small gift shop with t-shirts and shot glasses that said Ford's Garage.



Visiting this Ford's Garage location was like traveling in a time machine and going back nearly one hundred years to have dinner at an early Ford repair shop. I thought I may not see one of these interesting restaurants for many years to come and enjoy this fabulous experience, but there we were, and the visit was thoroughly enjoyable. If there is a Ford's Garage near your area or coming to your town soon, as a Ford fan you owe it to yourself to stop in for a visit. It was definitely an enjoyable experience!

-END-

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got Model A?

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MY NEW OLD 2015 FORD FUSION STORY! - BY RICK MITCHELL

During the summer of 2024, I was driving my wife's 2017 Subaru Forester while she was driving a newer Forester. Although the '17 was good transportation. it had over 95,000 miles with a few issues. I considered it as our spare car, and later I wanted to

replace it with a good, used Ford sedan that I could personalize to make it special. My best choice was to look into buying another Fusion. Three years ago I bought a low mileage 2017 Fusion SE. I only owned it for eight months when I traded to buy my '11 Mustang, which was my daily driver before it was turned into a show car. I was now interested in letting our older Forester go to buy another Fusion. There were many good reasons for buying another one.

The Wikipedia Ford Fusion (Americas) article said that the Fusion was a 4-door sedan that was the successor to the Ford Contour. Ford assembled the Fusion from 2006 to 2020, with two generations over the years, and various gasoline and hybrid engine versions. They were built as either front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive. The Fusions were assembled at Ford's Hermosillo plant in Sonora, Mexico. Production began on August 1, 2005 as a 2006 model. The Fusion was considered a mid-size car between the smaller Focus and the full-size Taurus. The Fusion was also sold in other countries, with some using the name of Mondeo instead.

The First Generation Fusions were assembled from 2005 through 2012. They were based on the Ford CD3 platform, which was Mazda's G platform, that was shared with the Mazda 6, Lincoln MKZ and Mercury Milan. The Fusion went through many upgrades and refreshes over the years, until the Second Generation Fusions were unveiled in 2012 as 2013 models. These later Fusions used the Ford CD4 platform, resulting in a slightly larger sedan. Production continued at the Hermosillo plant, but strong sales required that additional capacity was added for several years at Flat Rock, Michigan.



The Fusion was available in several models, such as the S, SE, SEL, Titanium, Hybrid, Sport, Platinum and Energi. There were six different engines offered between 2013 and 2020. Two were Duratec I4 gasoline engines, and the others were Ecoboost Turbocharged I4 or V6 motors. I wanted to find another Fusion with a Duratec 25 I4, which was a 2.5L (152 CID) engine, developing 175hp at 6000 RPM. It produced 175 ft-lb of torque, and was coupled to a 6F 6-speed automatic transmission, rated at 21/32/25 mileage.

The Fusion received a facelift for the 2017 models, which changed its front and rear styling and some of the interior, and again in 2019, but by 2018, Ford planned to discontinue the Fusion along with other sedans as Ford was shifting toward

trucks, SUVs and the Mustang. As a result, 2020 was the final year for the Fusion in North America when production halted that July, ending all of Ford's 4-door cars in North America. Ford sold 3,185,690 Fusions in the United States between 2005 and 2021.

I read articles discussing the 2.5L Duratec 25 inline four-cylinder engine. One reviewer said that the 2.5L was, "an excellent choice for those looking for a reliable and fuel efficient engine." The author had a difficult time finding common problems with this engine. He did say to watch the coolant level as the 2.5L has a tendency to use coolant. Additionally, problems with the 6-speed automatic transmission may begin around 70K miles with hard shifting. Several readers said the 2.5L was a good, solid engine and very reliable, with decent mileage on long trips, but it was not very powerful.

Another author described the 2.5L as one of Ford's "best works," and "one of the most reliable engines you can find anywhere." One of the problems noted again was to watch for coolant consumption, but the 2.5L was one of the most reliable engines with high durability, and it should last a long time, with some owners reporting up to 200,000 miles. It was a matter of how well the car was cared for. Finally, the 2.5L was retired in 2019 in favor of the Ecoboost engines. Having owned a '17 Fusion before, I had no qualms about looking for another one.



Now it was back to looking for a '13 to '17 2.5L Fusion, and often I reviewed many Fusions from across the country on different searches, and sometimes several times in a day. I was hoping for less than 50,000 miles in some color other than red, white or black. I preferred one-owner cars with low mileage and minimal nicks and dings, but they were hard to find. There were more of the turbo models as the cars got closer to the '18's that I ruled out. I eventually located a Deep Impact Blue '15 Fusion SE with 42K in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It had all of the features that I liked, plus fog lights and a rear spoiler. This Fusion was shipped to Maryland, my home state, on November 4 and arrived on the 13th. .

On November 15, the dealer advised that the Fusion had passed its state inspection, but that its Oklahoma title had not arrived. On the next day, I saw the Fusion and test drove it for over an hour. It handled quite well, but as the following week passed, the dealer still had not located the title. I finally received a text on December 10 that the blue '15 Fusion was ready! I set up a re-inspection and second test ride for the 13th. The dealer now had a duplicate title that the original owner signed, and two minor

repairs were completed. I spent another hour looking the blue '15 over in great detail. I then took the car on a 33-mile test ride and listened carefully, and it was quiet. Hooray! I think I found my car! I took delivery of the '15 Fusion on December 15.

The following is a short description of my '15 Fusion. It was assembled on August 21, 2014 in Hermosillo, Mexico. Its color is Deep Impact Blue Metallic, as noted, with a Charcoal Black cloth interior with red stitching. This Fusion has a 2.5L iVCT I-4 inline four-cylinder engine with 175 horsepower, and a 6-speed SelectShift automatic transmission. The car has Equipment Group 201A that added an appearance package, including 18" 5-spoke Premium Painted Aluminum sport wheels, a rear spoiler and fog lights.

I took the '15 to my mechanic on December 20 for an oil change and review. He looked at everything and said that the car was a "keeper," and so I stopped looking at used Fusions any longer. My search was finally over!



Over the next few weeks, I looked into what other improvements were needed. Most was minor cosmetic repairs, and so I ordered touch up paint and made other small corrections. I also added black pinstripe and located a set of OEM black rubber mats that said FUSION on the side. Next I wanted to add more chrome trim, and so I ordered two sets OEM 'FUSION' badges. The more deluxe Fusions have 'FUSION' on their lower front doors that looks good. I also added aftermarket chromed 2.5L emblems to my hood and trunk. I also located different chrome trim on ebay for my fog lights, front grille, tail lights and trunk deck and added that, too. All of this contrasted my blue paint and improved the overall look of my Fusion. Nothing, however, was changed on my engine.

I have found my Fusion to be smooth handling and a joy to drive. It is quiet, and the power is more than adequate. It also has many features that I prefer. This '15 has a pistol grip automatic shifter that to me is much nicer than the rotary shifter dial that my prior '17 Fusion had. There is no touch screen for some controls in the center stack on my '15, but rather real knobs and buttons. Call me outdated, but I like this better! My '15 has a backup camera, and there is also a CD player that many newer cars have left off. All of this seems well thought out. I also activated Sirius XM, a great addition for long trips!

Overall, I can see where my '15 Fusion may have the potential to attend a few car shows, and the external changes were made with that in mind. If an event came where I may be hesitant to take my Mustang because of marginal weather, and if the Fusion fit into the classes, then rather than not go, taking the Fusion instead would be a good idea. When a flyer says, "all makes, models and years," or "rain or shine," my Fusion may get the call! One point to stress, though, is that if you consider buying a used car or truck, be sure to request a Carfax report and/or other online reports, such as from Been Verified, and review them carefully. They are loaded with valuable information.

Finally, be sure to have a trusted mechanic look your new/old purchase over thoroughly, including the undercarriage, and request an inspection report if the vehicle fails as the basis for returning it during the first week to ten days you own it. These last suggestions are well worth the time and expense. One final comment is that for as nice as these Fusions still are, it is truly sad that they are no longer made. They are excellent four-door medium-sized cars that look great and handle well, and they drive like a Lincoln and are an excellent value.

-END-

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got Fusion?

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MITCHELL MOTORSPORTS

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MY FIRST CAR SHOW IN MY 2015 FORD FUSION! - BY RICK MITCHELL

"We had a real winter this year," one of my friends commented as we approached the better spring weather here in central Maryland. "Yes, we did," I replied. "And we had real snow to shovel, and real low temperatures to deal with, and real high

heating bills to pay on top of that!" There were also many incredibly long, cold stretches along the way, making decent days to work outside on cars difficult to find. Although my '15 Fusion was generally finished as far as debugging any mechanical issues, I wanted to take it a few steps farther and add additional trim to make it look better if I took it to car shows.

I spent many hours reviewing websites for Fusion trim, and I found that ebay was my best source for aftermarket pieces for the '13 to '16 Fusions, all of which were similar. I found enough nice looking parts to conservatively improve my Fusion's appearance. My goal was to add exterior trim that made my Fusion look more deluxe, as if Ford offered a better appearance package. The other selling point for ebay was that their prices for many items were reasonable and lower than expected. I could also email the vendors with questions and receive timely replies that were helpful.



I saw where my '15 Fusion had the potential to attend a few car shows, and I made its external changes with that in mind. If an event came where I may be hesitant to take my Mustang because of marginal weather, and if the Fusion fit into the classes, then rather than not go, taking my Fusion instead may be a good idea! When a flyer said, "all makes, models and years," or "rain or shine," my Fusion may get the call!

But as the new season approached, I wondered why not just outright take my Fusion to several events that were appropriate, rather than wait? It is nicely equipped with Sirius XM, a CD player, and quite comfortable on trips. Its Deep Impact Blue paint was also used on Mustangs and would look appropriate when displayed, and it has sporty factory wheels, fog lights and a spoiler, plus all that extra chrome trim that I added. Let's pick a good show and go!

Usually our season kicks off by mid-April with a few early events, despite the unpredictable weather. One of the best candidates to drive my Fusion to came on Sunday, April 27. This was the East Coast Drifters Spring Open Car Show, held at the Mechanicsville Moose Lodge, located in Mechanicsville, in southern Maryland. I had attended this excellent event twice

before in my Mustang over the last two years and thoroughly enjoyed both occasions. It was open to all years, makes and models of cars, trucks and motorcycles.



The show was 73-miles away and a long ride, but it was a good drive at speed that took about an hour and a half, mostly on the interstates. The event's parking was on a huge, grassy field with enough room for about 300 vehicles. What I liked most though was that this was a judged show by points. The judges were members of the club, but they did not allow their people to enter their own cars, which is an incredibly unselfish way to handle their judging. This looked like an excellent event to take my Fusion to for its first show!

I had planned to take my Fusion to a different show on Saturday the 26th, and so I completed a four-hour clean up of everything on the prior Thursday, but storms came through early that weekend and postponed that event. Next up, and also an excellent choice, was the East Coast Drifters on that Sunday. The problem was that my nice, clean car sat out in the rain and wind that Saturday in the midst of our typical late April high pollen, plus many of our trees unleashed hundreds of little 'helicopter' seedlings, creating quite a mess on everyone's cars!

When I checked my Fusion by the first light at 6am on Sunday morning with cold and blustery winds, I knew my car would need a 'windex bath' at the show site! The ride to Mechanicsville passed uneventfully and I arrived by 8:15am. I registered and then restarted the cleaning process. I was surprised at how crusty my wheel wells looked! But an hour and a half later, the Fusion looked show-worthy once more! Even still the high pollen came back with the windy weather.



This year the East Coast Drifters separated their parking for the late model cars by putting us away from the classics. Our newer cars were competing for 25 separate awards. I was in among many Corvettes and Camaros, as well as a few Mustangs, and I knew that this event would be a challenge. In all my years of competing, I had only ever seen one other Fusion. My car was brand new to competition and untested. How would it be perceived by the judges? I do not know how many other late model cars were at this show, but I estimated possibly 25 to 35, but that was only a guess.

Once I had my car ready, I had time to speak with several of the club members and get to know them. This is an incredibly gracious group who try very hard to run an excellent show. They donate many hours in the service of the club and take care of what needs to be done to hold successful events, and they make changes as needed. They also offer 126 trophies, but they do not just go to a trophy shop and place an order for every award. Instead, they order all of the pieces for their trophies and build the awards themselves, thus reducing the cost of their trophies by an estimated 30%. This is a time-consuming chore, but it results in great savings that go back to their various charities.

When we registered our cars, we were given our score sheets to place on our dashboard for our judge. I did not see my Fusion during its judging, but I saw that the emphasis was on condition and cleanliness. There was also an area devoted to evaluating of our trunks, which is often overlooked at many judged shows. Their scoring sheets covered the main areas of each car with point scales used for each. I did talk to my judge after the fact while he was looking at other cars.



Later that afternoon we were called forward to the center of the show field for trophy time. They announced their Top 70 classic cars first, and then our Late Model 25 winners were called, and I was fortunate to receive one of these nice awards for my Fusion. There is something truly special about spending so many long hours debugging my ten year old car, talking to different mechanics for advice about its condition, researching its history, repairing its cosmetic damage and adding extra trim to conservatively improve its appearance, and then taking it to its first show, preparing it, and then letting it be judged. It completed the circle. My Fusion is my daily driver and now an occasional show car. It drove well on the interstates, and overall it felt like it was 'new' again. And now it had survived its first real test!

One other trophy that always amazes me that was awarded, in addition to the Top awards and other Best of trophies, was the club's oldest participant award. The winner this time was a 91-year old man who was there with his restored 1958 Impala. The next oldest was age 90! Seeing this always gives me great hope for the future. To be in that good physical condition in that age range and still attending shows is outstanding! Finally, if you live within driving distance of southern Maryland and show your car, truck or motorcycle, then you owe it to yourself to consider attending an East Coast Drifters car show!

-END-

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got Fusion?

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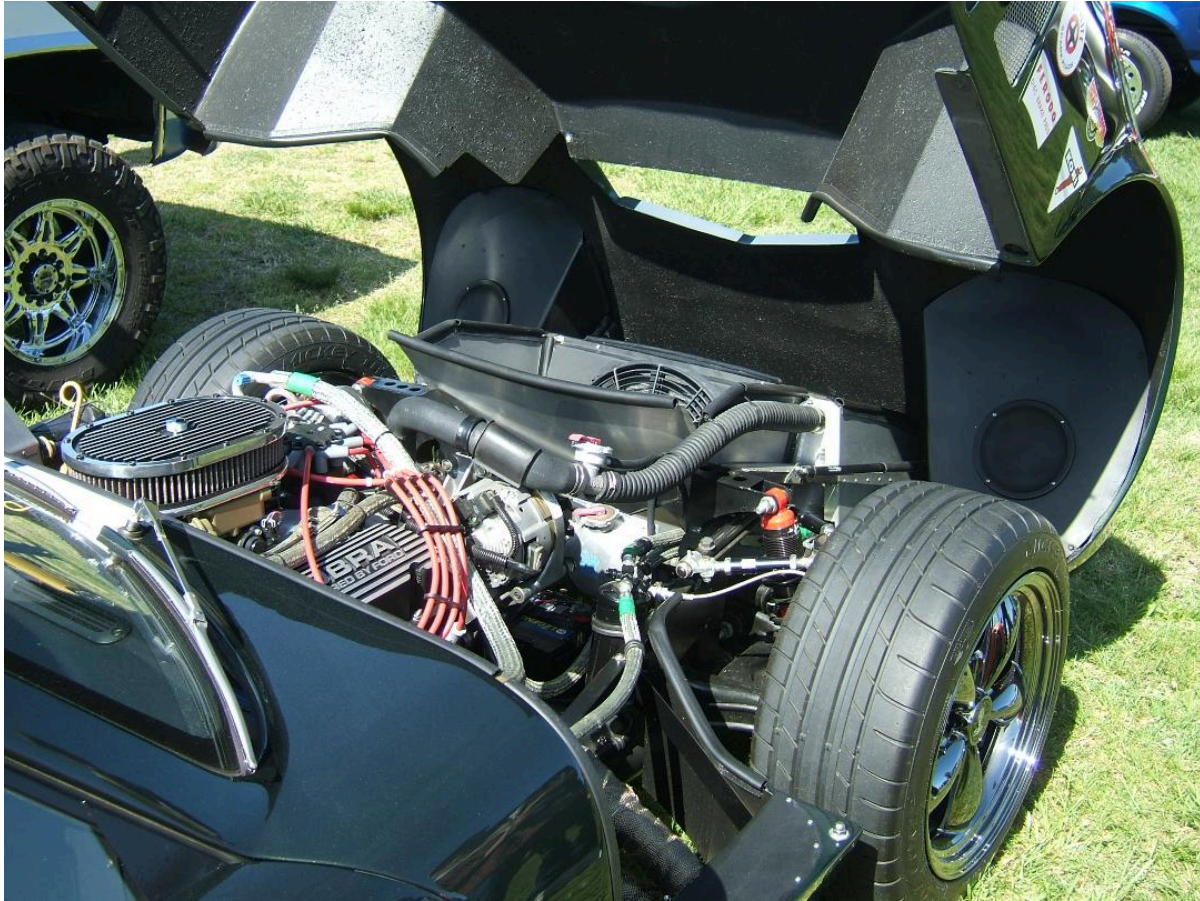
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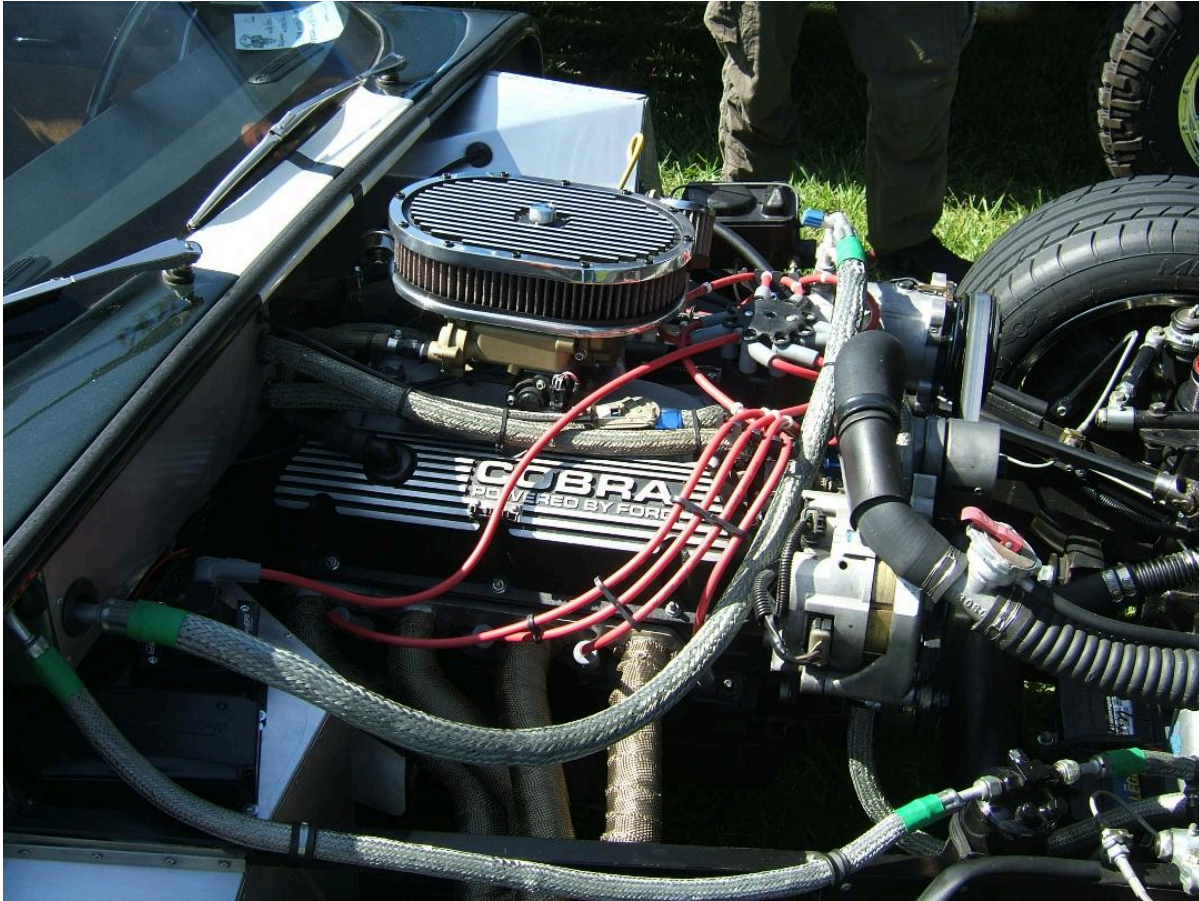
On Sunday, April 27, 2025, I attended the East Coast Drifters Spring Open Car Show, held in Mechanicsville, in southern Maryland. This event was open to all years, makes and models of cars, trucks and motorcycles, and it was a judged show by points. There were more than 200 entrants at this excellent event, which offered many great opportunities for pictures. We will present several photo issues of MITCHELL MOTORSPORTS highlighting some of the many Ford and Mercury vehicles seen at this show. In this issue we present pictures of a replica Shelby Daytona coupe. I believe this was made by Superformance. It was an amazing recreation, and one of the few I have seen over the years. It was very impressive!











-END-

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got Daytona?

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OUR 240TH ISSUE!

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opportunities for pictures. We will present several photo issues of MITCHELL MOTORSPORTS highlighting some of the many Ford and Mercury vehicles seen at this show. In this issue we present pictures of a red Mercury Cougar, a blue street rod from Factory 5, a light blue Falcon four-door, and a red '55 or '56 Thunderbird. All were very impressive!









-END-

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got Ford?

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-END-

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got Mercury?

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