

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY BOB EGLESTON

The White Fox

JOE BEUTLER'S UNRESTORED FOX BODY



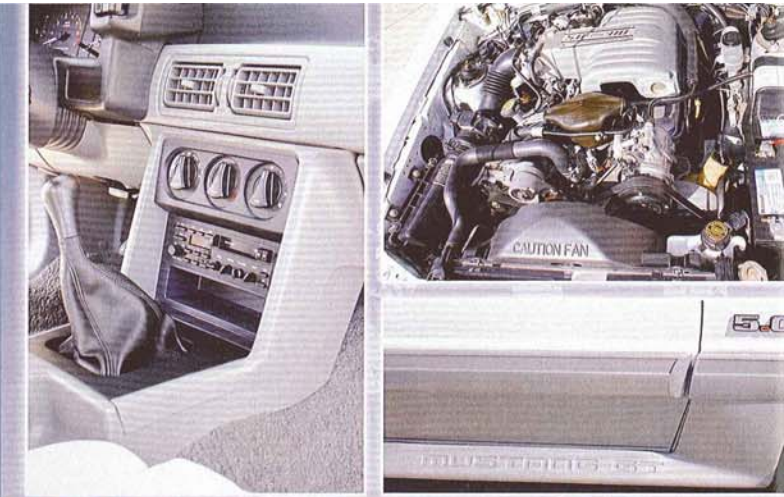
It's funny how the bug hits you. It can happen anytime, anywhere. It can happen when you least expect it. But when it happens, it's like someone hit you over the head with a frying pan. That's exactly what happened to Joe Beutler of Ravenna, Ohio. Joe is no stranger to cars and the restoration hobby. The love of this hobby is a product of a father/son relationship. You see, Joe's father purchased a 1926 Model T Touring car and a 1928 Model A Roadster pickup, which they restored together. He was hooked.

This same passion for Fords rubbed off on Joe's son, Dan, who owns an '85 GT, a '90 LX, a '97

Cobra and a 2000 6-cylinder daily driver. But that's not the end of the story.

Joe had purchased a '65 convertible and was working with his son on a frame-off restoration. In May 1999, he made a trip to K.A.R. Mustang in Columbus, Ohio, to return a bumper. There on the showroom floor was a 1989 Mustang GT Convertible with only 2,500 original miles. As with most of us, when Joe went to K.A.R. he had no intention of purchasing another car. But then, WHAM! That pesky bug hit. That '89 convertible really winked at him and next thing you know, it followed him home.

Joe drove the car that summer and his son suggested he enter it in an MCA National show in Franklin, Tennessee. It was there that Joannet Porter and Claudia Wallace, and an immediate friendship was born. Joe learned a lot about showing a Mustang and the rarity of a low-mileage fox body car.



Following some expert advice, the car won a Gold in the Concours Trailered division. Since then, Joe hasn't looked back. As a matter of fact, the car received an MCA blue grille medallion at the Space and Rocket Center National Show back in May. (July 2005 Mustang Times, page 62.)

Joe's convertible was built late in the model year, on June 29, 1989. The Oxford White GT has the white/medium gray leather sport interior and a white convertible top. The top looks great, partly because it has only been down twice. Look, no wrinkles! The GT is powered by the stock, 225 HP, 5.0L V8, with 5-speed transmission and locking 3.08 rear axle. In addition, it has cruise, power door locks, power windows, power side mirrors, and an electronic am/fm/cassette clock radio. Holding the car firmly to the ground are the standard finned

cast aluminum wheels shod with Good-year Gatorback tires. The only things that are not original to the car are the battery, serpentine belt and the oil filter.

The convertible now has just under 4,500 miles on it. But, don't expect to see the car tooling around the streets of Ravenna any time soon. This sly fox only drives from the garage into the enclosed trailer and then onto the show field. Joe has developed a great appreciation of what a low mileage, unrestored car is all about. Thank goodness! This is a great example of an unrestored fox body car that will serve as an invaluable resource for those soon wanting to restore their GT to stock appearance.

Does this mean that Joe will now sit back and rest on his laurels? Well, no. Next up is the restoration of a 1984 Turbo GT. Darn that bug. *MT*