

If you're a serious late-model Mustang maniac and have had your ears to the ground for the past few years, you've probably heard the name AutoKraft pop up on occasion. Although not yet a household word in the world of performance Mustangs, AutoKraft owner and visionary Doug Kielian has been working quietly from his base in Lincoln, Nebraska, for the last six or seven years, churning out limited-edition 5.0 demons the likes of which have never been seen in this hobby before. With their trademark vintage Grabber Blue hue, widened

## MUSTANG-METAL WIZARD DOUG KIELIAN AND HIS AUTOKRAFT CREW BUILD ANOTHER CHAMP.

text by Rob Reaser  
photography by Rob Reaser  
and Mary Jean Wesche

body treatment, custom interiors and state-of-the-art performance goodies, Kielian's

AutoKraft Mustangs present a fundamental revolution in ponycar modifications. In fact, Doug's latest creation, the sleek, chopped GT seen here, is to us the near-perfect definition of what Ford's third-generation Mustang should have been from the start.

Oddly enough, Doug purchased this GT new in 1989, shortly before starting AutoKraft, and began working on the car soon thereafter, but only recently completed the project. Developing a successful business and turning his talents to creating one-of-a-kind Mustangs for his customers took



# Going On

precedence through the years, however, insistent prodding from friends and dedicated employees finally prompted Doug to get the car finished.

About a year after buying the car, Kielian took the first step towards making his Mustang like nothing on the road. "I chopped the top three inches," says Doug, "and hand-fabricated the quarter panels out of a piece of flat steel. First, I built the quarter panels out of construction paper and made the depth gauges, then after a lot of welding, the quarter panels ended up two inches wider

on each side. I then painted the car the original black and drove it partially done for a few years."

Doug then explained why the project was put on the back burner. "I became busy working on Kenny Brown's project cars, such as the XS Mustangs and the Short Wheel-base Thunderbirds. After going from a one-man operation to a larger shop and eight employees, it was hard to find time to work on the car. My employees finally talked me into working on it again."

Once the project was again given the

green light, work began in earnest. With the help of dedicated employees Terry Worick, Joel Dorfmeier, and Dan Homes, Kielian and crew continued with the previous body modifications by widening the fenders 1.5-inches, extending the GT rear wing four inches, adding a Cervini Ram Air hood, a Cobra grill insert, and a perfect coat of Grabber Blue paint. Further, Doug replaced the stock headlamps with units from a BMW. Additional appearance modifications came when the GT fog lamps were removed to make room for functional brake ducts, and a Flow-



ne Better

# Going One Better



master exhaust kit was routed through the rear valance and topped off with Headman Header exhaust tips.

As with any AutoKraft production, the interior of Doug's GT received a special touch with a serialized AutoKraft blue leather dash cover, shifter boot, parking brake handle and blue upholstery piping. On the more functional side, Doug pulled the rear seat to accommodate an HP Motorsport six-point roll cage and spare tire mount and fitted Schroth four-point harnesses to the floorpans and Motorsport gauges to the dash. AutoKraft's own battery box was used to relocate the battery behind the passenger seat.

If you would like more information on the AutoKraft Mustangs, or the custom work the company can provide for your pony, contact Doug Kielian at AutoKraft, Dept. MM, 712 W. Cornhusker Hwy., Lincoln, NE 68521; (402) 474-2344.

In keeping with the car's sporty appearance, performance enhancements were not forgotten. Doug displaced the original V8 with an SVO GT-40 crate motor (built by his friends at HP Motorsports), along the way adding assorted Motorsport go-fast goodies, an MSD ignition and, most importantly, a Paxton SN93 Supercharger. Drivetrain power transfer is handled through a World-Class five-speed tranny and rounded out with a limited-slip 3.73:1 rearend. Stopping power is assisted via Motorsport's five-lug rear disc brake conversion kit. To help put the power to the road, 17-inch Motoform wheels with

Goodyear Eagle GSCs (255/45ZR17 front and 315/35ZR17 rear) complete the package.

Even in the field of mild-to-wild modified Mustangs, where everything that can be done to customize late-model ponies almost has, Doug Kielian's chopped '89 GT stands out in an already standout crowd. The low, wide stance of this AutoKraft creation not only distinguishes itself on its home field, but equally challenges the style and sophistication of those high-dollar European roadsters. Ford did a good job, but Doug Kielian did the Mustang one better.



\*1 to 3 when c

Copyright © by National

**OEM STY**  
OEM 2-pc c  
'65-73 Std  
'70-73 Mac

**DASH PA**

'65-66 5 co  
'69-70 W/c  
**OEM PA**

**JAMMIN**  
JVC & Kenw  
to fit your fa  
Dual dash s

'65-68 FT

**AUTOLIT**  
New higher  
for perform  
in the same  
standard gr  
Only \$124  
Standard gr  
available at

**SEAT TR**  
Complete the  
smooth-trav  
driving pleas  
seats! \$69.

Prices listed in this advertisement are catalog prices and are subject to change without notice.

