



1965 Mustang-Terlingua Tribute



What appears before you is among the coolest 1965 Mustangs around. This car is incredibly nice and if you don't believe it can turn heads you must have skimmed right over the pictures. The original 1965 Fastback was entirely restored as a Terlingua Racing Tribute car making it one of the toughest looking muscle cars on the road. What the heck is Terlingua you ask? Well in addition to being a small Texas town the history is quite interesting.

In the Beginning...

The Terlingua logo is black and yellow, with a rabbit holding its paw in the air. How it came together is quite a story. The whole thing actually got started when a group including Carroll Shelby, Dave Witts, Tom Tierney, David E Davis, Jr. and myself (Bill Neale) would go down to Terlingua to hang out, hunt deer, ride motorcycles, have some drinks and eat real well. Usually these trips would last anywhere from four to five days. We would get down there in many different ways, but most of the time we flew down on Shelby's DC-3 which he would bring to Dallas from Los Angeles. We did this two or three times a year.

After purchasing the more than 200,000 acres that made up the Terlingua Ranch, and while trying to decide what to do with the land, Shelby and Witts decided to do something to benefit the Terlingua community by developing a technical school for young men. Brewster County is a very sparsely populated area, and these young folks couldn't afford to travel the nearly 100 miles to the nearest schools. There were literally more goats living in and around Terlingua than people. The boy's technical school effort got off to a good start, but later fell apart for many reasons, most of them political.

While we were working on the school idea, Tom Tierney came to me and said "Bill, wouldn't it be nice if you designed a Terlingua Ranch logo?" Tierney was a public relations man who worked with Ford Motor Company. We met early one morning for breakfast at the Rafter's Club on Northwest Highway in Dallas. The first logo was drawn on a paper napkin, and we chose the colors, which were to be yellow and black. Tom is the man responsible for really promoting the first Terlingua chili cook off in 1967. At that time, the logo consisted only of the rabbit, the sun and the three feathers.

The Team is Born

After the Terlingua Ranch logo was created in the mid-1960's, Shelby said, "You know, it would be kinda neat to use this as a racing team logo too! If you will figure out how to do it, we'll use it on some of the GT350-R models I'm developing." Shelby brought the first car to Green Valley Raceway near Dallas on February 14, 1965. Ken Miles drove the car, designated 5R002. It was white with blue stripes and the first "R" model Shelby Mustang ever to race. I said, "Shelby why don't we put our first Terlingua logo on there?" The logo by now had "Terlingua Racing Team" on it and he said "let's do it!" That car won the race that day and has been documented in a lot of magazines, various books and so on.

Mr. Shelby had his name paired with some of the coolest cars out there and the Terlingua Race team is no exception. Looking over this 65 closely there is no doubting it is a race car because it is much more than a slick paint job with some racing decals. The car was completely frame off restored and transformed into the car you see here. From removing the window components to relocating the battery everything has been done in the vintage racer fashion with only the best components out there. The paint on the car has a beautiful finish and is done in a combination of White and Blue. All of the glass has been replaced with a polycarbonate in an effort to lose as much weight as possible. Features like the vented rear window and sealed quarter vent really show the level of detail that went into this car. Grey Rev wheels sit nicely under each fender and are wrapped with BF Goodrich Radial T/A tires.

Powering the car is a high performance 289 that runs just as well as it looks. It has been topped off with aftermarket Cobra power valve covers and an edelbrock manifold. The engine compartment was extremely well done with everything having a clean look. As it sits the car is show ready and it looks like the restoration was just completed yesterday. The original style strut brace and Monte Carlo bar have been powder coated a dark Silver. The motor delivers an awesome sound and is routed through pipes that dump out of the sides just in front of the rear wheels. The sound definitely matches the look. The level of detail is extremely high quality and is very evident when viewing this car in person. You will note that the bottom surfaces of certain chassis components were painted White with the tops painted Black so that everything has that clean matching look. Backing up the motor is a 5 speed manual transmission that moves through the gears just as smooth as your modern daily driver. The car is extremely comfortable to drive so don't be scared off by the racecar theme. It may be a racecar, but its one anybody could easily drive.

The interior of the car is Black and done in a combination of original style and aftermarket components. A roll cage has been added as were high back Procar seats with racing lap harnesses. To cut down on additional weight things like the window cranks, window hardware, rear seat and radio were all removed. Custom door panels were made from the car as well as custom window frames to facilitate the new windows. A strap set up was installed and reflects what you see on early racers. A Shelby woodgrain steering wheel sits in front of the driver as well as aftermarket gauges which were installed into the original style bezel. The trunk has been finished out just as nicely and houses the battery and billet gas inlet. Look around all you want but you won't find another Mustang like this one. It will stand up next to any Mustang out there and even next to million dollar Shelybs this car will draw a crowd. It is destined to end up in a museum someday or with a serious collector.

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