

-McClarenDesign's-

Very Serious SLS AMG Review of the Car of the Week N Stuff

"Get your racecraft organized. Have fun. But go about it in an organized way." -[Sir Jackie Stewart](#)

Week 17: 1967 Mercury Cougar XR-7

Before I begin, I must apologize for the delay. You see, whenever one divides up half their possessions, they usually bring their friends along. Shortly thereafter, more friends will arrive, dressed in fancy suits, and spilling the sorts of jargon you expect to hear from an insurance salesman. Before you know it, you'll find more hands in your wallet than the federal government, and absolutely nothing to show for it.

Thankfully, my efforts have apparently been rewarded. While I may have lost half my life, my soul, my house, my clothes, and my money, I finally get to experience the sort of luxury a man in my position needs... the sort of luxury that reminds you of exactly why you've worked so hard for so long. Better still, it's the sort of luxury the lawyers can't touch.

I've been promised a Merc.



So you can imagine the shock to my system when I arrived at the office. When I was told it was a Merc, I secretly lusted for the SLS AMG, or perhaps a Black Series of some sort. Instead, I'm left with the alternative to a "[secretary's car](#)", the senior citizen of the Mustang. Much like today, badge engineering had found a successful formula to once again capitalize on. Sure the Cougar had enough differences, but being a Mercury, it was meant to appeal to a more mature audience. Audiences with a craving for hideaway headlamps, and other nonsense that couldn't be bothered with in a Mustang.

Ever since Mercury's founding, it's been a brand that's meant to bridge the gap between Ford and Lincoln, never mind it's later fusing with the latter. The trouble I have is why an entire brand was needed. Perhaps my way of thinking is too simplistic, or perhaps rational, but wouldn't it have made more sense to increase the options and pricing of upscale Fords, such as the Crown Victoria, as well as simplifying and expanding Lincoln. To quote a line from the movie Spinal Tap, "why not just take ten, and make it louder?"

<http://youtu.be/EbVKWCpNFhY>

According to Polyphony Digital via Translator-san:

Translator-san

Following its release in mid-1964, the Mustang went on to be a tremendous hit over the next two years. The next step which Ford took was the introduction of a premium model that utilized Mustang components. The result was the Mercury Cougar, released in 1967.

The Cougar's wheelbase was extended 3 inches from the Mustang chassis, and a chic hardtop body was added on top.

The suspension was tuned to improve ride quality, and for the exterior, retractable headlights were added. It had many details that were appropriate for the high quality Mercury brand. The Cougar's concept was to combine the quality of a Thunderbird, and the superb result is as expected.

While the Cougar was only available in a 2 door hardtop, two variations were made available: the base model and a higher-grade "XR-7" model. Furthermore, there was a sporty GT-E package, which could be combined with either the base model or the XR-7.

The standard engine in the 1967 model was the 197 HP, 289 CI OHV V8. Available engine options included a 217 HP, 289CI, a 320 HP, 390CI, and finally a powerful 330 HP, 390CI V8. The lack of a straight-6 engine option was intended to differentiate the Cougar from the Mustang.

The Cougar also competed in the famed SCCA Trans-Am racing series. In 1967, in commemoration of this, a limited number of Group 2 cars were sold, equipped with engines tuned to specs equal to the Shelby GT 350.



Upon arriving at the garage, I was introduced to Vincent, a former Mercury dealer, who would be prepping our pampered Mercury. [Since 2011](#), Vincent really hasn't had much to do, and apparently the small paycheck we were giving helped him keep his house. Much like myself, he too is recently divorced, only his wife ran off with a doctor shortly after Mercury's demise. Naturally, we had much to talk about.

Our test driver was another matter entirely. Once again, our producer talked a good game and promised us a driver with actual racing experience. What he failed to mention, however, that this experience had never included anything remotely close to tarmac. Or that he was a bit cross-eyed. Or that he has two first names.

Sure enough, our rented "professional" was dressed entirely in camouflage, which I hear is indicative of his natural environment, a region simply known as "The South". Jim-Bob, I swear that's his actual name, has raced on just about everything but tarmac, including off-road monster trucks, swamp skiffs, and tractor pulls, and had even finished an event or two.



[Jim-Bob](#)- Ensuring The South has absolutely no chance of rising again. Ever.

Can someone explain why we don't just hire a monkey as our test driver and be done with it? Honestly, a baboon could just as easily accomplish our tests as the driver's we've hired, and they're a lot better smelling.

Producer

Well, we hired you, and that hasn't exactly worked out well, has it?



Performance As Purchased: November 27, 2010, Onyx (Black)

Displacement: 6,391 cc

Max. Power: 320 hp @ 5,000 rpm

Max. Torque: 428 ft-lbs. @ 3,000 rpm

Drivetrain: FR

Length: 4,834 mm Height: 1,316 mm Weight: 1418 kg

Tires: Sports (Hard)

Performance Points: 462

Mileage: 0.0 mi.

With gear unpacked, Jim-Bob is familiarized with the Cougar while I'm sent off for an ice pack. Apparently our producer's nose is a bit sensitive to punches as my ego is to criticism. At least I felt better. Meanwhile, Vincent and his men went about the Mercury, nabbing 16 extra horsepower, 22 ft-lbs. of torque, and 7 more Performance Points. Incidentally, I've also been informed that our producer will need exactly 1 stitch-per-Performance Point, which outta teach the (*expletive*) a little something about manners.

For those keeping score at home, other notable data includes: Max. Power: 336 hp, Max. Torque: 450 ft-lb., Max. Performance Points: 469 PP

Despite the lack of tarmac experience, our southern driver managed to discover what grip was out on the track. In a great cloud of smoke, Jim-Joe-Billy-Bob managed a 0:13.611 quarter mile time, and 0:5.078 seconds to 60 mph. Once finished, the backwoods redneck decided to display his doughnut prowess, shredding the tires and ruining the wheels in the process. Vincent wasn't happy, and from the looks of things, neither was our producer.

Looks like someone will be missing a few more teeth.

For those keeping score at home, other notable data includes: 0-1 mi.: 0:36.746, 0-100 mph: 0:11.478, Max. G-Force: 0.70G, Top Speed- 119.2 mph



Once the tires had been repaired, it was finally my turn to take out the tarted up stallion through its paces. For our Trial, only an easy Mountain would do, filled with a mixture of gentle and complicated curves. In true spirit, the Cougar felt right at home with the other cars of its era, including the Mustang and Camaro. Although its suspension is a bit antiquated, it still remained compliant and competent, even a bit soft at times.

On paper, this car is just as competitive as any muscle car on the streets, then or today. Sure, it may not be loaded with the technology of the Mercedes I was originally hoping for, but it is comfortable without the harshness of the Mustang, or the sloppiness of the Camaro. After a few laps, I began to see why Ford thought this would sell. This is for buyers that have graduated from the straight-line high school, and moved on to something that's fundamentally better overall.

Think of this as the "cake and ice cream" car. With this car, you get the best of both worlds, luxury and performance. Even the styling reeks of testosterone. The front grill is like an electric shaver, for gods sake! This is a manly man's car, none of that fruit-foo-foo silliness offered by the other marks. Perhaps its only competitor would be something from Oldsmobile, but even that would be far too heavy to be considered competitive, not to mention they're notoriously uglier than a menstruating Nancy Grace.



Despite falling in love with this car, I'm reminded of exactly why I'm not allowed to drive one on a daily basis. It's not because of irresponsibility, or costs of operation and maintenance or even finding spare parts. No, instead, the problem is the mirror.

You see, a man of my age simply can't be seen by the opposite sex in something like this, unless I plan on checking out the singles scene at my local nursing home. Women my age will think I'm compensating for something, and younger women just giggle to each other, thinking I'm some sort of pedophile. Hop on in, young lady, I've got some candy in the passenger seat, and I'm on my way to Justin Bieber's house to play on his xBoxes.

A car like this deserves so much more, but then again, so should [Wayne Gretzky's](#) trophies and awards. They deserve to be displayed and honored amongst manly men that understand things like hard work, sacrifice, and desire. Instead, they're locked up in the garage, only to be occasionally admired by adoring fans or lovingly polished, their glory long since faded.

<http://youtu.be/U8haxS5opic>

[Week 1: 2001 Alfa Romeo Spider 3.0i V6 24V](#)

[Week 2: 1966 Alfa Romeo Spider 1600 Duetto](#)

[Week 3: 2000 Toyota Sprinter Trueno GT-APEX \(S. Shigeno Ver.\)](#)

[Week 4: 2007 Audi TT Coupe 3.2 Quattro](#)

[Week 5: 1983 Nissan Silvia 240RS \(S110\) and 1985 Nissan 240RS Rally Car](#)

[Week 6: 1973 BMW 2002 Turbo](#)

[Week 7: 2004 DMC DeLorean S2](#)

[Week 8: 1971 Nissan Fairlady 240ZG \(HS30\) and 1971 Nissan 240ZG \(HS30\)](#)

[Week 9: 1985 Lancia Delta S4 Rally Car](#)

[Week 10: 1991 Mercedes-Benz 190 E 2.5- 16 Evolution II and 1992 AMG Mercedes-Benz 190 E 2.5- 16 Evolution II Touring Car](#)

[Week 11: 1999 Lotus Motor Sport Elise and 1996 Lotus Elise and 1998 Lotus Elise Sport 190](#)

[Week 12: 2001 Audi RS4](#)

[Week 13: 1968 Isuzu 117 Coupe](#)

[Week 14: 1969 Camaro Z28 and 1969 Camaro Z28 RM and 1969 Camaro SS](#)

[Week 15: The Shelby Cars](#)

[Week 16: 1979 Honda Civic 1500 3door CX](#)

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Ed. Note- R.I.P. [Mercury](#) (1938-2011)