

“Making power is easy, getting the car to go straight and fast was harder” -Jerry Morgano

VENOMOUS

Motorsports

“THIS MUSTANG CAN KICK!”

By: *Robert Hayes*
Photos: *Mark Walker*

When Jerry Morgano was an aimless young man idling around the streets of Hamilton, New Jersey, he happened to catch a showing of the 1985 cult classic film “Better Off Dead” – and he fell instantly in love with the 1967 Camaro that the film’s protagonist transforms from a rusted shell into a hot street racer. Jerry was working part-time in a pizza restaurant at the time, and every day when he got off the bus, he walked past a rusted-out ’67 Camaro sitting idle. Saving his paychecks, he eventually approached the car’s owner and bought the hulk for \$600.

Restoring that first Camaro proved to be Jerry’s trial by fire; even as a novice, he managed to actually get the car running well enough to take it to the racetrack, turning in 14.5 second times on the quarter mile before realizing he needed a faster car to get serious. Working his way through a series of Camaros, he eventually began racing in the Modified Street class at NMCA races with a 1979 Camaro using a nitrous power adder. He raced that car for four or five years, doing fairly well and developing his skills as a racer.

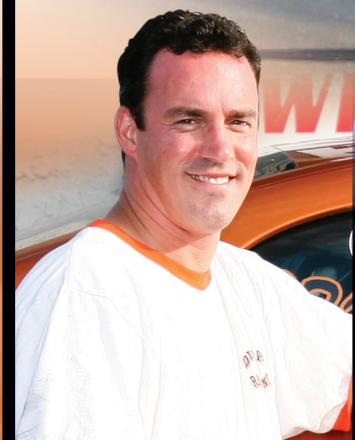
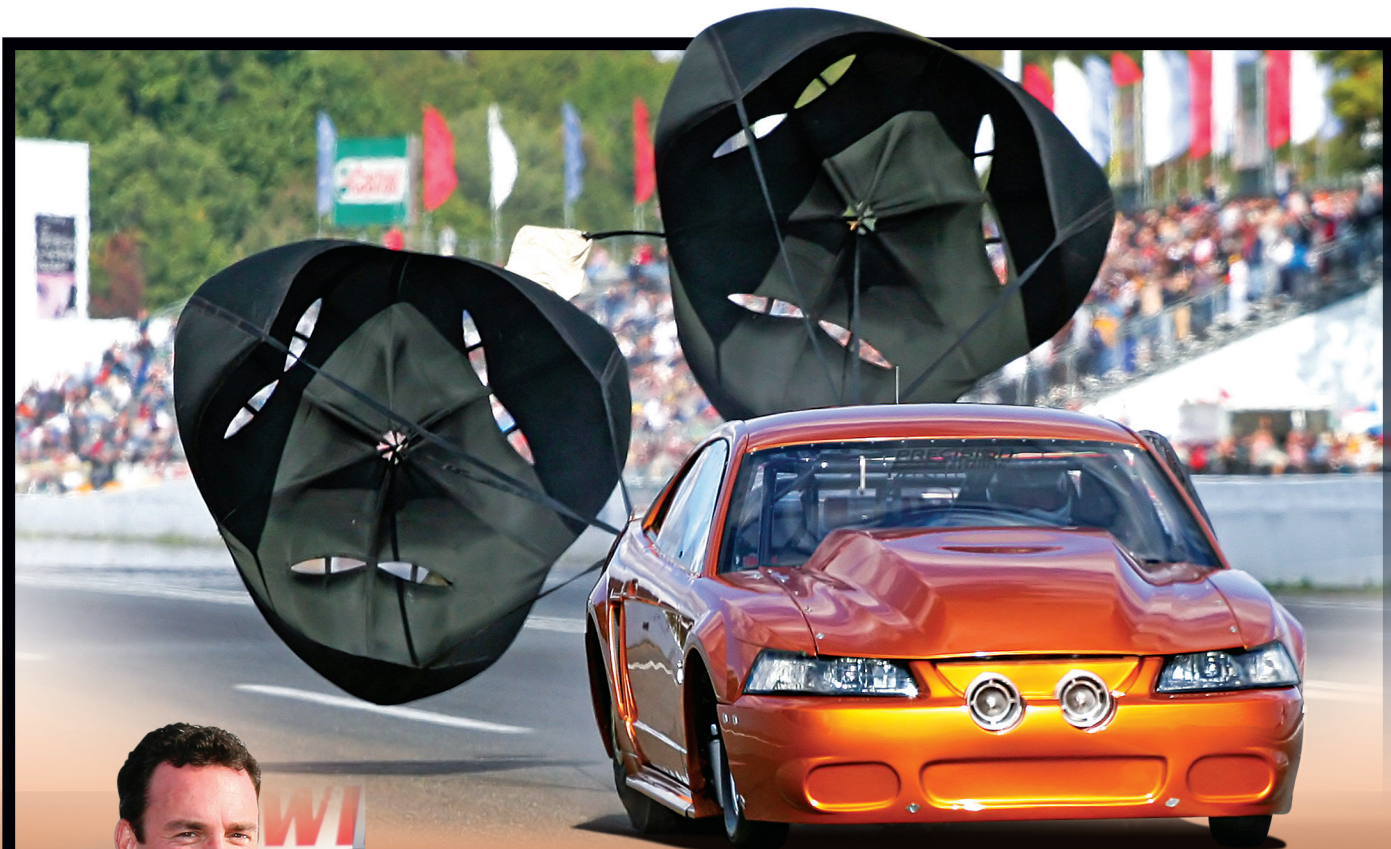
By 2005, Jerry was coming around to the conclusion that nitrous wasn’t the right solution for his racing needs – “just too much wear on the engine, and you have to buy too many new parts”. The turn to the turbo side of the force was encouraged by seeing driver Tim Lynch posting 7.17s in a single-turbo car – “good company to be in.”

Jerry spotted a single-turbo 2005 Mustang that was already configured as a “turkey racecar” and bought it. He raced the Mustang in the Outlaw 10.5 class for the remainder of the season, then added a second turbo and ran the car for two years in the Super Street class at NMCA races. Tuning expert Don Bailey of DCB Enterprises was available as a consultant, and delivered a first-cut tune right off the bat that produced a 7.40 lap time. By 2006, the car was tuned to perfection and Jerry took second place on points in the world championship, turning in a top speed of 199 MPH and running a 7.16 ET.

Jerry’s success as a racer has always started with building a great team back at the shop. For his Mustang, he started working with Jimmy Blackman of Straightline Chassis, one of the all-time great chassis men, to have the Mustang rebuilt as a 2502.

OUTLAW 10.5

TWIN
TURBO
MUSTANG



Jerry Morgano

— and the Mustang currently sports a DiSomma Racing Engines 449-cubic inch monster.

Jerry has always had an eye for color. That shows in the unique paint job he chose for this kicking Mustang, “Copperhead Pearl Metallic” by name.

“I like to have something different that nobody else has.”

He found the color on the Speed Channel’s “Trucks” show, and ended up calling the producers to get the mix code for the paint. The paint work was handled by George and Hank of Autobody Enterprises in New Jersey. Remarkably even with such a talented group, the car was rebuilt from its original single-turbo model in just ten weeks, start to finish.

With a great crew at the shop, Jerry could be forgiven for stinting at the track — but he’s built a fantastic crew there as well. Jim Lawson does double duty, helping with the build as well as being his crew chief. Racing partners Justin Heffernan and Tom Mauro help with the load, as does Bob Kasper of KFM Racecars, Jerry’s “make-anything fab guru”. The Mustang is currently sponsored by Ameriprise Financial (Jerry’s day job), Venomous Motorsports, DiSomma Racing Engines, DCB Enterprises, M2 Race Systems, and Straightline Chassis.

Jerry and his crew primarily race at three tracks: the Cecil County Dragway in Maryland, where they hit the Saturday Night Streetcar Shootouts, the Atco Raceway in New Jersey where they regularly run in the 2-day Outlaws every summer, and Englishtown Raceway in New Jersey where the yearly Shakedown at E-Town is a must-hit event.



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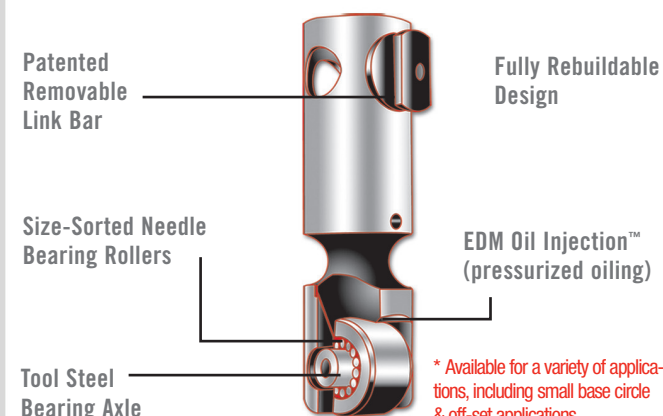
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Jerry estimates that he and his crew hit at least 25 races each year, focusing most of their attention on the NMRA races in the Pro Outlaw 10.5 class. Jerry has won Super Street NMCA races in three or four different classes, and the car just recently won the NMCA race at Atco with Tom Mauro in the driver's seat – they raced for points, but ended up taking the event.

Jerry's emphasis on careful tuning and developing the car has

resulted in truly staggering numbers; even at a 3000-lb curb weight, the Mustang's best quarter time is 7.08 with a top speed of 203 MPH, and a 1.14 second 60-foot time. Noting that gas prices and the expense of meeting class requirements are starting to cut into the car counts at major events, Jerry hopes that the costs of racing can be brought under control so that more people can afford to stay involved.

As for himself, Jerry confesses that he'd love to make the move into Pro Stock – if he can find someone to foot the bill.

TECH SPECS

OWNER: **Jerry Morgano** // CAR: **'05 Mustang** OUT OF: **Central New Jersey**

ENGINE:	449 SBF
COMPRESSION:	9.5:1
CAM :	Custom COMP Cam
PUSH RODS:	Manton
ROCKERS:	Jesel
PISTONS:	ROSS
RINGS:	Total Seal
CRANK:	Bryant
RODS:	BME
HEADS:	Brodix Neal BF202
INTAKE:	Ford w/160lb Bosch Injectors
EFI SYSTEM:	Big Stuff 3
FUEL PUMP:	Weldon
IGNITION:	MSD Digital 7
POWER ADDER:	Twin 88-mm Precision Turbos
BOOST:	N/A
INTERCOOLER:	Precision Air to Water

EXHAUST:	4" Aluminum
TRANS:	Powerglide
CONVERTER:	Neal Chance Pro Mod
REAR END:	Ford 9" w/3.89 Gear
SUSPENSION:	F- Santhoff Struts R- 4 Link, Afco Shocks
BRAKES:	Strange
WHEELS:	Weld Alumastar
TIRES:	F- Mickey Thompson R- Mickey Thompson 33x10.5
FUEL:	VP C-16
WEIGHT:	3,000lbs
BEST ET/MPH:	7.08/203
BEST 60FT:	1.14

SPONSORS: Ameriprise Financial, Venomous Motorsports, DiSomma Racing Engines, DCB Enterprises, M2 Race Systems, Straightline Chassis
SPECIAL THANKS: Jim Lawson, Anthony DiSomma, Tommy Mauro, Justin Heffernan, Don Bailey, Jimmy Blackmon

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