

PONYCAR SHOWDOWN!

Pedders USA Took a '10 Camaro and a '10 Saleen Mustang, Threw All Its Best Pieces at Them, and Took Them to the Road Course. The Winner? Read On.

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> Which is better: Ford or Chevy?
HOT ROD supplies rigorous scientific proof.



Ladies and gentlemen: In this corner, a blazing red '10 Camaro; in the opposite corner, an equally red '10 Saleen S281 Mustang. Both cars are equipped with trick suspension packages, big wheel-and-tire combos, and superchargers. And as it happens, both cars spend plenty of time on the 11-turn, 1.88-mile road course at Gingerman Raceway in western Michigan. Of course, it's only natural that folks could get to wondering how these two cars

match up on the track. Which one is faster, the Ford or the Chevy? It's the eternal question.

Pedders USA built these two cars not to race each other but as development mules for the company's suspension hardware. Pedders, based in Australia, is a relatively new name on the domestic performance scene, but here's how you'll be hearing about the American division: Pedders USA did the chassis upgrades for GM Performance Division's SEMA Camaros, and the

company's product line was just added to the GM Performance Parts catalog. Pedders USA also works as an engineering partner with Saleen Performance, developing the suspension packages on the Saleen Mustangs and for Saleen's Speedlab aftermarket parts line as well.

So which Pedders car is quicker? Camaro or Mustang? We'll spare you any further suspense and tell you straight out: You can throw a blanket over them. The Camaro and

Mustang run nearly identical lap times at Gingerman—in the 1:33 range. The Camaro had less than a 0.3-second edge on this particular day, but for real street cars with full interiors, A/C, and everything, that's a virtual dead heat. The Camaro shows 556 hp on the chassis dyno and weighs 4,197 pounds with driver and fuel, while the Saleen Mustang weighs 3,893 pounds and develops 450 hp at the wheels. Yet on the road course at Gingerman, they're an even match. At the

same time, the two cars have interesting differences on the track beyond their lap times.

Both cars are pretty fast at Gingerman, actually. They're quicker than a Viper or Corvette Z06 and also speedier than the many Pro Touring machines that run here. These are well-sorted cars with a full complement of carefully chosen suspension upgrades. The springs, antiroll bars, and

calibrations in the Pedders adjustable coilovers are fairly radical for the street. (Pedders USA calls the Camaro's package Solution C, in which the C stands for competition.) We drove both cars on the road, and while the ride comfort isn't bad at all, they won't be mistaken for stock, either. They're a mite on the stiff side. Because they spend so much time on the track, both cars use full-race brake pads that

aren't recommended for road use. Also, race-style front-wheel-alignment settings have been dialed in: 2.1 degrees negative camber for greater grip and a half-degree of toe-out per wheel to aid turn-in. If decent tire life is desired, most enthusiasts will stay within the factory alignment specs.

The similarity in lap times comes down to this: The cars aren't really as different as their

specs might suggest. Let's start with power. On the Dynojet chassis dyno, the Camaro's 6.2L LS3 engine with ProCharger and air/air intercooler has more than 100 hp on the Mustang's 4.6L Saleen blower and air/water cooler. But that's on the dyno. "You can dyno the cars and they'll make what they make," says development engineer and Pedders testdriver John Buttermore. "But that doesn't mean