



By Bill Bauer
Photos by Bill Bauer

The Mid America Cougar Nationals were held on April 21st and 22nd, in Tulsa Oklahoma at the Tulsa Expo Center. It was sponsored by the Mid-America Cougar Club and Lone Star Cougar Club, with support of the Cougar Club of America. Local Fords Unlimited club members who registered for the show were Bill Bauer, Greg Young, and Steve Hendricks. Although Steve decided not to go because of the weather forecast and a bad case of poison ivy. Other FUCC club members who attended without cars were Jim and Syl Biermann and John Saxton.

The venue was held indoors at the Tulsa Expo Center. There were 113 cars registered but the official count was down to 94 Cougars and two Comets. All the buildings at this large complex were labeled for Ford vehicles, Mustang Barn, Explorer Barn, Expedition Barn, Super Duty, etc. They were not really barns but multi-use buildings. Along with an indoor arena with quarter mile track where the Chili Bowl Race is held. (midget car race). Nothing like it in STL. There were 13 classes and best of show. Three awards per class. Our road trip started on Thursday April 20th, Greg driving his 1970 Cougar XR7 428 ci. with wife Fay, And me trailering my 1970 Cougar with Donna. We ran into heavy rain about an hour out of STL. And then Greg's car developed an oil leak from the rear main seal, which we stopped every 100 miles so he could check and add oil. I don't know how he saw out of the windshield with the eighteen wheelers passing us in the rain. I was not supposed to go over 55 mph because I had rented a trailer. So we got passed by everything.

Anyway we made it. Thursday evening there was a meet and greet at a local favorite restaurant, Tally's, a retro route 66 diner. It rained and stormed Thursday night and most of the day Friday. If you didn't have an enclosed trailer you were soaked. The wind was fierce. Car covers didn't have a chance. There were several Cougars sitting outside through all this, even a couple of Eliminators. During a break in the weather on Friday they let us take our cars inside the building where the car show was held and they stayed there until Saturday morning. There was a Cruise scheduled for Friday but was cancelled but with pretty many registered car owners there before the show there was a Meet and Mingle at Baxter's, another favorite watering hole in downtown Tulsa. Finally Saturday it's show-time and no rain. We arrived at 6:30 am to move the cars out of the building and them line up and re-enter the building and get the cars prepared for the show which started at 10 am. Judging starts and building opens to the public. Voting closed at 2:30, (participant voting), with concours judging optional. 3 pm the show closed to the public. A nice catered Banquet at 5:30, Syl, Jim, Donna, myself, Fay, Greg, and Tom and Les from the Cape (Mo) shared a table, The awards ceremony was at 6:00 pm all held in the same building as the car show. The neatest thing was Greg was selected as a keynote speaker, He is member #20 of the Cougar Club of America which was founded in 1980 which now has about 9,000 members worldwide. If you want to know anything about Cougars he's your man. Many beautiful cars, the early models with either a 427 or 428 were the highlight. At Trophy time Greg unfortunately got shut out in his class. But I was totally surprised to get 1st Place in my class. Another neat thing was at the trophy presentation the class sponsor was there to hand out the awards. Anyway it turned out to be a fun trip, the show committee and volunteers from Mid America Cougar Club did a first class job. I've never seem so many Cougars in one place from the 1967 trough the 1987. 302's, 351s, 427's and 428's. Again what a great venue.

Greg decided to rent a truck and trailer to bring his car home to STL and not risk any motor damage. We all made it home safely.

