



This '06 GT has the stock brakes to go along with performance upgrades. We can do better with the Baer kit.

Baer Essentials

THE WHOA BEHIND THE GO

Text and photography by Ricardo Topete

All too often, Mustang enthusiasts are guilty of neglecting certain aspects of our prized pony cars. We are so focused on building insane levels of horsepower, reducing quarter-mile or lap times, or simply trying to get the advantage over the competition on the show circuit. One very important area that is often overlooked is the braking system on our beloved ponies.

The importance of a well-functioning brake system should be crystal clear. What good is 600 horsepower if it takes a country mile to stop your car? Chew on this -- some car accidents could be prevented if only the car stopped several feet sooner. The more stopping power and shorter stopping distances your Mustang has, the more potential danger you can avoid.

There's an effective, simple and affordable brakes system upgrade available for the ever-so-popular S197 Mustang GT offered by Baer Brakes. Baer has

been building some of the finest brakes systems and components for Mustangs for over two decades. The variety ranges from entry-level performance brake pads and rotors to full-boogie, six-piston calipers and massive rotors that will stop a freight train. Baer's singular focus on braking systems allows them to offer innovative solutions. Baer recently introduced their EradiSpeed Plus Two upgrade kit to lend much needed help to our 2005-2008 Mustang GT front and rear brakes.

The concept behind the EradiSpeed



1 This is a shot of the stock rear brakes. They're in there. You have to peer deep, but the stock 12-inch rotors are there.



2 This is what you get when you receive the Baer EradiSpeed Plus Two system. This will do the job for the front and rear.

3 We've isolated on the front kit with the rotor and supporting hardware.

4 The rear brake kit is very simple with the rotor and hardware provided.

5 While we're changing brake systems, we're going to put a high-quality racing pad in place. The Hawk Performance

ceramic pads will serve us well.

6 Here's a look at what's coming off. This is the stock unit found on the 2006 GT.

7 Out back, the stock 12-inch will be cast aside in favor of the new Baer kit.

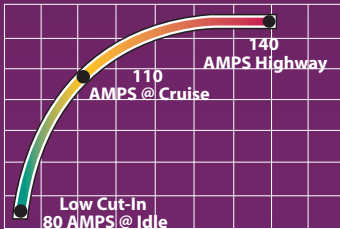
8 Starting with the rear, unbolt and remove the stock caliper from the car.

9 The factory rotor will slide off and be set aside.



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10 Unbolt and remove the stock anti-moan bracket.

11 Mount the supplied Baer caliper relocation bracket to the axle housing, using the factory bolts.

12 Install the stock rear caliper bracket onto the Baer bracket, using the supplied hardware.

13 Here is a comparison of the stock rear rotor versus the Baer EradiSpeed

rotor. Which do you think will work better?

14 David Chamberlain slides the Baer rotor into position. Use a lug nut to temporarily secure the rotor.

15 Our freshly-painted rear caliper has been installed. You don't have to paint yours, but we opted to do it.

16 In short order, the rear brakes are done and look good.

Plus Two is genius. You add significantly larger brakes (two inches larger in diameter, hence the "Plus Two") in a very simple, effective and attractive package. EradiSpeed brake rotors are 14-inch diameter front and rear versus the stock GT's 12-inch front and rear brake rotors. This increase in rotor diameter allows for greater brake leverage and improved brake torque for more stopping power. This is ideal for Mustangs that have larger and heavier-than-stock wheels and tires, and/or gobs of power, which probably applies to the majority of readers.

The EradiSpeed rotors are built with "LITE" Technology (Low Inertia Thermal Efficient), which utilizes a two-piece rotor design. By incorporating a lightweight aluminum hat and iron disc, Baer minimizes overall weight. For comparison purposes, the stock front Mustang GT 12-inch rotors weigh in at 19 pounds each whereas the EradiSpeed 14-inch front rotors weigh 17 pounds apiece. Both the stock rear 12-inch rotors and the EradiSpeed 14-inch rear rotors weigh 13 pounds each. This is a win-win situation since we increase rotor size and reduce overall weight (albeit a small amount). Cutting four pounds of unsprung mass translates into better performance, as this is less weight for the Mustang to accelerate, decelerate and control in corners.

Making this system even more appealing is the ease of installation. EradiSpeed Plus Two systems include specialty hardware and brackets necessary to relocate the stock calipers further "outward" in order to fit the 14-inch rotors. Since the factory brake calipers, brake pads, and brake lines are retained, installation is a breeze and does not require bleeding the brake lines! Best of all, Baer's EradiSpeed rotors work just as well as they look, outfitted with curved and directional vanes to dissipate heat for maximum cooling. Cross-drilled, slotted and zinc-coated rotor surfaces give a race-inspired look that will create brake envy among fellow Mustangers.

GTR High Performance had a perfect test mule er, pony, to test this on. GTR owner Gonzalo Topete's 2006 Mustang GT was a hard-charging steed equipped with a host of performance upgrades to the motor, transmission, exhaust, suspension and 20-inch wheel/tires. Packin' well over 300 rear-wheel horsepower, Gonzalo's GT was more than enough to get into trouble. However, his horse was sorely



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17 They look just as good with the wheel in place. You don't have to strain to find the rotor now.

18 We'll turn our attention to the front of the car. Start by unbolting the stock caliper, then remove the rotor.

19 Here's the side-by-side comparison for the front brakes. In case you got it wrong on the rear set, the Baer unit is

on the left.

20 Attach the caliper relocation bracket provided in the Baer kit. It fits onto the spindle.

21 Install Baer's front rotor, again using a lug nut to hold it in place.

22 The factory caliper bracket can be installed, using the new supplied bolts.

lacking in was the braking department. The addition of the larger (and heavier) wheels and tires gives the car it's "all-business" look, but they also tax the brakes heavily and reduce the braking performance noticeably.

The crew at GTR made short work of Baer's kit. Installation should take the do-it-yourselfer a couple of hours. If you prefer, any qualified shop can tackle the project. Although changing brake pads was not required, we chose to ditch the stock Ford brake pads in favor of Hawk Performance ceramic pads. Hawk makes race-proven brakes pads that are street-legal and ideal for a high performance machine. The Mustang's pads were already showing signs of wear (abuse). To sweeten the pot, we also chose to spray-paint the calipers gloss-black to add a nice, subtle touch. Special high-temperature brake paint can be purchased at any auto parts store for just a few bucks. This is a simple and inexpensive way of further dressing up the brake system, which lends a nice touch to the end result.

With installation complete, it was time for the test drive. First, we seasoned the rotors and bedded the pads per Baer's and Hawk's recommendations. With the formalities out of the way, it was time to play! Hard stops are now more rewarding and less nerve-racking. Repeated hard stops also become more predictable. Brake fade is now a thing of the past. No more wondering how well the Mustang will brake after the fifth hard stop. Put simply, you can feel the brakes biting down harder, which instills much needed confidence in the driver.

So how much cha-ching do you need for all this bling? Well, considering the huge visual improvement that the Baer kit adds, not to mention the significant improvement in stopping power, the EradiSpeed Plus Two is a relative bargain. GTR sells the front 14-inch kit (part 2261026) for \$659, and the rear 14-inch kit (part 2262019) for \$609. You can buy the front and rear as a kit or a la carte to suit your needs and budget. Spring for a set of Hawk ceramic pads, and the front set (part HB-484-670CER) goes for \$87.99 while the rear pads (part HB-485-656CER) are \$74.99 through GTR High Performance. In the end, you get world-class brakes for '05-'08 Mustangs that are priced right, easy to install, work beautifully and look like a million bucks.

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23 Here's a good look at the shine of the gloss black finish. The paint is available from any parts store for just a few dollars.

24 Slide on the front caliper and secure it. The new Hawk ceramic pads have already been placed into the caliper.

25 Replace the wheels and torque the lug nuts to spec. Notice how well the Baer 14-inch brakes fill out those 20-inchers.

26 Remember what we had to start with? These brakes now mean business.

27 This is a close up shot of the Baer front kit in place.

28 There's a big difference at the rear. The new rotors occupy a larger area and that's going to increase braking power as well as the looks. ■

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