

BLACK MAGIC

The Amazing Story of CSX2001

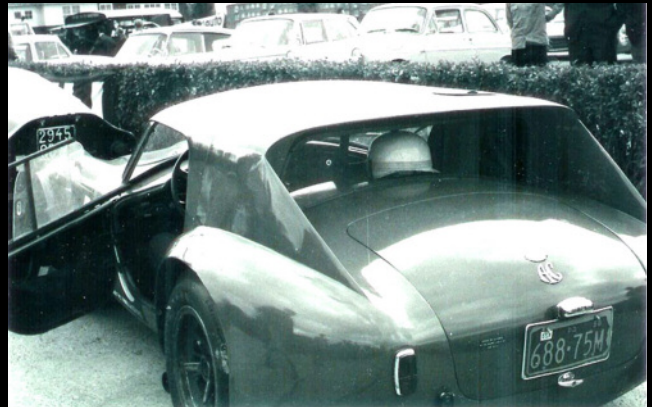


CSX 2001 was the first production Cobra built. It was one of the very first batch of cars shipped by air to early dealer Ed Hugus' European Cars in Pittsburgh, PA in July of 1962. The plan was to expedite the completion of the car (install the 260 engine and Borg Warner T-10 transmission, general clean up and make sure it started up and ran) and then put on display in the Pittsburgh Auto Show a couple of months later. The red car attracted a lot of attention, as you might expect, and was purchased immediately by Dr. Richard Milo. The winter proved to be the wrong time of the year to drive a Cobra in western Pennsylvania and it wasn't long before Dr. Milo was back at the dealership, looking to trade the Cobra in on a new Porsche. He said he was tired of having his ass frozen off every day.

Milo's loss was Lloyd "Lucky" Casner's gain. He was the founder of Camoradi

(CASner MOtor RAcIng DIvision) USA which was essentially the U.S. arm of the Maserati factory team. Casner had hired Carroll Shelby as a driver for his Birdcage Maserati in 1960 and now wanted to support Shelby's new automobile business. The car was modified to race specs (including a unique, full-width roll bar) but before Casner could get behind wheel he sold CSX2001 to French pilot Jean-Marie Vincent who shipped it to France. Vincent and Casner made plans to enter the car in the 1964 LeMans 24 Hours. Vincent practiced during the April LeMans trials but by the time the race rolled around in June, Casner couldn't make it so the car was pulled.

Between September 1964 and June 1965, Vincent raced the car in 8 events in France, including the Tour de France (with Casner) and the 1000km de Paris. It scored 6 First Place finishes and 2 DNFs.



Before racing the car in France, Vincent embarked on a program of modifying the car to, essentially, 1964 Cobra race specs. This included swapping the 260 engine for a full-race, Weber equipped 289, adding Halibrand 6.5" and 8.5" mag wheels (requiring modification of the fenders), sway bars, an oil cooler, a 36-gal. fuel tank, a cut-out at the leading edge of the hood to allow air to escape from the engine compartment, and the fabrication of a one-off hardtop. The worm-and-sector steering was also replaced with a rack-and-pinion unit. Parts were made available from AC Cars and the work was performed by the official Shelby garage in Europe, the Garage de Lorraine of Andre Chardonnet. It's foreman had been trained in England to work on Cobras.



Vincent and Casner teamed up for the September, 1964 Tour de France but they failed to finish. They competed against a pair of factory Cobra Daytona Coupes which also failed to finish.





COURSE DE COTE DES ANDELYS 1965

The unique hardtop, essential for top speed on the longer courses, proved to be a distinct disadvantage on the shorter tracks so it was removed. The full-width roll bar was retained. CSX2001 was very successful as a roadster, finishing in First Place in the Rallye de l'A.G.A.C.I. in Reims, and in the Course de Cote in D'Hebecrevon, La Pommerate and Des Andelys.



4^e RALLYE DE L'A.G.A.C.I. 1965 - Ep. de Reims

In 1966 Vincent sold the car to a fellow Frenchman, Pierre Landerau. It was used as a street car and Landerau and friend Jean-Pierre Beltoise were returning from attending at a race at the Montlhery track when, with Beltoise at the wheel, the car suffered an engine fire. Damage was limited to the engine compartment, and it was soon repaired. The Cobra was then painted yellow.

In 1968 it was purchased by Herve Arnonde-Demoy who lived in Casablanca, Morocco. He painted the car red again and drove it on the street until selling it, in 1974, to Bernard Afchain. The car then went back to France.

Afchain restored it to '64-'65 Cobra roadster specifications, adding a single hoop roll bar. In 2000 it was purchased by Dominic Ellenreider of Switzerland, who repainted it light green metallic and retained all of the race modifications.

It was purchased in February, 2006 by SAAC member Bruce Meyer of Beverly Hills, CA. Never a fan of light green and having had two previous red Cobras, Bruce decided to re-do the car in his favorite color: black. He brought it to the maestro of Cobra restorations,



Mike McCluskey. After 1 1/2 years, the results are nothing short of stunning. Despite its racing history, 2001's chassis, body and seats are original. The body only required some new metal in the nose area.

After purchasing the car, Bruce drove it in a road rallye from Budapest to Prague [*top photos*].

Studio shots of the finished restoration were taken by Scott Williamson/www.photodesignstudios.com

