



# The MAIL SAAC

## Notes from the SAAC Mail Room.

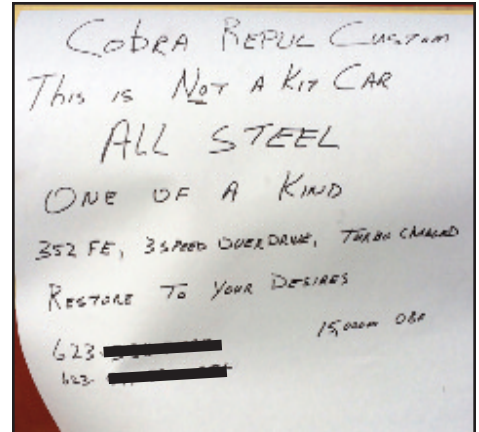
There's something that's been bugging us for quite a while, and this is probably as good a time as any to get it off our chest. It seems that some people think the terms "engine" and "motor" are interchangeable. They're not. An engine converts chemical energy into mechanical energy. A motor converts electric energy into mechanical energy. They are not the same thing, and it shouldn't be that difficult to make the distinction. But every time we see someone say "427 motor" we cringe.

We suspect this may have gotten started back in the 1950s when hot rod magazines first became popular. The writers of these magazines were younger and tended to have more hands-on experience in the hot rodding world than did older, more formally-trained writers. Being younger and more in touch with rodding scene, they started using various terms like "mill" to describe an engine. We distinctly recall reading that although we rarely heard anyone use that term in spoken language, unless it was by someone who was desperately trying to be hip.

All this was probably understandable; writers in these magazines were trying to keep their articles fresh and would often insert slang terms to make things more interesting. They were speaking to youngsters, not English majors or mechanical engineers. They would call a supercharger a "blower" or "puffer." Pistons were called "slugs" and two-barrel carburetors were "jugs." Engines were bored and stroked, cylinders were "punched out" and automatic transmissions were called "slush boxes." Cars were "rods" or "shorts" and they were nosed and decked, chopped and channeled, frames were "Z-ed" and front axles were dropped. They were "raked" and headlights and taillights were "frenched." Calling an engine a motor was, to them, no big deal. It was just another color on their palette. And this type of automotive shorthand is still with us today. Unfortunately.

## COBRA TURBO PROTOTYPE FOUND !

We didn't even know it was missing. [Rim shot.] Do we really need to comment on this car? It was spotted recently at a swap meet in Phoenix, Arizona by Colin Comer who only got close enough to take these pictures before he took off like a castrated chimpanzee. The sign taped to the door described it as a replica, but not a kit car. Got that? It is powered by a 352 FE. Obviously a lightweight model that could have been a prototype for the 390 CID engine used in the original Flip Top. "Restore to your desires" covers a lot of ground. The \$15,000 OBO price is too good to believe. We especially like the rear exhaust treatment.



What's the beef? It's a matter of accuracy. We try hard to maintain high editorial standards and in a world of 140-character texts, no capitals or punctuation and trendy acronyms it sometimes seems like we're driving south in the northbound lane.



**Making History.** It all started when a video link was forwarded to us from Gary Goeringer, who stays on top of stuff like this so we don't have to. If "crashes at a hot corner" raises your curiosity factor, here's the link: [www.motorsport.com/vintage/video/main-gallery/highlights-tour-auto-2014-crashes-at-a-hot-corner](http://www.motorsport.com/vintage/video/main-gallery/highlights-tour-auto-2014-crashes-at-a-hot-corner)

It wasn't an especially long video; it was taken by an amateur who was standing on the inside of a corner of a rally stage in France, catching some of the cars as they approached a blind corner in a heavily-wooded section. Car after car locked its brakes and a few skidded off the outside of the road into the dirt and bushes. They were a good mix of typical vintage racers: Ferraris, Porsches, Alfas, Jaguars, Mustangs and, yes, Cobras.

After two or three small block Cobras attempted the decreasing radius curve (some with more success than others) a light went off over our head. All of the Cobras had LeMans hardtops. What's going on here?

We don't know for certain, but we think we have an idea. Let's see how this plays. These cars are all brand new (or they were, fairly recently). They were Kirkhams, newer ACs or CSX7000s. They had alloy bodies and most were finished to Cobra race specifications (cutback doors, FIA fenders, hood and oil cooler scoops and wide Halibrand wheels). And they had LeMans style hardtops which are apparently popular in European vintage circles. But the cars had no history.

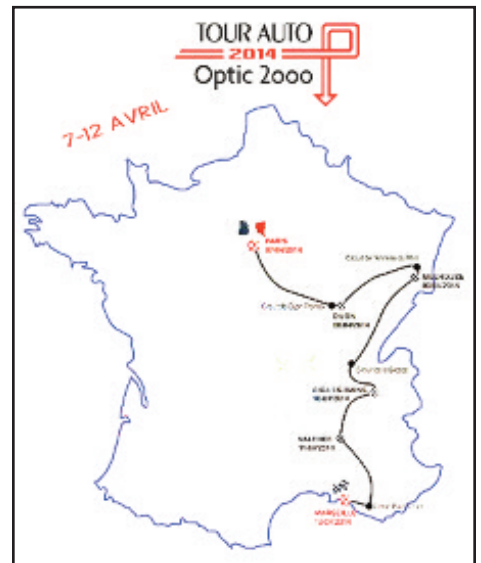
It would be insane to expect the owner of an original Cobra to drive their car as hard as this, what with prices for street cars beginning to reach into the \$750K to \$900K range, and higher than that for legitimate competition cars. Current reproductions will cost you between \$100K and \$150K. What's the difference? History. Current cars have nothing to do with Carroll Shelby and Shelby American or Shelby's 1960s sales network.

## 1300 KM THROUGH FRANCE IN 5 DAYS



The French Tour Auto Optic 2000 is reminiscent of the original Tour de France during the Cobra Ferrari Wars of the mid 1960s. This is a vintage version. This year's event ran for five days in early April and saw 236 entries in two classes: competition and "regularity" (stock street cars). The rules allow replicas as long as they conform to original specifications, and there is no shortage of those. With more available every day.

The route began in Paris and led the competitors to four overnights, four race circuits and nine special rally stages before finishing in Marseilles on the Mediterranean. The smaller back roads wound through the French countryside. A quick look at the entry list revealed eight Cobras, two GT40s, four Panteras, a '63 Galaxie and eight Mustangs. The winning car was a Cobra, driven by the British team of Shaun Lynn and Kevin Kivlochan.



These pictures were taken from the website video and because they were shot with a handheld camera they are not in focus,

No one can go back into the past, but time for these reproduction cars began when they were purchased by their original owners. And whatever happens to them or with them represents their history. And it is open-ended. Granted, participating in a vintage race or one-week road rally like the French Tour Auto doesn't begin to compare with winning at the Nürburgring or LeMans. But it is something if that's all you have. And you can always build on it.



## MUSTANG RADIO SUPPRESSORS

Sooner or later if there's a large enough demand, it will be supplied. Virginia Mustang's Brant Halterman determined that concours quality used or NOS Mustang (and Ford and Mercury) radio suppressors, also called capacitors and used on all cars with radios, were impossible to find anywhere. They are mounted near the voltage regulator. His answer: have exact duplicates reproduced. The cost is \$29.95. For more details: [www.virginiaclassic-mustang.com](http://www.virginiaclassic-mustang.com)



Although the suppressors, themselves, are all the same internally, the different years have different part numbers: 1965 [left], 1966 [center] and 1967-1971 [right]. They are, of course, licensed by Ford.

## 1 CHANCE IN 4,000 TO WIN THIS GT500



The Shelby American Collection museum in Boulder, Colorado has announced its 2014 Raffle fundraiser. For a \$50 ticket you could own this new, black and red GT500 convertible (MSRP a touch over \$68K) with a 662 horsepower 5.8 liter DOHC 32-valve supercharged and intercooled engine backed by a TREMAC 6-speed. The drawing will be held during the museum's annual fundraising party on Saturday, August 30 at 6 p.m. and you don't have to be present to win. Only 4,000 tickets will be sold. Check their website: [www.shelbymustangraffle.com](http://www.shelbymustangraffle.com) for the raffle details. It includes a counter which will tell you the number of tickets currently sold.

## CAUSES OF INSOMNIA #42



We did a double-take when we saw this '74 Fiat on eBay Motors. Is it our imagination or when you see it does your brain scream "BRE"? And speaking of a screaming brain, is this the kind of thing that makes Peter Brock jerk straight up in bed at 4 a.m., start hyperventilating and break out in a cold sweat? There is, obviously, a downside to fame and notoriety.

## GLOBE-TROTTING COBRA

When SAAC member Dr. Ernie Nagamatsu showed up at the Melbourne, Australia Grand Prix with CSX2203 and Max Balchowsky's Old Yeller 2, Australian SAAC Rep Nez Demaj had him covered like a black Stetson. Nagamatsu has raced his Cobra virtually everywhere they have vintage races (forgive us if the list is too long to include here). We'd be willing to bet that everywhere he goes SAAC members find him. Like Nez did.



## DON'T LET YOUR KID SEE THIS !

Spotted on the Internet: Portuguese engineer and designer Ernesto Freitas built this Cobra for his son. Scratch-built and hand-crafted from fiberglass and powered by a 50cc/7hp engine, it reportedly does 25 mph. He said it took him 1,600 hours to complete. Having finished it, he is now considering a production version, with a turn-key price of \$21,000. Unassembled kits may also be available. All we can say is, "Quick, Billy, behind you! Look at the puppy!"



## WILL THE FORD GT TALLY SOMEDAY GO INTO NEGATIVE NUMBERS?

Another Ford GT accident was splashed across the tabloids in February, not because of the car (more about that in a minute) but because it was driven by the brother of Hollywood actress Salma Hayek. Sami Hayek's passenger, Ian Cutter Sala, was killed when the Tungsten Ford GT Hayek was driving crossed the centerline and collided with a Toyota pickup. Sala was a Grammy Award-winning art director and photographer. It is thought the car belonged to someone else. Hayek, described as a furniture designer, was hospitalized for several broken ribs and a cut to his head.

The accident happened on Sunset Boulevard in the tony Beverly Crest area of Los Angeles. Heading west, the road passes North Whittier Drive and turns into a wide, ninety-degree curve which has proven deceptive at high speeds, especially for drivers of exotic cars. It was the subject of the 1964 hit song, "Dead Man's Curve" by Jan and Dean (written by Brian Wilson, Roger Christian and Jan Berry). As one of the iconic teenage tragedy songs of the 1960s, it described a street race between a Jaguar XKE and a Corvette Stingray. The Stingray's driver relates the story to a doctor as he is dying. The crash took place on Dead Man's Curve. The song reached number eight on the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart that year.

Two years later, Jan Berry crashed his Corvette into a parked truck a short distance from Dead Man's Curve, receiving severe head injuries that put him into a coma for nearly two months. He suffered brain damage and partial paralysis which left him with minimal use of his right arm. He was forced to learn to write with his left hand. Although he was eventually able to take the stage again with his partner Dean Torrence, he was never the same after the accident. [In a side note, in 1977 Jan Berry and Dean Torrence purchased CSX3264 and kept the red, 428-powered Cobra until 1983.] Jan Berry died in 2004 after suffering a seizure. Torrence still does concerts and serves as the spokesman for the City of Huntington Beach which is nationally recognized as "Surf City USA" due to Jan and Dean's 1963 hit song.

With Ford GTs regularly commanding at least double their original list price of \$140K, they have become like Cobras: no car is too damaged to be repaired. Determining what percentage of the original build (4038) has been wrecked or severely



damaged is proving to be impossible for the Ford GT Registrar. You would think it would be easy because of the computer-generated reports body shops are required to submit. Anyone with access to a computer can research the history of a car on CarFax. The problem is that this database only includes a line item in the report noting that the car was involved in an accident. No details are provided. Also, when some Ford GTs are wrecked they are repaired without paperwork (spelled "cash") or by specialty shops such as The GT Guys in Flat Rock, Michigan, X2 Rebuilders in Granite City, Illinois or Andy's House of Performance in Lufkin, Texas. They have all realized the value of doing work on these cars under the radar. The GT Guys are estimated to have rebuilt more than 300 cars by themselves. And don't forget that Mayfair Vehicle Systems in Norwalk, Ohio built a number of extra "body-in-white" cars after production ended, for use in repairing future wrecks.

The wrecked GT situation has "1970s Cobras" written all over it. With shells turning up at one dismantler, engines at another and transmissions at a third, it won't be long before cars are rebuilt using original VINs built around these components. It won't be a pretty sight when two or three owners step forward to argue that each of them has the right to a VIN based on the original parts used in the rebuild.

Jeff Burgy takes his job as Ford GT Registrar seriously. He has, at last count, 132 GTs in his database which have been tagged as "wrecks." He figures that's probably about ten percent of the actual number of cars that have suffered significant

damage. Probably ten to fifteen percent of them are running around on salvage titles.

The problem with wrecked and rebuilt cars is something that SAAC has become acquainted with as the values of Cobras, and then Shelbys, have continued to escalate. Ford GTs are new to the party. Most public crash reports do not provide any VIN identification. The owner of the FordGTForum has finally recognized this is an issue and has taken steps to try to keep track of seriously damaged GTs. The forum has a strict policy of not allowing pictures of crashed GTs to be posted unless they are submitted by the car's owner.

We don't recall original Cobras having such a high destruction rate. And we think we've figured out why. When a driver gets behind the wheel of a Cobra (even someone who has never driven one before, which would describe all first-time owners at one time) and gets on the gas, a lot starts to happen—all at once. There is the exhaust noise, the carburetor sucking air and fuel, valve train noise, vibration through the steering wheel and the wind buffeting your face. Behind the wheel of a Ford GT you get none of that. First of all, it's a coupe. It's well insulated and quiet. Acceleration is more like a rheostat than an explosion. It accelerates smoothly and rapidly, to the point where you are going faster, much faster, that you think. Nothing about the handling or steering sends the message that you are going fast—even at over 100 mph. Insulated in that cocoon, you just don't realize you are traveling at that speed. Note: We doubt this is likely to be successful in explaining away the infraction to the arresting officer, or to the judge.

## \$7,000,000 GT40 : P/104 GOES TO UTAH

Winning bids at auctions are a matter of public record. The top bidder is often shrouded in secrecy. Auction companies do not divulge buyers' names as a matter of policy. Some buyers desire privacy, preferring to let the word out on their own timeline. Sometimes it is a matter of desiring financial confidentiality. Ford GT40 P/104 was the fourth GT40 prototype made and the first with a lightweight chassis. As soon as it was completed it was sent to LeMans where it qualified second but went out with an engine fire. It was one of the two racers sent to Shelby American when they took over the program and modified and campaigned at Daytona in 1965 where it qualified and finished third.



The car was owned for over thirty years by SAAC member, the late Greg Lonberger of Lombard, Illinois. He was in the process of restoring it to 1965 Daytona specifications when, after a long battle with multiple sclerosis he became incapacitated and unable to finish the car. The MS was a result of his contact with Agent Orange when he was serving as a ranger specializing in long range reconnaissance patrols in Vietnam.

The car was recently completed and went across the block at the Mecum auction in Houston, Texas on April 12. The history of this car is unimpeachable and the \$7M price set a record for a Mecum auction. A press release from the Larry H. Miller Total Performance Museum at Miller Motorsports Park in Tooele, Utah announced that they had purchased the car and it was on display at their museum. It joins P/103 (P/104's sister car which finished first at Daytona in 1965), MK II P/1015 (the light blue Ken Miles car) which finished second at LeMans in 1966, the yellow MK IV J-4 which finished first at Sebring in 1967 and P/1074, one of the three Gulf Team GT40s that raced in 1968-1969. If you are going within 1,000 miles of Salt Lake City, Utah you owe it yourself to visit this museum.

## A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE ?

Bob Perkins of Juneau, Wisconsin is famous for his collection of low-mileage Mustangs and his perfect concours restorations. But after the Mustang 50th Anniversary at Charlotte, North Carolina, he will probably become famous for his see-through enclosed trailer. We got this photo from someone who saw it on SAAC member Brant Halterman's Virginia Classic Mustang website. Both sides of the trailer appear to be made up of panels of clear plexiglass, allowing the car to be viewed without exposing it to the elements.

When we were vintage racing we saw a lot of enclosed trailers on the road, especially as we got closer and closer to the track. We often wondered what was inside as we scoured the trailer for some sticker or decal that might give it away. Of course, some owners used the trailer's sides and rear to advertise what was inside but most remained "plain wrappers." This can lead to conflicting emotions. On one hand, the owner is proud of their race car and wants to tell the world what they have inside. This isn't something that those with open trailers ever have to deal with. On the other hand, they like the privacy and security of not drawing attention to their car.



For those experiencing a much greater pull from the "Hey-Look-At-Me" gene than from the stealth gene, Perkins' trailer is definitely the answer. Whether you're hauling down the Interstate or parked at the event, there's no question what your cargo is. This, of course, brings to mind two thoughts. One is how well you'll sleep at night in a motel on trips that are more than one day's drive. The other is how tight all of those joints and panels will be after five years of bumps and potholes.

And here's one more thing to think about. Fast-forward 20 years. Imagine going to a convention or car show where everyone has one of these see-through trailers. Cars are never rolled out; people just walk between rows of trailers, looking at the cars inside of them. Think that isn't likely? Twenty years ago no one could have imagined a Shelby selling for \$100K. What's going to happen when they are \$1M? Think they will get driven around? Even in a parking lot?

## FIREBALL 500



We spotted these pictures on the Internet, where we see a lot of things which we feel are worth including in this magazine. In San Angelo, in west-central Texas, a woman driving a new GT500 apparently lost control while trying to change lanes.

The rear end lost traction, she over-corrected and looped the car several times before hitting a metal boundary wire and posts separating the eastbound and westbound lanes of the Houston-Harte Expressway. According to eyewitnesses, the car was already on fire after it spun out of control. The driver was initially trapped in the car and after attempts to open both doors failed, she rolled down the driver's window and bailed out before the entire car was engulfed in flames. She was not injured and passed a field sobriety test. After seeing these pictures, we'll admit that she was one lucky cowgirl to escape unharmed. But we're left wondering why, with so many of these cars sold (more than 60,000 GT500s since 2007) why have so few been reported as being wrecked or destroyed? We're betting that like Ford GTs, a fair number have succumbed to being over-driven by owners who have short high performance car resumes. With the name "Shelby" acting like a publicity magnet, why haven't we seen more reports of GT500 catastrophes? Are we just not looking in the right places?



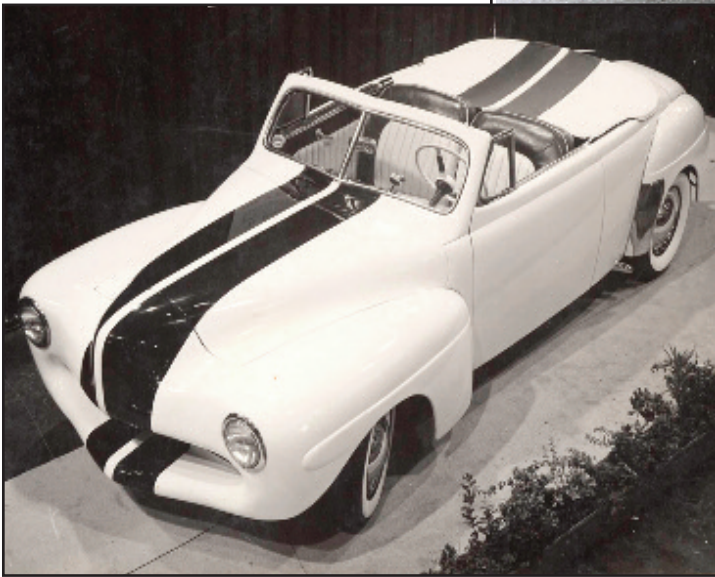
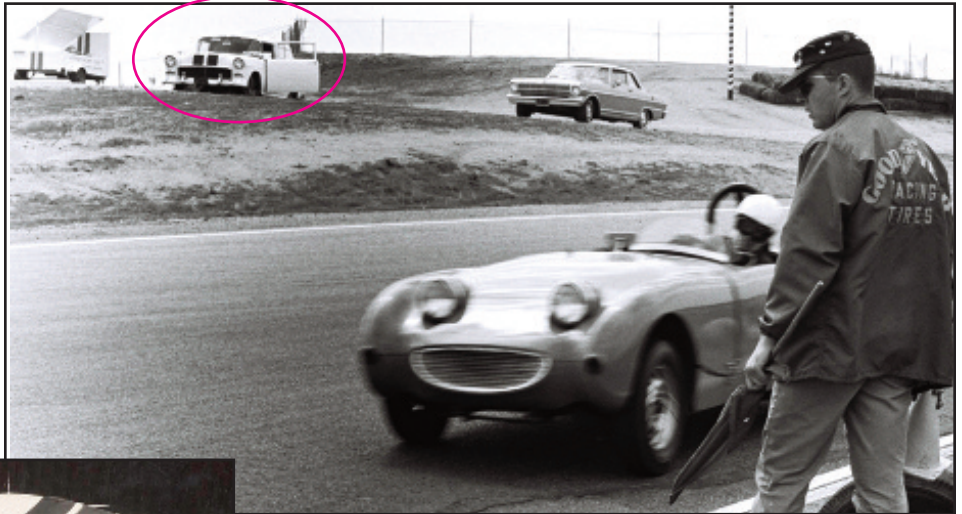
## CALIFORNIA BLACK-AND-YELLOW PLATES ABOUT TO BECOME PLENTIFUL

California State recently passed a law making it possible for vehicle owners to purchase replicas of the black and yellow license plates originally issued between 1963 and 1969. For a \$50 fee a resident can get standardized sequential plates or vanity plates for all vehicles, including trucks and motorcycles. And it is possible to get a current plate reproduced in black and yellow. This change in the law will make original black-and-yellow plates much less rare. The DMV advises that all plates are reviewed for acceptability. Their website advises, "The department must insure that the meaning of the plate configuration will not be construed as offensive to good taste." The new plates will not look exactly like the originals because current law requires license plates to be reflectorized and modern manufacturing processes do not allow for exact duplication. In addition to the black and yellow plates from the 1960s, 1950s style black-on-yellow plates and 1970s yellow-on-blue plates are also available. It's a good revenue generator for a state operating in the red.



## CSSHPD SUPPORT VEHICLES

A surprising number of Shelby enthusiasts continue to be as interested in the Shelby American support vehicles as the cars, themselves. And there were a lot more than most people think. When the Carroll Shelby School of High Performance Driving began, Peter Brock was using his '55 Chevy panel delivery as a support vehicle. It was white with twin blue stripes, of course. He was partial to that color combination ever since seeing Briggs Cunningham's race cars in magazines. When he channeled his '46 Ford to build a canyon racer in high school, those were the colors he chose. It wouldn't be the last time.



Once Brock accepted Shelby's offer to run the driving school, one of his first projects was to build a mobile classroom which could be towed to various places around the Riverside track. When the school was up and running the '55 Chevy was replaced with a '63 Falcon panel delivery. It was white and immediately received a pair of blue stripes. It was powered by a small block V8 and it wasn't long before it began sprouting Cobra dress-up and go-fast parts.





The driving school also got an Econoline van. John Timanus drove it, mostly, and both vehicles were common sights at Riverside in 1964 and 1965 before the school was moved to Willow Springs. In 1966 Shelby American got a new Econoline. At the same time the school was winding down, Shelby American's race assistance program was spooling up. Timanus was in charge of the day-to-day operation and he often attended west coast races and brought with him parts that racers might need during "emergencies." Note: there was, apparently, no shortage of 14-inch ten-spoke aluminum wheels.



## FORMULA 1 CHAMPION DRIVES A COBRA

We'll file this one in the "Leave It To Pardee" annals and just say it doesn't surprise us. We won't even hazard a guess why he was reading the *UK Daily Mail* online but he found these photos of Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton, the 2008 World Champion, with his on-again, off-again and presently on-again girlfriend, singer Nicole Scherzinger of the Pussycat Dolls pop group (since disbanded, according to retired professional musician Pardee). He recently bought a pair of Cobras: CSX3282, a red one and this one, CSX3244, a low-mileage former SAAC concours winner. It was fresh from a full-boat McCluskey restoration when the paparazzi caught up with them in Malibu and snapped these pictures. Hamilton's squeeze was reportedly not too enthusiastic about riding in the open car with a big block on an 85° day. Both Cobras are stored in Los Angeles while he's off racing.

