

Cooper-Monaco



T61M King Cobra
CM/5/64



1964 LA Times GP, Riverside - Bob Bondurant & "King Cobra" CM/5/64

In 1963 Carroll Shelby instigated a project to replace the Cobra. The new "King Cobra" was based on the new mid-engined de Tomaso P70 designed by Peter Brock. In testing it showed limited potential and never got beyond the testing stage before the idea was dropped. In its place, Shelby ordered up two new Cooper-Monaco T61M chassis. Fitted with the Cobra 289cid engine they quickly became dubbed by the press and media as "King Cobras" although Shelby only ever referred to the cars as "Cooper-Fords".

Two new Shelby "King Cobra" Cooper-Fords were raced with some success by Shelby-American during 1963 in the US SCCA and FIA Professional Fall Series and for 1964 three new cars were built with revised bodywork by Peter Brock. This car, chassis CM/5/64 was the second car built and was driven in the '64 LA Times GP at Riverside by Bob Bondurant who finished 5th. Bob followed this up a fortnight later with a 3rd in the Monterey GP at Laguna Seca.

The bodywork from the car was then transferred to CM/6/64 to repair it after Parnelli Jones' crash at Laguna Seca. In late 1964, a development program was begun on this chassis involving relocated front and rear shock mounts for more suspension travel.

However, once Shelby took over the GT40 racing programme for Ford, CM/5/64 car was sold to Ford Advanced Vehicles in England for Roy Salvadori to drive in the early races of 1965. A new body was fabricated in England and a ZF transaxle replaced the Colotti. Later in 1965 the car was returned to Shelby American and offered for sale.

Oscar Koveleski purchased CM/5/64 along with CM/4/64 and a myriad of other spare parts in March 1966. He quickly sold CM/5/64 to James E. Brown of Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Brown raced the car from 1966 to 1968, achieving several National wins and 4th in points in the SCCA Northeastern Region, ASR class in 1968. Brown sold CM/5/64 to Francis Larkin of Binghamton, New York in October 1968. After damaging the front nose in his first race, Larkin replaced the bodywork with a homemade fiberglass shell taken from a Genie sports racer owned by Tex Arnold. Larkin campaigned the car until 1970, setting a new lap record of under 1 minute at Lime Rock. Larkin traded CM/5/64 for a BMW Trans-Am racecar in 1971.

The new owner, Mark Scarano of Vestal, New York rebuilt the engine then sold the car to Craig Smith of Robeson, Pennsylvania. Smith drove the King Cobra in six hillclimb events in 1971 before selling it to Dick Johnson of Madison, Wisconsin in early 1972. Johnson raced CM/5/64 throughout the mid-west and southern states. from 1972 to 1976, competing in the SCCA ASR class. In 1976, Johnson sold the King Cobra to an autocross racer from Denver, Colorado. The rolling chassis made its way to Southern California by 1979, where it was purchased by Wayne Lyndon of Roseville, California.

When purchased by Lyndon, CM/5/64 was still wearing the old fibreglass body made by "Tex Arnold" fitted a decade earlier, but the chassis had no engine fitted and showed considerable and extensive wear and tear from many years of club competition and use.

Lyndon sold the King Cobra to Barry Brown of Pacific Palisades in late 1981. Brown mistakenly restored the chassis as CM/6/64 and replaced the fiberglass shell with a new body made by Len Pritchard in the United Kingdom. After competing at the Monterey Historics in 1999, the car was sold in 2001 to Larry Bowman of Redwood City, California. Bowman performed a mechanical restoration prior to campaigning the King Cobra in vintage racing events. CM/5/64 was then sold in 2009 to Ross Meyer of Boyertown, Pennsylvania. Meyer did not race the car but kept it on display in his "3 Dog Garage" foundation collection of classic cars.

Donn Vickrey of Carlsbad, California acquired the King Cobra in 2011 and campaigned the car in historic racing. The opportunity was also taken with the help of Cooper-Monaco historian and SAAC Registrar Chuck Brandt to authenticate and properly number the car as CM/5/64.

In 2015 CM/5/64 was sold to the current owner, a classic car enthusiast, collector and historic racer who is big on history, accuracy and authenticity as well as a cars potential to reach antiquity status. To this effect, the King Cobra has been restored with the correct '64 spec Brock styled bodywork which was fabricated using a quarter scale wooden model made by Peter Brock himself specifically for this project. The restoration was done to the most exacting standards and was completed in June 2020.



Above: CM/5/64 being unloaded at Riverside in 1964.

Below: All three King Cobras together at Laguna Seca in October 1964 for the Monterey GP with CM/5/64 nearest the camera.



- 07/64: Shelby American Inc, Venice, Los Angeles, California USA
 - invoiced to Ford Motor Credit Company, Detroit
 - to the credit account of Carroll Shelby
 - assembled and race prepared by Shelby-American
 - nicknamed "King Cobra" by the press
 - fitted with 4700cc Ford Cobra 289cid V8 engine
 - raced by Bob Bondurant '64 LA Times GP, Riverside & '64 Monterey GP, Laguna Seca
- 14/01/65: Ford Advanced Vehicles, Slough, Bucks, England
 - delivered bodyless - new body fabricated by Cooper Cars
 - modified to Group 9 regulations by Ermanno Cuoghi, FAV chief mechanic
 - raced by Roy Salvadori '65 Silverstone and '65 Goodwood
 - returned in late '65 to Shelby-American
- 04/65: Shelby American Inc, Venice, Los Angeles, California USA
 - disassembled and placed in storage
 - first offered for sale May '65
 - still on offer Jan '66
- 03/66: Oscar Koveleski, USA
 - purchased along with chassis CM/4/64
 - assembled - never used or raced prior to resale
- 66: James E Brown, Greensburg, Pennsylvania, USA
 - raced SCCA 1966-68
- 10/68: Francis Larkin, Binghamton, New York, USA
 - raced SCCA 1968-70
 - crashed after first race in '68
 - rebuilt and re-bodied with homemade glass-fibre body moulded from Genie sports car
 - traded in 1971 for a Trans-Am BMW
- 71: Mark Scarano, Vestal, New York, USA
 - for re-sale with rebuilt engine
- 71: Craig Smith, Robeson, Pennsylvania, USA
 - raced in Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association events in '71
- 72: Dick Johnson Auto Body & Salvage, Madison, Wisconsin, USA
 - raced SCCA 1972-76
- 76: Unknown, Denver, Colorado, USA
 - auto-crossed 1976-79
- 79: Wayne Lyndon, Roseville, California, USA
 - complete less engine
- 28/11/81: Barry Brown, Pacific Palisades, Los Angeles, USA
 - restored over a ten year period 1985 to '95
 - with new body by Len Pritchard
 - incorrectly plated as "CM/6/64"
 - raced 1997 Los Angeles GP
 - raced 1999 Monterey Historics
 - new FIA HTP Papers issued Oct 2000
- 27/10/01: Larry Bowman, Redwood City, California, USA
 - rebuilt and restored by Arrow Lane Restorations 2002-2006
 - raced in US Historics
- 11/05/09: Ross Meyer, Boyertown, Pennsylvania, USA
 - on display in the 3 Dog Garage Foundation Collection
 - offered for sale in 2010 with RM Auctions
 - unsold at \$425K
- 11: Donn Vickrey, Carlsbad, California, USA
 - verified and endorsed as CM/5/64 by SAAC Registrar Chuck Brandt
 - correctly replated as CM/5/64
- 07/15: Anonymous
 - current owner
 - 2016-2020 restored with correct 1964 spec King Cobra alloy body



1964 LA Times GP, Riverside - Bob Bondurant

Shelby-American Inc

11/10/64:	LA Times GP, Riverside	#93	B.Bondurant	5th	75 laps
18/10/64:	Monterey GP, Laguna Seca	#96	B.Bondurant	3rd	104 laps

Ford Advanced Vehicles

20/03/65:	Senior Service 200, Silverstone	#12	R.Salvadori	Rtd	water logged
19/04/65:	Lavant Cup, Goodwood	#40	R.Salvadori	DNS	gear selection
01/05/65:	Tourist Trophy, Oulton Park	#20	R.Salvadori	DNA	did not arrive
15/05/65:	International Trophy, Silverstone	#24	R.Salvadori	DNA	did not arrive

James Brown USA

30/04/67:	Virginia, SCCA National	#7	J.Brown	Rtd	-
28/05/67:	Nelson Ledges, SCCA Regional	#7	J.Brown	1st	1st C/SR
18/06/67:	Nelson Ledges, SCCA Regional	#7	J.Brown	1st	1st C/SR
28/07/68:	Steel Cities, SCCA National	#7	J.Brown	1st	1st A/SR
00/00/68:	Mid-Ohio, SCCA National	#7	J.Brown	2nd	2nd A/SR

Francis Larkin USA

18/05/69:	Cumberland SCCA National	#51	F.Larkin	-	-
18/10/69:	Watkins Glen SCCA	#5	F.Larkin	14th	2nd A/SR

Craig Smith USA

14/05/71:	Jefferson PHA Hillclimb	#500	C.Smith	4th	-
05/06/71:	Duryea PHA Hillclimb	#500	C.Smith	5th	-
19/06/71:	Tuscarora PHA Hillclimb	#500	C.Smith	3rd	-
07/08/71:	Topton PHA Hillclimb	#500	C.Smith	3rd	-
04/09/71:	Fleetwood PHA Hillclimb	#500	C.Smith	1st	-
25/09/71:	Rose Valley PHA Hillclimb	#500	C.Smith	Rtd	-



A Tale of Two King Cobras

Why I Swapped the Identity of Two Valuable Historic Racing Cars

By Chuck Brandt

My part of this story started almost 10 years ago when I was asked by the buyer and seller of an alleged Shelby King Cobra Cooper-Ford rolling chassis to determine which car it was. I travelled to North Carolina with the buyer to pick up the car. The seller's name was Noel Rogers and for the sake of clarity I will refer to this chassis as the Rogers car.

Clearly it was a Shelby modified Cooper Monaco T61M chassis. The most notable characteristic is the two fabricated removable frame sections over the transaxle. As shipped from Cooper these were solid hoops. Shelby's team cut out the top section of both hoops to facilitate the removal of the engine and transaxle as a unit. They fabricated replacement sections that bolted in to the remaining tube. In this case both sections were double sided flat perforated panels. I had seen this type of part on pictures of each of the '64 cars. The chassis also retained many original Shelby specific parts including a Shelby tach (logo'd with a tie tack) and tach drive. It also came with a unique Hayden Trans Cooler that would figure heavily in my mis-identification of the car.

One of the easiest ways to identify these cars is by their fuel tanks. The Shelby crew chiefs made elaborate and unique modifications to the stock

Cooper tanks for more capacity. Unfortunately this chassis had original un-modified Cooper tanks.

Yes, I fully admit that I made a mistake in my first identification of the car. We had a limited number of photographs to work from, a couple dozen. None of the cars that I had pictures of had exactly this configuration of the fabricated sections of the rear chassis. The other cars had a front section fabricated from tubing, most likely the piece that was cut out. This car had perforated panels in both positions.

The owner was intending to build a new accurate aluminum body for the car, to do that I needed to tell him which car to model it from. This is when I found a picture of Bondurant's car CM/5/64 with our unique folded over Hayden Trans Cooler clearly visible. If we assume that the perforated front section was a more recent modification then this could be the Bondurant car.

It was an easy answer to accept because the Bondurant serial number was not claimed by any other of the existing cars. We proceeded with the restoration and body fabrication based on the idea that we had the Bondurant car.



Peter Brock's 1/4 scale wooden model of the King Cobra

I was fortunate to be able to work with Peter Brock to produce a 1/4 scale clay model of the Bondurant car. This model was scanned and scaled and a full size wooden buck was produced. A beautiful and accurate aluminum body was made by the team at Legendary Motorcars.

At this point in the story a game changer event happened, the vast Dave Friedman photo collection was sold to the Henry Ford Museum. This collection of Dave's and other photographer's photos contains approximately 250,000 images and a large number of documents. I was able to travel to the Benson Ford Research Center to view the collection with the goal of finding pictures that showed the inner panels and body mounting hardware for the Bondurant car.

After a few hours of looking through negatives and contact sheets I discovered what we now call the "Oh Crap" photo. It was a nice clear photo showing a King Cobra with two perforated rear frame sections exactly like the ones on the car we were working on. Unfortunately the car in the photo was the Parnelli Jones car not the Bondurant car.

I immediately contacted the owner of the Rogers car and there was no doubt in either of our minds what we needed to do. We had to correct the identification of the Rogers car. The problem was, another car was claiming this provenance and chassis number CM/6/64. The other car was restored by Barry Brown in the 1980s, I will refer to it as the Brown car.

I then had a new mandate for the trip to the Benson Ford Research Center, to figure out which car the Brown car really is. This is where it gets very exciting, several random facts I knew about both cars started making sense, the pieces of the puzzle are starting to fit.

We know the Parnelli car had an off at Laguna Seca which ignited some hay bales and burnt the car badly. I found a photo showing the crew removing the burnt and mangled body at the track. In the photo the frame looks pretty good and straight, certainly salvageable. When they eventually offered the "Riverside Race Winner" for sale they used a picture of the Bondurant car with the numbers changed to 98, Bondurant's distinctive helmet was clearly seen. When one compares the Bondurant body at Laguna Seca (it suffered front end damage at Riverside) to the Parnelli car as raced by Lothar Motschenbacher in '65 it becomes evident that the team moved the Bondurant body to the Parnelli chassis for some reason, probably because race winners sell for more money. This also explains how the unique oil cooler ended up with the Rogers car.

The cars were basically "sister" cars in that their bodies as delivered from Cooper were nearly identical. The Brown car has modified suspension at all four corners. The shock mount had been moved outboard and above the upper frame tube. I never found any documentation as to why this was done, there is speculation that it was being developed for the Targa Florio.



Roy Salvadori in the FAV Cooper-Monaco at Silverstone in 1965

I have had a puzzling Shelby invoice for years showing a Cooper Monaco sold to Ford Advanced Vehicles for Salvadori early in '65. The car was mentioned in Roy Salvadori's autobiography saying "For 1965 Carroll Shelby, John Wyer and I put together a deal whereby Ford Advanced Vehicles with John at the helm would build and race a King Cobra. This consisted of a Cooper Monaco chassis powered by the Ford 4.7-litre engine."

In the Friedman Archives were a number of letters arranging for this deal between John Wyer and Al Dowd.

Some interesting phrases I pulled out were:

"We are doing some suspension modifications that we feel will greatly improve the car in regard to road holding, etc."

"The car is complete in all respects less body panels, which I understand will be installed in England."

"It is unfortunate, John, but we just do not have panels for this car."

"We thought we would be able to pull a set of panels off an existing buck that was made for a special Cobra Ford but arrangements could not be finalized with the owner" (Possibly the Lang Cooper panels from Don Edmunds).

We also now know that CM/5/64 along with CM/4/64 were purchased by Oscar Koveleski at the Shelby Garage Sale and his mechanic Jack Deren said one of the cars was a "special one for Salvadori". I have pictures from the son of James Brown, the owner after Koveleski, that shows the suspension modification clearly and the Bondurant fuel tanks.

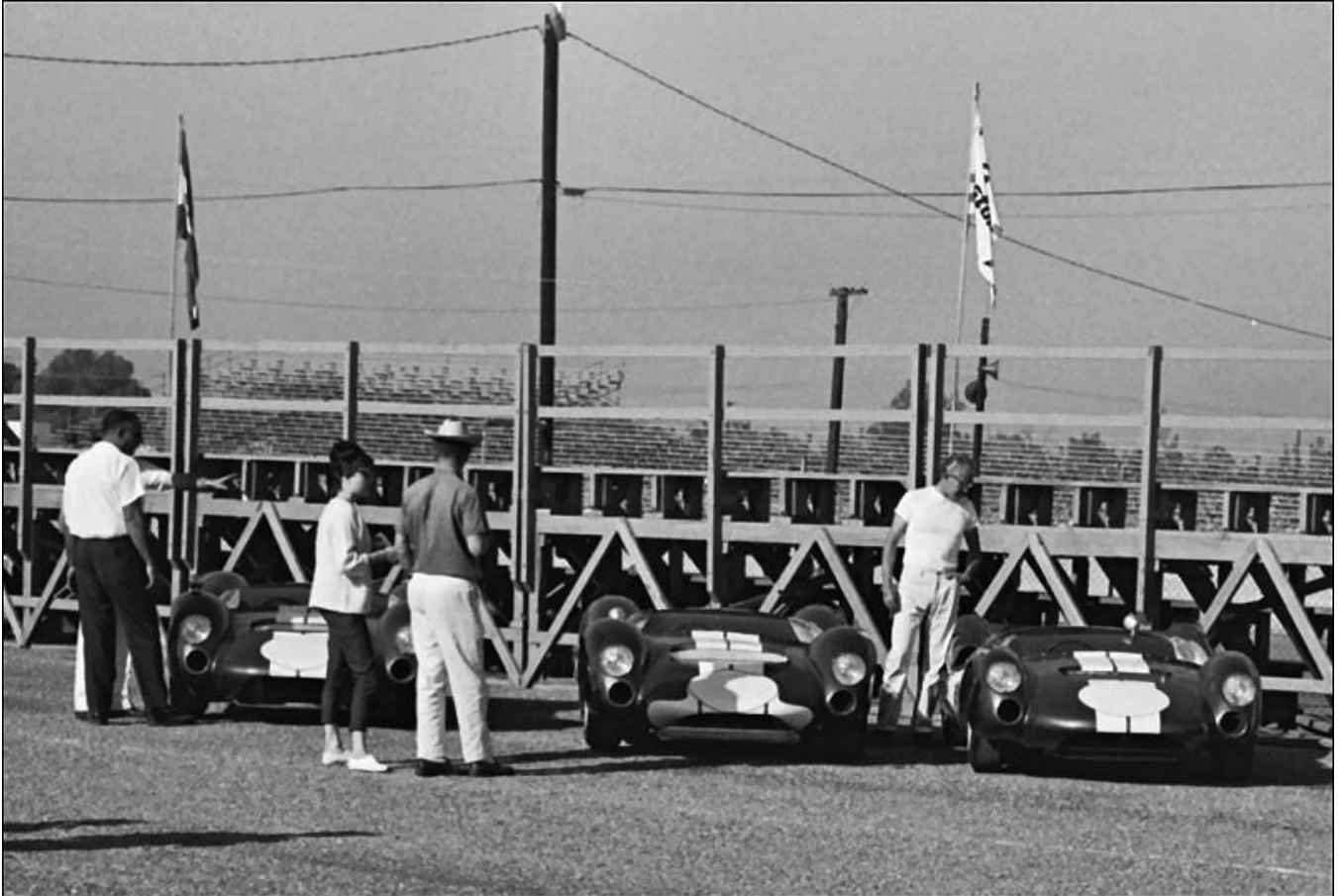
The conclusions we've drawn are that sometime after Laguna Seca in '64 the Bondurant body was moved onto the Parnelli Jones chassis. The Bondurant chassis was modified for some unknown race intent while at Shelby's.

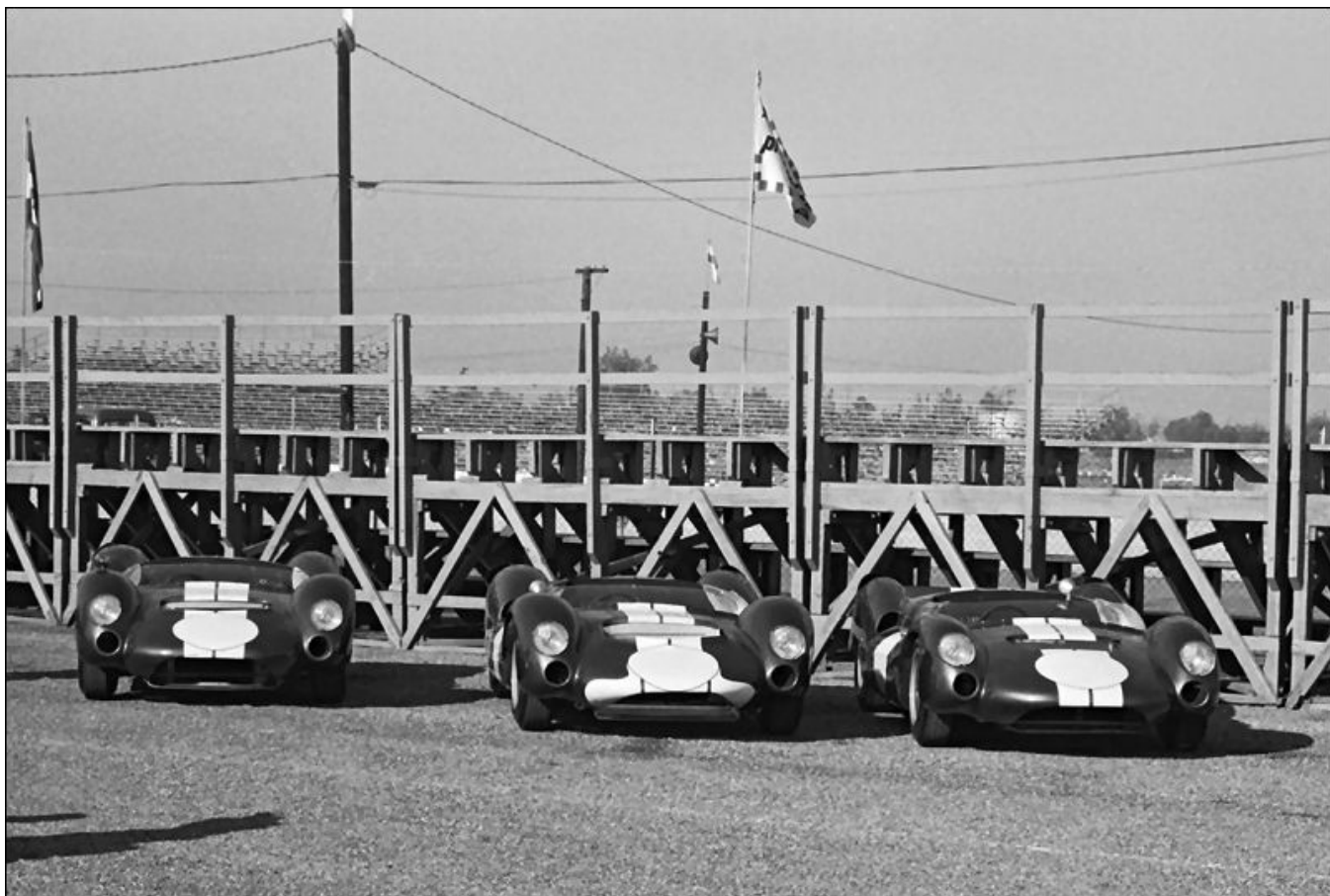
The Bondurant car was prepared for Salvadori and shipped without body to John Wyer's shop in England. Ford Advanced Vehicles put a new body on it and raced it in 3 races then returned it to Shelby. Shelby sold it to Oscar Koveleski. Armed with this evidence the new owner of the Rogers car and I approached the owner of the Brown car.

Everyone agreed the Rogers car is CM/6/64, the ex-Parnelli Jones, Lothar Motschenbacher, Ex-Terry Kniss, Ex-Ed Felter etc. The Brown car is CM/5/64 Ex-Bob Bondurant, Ex-Roy Salvadori, Ex-Oscar Koveleski, Ex-James Brown, etc.

After this agreement was struck, CM/5/64 was sold and the new owner agreed to buy the new body from the other owner. Both cars are currently undergoing restoration with correct new bodies.







11/10/64: LA Times GP, Riverside - B.Bondurant - 5th