

Second Strike

The Newsletter for the Superformance Owners Group

July 15, 1998

Volume 1, Number 3

SECOND STRIKE BARES FANGS AT TANGLEWOOD



Fourteen Superformance Cobras are an impressive sight!

The Triad Austin-Healey Club held their annual "British Car Day South" event at Tanglewood on June 13th and 14th. The car show on Sunday had classes for various versions of Austin-Healey, Sprite, Mini, Jaguar, Lotus, MG, Morgan, Morris Minor, Rolls Royce, Triumph, Sunbeam, Jensen-Healey, TVR, Land Rover, and a class for British Car Replicas. Altogether, several hundred cars

participated in the show with a large contingent in British Car Replicas - including fourteen Superformance Cobras! Class winners were:

1 st	David McRae	SP151
2 nd	Bruce Weber	SP187
3 rd	Errol Walsh	SP257

Congratulations!!

TRACK ATTACK AT SAAC-23

The 23rd annual Shelby American Automobile Club convention was held at the Charlotte Motor Speedway Friday through Sunday, July 10-11-12, 1998.

Superformance was well represented at the event. Jimmy Price, Superformance president, made the trip from South Africa. All the dealers were there as well.

Bob, Dennis, and Baby Olthoff of Olthoff Racing hosted the event for Superformance. Bob and Dennis brought their potent race car with the 351W/422 CID stroker motor.

Doug Reed of Superformance South, Chalmette, Louisiana, showed up with a very hot 460 powered 427 S/C, a raft of suspect Cajun jokes, his (long suffering I suspect) brother, and an surprisingly attractive and charming wife.

Ron Rosen, Superformance of Cincinnati, made the trek from Ohio and Dave Radtke, Dayan House of Cobras, came all the way from Los Angeles.

About thirty Superformance owners attended one or more of the three days. With help from Larry Miller and others, the Olthoff's set up tents in the paddock area as a gathering place. Cars were in and out throughout the event, but at any given time there were typically fifteen to twenty Superformance cars lined up together. It was the largest and most impressive display by any manufacturer at the event.

The impromptu tent sessions included some important owner - builder discussions, an excellent introduction to Bayou humor, good camaraderie, the inevitable hoods up tech talks, and more than few tall tales and bench races.

But this bench racing was backed up with real owner participation events - a Concours Car Show and a

Popular Vote Car Show on Sunday and Open Track Time on Saturday and Sunday.



Superformance builders, dealers, and owners gather at SAAC-23

Car Shows

Dave Himes shows SP097 with 428 and 2x4 bbls in the Popular Vote Car Show. Dave took 2nd in "Special Interest Exotic"! Congrats, Dave!



Dennis Olthoff with the PPG car, Rodney Moore SP305, and Larry Miller SP299 entered the Popular Vote Car Show under "SECOND STRIKE COBRA CLUB" banner. Larry took home a 2nd in "Cobra Kit Car". And congrats to you too, Larry!

Track Time



Bob Olthoff accelerates into the infield course in SP245 carrying the color scheme of his Team Willment car CSX2130.

Bob Olthoff, Dennis Olthoff, David Sugg, Lee Brock, Dave Himes, Rod Waltermann, George Burrett, Doug Reed, Ronnie Reed, Charlie Ponstein, Clay Gould, Barry Parker, and yours truly opted for track time on the Charlotte Motor Speedway 2.5 mile road course. Open track time was available Saturday and Sunday with five groups of cars: Race (A and B), Intermediate (C and D), and Novice (E). Each group got four 15 minute sessions each day with passengers allowed on the last session. Passing was only permitted on the back straight to discourage fender bashing passing in the infield.

Bob Olthoff, Dennis Olthoff, and Doug Reed ran with the Racers and set the pace.

Official lap times were not kept, again to discourage fender bashing competition. However, lap times were kept unofficially for some of the hot shoes in the Racer class. Bob Olthoff had the unofficial fastest time of the day (FTD) in SP245 at 1 minute 22 seconds (110 mph average) with a top speed of 172 mph. Doug Reed posted a 1:29 lap (101 mph average) with a top speed of 152 mph.



David Sugg in SP171 in the "hot pits" waiting a shot at the track

I ran with the Intermediates and posted a 1:39 lap (91 mph average) with a 140 mph top speed. Hey, but those guys didn't get backed up in traffic, had race tires, had bigger motors, and what else – uh – better drivers. Well, Bob maybe. Not Doug, though.

A Hot Lap Around CMS

The Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) ran the Solo II Divisionals at Charlotte Motor Speedway in the 1980's when I was actively competing. The Solo II course used the infield course, the front straight run backwards, and the pit road. I looked at the banked oval and said to myself, "Someday..."



Your editor in SP218 awaits beginning of first session with the two ERA Cobras

Someday was Sunday, July 12th. My car now, SP218, is altogether better qualified for the task than the 1979 Mustang I won four Regional BSP titles with.

I ran my car with stock suspension settings, spring and shock settings, and street tires because I wanted to learn something about how it performed at the limit configured the same way that I drive it every day.

The 2.5 mile road course consists of the 1.5 mile banked oval and an additional 1.0 mile road course in the infield. This is how a lap looked and felt.

The infield course begins at the end of the front straight-away with a sweeping left that invites overspeeding the next sharp right. Quick brake, sharp right, sharp right, and a short straight. Second to 6500 then third, then tap the brakes for a sweeping 180 degree right turn then back hard to the left through some ups and downs that feel like flying a fighter plane in a dog fight. I got some air here years ago. Set up for the left turn back onto the oval at turn one and the abrupt transition onto the banked turn. Lay back just a little here to run up on the cars in front and pass them on the back straight.

Now it's a different story. Up onto the bank - good gracious it is steep - and pedal to the metal. Wind to 6500 in third through turn two and pull it into fourth. The side forces continue to build as speed builds, but the bank begins to flatten for the back straight. Keeping the go pedal down becomes an act of faith. Hold it down and slip past the slower cars, remembering that there are NO slow cars here.

Speed continues to climb down the back straight - 130, 135. How long can the pedal stay down without climbing up the tail pipe of the cars braking for turn three? Hold it, hold it, goal reached - 6500 rpm and 140 mph - but closing rapidly. Jump on the binders and haul it down a bit. Very exciting. (Even more exciting - the wind at 140 mph peeled the numbers off my door. One piece swirled around, hit me between the eyes, and stuck to my glasses. I could see around it so I left it there until a calmer moment when I could get a hand free to remove it.)

Into the banked turn three. Drop down below the car in front just in case he slows a bit too much. No passing though. Almost down to the apron and looking up the bank. Seems like one of those carnival rides where they go round and round in the barrel, held up only by centrifugal force. The car drifts a bit when braking to avoid the car in front, but it recovers by itself very nicely.

Out of turn four and down the front straight. Everyone overcomes their hesitation on the banked turns and nails it. Then it is brake and downshift for the entrance to the infield course. A hard, not so fast, left. Lulled by the straight-away speeds, a few don't brake quite enough. Some exit the course on the run out. Some execute brilliant 360's and keep going.

Some back it into the rubber retaining wall designed just for that purpose. Some do it more than once. Just remember the words of the wise old driver, "If you haven't left the course, then you don't know how fast you can really go."

So how fast did I go? I was able to pass every car on the track at one time or another and avoid being passed. So I guess it was fast enough. In the third run, I passed two ERA Cobras who then hooked up with me and we started passing everybody. I could pull away from them on the straight, but they would catch up again in the infield when traffic backed up. Jimmy Price and I went by and chatted with the two drivers after the run. Both were well built cars with FE big blocks (427's). One had racing tires and the other had high performance street tires (Bridgestone Potenza). Both were trailered in. Running fast in fast company.

I was very impressed with the Superformance as a high performance car. In acceleration, braking, and handling it did all that I asked of it. It is a well balanced car and inspires confidence even when sliding a bit at high speeds. The tires are not the best for competition, but the composure of the car made up for a lot of the deficiency.

All and all, it was every thing I dreamed of ten years ago. And more....

NIGEL HULME AND CSX2131

When I arrived at Charlotte Motor Speedway early Friday morning, Bob, Dennis, and Baby had already set up the Superformance area and folks were starting to arrive. I parked in line with the other cars and started washing up for the weekend (the car, that is). An English chap walked up, introduced himself as Nigel Hulme, and asked me a few questions about my car which I was naturally willing to answer. After a while, the bonnet came up and the yarn swapping began. He saw the "Engine by Bob Olthoff Racing" sticker and asked me if that would be the Bob Olthoff, by chance. And there upon began a most interesting story.

Nigel Hulme, as it turns out, is an owner and racer of vintage race cars. He was visiting SAAC with Trevor Legate, author of *Cobra* and *Cobra, The Real Thing!*, who was gathering information for a new book. Nigel's original interests were in Cobras, Lolas, GT-40's, and Ferraris. His first race car was a Porsche 911R, a 2.0 liter racer that had run at Le Mans and at Kyalami in South Africa. He subsequently traded the Porsche for an ex-Mecom Lola T70 Mk 3 Spyder, a Can Am car with a tunnel port 427 engine.

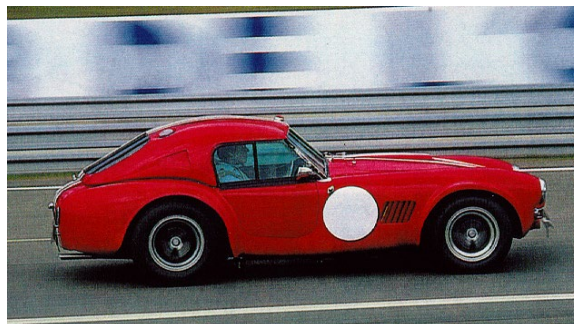
David Piper, fellow Englishman and auto enthusiast, invited Nigel to join a vintage racing series. He replaced the 427 with a 302 to conform to series specs and ran the car for three years.

The Lola T70 Mk 3 Spyder was replaced with a Lola T70 Mk 3B, a GT-40 like coupe. The T70 Mk 3B was barrel rolled coming out of Paddock Hill bend at Brands Hatch by Joe Bonnier in 1969 and written off. The car was "buried" on the roof of the drawing office at the Lola factory. Nigel bought it off Eric Broadley on the condition that the factory would rebuild it.

With the T70 Mk 3B, Nigel won the 1985 Historic Championship. In 73 starts, he had 25 class wins, 6 outright wins, and only 2 DNF's. The best run was at Brands Hatch where he won the pole and was duly lined up in the first row with Dicky Attwood, a Le Mans winner in 1970, in another Lola T70 Mk 3B.

Clive Robinson, Nigel's mechanic, had once worked with Attwood and shared some insights into his driving style. Attwood liked to follow opponents around the circuit to learn their weaknesses, then pass them on the last lap to win. True to form, Attwood was leading after the first lap, but quickly fell back. Nigel extended his breaking distances in the corners to send Attwood a "red herring" about his driving style. When Attwood began pulling up in the final laps, Nigel returned to normal, more aggressive braking and was able to retain the lead and the win. The fox had been out foxed.

In 1971 Nigel purchased a 10 year old AC 2.6 roadster. (The AC 2.6 is very similar to the 260/289 Cobra except that it has a 2.6 liter inline six engine.) He sold the AC 2.6 and purchased a very tired Cobra Mk II (289) ex-race car. He had started to rebuild it when Ron Stern, a friend, called to tell him that he located the ex-Le Mans Cobra. The Mk II was sold and the Le Mans car acquired.



CSX2131 as it exists today with Le Mans Hardtop, FIA body, and Team Willment colors

The car, CSX2131, was entered in Le Mans in 1963. It was driven by Sanderson and Bolton (Ed: Friedman lists as Peter Harper and Ninian Sanderson), sponsored by the *Sunday Times*, and managed by Stirling Moss. It finished seventh

overall behind six Ferraris and finished first in the over 4 liter GT class. It averaged 108 mph for 24 hours and was timed at 161 on the Mulsanne straight.

The car was basically a stock 289 fitted with four twin throat Weber carburetors. The Le Mans fastback hardtop was fitted along with the split boot lid that goes with the hardtop. For Le Mans, the car was painted AC green (a light metallic green) and carried the number 3.

The car was subsequently sold to the John Willment, the largest Ford dealer in England at the time. Team Willment's Cobra roadsters and their Willment built Daytona look-alike coupes were a powerful force in European racing. Modified to FIA body specs with the larger front fender flares and bulging rear fenders later user on the 427 and painted red with the white narrow-wide-narrow Willment stripes, the car became the sister car to Team Willment's Le Mans prototype, CSX2130, painted white with red Willment stripes. The Le Mans prototype was developed and driven by Bob Olthoff as reported in "**The Chase**" in the last issue. Both cars were raced successfully in 1964, 1965, and part of 1966 by drivers Jack Sears and Bob Olthoff. Frank Gardner and Brian Muir also drove for Team Willment.

Gardner put CSX2131 on the roof at Nurburgring in 1964. It was rebuilt and entered in the Ilford Films Trophy Race at Brands Hatch on July 11, 1964. Bob Olthoff set the fastest lap in practice in CSX2130. When he passed the pits to check his time, it wasn't posted. So he set out on a faster lap. Too fast, as it turned out, for he left the track and came to rest against a large and hostile tree. The pole position was his, but the car could not be repaired in time and he was out of the race. At the beginning of the race, the cars lined up three abreast in the starting grid. The car in the second spot, a lightweight E-Jag driven by Jackie Stewart, moved into the spot vacated by Olthoff. Roy Salvadori in a Cobra moved from third to second and Jack Sears in CSX2131 moved from fourth on the second row to the empty spot on the first row.

Sears was black flagged after the first lap as a penalty for advancing a row on the start. Sears was infuriated by the forced "stop and go" which put him back in eighth or ninth position. In Jack's words, "I was white with rage, absolutely livid. I charged through the pits shaking my fist at every official I could see." He drove like a man possessed, a mad man, overhauling several cars a lap. Fifty thousand spectators were on their feet cheering. The

competitor's pit crews were cheering. At the end of the race, Jack passed Jackie Stewart on the Hawthorn straight and went on to win by four seconds. Jack called it, "the greatest race I ever drove".

The Willment team offered CSX2131 for sale in 1965 for 800 English pounds (about \$1,200). In 1966, it was sold to a policeman, Jerry Bagshaw, who raced it in club events. He wrecked it at the Crystal Palace race and left it in his garage until Ron Stern found it.

Nigel purchased the car in 1975 and restored it to Team Willment specs, retaining the Le Mans fastback hardtop. Brian Angliss of AutoKraft repaired the frame. It is used today as a road car and as a vintage racer. It has been to two Le Mans reunions and the Festival of Speed at Goodwood where it took first in class. It was raced by invitation in Japan in 1990.



Left to right: Trevor Legate, Nigel Hulme, Jim Price, Bob Olthoff at SAAC-23

Which brings us to SAAC-23, Charlotte Motor Speedway, Friday morning, July 10, 1998. No, I did not get my Superformance in South Africa. Bob now lives here, about 30 miles up the road. That is his son Dennis standing over there. Bob has gone to the airport to pick up Jimmy Price. Upon his return, a very fine first meeting between the current owner of CSX2131 and one of its Team Willment drivers and developer and driver of its sister car, CSX2130, would take place.

(Ed: This article was based on interviews with Nigel Hulme, conversations with Bob Olthoff, Dave Friedman's book *Shelby Cobra*, and a June 1991 article on CSX2131 in *Supercars & Classics* magazine.)

BEACH MOUNTAIN HILL CLIMB

Each year for a long long, time, SCCA has held a Solo I hill climb in the mountains of North Carolina. For years it was held at Chimney Rock, but in recent

years it has been held at the Beach Mountain resort.

Dennis Olthoff entered SP245, the “race car”, this year and a number of owners went up to enjoy his rather spectacular driving style and cheer him on. Unfortunately everyone also got swimming lessons for the weekend brought rain in buckets - literally.

Dennis really showed his potential in practice when he bested the course record by 6 seconds and was 26 mph (!) faster in the timed section.

While he was waiting to start his run Sunday morning, the sky opened up. Enough rain fell to form a lake in the floorboard of SP245. No time to bail! Time to go!

There is a problem with being faster than anyone else. The “hump” that was just a bump to the other drivers became a launching ramp for Dennis, sending him airborne. The car left the course and came to rest on some large rocks, finishing the day.

Exactly what happened between launch and impact is a subject of some debate. I am convinced that the lake in the floor of the car was violently disturbed by the launch and formed a tidal wave which crashed into the door and threw the car off course. At any rate, that’s my story and I’m sticking to it.

SCORE

Superformance Cobra Owners Registry

I have talked with Jimmy Price and all the Superformance dealers about including all owners in the registry and everyone agrees that this would be a good idea. I have included a registration form in this newsletter. Anyone who wants to belong to the registry can complete this form and mail it to me.

I have also asked all the dealers to send the registration form to their existing customers so that they can be included. The goal is to register every Superformance Cobra in the country and track the ownership history.

Everyone in the registry automatically receives the newsletter. I have also created a mailing list for folks who are not owners but want to receive the newsletter. The registry form can be used for this purpose as well.

BITS & PIECES

Owners Manual

The Superformance Cobra Owner’s Manual has been printed and is available from your dealer. If you haven’t received yours yet, contact your dealer.

Specifications Manual

All of the Specifications Manuals done so far have

been for specific cars. It takes quite some time to research the often subtle differences between individual cars. With all the cars out there, this could become a career. Under the assumption that “close” is better than “you’ll get it later”, I will be producing a number of standard sets of specifications and you can choose the one that best fits your car. At this moment, the planned variations are:

Engine	CID	Variation
351W	351	SVO crate motor
351W	357	TFS heads, A332 cam
351W	357	TFS heads, A351 cam
351W	396	TFS heads, A351 cam
351W	429	TFS heads, A351 cam
460	460	SVO crate motor
351W	351	SVO Special Order
351W	396	SVO Special Order
460	460	SVO Special Order
460	514	SVO Special Order

The horsepower curves will be taken from manufacturer’s specs or dyno tests where available. Where they are not available, I will use the Desktop Dyno engine simulator to develop the horsepower curves.

Soft Tool Box

I have visions of a high g-load corner sending a fully loaded metal tool box across the inside of my trunk and out through the side of the fender. So I have put together a soft tool kit that fits ever so snugly behind the drivers seat. The tool kit consists of:

- CLC Contractors Briefcase. Purchased from Home Depot. UPC 84298 01122. Designed for contractors to carry tools and paperwork. It is made of a canvas like fabric, is a little smaller than a briefcase, and has lots of pockets for individual tool storage.
- Craftsman crescent/box wrench set (part number 44138). 11 pieces from 3/8” to 1”. A special set shorter than normal. The longest wrench is 7” long. The entire set fits nicely in a pocket in the contractor’s briefcase.
- 3/8” drive socket set, inch and metric sockets, plug sockets, short and long extensions, ratchet handle.
- 6 screwdrivers, small medium, and large, standard and Phillips.
- Leatherman multipurpose tool.
- 8” adjustable wrench.
- Pliers.
- Lead knock off hammer from Cook Hammer Co. Purchased from Bob Olthoff.

- Gunk Puncture Seal Instant Tire Repair. Much smaller than a jack and spare tire. Works for the BMW Z3 M. Should work for me.
- Owners Manual and Specifications Manual in the document pouch.

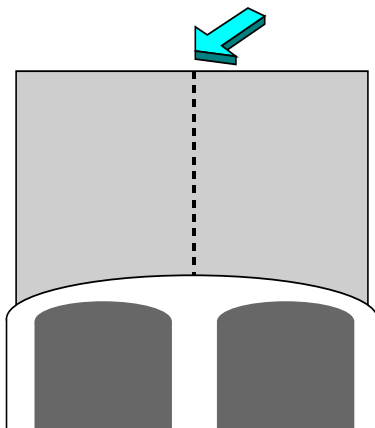
Once full, the tool kit is heavy and a little bulky. I stand it on edge and slip it in the triangular space between the back of the drivers seat, the rear bulkhead, and the drive shaft tunnel. It fits snugly and does not move even under the forces of aggressive driving. The tonneau cover, either up or down, covers it when the car is parked and reduces the chance of casual pilferage. Actually, nobody but a weight lifter could steal it anyway.

Tonneau Cover

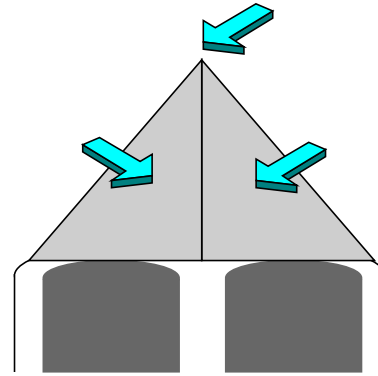
I am a big fan of tonneau covers. My Austin Healey had one and I used it a lot more than I used the top. High speeds ward off rain and thieves while driving with the top down. The tonneau cover at least hides the contents of the car when parked and discourages casual theft. It also protects the car from rain and sun baked seats. And keeping the right side up in place makes solitary winter rides noticeably warmer.

Using the tonneau cover reduces the number of times I have to use my top. I leave mine snapped in place and fold it behind the rear seat when riding. I think it adds to the English roadster look. The question I have heard most often is how to get it folded behind the seat.

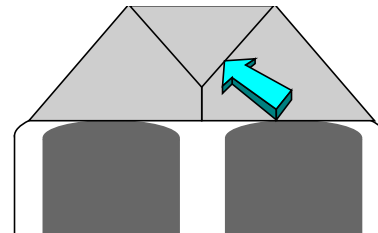
Here's how. The diagrams are from the front of the car facing the rear.



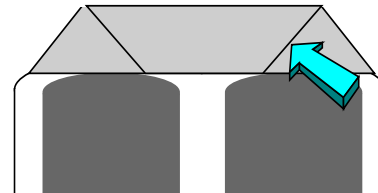
Unsnap the tonneau cover from the dashboard and the first snap aft of the door on both sides. Hold the tonneau cover up by the center.



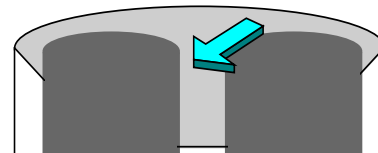
Fold the left and right of the tonneau cover toward the front of the car.



Fold the point of the triangle toward the front of the car.



Fold it a second time if necessary.



Tuck the tonneau cover behind the seats. the part behind the seats is only one fold of fabric thick and fits easily. The bulky center portion fits between the seats where there is room.

Speedy Top Bows

From Roger McKee: With summer coming on this may not be of much value but it may help save someone some sore fingers. This winter I found that putting the top on and positioning the back bow was very difficult. The bows with my car had a somewhat rough, grainy finish which was very difficult to move against the fabric. My solution was to buff them down with Scotchbrite and put on a coat of paste wax. Now I can pull the top over and easily slip the back bow into position.

Ed: I did this and it really works. Read on.

Erecting the Top (In A Hurry!)

My wife Pat and I were riding to Charleston and a large thunderstorm was forming on the horizon. She kept pointing to it and I kept saying, "It'll blow over." Pretty soon, it started raining and she said, "It's not going to blow over. It's raining now!"

"You misunderstood.", I said. "I meant that if I keep driving this fast, it will blow over our heads and we won't get wet." It did, but sooner or later everybody has to stop. And as a matter of regular practice, I wait until it is too late to put the top up. I think this is a "guy" thing. I know some other guys who do it too, but I'm not naming any names. You know who you are. At any rate, this procrastination results in being required to erect the top under duress in a hurry to avoid the rolling bathtub syndrome.

The answer is the right technique. And practice.

1. If you have the tonneau in place, throw it over the cockpit to keep rain out while you get the top out of the trunk.
2. Throw the top over the cockpit before putting the top bows in place. This keeps the rain out of the car while you work.
3. Locate the pins in the front top rails into the center oblong slot in the top of the windscreen.
4. Fit the top rails over the top of the wind screen, but do not latch the over center clips on the sides of the windscreen. Leaving the over center clips unlatched makes it much easier to clip the dot clips in place. Maybe possible vs. impossible.
5. Assemble the top bows and slip them under the top. Plug them into the sockets behind the door.
6. Reach under the top and remove the tonneau cover. Lay it over the seats.
7. Now clip the dot clips into the pins around the back of the cockpit. Because you didn't latch the over center side clips at the front yet, you have enough slack in the top to easily snap the clips in place.
8. The rails can now be latched onto the sides of the windscreen with the over center clips. Press the left rail onto the top of the windscreen and then use the over center clip to pull it tight. Repeat on the right side.
9. Install the side curtains.
10. Enter the car and sit down. Wad up the wet tonneau cover and put it in the passengers seat. If your wife is sitting in the seat, hand it to her

without instruction. She will instinctively know what to do with it.

11. If you waxed your top bows as suggested in the previous Tech Tip, you can reach over your head and slide the rear bow into position. Otherwise, you will have to turn around, break a fingernail or two, and curse several times to get the reluctant top bow to slide into place.

Using this technique, the top can be installed very quickly in a driving rain while keeping the interior relatively dry. The driver will not be so lucky, but sacrifices are required. And it is easier to get your clothes in your dryer than get your car in the dryer.

The courteous driver will of course allow his passenger to remain seated under the top while it is erected.

As to practice, it is hard to read the owner's manual or this Tech Tip when the rain is washing the road away. So practice in the comfort of your own driveway some sunny day. Yeah, yeah - I know that anybody that waits to the last minute won't practice either. But I felt like I had to suggest it. My wife might be reading this and I want to appear responsible.

Top Bow Storage

The top storage pouch will not lay flat on the trunk floor because the top bows are in the pouch and they will not lay flat. This wastes valuable trunk space and makes me nervous about piling stuff on top of the top pouch.

I purchased a Velcro strip set from Auto Zone, glued the hook strip and pile strip back to back with the self adhesive, then cut into 6" lengths.

I wrap these strips around the top bows to hold them together, and then put them in the trunk by themselves. A little finagling will find a well fitting spot. I put one end in the back left corner with the bow running toward the front of the car then curving toward the right rear fender. This tucks in nicely against the vertical face of the trunk well and out of harm's way. The top pouch, side curtain pouch, and tonneau cover now lay flat on the trunk floor.

Weatherproofing the Cobra

The Cobra was based on the AC roadster. The AC roadster was a 1960's English roadster. 1960's English roadsters leak when it rains. The Superformance Cobra is a rather close reproduction of this 1960's English roadster and like the original, it leaks when it rains.

I originally planned to never drive my car in the rain. However, El Nino and my desire to drive my car

frequently have conspired to make that a rather silly objective. My car lost its virginity, so to speak, on the way to the Beach Mountain Hilleclimb. My lame fumbblings in erecting the top in a downpour lead to the **Erecting the Top In A Hurry** tech tip, above. However deep the water by the time I got the top erected, it got deeper as I drove. Especially in my left shoe.

I have talked with a number of folks in determining the sources and solutions to rain intrusion - Bob Olthoff, Dennis Olthoff, Larry Miller, Rick Jackson, and others. This Tech tip represents the current collective wisdom. There will be more in the future.

The identified leaks with the Superformance Cobra:

1. Windshield end posts
2. Top of doors
3. Top of windshield
4. Gap in top at rear fender
5. Seams in the top
6. Gas cap into trunk

Windshield End Posts

This problem typically exists only on earlier cars and has been corrected at the factory on later cars. Since most cars do not have this problem, check it out first. Pour water on the area where the windshield post enters the body and then look under the dash at the windshield post mounting for water. In none, skip this one.

Some folks have gone so far as to remove the windshield to add silicone sealant to correct this problem. This is not a solution recommended for the owner. The windshield has to be properly aligned for the top to fit correctly and removing the windshield disrupts this alignment.

Apply a very small line of clear silicone sealant between the windshield post flashing and the body, between the windshield post and the flashing, and under the windshield gasket where it sits on top of the flashing. It may also be useful to trim a very small amount from the side of the windshield gasket to help it lay flat.

Top Of Doors

If you look at the weather stripping on your doors, you will note an absence of weather stripping at the top forward edge where the door curves.

From Rick Jackson: I got a piece of weather stripping like the factory stuff and cut a piece to fit where the stripping ended. I followed the contour of the door and glued it all the way inward toward the cockpit. GM black weather stripping cement is a good glue to use. Follow directions on the tube to the T.

From Editor: Rick's suggestion continues the factory look for the weather-stripping. I have heard from

others that have tried it that the weather-stripping rubs on the door frame when the door closes. Given the geometry of the door, this seems reasonable.

Cross Section Through Door



As an alternative, I used Action Weatherstrip part number 8534 from Auto Zone. It is 5/16" thick by 3/4" wide by 10' long. Cut two 7.5" strips for the left door. Attached one strip on top of the other strip to form a piece 10/16" thick. Rather than attaching it to the lip of the door as the factory weather-stripping is, attach it to the body of the door as shown above. Trim the end at the top of the door as required to hide the weather-stripping. Repeat on the right door. When the door closes, the new strip is in compression rather than shear and is less likely to pull off or scuff the paint.

Top Of Windshield

The top of the windscreen leaks all the way across. Water gets up into the metal top channel and drips onto you.

From Editor: I haven't fixed this one yet, but the following will be my first attempt. I plan to use Action Weatherstrip part number 8334 from Auto Zone. It is 3/16" thick by 3/4" wide by 10' long if I can't find something smaller.

Cut to length. Trim to 1/2" width before removing the backing paper. Insert into channel on front of top, attaching to roof of channel with self adhesive side. Test to see if top can still be installed. If yes, test with hose to see if leak proof. If leak proof, clap hands. If not, back to the drawing board.

Gap In Top At Rear Fender

There is an air gap where the edge of top crosses the valley between the trunk and the fender bulge. If the car is parked nose downhill, rain collecting on the rear deck will run through this gap into the car.

Editor: Anybody working on this? Please let us hear from you.

Seams In The Top

From Rick Jackson: The seams in the top near the support bar go drip, drip, drip. Get some tent seam

sealer and coat both sides and let dry well. I have not done this, but should work.

Editor: Anybody working on this? Please let us hear from you.

Gas Cap Into Trunk

The body is recessed around the gas cap, just like the original. Water collects here when it is raining, just like the original. If the gas cap assembly is not tightly attached and sealed correctly, water can leak into the trunk at this point.

First, test to see if you have the problem. Pour water into the body well around the gas cap and see if it stands there or leaks out. Check the fuel neck in the trunk to see if any water is getting in. If you don't have a problem, no need to fix it.

If you do have a problem, first try tightening the screws. Open the gas cap first to make access to the screw heads easier. After tightening the screws, close the gas cap and test again for leaks. If none, you are done.

If the leak continues, remove the screws attaching the gas cap fixture to the car body. Rub a thin film of clear silicone sealant on the gasket surface on the underside of the fixture. Place the gasket on the fixture. Rub a thin film of sealant on the gasket. Reinstall the fixture and replace the screws. The screws screw into a receptor ring under the body recess. Make sure that this ring is in place before screwing the screws in.

Headlight On Warning Buzzer

From Rod Waltermann: If you have ever left your lights on when you've left your Cobra, you know how much you miss that warning buzzer that is on your other car. Here's how to install one on the Cobra. It costs less than \$3.00

Part needed: 12-volt D.C. Mini Buzzer. Radio Shack Part #273-055

Warning Disconnect the battery before doing any work on the electrical system.

This buzzer has a red wire and a black wire attached to it. If you look under your dash on the passenger side, you will see an 8-way fuse panel. Take the black wire from the buzzer and attach it to one of the black wires going into the fuse panel. The black wire is hot only when the ignition is switched on.

Now attach the red wire to one of the gray/red wires going into the fuse panel. The gray/red wire is hot only when the parking lights are on.

Find a convenient location to mount the buzzer to the back of the dash. You can use double sided tape, or just glue it like Superformance has done with the

Brake warning buzzer.

Now any time your ignition is off, and your headlights are on the buzzer will sound.

If you are unsure of how to wire the buzzer in, you can have any auto repair place do it for you. Double check your work!

If you want to know how this works read on...

Inside the buzzer is a coil of wire and a diode. Diodes have a neat property in that they allow current to flow in only one direction, like a check-valve for D.C. electricity. If you hook the red wire to +12V, and the black wire to ground current flows through the diode, and the coil. This makes a small spring loaded arm resonate, or buzz.

Now assume the buzzer is installed by following the directions above. When the headlights are off and the ignition is off, you have no source of 12V to power the buzzer. Now suppose you turn the ignition on, this puts 12V on the black wire and a ground on the red wire, through the headlights; however our diode is installed, so the current is blocked. Hence no buzz.

If you have your headlights and ignition on, so we have 12V on both sides, no ground, no buzz. Now turn the ignition off. We now have 12V on the red wire and a ground, through the ignition coil, on the black wire. Bingo! we have buzz.

Cooling the Brake Light Switch

From Rod Waltermann: Does your master cylinder get so hot you can't touch it. Mine did until I did a couple of things. If you look at this years model of Superformance Cobra, they have added a heat shield between the exhaust and the master cylinder. This helps for radiant heat, but you still get heat soak.

If you are not using your brake cooling ducts, most of us are not, you can duct them in through the fender well. This puts fresh air blowing on the master cylinder. Really cools it down quick, once you start moving. I used 3" diameter aluminum dryer vent pipe, and a 2" inside diameter plastic shower drain. You will have to be very careful when you drill the 3" hole in the back of the fender, since the clutch line and wiring harness run on that wall.

I took out the access panel for the master cylinder to see where I was drilling. Just clamp the hose on both ends, and cable tie it out the way of the wheel.

Now you will have cool air blowing on the master cylinder. I did this to both sides.

Creaking Wheels

From Brom Sargent: Are the wheels on your Cobra

equipped with fiberglass centers ? Do they make a creaking noise, especially when turning ? If the answer is "yes" the cure may be inside your Refrigerator !

I used an old one gallon milk jug and cut out washers from the flat sides.

The outside diameter of the washer is about 3" and the inside cutout is around 1 13/16". Place the washer on the spindle between the fiberglass center and the wing-nut and tighten securely. I have been using the washers since December and have not noticed any tendency of the wing-nuts to become loose. Let me know if this works for you.

Battery Cut Off Switch

From Rod Waltermann: I just installed a battery cut off switch in the car, and I think I found one of the best locations for it. If you look in the trunk behind the battery, you will see a flat area right behind the battery box (by the tail lights). If you lift the carpet you see a hex bolt that is flush with the body.

That bolt is the main ground for the car. You can install a Moroso battery cut off switch next to it, and wire it up with a short grounding strap. Now you can cut power, and lock the trunk. No worries about a dead battery after a long storage, or anyone hot wiring the car.

FEEDBACK

Letters to the editor and other sayings.

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*January 14, 1998*

Mike,

We are the Waltermanns (SP227). We went to the World O' Wheels show in Charlotte, and saw your Cobra. Very nice.

Sorry about not e-mailing you sooner, but I wanted to wait until the car was 99% complete. We had it on the road the first week in Dec. We needed to wait a long time for some of the engine parts. Then the fuel injection needed tuning. It is very close now, and getting to be a real blast to drive. By spring we should have it running quite well.

David McRae (SP151) and we are both running the Holley 4DI fuel injection system. I'm in the process of writing a small article for an auto-cross news letter. I'd be happy to send you a copy.

Also I'm working on a cold air box for the car. I have also seen one that David is working on. They are slightly different.

So do you still walk into your garage and get a really big smile, like we do?

*Ciao,  
Rod & Lisa Waltermann*

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April 28, 1998

I enjoyed getting your second newsletter, a job well done. I am very interested in the air cleaner HP situation. I have a Moroso 8.5 inch diameter 2.375 inch tall air cleaner inside a turkey pan. I think the formula for the area is $3.14 * 8.5 * 2.375 = 63.42$ sq. in. By the way I think #2 on page 3 should be 77 sq. in. not 57 or did I miss something. I wonder if your HP figures would also change with that correction.

An interesting future article might be how to set up the suspension. I am specifically interested in how to soften up the front without getting the steering arms too far out of horizontal.

Keep up the good work. I'm already looking forward to the next issue.

Bill Sharp SP064

Ed: The formula for paper and K&N filters is:

$$\text{Area} = 3.14 * \text{Diameter} * (\text{Height} -.75)$$

These air cleaner elements have a top gasket and a bottom gasket which are about 3/8" thick (both being 3/4" or .75). No air flows through these gaskets so the actual flow area must be reduced by this amount.

Foam air cleaner elements do not have a gasket so the area is:

$$\text{Area} = 3.14 * \text{Diameter} * (\text{Height})$$

I have written a paper on sizing air cleaners. It has all the math. If you are interested, I'll mail you one. Thanks for the feed back.

~~~~~

*April 15, 1998*

My name is David Latimer. I visited the Charlotte Auto Fair and met Bob and Dennis Olthoff. I've been looking at Cobra replicas for a while now and am very interested in the Superformance. I received a copy of the newsletter and am attempting to contact Jamie Furman, as he is the closest to me who owns a 460/Tremec car. I would like to make an appointment to see and ride in his car, as the only Superformance I have experienced is a 351W.

*Thank you,  
David Latimer*

Ed: If you have experience with a 351W, you have

been to the mountain top. Personal opinion, of course.

~~~~~  
April 22, 1998

Just received the second edition of the Superformance newsletter. Same as the first one, it is also terrific! It is very obvious that you have a great interest in our Cobras and put in a lot of time and effort in the newsletter. On behalf of many of us that are less talented, I want to thank you very much for your superb work.

"Cobra History: The Chase" was a very interesting piece. Bob is so very much a part the Cobra history and legend, but he is so modest that without asking, it is difficult to know about any of his accomplishments.

I have seen a copy of the Specifications Manual you developed. It is also a great piece of work! I am sure that you will be covered up with request. I would like to join the party and request a copy when you can get around to it.

*Thanks,
 Roger McKee SP207*

Ed: Your Spec Manual is in your hands by now.

~~~~~  
*May 8, 1998*

Just wanted to thank you for sending along the manual on my Cobra. It is very well done and contains a lot of useful information. I will refer to it often.

I am still getting everything together for the variable fan speed article and will e-mail it along soon. Please let me know in what format you would the several drawings that need to be included.

*Best regards  
 Brom Sargent SP162*

Ed: Hey Brom, we're still waiting....

~~~~~  
May 13, 1998

Dear Mike,

Hi, I have just received a copy of Second Strike No 2 and want to compliment you again on a fine effort. I've also sent a fax to our other dealers to tell them to pass on the info regarding what you are doing, to their clients.

*Kind regards
 Jimmy Price*

~~~~~  
*June 7, 1998*

This is Rod & Lisa. We plan to go to the car show on Sunday June 14. Our registration will be mailed on Monday 6/8/98. We hope you get the magic ten that you need for a SCORE tent.

I have a couple of tips for your news letter; which is great by the way. Looking forward to meeting you!

*Ciao,  
 Rod & Lisa Waltermann SP227*

Ed: We had fourteen for Tanglewood. Thanks for being there. Your tech tips are in Bits & Pieces this issue.

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June 14, 1998

We just wanted to say it was a pleasure meeting you at the Tanglewood Car Show. It was not only informative shooting the bull with you re: Cobras, but very entertaining! I'll try and do some of your suggestions.

We look forward to seeing you in Charlotte at the SAAC meet.

*Take Care,
 Sue and Neil Lutins SP119*

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*June 26, 1998*

I was just down in Salisbury visiting Dennis Olthoff, and he was kind enough to provide me with Vol 1. No. 1 & 2 of your newsletter. So, I thought I would e-mail you to introduce myself and tell you about my car.

I am John Tucker, President and COO of York International Corp. in Redlion, Pennsylvania. I recently purchased a Guardsman Blue 427-SC Superformance Cobra from Ron Rosen. It has white stripes, a 351 Windsor engine w/ 415-h.p., Tremec 5-speed, chrome roll bar, side pipes, and fire extinguisher.

I love the car and would really like to be added to your newsletter mailing list. So, please e-mail me and let me know what I need to do.

I may know of at least two other Superformance Cobra's in PA. I'll try to pass on the word to them as well.

*Best regards  
 John Tucker  
 Redlion, Pennsylvania*

My son brought by a friend of his and his father by to visit. The real purpose was to finagle his father a ride, although the father was quite unsuspecting. The father has been blind for several years, but was a real gearhead back in the 60's and is still a man of quick wit and an easy laugh.

His son asked him to get into the car without revealing what it was. The father felt around the dashboard and the lack of a top or rear seat and decided it was a sports car of some type. Then I cranked it up. He grinned broadly. "Ah, it sounds like music," he said. A few clues and he guessed what it was. Now he was really grinning.

I offered to take it easy if he wanted, but he insisted not. "You can't scare me. I want to feel everything it will do." I ran it up through the gears and he was a hooting and a hollering. "Hot dang! Sounds like a symphony to me!" He loved it.

When we returned, he went all around the car, feeling every nuance of the shape with his hands, imprinting it in his mind's eye. When he finished, he said that it was simply beautiful and that it was the most fun he has had in quite a while. Me too.

*Mike*

### In the Press

Dave Radtke, proprietor of Dayan House of Cobras and west coast dealer for Superformance, has a cover story article in the August 1998 issue of Kit Car Illustrated entitled *How To Buy A Cobra*. Good stuff. Give it a read. Superformance has a full page color ad on the back cover.

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

### Euro 98 Auto Festival

BMW invites you to their Manufacturing Plant and Visitor's Center, The Zentrum, for a weekend gala of European Motorcars, Oktoberfest food and beverages, and special event.

Emphasis will be on diversity. The festival is being organized by many clubs enthusiastic about different Marques and eras, but a shared excitement about collectable cars. There will be a special birthday for Donald Healey's 100<sup>th</sup>.

Friday, October 16: Plant tour, hospitality suite.

Saturday, October 17: Car show, Oktoberfest lunch, driving event, banquet, hospitality suite.

Sunday, October 18: Driving events, lunch.

Registration is \$25 a car. The Saturday banquet is \$25 a person. The rally is \$5 a car. Proceeds benefit the disaster relief efforts of The American Red Cross.

This could be a lot of fun. Let's do it! For information and registration forms, contact Staged Right at 1-888-879-2199 or 1-864-235-2351 or [www.euro98tres@aol.com](mailto:www.euro98tres@aol.com)

## NEWSLETTER NUMBER 3

This is the third in a series of quarterly newsletters for Superformance Cobra owners. It's getting fatter with more articles, more events, more tech tips, and photos for the first time.

As editor, what I really need is input from you, the Superformance owners. We all have interesting stories. Take a few minutes and write it down and send it on. I print pretty much anything that won't get me or you thrown in jail.

### 1000's of XXXX Major Naked Babes!!

When you let your adolescent male children use your Internet connection, you get a lot of e-mail like this. to get to the real stuff, you know - like Superformance e-mail, I have to wade through mountains of "SPAM". Please put "Superformance" in the title to help me find it.

A few folks have mentioned that I don't always answer my e-mail. True. I read it, I collect it for newsletters, but I don't always respond. I'll start.

I had another birthday this month. In fact, the publishing date of this newsletter is my birthday. My memory did not improve in the past six months. Please submit all contribution in writing or via e-mail to:

Mike and Pat Stenhouse  
400 Avinger Lane Villa 902  
Davidson NC 28036-6708  
Email: [Mike@SecondStrike.com](mailto:Mike@SecondStrike.com)  
Phone: 704-655-1902

## IN UPCOMING ISSUES!

### Articles

An interview with Jimmy Price, founder and president of Superformance.

How to pick an engine and transmission.

### Bits & Pieces

- A variable speed heater fan switch from Brom Sargent. (He promises to do it this time. Really!)
- A soft glove compartment.
- Door latch alignment

# Second Strike

The Newsletter for the Superformance Owners Group

## SIGHTS AT SAAC-23

