



# DRAGWAY RETROSPECT

by Dewey Ketner

## Shelby's '62 Dragonsnake Played Key Drag Racing Role

Carroll Shelby, who died recently, is famous for having developed all of those hot aftermarket Shelby Mustangs over the years, of course.

But let the record show he had a major impact on the history of drag racing as well.

Some research among my 1960s *Hot Rod* magazine collection reveals that the 1962 Shelby Cobra Dragonsnake played an important part in drag racing history.

Reads one such track observation from *Hot Rod*:

"The Cobra Dragonsnake is such an animal. Off the line in a nose-high attitude, Cure-Ride 50-50s locked in position, the Anglo-American azure sportster issued its first challenge at the HRM Championship Drags, going on to clip both ends of the NHRA A/Stock Sports record with 116.27 mph in 11.81 seconds," it says.

"Later, Ed Terry grasped the reins of the Shelby American sizzler, tracking class rivals to their lairs on a country-wide tour, and turned them back at every meeting.

"With the fraternity alerted, Terry towed to Indianapolis for the supreme trial under fire: the Nationals. Pitted

against the cream of the crop, and before the critical eyes of thousands, he ripped away from every challenge in a crammed class, erasing all doubts as to who is the tiger of sports hill in drag racing."

Wow, they don't write racing reports like that anymore, just as they don't build 'em like Carroll Shelby's 1962 Dragonsnake.

More history on the car provided by Conceptcarz describes the significance it had on mid-1960s drag racing.

"Since the Shelby Cobras had already laid waste to much of the field in sports car racing, it was time for new competition," the history reads.

"And in 1964, what better way was there than to focus on the 1/4-mile - thus was born the 'Dragonsnake.'

"A few Shelby employees asked their boss to provide a 289 Cobra that they could drag race. Chassis number CSX2019 was designated as a public-relations car. It was already a movie star, so to speak, appearing in the movie, "Viva Las Vegas" with Elvis Presley and Ann-Margret.

"According to Shelby archives, Jere Kirkpatrick was

the driver of CSX2019 and also looked after the chassis, while Ralph Falconer, Jr., was tasked with tuning the motors. The two dominated the competition, with a best quarter-mile result of 11.73 seconds at 119.20 mph, an AA/SP class record in the AHRA."

Shelby combined a lightweight aluminum body that was made at AC in England together with a Ford Hi-Po 289 engine. The Shelby Cobra, meant for both road and track, was an immediate success.

"The Shelby Cobra intended for the drag strip was dubbed the dragonsnake. Driver Kirkpatrick and mechanic Falconer dominated the A/SP class and was responsible for setting many records," the Conceptcarz history further reads.

One of the tricks that the Dragonsnake team used to generate higher performance was that the valve pockets had been relieved in Dragonsnake to permit freer breathing.

Point being that Carroll Shelby wasn't just a Mustang modifier. He had a tremendous impact on drag racing and that shouldn't be forgotten as the hosannas continue to pour in for the late Shelby.

# Grand Prix Now Offers Belle Isle Ferry For Fans to Go from River to the Race

by Gerald Scott  
News Dept.

It what promises to be yet another fun sports-related ritual in Detroit, Belle Isle Grand Prix race organizers have initiated water ferry service to transport fans from the RenCen/Port Authority riverfront over to Belle Isle for the races.

That is to say, fans who want to enjoy the beauty of the Detroit River will be able to take the scenic route to the fastest weekend of the summer with the new ferry service to Belle Isle announced last week by the Chevrolet Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix.

As the Grand Prix returns for the first time in four years, June 1-3, event attendees will be able to enjoy a service that has never been offered before in the history of the race in Detroit.

The Grand Prix will provide a ferry shuttle service that will run from the Detroit Port Authority, located along Atwater on the Riverwalk adjacent to the GM RenCen, over to the Harbormaster Station at Belle Isle Park during race weekend.

The ferry service will begin at 7 a.m. Friday-Sunday and will leave from the Port Authority dock every hour on the hour.

The trip to Belle Isle is expected to take approximately 20 minutes and will allow ferrymen the opportunity to enjoy the picturesque scenery of the Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, Canada, riverfronts along the way. Return trips from Belle Isle back to the Port Authority will depart on the half-hour from the Harbormaster station, located next to the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle. The ferry, which holds about 70 people, will operate until 9 p.m. each night of the Grand Prix.

"We're very excited to offer this unique ferry service to our fans," said Bud Denker, chairman of the Chevrolet Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix.

"This is a terrific way to experience race weekend - enjoying the beautiful waterfront as you visit Belle Isle for the re-



Penske Racing officials brought their demo IndyCar racer to the Detroit riverfront last week, all to announce that new water ferry service would take Grand Prix race fans from the Port Authority to Belle Isle starting this Friday.

turn of world-class auto racing to the Motor City."

With no on-island parking available for race attendees during the weekend, the ferry provides another transportation alternative for Grand Prix attendees, in addition to the shuttle bus service that will carry all others on to Belle Isle.

Tickets for the ferry can be purchased on the lower level of the Detroit Port Authority Terminal. For more information, contact the Port Authority at 313-259-5091.

The cost of the ferry service will be \$10 for a round-trip ticket for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under - the same prices as the shuttle bus transportation. Anyone wishing to take the ferry is encouraged to park in the Miller Garage on Renaissance Drive, located across from the Marriott at the Renaissance Center.

The Chevrolet Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix is a 501(c)3 organization and a subsidiary of the Downtown Detroit Partnership.

The event will include:

- Chevrolet Indy Grand Prix presented by shopautoweek.com, featuring the cars of the IZOD IndyCar Series
- Chevrolet GRAND-AM 200 at Belle Isle presented by the Metro Detroit Chevy Dealers with the sports cars of the GRAND-AM Rolex Series
- Cadillac V-Series Challenge

presented by the Metro Detroit Cadillac Dealers featuring the cars of the Pirelli World Challenge Championship Series and the Firestone Indy Lights Series.

## Wayne State Hosts Meeting On 'Rebuilding'

Wayne State University in Detroit is hosting the "Rebuilding American Manufacturing" conference on Tuesday, June 5, at WSU's McGregor Memorial Conference Center from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

The keynote address will be given by Brian O'Shaughnessy, co-chair, Coalition for a Prosperous America; and chair, Revere Copper Products.

Other speakers include Bob King of the United Auto Workers, Chris Michalak of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO and Karla Swift, Michigan AFL-CIO.

The first panel discussion will include David Foster of BlueGreen Alliance; Susan Helper, Case Western University and Richard McCormack, editor, *Manufacturing and Technology News*.

For more information, call the Office of Special Events at 313-577-0300.

## SAE Honors Edsel Ford II for Leadership

by Gerald Scott  
News Dept.

The SAE Foundation celebrated its 25th anniversary last week by saluting one of the notable philanthropic champions of the Detroit auto industry in Edsel B. Ford II.

The SAE Foundation honored Ford with its Industry Leadership Award and raised more than \$400,000 to fund STEM education programs during the Foundation's 25th Anniversary celebration at Ford Field in Detroit.

Much of the proceeds came from a live auction of a one-of-a-kind Ford Mustang built by Ford Motorsports and Roush Performance.

The SAE Foundation is the charitable arm of SAE International. Its programs are among the most widely-recognized and successful in classroom-based education in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) areas.

In remarks after accepting the Industry Leadership, Edsel B. Ford II said, "I am truly humbled to receive the SAE Foundation's Industry Leadership award, however the real honor goes to the many hard-working men and women of our engineering, product development and design staff who have brought passion, dedication and ingenuity to our worldwide product line-up that is now an integral part of Ford Motor Company's DNA.

"I am honored to be recognized and represent the Ford team tonight."

Ford is a member of the Board of Directors of Ford Motor Company and a consultant



Two industrial titans from the Detroit auto industry - Edsel B. Ford II, left, and Jack Roush - at the SAE Foundation's 25th anniversary celebration at Ford Field in Detroit.

to Ford. He is active in company affairs and dealer relations and a member of several charitable, philanthropic and community organizations.

He was recognized for his more than 40 years of commitment and dedication to improving the U.S. automotive industry.

Matt Miller, director of the SAE Foundation, said, "Leaders such as Mr. Ford are a key element of our efforts to attract, educate and retain engineers."

"Our programs are among the most effective in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education, and we are honored to include Mr. Ford among our leaders and supporters. Our 25th anniversary celebration promises to be a great evening for the industry."

Elsewhere at the event, the 2nd annual Gordon Millar Award, funded by auto supplier AVL, was presented to Dan

and Vicky Hancock for their continuous philanthropic support of the SAE Foundation Mission to encourage and increase student participation and achievement in STEM education. Hancock is a retired executive from General Motors.

"The evening was a testament to the industry-wide support for our STEM education programs," SAE Foundation's Miller further said.

"The support from companies like Ford, Roush and the dozens of others who are committed to improving the industry's competitiveness will help us offer our programs to even more students in the future," he added.

The evening's over-arching theme, "The Future STEMs from You!" celebrated the SAE Foundation's individual and collective efforts to improve the state of STEM education for America's students. It was a well-attended event.

## Schoolcraft Hosts EV Car Show June 9

LIVONIA - The Fourth Annual Michigan EV Show will be held June 9 at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

While electric cars are becoming more common on the roads, few have actually had the chance to see one up close, talk to the owner, or otherwise ride in one.

The event is scheduled for Saturday, June 9, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. It will take place rain or shine as activities are scheduled for both indoors and outdoors at the Schoolcraft campus.

Event co-sponsors are Schoolcraft College, Michigan Auto Electric Association, Clean Energy Coalition, DTE Energy and Greeing Detroit.

The event is free and open to the public. Electric and hybrid vehicles of all shapes and sizes, from scooters to transport vans to pickup trucks and, of course, passenger cars, will be on display.

Visitors will have the opportunity to see cars close up, talk to the owners and go for a short ride in an EV with the owner driving.

The vehicles will include some major production models from major manufactur-

ers, gas-powered cars converted to electric, and those produced from EV kits.

General Motors spokesman Randy Fox said, "We have been proud supporters of the Michigan Electrical Vehicle

Show since 2010. We are excited about showcasing the Chevy Volt at this educational event."

The show will include vendor booths, Q&A sessions with experts and more.

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