

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
Louisville, KY

STREET ROADSTER



S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY -- A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

THE JOURNEY OF TWO MKIII'S

SPO 1649 - SPO 2891



FROM HERE
PART-1



A JOURNEY FULFILLED



Original 1960's 427SC owned by Jim Maxwell, NC.

As a youngster, growing up in the **1960s**, I was fascinated by automobiles and specifically those of the Muscle Car Era starting with GTOs and 442s, etc. At the time anything with a slight exhaust rumble captivated my attention and made me drift away from anything that should have been academically prudent during my high school years. *(can you relate?)*

The Cobra of course was such a strong influence to kids like me that of impressions etched in our hearts from that time, those of the Shelby Phenomenon remain on the surface of our consciousness forever.

Economics, stints in the US Navy, college years and a family, washed some of those early memories with an untouchable veil of longing. Our responsible quest to take care of family was our Cobras of the 80s, our kids' education. Oh boy did it pay off, with 4 solid kids on the right path to living well, and a wonderful and supportive wife, Cindy. *That really should be our legacy on this Earth.*

After 4 great kids and 4 college careers it was time to revisit earlier thoughts of *"Visceral Tingling"* at the sound of 500+ ponies at the tip of your right foot.

1998, that is when I stumbled upon what I thought was a real Cobra from the 60's, at a Superformance Tradeshaw Booth in Louisville, KY during the Hot Rod Nationals. My youngest son Marcos was with me. He was 15 at the time but knew quite well this moment was special. Not only did I find out that the car was not priced in the high \$250,000s, like most of us thought, but that it was a replica costing a fraction of that.

Dean Rosen was there, then one of the owners of Dynamic Motorsports in Ross, Ohio, a Superformance dealer. He captivated me with his passion and love for these cars and, yes, I blame him for jump starting this phase of my life.



Replicas, what are they?

That was my question to Dean at the time. Later I discovered that there was an entire industry dedicated to, satisfying the likes of me, affording us the financial reality of owning one of these beautiful, nasty and insane monsters of the roads.

I left the Dynamic Motorsports Booth and Dean **"BITTEN BY THE SNAKE"** with the thought of 500 plus ponies in my head. The seed was planted with periodic visits to the computer in search of more information on anything Cobra. What I found out was that only those with endless sources of green grass can afford what a real Cobra costs today. The alternative for us mere mortals is clear. Replicas.

2002, four years later, and the sale of my Design business, became the sparkplugs that ignited the high octane fuel for my 8 cylinders of lust for a Cobra replica.

I am not going to enter the debate engaged in by many on which Cobra replica is the best, the most original, etc. That I leave to the Purists. I just enjoy looking and driving my replica. The feeling is all **Real**.

I studied many of the Cobra replica manufacturers and decided that the one for me at the time was going to be a Superformance built MKIII.

Replicas, who owns them?

Armed with the knowledge that one of these beautiful pieces of mobile art would be mine I wanted to know anyone who owned these.

2003, with a few names and phone numbers of Superformance customers in the area I did my due diligence by assuring myself that this replica was the one. **DONE DEAL?** Not exactly.

Well, in my above quest for assurance I was rewarded with the best part of Cobra ownership, a best friend.

Samuel Jackson, who?

Sam, one of the names Dean gave me, is a Superformance MKIII owner that had purchased his MKIII a year prior. I remember my phone conversation with Sam in February 2003. After explaining his pride of Superformance ownership and asking if I wanted to see his Superformance, I promptly asked back, "Can I Come Over?", Sam replied "Now? Sure", **"BIG MISTAKE"**

Sam Lives about forty minutes from my house at the legal speed limit of 65 mph of Kentucky highways. Thinking back he estimates that from the time he put his phone down with the word "Sure" coming out of his mouth, maybe not ten minutes had passed and I was right there at the Jackson's residence. **"BAM!!"**

Monika gets a new tenant?

Monika is Sam's wife. I can only imagine, in the ensuing months, Monika asking Sam, **"Doesn't he have a home to go to? He's always here."**

It seems like from that first afternoon on, every minute I had to spare was spent asking Sam, **"If you ever go for a spin on your MKIII give me a call and I would offer shotgun ride support"**. Well, he never called, I never gave him a chance, I was always calling as soon as I knew he got home from work. Every day sharp.

The first day he showed me his MKIII I was stunned, not only from the beauty of the car's show quality paint job but the sheer brute and raw horsepower displayed by the Ford Racing Engine lurking within.

"BITTEN BY THE SNAKE"
Hooked I was for sure, and with a best friend to last me a lifetime and...



Here you see Sam ON THAT FIRST DAY showing me his pride and joy in his garage.



02:12:2003



PART - 1 - **AT THE FACTORY** - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

SUPERFORMANCE MKIII



What is a MKIII?

Built under license from Carroll Shelby Licensing Inc., the MKIII looks like an exact Cobra replica from 1965 should.

It is aesthetically and dimensionally correct. It is sure-footed and reliable and is as exciting as the great sport roadsters of the sixties.

Each rolling chassis comes completely assembled and painted, less engine and transmission.



All MKIII's come with:

- Show quality two-stage paint finishes. fiberglass body with reinforcing inserts.
- Heavy duty TIG welded ladder frame zones.
- Fully independent front and rear suspension. Limited slip differential.
- Original style side pipes and headers to accommodate a 351,460 or 427 motor.
- Willwood® power-assisted vented disc brakes (4-pot calipers.)
- Billstein® custom crafted coil-over shocks.
- Aluminum pin drive "Halibrand" style wheels (Knock – off) with 15" tires.
- Side and rear view mirrors.
- Carpeted interior and trunk.
- Aluminum finished firewall.
- Soft top and side screens.
- Tonneau cover.
- Sun Visors and wind wings.
- Wipers & Washer, heater/defogger.
- Leather seating surfaces
- Original style latch-lock seat belts.
- Moto - Lita wooden steering wheel.
- Monza style filler. (locking gas cap)
- Aluminum, single core hi-performance radiator, shroud and dual fans.
- Original style gauges (Smith) and switches. (Lucas.) Reverse 180mph speedometer .
- Original style pedals, catches and fittings.
- Original style shifter and hand brake lever.
- Stainless steel roll bar, chassis mounted.
- Oil cooler and braided lines.
- Stainless steel fuel tank. 17 gal. (Pressure tested.)

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
Louisville, KY

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S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

Who is Superformance?

A distributor for complete, "Rolling Chassis" replica and continuation race cars of the 1960's, Superformance has distributed specially constructed cars in the United States for over 12 years. As one of the first players in the industry, Superformance has over 20 independent dealerships throughout the world. They have earned their reputation with attention to detail, quality, craftsmanship, fit, finish and customer service.

Superformance LLC has a long standing relationship and build contract with Hi-Tech Automotive, in South Africa, who is the world's largest specialty car production facility. Together they and Hi-Tech have produced and distributed more than 4000 rolling chassis worldwide.

 **Superformance**

The Hi Tech Automotive 400,000 sq.ft. factory is located on the Southern tip of South Africa, West of Port Elizabeth.

Hi-Tech employs over 600 highly trained craftsmen.





2003
SPO 1649
My 1st MKIII



January 2003 *Love at first sight!* With my wife Cindy that is. She is the rock that has made the last 20 years of my life a Renaissance. My love affair with the Cobra would not have been possible without her.

I remember very vividly the month of January 2003, very, very cold. But on this particular Saturday morning the sun was shining especially bright and we embarked on a sightseeing trip to Cincinnati, OH to visit Dynamic Motorsports for the very first time since meeting Dean Rosen 5 years earlier.

Arriving at Dynamic on that Saturday morning with temperatures hovering at 17 degrees was not the proper framework to introduce Cindy to the finer points of Cobra replica ownership. But she hung in there. The reaction from my wife upon seeing these incredible beauties was followed by a *"...These must cost a fortune?"*

Dean assured my wife that the cost of this incredibly well made replica was a small fraction of the cost of an original. Her response *"...well, not too bad..."*

Bam!! The deal was done!



01:18:2003

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July 2003 Picked my first MKIII, SPO 1649 at Dynamic Motorsports and Performance Engineering. Eric Hindenberger built and installed my engine and transmission. 427 W Stroker, 566 hp / 557 lb ft torque. A true beast.



2004 We spent many, many days and hours riding this work of art. As a result of owning this replica my world has changed forever. Made many new friends and helped form the Kentucky Cobra Club.

2005 After 2 wonderful years of ownership, an attorney from Nebraska made me an offer I could not refuse and my beautiful MKIII was gone.

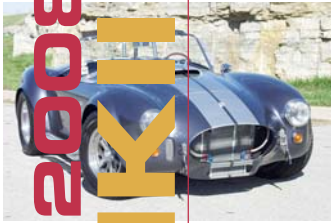


07:15:2003

SPO 1649 2003
My 1st MKIII

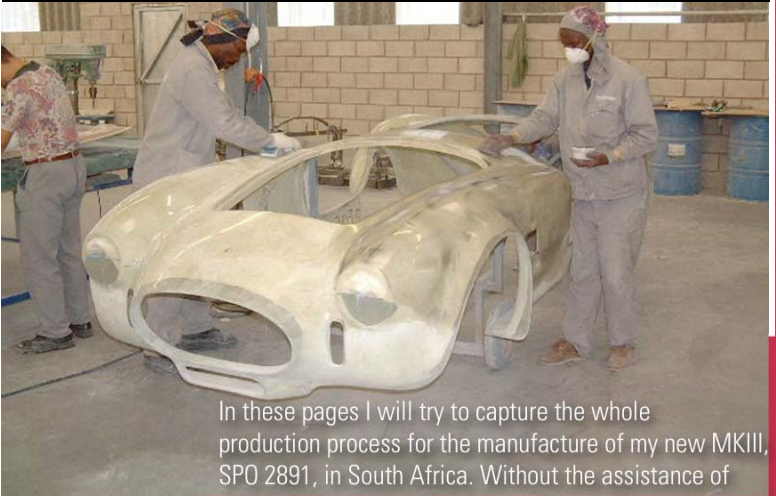


SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII
2008



April 24, 2008 2 Cobras and 3 years later afforded me the luxury of trying out and buying different manufacturers' replicas. What I discovered is that no matter what brand of replica you own the pride of ownership is all the same, just ask me. After 5 years of owning and looking at different brand cars I decided that purchasing, my 3rd Cobra, another Superformance MKIII was right for me one more time. On this date I ordered my 2nd MKIII.

BODY PREP



In these pages I will try to capture the whole production process for the manufacture of my new MKIII, SPO 2891, in South Africa. Without the assistance of Shane Miller, Lance Stander and Jimmy Price this would not have been possible.

All photos on this section of the booklet courtesy of Francois Oliver, Hi-Tech Automotive, South Africa.

The names on the photos are those of the employees that worked on SPO 2891 at Hi-Tech Automotive.

CHASSIS ASSEMBLY



04:24:2008

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Louisville, KY

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PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



This time, however, I decided to special order the car just the way I wanted it. A Street Roadster Special. No side pipes, no stripes, no rivets, no hood scoop. Under car exhaust, wire wheels, a hardtop and two roll bars, please, for my wife Cindy. ***All of these photos are of my car (SPO 2891) as it is being manufactured and assembled. The photos were taken by Francois Oliver at Hi Tech Automotive.***

PRIMER COATING



While a trip to South Africa, to document the process personally, would have been nice the price tag made it impossible for me. So I relied on the staff at Hi-Tech Automotive to provide me evidence of the process.

Enjoy the ride!

BODY TRIMMING



05:19:2008

2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII

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Louisville, KY

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PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII



Raymond

Superformance utilizes a multiple booth paint shop, each with its own in-line oven, located in a climate controlled and dust-filtered environment. The paint used is PPG Light Toreador Red Metallic, a GM color spec.

IN THE PAINT BOOTH



The color I chose for my street roadster special is a PPG/GM color having been used only once on the 2003 Saturn.

Light Toreador Red Metallic

HARDTOP FITTING



George



05:21:2008

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Superformance uses a twin-pack urethane base coat-clear coat system and each body and component is hand-sprayed by highly qualified and experienced spray painters.

BASE COAT HAS BEEN APPLIED



In the above picture the base color has been applied and waiting for the high gloss clear coat.

The color will look flat and golden until the clear coat is applied.

ONE OF THREE PAINT BOOTHS



05:21:2008

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PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

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After painting and baking, each body is flattened with 2000 grade flattening paper. The bodies are then machine and hand polished to the tough, gleaming surface that is the most visual quality of a Superformance Replicar.

LET THE BUFFING BEGIN - FROM THIS...



As the car is being buffed you will begin to see the rich depth of the color I have chosen.

Light Toreador Red Metallic

05:22:2008

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PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



Superformance bodies are also non-stressed, so they will never show pit marks, print thru or stress marks. Careful handling of all body parts exemplifies Superformance's dedication to high quality.

....TO THIS - BUFFING BRINGS OUT RICHNESS OF COLOR



This is show quality paint and body at its best.

BUFFING DONE - NEXT...



05:22:2008

SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII



2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII



Simon & Ashton

Superformance pride continues throughout the whole process of manufacturing. Headlamps are assembled and attached as well as completing the wiring, affixing the windscreen, roll bars, etc. Quality control also inspects all progress to ensure all production standards are maintained, no watches, rings, phones, belt buckles or loose items are allowed in the assembly hall.

ASSEMBLY - WHERE IT COMES TOGETHER



Divan

What has always impressed me about Superformance is the attention to details.

Note the taped edges on the fender wells to avoid nicks and scrapes.

NOT A BAD ANGLE



05:28:2008

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PART - 1 - **AT THE FACTORY** - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



PRECISE - CONSISTENT - HIGH-QUALITY



The above photo illustrates what typically distinguishes Superformance from other Cobra replica manufacturers. Notice, for example, the jig used for accurately positioning and installing the windscreen.

2008
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NEXT STEP...



05:28:2008

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PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII

 Superformance®



Ashton & Lee

At this stage of the build process the roll bars are installed as well as the interior of the car is finished. Only a factory with a work force of over 600 employees can dedicate the adequate amount of time required to recreate one of these high quality replicas in the short time frame it takes Hi Tech to finish them.

FINAL ASSEMBLY - ROLL BARS



Jacques

05:29:2008

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Louisville, KY

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FINAL ASSEMBLY - ROLL BARS



Jimmy Price, President of Hi Tech Automotive, has been so very kind in having company staff provide me with photos of my build. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Price at Dynamic Motorsport in Ross, OH.

SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII

05:29:2008

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
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SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII



Yanda

FINAL ASSEMBLY - HARDTOP



Simon

The fabrication and installation of the hardtop for the MKIII requires a lot of attention as you can see by these photos.

INSURING FOR A TIGHT FIT

Simon, Wesley & Ashton



05:30:2008

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S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



Ashton, Wesley, Simon

FINAL ASSEMBLY - HARDTOP



Jimmy Price

The factory in South Africa employs 600 plus personnel with diverse backgrounds and skills assuring you a prompt quality and value driven response to your order.

Above: My friend Jimmy Price with my completed roller.

SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII

05:30:2008

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SPECIAL

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII



FINAL ASSEMBLY - ELECTRICAL



Shaun

Each MKIII is accompanied by a comprehensive "Owners' Manual" that outlines the proper procedures for maintaining your new MKIII.

This is a factory built automobile not a kit. Only this way you can be sure that each MKIII is assembled with as good a quality job as the first.

06:03:2008

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
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S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



FINAL ASSEMBLY - ELECTRICAL



The electrical system on every MKIII is designed for long life and ease of maintenance.

SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII

06:03:2008

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PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII



FINAL INSPECTION - READY TO SHIP?



Wesley

The final inspection is not a quickie courtesy check. This insures that your investment is secure with a reliable rolling chassis that can be driven on the streets comfortably or at the track.

06:04:2008

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
Louisville, KY

STREET ROADSTER



S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



FINAL INSPECTION - READY TO SHIP?

Ashton



At this stage of the build process the car is gone through carefully to make sure your ride is all you expect it to be, safely. **Next stage is pre-shipping.**

SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII

06:04:2008

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
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S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII



GET ME HOME - I AM READY



My first Superformance MKII, which I bought in 2003, was ordered with little or no input from my lovely wife. 5 years later, a little different story. As you can see, now our MKIII will have 2 roll bars, a hard top and no side pipes.

Request of my lovely wife Cindy, it's "*Our Car*".

06:05:2008

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
Louisville, KY

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S P E C I A L

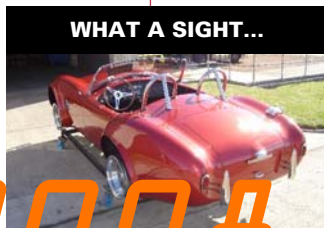
PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



SPO 2891 - GRADUATION TIME!



In these photos my car is now in the process of being ready for shipping to the US. I have been on pins and needles since I ordered my car in April 24, 2008. *(My, how time flies)* Next step is loading.



SPO 2891 2008
my2ndMKIII

06:05:2008

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S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

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SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII



Lesley

LOAD ME UP - BOUND FOR THE U.S.A.



The car shipped to the USA on Friday, June 6, 2008 aboard the MSC Voyager from Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Estimated time of arrival at Ross, OH is July 7, 2008.

HERE I GO...



06 : 06 : 2008

Juan & Cindy Lopez-Bonilla
Louisville, KY

STREET ROADSTER

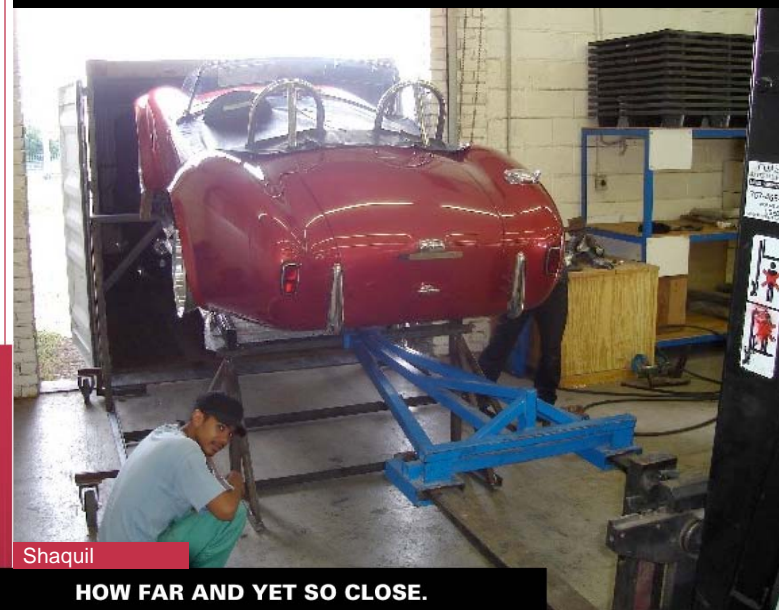


S P E C I A L

PART - 1 - AT THE FACTORY - A CUSTOMER'S PERSPECTIVE



SPO 2891 - GOING ON SEA DUTY!



Shaquil

HOW FAR AND YET SO CLOSE.

2008
SPO 2891
my2ndMKIII

I hope you have enjoyed this part of this journey with me.

You too can embark on such a journey once you are...

... "Bitten By The Snake"

(continued on book 2)

Juan, SPO 2891
Louisville, KY, USA



06:06:2008

