

EST 1973

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# classiccars

**E-TYPE**  
SPECIAL ISSUE



# 50 YEARS OF THE E-TYPE

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# Unlucky number comes good



Nice weather for ducks – and Cobras too, apparently. Below: team manager Dean Lanzante oversees pit stop



## 1964 SHELBY COBRA 289 MKII FIA

OWNED BY KEVIN KIVLOCHAN  
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My own Cobra is still with Lawrence Kett of G&A Fabrications, who's busy completing the long job of its bodywork, but the engine build by Pete Knight is complete. As built it had aluminium-finned Cobra-lettered rocker covers, but the race cars of the period didn't get such luxuries – they had 'tin' rockers with additional lengthened funnels, all painted in simple silver. Alec and Alan at Thunder Road have done a marvellous job fabricating a set, faithfully copying in painful detail the original pattern. The correct stickers for the covers, reading 'Cobra' in black on a silver background, are en route from the USA for the princely sum of \$40 (£25) each.

It also has an original Sixties aluminium fuel tank, which is beautiful but not up to today's safety standards, so Alan has sourced Shelby team car-style dual tanks, which are



Kev's rebuilt V8 is ready to go back into his own Cobra

now foam-filled. And the gearbox internals have been completely rebuilt – having raced Bill Bridges' *Hairy Canary* Cobra at Le Mans Classic this year, it was clear his 'box was in far better fettle than mine. 'I want one like Bill's,' was my request to Alan, who gladly obliged.

In the meantime I've been reunited with the ex-Bob Olthoff 1963 Le Mans Willment Cobra that I crunched at Le Mans Classic in 2004. This time I raced it with owner Shaun Lynn in the two-hour Masters Gentleman Drivers race at the Spa Six Hours meeting in September.

The event is a fixture in my diary – I go to watch and enjoy the racing along with the beer and Whoopie snacks (the only other food available being chips and Belgian waffles). It usually means putting up with loads of wasps, but this year the wasps were missing, replaced by rain and then even more rain. Perfect Cobra weather – not.

We pitched up in the new Formula One pits, with Sebastian Vettel's name etched on the floor from the previous week's race, and qualified in a respectable 21st spot out of 69 starters.

Shaun started in torrential rain and did well to move up the grid, but after 40 minutes he made an unexpected pit stop – he'd been tapped by a Lotus Elan on the nearside rear wheelarch and the contact had nudged the thin aluminium bodywork into the rear tyre.

The Lanzante team swiftly jacked up the



rear of the number 13 Cobra and removed the wheel, and after a quick whack with a mallet it looked almost good as new. Shaun was quickly back up to race pace, but we'd dropped to something like 50th place.

Just before my stint I got my team talk from Shaun's wife, Tesie. It wasn't one you might have expected, such as 'Be careful with my husband's beautiful car', but a simple 'Have fun.'

Shaun came in just over the hour mark and handed the car to me, the rain now reduced to a heavy drizzle. I managed to hold my position, losing a few places and gaining a few, and we finished 31st of 48 classified finishers.

Not a bad result considering the conditions, and I have now well and truly conquered my demons of both the Le Mans circuit and Shaun's car. Until my Cobra is ready, I now need to find another excuse to race someone else's. Any volunteers?

### NEED TO KNOW

Miles this month None Costs £4800  
Engine 472cc, V8 Power 409bhp @ 6500rpm  
Performance Top speed: 170mph; 0-60mph: sub-5sec