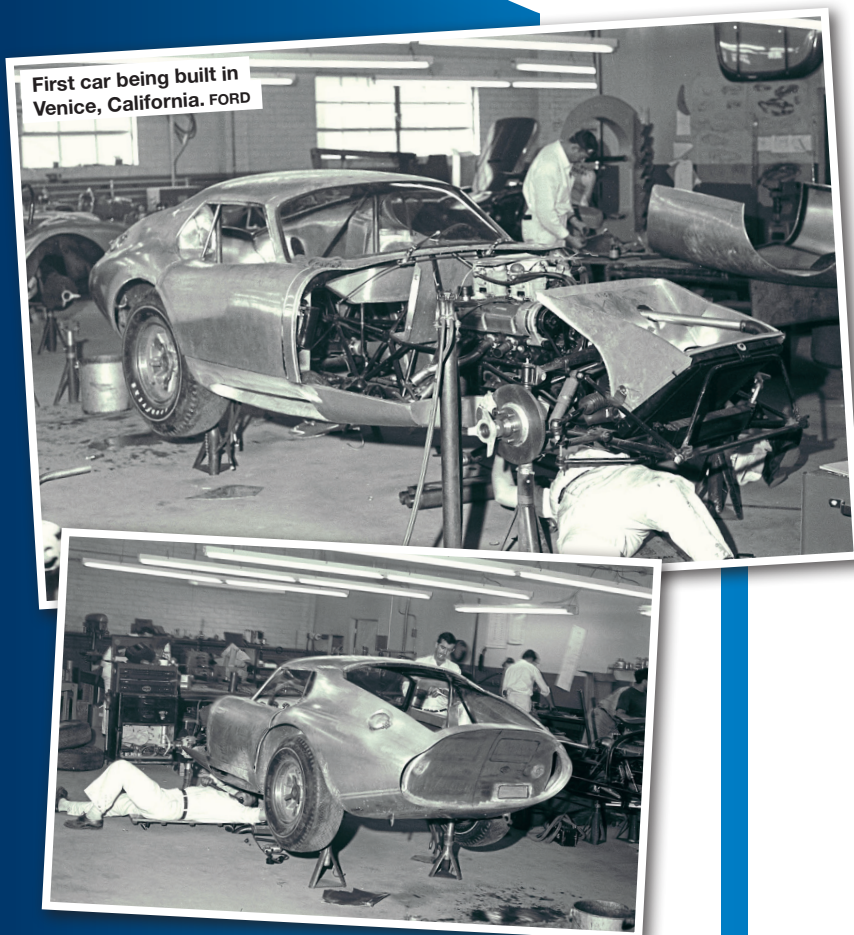


1964 Shelby Cobra Daytona Competition Coupe Re-creations

Words: Steve Havelock **Photography:** Courtesy of Peter Brock,
Mikael Tarne, Ford and Steve Havelock.

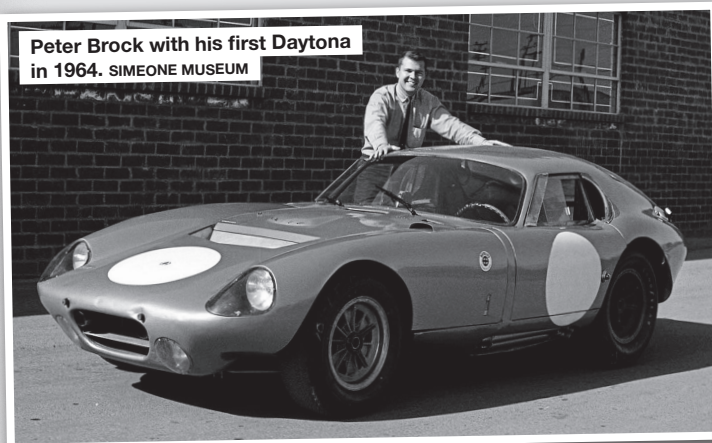
QUEST FOR PERFECTION

How do you create perfection? Ask Mikael Tarne, he's succeeded in creating virtually identical replicas to the original brace of Shelby Cobra Daytona Competition Coupe race cars built... even down to the flaws!

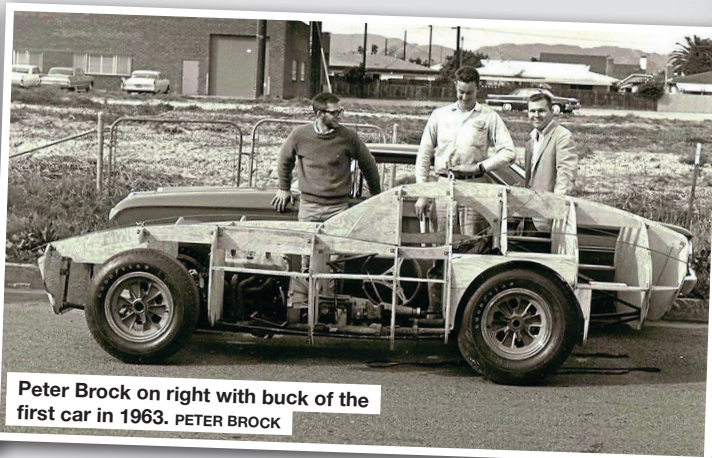


Only six Shelby Cobra Daytona Competition Coupe race cars were built in 1964 and '65. All six survive today and are worth millions of pounds each. For the first time ever, they were all gathered together, at the 2015 Goodwood Revival, and that event and the detailed race history of them was covered in Steve Havelock's two-part feature in CA300 and 301 in 2016. Just like the open-top Shelby AC Cobra roadsters before them, oodles of Daytona Coupe replicas have been built, although in most cases the accuracy and quality is questionable. Others may look like the originals, but have been slightly scaled up to make them more comfortable for ordinary folk rather than for the skinny racing drivers they were originally designed around, and they are equipped with the luxuries and niceties of a modern road car.

A dozen or so years ago, Daytona Coupe enthusiast Mikael Tarne, who is half Danish and half British, tried to buy an exact "FIA approved" replica for use in historic racing. However, he couldn't find such a car so he set out on a mission to build one. But then he discovered that the first two original cars were significantly different from each other. So he has re-created them both. And here they are. Mikael's enthusiasm and quest for perfection has led to the Daytona Coupe's original designer, Peter Brock, coming on board and endorsing them. I saw these two fabulous cars at last September's Goodwood Revival and talked to Mikael and Peter, unbelievably now 83 years old. >>



Peter Brock with his first Daytona in 1964. SIMEONE MUSEUM



Peter Brock on right with buck of the first car in 1963. PETER BROCK

First, Mikael told me: "It's the power, the shape and the history that appeals. It's a piece of art on four wheels. These first two cars are the most important of the six built. One of them won the Le Mans 24 Hours (GT class) twice (in '64 and '65) and the other car ran in so many races and won so many points that they won the GT World Championship in 1965." This was the FIA World Sportscar GT Championship for Manufacturers. Shelby American had knocked Ferrari off their pedestal and this was the first time that an American-built race car had won a World Championship.

Mikael continues: "I contacted the Shelby organisation to see if I could get a 'continuation' FIA racing car. They said: 'We do have some parts but we can't deliver what you want. Feel free to go and build it yourself if you want to.' They could see that I was persistent and wanted to do it right. The Coupe replicas that were on the market were not accurate. Someone suggested that I contact Peter Brock, but I thought he was dead. That was because there was a Peter Brock in Australia who was a really good racing driver and he was killed (in the 2006 Targa West Rally in Australia) driving a Daytona Coupe (replica). I wrote a long email to

Peter in America and he liked what he read. We became friends and he engaged in the project. Peter taught me a lot and helped me understand a lot of things."

Now, over to Peter who says: "Mikael sought me out, but at first I kinda shrugged him off. I thought he was just an enthusiast, but he has determinedly stuck to it. He has put close to 10 years into getting this project together and building these cars. He's the only guy in the world who has done them correctly. His dedication to the project is absolutely amazing. I cannot believe he has stuck with it this long. He's built copies of the first two cars which are quite different in shape. The first car, chassis number CSX2287 was built to my original design (in Shelby American's Californian

workshop) in Venice, America. If you look at the roofline, the high point is directly over the driver's head. And from that point, the roof slightly goes downhill towards the front.

"The next five cars were going to be produced at Carrozzeria Gransport in Modena, Italy. I sent my drawings over to them. They looked at them and because it was such an unfamiliar shape to them, they said: 'He's screwed it up. We'll fix it.' So, with all good intention, they changed the roofline on the car. They made the high point right behind the top of the windscreen and then it slopes back towards the rear. It was more of a Ferrari roofline. It didn't have the aerodynamics of the first car and, of course, this car was slower. They also changed the headlights on it and a lot of

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Carroll Shelby with drivers Dave MacDonald and Bob Holbert with first 'Daytona' in '64. FORD.



The high point of the American-built car's roof is above the driver's head. STEVE HAVELOCK



The Italian-built car has high point of roof above windscreen. STEVE HAVELOCK



other different things. The Italians did a great job on it, but it wasn't the way I designed the car. When I saw it, it was far enough along that we couldn't change it. This was chassis CSX2299."

Peter then recounts: "When we went to the Le Mans 24 Hours in '64 there was about a 4mph difference between the two cars. We were clocking 197mph with the first car, which was amazing because we only had 385 horsepower. So to be able to turn that sort of speed with that low horsepower, it was all about the shape of the car. The standard chassis Cobra roadster had a top speed of 160 to 165mph depending on gearing so by just putting this body on, the speed went up to over 195mph. The No. 5 car (the 'Italian'-built car) won Le Mans and the No. 6 car (the 'American'-built car) led the race for 11 hours before it was disqualified for an illegal re-start in the pits. They were running one and two, ahead of all the Ferraris and it ended up with Dan Gurney and Bob Bondurant winning the race."

The two new re-creations are modelled on the cars as they ran in the 1964 Le Mans 24 Hours. Since the first car made its debut and secured pole position at Daytona and then won the Sebring 12 hours, Peter made a few alterations including extra air scoops in the bonnet and wings and added a rear spoiler. He told me: "The car changed from race to race as we learned how to make it faster and more comfortable. It was extremely hot inside, so after Daytona we started adding scoops and vents. The spoiler was 'developed' at Spa just before Le Mans '64."

Mikael adds: "Later, the first car was sent to the salt lakes at Bonneville where it claimed 23 National and International land speed records. It's the only car that is true to the original

Ebener, Tarne and Brock with the new buck in 2018. MIKAEL TARNE



Above: Note the hammer marks on re-creation. PETER BROCK.

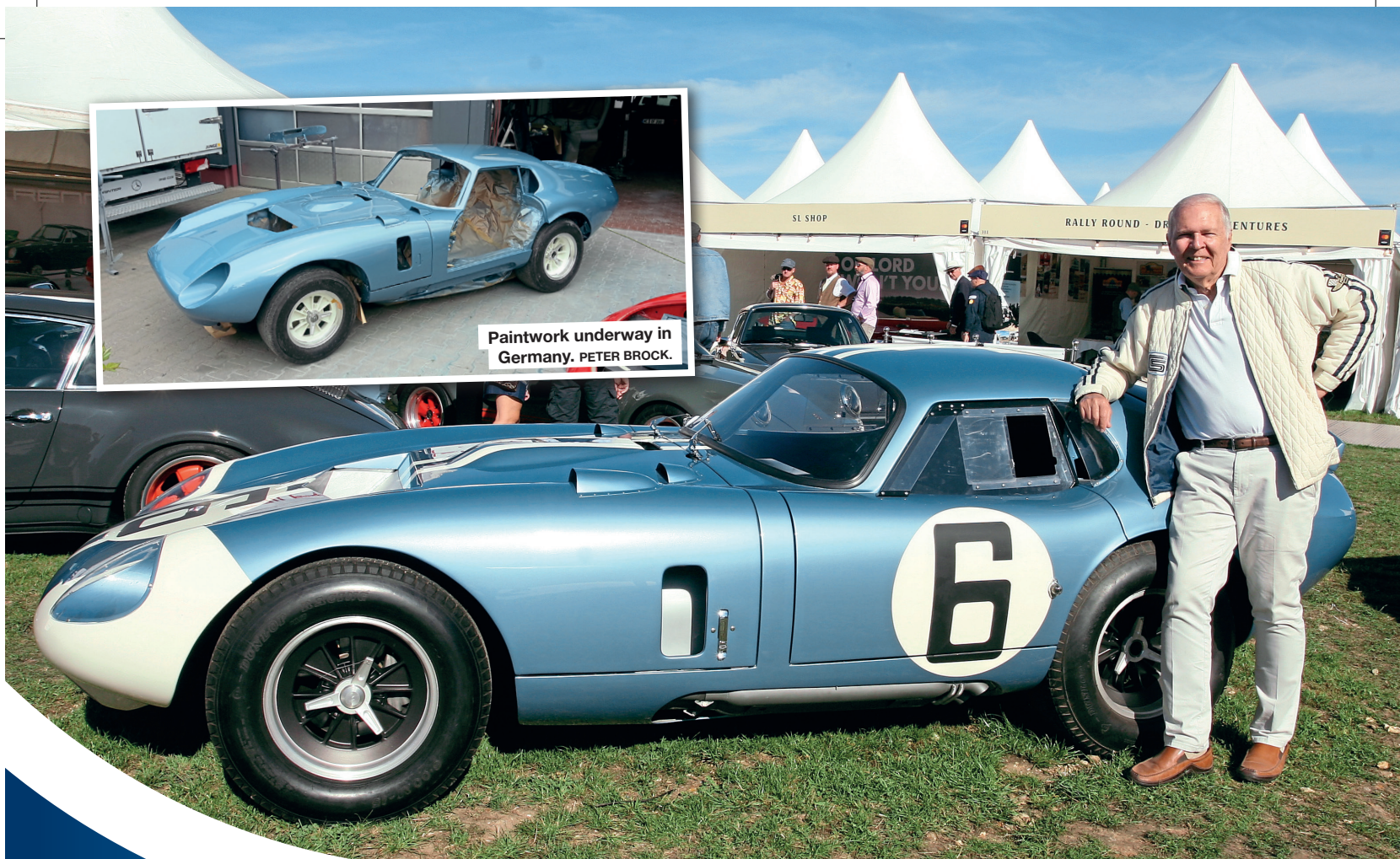
blueprint that Peter did. That makes it very important. It was also nominated as one of the most important cars in US car history, if not the most important car." As I studied the re-creation of the first built car, I realised that the rear wheels don't sit central in the wheel arches. >>



Above and below: New wooden buck for building the first recreation. PETER BROCK



All six original Daytona Coupes at Goodwood in 2015. STEVE HAVELOCK



Above: Peter Brock with No. 6 re-creation. STEVE HAVELOCK

Peter says: "Ah, you noticed that. That was a mistake when they made the body originally. This car has the mistake copied over in it. Mikael is such a stickler for originality that he had it made with the mistake in it."

As fine as the original Daytona Coupes were, they weren't perfect. Peter puts his hand up and admits: "Aerodynamics back then was very much trial and error. There was a problem with the first car. When the air came off the A pillar it was all travelling outwards and didn't go into the brake scoops, so in order to fix it we put these on (clear Perspex winglets in front of the side windows) to capture some of the air and try to direct it back into the scoops. That was an error in design." I then asked him how they were so sure of the accuracy of these re-creations, to

which he replied: "We got permission from the owners of the original cars to 3D scan them. The first car was owned by the Simeone Museum and the second by the Miller family."

Mikael says: "In the digital scanning of these cars, we captured upwards of a hundred million dots. Then the computer joins up all the dots." He continues: "The original Daytona Coupe was a British sports car fitted with a big American engine and with some German technology. When Peter was a young engineer at General Motors, he had access to German papers about aerodynamics where he picked up a lot about how to make fast cars. This is also a kind of German project. I live in Denmark, but I ended up sourcing technology and partnership in Germany. I found a small German shop (coach

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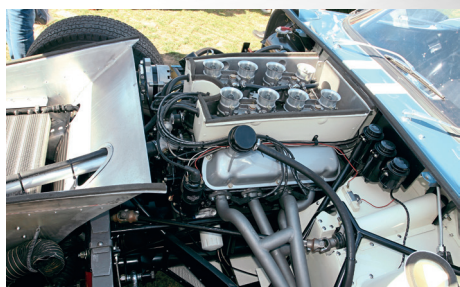
Below: No. 5 re-creation with its Italian roofline. PETER BROCK



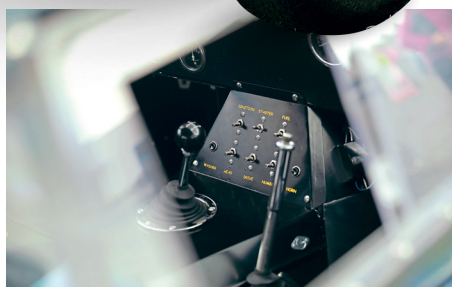
No. 6 re-creation with roofline as Brock intended. PETER BROCK.



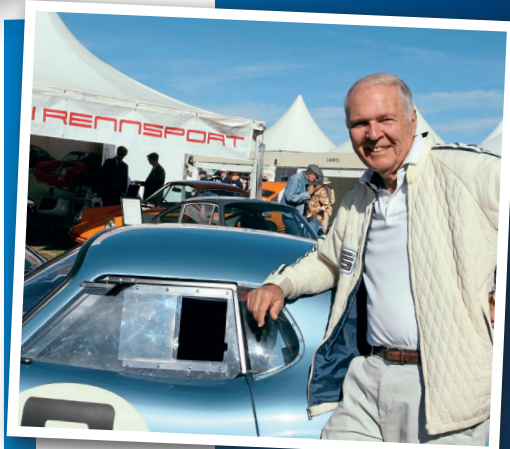
No. 6 re-creation in all its splendour.
PETER BROCK



Ford 289cu in powers Tarne's new cars.
STEVE HAVELOCK



Re-creation's spartan interior. MIKAEL TARNE.



Above: Brock points out corrective perspex winglets.
STEVE HAVELOCK

builders in Stolberg) and they reminded me a lot of what I knew and read about the original Venice shop (in California). These guys had the right spirit and I liked the owner, Bastian Ebener, a lot. So we built the cars there. We found a construction method that paid respect to how the original car was made in the US. It was made with a pneumatic hammer. So we try to re-create the cars in a very true form."

A wooden buck was built, over which the aluminium panels were formed. The chassis is an exact copy of Brock's design and is fitted with a Ford 289cu in V8 mated to a Borg Warner T10 gearbox and a Salisbury-type limited slip differential. A second buck was built for the 'Italian' car. Mikael has now turned what started out as a personal project into a business and intends to build more cars to order. He says: "We have prices from \$395,000. If you want an FIA race car you have to add \$100-\$200K more. We want to produce the best of the best. That's our goal." He then told me: "These are the 1964 cars, but Peter also designed a '65 which was supposed to be a perfected version. All the small things that Peter knows, we've combined and drawn a '65 version that we can build." The final word goes to Peter, who says: "They are really fine copies...exact in every line." ★

Mikael Tarne shows off the 289cu in Ford V8.
STEVE HAVELOCK



Special thanks to Peter Brock for his invaluable help and photos.