

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Rare 'Dragonsnake' Cobra to be Auctioned by Mecum



**While the famous Cobra-Ferrari circuit-racing rivalry has captured the attention of historic racing enthusiasts, in the early 60s, drag racing was just as important to Shelby American and its paymasters in Detroit.**

Ford was as interested in beating Chevrolet and Chrysler on the strips as it was in seeking national and international racing success against Ferrari, Jaguar and Aston Martin.

As a result, Shelby American Inc. was tasked with preparing special Mustangs and Cobras with just one purpose: to cover a quarter-mile in the shortest possible time.

Named 'Dragonsnakes', the limited-series (believed to be just eight official cars) Cobras were equipped with a stump-pulling 4.88:1 final drive and could run a variety of engines in American Hot Rod Association (AHRA) and National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) events. As the classes were very often based on power output, it was not uncommon for wealthy entrants to be supplied with up to four different 289s in different stages of tune. The most powerful would be a Weber-equipped, high-lift-cam screamer, producing a reported 380bhp. An elapsed time of just under 12 seconds and a terminal velocity exceeding 116mph was the result.

US auctioneer Mecum will offer an original Dragonsnake, chassis CSX 2093, the 93rd Cobra built, at its January 26-30 2011, Kissimmee, FL auction. The magenta metalflake Cobra was bought new by Jim Costilow and driven by drag-racing professional Bruce Larson.

The combination was to dominate NHRA's A/SP, AA/SP, B/SP and C/SP classes in 1964, going on to set all-new records in 1965, winning the NHRA Springnationals, Winternationals and U.S. Indy Nationals that year. Its winning ways continued through to 1968 and, all told, CSX 2093 held national titles in four separate classes.

For further information, visit [www.mecum.com](http://www.mecum.com).

*Text - Steve Wakefield  
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