

# Getting it Right

## Picking the Right Color Scheme for a Classic Shape



Superformance's new coupe has differing meanings to people. Those over 40 years of age tend to view it as a refined recreation of one of the six "Daytona Coupes" created by the Shelby team in 1964 to wrest the World's GT Championship from Ferrari. Younger enthusiasts, who have no knowledge of the Shelby era, see it simply as a totally new car with classic lines. That's understandable, as the Superformance shape is certainly similar to the Daytona Cobra coupes but that's not because it was "copied" to resemble the originals, but re-defined to use much of the same aero-technology that made the original Cobra coupe so successful on the race track. This new offering from Superformance is in fact a completely new shape; there's not a single line that matches the Daytona coupes I designed some 40 years ago! The refinement of line and surface make this a far more elegant form that is remarkably more efficient than the original concept.

### Historical Liveries

The first Cobra Daytona coupe, CSX 2287, was painted Viking Blue, a light metallic shade that still looks extremely good on this basic shape and is still preferred by many who saw the car take its first win at Sebring in March of 1964. That success encouraged Ford Motor Company to back a program to quickly build five more coupes to go to Europe and challenge Ferrari. The tiny team of Shelby mechanics that went to Europe with those cars in '64 came tantalizingly close to winning the championship in that year. One of the coupes, CSX 2299, with Dan Gurney and Bob Bondurant did in fact win the GT class at Le Mans and the livery of that car, Viking Blue with thinner Wimbledon White racing stripes added on for easier recognition at speed, is most memorable for that year. In my opinion, the whole effort for '64 was probably that team's greatest achievement, even though it fell short by a few points because of Ferrari's questionable manipulation of the points for the final race at Monza.

The Maranello team, knowing they hadn't a prayer against the Daytona Cobras in the following year, 1965, elected not to run a factory Ferrari GTO team in that year, choosing instead to race in the prototype class against Ford's GT40s. It was the end of an era. Instead of being scrapped the six Daytonas were assigned to a British team, Alan Mann Racing, to see if the GT Championship could still be won with the year-old cars. Mann, using a selection of top English and American drivers easily won the World's GT Championship for Shelby American in '65, so the team's livery from that year, Guardsman Blue with Wimbledon White stripes is considered by many to be the

“classic” look for those cars. It still looks great on this newer shape and is one of the most popular choices for present coupe owners.

Even though those '65 colors are best remembered by most knowledgeable fans, a couple of the original Daytonas raced with different livery in that season and those colors are now being re-created for vintage competition with replicas of the original cars. At the Nurburgring in Germany in '65 Ford of France entered one of the Alan Mann cars with a modified “French/American” livery of an all Wimbledon White body with thin bright Red and Blue racing stripes. The effect was stunning and well remembered, although the car was only seen once in those colors. At Le Mans, a few weeks later the famed Swiss Filipinetti Racing team secured a “Swiss” entry for one of the Alan Mann racers and it ran with a red body and a single, wide, pure-white stripe.

The point in noting these different color schemes, for those interested in authenticity, is that the Daytonas ran in many colors, so almost anything other than Blue and White, if recreated in the same graphic styles as the originals would still look period “correct”, provided the proportions are kept the same.

### **Importance of the Split Cove**

One distinct feature of the original Daytona’s racing livery was the use of the “split cove” on the back of the car, with one half of the rear end being painted white, to be used as a background for the racing number. This singularly unusual graphic layout has become one of the distinct design cues of these cars and should be seriously considered as part of the car’s overall design, no matter what color it is painted or whether or not it has stripes. Certainly no car that is painted with racing stripes should be without it, even if the stripes are other than white! Some owners who prefer the true authenticity of a real “racing” livery will also use white roundels on the nose and doors while others prefer a more moderate approach with just stripes and no roundels. Any coupe, though, no matter what color it is painted, should have some recognition of the split cove, as it truly is part of the original design. Coupes look extremely handsome in a solid color, even when the back is left plain, but the asymmetric layout of the lights and license plate really cries out for a split cove. White is a logical choice, especially if the car’s chassis number is used as “race number” on the back end! Since these Superformance coupes are so rare many are being referred to, not by their owner’s names, but by their chassis numbers. Being able to use this striking graphic of a bold numeral on the back adds a distinctive touch that provides a beautiful reminder of the car’s past history and also serves to identify it by number. For those not so inclined, a “split cove” can also be elegantly handled by using a slightly lighter shade of the car’s main color. The point is, the “split cove” is a part of the car’s original design and should be recognized as such, as it breaks up what could be a rather uninteresting expanse of skin.



## **Wheel Color**

Wheel color is an incredibly important part of the car's livery no matter what color the body is painted. Generally speaking the wheels should always match the color of the racing stripes, as that is the main purpose of a good racing team's livery, instant identification from any angle. In the event the car is painted a solid color, wheel color choice should not match the color of the car but should be something understated or complimentary. Silver or white is probably best if no other specific reason for color is evident. Don't make the gauche mistake of polishing or chroming the entire wheel, or worse yet mounting a wheel that doesn't match the car's era! That isn't to say that other than "stock wheels" won't look good on the car; there are any number of styles that might be suitable, provided they don't look too gaudy. The problem here is that the coupe's unique wheel offset and center-lock attachment method prevent almost every "aftermarket" wheels from being fitted. BRE does make optional wheels that are designed specifically for the coupes and wheel centers are available in a variety of special colors and finishes to perfectly match any custom livery chosen for the coupe.

One mistake some insensitive types make is to paint the wheels entirely black... perhaps thinking the color will mask the brake dust that tends to accumulate on the wheels. Don't do this! Painting the wheels black (without a polished rim) is like looking at bad teeth! The combination of black wheels with the mass of the black tires just creates a side view of two massive voids where one of the car's most important visual aspects should remain. If you have to paint the wheels black, say to match black stripes or an all "Black Diamond" surface color with the intent of looking stealthy don't forget to leave the rims polished! It can look incredible!

## **Today's Colors**

Colors other than the traditional '64/'65 racing livery are really exciting on the Superformance coupe as its large, curving subtle surfaces allow the colors to pick up a lot of light and change shadings where they reflect the sky. If you choose to order your own unique hue there's no need to run a lot of "metallic" in the paint as the coupe's simple surfaces can't tolerate that much distraction. Putting a heavy metal-flake hue on the surface can make it look like a "bass boat"! Even though the coupe's two earliest colors, Viking and Guardsman Blue, had some slight metallic enhancement don't make the mistake of using a "modern" pigment with too much metallic or worse yet "candy" or "pearl" tints; those "today" colors are best left to the custom car crowd. This coupe's surfaces respond best to minimum metallics or opaque colors with the subtle depth of a fine finish to give the car its best lines.

## **Stripes**

As mentioned above, historically different stripe colors and patterns have been used. A general rule of thumb is to keep the stripe color the same "type" of paint as the body. For example, if the body color is a metallic, have the stripes be a metallic paint color. If the body is an opaque color, opaque stripes are best.



Existing Coupe color combinations can be viewed at the Superformance owners website: <http://www.secondstrike.com/Coupe/SSV6N2Home.htm> then select the "photo gallery" link on the bottom left of the screen.

If you really want to break out and try something different but aren't quite sure what to do, ask your salesman to have me contact you. I'll be glad to discuss the color of your new car with you. The factory's stock colors are all proven winners, but there are literally thousands of shades that could make your new coupe even more special. This is your chance to make the car of your dreams even more personal. What ever you do think this over very carefully. You're probably going to live with it for a long time, so make sure you feel comfortable with your choice.

### **Stock Superformance Colors:**

The Blues... five hues in ascending order from light to dark:

1. Portofino Blue. An almost silver tint with a slight shading of light metallic blue. Very elegant. Closest to the original Viking Blue.
2. Guardsman Blue. The original Ford color used on the '65 team cars. This is a more subdued blue, with a hint of gray and best used with Wimbledon White, if stripes are chosen.
3. Viper Blue. A much brighter hue than Guardsman. This color really stands out compared to the other blues because of the extra metallic material in the pigment.
4. Royal Blue. A long time favorite on Superformance roadsters. Deep and rich; perfect with a set of Polo White stripes.
5. Indigo Blue. The deepest and richest of all the blues. Looks very elegant when used as the sole color on the car.

Some other fine metallics:

6. Diamond Black. A fine metallic in this deep black gives the surface a rich charcoal effect where the sun hits it.
7. Malachite Green. A good, deep metallic green that gives the car a really different look.
8. Viper Steel Gray. This color gives a really elegant look to the coupe, especially if combined with Titanium or Silver stripes.

The Opaques... the classic primary colors that have a serious "competition look":

9. Olthoff Red: A stunning red named after famed South African racer Bobby Olthoff who scored so many triumphs with his Cobras, back in the 'mid '60s. This red looks sensational as the sole color on the coupe or with a set of Polo white stripes. Don't forget to split the cove whether you run the stripes or not!



10. Fly Yellow. This is THE color of choice, if you want your coupe to stand out in any gathering. A surprisingly nice accent with this brilliant yellow is to do the wheels in white instead of silver.
11. Wimbledon White. Another classic color from the '60s looks great with accent stripes of blue or red, or even combined, as on the Alan Mann/ Ford of France '65 Nurburgring racer. Wimbledon White wheels are a must with this combo'.

More classic fine metallics:

12. Silverstone Silver. An ultra fine metallic shade of silver that looks beautiful by itself or with a set competition stripes in Diamond Black...or?
13. Titanium. A truly unexpected shade that looks sensational on the coupe. No stripes needed. This is one of the most elegant colors on the car. It gives the coupe a surprisingly contemporary look. This is one case where the "rule" of not painting the wheels in the same color as the car doesn't apply, although a slightly deeper version of the hue might be even better!

Remember color choice is always a personal expression of what you feel. The Superformance Coupe doesn't need a lot of wild color to make it stand out. On the contrary it might look better in something understated. What ever you decide, have fun!



Peter Brock



**Brock Racing Enterprises**  
22828 NE 61<sup>st</sup> Street, Redmond, WA 98053  
425-868-1989 f: 425-868-0559