Factory Hot Rod: Carroll Shelby's Melding of Detroit Industry and Hot Rod Culture

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Abstract
Everyday Americans depend on their cars, but few outside of automotive culture understand its evolution, and the impact of individuals like Carroll Shelby had upon it. During the 1960s, Shelby facilitated the development of a unique bond between Detroit industry and Southern California hot rod culture. After he retired from racing, Shelby, with Ford's industrial backing and the ingenuity of hot rodders was able to develop the Cobra. This car became an instant icon by its ability to win races against some of the world's best including Ferrari. Shelby would apply his formula to Ford's internal racing effort with the Ford GT40, and help them win at Le Mans. Also, with the GT350 and GT500 Shelby enabled everyday Americans a chance to participate with automotive culture through his melding of Detroit industry and hot rod culture. Overall, Shelby's work demonstrates a unique time in American history where diverse automotive cultures came together through Shelby to develop factory hot rods.