

March 28, 2005

Larry Sachs
P.O. Box 5-H
Scarsdale NY 10583

Dear Larry,

Here are the particulars to the best of my knowledge with reference to the 63 Corvette Z06 and the subsequent Blue coupe that was ultimately painted gold.

The white coupe was purchased from Alan Wyllie. If he had bought a Z06 then I owned that car. There is no existing bill of sale nor any remaining substantiating paper work on any of the transactions or ensuing record of the car.

Ken Duclos (see the note at the end) had done a lot of work on Alan's car at various race tracks as the car was not well prepared and Alan was not a mechanic. So we knew this car quite well. It was a rather easy job putting the car in race ready condition once I bought it. The engine was factory fuel injected with the rest of the factory Z06 options; 36 gallon gas tank and heavy duty brake option.

We raced the car that season and decided to go to Daytona. I say "we" as I do not remember who drove the car as it was several drivers over the course of the season.

During the crash at Daytona the body flew apart and came off the frame, which is what it was designed to do. Ken Duclos had installed a full roll cage to protect the driver. The car landed on all four wheels and Tom Rizzo walked away. The car was literally tied onto the trailer and hauled back to Boston. With so much body damage it was easier to build a new car than to repair the body on the original one. Ken wanted to build a roll cage from scratch anyway. We located a Daytona Blue 63 coupe at a junkyard that had been stolen and the motor taken out. Ken built the roll cage in the blue car and we simply bolted on all the race hardware from the white car making improvements as we went along. The blue coupe has a 327 A Production legal motor.

I have no recollection where the original Z06 chassis wound up.

We had all been quite friendly with Don Yenko going back to 1960 as we traveled the circuit as a group and Corvette owners stayed together at the tracks and helped each other when necessary. When Chevrolet released the 396 block I asked Don if I could buy an engine. We were getting bored with the 327 and wanted to build a Corvette "super car." Chevrolet would not sell the engine alone at that time so Don sold me a car at his cost with the understanding he could drive it at Daytona and Sebring.

I flew to Cannonsburg to pick up the car, a factory white coupe. The car would not go over 50 mph all the way home without overheating. This was a problem with the very first cars shipped with the 396. We put the engine and radiator into the blue coupe. We discovered what the overheating problem was and immediately corrected it. This caught the attention of the GM engineers.

Since the engine had to race in modified class, we had free reign to do whatever we wanted. Ken Duclos did all the mechanical work. He found a custom intake manifold that used 4 Rochester 2 barrel carbs so that there was a direct flow to each intake valve. This proved much more efficient than the standard high rise manifold with a big Holly. Through Don, I had an inside track to Chevy R&D and since we were the only ones on the east coast racing and experimenting with the big block, Chevy kept sending us all kinds of engine parts to try. This included everything from camshafts to exhaust systems.

We decided to make the car look more like a Gran Sport and modified the body. We took the split out of the rear and had a custom plexiglass window made with air vents. The venting on the body was designed for brake cooling and to let some of the air out of the lower rear chamber.

The engine had so much power we could not keep transmissions or rear ends. I had already purchased what Chevrolet called the "Rock Crusher" gear box for my 63 roadster so this was put in the 396 car. To solve the rear end problem Ken Duclos welded the spiders so we had a locked rear end. Mark Donohue always called this car a moving road block.

We still had problems with the transmission and rear end overheating so we installed Borg Warner pumps on each with manual switches and temperature gauges. When the temperature got to a certain point the pumps had to be turned on. This kept the gears from turning blue.

This car ran like a Swiss watch. Every nut and bolt was safety wired including all the internal engine parts.

When Ken and I decided to take the car to Nassau Speed Weeks we got greedy and built a 427. This engine never ran well. At Nassau we had so many problems with it we did a swap with the original 396 short block which we had in the truck. After Nassau we decided to sell the car the following spring. I believe the first sale was to someone in Connecticut.

Going back to 1960, Ken Duclos was chief Corvette mechanic at a local Chevrolet dealer. This dealer was noted for work on sports racing and rally cars. Several of us all bought 63 Sting Rays at the same time from this dealer. This group included John Bushell, myself and Tom Rizzo, among others. The three of us were the only ones who continually used the cars in competition and were interested in more than local Autocross and hill climb events. Ken Duclos did all the work on all the cars. This is how the alliance was formed between us and why this was the initial group at Daytona. Fred Darling was another Corvette Driver from Rhode Island who consistently hung with our group. Fred drove the older solid axel cars at the same time John Bushell started to race solid axel Corvettes. Ken Duclos was John's mechanic.

Ken started to drive our cars at autocrosses and it was apparent he was a superb driver. He then got his SCCA license and ultimately won several SCCA championships.

That is the short history of the car without all the ensuing stories that followed that car while I owned it.

I hope all this and the CD of photos is useful and what you expected.

Regards,

Ken Hablow