

Las Vegas

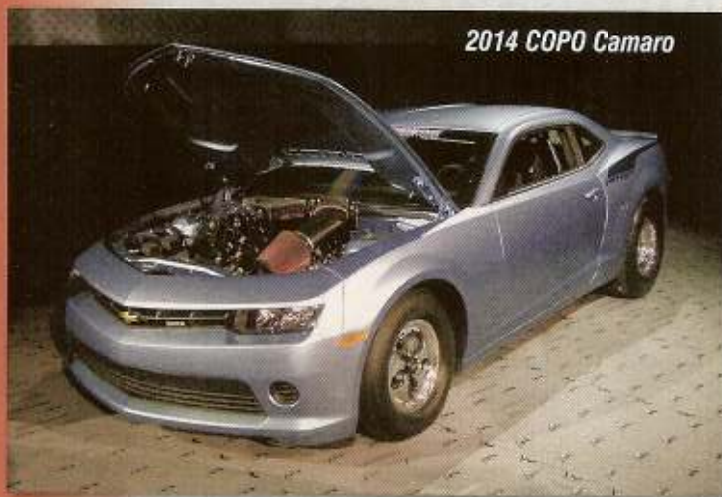
SEMA
SHOW

CONVENTION CENTER

2013

Automotive nirvana at its latest and greatest!

2014 COPO Camaro



New Z/28 featuring an LS7 engine with 500 HP.



The Las Vegas Convention Center hosted the SEMA (Specialty Equipment Market Association) Show on November 5-8, 2013. The two million square feet of indoor space was covered with absolutely the greatest cars, equipment and people.

This was the 47th annual SEMA Show and is used to connect over 60,000 buyers with the automobile after-market industry. From tires to carbs, interiors to grilles, wiring to tools; if it had anything to do with two or four wheels (or more) it was at the SEMA show. The SEMA organization itself just celebrated its 50th year in existence. It consists of over 6,500 companies involved in the automotive specialty equipment industry. Overall, 130,000 car enthusiasts attended this four day extravaganza and nearly 2,000 cars were there to be ogled, admired and appreciated.

Monday was the unofficial start of the SEMA Show, with educational classes and seminars offered throughout the

day, while exhibitors frantically hustled to get their display booths in order. One of my personal highlights of this year's show was attending the Chevrolet Media Event that night. There they offer a first look at some of their production and concept cars that will be on the display floor the rest of the week. Celebrities there to tout their creations included motorcycle champion and NASCAR driver Ricky Carmichael, as well as fellow NASCAR driver Jeff Gordon, straight from a win at Martinsville. At this show, the Chevy management unveiled the new blue 2014 COPO Camaro designed for the drag strip and in very limited quantity (only 69 will be sold in a charity auction and by lottery). Chevrolet also resurrected the Z/28 nameplate with a beast of a car, featuring an LS7 engine with 500 horsepower! Gordon was showcasing an SS model with a gorgeous red satin paint job. From the upcoming "Transformers 4" movie the



real stars were showcased; a Corvette Stingray, a Sonic and a yellow Bumble Bee Camaro.

Tuesday kicked off the show and SEMA used the morning to announce their new products award winners. This year over 2,200 items were displayed in the new product area and judges narrowed the entries down to sixteen winners in various categories. Among the winners were Coker Tire for their radial whitewalls with a bias look for our classic cars, and COMP Performance's TCI high strength steel planetary gears for Powerglide transmissions.

Wednesday offered the annual NHRA (National Hot Rod Association) breakfast, where past announcers reminisced about their careers and the racers they followed. Dave McClelland, Bob Frey and Alan Reinhart were

joined by current ESPN sportscaster Dave Rieff to discuss their humorous memories. Then John Force, who just claimed his 16th Funny car championship, joined them for more laughs and reminiscing.

Throughout the four days of SEMA, the booths were packed with products, cars and celebrities. If you saw a long line, it had to be for Chip Foose—the hardest working guy at SEMA. He made daily appearances at his various sponsors' booths and at his trailer, selling Foose gear. John Force and his clan made the rounds as did many other drivers and TV celebrities. Even Las Vegas locals Danny "the Count" Koker and Kevin Mack, from History Channel's reality show "Counting Cars", were there drawing big crowds of admiring fans.



PPG paint display



1978 4X4 Silverado pickup

There are literally thousands of cars to admire, whether in a vendor booth, along a walkway or out front of the convention center on an asphalt lot. Each year GM issues awards to cars and products that they feel were exceptional. One of the recipients at the Craftsman tool booth was a lowered 1969 Chevrolet C-10 truck shod with a Roadster Shop chassis, Wilwood brakes and a fuel injected engine.

Despite the focus on new products, there are always plenty of classics at the display area. Chevrolet had a restored 1978 4X4 Silverado pickup with a new E-Rod 5.3L crate engine and a 4-speed automatic transmission. The PPG paint display featured three cars including a '57 Chevy convertible with an awesome silver and green paint job. Axalta, the new name for DuPont paints, also featured a '57— this one had deep raspberry candy paint. Plenty of Tri-5s could be found scattered throughout the show, along with Impalas, Novas and Camaros. Two noticeable trends were green paint jobs and a return to the Gasser look.

While the SEMA Show is running, across town at the Sands Convention Center the AAPEX (Automotive




Aftermarket Products Expo) show is also in full swing. This show is geared towards the mechanics and small shop owners, but many of the same companies will display their wares at both shows. But there are significantly less cars on display at this event. Together, the two shows combine to form the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Week in Las Vegas, the second largest convention held there.

Unfortunately the two shows are trade-only events, and typically the general public cannot attend. Now if you happen to know someone in the trade, that may be a way to score a ticket...

For the general car-loving public, there are still two ways to see some of the cars at the SEMA Show. As mentioned, the outside of the convention center is plas-



did not disappoint, as the trucks turned on their high powered LED lights, the exhausts rumbled and the vehicles drove by letting us all admire these rolling pieces of art.

Can't wait to see the show next year! 



tered with all variety of cars along the concrete walkways and asphalt drives and parking lots. This area is open to the public and gives outsiders a feel for the show. In fact, Barry Meguiar tapes his "Car Crazy" TV show from the front entrance to the convention center, surrounded by these very rides. You can also check out the cars online at www.semadigital.com

On Friday, the SEMA Cruise is held in the afternoon, after the show officially closes. Then, cars are invited to cruise out and give fans a chance to see these vehicles in action. Chip Foose came over to thank the fans for coming to SEMA and over 200 cars drove out during the two hour event. Fans sat in the bleachers specially set up just for this event, and they also lined the driveways to see the cars roar by. And the drivers



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