

Love at First Sight

JACKIE GINSBURG ABSOLUTELY
HAD TO HAVE A YELLOW BOXSTER.

STORY BY **DAVID MATHEWS**
PHOTOS BY **MICHAEL ALAN ROSS**

AMID A CACOPHONOUS CROWD of winged, gilled, vented, flared-fendered, and fat-tired Porsches at the Palm Springs Parade, there was something singularly captivating about the 986, arguably one of Porsche's most basic models in recent history. At the wheel, low in the driver's seat, sat a woman with a floppy straw hat and sunglasses.

Los Angeles PCA member Jackie Ginsburg, her bright smile a perfect match to the sparkling Speed Yellow exterior of her Boxster S, was eager to speak. "I'll tell you a little story about how the slippery slope in Porsche-land happened with me," she began. "I was visiting my cousin, near Aurora, Illinois. He was getting married that weekend, and had just bought a Boxster. He said, 'Hey, let's go for a ride.'"





What's that about the moon and stars being aligned? Let's see... a beautiful May day, back-country roads, a new convertible, make that a new *Boxster*, and a cousin willing to toss you the key? After a quick ride as a passenger, Jackie slid behind the wheel and down that proverbial slope. "It took me about a minute," Jackie continued, "to decide I wanted—no, needed—to buy my own Boxster."

After returning home to Southern California, she began her search, with her heart set on a silver Boxster with a red interior. "I had several friends who owned Boxsters," Jackie said. "We had numerous conversations. One day, a friend of mine, who owned a Speed

Yellow Boxster with a black top, called and asked if I want to go for a drive. It was evening. We were in Beverly Hills. On my right was a building with mirrored-glass windows. My friend said, 'Hey, take a look at your reflection in this Speed Yellow car.' I did. Then I thought, Oh my God! What a visceral experience. Then and there, I knew I wanted a yellow Boxster with a black top."

A search throughout Southern California was fruitless. Not a Speed Yellow Boxster with a black top to be had... anywhere. "Don Dicker, my sales contact at McKenna Porsche, in Norwalk, California, told me that if the dealership were to order one for me, it would probably take six months for it to arrive. However, they did have

a Speed Yellow Boxster S due in a few weeks, with a Metropolis Blue top and interior, yellow-painted console, and yellow seatbelts." Jackie balked. Then Don continued, "I guarantee you'll love it. It's going to be gorgeous. I ordered the car for our showroom, but if you want it..."

Jackie knew one thing: she did not want to wait six months for her Boxster. "The next thing I knew, I was the owner of a 2000 Speed Yellow Boxster S with a Metropolis Blue top," she said. "I fell in love immediately, and after 23 years and 122,000 miles, still love my Boxster. I am not at all tired of it. At first, it was a garage queen, but now it's my daily driver."

Jackie's enthusiasm grew quickly, and she became

What's more California than a bright yellow Boxster, the cherished companion of a woman with dark glasses and a straw hat? The color-matched console and roll bars perfectly complement the Speed Yellow exterior.





friends and attended events with other Southern California Boxster owners. “They dragged me to the track. I thought it would be fun since that’s where the boys were anyway,” Jackie said with a giggle. “I was single and thought that was a darn good idea. So, I went to the track. Scared the dickens out of myself at Buttonwillow Raceway Park, at an event put on by a group called TrackQuest. At the end of the day, I remained terrified, but fascinated.”

One event led to another. Then when reason prevailed, not wanting to damage her new car, Jackie acquired a purpose-built track Porsche, a 1978 911 SC coupe, within one year of buying her Boxster.

“My SC is Petrol Blue, a lovely car,” she said. “I still own it. That SC has been a good friend for many years. I began attending Porsche club events focused on competitive driving and wheel-to-wheel racing, acquired a time-trial license, and then, before too long, I secured my race license.

“I crewed for a team that went to Daytona in 2004,

the rainiest year ever. I was never more tired, nor have I had so much fun. I also crewed for Bob Rodriguez in his GT3 Cup effort in 2007 and 2008.”

AT ONE POINT, Jackie’s avocation became her vocation. “My love for Porsche led me to Skip Barber Racing School, where I managed and sold corporate programs,” she said. “Then, from 2017 through 2020, I established my own company to do performance driver training for corporations that were looking to help their drivers and engineers be safer on the street, and more equipped to handle emergency situations when they were testing. But with the onset of COVID, I soon realized that people didn’t want to be in a car with other people.

“Because I was just starting out, it was very difficult. I transitioned out of that arena to join a major wealth management institution as an advisor. That’s where I’m at right now. Porsches are still very much my hobby, but now my goal is to help people plan ahead so they can enjoy their lives, and their cars, in the future.”

With 122,000 miles, this 986 is a driver in every sense of the word. This Boxster’s Tiptronic transmission is perfect for stop-and-go Los Angeles traffic.

A Simple Salvation*

THE LATE 1980s AND EARLY 1990s were challenging to Porsche because the deutschmark was losing value against the dollar. As board member Horst Marchart delicately put it, "From the cost side, we had trouble in the marketplace." Porsche's entry-level variants were long in the tooth. Upstart rivals, like Mazda and its Miata, for example, were grabbing market share. Dealers were crying for help.

A new model was needed, perhaps a mid-engine car that would reflect the Porsche bloodline and maintain the mystique, but not cause financial hemorrhaging. A two-seat convertible with flattened flanks and pop-up headlights, with front-, mid-, and rear-engine configurations was a consideration. The stillborn 984 "Porsche Junior" offered an interesting alternative, but projected production costs from building a lower-volume model completely distinct from the 911, during economic uncertainty, left



The Boxster design team (L-R): Grant Larson, exterior; Jörg Kirschbaum, model designer; Otto Geffert, design engineer; Dorothea Müller-Goodwin, color and trim; Klaus Ziegler, model designer; Stefan Stark, interior; Peter Müller, head modeler. In the design study is Harm Lagaay, head of design.

the 984 to gather dust on the drawing board.

The 993, solid confirmation that Porsche would retain the 911 build philosophy, was moving toward production. A successor to the 993, the 996, was in its earliest infancy. It was decided that the new, low-cost model must not only share Porsche mystique, but also hard parts and components to defray cost.

Well, maybe the 984 concept, a smaller two-seat roadster that would provide buyers a step up from the Miata or MX-5, would not be a bad thing after all. If the two cars could share components, say the same front end, from the front bumper all the way to the windshield, would production costs be tolerable? The 911 and "Junior" could share the same engine configuration... be brothers in the same family. There was light at the end of the proverbial tunnel.

In early 1992, management agreed to shelve the four-door Type 989 concept and concentrate on a lower-cost, entry-level sports car. The design department, under the direction of Harm Lagaay, was elated. "For us in the studio, that was the day of deliverance," Lagaay said. The team, comprising Tony Hatter, Matthias Kulla, Grant Larson, Pinky Lai, Wolfgang Mobius, and Steve Murkett, could begin styling and shaping a new roadster, with the soul of the RS60, while sharing frontal components with the 996. Larson, a dyed-in-the-wool car guy who attended Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design (MIAD) and the Art Center in Pasadena, then worked for Audi, was relieved of other design matters to concentrate on the development of the 986. By mid-year, a form emerged that was sexy, spunky, and absolutely Porsche. The 986 Boxster Concept model, flashy in silver with a Boxster Red interior, was introduced to the public at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit in January 1993. To say Larson's design was successful is an understatement. When dealers finally got their hands on them in 1997, Porsche could not keep up with the demand.

*Source: *Excellence Was Expected* by Karl Ludvigsen, Volume 3, Chapter 56.

Jackie no longer races her SC. Her focus now is concours competition, bringing the tenacity she had while racing to judging. "I'm working hard to refine my skill, working with judges at various PCA events, Zone 8 in particular," she said. "My goal is to become a competent and respected judge."

Most of all, Jackie simply likes to drop the top of her Boxster and drive, be it to the local Cars & Coffee, Mulholland Highway, or up to Monterey, California. "I belong to a group of female Porsche owners who do social events and occasional drives," she said. "It's called Porsche Women Global. We have no website or formal organizational structure. We are just a group of like-minded women who've come together because of common interest."

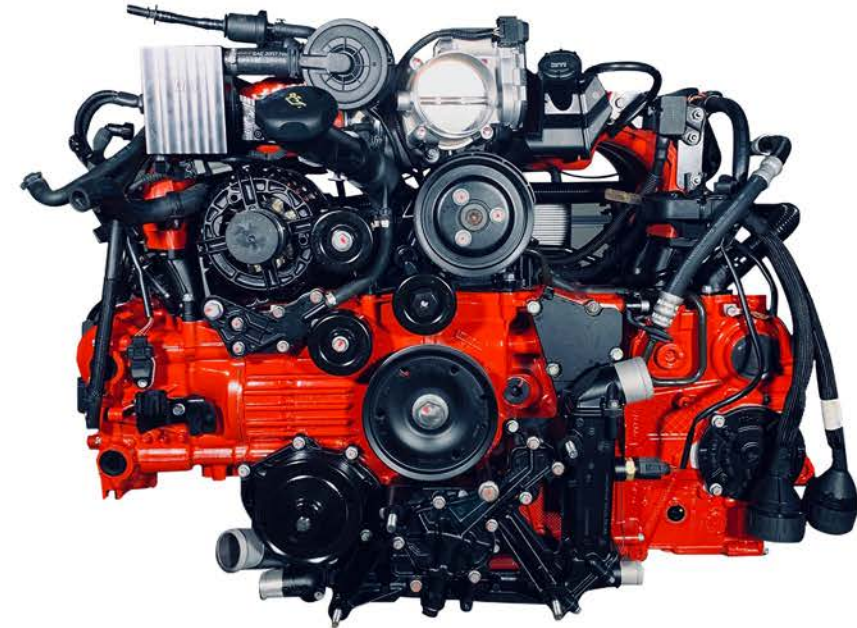
The Palm Springs Parade was Jackie's first. "It was simply too close to pass up," she said. "I worked as a runner at the concours competition. Parade was a wonderful opportunity to meet Porsche-passionate people and see some awesome cars. It all boils down to the people you meet.

"Take what we are doing—this interview and photo shoot—as an example," continued Jackie. "My car was moderately clean, but not where I'd want it if I knew this was going to happen. I didn't bring any cleaning supplies. But Bob Young, a Porsche friend, told me to bring my car to his villa where I could park in the shade, and use any of his cleaning supplies. I was so touched by his generosity and his willingness to help."

The Historic Display also was memorable. "The collection, the variety of historic cars, was special," Jackie said. "Most of the time, we see the newer cars on the street. We saw Pre-A 356s, and a 918 Spyder. I was fascinated by the evolution, the historical perspective."

Although Jackie is sometimes tempted by a new Carrera S, she still loves her 986. "The lines are so classic," she said. "The lines are pure, without anything extra. It's ageless. Another thing—the car handles great. It may not be the fastest car on the street, but I'll challenge anyone on a twisty, winding road. It never lets me down. It was great to meet Grant Larson in person. He did us right by designing the Boxster." ●

Often imitated.



Never duplicated.

A Porsche engine reconstructed by Flat 6 Innovations embodies much more than the sum of its components. It is the culmination of decades of performance engine expertise, years of research and development, and thousands of hours of rigorous testing. By entrusting Flat 6 Innovations, you're tapping into over 25 years of craftsmanship providing no-compromise solutions.



At Flat 6 Innovations, we aren't mere assemblers, but true engine builders. There are no clocks, time constraints, or deadlines. Success cannot be rushed, but failure can be. We choose the path of old-fashioned craftsmanship, following time-honored traditions coupled with modern techniques and technologies when reconstructing Porsche engines.



flat6innovations.com | (706) 219-4874