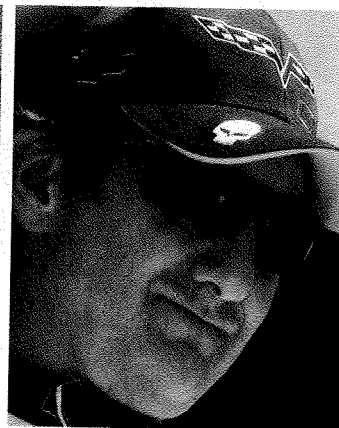
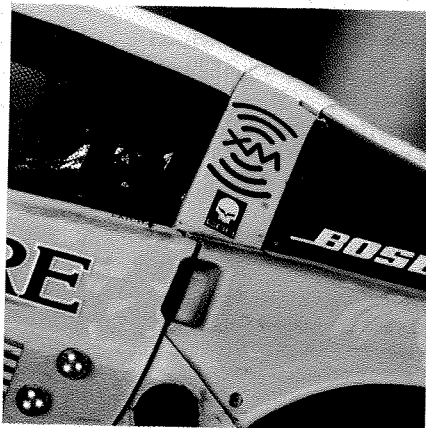


## ■ finish line

BY CHUCK AREHART



RICHARD PRINCE ©

# Meet Jake

## How a simple observation became the mascot and attitude of Corvette Racing

**HE'S** mysterious. And more than a little menacing — a yellow skull with black crossed-flags eyes. His name is “Jake,” and he can be found tucked beneath the XM Radio logo on the B-pillar of the C6.R factory racer. You’ll also find his likeness on the driving suits, uniforms and hats worn by the Pratt & Miller Corvette Racing team.

Jake has no relation to any sponsor and, if anything, he looks like the antithesis of what you might find on a factory-official race car. But nothing goes on a C6.R without a reason, so we talked with Corvette marketing manager Gary Claudio and Corvette Racing program manager Doug Fehan to investigate how “Jake” came to be.

“I was simply putting on my shoes the morning of the 2001 Le Mans race when it hit me,” said Claudio. “On the tongue of our team shoes was a skull and crossed-bones emblem and I asked the guys during our team meeting what that meant.”

“Pirates,” a crew member replied. “And what do pirates do?” Claudio further probed. “They take no prisoners,” another teammate answered. “That’s what we’re gonna do today,” Claudio coached. “We’re not taking any prisoners, we’re gonna kick ass and win this race!” And win they did, sweeping the GT1 class.

A skull and crossed-bones decal was then affixed to the No. 4 car, reminding them of the Le Mans effort and success. But they wanted something more unique that you wouldn’t see in the typical pirate movie. “Don Male, who’s one of the truck drivers, came in with ‘No Fear’ flaming skull decals,” explained Fehan. “And then Ed Jabbour who is with Kick Design in New York offered to help us come up with something of our own that was unmistakably

Corvette. So we worked on it some more and finally came up with something that looks cool and integrates the Corvette crossed flags, which was a great idea.”

“We call him Jake because it’s a tough, no-nonsense name for a tough, no-nonsense team,” adds Claudio. “He’s a symbol of unity and team strength that the team really came up with on their own and reflects their passion.” Jake in his current form made his official debut on the C6.Rs at the 2005 Le Mans race where they again swept the GT1 class.

Jake seems to be earning his keep. Since that 2005 Le Mans sweep, the C6.Rs have won the ALMS driver and manufacturer’s championship two years in a row. Jake will be along for the ride as they go for a third this March at Sebring.

Visit [www.badboyvettes.com](http://www.badboyvettes.com) to purchase Jake merchandise and get more Team Corvette information. ■