

# Road Show, Vegas Style

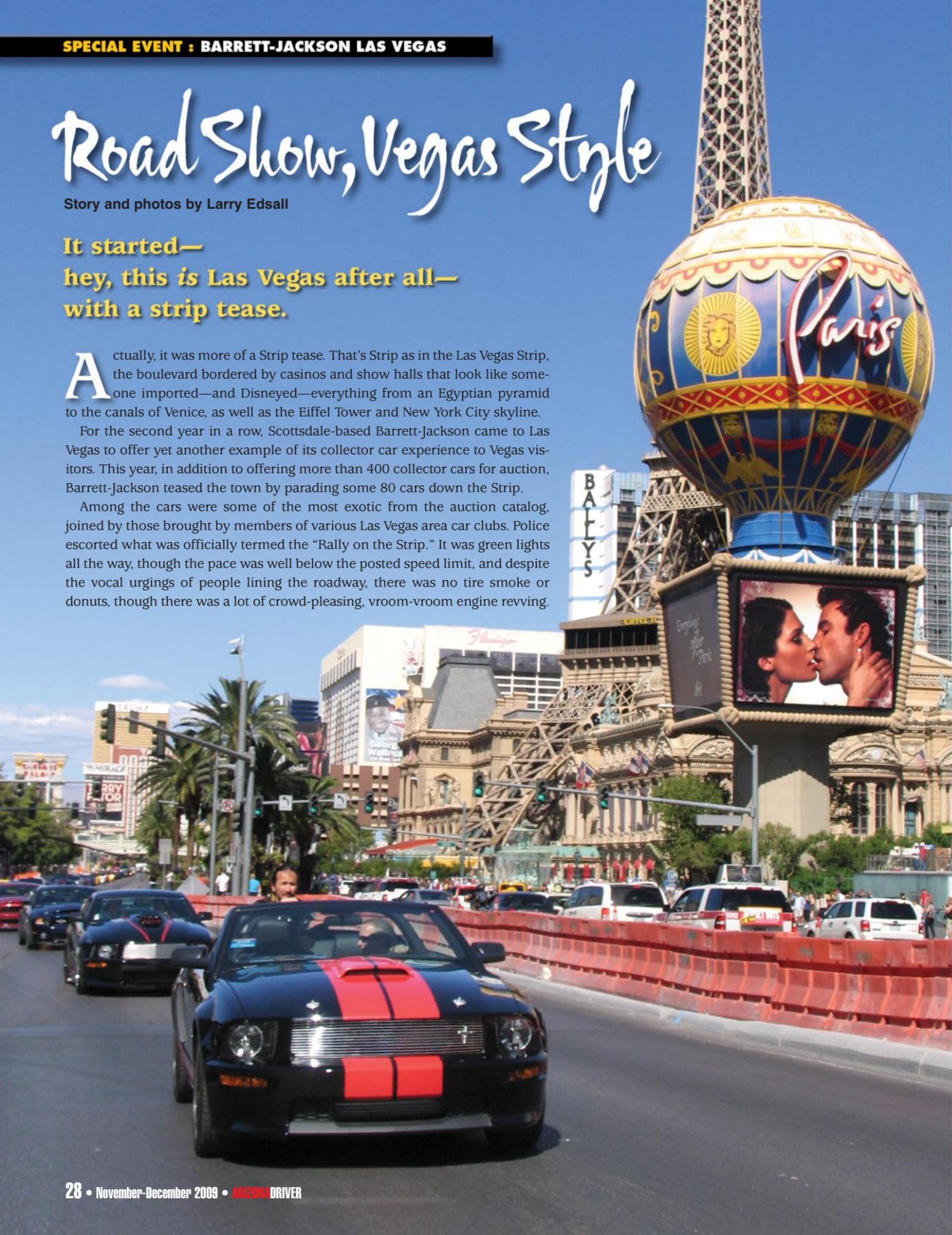
Story and photos by Larry Edsall

**It started—  
hey, this is Las Vegas after all—  
with a strip tease.**

Actually, it was more of a Strip tease. That's Strip as in the Las Vegas Strip, the boulevard bordered by casinos and show halls that look like someone imported—and Disneyed—everything from an Egyptian pyramid to the canals of Venice, as well as the Eiffel Tower and New York City skyline.

For the second year in a row, Scottsdale-based Barrett-Jackson came to Las Vegas to offer yet another example of its collector car experience to Vegas visitors. This year, in addition to offering more than 400 collector cars for auction, Barrett-Jackson teased the town by parading some 80 cars down the Strip.

Among the cars were some of the most exotic from the auction catalog, joined by those brought by members of various Las Vegas area car clubs. Police escorted what was officially termed the "Rally on the Strip." It was green lights all the way, though the pace was well below the posted speed limit, and despite the vocal urgings of people lining the roadway, there was no tire smoke or donuts, though there was a lot of crowd-pleasing, vroom-vroom engine revving.



Cars that would cross the auction block in the Mandalay Bay events center (top left) were available for viewing inside the resort's adjacent convention center facility (top right). For the Rally on the Strip (opposite page), vehicles including the bright yellow Ol' Yaller racer (above) staged in a parking lot near the Las Vegas Hilton. The rally's conclusion was signaled by show girls with checkered flags. Among the vehicles sold at the auction were (top to bottom) one of Jay Leno's motorcycles, a Shelby Cobra (the top-dollar sale), Iacocca and Prudhomme edition Mustangs, and a 1958 Pontiac Bonneville Sport Coupe.

The rally ended at the Mandalay Bay resort and casino, where the auction spanned three evenings in the resort's arena-like events center.

Many stars have played the venue, and there were several who showed up for Barrett-Jackson, including Jay Leno, who sold a motorcycle from his collection to benefit Bailey's Café, an educational program based in Brooklyn NY. (Founded by Stefanie Siegel, a friend of Leno's from his college days, the program uses poetry, theater, video, writing, music, dance, cooking and fine arts to build community and inter-generational understanding and respect in inner-city neighborhoods.)

Raising money for charities has been a feature of Barrett-Jackson auctions from the beginning, nearly 40 years ago, when Tom Barrett and Russ Jackson first got together to stage the Fiesta de los Auto Elegantes, a collector car show and parade, as a fund-raiser for the Scottsdale art center and to help buy books for the town's library.

Leno's motorcycle, a 200-horsepower, highly customized Yamaha Star V-Max, brought \$120,000 for Bailey's Café. The highest price paid for any vehicle was \$440,000 for an original 1965 Shelby Cobra. An "Iacocca 45th Anniversary"

edition of the 2009 Ford Mustang, one of 45 built to celebrate former Ford executive Lee Iacocca's role in the creation of the original pony car, went for \$352,000.

The prototype for a potential run of 100 Ford Shelby GT500 Super Snake Prudhomme Edition Mustangs brought \$302,500. The car is a collaboration between Carroll Shelby and drag racing superstar Don "The Snake" Prudhomme and features a 750-horsepower, 5.4-liter supercharged Ford engine that gains another 50 horsepower when run on racing fuel.

Another highlight of the event was the announcement that Barrett-Jackson, which annually stages auctions in Scottsdale, Palm Beach FL and Las Vegas, will add a fourth event in 2010 with an inaugural Southern California auction at the Orange County Fair & Event Center in Costa Mesa, California (see page 6). ■

After working as a sports editor for daily newspapers in Michigan, **LARRY EDSALL** was on staff for 12 years at *AutoWeek*, most of it as managing editor. He has driven more than half a million miles testing cars on four continents. He helped launch [www.izoom.com](http://www.izoom.com) and also helped found PAPA, the Phoenix Automotive Press Association. His books include *Masters of Car Design (Genius)*, *Miata 20 Years* and his eleventh, *Camaro: A Legend Reborn*, all available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).



Cobra and Iacocca photos courtesy Barrett-Jackson

