Tom Barrett and Russ Jackson inducted into AHF

Barrett-Jackson founders honored for helping build the company into a leading collector car auction business

The Automotive Hall of Fame has inducted more than 300 individuals from around the world. The Class of 2026 was first unveiled during REVEAL 2026, an exclusive reception held in February in Naples, Florida, presented by JM Family Enterprises and hosted in partnership with the Naples Automotive Experience. The private event brought together Automotive Hall of Fame Board members, industry leaders and invited guests to celebrate the announcement ahead of its public release.

Following REVEAL 2026 came a months-long Road to Induction—a journey of storytelling, engagement and collaboration designed to honor each inductee's achievements through digital content, interviews, partnerships and live activations leading up to the induction ceremony. The formal Automotive Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, presented by MEMA, was held on September 23, in downtown Detroit, at The Department at Hudson's. The prestigious black-tie ceremony brought together inductees, global automotive leaders, partners and guests for an evening celebrating excellence, legacy and innovation.

The Class of 2026, whose leadership, innovation and influence have profoundly shaped the global automotive industry, includes:

- Akio Toyoda, for redefining global automotive leadership through a driver-first philosophy and restoring passion, performance and purpose to modern mobility



- Giampaolo Dallara, for pioneering engineering excellence in motorsport and founding one of the world's most influential race car manufacturers
- Harold Goddijn, Corinne Vigreux, Peter Frans Pauwel and Pieter Geelen, founders of TomTom, for transforming navigation technology and reshaping how the world moves
- Tom Barrett and Russ Jackson of Barrett-Jackson Auction Company, for revolutionizing the collector car auction industry and elevating automotive culture on a global scale

Automotive Hall of Fame president Sarah Cook says, "These inductees have not only shaped the industry in their own time, but have also inspired generations of engineers, leaders, and enthusiasts around the world." ■



Russ Jackson : November 19, 1915 – January 30, 1993

In 1963, Tom Barrett placed an ad in the paper for a 1933 Cadillac Town Car. The respondent? Russ Jackson, who loved old cars, especially Cadillacs with big 12- or 16-cylinder engines. While the deal didn't materialize, the two formed a bond over their common interest and, a few years later, formed the Barrett-Jackson Auction Company. Born in Michigan, Jackson attended GM Institute in Flint, became a car salesman with local dealerships, married Nellie in 1940 and joined the Air Force, working up to Chief Mechanic. After World War II, he owned and ran the successful Russ's Country Store just outside Pontiac till moving to Arizona in 1960. Here, they opened the full-service Super Car Wash, securing a contract to wash Scottsdale's police cars and doing prep work and washing for local dealerships, while also owning and operating the Classic Carriage House, where they bought, sold, rebuilt and refinished classic cars. •



Tom Barrett : June 1, 1928 – April 20, 2004

Born in Oak Park, Illinois, Tom Barrett was a natural wheeler-dealer. A car collector since age 19, he had business contacts with collectors throughout the country. He also moved to Arizona in 1960, to be a real estate broker. For nearly 30 years, his Paradise Valley estate, La Paz, saw thousands of automotive masterpieces roll through its gates. Collectors would travel from around the globe to see rare classics and deal with the flamboyant showman. The "Grandfather of the Collector Car Industry," Barrett had his fingerprints on nearly every major classic car in existence. He went behind the Iron Curtain to chase down incredible cars from Germany during World War II. In 1989 the CCCA named the antique barn at the Gilmore Car Museum in Kalamazoo, Michigan in Tom's honor. While known for classics, Tom also had his own Indy car race team in 1981 and was a sponsor of the Indianapolis 500 for a number of years. •