

Going, going, going... coming back.

Prior to last year, we would attend four Monterey events: Arizona-owned Russo and Steele, Arizona perennial RM Auctions right across the street, the Monterey Historic Races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca (featuring some Arizona drivers), and the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, the longstanding anchor of the whole week. Last year, we added two: the Gooding & Company auction and the Concorso Italiano (both with Arizona connections).

This year the count climbed to eight, adding Mecum Auction, new to Monterey and presenting the Bondurant Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe (see our May/June issue) and La Dolce Vita, a spinoff of the Concorso Italiano. It's a challenging schedule, spreading from Laguna Seca to Seaside to Monterey to Pebble Beach, not to mention lodging a considerable distance away, as rooms in Monterey during these events are rare and priced accordingly.

The mood in general at the auctions was far more upbeat than last winter's, when the financial crisis was in full and unfamiliar swing. We had a preview of conditions at Meadow Brook in Detroit (see next issue), where it seemed that although prices were down a bit, interest was, well, normal. And normal hadn't been seen for awhile. Lower prices didn't seem to represent opportunism, as much as just a welcome return to a more accessible hobby. So let's check Monterey.

Gooding & Company

\$50+ million sales, 129 lots, two \$4+ million cars, three world records

Gooding & Company, the official auction house of the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, always puts on a class act, just up the hill from the waterfront Concours site. This year's auction attracted thousands of collectors and enthusiasts from around the world.

83% of all Saturday offerings were sold, earning more than \$21 million with a total of 74 lots sold. Two world record-breaking sales were achieved: a 1953 Aston Martin DB 2/4 Drop Head Coupe at \$1,650,000, a 1953 Jaguar XK120 SE Roadster at \$192,500 and a 1938 Buick Limited Series 80 Opera Brougham at \$506,000. The evening's highest sale was the red hot 1958 Ferrari 250 GT LWB California Spider at \$2,750,000. A highlight for many enthusiasts was the sale of Ettore Bugatti's own 1938 Bugatti Type 57C Special Coupe that passed hands to its new caretaker at price of \$1,375,000. An historic collection of American race cars from the Don & Joan Lyons Collection collectively realized \$1,034,000 in sales for all seven lots consigned without reserve. The 1964 Dean Van Lines Roadster, the star of this collection and the car that launched the career of racing legend Mario Andretti, sold for \$231,000.

Sunday's totals included \$29+ million for 55 lots sold out of 70 offered. Nine exceptional cars sold for more than \$1 million each. The evening's top five sales were the 1962 Ferrari 250 GT SWB California Spider at \$5,115,000, the 1933 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Drop Head Coupe at \$4,180,000, the 1935 Duesenberg Model SJ Roadster at \$3,300,000, the 1954 Ferrari 500 Mondial Series I at \$1,540,000 and the 1934 Mercedes-Benz 380 Sport Roadster at \$1,078,000.

In contrast with of the evening's classics, Sunday night also included the sale of "Chassis Number One" of Bentley Motors' new flagship grand tourer Mulsanne, conceived, styled and engineered at Bentley's headquarters in Crewe, England, and presented for the first time at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance that day. \$550,000 in proceeds were donated to the Pebble Beach Phil Hill Scholarship.

GOODING IN ARIZONA IN JANUARY: Gooding & Company will hold its 3rd Annual Scottsdale Auction on Saturday, January 23, 2010. Info: www.goodingco.com.

Mecum Auction

First-ever Monterey event tops \$14 million; record \$7.25 million for Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe

Mecum Auction ran its inaugural event at Monterey this year, scoring a great location at the Hyatt Regency Resort & Spa on Del Monte Golf Course. Well known as high-performance specialists, Mecum brought plenty of that to the party, along with a wide array of '50s and '60s cars, as well as classics and one-of-a-kinds for all eras.

Legendary race car driver Bob Bondurant of Arizona and automotive designer Peter

Brock were signing autographs on Saturday, before Bondurant drove the featured attraction, a 1965 Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe CSX2601—American racing's Crown Jewel and one of only six built—across the block in midafternoon. This was the car Bondurant drove to a World Manufacturer's Championship on July 4, 1965, in Reims, France, beating Team Ferrari (see our May/June issue).

Mecum promoted the Daytona Cobra Coupe for months leading up to this auction, with Bondurant himself driving the car for the first time in 40 years at Firebird International Raceway in Phoenix, then one near-sale in Indiana. "Selling this amazing piece of American race history at our first Monterey auction has been the crowning achievement of my career and Mecum Auction's 22 years of selling collector cars," said Dana Mecum, President. "In addition, we had an amazing array of high-end classic and exotic cars cross the auction block, from early '30s Ford street rods to late-model Bentleys. It was exciting to bring both serious car collectors and enthusiasts to the Hyatt Regency Monterey, which is just minutes from downtown and gave us ample room to display cars on the beautiful Del Monte golf course."

And indeed it was a wide array. We were struck by the venue, the displays, the accessibility and the wide range of offerings spread across the course, as well as the semi-open tent atmosphere of the auction itself. A diverse crowd enjoyed it fully. Thrilling without being stuffy, this auction is one to watch.

The inaugural Mecum Monterey Auction gave the company the highest single vehicle sale in its history—\$7.25 million for the 1965 Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe—and reached total gross sales for the one-day auction of \$14.3 million (including buyer's premium).

Complete car-by-car results are available to Mecum InfoNet members, which is free to join at www.mecum.com/infonet.

RM Auctions

Friday: renowned woodie collection sale sets positive tone for weekend

The crowd at RM Auctions in Arizona last January showed the effects of the financial crisis and wide-ranging uncertainty, with quite a few empty seats as the night progressed, though international buyers were still in full force. Not so at the Portola Hotel & Spa in Monterey this summer: the facility was absolutely packed, standing room only, both nights, with overflow into the lobby and foyer. Displays of September's upcoming Icons of Speed and Style auction at the Peterson Museum in LA (see our July/August issue) kept the overflow entertained. RM Auctions' busy calendar at Monterey included an exclu-

sive online auction at www.rmauctions.com, closely followed by the distinguished Nick Alexander Woodie Collection, then the Sports & Classics of Monterey auction event.

RM kicked off their Monterey event on Thursday night with the Nick Alexander Woodie Collection achieving in excess of \$7 million in total sales. The four-hour auction attracted spirited bidding as 51 magnificent pre- and post-war Ford and Mercury wood-bodied wagons crossed the block before a packed house. The top seller of the night was a Dearborn award-winning 1946 Mercury Sportsman Convertible, the rarest Sportsman of all, which brought an impressive \$368,500. Other highlights included an exceptionally rare 1948 Ford Super Deluxe Sportsman Convertible for \$275,000, and a handsome all-wheel-drive 1946 Ford Super Deluxe Station Wagon for \$247,500.

One final car from the collection—a 1939 Ford Deluxe Station Wagon—was saved for Saturday's auction line-up.

Phil Hill's son drives famous dad's 1952 Jaguar C-Type to auction

Derek Hill, son of legendary racing driver Phil Hill, drove his dad's historic 1952 Jaguar C-Type, s/n XKC-007 to an auction world record on Saturday night, selling for \$2,530,000. XKC-007 was one of the first C-Types delivered to North America. In 1952, a young Phil Hill—then just 25—drove the car at Elkhart Lake to claim the C-Type's first North American victory, before going on to achieve further success at Torrey Pines that same year.

"The global interest and enthusiasm in our 2009 Monterey event led to a packed sales room of active bidders each of the three evenings, (elevating) numbers in excess of the anticipated pre-sale expectations," said Ian Kelleher, President and Chief Operating Officer of RM Auctions.

Top sellers at RM included two additional million-dollar cars: a race-bred 1955 Aston Martin DB3S, which brought an impressive \$1,980,000, and a stunning 1935 Duesenberg Model SJ Disappearing Top Convertible Coupe which sold at \$1,430,000.

A further highlight was the sale of a factory-original 2005 Ford GT super car, offered on behalf of the Ford Motor Company and selling for \$181,500 with a portion of the sale proceeds benefiting the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). Ford Motor Com-

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Gooding & Company



Mecum Auction



KEEP RIGHT >>

pany Board Director Edsel B. Ford II and his son, Henry, joined a group of local Monterey JDRF youth ambassadors to witness its sale.

The 1939 Ford Deluxe Station Wagon, final lot of the Nick Alexander Woodie Collection reserved for Saturday night's sale, exceeded its original high estimate to bring \$215,000 hammer price. This lot capped off the extremely successful single-owner offering of \$7.3 million. The \$215,000 was donated to the Midland School in Santa Barbara, California by Nick Alexander, along with the 10% buyers premium of \$21,500 and other monies raised at Friday night's sale of a selection of photography depicting the histories of Ford, Mercury and the Iron Mountain Factories, all of which was donated by RM.

RM IN ARIZONA IN JANUARY: RM Auctions will conduct its 11th Annual Automobiles of Arizona event on Friday, January 22, 2010, at the Arizona Biltmore. More information is at www.rmauctions.com.

Russo and Steele

Record attendance, increased sales percentage, 14% increase in bidders, 17% increase in first-time bidders, 55+% sales ratio, eight world records

Russo and Steele Collector Automobiles specializes in European sports cars, American muscle cars, hot rods and customs. The company brings the same up-close auction-in-the-round format to Monterey (now in its 9th year) that it has used so effectively in Arizona (entering its 10th). But a lot of the buzz is created outdoors, from a rooftop reception the night before the auction series begins, to the public staging of vehicles on Calle Principal in front of the Monterey Marriott Hotel, a chance to see the equipment up close and catch the sounds and smells. Pure magic.

Bidders were present from all 50 states and 16 countries, and thirteen nations were represented by media. With the "rolling preview," a new online webcast and phone bidding, audiences everywhere could enjoy the Russo and Steele auction experience.

The two-evening auction addressed the current financially conservative market by increasing the number of cars in a higher market value range. Results demonstrate that the market is still strong when selling collector vehicles with carefully researched provenance—a Russo and Steele forte. All the major auctions make every effort to ensure top quality and accurate information, but Russo and Steele owner Drew Alcazar is a living, breathing encyclopedia of provenance.

New to Russo and Steele this year was a live online auction webcast. "Within two minutes of us testing the webcast prior to the auction starting, we had over 250 people

watching, and it increased at amazing speeds as the night progressed" said Brian Quinn, Russo and Steele General Manager.

5000 people attended the auction. Friday night set records for attendance, with crowds filling the auction room to capacity, standing room only. A 1961 Porsche 356 Carrera 2/2000 GS once belonging to Dr. Ferry Porsche sold after a lively battle for \$330,000. Saturday night's top sale was a 1964 Shelby Cobra CSX 2492 at \$475,000.

"The marketplace in Monterey performed as we anticipated," says Alcazar. "We intentionally selected automobiles within the range of \$100,000 to \$500,000 to better serve the projected marketplace. Without a doubt, the market continues to show strength for extremely desirable and well-documented examples. Dr. Porsche's 1961 356 Carrera 2/2000 GS, the 1939 Alvis Speed 25 Tourer, and the 1964 Shelby Cobra CSX 2492 among many others are clear evidence of this."

As the hobby and the economy continue to take their twists and turns, Russo and Steele has made a major point of moving to an All Reserve format. Traditionally, cars selling at No Reserve (having no hidden minimum price) may generate extra excitement that raises bidding even higher than it might otherwise have run, especially when they are the exception to the bulk of entries. But it carries the risk of a sale at an unfavorable price. A trend to No Reserve pricing in recent years has left many owners forced to sell at heartbreakingly low prices. Hence the current All Reserve commitment by Russo and Steele.

"The quality and caliber of consignments this year far surpassed any to date. I believe that this selection of automobiles proves our All Reserve format is working," Alcazar continued. "This platform benefits everyone. The consignors get a measure of control over the sale of their automobile, the auction house has the opportunity to increase the quality of its selection offered at the sale, and bidders have the opportunity to buy some of these stellar automobiles that might not otherwise be available. Russo and Steele is merely the first auction to realize this, but I am sure we won't be the last."

RUSSO AND STEELE IN ARIZONA IN JANUARY: Russo and Steele holds its 10th Annual Sports and Muscle in Scottsdale from January 20-24, 2010. For info: www.russoandsteele.com. ■

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RM Auctions



Russo and Steele



Camera and iPhone photos: Joe Sage

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CHANGE A FOOT AFTER THE 36TH ROLEX MONTEREY HISTORIC AUTOMOBILE RACES

The big news at the Monterey Historic Automobile Races this year came at the end of the weekend, as a significant case of politics boiled over, impacting the future of the event (or ultimately not impacting it, they seem to say)

A flurry of press releases began arriving on Sunday, the last day of the event, first announcing that the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP) would take over producing the historic races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in 2010, and that General Racing, Ltd. was out. "This has certainly been a long and rewarding relationship with Steve Earle and General Racing," said Gill Campbell, CEO and General Manager of Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. "SCRAMP has always admired Mr. Earle's creation, which has brought historic car racing to the enthusiast on such a level."

Steve Earle, General Racing Ltd. president, issued a statement in response on Monday, saying that General Racing, which had created and produced the Monterey Historic Automobile Races® (he pointedly includes the ®) for 36 years, would indeed no longer be doing so. Earle described SCRAMP's program as a new event. Many feel that Steve Earle and the long-running Monterey event have made historic automobile racing what it is in the US today.

David Love of San Rafael CA, a 74-year-old racing veteran who has driven his 1958 Ferrari 250 Testa Rossa in all 36 runnings of the race, reminisced that in 1967 a half-dozen friends gathered with their old sports cars to have what they called a mechanical picnic. The next year, "we rented a local track for \$100 and divided the cost between us," says Love. "Steve Earle heard about it, came out with his GTO to see what we were up to, and that's how we met." It didn't take long for Earle to envision a proper road race to coordinate with the timing of the Pebble Beach Concourse d'Élegance, but he knew it

would not be allowed on public streets, as many vintage events are, so he chose the track at Laguna Seca as the ideal venue.

The track, however, was established in 1957 and has been operated since its inception by SCRAMP, a not-for-profit organization which has donated more than \$12 million to communities around the Monterey Peninsula and to volunteer groups that help put on the races.

As early as fall 2008, Earle says he was advised that the terms of agreement between General Racing and SCRAMP were no longer economically viable. Unable to come to a new agreement, General Racing announced they would allow SCRAMP a one-time use of the name Monterey Historic Automobile Races for the 2010 event.

General Racing meanwhile announced that they would continue their own tradition at the Wine Country Classic at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma CA in early June 2010. "I truly believe that we have brought something special to the community of Monterey," said Earle, "as an event of world renown and the generator of substantial revenue for the local economy and the charities to which SCRAMP contributes. The purpose of General Racing, Ltd., is and always has been to encourage the restoration, preservation and use of historic, sports and racing cars... for the enjoyment of participants and enthusiasts alike."

By later that same day, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca officials had announced that August 13-15, 2010, would be the dates for the 37th Monterey Historic Automobile Races. "Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca's mission will be to maintain the integrity, authenticity and prestige of the Monterey Historic Automobile Races, while enhancing the enjoyment factor for the fans, participants and sponsors," said Campbell.

The event has been one of the cornerstones of the Monterey Peninsula's Classic Car Week and is at the pinnacle of Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca's track calendar.

By the middle of the following week, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca officials had announced a new Selection Committee for the 2010 races, including Steve Earle.

Use of the Monterey Historic Automobile Races® name, as well as details of General Racing's plans for Sonoma next June, had not been clarified by press time. Tickets for Monterey 2010, however, go on sale November 17, 2009, available at 800-327-7322 or www.mazdaraceway.com.

Full 2009 entry lists and race results are available at www.montereyhistoric.com. ■

VINTAGE WHEELS, NEW WHEELS AND TWO WHEELS AT LAGUNA

PORSCHE SHOWCASES HISTORY AND FUTURE AS THE FEATURED MARQUE

At the 36th Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races, held at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca (August 14-16), the sound of over 450 race cars was complemented by the 2010 Porsche Panamera Gran Turismo making its North American debut. In addition to the 145 Porsche racers entered by their owners (one-third of the 450-plus field), Porsche showcased the Panamera on the world-famous race track and also provided display vehicles on site, including four special cars with significant American connections, on loan from the new Porsche Museum in Germany. (The Panamera also made a debut appearance at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance.) Jay Leno was on hand to drive the Panamera Turbo.



DUCATI

Ducati was at the Monterey Historic Races for their first time, unveiling a "Martini Racing" liveried Superbike in honor of Porsche. They also had their 200hp, 366-pound Desmosedici RR MotoGP race replica on display.

Ducati reminded us that Arizona is an important market for them, with the first showroom in the world to be completed under their new retail design program to be Ducati Scottsdale, set to open by the time you read this.

FISKER

The Fisker Karma Plug-in Hybrid made its public driving debut during the Monterey Historic Races on Saturday, just 19 months after being unveiled as a concept car, the first-ever appearance of a PHEV on track at the event. The Karma PHEV is a full-size luxury sedan with seating for four, yet has a range of 50 emission-free miles on a full charge of its lithium-ion battery, and a total range of 300 miles with an on-board generator turned by an efficient 260hp Ecotec engine. Two 201.5hp electric motors send traction through a single-speed differential, enough to hit 0-to-60 in about six seconds with a top speed of 125mph. (The Karma was also on display at Concorso Italiano, alongside the Karma Sunset hardtop convertible concept. The Sunset was on display again at the Pebble Beach Concours.) ■

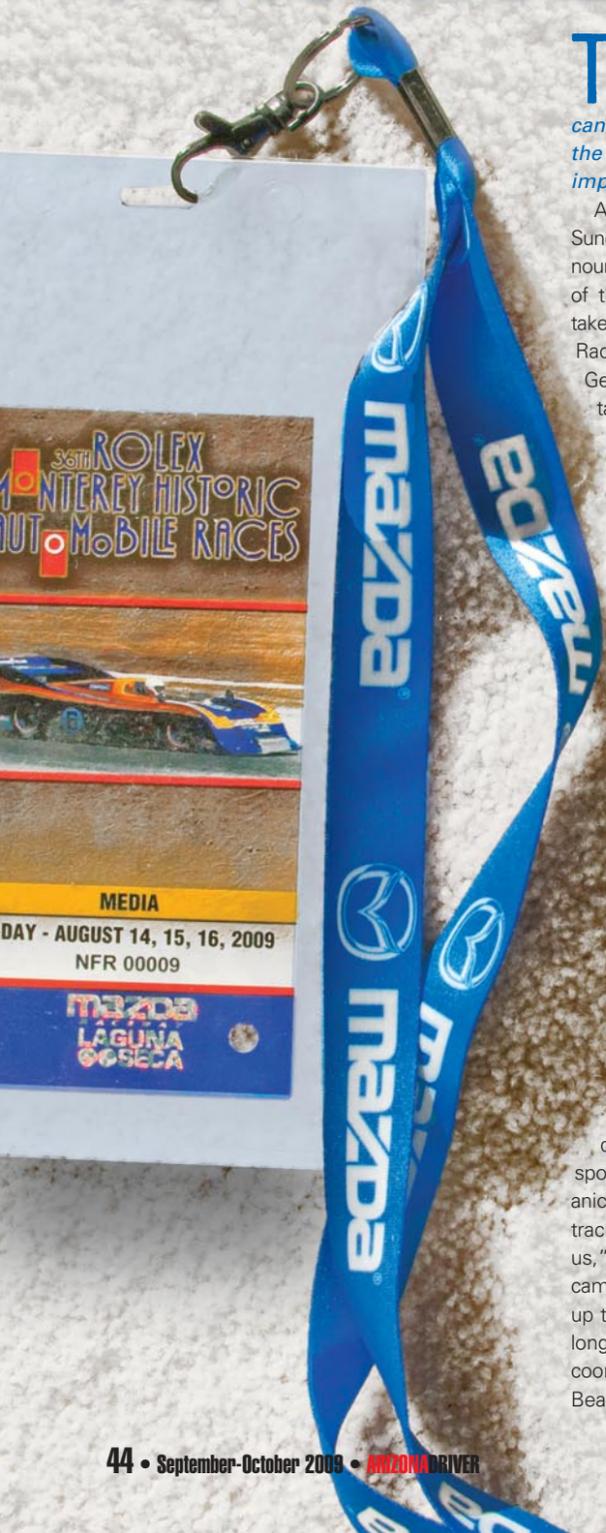
The new four-door Porsche Panamera (top left) was flown via 747 from Germany to its debut at Monterey. Photo © Dirk Michael Dekbar, courtesy Porsche AG.

Porsches navigate the Corkscrew at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. Photo: Kyle Burt

Ducati unveils Martini Racing liveried Superbike in honor of Porsche as featured marque.

The Fisker Karma Plug-in Hybrid made its driving debut on the track during the races.

MOBILE UPLOADS



Last year, we attended the Concorso Italiano for our first time. It was held at the Marina Airport, northeast of Seaside (itself just north of Monterey). This was a "peace dividend" former military airport, part of old Fort Ord. The area is sure to get redeveloped in a big way. Recession or no recession, the sandy rolling hills are already being bladed into wide, flat boulevards along a lot of the old familiar back road shortcuts.

The airport site didn't seem all bad, if you'd never attended the event before: accessible for fly-in elements to the show, with plenty of parking. But those who had been before, when it was held on the green grass of the Bayonet and Black Horse Golf Resort, were sorely disappointed and lobbied for a return to such a location. Black Horse had inadvertently sent the Concorso packing when improvements they were making limited available parking for the event last year.

So a new group coalesced, attempting to pick up the torch. What ensued seemed to be a fairly brief struggle between a replacement event and a reborn original. As the dust settled and the calendar firmed up, one became La Dolce Vita Automobili and the other, with its own nice golf resort setting at Laguna Seca Golf Ranch, secured the original Concorso Italiano name. We set out to visit them both.

La Dolce Vita Automobili at Black Horse BAYONET AND BLACK HORSE GOLF RESORT, SEASIDE

Calculating the best way to triangulate our travels with both concorsos and the Monterey Historics (as well as an auction or two en route), we headed to La Dolce Vita first. We had conflicting address information, and signage was misleading in places, but we did find the entrance to the resort. There was quite a comedy of errors from there, with media credentials missing, a denial of entry, an apology and entry after all, but denial of entry at the media tent, as we'd been given the wrong type of passes. We were unable to see much of this event. The cellphone photo of a sparse display, to the right, is basically all we saw. We were,

shall we say, disappointed. Colleagues have told us the event was indeed somewhat sparse, but with the dueling events and preparatory confusion, nobody really knew which concorso would attract what vehicles and spectators. But it did pretty well. There was indeed a nice Lamborghini grouping, as well as a showing of early Citroën Traction Avants and some truly unusual customs. The open layout and casual atmosphere were welcomed by some. The well-respected Larry Crane provided emcee duties. All in all, to the degree this had started out as a rebirth of the temporarily ill-fated Concorso Italiano, it fell somewhat short in attendance, but succeeded in regaining the original turf. To the degree it can be seen as a new event, many are hoping they pursue the broader spectrum of cars, beyond the Italians, and grow from there.

Concorso Italiano LAGUNA SECA GOLF RANCH, MONTEREY

Next stop: Concorso Italiano. And this seems to be where the crowds showed up, both participants and spectators. The parking areas were brimming, and well-organized. This wide-ranging Italian-focused event included a world-record gathering of 15 Ferrari 288 GTOs, a celebration of the golden anniversary of DeTomaso, Jay Leno attending to receive his La Bella Machinna award (and presenting his own heartwarming thoughts about Valentino Balboni's contributions to Lamborghini). Keith Martin, publisher of *Sports Car Market* magazine and on-air *SPEED* commentator, did emcee duties here. There were hospitable VIP and media tents, but we dined at the food booths, which offered great quality and variety, as well as the enjoyable Italian mandolin and guitar players known from the prior event. Shown together for the first time anywhere were

all four original Bertone-designed Alfa Romeo BAT concept cars, drawing flocks of admirers and photographers for the duration of the event. Lili Bertone was on hand, as well.

Martin Loge of Santa Barbara CA received the Best of Show trophy for his stunning 1969 Maserati Mexico.

There is little doubt that the 2009 Concorso Italiano succeeded in presenting the event everyone remembers as the real thing, and details have already been announced for 2010. For this year's complete results and information about next year, visit www.concorso.com.

The 59th Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance EIGHTEENTH FAIRWAY, PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS, THE LODGE AT PEBBLE BEACH

We always hit the grounds at Pebble Beach several times before the actual Concours is held—for new vehicle reveals, manufacturer displays, automobilia booths, the Gooding & Company auction and so on. This year's new vehicle launches included the Porsche Panamera (see races, prior feature) and the new Bentley Mulsanne, the company's all-new flagship grand tourer (with Number One sold at the Gooding auction; see two features prior).

The Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance is the granddaddy event that anchors the whole event-laden week. Over 200 classic cars from 30 states and 19 countries competed in 28 classes. Only the rarest and most beautiful cars are invited, and connoisseurs of art and style flock to see these masterpieces.

Bentley, a featured marque for 2009, had the largest presence on the show field. The event also celebrated the centennials of Bugatti, Audi and Morgan, and the styling of Zagato. Motorcycles were displayed for the first time, in a class of British bikes built through 1959.

Jay Leno brought a 1928 Bugatti Type 37A 2 Seat Sports and was a guest auctioneer. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger also participated on stage, auctioning his signed bomber jacket, which raised \$30,000 for charity, adding to more than \$13 million raised through the years.

A 1937 Horch 853, owned by Robert M. Lee, was named Best of Show (right). Jerry Seinfeld collected second place in the Porsche class with his 1970 Porsche 908/03 Spyder.

This year coincided with the 40th anniversary of the famous Woodstock Music & Art Fair, and we noted one similarity in that you can spend as much time getting in and out as being there. The luckiest secure lodging on site. For this year's complete results, more great photos and information about next year, visit www.pebblebeachconcours.com. ■

MOBILE UPLOADS

Concorso Italiano



La Dolce Vita Automobili



Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance Best of Show: 1937 Horch 853



Concorso, Concorso, Concours

