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Second Motorcar Cavalcade Kicks Off Show Season

This lavish, car-centric garden party sports unique classes — and a different perspective on a concours

Story and photos by CHUCK GILCHREST



CAR ENTHUSIASTS ARE drawn to sunshine and palm trees during the winter months.

If the event is held on the fairway of an exclusive luxury resort in South Florida, in the middle of January, there's a very good chance the show will draw cars that can whet the appetite of the most discerning enthusiast.

Enter Miami car culture, a unique community encompassing a blend of exotic super cars along with a classic auto contingent, many of whom migrate south from northern climates to enjoy their vehicles during the winter.

Bring these elements together, add in some dazzling artistic enhancements and you have the Motorcar Cavalcade presented by the Warren Henry Auto Group, now in its second year at the JW Marriott Turnberry Resort in trendy Aventura, Florida. In 2023, Motorcar Cavalcade experienced a serious growth spurt over the previous year, roughly doubling both the number of vehicle entries and spectator attendees.

Not your usual concours

Show organizer and founder Jason Wenig wasted little time to set this event apart from the more traditional concours competitions.

For starters, Wenig welcomes modern exotics, which generally tend to draw in a more youthful contingent of owners and fans. But how do you integrate both the young and old vehicles in a show setting without lumping them apart into categories solely delineated by age and origin?

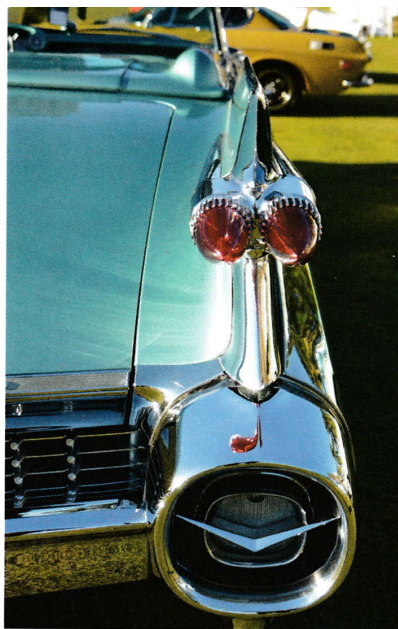
Wenig's team views each vehicle as an artistic statement and created judging criteria based upon certain unique visual or visceral characteristics of the car.

"I don't want the car to be judged solely on a certain component, but instead if that element offers a focal point of the overall style or car's presentation, it becomes something special" said Wenig in his advice to his all-star group of judges.

A different kind of competition

With design features in mind, cars are placed into categories such as "Tails," "Glass," "Sound," "Grilles" and "Doors." Other cars are placed in groups for a variety of uses, including "Utility," "Competition" and even "Beach Cars."

This year's judges were an interesting blend of talent, ranging from automotive designers, race car heroes, and marque specialists to hip-hop artists, DJs, pro athletes, and social media podcasters.



In this way, eclectic mixes of vehicles could be judged alongside each other with a focus on appealing aspects of design rather than aiming a narrow lens on originality or pedigree.

For example, in the "Cockpit" category, there was a stunning black McLaren Speedtail fresh off the dealer floor alongside a white-and-black 1952 Cooper/MG roadster. Examining both unique interiors was a fun comparison.

On the road

While the Motorcar Cavalcade emphasizes style, driving is also a big deal at this event. On Saturday, January 14, prior to the January 15 concours at the Turnberry Resort, many of the entries gathered for a

police-escorted "Rallye" through the beach towns near Miami Beach.

The finish of the Rallye was the luxurious Bentley Residences in Sunny Isles Beach. The large parking lot allowed the public to see many of the show cars, while participants enjoyed a catered luncheon inside. The array of vehicles participating in the Rallye weighed heavily toward modern supercars, with marques such as Lamborghini, Ferrari, Bugatti, Mercedes, and even Hennessey.

Concours Sunday

On January 15, the 190 concours entrants motored onto the palm-tree-lined lawn that serves as a driving range for the golf resort.

Everyone was reminded of the upcoming Miami F1 Grand Prix scheduled for early May several miles away, as there was a custom-painted F1 racer with Miami GP livery at the entrance.

The variety was astounding. The cars were arranged in classes, with little concern about the age of the car. American muscle rubbed elbows with Italian exotics and rare vintage classics.

Cavalcade is an all-inclusive experience for attendees, and throughout the show, bubbly refreshments, designer cocktails, and creative food offerings created a lawn party aura. In true Miami style, couples young and old dressed for the occasion, with pastel hues and jaunty Panama hats.

Texas-based Hennessey Performance brought three cars to the event, including the global unveiling of their new, track-focused Venom F5 Revolution coupe. Crowds gathered as the





semi-style judges



1929 Cord L-29 formerly owned by Frank Lloyd Wright



The Rey Collection



Adam Kohn with his family's 1959 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz

cowboy-hat-wearing Hennessey crew revved the 1,800-hp unmuffled engine. Only 24 of these cars will be built.

Also bringing a cadre of vehicles was Brandon Anderson of the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum of Auburn, Indiana. Their brilliant two-tone orange 1929 Cord L-29, formerly owned by architect Frank Lloyd Wright, won several awards. Their entries also included two Duesenbergs and a 1930 Ruxton. In the most bizarre juxtaposition, their well-optioned 1930 Duesenberg Model J won the "Accessories" class award, edging out a 1981 DeLorean dressed out as an exact copy of the well known "Back to the Future" car.

There was bound to be a Latin American component to the entries, and that was evident in the presentation of the Rey Collection from Argentina. Comprising this unique group were three different Torino automobiles, a late 1960s product of IKA/Renault. These Argentinian-built cars were derived from the Rambler American and later produced under the Renault name after their AMC merger until 1981. Also featured in the Rey collection was a stunning blue Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster signed by Argentine racing legend Juan Manuel Fangio.

Another entry with Argentine roots was a 1935 SS100 Swallow (Jaguar)

Coupe shown by Eduardo and Michelle Zavala-Harris. This car was once owned and driven by the famous tango dancer, actress and singer Ada Falcón. This rare and lovingly restored coupe picked up the "Executive Committee" award, along with an acknowledgement of excellence in the "Doors" judging category.

Whether you are passionate about Porsches or Packards, the Cavalcade packed on the glitz and the glamour of the high end automobile scene synonymous with South Florida.

It is a great opportunity for those in the car community who may spend warmer months in northern climates to enjoy



Best of Show: 1928 Auburn Boattail Speedster
shown by Richard and Helen Harding

year-round use of their prized collector cars. Such was the case of Adam Kohn, a Philadelphia area enthusiast who along with his brother and father saw their 1959 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz take home honors in the “Tails” judging category, showing off the tallest tail fins in the show.

Best of Show choices

As with most Concours, judges came together to pick their “Best In Show” which was divided into Modern and Classic Categories. Nobody was surprised when the 1928 Auburn Boattail Speedster shown by Richard and Helen Harding claimed top honors in Classic. This was an Ohio “field

find” by Richard’s dad roughly 30 years ago. Richard almost entirely restored the car after his father passed. “The most fun was trying to track down all the parts for the vehicle”, said Harding. “Being a somewhat local car, not too far from where it was built in Indiana, made the job a bit easier.”

At the other end of the spectrum was Mehran Aryafar’s 2021 Mercedes-Benz AMG GT Black Series complete with an F1 themed graphics package, which took the top prize in the Modern Category.

That a graphics-wrapped vehicle took Best of Show honors may upset the traditional Concours purists. However, the choice spoke to the quality of the

presentation and the latitude of judging criteria. This was a notable achievement, with some very serious competition from numerous Bugatti, Ferrari, and Pagani entries.

While some would say that adding another Concours to a busy calendar that includes Arizona, Boca Raton, and Amelia Island at the start of the year may seem redundant, the Motorcar Cavalcade has enough style, swagger, location, and quality entries to take its proper place among the top events kicking off show season.

It will be fascinating to see how this unique event will evolve in the years to come. ∞