

# 15th Anniversary Amelia Island Concours

By Tom Gorsuch

This year marked the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Amelia Island Concours. As the famous Porsche 917 was to be featured at the concours this year, our Space Coast Region organized a Sunday drive to enjoy the sights. We had six Porsches and eleven members join us for the morning drive plus six other couples who had made the trip up earlier to enjoy a long weekend. In addition to the 23 Space Coast Region members, there were PCA members from across Zone 12 to run into, densely congregated around the Porsches on display.

The Amelia Island Concours is one of the best in the world for viewing significant, well prepared, and often unusual classic automobiles. It is often spoken of as the second best show in the US behind the Pebble Beach Concours in Monterey each August. Many of the cars on display are previous Pebble Beach winners. In contrast to the Pebble Beach show, the Amelia field includes more post war sports cars and always includes a collection of significant motorsports vehicles.



Amelia Island is a resort destination and an ideal setting for a getaway weekend for couples looking to experience the automotive glamour lifestyle. The host location is the Ritz Carlton hotel which opens its grounds for luxury lounging. Their boardwalk over the Amelia Island dunes shows off Florida's most beautiful beaches. The portico is lined with the most outrageous modern exotics. Notable this year were several new Mercedes Gull wings in waiting, Panameras available for test drives, and a first sighting of the new Boxster Spyder. Last year we had several million dollar Bugatti Veyrons on hand. The town is quaint and full of shopping opportunities and restaurants. There are organized driving tours and historic

automotive seminars throughout the weekend. There are now two major collector car auctions on Saturday where you can watch bidders run their credit lines to capture rare, beautiful, and fast automobiles, often exceeding \$100K.



The main attraction is on Sunday and this year a main draw for us Porsche fans was the 917s. There were nine variants on the green including short tails, long tails, and CAN-AM configurations. The most significant car was the Salzburg red #23 which had claimed Porsche's first overall victory at Le Mans in 1970. The 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher #3 Hippy car was next in line. Also a winner in 1970, the #2 Gulf livery 917 that finished 1<sup>st</sup> at the 24 hours of Daytona. Most of these nine 917s had been at the Monterey weekend last August but they were scattered between a Porsche display at the Historics, private owner paddocks, and on the green at Pebble Beach. This pinnacle lineup allowed for close comparative inspection and exemplifies the type of display we have come to expect at Amelia Island. Another favorite Porsche was the beautiful, silver, hard top enclosed 356 Carrera Spyder (see photo). Surely one of only a few of which we are seeking history so please let us know if you have any background info on this car.



The other cars include all types of pre-war classics and post war sports cars. Duesenberg, Roll Royce, Bentley, Mercedes, Ferrari, Maserati, Alfa, Bandidi. Many early cars are adorned with owners and models in period dress. The class and overall winning cars are driven up the fairway to receive their awards. The moving display ranges from silent elegance to raucous horsepower. This year's overall winners were the pre-war, silver 1937 Mercedes 540K and the postwar, white Maserati Birdcage. The late afternoon photos of these two winners do not even begin to tell their life stories, but on this fine day in North Florida they were still accumulating legacy of which the Space Coast Region now shares a small part. Please visit our photo site via the link on our home page (<http://spc.pca.org>) for the full collection of member photography from the event.