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## Concours in the Park

N.Y.C.'s Central Park plays host to the first New York City Concours d'Elegance

BY RICHARD LENTINELLO, HEMMINGS MAGAZINE  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUTHOR

If you believe that old adage, "Good things come in small packages," then the New York City Concours d'Elegance was for you. Compared to the bigger, more popular concours like Amelia Island, Meadow Brook and Pebble Beach, it was a refreshing change to walk the grounds of this most intimate gathering and enjoy the show cars up close and personal without being elbowed out of the way by 35 other people. The only criticism was the \$30 admission, which we felt was kind of steep considering the fact that there were only about 50 cars on display. But among those 50 were some of the rarest and most historically significant automobiles to be found anywhere.

Held within the confines of the Wollman ice skating rink in Central Park, a mere stone's throw from the posh Plaza Hotel and the glamorous bistrottes along Fifth Avenue, the event was held on Friday, September 30th through Sunday, October 1st. Having been blessed with picture-perfect autumn weather, where the sun-drenched temperatures rose into the low 80s, a better start to what appears to be an annual affair just couldn't have been planned.

Being New York, there were many celebrities on hand, several of whom were actual judges. Master of Ceremonies was none other than noted race driver and TV personality Alain de Cadenet. Others included former Briggs Cunningham team driver and automotive inventor John Fitch, Speedvision founder Roger Werner, Jr., rock musicians Nick Mason of Pink Floyd and Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits, and actor Malcolm McDowell among others.

But the cars were the real stars. One of the main attractions was Joseph Cassini III's 1938 Horch with Erdmann & Rosst coachwork that won Best of Show at Pebble Beach in 2004, as well as this event's Best of Show. In the American Classics category, Nicola Bulgari from Rome exhibited his gorgeous green 1939 Packard Super-8 Convertible, and Brent Merrill from Toronto came down with his sensational 1932 Auburn 120 Boat-tail Speedster. Some of the more popular sports cars, all of which were expertly restored, included a 1959 Triumph TR3A, 1963 Mercedes 300SL Roadster, '63 Lotus Elite and a Porsche 550 Spyder. Detroit muscle was well represented too,



Banners promoting the N.Y.C. Concours were draped on lampposts throughout the city, as shown by this banner located at the entrance to Central Park on Columbus Circle.



This Jaguar XK-120 roadster looked positively striking with its red leather interior and matching painted wire wheels against its sleek black body. The lack of its thin bumper allowed show-goers to enjoy the car's purity of line the way its designer intended it to look.

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Jason Wenig from Florida brought up his 1953 MG TD Sport Special, one of two that were hand built by Carrozzeria Motto Coachworks in Torino, Italy. One was destroyed back in the 1950s and the other survivor resides in Japan.