



Around the Benz

the official central florida section club newsletter

Volume 2018 - 2nd Edition
March-April



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Spring is in the Air, a Wonderful time for Motoring!



February Section photo at Museum of Speed, Mt Dora

The Presidential Address

Welcome to the second installment of your MBCA Central Florida Section 2.0 newsletter, and a hearty welcome all of our new readers, especially to those new members who have joined us in all things Mercedes Benz. We look forward to meeting you at future events and for goodness sake's, make sure you introduce yourself to myself and other members...[read more page 3]

Tech: Matte Finishes...

So you took one look at that new Mercedes in a seductive matte finish, and like love itself, you knew it was the ONE! So you checked the box, placed the order and took the plunge into a gloss-less existence! Cool! Well, mainly cool!... [read more page 9]

Tech: The W108 of my Dreams!

I never thought I would drive a W108 every day. I was hesitant about their reputation for poor fuel economy, the difficulty of repairs and the cost of parts. I sorted a few for several of our customers, though, and as I got to know the cars better, I decided that I should start looking... [read more page 20]

Upcoming Events

- March 9-11 - Amelia Island, FL
Concours D'Elegance
The Ritz-Carlton
- March 17 - Sebring, FL
12 Hours of Sebring
Sebring International Raceway
- March 19 - Orlando, FL
Meetup with the Porsche Club
ACE Cafe
- March 24 - Maitland, FL
Driver's Safety Course
MB of Orlando
- April 7 - Winter Park, FL
34th All-British Car Show
Meade Gardens
- April 14 - Ocala, FL
Museum Visit
Don Garlits Museum of Racing
- May 14-21 - Birmingham, AL
StarFest 2018
National MBCA Event
- June 2 - Titusville, FL
Tech Session
Pierre Hedary & Company
[for more, see pg 5]



visit centralflorida.mbca.org for more info



About the Club

The MBCA was established in 1956, and currently has approximately 30,000 members across the nation. There are over 84 local Sections organizing hundreds of local and National Events each year. You can enroll as a member of MBCA by calling 1-800-637-2360, or by using the National Website at www.mbca.org. Cost is: One year = \$55.00 | Two years = \$107.00 | Three years = \$157.00 You may select your Section, or be assigned the closest local Section by your zip code to be closest to Events and activities in your area. More information can be found on the MBCA website: mbca.org/membership.

About our Section

Your National dues include membership in the Section of your choice. Each Section publishes a newsletter defining it's activities and Events. Year round calendars of Events include social, technical, and driving Events. Within your MBCA magazine, The Star, you will find information on Section, Regional, and National Events. Any MBCA member may attend any Section, Regional, or National Event by registering and paying the member fees advertised. If you need a referral for a service provider to maintain your Mercedes Benz, reach out to a fellow club member.

About the Newsletter

The Mercedes-Benz Club of America—Central Florida Section, Inc. publishes this newsletter every two months starting in January — March — May — July — September – and November. Special editions may be published from time to time to address events or interest items of special significance. Opinions expressed are those of the Authors and Editors. Express permission is hereby granted to other Sections of the MBCA to reprint articles contained herein, without exception. Articles of general interest are solicited for inclusion and should be e-mailed to the newsletter editor Pierre Hedary at mownersforlife@bellsouth.net. Submissions will be considered preceding the month of publication. To download newsletter copies, visit: centralflorida.mbca.org/section-newsletters.

Member Benefits

There are additional and sometimes unknown benefits to being an MBCA member. Take advantage of some of them.

-Mission Inn Resort, Howey in the Hills: purchase two nights and get a consecutive 3rd night for free.

-Area Mercedes-Benz Dealers: \$500 off the purchase of any new Mercedes-Benz.

-Pierre Hedary and Company: \$5.00 off per hour (pre-1995 models only).

-Hagerty Classic Car Insurance: discounts available for members in good standing.

-Brooks Brothers: Fifteen percent off regularly priced merchandise with presentation of MBCA card.

Section Leadership

Officers

President

Bob Hartmann
Hartmann.r@att.net
407-913-6134

Vice-President

Lars Morgan
lars_morgan@hotmail.com
407-267-7936

Secretary

Tom Quinn
tquinn1934@gmail.com
248-494-1066

Treasurer

Elaine Spiller
elainemspiller@gmail.com
904-874-1091

Chairpersons

Activities

Bob Rolle
rolle.bob@gmail.com
617-755-2678

Photography

Edward Ho
edho6600@gmail.com
973-723-1303

Webmaster

Elaine Spiller

Newsletter

Pierre Hedary
mownersforlife@bellsouth.net
407-765-2867

Advertising

Open

Hospitality

Larry Barnes
913-484-6961

Membership

Open

Southeast Regional Director

Dan Cabrera
cabrerad1313@hotmail.com
813-759-0776

Directors-at-Large

Peggy Bohl

peggy.bohl@gmail.com
407-951-5062

Benno Deifel

jhbenterprises@yahoo.com
352-281-7167



Around the Benz

Volume 2018 - 2nd Edition

March-April

The Presidential Address

Bob Hartmann

Welcome to the second installment of your MBCA Central Florida Section 2.0 newsletter, and a hearty welcome all of our new readers, especially to those new members who have joined us in all things Mercedes Benz. We look forward to meeting you at future events and for goodness sake's, make sure you introduce yourself to myself and other members.

In this issue, we look at a variety of topics coming up in March and April. First and foremost: driver education with certified driving instructor Robert Frangione. He will be conducting a driving safety seminar focusing on etiquette and the rules of the road as they pertain to us here in the state of Florida. Next, we'll take a sneak peek at the exotic show car circuit which kicks off this month with the Amelia island Concourse. We have reviews of the recent 24 Hours of Daytona and look ahead to the Sebring 12 Hour endurance race. Finally, we will look back at some recent club events and preview our upcoming events including Star Fest, which will be held in Birmingham, Alabama this May.



Bob with his 2008 SL55 AMG 'Mistress'

What is this AMG thing all about? I offer up a condensed review of the brand and its history and an invitation to check out these "MBs on steroids" for yourself.

Before leaving, I would just like to extend a big thank you to those dealerships who continue to support our organization. Thanks go out to the fine folks at Mercedes-Benz of South Orlando, Mercedes-Benz Orlando – Maitland and Mercedes-Benz of Sanford. Their hospitality in hosting both meetings and events are greatly appreciated, and without their support, this club would have a difficult time functioning.

As always, your stories, comments and suggestions are welcome. Feel free to email myself or any of the other officers listed with this newsletter. We'd be glad to hear from you!

Mercedes-Benz of North Orlando

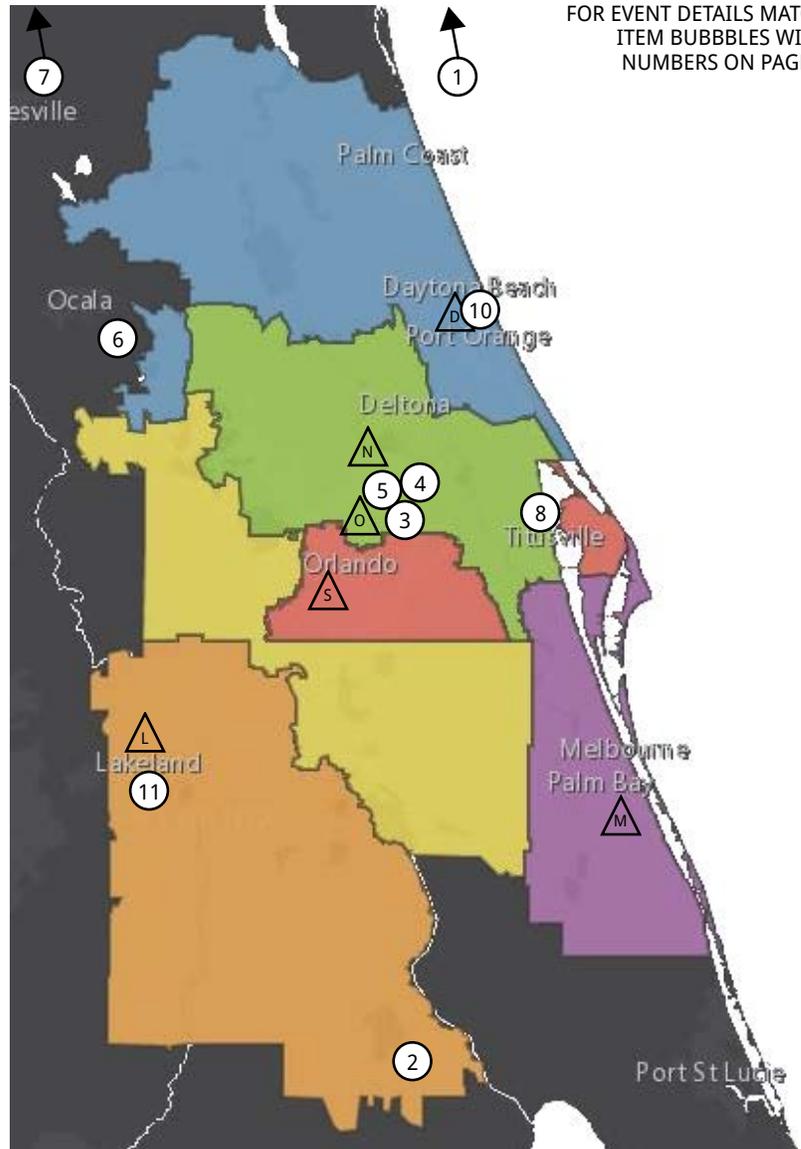




Event Summary and Membership Map

LEGEND

-  NORTH (32)
DAYTONA, VILLAGES, PALATKA
-  MB OF DAYTONA
1188 N Tomoka Farms Rd
Daytona Beach, FL 32124
-  NORTH CENTRAL (57)
SANFORD, EUSTIS, MAITLAND
-  MB OF NORTH ORLANDO
1100 Rinehart Rd
Sanford, FL 32771
-  MB OF ORLANDO
810 N Orlando Ave
Maitland, FL 32751
-  CENTRAL (23)
ORLANDO, DISNEY, MERRITT ISLAND
-  MB OF SOUTH ORLANDO
4301 Millenia Blvd
Orlando, FL 32839
-  WEST/KISSIMMEE (24)
KISSIMMEE, CLERMONT, LEESBURG
-  SOUTHEAST (28)
MELBOURNE, PALM BAY, COCOA
-  MB OF MELBOURNE
509 E Nasa Blvd
Melbourne, FL 32901
-  SOUTHWEST (18)
LAKELAND, DAVENPORT, SEBRING
-  FIELDS MOTORCARS
4141 N Florida Ave
Lakeland, FL 33805



FOR EVENT DETAILS MATCH ITEM BUBBLES WITH NUMBERS ON PAGE 5

The Spring Raffle is now Open



Enter for a chance to win your dream vehicle, a 2018 Mercedes-Benz S560 Cabriolet. Tickets are \$50 each and there is no limit to the number of tickets you can purchase.

The International Stars Mercedes-Benz Club of America raffle is open to MBCA members only. Visit raffle.mbca.org for more information and to read the rules and regulations.

To purchase tickets by phone please call 1-800-637-2360 (Monday-Thursday 8 am - 4:30 pm or Friday 8 am to 4 pm Mountain Time).

Image in contest promotional materials doesn't entirely represent actual prize being won. Photo credit: Mercedes-Benz-USA



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Upcoming Central Florida Section Event Details

1. Weekend Event, March 9-11 - Amelia Island, FL

March 10 - Amelia Island Cars & Coffee

Where: The Ritz Carlton Amelia Island

Time: Entrants must arrive at 7 am, observers at 9 am.

Founded in 2013, The Amelia's Cars & Coffee allows individuals with vintage, exotic, and collectible vehicles to gather with other enthusiasts on The Golf Club at Amelia Island to see some unique special interest vehicles. This is a free event. For more information, or to enter your own Mercedes-Benz for display at C and C, please check out the following site:

<https://www.ameliacconcours.org/car-classes.aspx>

March 11 - Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

Where? The Ritz Carlton Amelia Island

Time: get there as early as you can

Cost: \$95.00

Since 1996, Sunday's main event is limited to a select group of vehicles with unique historical significance, chosen to tell a thoughtfully-scripted story, and has featured many significant cars, drivers, and concepts. Mark your calendars for the MBCA-CFS Event date.

MBCA Club events during the weekend

The Amelia Island concours has become a popular tradition for MBCA members. Members' cars will be on display in the Cars & Coffee at the concours event Saturday morning in front of the Mercedes-Benz pavilion. Additionally, member sections are sponsoring get-togethers during the event. Please RSVP by March 4th for these events.

Friday, 9 March, 6:30pm- Alabama Section has arranged for Millhouse in Kingsland, GA. This is the last exit in Georgia before the Florida line. Millhouse is located right beside the southbound exit to Kingsland. Contact Jim Roberts to make reservations at jertoosaver@bellsouth.net

Saturday, 10 March, 2pm - Southern Starts Luncheon at Horizons Restaurant, 5472 First Coast Hwy. (A1A) Fernandina Beach. Jeff Rotatori (jeff_rotatori@yahoo.com) or Herb Gregory at (hd4ever@comcast.net).

Saturday, 10 March 6pm - Alabama Section has an evening at The Crab Trap in the heart of historic Fernandina Beach. Contact Jim Roberts jertoosaver@bellsouth.net

2. Saturday, March 17 - Sebring 12hr Enduro Race

Where: Sebring Intl Raceway

When: 10:40am

Historic Le Mans-style race. 'If you can win at Sebring, you can win anywhere'

Cost: see Event website

3. Monday, March 19 - ACE Cafe Meetup

Where: 100 W Livingston St, Orlando

When: Dinner @ 6pm, Cars @ 7

Partnering with the Porsche Club for a great time. Bring your Benz!

4. Saturday, March 24 - Driver's Safety Course

Where: MB of Orlando

Time: 10:30am

Cost: Free

The two hour course on Florida Rules of the Road will include many

Bob Rolle/Bob Hartmann

practices most drivers are not focused on including perception versus visual acuity and influences that affect our driving as we age. Also information will contrast DUI versus DWI.

Our knowledgeable speaker will be Captain Robert Frangione who is a certified driver education teacher in three states and has taught the AARP Safe Driver course for five years. He is also a highly experienced military and airline pilot.

5. Saturday, April 7 - 34th Annual All British Car Show

Where: 1300 South Denning Dr, Winter Park, FL

Time: 9am-Noon

Cost: Free

Come join nearly 200 classic British Cars and their owners for a day of unparalleled British automotive history.

6. Saturday, April 14 - Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing

Where: 13700 SW 16 th Ave, Ocala

Time: 10am

Cost: \$10-12 pp

Car Museum, over 300 cars mainly American and drag racers

7. MBCA National Event, May 14-21 - StarFest

Where: Birmingham, Alabama

Cost: visit www.starfest2018.com for details

8. Saturday June 2, Tech Session

@ Pierre Hedary and Company

When: time under consideration

Where: 1000 Pine St, Titusville

Cost: 0

Mercedes Benz classic car care and restoration

9. July - Club dinner and social event.

What: social get together

When: to be determined

Where: Restaurant identified later

Cost: TBD

10. September - Tour of Daytona Speedway

When: TBD

Cost: TBD

11. Saturday, October 20 -Lakeland Car Show

When: 10am

Cost: none

Show club cars on the streets of Lakeland

12. November/December - Club Holiday Party

Details to be worked out





Club Tour: MB of South Orlando G+ Jon Douglas

Jan 20 - Mercedes-Benz of South Orlando is located directly across the street from the Mall at Millenia. Hector Perez and the entire staff welcomed the club and treated us like VIP's. New and returning faces showed up in droves. We were treated to lunch, then given a tour of the service department (where we saw a quite classy '87 300D, if I may say so myself!), and the impressive inventory they have. It was easy to see why they were the 2017 top selling AMG dealership in the US, but they didn't stop there; I think i counted few Maybach on the lot. Even test drove a monster G Wagon g63 for good measure.

Life will never be the same...



Tech Session: MB of Orlando G+ Bob Rolle

Jan 27 - The Detailing Tech Session was a complete success with about 25 club members in attendance. We were very impressed with the expertise of "Shorty" Harrell, the car detailing expert at the Mercedes Benz dealership of Maitland.

We would also like to thank Ed Taylor, Service Manger, for providing time for Mr Harrell to show us the process for car detailing.



Car Meet: ACE Cafe G+

Peggy Bohl

The Porsche Club of Orlando is all about having fun and getting to know people with similar interests, particularly interests in fine German cars. They invited us to join with them at their monthly event at the Ace Café on Monday February 19th. About 30 MBCA-CFS members joined with them for an evening of camaraderie and fun. This has been a monthly event for the Porsche Club for some time. MBCA-CFS will consider meeting at this motor oriented café, bar and restaurant in the future. Historically both clubs have conducted many joint events. We look forward to doing the same in the future. In the meantime we thank Lyn Perez, their President, for cordially including us in this enjoyable evening.



Private Tour: Museum of Speed G+ Bob Rolle

Feb 24 - Thirteen members of the Central Florida Mercedes Benz section visited the Classic Dream Cars Museum in Mt Dora. Of particular note was an unrestored but beautiful 1963 190SL owned by one of our members. The museum was a mix of cars (Porsche, Jaguar, Ferrari, Maserati, etc) with ambulances and a hearse. The museum also had an eclectic mix of automobilia and antiques including a 1940's Texaco gas station.



fotosEduardo



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Member Interview: Paul Sorgen and his 230SL

Pierre Hedary



I met Paul last summer when he had a few minor issues on his 1963 230SL he wanted me to look at. While I tend to get excited about any W113, this example really blew my mind. The 230SL Paul has purchased, restored and maintained for the twenty five years is a striking Arabian Gray on black 1963 production example, minimal in its presentation. Lacking power steering, AC or any other creature comforts- with the exception of a correct radio and leather seats- this is a true driver's car.

The 1963 version of the 230SL is extremely rare. With the spare tire mounted upright in the trunk, the seats set up higher in the car's unibody and the early, raucous m127 engine that loves to run all day above 3,000 rpm, it feels totally different from the 280SL that so many people idealize. The early 230SL represents the purest form of Paul Bracq's design. Few admirers of the w113 will ever get to own- let alone drive- such an elusive creature, and my time with Paul and his car truly feels like a gift.

I finally had the chance to sit down with Paul (on the phone) and ask him a bunch of detailed questions about the 230SL. Below is our Q and A. I have done my best to accurately recreate his statements.

PH: What made you decide to buy your 230SL?

PS: Well, I was looking for a car to restore. Initially I thought about getting a Camero or a Mustang, but I was impressed with the quality of the Mercedes.

PH: how did you locate your 230SL?

PS: The guy who had it wanted to trade for a minivan of all things. He went to the Ford dealer in Carbondale Illinois first, and then to the Chevy dealer, but neither one wanted it. I knew both of the salesmen at these dealerships, and they contacted me and told me about it.

PH: What was your first step in the restoration?

PS: The first thing I did was strip the engine down. I sent all the ancillary parts (throttle linkages, coolant pipes, hardware, etc.) out for plating. I painted the block and cleaned the manifolds, and while everything was apart, I sent the car to the paint shop to have the engine bay resprayed.

PH: Was there any rust on the body?

PS: Before I sent the car out for paint, I learned it was from Italy. A thorough inspection of the insides of the unibody proved this was a very clean, rot free car. I was really afraid of what I would find, but everything turned out fine.

PH: How long did the whole thing take?

PS: I worked on it for twelve or thirteen years, but sometimes I would go for six months without working on it.

PH: What advice would you give to someone who is going to restore a W113?

PS: Start with the cleanest, most rust free example you can.

PH: What aspect of this restoration do you feel you did best?

PS: I worked very hard to make the engine authentic. I put a lot of work into making the engine as authentic as possible.

PH: I agree, as most of the engine compartments on these cars are pretty depressing- even on some of the "best" examples. Is this car like a family member?

PS: yes it is. To me, this is "the car." I haven't had a desire for anything else.

PH: What's the longest distance you've driven your 230?

PS: I made a 200 mile roundtrip from Carbondale to St. Louis.

PH: Do you feel the car is dependable?

PS: I certainly do.

PH: I really feel you did an impressive job restoring this car. It is much better than many examples out there. I feel fortunate to have a chance to service and drive this 230SL.





January Event Review: Mar-a-Lago

Each year there is an event for the Palm Beach Cavallino Classic at Mar-a-Lago, President Donald Trump's club. This year the featured car manufacturer was Mercedes Benz, and the featured model was the 300SL. Many Gullwing and Roadster owners were invited to show their Mercedes. These were complemented a trio of w113 SLs, one of which was a highly original 280SL. Also present were a 300d cabriolet D, a 300B cabriolet D, several pre-war marques including a Mercedes 540K Cabriolet A, several important Ferraris, Alfa Romeos, and other European cars. Like most car shows, the parking lot had many interesting cars as well, including a section in the front facing the field blocked off for vintage Ferraris.



Elaine Spiller



Most cars on the field were being shown by their owners, which gave people the opportunity to meet them and have informative discussions about the cars. I had the pleasure of meeting a few 300SL owners who drive their Mercedes everywhere rather than keeping the car exclusively as a "show car." These cars should be driven often, and it's always exciting to meet people who actually own them .

Overall, the venue was beautiful and was just minutes from the ocean. There was a delicious buffet style lunch served inside the dining room including but not limited to seafood, meats, cheeses, fresh vegetables, salads, and multiple gourmet desserts. A portion of the contributions from the event, have been donated to the American Council for the Blind. In essence this event gave back to the community and was an exciting show for Mercedes enthusiasts.



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Matte Finishes... and the THREE THINGS You NEED to Know to Keep them Looking Great!

Tom Quinn

So you took one look at that new Mercedes in a seductive matte finish, and like love itself, you knew it was the ONE! So you checked the box, placed the order and took the plunge into a gloss-less existence! Cool! Well, mainly cool!

Unlike love, that has no operators manual to guide you through the ups and downs, here are three simple, but critical, pieces of information that will make owning a matte finish enjoyable for many years.



Even though it LOOKS like it's vastly different from its far more glossy cousin, that matte finish was born from nearly the same family of durable clear coats as any other color you might have chosen – the base chemistry providing nearly identical levels of protection against the environment. However, there are some differences that matter and need to be taken into consideration when caring for your car's finish! Here we go!

ONE - The part of the chemistry that makes the paint matte is only on the surface. It doesn't penetrate all the way down through the entire clear coat layer.

TWO – A matte finished surface is much more vulnerable to abrasion (bruising) compared to high gloss finishes.

THREE - Once damaged, there is no repair, other than to repaint.

Most of us grew up knowing that if we wanted to get rid of that pesky scratch, or bring our car's finish back to high gloss life, we polished, washed and waxed our way back to slick, smooth and beautiful. Try any of those steps on a matte finish and you might be headed for a very expensive repair bill!

When something rubs against the surface of a matte finish, it bruises the flattening agent that's resting on top of the clear coat and actually becomes more glossy. You read that right! If you polish a matte paint, you don't get more matte, you get more GLOSS! That means polishing or waxing of any kind is no longer on the menu. Even bumping a matte finish too strongly can cause a bruise, the damaged area appearing slightly more glossy than it's surroundings. Washing? By hand only, with mild soap, a very soft sponge and some super soft microfiber towels. No automated car washes allowed - even the newer, softer, kinder, more gentle varieties can easily cause bruising.



Unfortunately, and unlike its glossy counterparts, once bruised, there is no magic available to restore the Matte finish to it's original appearance short of re-painting.

However, with a little knowledge and a "preventative" approach, your matte finish will last just as long as any other and provide you with a unique ownership experience!





January Event Review: IMSA Rolex 24 Hour Daytona Enduro Race G+

AMG Private Lounge

The 2018 IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship gets off to a successful start for Mercedes-AMG Motorsport. During the 'Rolex 24 At Daytona', the Mercedes-AMG Team Riley Motorsports secured fourth place in the GTD (Grand Touring Daytona) class. Eighth in class, SunEnergy1 Racing added another top ten result for a team with the Mercedes-AMG GT3. The US debut of the new Mercedes-AMG GT4 also was a positive affair: the season opener of the IMSA Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge that supported the 24-hour race saw Customer Racing Teams of the performance brand from Affalterbach claim three top ten results.

- Fourth place for Mercedes-AMG Team Riley Motorsports in IMSA season opener
- SunEnergy1 Racing in eighth place, twelfth position for P1 Motorsports

• Mercedes-AMG GT4 has a successful US debut with positions 5, 6 and 7

A motorsport marathon at Daytona International Speedway that remained thrilling till the finish marked the start of this year's IMSA season. After 24 hours and with 751 laps completed, the Mercedes-AMG Team Riley Motorsports only just missed out on a podium finish in the GTD class for GT3 cars. At the finish, the driver quartet of Ben Keating (USA), Jeroen Bleekemolen (NED), Luca Stolz (GER) and Adam Christodoulou (GBR) with starting number 33 lacked a mere 2.7 seconds to repeat its success from last year when the team finished third at Daytona in its maiden race with the Mercedes-AMG GT3.

From 13th place on the grid of the GTD competitors, the #33 consistently worked its way up in the early stages of the race that was marked by strategy and saw only few full-course yellows. As the night fell, the

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- Experience laps at Talladega Superspeedway
- Off-road track driving experience
- Concours at the Mercedes-Benz Factory
- Road Rallye's
- MBUSI plant tours
- Reception and dinner at the famous Barber Museum
- And much more...



Host Section: Mercedes-Benz Club of America Alabama

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Rolex 24 Hour Enduro (continued)

defending North American Endurance Cup (NAEC) team racked up its first laps in the lead. Around midnight, a penalty (pit lane speeding) cost valuable positions. Having dropped back behind the front-runners, the driver quartet made it back into the podium positions as the race went on.

The 18-hour mark, with additional Endurance Cup points at stake, just like at the six- and twelve-hour marks, brought an early decision in the battle for victory. In order to secure these valuable points, the team deviated from its initial refueling strategy. As there were no further yellows until the end of the race to bunch up the field once more, the #33 had to head into the pits for a splash and dash from second place with ten minutes remaining and thus dropped out of the battle for victory. In spite of a thrilling finish, final driver Bleekemolen didn't find a way past the third-placed Lamborghini and thus crossed the finish line in fourth place with a slight deficit.

The Mercedes-AMG GT3 with starting number 75 encountered bad luck in the early stages of the race. The SunEnergy1 Racing car with the two Mercedes-AMG Drivers Maro Engel and Thomas Jäger (both GER) plus Mikael Grenier (CAN) and Kenny Habul (AUS) had started from 18th place on the grid. An unscheduled pit stop just after the start of the race initially made the team drop back. The subsequent

recovery saw the quartet move up again and the #75 was on its way to the top ten at the halfway point. Minor technical issues in the second half of the race prevented any further progress for the SunEnergy1 Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3. Eventually, final driver Maro Engel secured eighth place in class.



The P1 Motorsports team also showed a convincing performance in its maiden race with the Mercedes-AMG GT3. From 20th place on the grid in the GTD class, Juan "JC" Perez (COL), Kenton Koch, Robby Foley (both USA) and Loris Spinelli (ITA) worked their way up to twelfth place with good stints in the car with starting number 71.

Adam Christodoulou, Mercedes-AMG Driver Mercedes-AMG Team Riley Motorsports #33: "Making it to the finish of a 24-hour race is always great. Today, we had a real chance to win the race as well. Now, we are here in fourth place, which is a slight disappointment, especially as it was so close. We had planned to score as many championship points as possible at the interim results. In hindsight, that probably wasn't the right decision concerning the race win. Nevertheless, I am happy with fourth place and I would like to thank the entire team and my fellow drivers. We will do everything to come back to Daytona even stronger next year."



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Rolex 24 Hour Enduro (continued)

Ben Keating, Mercedes-AMG Team Riley Motorsports #33: "We were much more competitive than last year when we finished third. Back then, however, we had rain for ten hours and we made it through without any mistakes. That wasn't the case this time: we had a few minor misfortunes and penalties. Notwithstanding, we drove a really good race. We were leading at the 18-hour mark and we wanted to collect the Endurance Cup points, which we did. However, it didn't work out with the refueling in the end and there was no more yellow that would have made up for it. I can't remember any 24-hour race at Daytona in which there wasn't a single yellow in the final hour. Nevertheless, it was a thrilling race throughout and I am very happy with fourth place."



Thomas Jäger, Mercedes-AMG Driver SunEnergy1 Racing #75: "This year's race was not only extremely thrilling until the end, but also extremely demanding. During the 24 hours, track conditions changed significantly and we made set-up changes over and over again. That was also very demanding for the drivers. Traffic was another factor: there was a lot going on and you had to be really careful to avoid any incidents. At the end of the day, the performance of all three Mercedes-AMG GT3 was very good, even though the number 33 unfortunately didn't make it onto the podium. That is a pity, but for the championship, it was important to pick up these points."

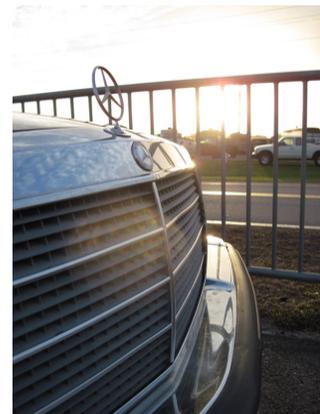
Maro Engel, Mercedes-AMG Driver SunEnergy1 Racing #75: "That was a very atypical Daytona 24 Hours: in total, there were only four safety car interventions. Last year, we had at least 15. Accordingly, we had no chance to make up for the laps that we had lost in the opening stages. At the beginning, we had to return to the pits at slow speed due to a loose wheel and we had to change the brakes.

That cost us around five minutes that we were lacking later to be on the lead lap and battle for the lead with the others. The pace to do so was definitely there. But huge compliments to all drivers and the entire team for the super job they have done."

Successful US debut of the Mercedes-AMG GT4

The IMSA Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge season opener that was held on Friday saw the new Mercedes-AMG GT4 make a successful debut with three top ten results. In total, eight GT4 cars from Affalterbach had been entered for the US debut at Daytona International Speedway. Turbulent situations, numerous yellows and continuous position changes marked the four-hour race from the very beginning. In the process, the Mercedes-AMG GT4 also racked up its first laps in the lead of the North-American sports car series. In the thrilling finale, the Winward Racing / HTP Motorsport entry with starting number 57 managed to make up one lap: at the finish, Bryce Ward (USA) and Indy Dontje (NED) claimed fifth place, securing the best result for the Customer Racing Team. Just behind them, Owen Trinkler and Hugh Plumb (both USA) finished sixth with the Mercedes-AMG GT4 #46 (Team TGM) followed by Jeff Mosing und Eric Foss (both USA) with the Murillo Racing #56 entry in seventh place.

*-thanks to the AMG
Private Lounge for this article*





Me and My Mercedes: A 1958 220S Coupe

During my graduate college years in the 1960's my best friend and I traveled around in his 190 SL Mercedes which in many ways influenced me to purchase a 1958 Mercedes in the 1970's.

At that time I was driving a two seater convertible Alfa Romeo I had acquired in Italy, so as a contrast I started looking at Mercedes Sedans of reasonable price vintage 1950's. I looked at several 300d (Adenauer) models which turned out to be too long to fit into my garage, then I saw an ad in the New York Times for a low mileage 220 S Coupe that had been driven from San Francisco to New York City. I was smitten. I purchased it for \$2,000 and began a mostly self-labored restoration.

I carefully removed the interior seats and panels and then restored the leather seats. By lightly sanding the seats then re-dying with original German cordovan color I returned the leather to its full richness. This period car possessed a lot of chrome molding which I removed and sent out to be re-chromed.

This car had a rare transmission named Hydrak which was really a semi automatic with a column shifter but no clutch pedal. Prior to starting the restoration the transmission had froze up on me and rather than converting to a standard stick shift transmission, I had the Hydrak repaired instead; in hindsight this turned out to be a poor decision . the Hydrak was a service headache and was superseded in 1961 by the first real Mercedes automatic gearbox.

The car's original color was a two tone brown and tan which I took some liberty with when repainting making it black and silver (I had admired this combination on Rolls Royces) creating some drama while staying luxury car traditional. (I would have preferred brown and light ivory-Ed)

The car's engine and suspension restoration was completed by Robert Platz, noted restorer of Mercedes built prior to 1972.

Then followed the satisfaction of driving this car to competitive events where enthusiasts swooned and I won prizes. A picture of my car landed in the Mercedes Star magazine; I was thrilled.

Finally practical concerns conflicted with my affection for owning this car (my son was then a babe in arms) and so I sold the 220 S Coupe at auction in the Atlantic City Convention Center for multiple times what I paid for it. I did turn around and buy another German car which was a brand new four door Volkswagen Diesel.



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AMG: Tell Me More!

The other day I was asked by one of our members what AMG stands for. Quite simply, they are three letters that have impacted the world of high-performance automobiles for the past 50 years. In the beginning, they were a pair of dedicated Mercedes-Benz Engineers, Hans Werner Aufrecht (A), Erhard Melcher (M) and Grossaspach (G) which is where they laid down their roots. Their vision was to enhance an already well engineered automobile and not only improve the performance and handling of Mercedes-Benz, but to create a unique, high level of personalized luxury. Today, they are a wholly owned subsidiary of Mercedes Benz, producing world championship race cars in Formula One and outstanding high-performance passenger cars for the street.



What makes AMGs stand out? Is it the extraordinarily high level of engineering, fit and finish, or is it the insane amount of horse power generated by their hand built four, eight and twelve cylinder engines? Whatever it is, for those in the know they have become the most revered of all Mercedes-Benz products. Mercedes-Benz products are already engineered to an extremely high level, yet it is the ability of the engineers from Affalterbach, Germany (their current home) to crank that performance up several notches. Yet most of all, it's the stealth factor that owners enjoy most. Placing supercar levels of performance into these normally "plain" Mercedes sedans provides AMG owners with performance on par with Ferraris and Porsches. But straight-line speed isn't the only area that has been

improved. Enhanced cornering and braking are also in the equation, along with supreme interiors, all covered by a normal Mercedes Benz factory warranty. Overall, AMGs are vehicles that have that "Jekyll and Hyde" personality; normally docile sophistication, but when you put your right foot down, hold on!

While AMG initially was about upgrading and tuning standard Mercedes Benz engines and cars, they have since created several engines of their own design, most recently the new 4.0 liter bi-turbo V8. They also designed two unique sports cars for mass consumption, the SLS and the GTS. Their most ambitious project to date, termed "Project One", is an AMG hyper-car based on the highly successful Formula 1 Gran Prix car. Like other hyper-cars developed by McLaren, Ferrari and Porsche, it combines electric motors with an internal combustion engine to create mind bending street performance. Priced at \$2.5M, the "Project One" is scheduled to start deliveries sometime in late 2019.

If you've been curious about AMGs, make a visit to your local Mercedes Benz dealer and test drive an AMG. But be warned; absolute power corrupts absolutely.



Sean Sleiman's Rarity; a 2018 e63S Edition 1 with a matte finish; 'It rides as nimble as a gocart' Equipped with a twin-turbo V8 producing 603hp and 627 ftlbs of torque from the factory. But I wouldn't count on Sean staying stock :)



@fotosEduardo





Upcoming Event: Amelia Island Cars and Coffee at the Concours

Bob Hartmann

Saturday, March 10, 2018 from 8am -1pm. Attendance is free

Founded in 2013, The Amelia's Cars & Coffee at the Concours allows individuals with vintage, exotic, and collectible vehicles to gather on the same show field used to display vehicles entered in the following day's prestigious concours d'elegance.



Unlike Sunday's main event that is limited to a select group of vehicles with unique history, Saturday's Cars & Coffee at the Concours features a diverse group of vehicles that celebrate the automotive enthusiast's spirit. Proud owners of beautiful collectible and exotic vehicles awake early, shine up their prized automobiles, drive to The Golf Club at Amelia Island and gather with like-minded enthusiasts on the first, tenth, and eighteenth fairways for a cup or two of fresh coffee and talk all things automotive.

Although every entrant must go through an application process, showing a collectible car costs nothing and the event is free to the public from 9am to 1pm. The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance views Cars & Coffee at the Concours as a gift to the community, a family-friendly "thank you" for supporting the event and making the award-winning show, now in its 23rd year, a reality.

For those of you interested, the 2018 Cars & Coffee at the Concours Entry List and Waitlist is closed. They will begin accepting applications in September for 2019 Cars & Coffee at the Concours. If you'd like to be included for next year, please contact Bob Hartmann at Hartmann.r@att.net for further information.

Upcoming Event: 12 Hours of Sebring

Bob Hartmann

Are you looking to attend one of the most historic endurance races in the world, right here in Central Florida? Mark your calendar for the 12 hours of Sebring international race to be held March 17th in Sebring, Florida. A world class field will be assembled, and it marks the return of the Mercedes-Benz AMG GT3 winner from last year. Tickets and parking are still available at: <https://tickets.sebringraceway.com>



Our Online Presence

The Central Florida Section is spreading its roots in online presence! We have quite a history on facebook, which will soon be up and running again. Until then, google+ is our current go-to for online content. Future plans are to morph and expand; including platforms as instagram, pinterest, snapchat and twitter. You also may see YouTube postings that will make your day. There's also a google calendar you can stay up to date with all the section's upcoming events. Click logos below to find out more. These logos scattered throughout the newsletter mean there is more content online; simply click on them to see more! Of course continue to check back on our official centralflorida.mbca.org section site, as well.



One thing is for sure: our section is building steam so we may just surprise you in the best way. Come to events and get your picture taken with your car, you just might find yourself featured in a 'Member Spotlight' in our Newsletter. Your Mercedes-Benz will thank you!



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February Event Review: RetroMobile 2018 in Paris, France

Elaine Spiller

Each year in the beginning of February, Retromobile takes place at the Porte de Versailles Paris Expo Center, located in Paris, France. There are more than 550 exhibitors, 500 cars on show, and over 100 clubs in attendance all in 65,000 sq. ft. of space. One could definitely discover multiple car manufacturers, clubs, automobilia vendors, parts vendors, tool vendors, auction houses, restoration shops, insurance reps, and car art galleries. There was definitely something for everyone who attended the event.

Pierre Hedary and I had the opportunity to see the cars up close that were being sold at the Artcurial auctions that took place at Retromobile. The main auction included multiple Mercedes, Ferraris, Alfa Romeos, Renaults and other European cars. The top sellers were a 1942 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 Cabriolet Pinin Farina restored by "The Guild of Automotive Restorers" (it was pretty nice, but the Europeans do it better- Ed) which was 1 of 4 and sold for \$1,080,000 and a 1954 Maserati A6 GCS/53 Spyder Fiandri & Malagoli, which sold for \$2,605,260. There was a motorcycle auction featuring the nebulous Guelon Collection and a second auction featuring the Broual Collection of historic French small displacement sportscars, such as Chenard et Walcker or Amilcar. The top seller was a 1928 Rally "Roy" which sold for \$105,405.



Overall, the culture at the European car events is much different compared than the car events in the United States. First of all, people do not dress up in suits and nice dresses unless they are working. In fact, many people wore jeans with tennis shoes or boots. The food sold at the booths was extremely delicious and the meal options included fresh meats with veggies, sandwiches with meat off the frame,

and seafood. Moreover, there were some café vendors selling fresh tea, coffee, and many French desserts and pastries. While most Americans may not realize this, everyone was very friendly and considerate towards one another. It was completely normal to share a meal table with strangers, and it is always a pleasure to talk to people from different countries. When it comes to taking photos, people are very courteous and will not get in your way. In fact, the Europeans actually stop and wait for you to take a quality photo, unlike many Americans.



If you are interested in attending Retromobile in the future, here is some information for you. There are low cost direct flights to Paris from Orlando International Airport and Ft. Lauderdale International Airport on Norwegian Air. Accor is a major hotel chain in Paris and their hotels are within walking distance to Retromobile at an affordable price. While on their site, look for hotels near the "Porte de Versailles." Also, last but not least, the tickets were sold at the door for 20 euros each day making this event affordable.

Should you ever consider going to Retromobile, it is wise to brush up on your French. Don't be afraid to try new things, either, as there are lots of surprises in store in Paris.





Tech: The Story of my 280SE 4.5

Stop Looking, and you Will Find the One...

I never thought I would drive a W108 every day. I was hesitant about their reputation for poor fuel economy, the difficulty of repairs and the cost of parts. I sorted a few for several of our customers, though, and as I got to know the cars better, I decided that I should start looking. My instincts guided me towards a 280SE 4.5, as I preferred the shorter wheelbase, and I liked the torque of the V8 model.

The main thing that irritated me was the lack of maintenance most of these fine cars had. No matter how expensive they were, they all needed something. So, after a year of looking, I threw the towel in, and gave up. I decided that I was going to end up sorting these cars for other people and that the odds of me getting one were slim to none.

And then the call came. It was November of 2011, and my good friends the Godwins, who owned a 268 dark green 4.5 called me. I remember the call perfectly. It boiled down to this:

"Pierre, Marion is very sick. We are getting her a newer car so she can enjoy driving. We were going to give you the 4.5."

"I'm speechless. This is the nicest thing anyone has done for me."



Pierre Hedary

While the car was not perfect, it was certainly solid and rust free. I collected the car a few days before thanksgiving. I was very sad, though, to hear that Marion had cancer, and her situation was unpredictable, at best. I promised her that I would give that car anything it needed.

Keep Your Promises

I took the new treasure back to my shop and began to assess it. I learned that it had 250,000 miles, and that Marion's uncle had been the first owner, her sister had been the second and that she had acquired it in 1983. It was sold new in Pennsylvania, but it lived most of its life between Florida, Washington, D.C. and San Diego. It had a sunroof added, which I have had a love/hate relationship with, and it was a column shift car, which I loved. The sunroof, a glass unit from American Sunroof Corporation, was fully functional.

My first assessment was typical- it needed subframe mounts [I replaced these immediately], a full service, and a few small repairs. But there was something else- following a botched crankshaft seal installation, someone had welded on the harmonic balancer. It has already let go once, and who knew if it would happen again.

Well, it did. One day I was driving home from work, and the alternator light came on, and my power steering was diminished. This was not what I had wanted to see happen two months after I put the car on the road, but that's how the cookie crumbles. I thought of my promise to Marion, and I said to myself "time to find a new crank."

My good friend Jim Deen rebuilt the motor for me. It was pricey, but after looking at the cylinder liners, the 252,000 mile engine showed no wear at all. The M117 cast iron block is as good as they said it was.



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Pierre Hedary

Tech: The Story of my 280SE 4.5 (Continued)



I began to save like crazy for the project, and I stopped doing the things a normal 27 year old would do. I was committed to fixing the car. During my parts hunt, I found a new old stock crank, and I found a transmission from a 3.5 liter car, which was a four speed automatic. Jim installed the new crank as the rest of the motor was done, and a 3 day take-no-prisoners front subframe and water pump job on a 1967 300SEL [M189 engine] padded my pocket nicely to complete the project.

Unfortunately, half way through the project, Marion passed away, but she was pleased to know I was holding up my end of the bargain.

I did final assembly in August of 2012, making this an eight month project. I spent about \$11,000 on everything, meaning that I bought the repairs with the car thrown in for free. This did not include my labor, which was close to 150 hours.

One day, Bob stopped in to see the 4.5. He had been traveling since Marion had passed. When I showed him my notes on everything I had done, he was blown away.

"Most people would have dropped a used engine in and called it a day."

My response was simple. "I promised Marion I would do whatever the car needed. I didn't say I would do it cheaply."

Happily Ever After....

I drove the 4.5 nearly every day for three years, although now I use the big car mostly for long pleasure trips. I usually drive my '83 300D. The 4.5 now has 292,000 on the clock. It is drop dead gorgeous, and with the four speed automatic, it flies down the road. I look back on all the work it too to get here, and I often think of the lady driving this car from California to Florida, multiple times, during the eighties and nineties, pulling a trailer, with kids in it. I look at the lovely original dashboard, the faded wood, the tough MB Cognac MB tex, and I think to myself "This is my car for life." I don't miss all the thousands of dollars I put in this car, but every day that I don't drive it feels a little less exciting.

Since then, I have replaced the wood surround on the door frames, the door seals, the manifold pressure sensor, the driveshaft and the rear axle bearings. Not mention I have tried to give this car any maintenance it needs.

If you, the reader, get anything from this article, I hope you find your own classic Mercedes that you will put your all into. And to those of you who did what I did, and more, my hat goes off to you.

Happy motoring!





The Grand Finale... Recent Member Photos



Stay tuned for the next issue where you'll find more great Mercedes-Benz articles, How-To's, Event Reviews and Section News...



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