

Concours Explained **by Kathy Golik, Allegheny Region (from RUNDSCHAU)**

A Concours d'Elegance is an event during which owners of restored and highly maintained cars compete to determine which entry is the cleanest, So, let's see.... it all began back when....

Concours d' Elegance is said to have begun in the late 1800's as an event for the social elite. Actually, back then, the car and the entire family were judged. Competition in the Rolls-Royce category in England became so stringent that beautiful models were hired to wear specially designed dresses that matched the interiors of the cars. In addition, some competitors set up picnic tables nearby with linens and accessories made to complement the color of the cars. Eventually, the purpose of these events became blurred, with the cars being over shadowed. Today, Concours events are held all over the world.

In the United States, interest and participation in these events has increased over the past several years. And as a result, detailing shops and care product manufacturers generally have experienced great growth.

Competition Types

There are essentially two types of concours competitions. The first and most involved are the "full" concours. In these events, everything (and I do mean everything!) on the car is judged: body, paint, underbody, engine compartment, interior, and luggage compartment. Parts and crevices in your car that you may never have taken notice of before will be judged. Obviously, this category involves the very, very serious concours enthusiast; because who else would actually attempt to disassemble their Porsche, clean everything very thoroughly and then reassemble it? Yes, most of these people actually do this. A new car, right off the showroom floor, would have a tough time winning the show. Most experienced concours judges will tell you that a new car never driven may, on average, score half the points of a concours winner! In this type of competition, the entrants trailer their prized possessions to the site, unload them to be judged, and then load them back up to go home.

The other type of competition is the "street" concours. This is what we usually hold in Allegheny Region. You are essentially seeing judging based on what one would see if they were just viewing your car; specifically, the exterior, interior, and luggage compartment. Some events may include the engine compartment in that list. Essentially, everything except for the underbody may be judged. People who enter this type of concours are those who generally drive their vehicles on a regular basis. Consequently, there is also a real challenge in this kind of competition to see how well you can maintain a car that you do drive. For example, how clean and well-maintained is your 1987 911 with 75,000 miles on

it? It is really something to see a car like this that looks as though it is still brand new.

And as far as judging is concerned, each car is placed in a class according to model and or year and evaluated by a team of judges, each concentrating on one area of the car, using a point system.

The points are totalled and the car with the highest number of points in that class wins. Many people may look at those who participate in Concours d' Elegance events as being "fanatical, perfectionistic, cleaning nuts." I know that I get some strange looks from my neighbors when they see me working on my car a couple of weeks prior to an event. They probably say to themselves, "Geez, she really ought to get a life!", or, "Why is she still working on that car at 3 am?", or "No, it really can't be that she is scrubbing inside her engine compartment with a toothbrush, could it?" Yes, others may find some concours participants strange, but it is a great and enjoyable hobby and passion for many. It's such a great feeling to finish your car and just stand back and admire the sheer beauty of your automobile. For all of you who are new to this type of event, do not be intimidated. I have spoken to those who feel they can't enter a concours because their car is not "perfect" enough. Let's put that misconception to rest. There is a challenge in having a car that is both driven and shown successfully. Everyone can participate. These events will be low-key and fun. No one ever loses in a concours, because just prepping your Porsche for a show will get it cleaner than it may have ever been and even bring to your attention potential problems that otherwise may not have been uncovered. Concours events first and foremost, are a lot of fun.

So, detail your car and enter a street concours scheduled in your region this year. These are not just competitions--they provide you with beautiful examples of our marque to enjoy.