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**Contact:** **Bill Warner, Chairman**  
904-636-0027  
*bwarner@ameliacconcours.org*  
**Chris Hoyt, Dir. of Operations**  
904-636-6687  
*choyt@ameliacconcours.org*

**LONG GONE ROAD RACES LIVE AGAIN  
AT 2007 AMELIA ISLAND CONCOURS**

*Targa Florio, Mille Miglia, Carrera Panamericana & Isle of Man TT Subject Of Seminar*

**JACKSONVILLE, FL;** August 9, 2006 --- They're long gone now, legislated out of existence due to safety concerns and changing public opinion, but the great road races of the past and the cars and motorcycles that competed in them will come back to life in a two-hour seminar during the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, March 9-11, 2007.

The Targa Florio, Mille Miglia, Carrera Panamericana, and Isle of Man TT all share a colorful and tragic past and each had the greatest drivers of their respective eras competing in them. Drivers like Moss, Fangio, Nuvolari, Ascari, Hill, and Vaccarella constantly fought for overall victory piloting marques such as Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, Maserati, Mercedes, and Porsche.

"I'm really looking forward to this seminar because the topic is so rich in history," says Bill Warner, founder and chairman of the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. "These races, staged on public roads, were some of the most dangerous ever held and were the last ones with a driver/navigator team. Oftentimes, a brick wall or embankment covered with spectators was literally only inches away from the car, and at such high speeds, it only took one mistake to put an end to your race or worse, your life. These guys were incredibly fearless, and so were the fans."

*From Europe To The Americas To The British Isles, Only One Survives*

One of Europe's first major races, the Targa Florio was founded in 1906 by Vincenzo Florio, a wealthy auto enthusiast, and it initially covered 277 miles with numerous hairpin turns on the treacherous mountain roads of Sicily. Over the years, the course changed configurations several times, and due to its length, drivers practiced the week before in public traffic with their cars fitted with license plates. The last professionally sanctioned race was in 1973 and the Targa's fate was sealed permanently in 1977 due to a fatal accident.

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The Mille Miglia, which is “*thousand miles*” in Italian, ran from 1927 to 1957. It was an open road race from Brescia to Rome and back. Similar to modern rallying, cars were started one by one, every minute. The 1940 Mille Miglia saw the debut of one of the most famous marques of all time – Ferrari. The race was banned after a crash in 1957 that killed Spanish nobleman Alfonso de Portago, his American co-driver/navigator, and 10 spectators, including five children.

To celebrate the completion of Mexico’s section of the Panamerican Highway, the Mexican Government held the inaugural Carrera Panamericana in 1950. It was a six-day, border-to-border race on open roads. It started in Juarez and continued 2,096 miles southbound until the finish line in El Ocotil, and it was considered one of the most demanding auto competitions ever held. The race’s high number of injuries and fatalities combined with the 1955 24 Hours of LeMans tragedy, which killed over 80 spectators, spelled its end that same year.

The tiny Isle of Man in the Irish Sea hosts what is arguably the world’s most famous and dangerous motorcycle race – the Isle of Man TT (Tourist Trophy). Still surviving today, the race began in 1904 for automobiles and motorcycles were admitted in 1907. Actually a series of races held over several weeks, the TT quickly became the most significant competition in the world for two-wheelers due to its undulating terrain and twisting, narrow public roads. Each lap measures nearly 38 miles and consists of over 200 turns while climbing from sea level to an altitude of over 1,300 feet. Due to ongoing safety concerns, the TT’s future is always in doubt, but it will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007.

“Amelia has become extremely well-known for its seminars and last year’s CAN-AM panel discussion was an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that really entertained the crowd,” says Warner. “We hope to top that one with the great road races. The history of these races is so varied and there were so many great individual achievements, you won’t want to miss a minute.”

The 2007 Amelia Island Concours d’Elegance will be held March 9-11 on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> fairways of The Golf Club of Amelia Island at Summer Beach adjacent to The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island. The honoree will be five-time LeMans winner Derek Bell MBE. The show’s foundation has donated nearly \$1.4 million to Community Hospice of Northeast Florida, Inc. since 1996.

*The Amelia Island Concours d’Elegance is one of the nation’s most innovative vintage auto events featuring over 250 rare classics from seldom-seen private collections nationwide. The show is scheduled for March 9-11, 2007, at The Golf Club of Amelia Island at Summer Beach adjacent to The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island. For more information, visit [www.ameliaconcours.org](http://www.ameliaconcours.org) or contact them at 904-636-0027.*

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