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## HISPANO-SUIZA "HONORED CLASSIC" OF THE 26th ANNUAL AMELIA ISLAND CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE

**Jacksonville, FL** – A special class of rare, exotic and historic Hispano-Suizas is scheduled to be the classic centerpiece of the 26<sup>th</sup> annual Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance on May 23, 2021.

The Spanish-Swiss marque was incorporated in Barcelona in 1904 as *La Fabrica de Automoviles La Hispano-Suiza* formed from the remnants of two firms suffering financial problems. An executive of both organizations was 26 year old Swiss engineer Mark Birkigt. He held engine and chassis patents and was made factory manager of the new concern with the name Hispano-Suiza: Spanish-Swiss.

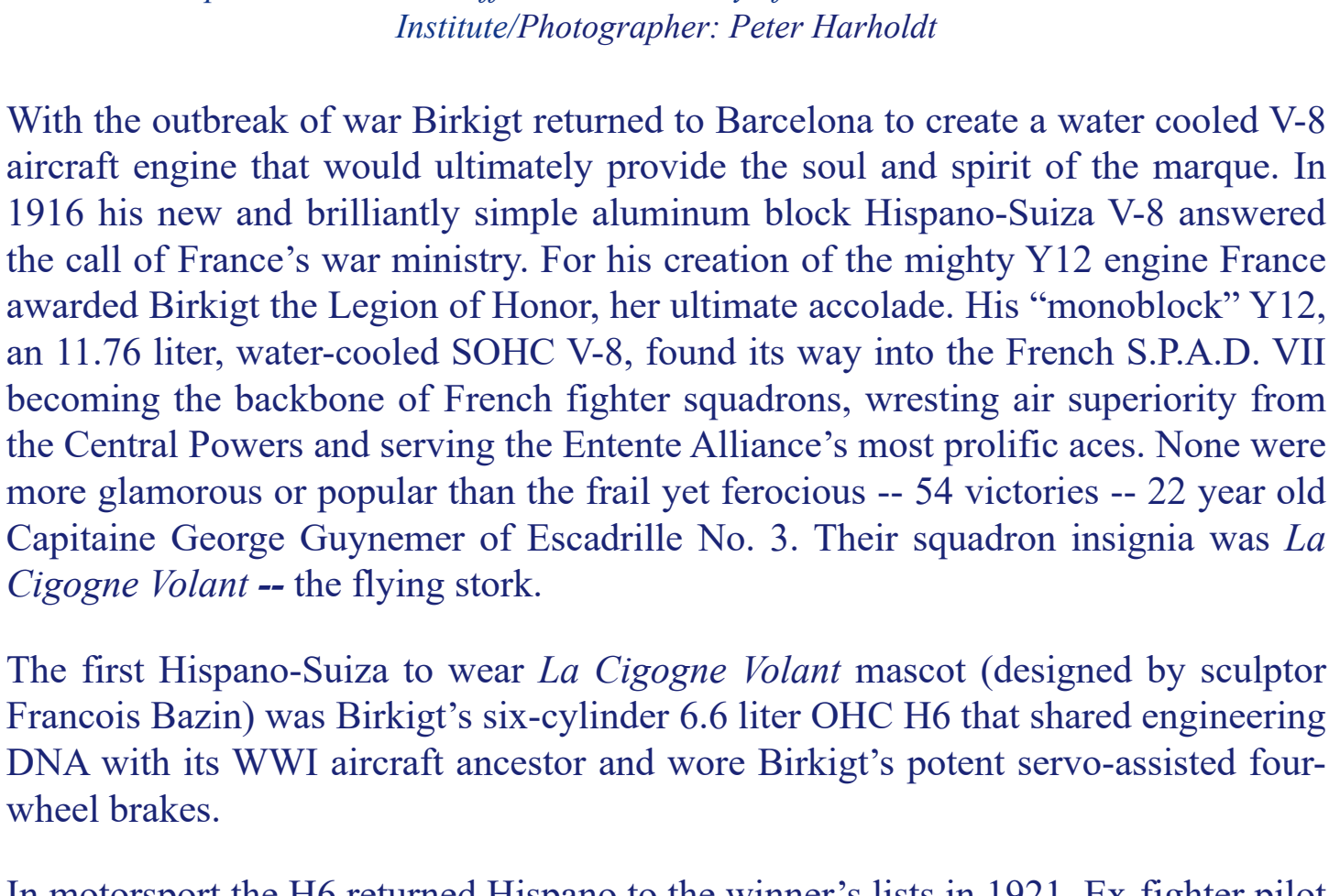


1912 Hispano-Suiza T-15 Alfonso XIII. Photo courtesy of Miles Collier Collections at Revs Institute/Photographer: Peter Harholdt

Engineer Birkigt liked to drive. He was known to commute from the Hispano works in Paris to the Barcelona factory making the journey do double duty as a commute and real-world test session. The long drives confirming his assumptions and prejudices with Birkigt learning firsthand how close to perfection were his creations. Hispano quality was a lofty target. The addition of four-wheel servo-assisted brakes on the landmark H6 rewrote the rules for premium car engineering.

Though Hispano-Suiza has been called “the queen of the road”, it is literally the car of a king. Specifically, King Alfonso XIII of Spain. The king owned as many as 30 of the grand marque and in 1909 the factory received royal permission to call the T15 the “Alfonso XIII”. In 1911 his consort, Queen Victoria Eugenia, presented him with a white T15 with gold-plated fittings and golden wire wheels for his birthday.

The Alfonso XIII is the blood descendant of the 2655 cc Coupe de l'Auto-winning Hispano of 1910. The three-car Hispano-Suiza racing team finished a resounding first, third and sixth. In 1911, with the 3620 cc four-cylinder, the new race-derived T30 was capable of a true 80 mph making the elegant “Alfonso XIII” one of the first true sports cars.



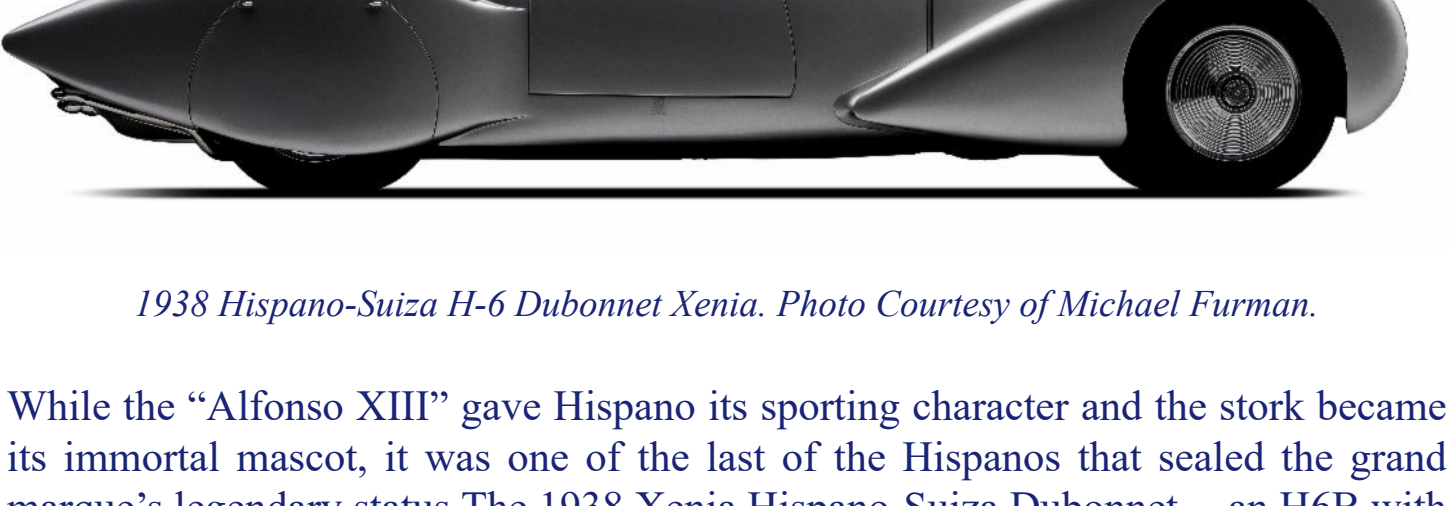
1928 Hispano-Suiza H6C Stiff Kellner. Courtesy of Miles Collier Collections at Revs Institute/Photographer: Peter Harholdt

With the outbreak of war Birkigt returned to Barcelona to create a water cooled V-8 aircraft engine that would ultimately provide the soul and spirit of the marque. In 1916 his new and brilliantly simple aluminum block Hispano-Suiza V-8 answered the call of France's war ministry. For his creation of the mighty Y12 engine France awarded Birkigt the Legion of Honor, her ultimate accolade. His “monoblock” Y12, an 11.76 liter, water-cooled SOHC V-8, found its way into the French S.P.A.D. VII becoming the backbone of French fighter squadrons, wresting air superiority from the Central Powers and serving the Entente Alliance's most prolific aces. None were more glamorous or popular than the frail yet ferocious -- 54 victories -- 22 year old Capitaine George Guynemer of Escadrille No. 3. Their squadron insignia was *La Cigogne Volant* -- the flying stork.

The first Hispano-Suiza to wear *La Cigogne Volant* mascot (designed by sculptor Francois Bazin) was Birkigt's six-cylinder 6.6 liter OHC H6 that shared engineering DNA with its WWI aircraft ancestor and wore Birkigt's potent servo-assisted four-wheel brakes.

In motorsport the H6 returned Hispano to the winner's lists in 1921. Ex-fighter pilot and Duesenberg Grand Prix racer Andre Dubonnet -- also an alumnus of Escadrille No. 3 -- drove an H6 to victory in the Bouillon Cup of the Boulogne race. Another victory followed with a win in the Autumn Cup at Monza, this time with a bored-out 6.9 liter H6 capable of over 107 mph.

Birkigt's final automotive masterpiece was the gigantic J12 of 1931 (the year Alfonso XIII was exiled and the year the Depression bit hardest in France) that would have nothing to do with the economic realities of the deepening Depression. The elegant new 9.425 liter 190 hp 60-degree V-12 -- ultimately an 11.3-liter 250 hp V-12 by 1934 -- was of such handsome proportion and presentation that one proud J12 owner specified that his *carrosserie* should install glass tops in the hood so that Birkigt's beautiful V-12 would not be hidden.



1938 Hispano-Suiza H-6 Dubonnet Xenia. Photo Courtesy of Michael Furman.

While the “Alfonso XIII” gave Hispano its sporting character and the stork became its immortal mascot, it was one of the last of the Hispanos that sealed the grand marque's legendary status.The 1938 Xenia Hispano-Suiza Dubonnet -- an H6B with an 6.5-liter straight-six -- is still regarded as the most glamorous Hispano-Suiza wearing radical and exquisite coachwork designed by Jean Andreau and realized by Carrosserie Scatichich. Andre Dubonnet named the Xenia for late wife Xenia Johnson who died in 1936. The reigning Madam Dubonnet refused to be haunted by the memory, let alone the name, of her predecessor and exiled the futuristic coupe.

World War II drove Xenia deeper into hiding only to reemerge a year after VE Day leading a parade opening the new St Cloud tunnel near Paris. It was first restored in the sixties, won Best of Show in the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance (2001) and followed up winning Meadowbrook's Engineering Excellence Award later that summer.

While the First World War gave Hispano-Suiza much of its lustrous reputation, the realities of post WWII life finished the grand marque. On August 15, 1947, despite a last creative flurry with the debut of an entirely new Hispano-Suiza V-8 engine at the 1946 Geneva Motor Show, an announcement in English, was published in *Autocar*: “*The famous Hispano-Suiza works in Barcelona, Spain have become semi-national and will be known as Empress National de Automobiles.*”

Birkigt had moved on shifting his gifts and attention to artillery, railway engines and even the landing gear for an early French jetliner. On March 17, 1953 *The Times* reported that 75-year old engineer and auto executive Mark Birkigt, “decorated for his achievements and contributions in both World Wars”, had died at his lakeside home in Versoix, near Geneva, Switzerland on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

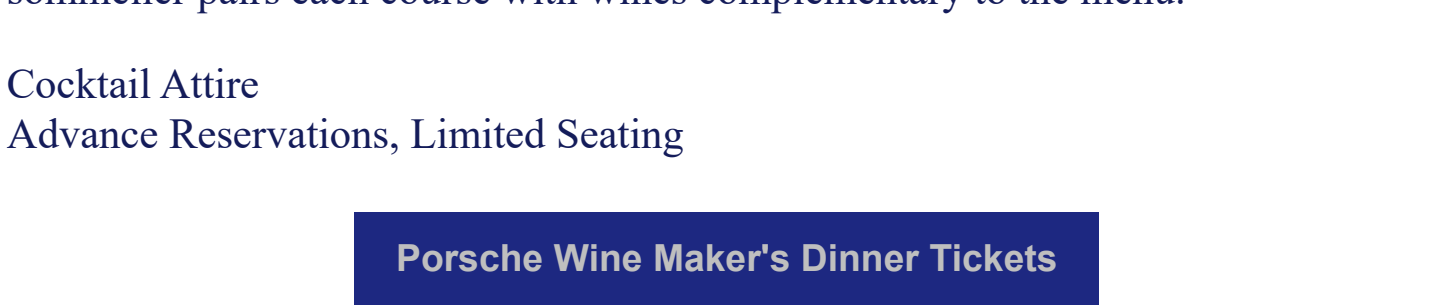
*“The Hispano-Suiza class for the 2021 Amelia Island Concours is an extraordinary group of famous, and in some case practically priceless, cars. Cost was never an object with Hispanos and it shows,”* said Bill Warner, Founder and Chairman of the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. *“While fewer than 300 survive, it's still a grand tale. Many of the players in the Hispano-Suiza saga are royalty; there are war heroes, movie stars, all sorts of international celebrities and a few sports heroes. It all helps make Hispano-Suiza one of the most legendary, elegant, desirable and exotic cars in history.”*

## AMELIA ISLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

### Thursday, May 20, 2021

#### Guardians of Porsche Wine Maker's Dinner

6:30 - 10:30 PM at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island Talbot Ballroom



Begin your AMELIA weekend with an intimate four-course dining experience. A sommelier pairs each course with wines complementary to the menu.

Cocktail Attire  
Advance Reservations, Limited Seating

[Porsche Wine Maker's Dinner Tickets](#)

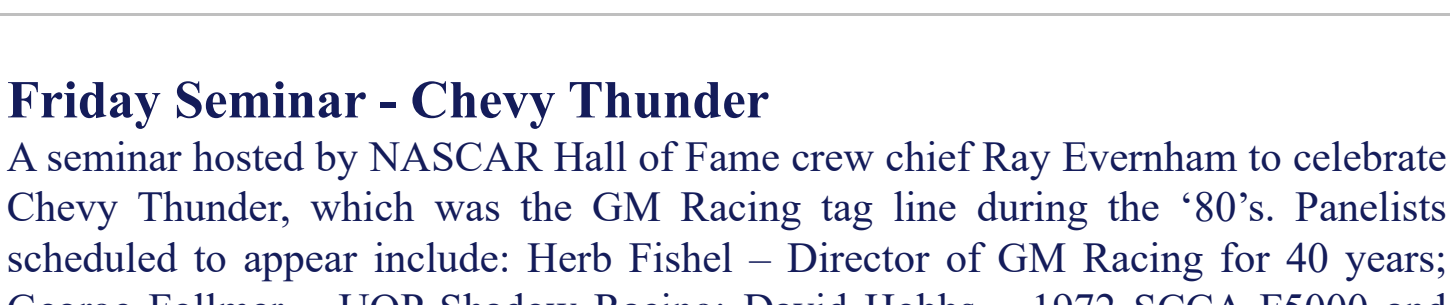
### Friday, May 21, 2021

#### Porsche Driving Experience

7:00 AM - 4:30 PM Departs  
from the Fernandina Beach  
Municipal Airport

The Porsche Driving Experience departs from the Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport immediately following the 7:00 a.m. check-in and 7:30 a.m. drivers meeting with coffee and donuts. Participants will travel in their personal vehicles to a yet to be determined location where they will enjoy activities to include an autocross in one of the latest Porsches and a spirited ride with a professional driver. The tour will also make a stop at the fabulous new Brumos Collection which began as an eclectic private automotive collection that was stored on-site at the Brumos car dealerships in Jacksonville, Florida. Many international and national award-winning cars, historical documents, and racing artifacts are housed in their new location.

- Limited to 125 cars
- Must be at least 21 years of age to participate in the event
- Required documents:
  - valid driver's license
- Need not own a Porsche to participate



[Porsche Driving Experience Reservations](#)

#### Friday Seminar - Chevy Thunder

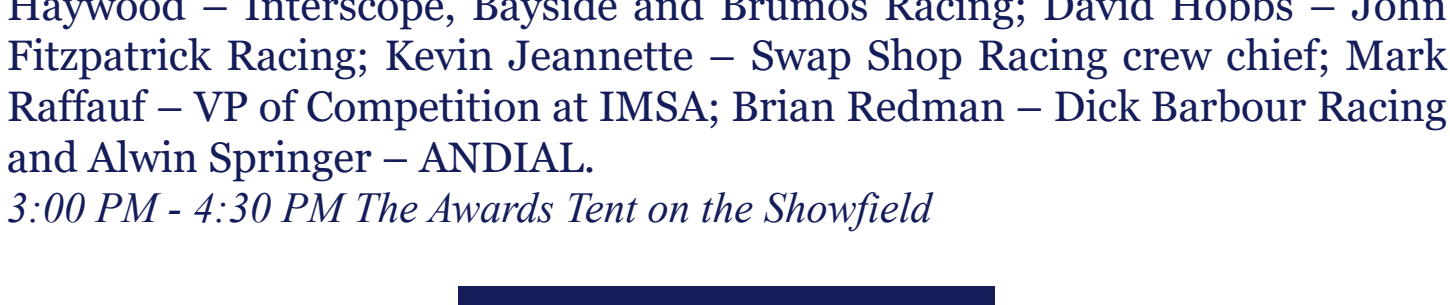
A seminar hosted by NASCAR Hall of Fame crew chief Ray Evernham to celebrate Chevy Thunder, which was the GM Racing tag line during the '80's. Panelists scheduled to appear include: Herb Fishel – Director of GM Racing for 40 years; George Follmer – UOP Shadow Racing; David Hobbs – 1972 SCCA F5000 and SCCA Trans-Am Champion and Brian Redman – 3 time SCCA F5000 Champion and IMSA GTP Champion, all in Chevy powered cars.  
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM *The Awards Tent on the Showfield*

[Friday Seminar Tickets](#)

#### McLaren Dinner

7:00 pm - 10:00 pm The Ritz-Carlton, Talbot  
Ballroom Talbot Ballroom

Cocktail Attire



[McLaren Dinner Tickets](#)

### Saturday, May 22, 2021

#### Saturday Seminar - The All-Conquering Porsche 935

A seminar hosted by NASCAR Hall of Fame crew chief Ray Evernham to tell stories of racing, preparing and writing rules for the all conquering Porsche 935 when it raced in IMSA. Panelists scheduled to appear include: Hurley Haywood – Interscope, Bayside and Brumos Racing; David Hobbs – John Fitzpatrick Racing; Kevin Jeannette – Swap Shop Racing crew chief; Mark Raffauf – VP of Competition at IMSA; Brian Redman – Dick Barbour Racing and Alvin Springer – ANDIAL.  
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM *The Awards Tent on the Showfield*

[Saturday Seminar Tickets](#)

### Sunday, May 23, 2021

#### The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

9:30 AM - 4:30 PM The Golf Club Amelia Island 10th & 18th Fairways



- General Admission Adult: \$100 – Purchased July 6, 2020 - March 31, 2021
- General Admission Adult: \$125 – Purchased April 1, - May 22, 2021
- General Admission Adult: \$150 – Purchased at the Gate/Day of Event
- General Admission Youth 13-17 years old: \$60 (12 and under free w/paying adult)
- Active Duty Military and Dependents with Active Duty ID: \$60 each available on-site only

[Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance Tickets](#)

#### Concours and More

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM The Golf Club of Amelia Island

- Ticket includes early entry into the show field at 8:30 AM
- A private lunch inside the Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island(11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) in the Talbot Ballroom
- Event Poster (to be distributed at lunch)
- Tickets not available day of show

[Concours and More Tickets](#)

#### Club Amelia

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM Club Amelia Pavilion on the Showfield

Your Club Amelia Ticket includes:

- Early Admission onto the show field at 8:30 AM (One hour prior to gates opening to public)
- Collectible Program
- Collectible Poster
- Breakfast, Lunch and Afternoon Snack
- Hosted Bar
- Covered seating located in the Awards Presentation area
- Private restrooms for Club Amelia Patrons
- Parking decal provided.

It is not necessary to purchase General Admission tickets for entry onto the show field. Your Club Amelia ticket is your entry into the show field.

[Club Amelia Tickets](#)

All images are property of The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance / Decorum Studios

About The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

THE AMELIA is held May 20-23, 2021 at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island and The Golf Club of Amelia Island. The show's Foundation has donated over \$3.75 million to Community Hospice & Palliative Care, Spina Bifida of Jacksonville and other local and national charities since 1996. To learn more about the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, visit [www.ameliaincoursdse.org](http://www.ameliaincoursdse.org).

The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance| 904-636-0027 | [E-mail](#) | [Website](#)



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