

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Mecum at Kissimmee, FL Auction, January 2011: Rivas and Cobras to the Fore

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1996 Riva Aquarama Special - Sold for \$975,000

**It was two seemingly disparate entries, one 'Old World' Riva power boat and one very home grown, a 1963 Shelby Cobra 'Dragonsnake', that headed the results at Mecum's \$40m+ Florida sale.**

The 1996 Riva Aquarama Special, hull 774, the last Aquarama sold to the public, achieved an impressive \$975,000. There was another Riva in the auction's top ten best-sellers, a 1970 Riva Aquarama Series III, which sold for \$325,000.

Talking to a UK-based Cobra specialist this week, he felt prices for the Anglo-American sportscar – which have soared in recent years – might be on the decline. If you look at the big-block Cobra that was a little too 'chromed-pipes-and-white-and-blue-paint' for my liking, but nevertheless sold for \$550,000, he might be right. Compare that with RM's similarly shiny, red \$643,500 car at its Scottsdale sale just a few days before Mecum, and it's less money but still there-and-thereabouts – and not \$1m.

The big-selling Shelby Cobra at Mecum's sale was a 289, one of the limited-series 'Dragonsnake' dragsters. You could a-hodda-hodda-hodda it round a concours field, or blaaaaaaaaaaaaarrttt! it up a drag strip – but, if in original tune, it wouldn't be fit for touring or Vintage racing. The eventual sales price of \$875,000, therefore, reflects the car's rarity and collectability rather than its usefulness.

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1966 Shelby Cobra 427 - Sold for \$550,000

Show me an original, wire-wheeled, narrow-bodied 289 in a nice colour (black, green or ivory, for example) and the buyers will come running, as you can do pretty much any event in these cars nowadays.

Elsewhere in the successful sale, dominated by mid-range American classics, a 1969 Pontiac GTO Judge Convertible sold for \$225,000 and the 1964 'Countdown 3', one of just 21 Detroit Steel Tubing-built, factory A/FX lightweight drag-racing 427 Mercury Comets, went for \$175,000.

Mecum's next major classic car sale will be in Indianapolis on May 17-22, 2011.

For further information, see [www.mecum.com](http://www.mecum.com).

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