CLASSIC DRIVER

Rampant Italians shine at RM's London sale

09 September 2014 | Joe Breeze

Well on its way to becoming one of RM's headline auctions, the London sale was busier than ever before – with a host of thoroughbred Italians selling for more than predicted...

With a Jaguar E-type Series 1 3.8 FHC selling for a beyond-estimate £109,200 a few lots into the sale (please note these prices include buyers' commission), early signs showed the domestic-bred machines might prove the most triumphant at the Battersea Evolution. This view was reinforced when a Jaguar XJR-15 sold well, a few lots later, at £218,400. But it wasn't long before Maranello madness took over: ever-animated auctioneer Max Girardo guided several cars well beyond estimate, including an F40 at £761,600 (estimate: £475,000-575,000), a 330 America at £224,000 (estimate: £145,000-175,000) and, perhaps most stunningly, a late, delivery-mileage 328 GTS for £156,800 (estimate: £65,000-95,000).

The headlining Ferraris, the 250 TdF and alloy-bodied 275 GTB (cars that we were_lucky enough to drive shortly before the sale), sold for £4.872m and £1.96m, respectively. But top-performing Italians weren't restricted to those wearing a Prancing Horse: a Lamborghini Countach 25th Anniversary sold for £224,000 (a signal that values of these later models might follow those of the ultra-desirable early cars, perhaps?), while an Osca Formula Junior went for more than double its lower estimate, fetching £212,800. Whether the latter's rarity (one of six remaining), racing provenance (ex-Ricardo Rodriguez) or simply RM's new format for London – with each car crossing the block Monterey-style – the impressive result rounded off what looks to have been RM's most successful London sale to date. And if you need any further persuasion, how about £156,800 for a Peugeot 205 T16?

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