

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 3  
MAY-JUNE 2018

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COVER: The Lexus LC 500h, the hybrid version of a car that has won a lot of comparo awards in both its regular and hybrid forms, has a beautiful surface, strong performance and a complex personality. Photo: Joe Sage

## START YOUR ENGINES : FROM THE PUBLISHER

The team fans out far and wide in this issue, to bring news from the Mediterranean, mid-Pacific, México, Michigan, Australia, the West Coast, the Rockies, Southern California and any number of points all over Arizona. Pack your bags and hang on!

**Sue Mead** covers the near and the far, with launch drives of the new Jaguar E-Pace on the island of Corsica and the Audi RS 5 Coupe here in Arizona. The World's Fastest Female Motorcycle Racer, **Valerie Thompson**, takes us to South Australia, where she tops herself with yet another female world speed record, then survives a horrific crash while continuing on her quest for the absolute world speed record (males, watch out—she's still hot on the tail of this title!). We also cover the need for speed at ISM Raceway's spring NASCAR and IndyCar Phoenix Grand Prix events, while **Randall Bohl** has race analysis from the NHRA Arizona Nationals.

In neighboring terrain, **Paul Strauss** duplicates much of the Baja 1000, just for fun, south of the border with Wide Open Baja. **Dave Stall** does a California track introduction and road time in the Lamborghini Huracán Performante, then also heads to Crested Butte, in southwest Colorado, for winter driving in the all-wheel-drive turbo-six version of the hot new Kia Stinger, while we drive the rear-drive turbo-four version in Arizona.

**Stephanie Jarnagan** puts on her family vacation hat for an RV-and-Jeep tour up the coast to the Pacific Northwest, then puts her work hat back on for a look at two powerful teen driving programs Ford brought to the Valley of the Sun. Ram Trucks also chose Arizona for the new Ram 1500 launch, on- and off-road. **Tyson Hugie**, who brings us all along on many a road trip, finds a local spot equally of interest as a day trip just for fun or a car restorer's paradise with a mission. Also in-state, we visit the secretive Nissan Arizona Test Center, the Arizona Black Rodeo at Rawhide, and Bartlett Lake, arriving in the back seat of a new Rolls-Royce Phantom and returning to town behind the wheel. And lots more.

Enjoy the ride!

**Joe Sage** - Publisher/ Executive Editor

# ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE



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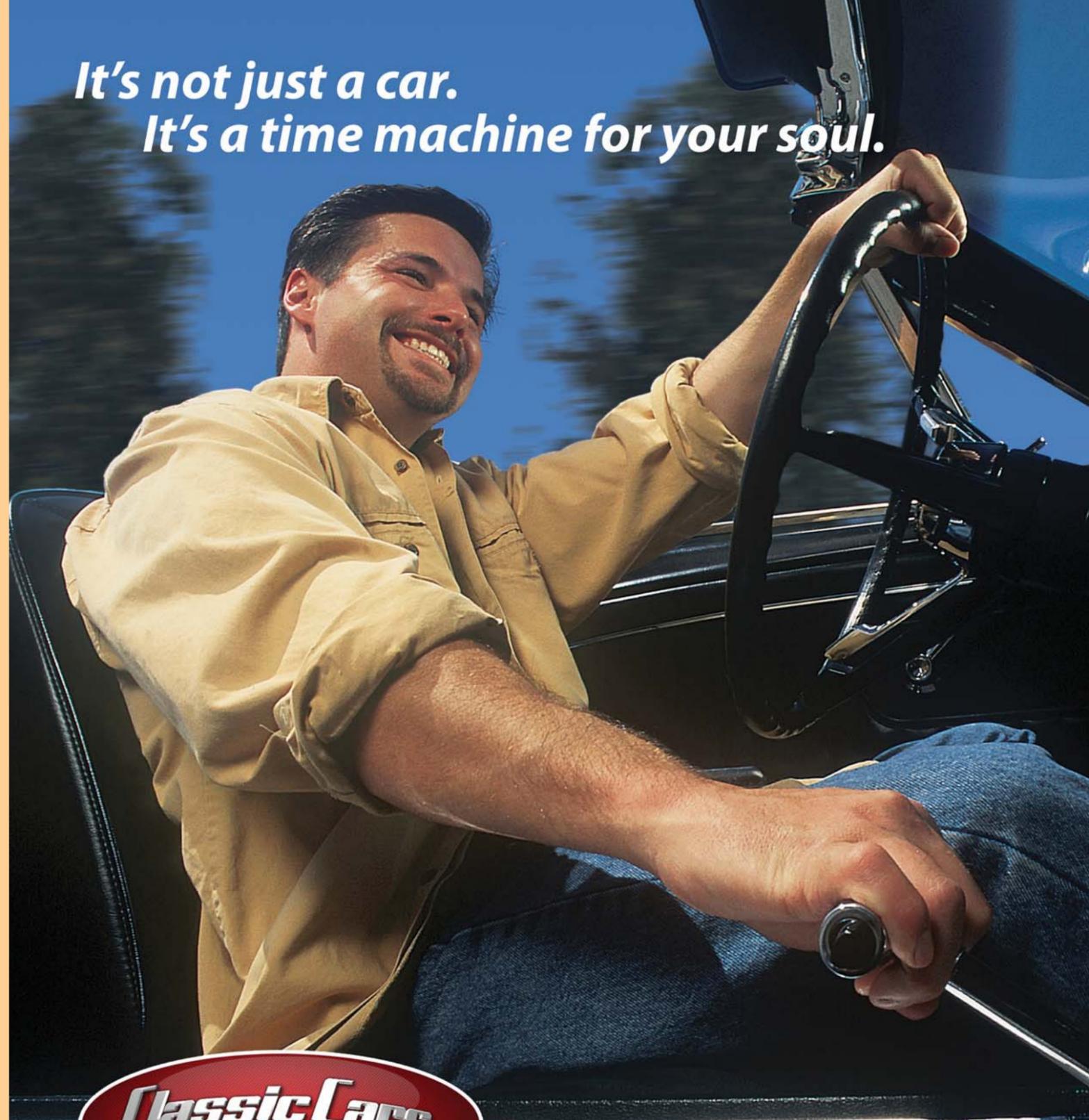
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torque to produce both mind-blowing acceleration and true hypercar top speed.

▼ **McLaren** has confirmed its upcoming new “Hyper-GT,” codenamed BP23, will have the highest top speed of any McLaren yet, beating the 243-mph peak speed of the legendary McLaren F1 road car. This new information followed an announcement by McLaren Automotive CEO, Mike Flewitt at the Geneva Motor Show that a public reveal of the car can be expected sometime this year. The next addition to the McLaren Ultimate Series will be both the fastest-ever McLaren and the most luxurious. With a three-seat cockpit design and central driving position—as in the F1—and a gasoline-electric hybrid powertrain, BP23 promises the “unparalleled blend of extreme performance and sporting luxury that befits its status as the ultimate road-going McLaren.” The entire production of 106 examples was allocated sight unseen, even before the car was officially announced a year and a half ago, in November 2016. Production is due to begin at the end of 2019, with each BP23

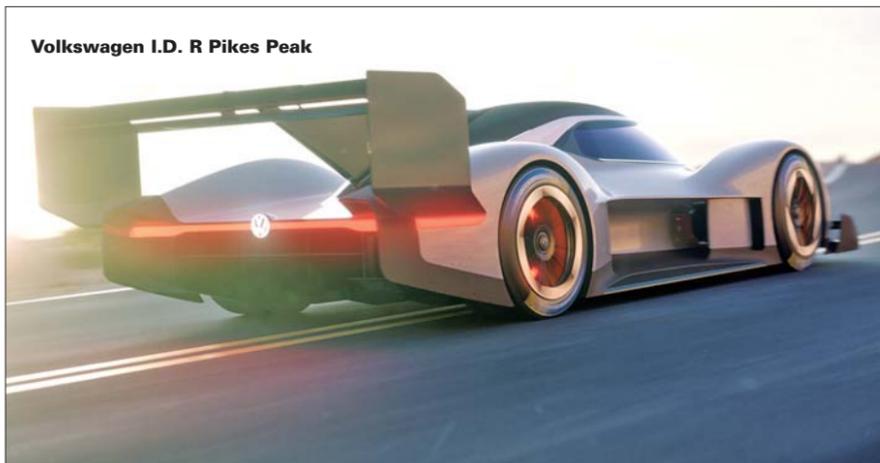
billi’s in-house team in Croatia and built entirely from scratch with all-new technologies, the C\_Two features a full carbon fiber monocoque with bonded carbon roof, integrated battery pack and merged rear carbon subframe. Crash structures are formed from aluminum, and the body itself is pure carbon fiber, for a car that is both relatively light and exceptionally strong. Double wishbone suspension with electronically-controlled dampers and



Rimac C\_Two electric hypercar

active height adjustment create a smooth and comfortable ride, while four electric motors, one powering each individual wheel, provide both four-wheel drive and extremely high levels of dynamic control. A pair of independent single-speed gearboxes applying drive to the front wheels, plus a pair of independent two-speed, gearboxes, one for each rear wheel, allow the C\_Two to make use of its prodigious

personalized to its owner’s taste by McLaren Special Operations (MSO), the division of McLaren Automotive responsible for bespoke customer commissions. BP23 will carry an as-yet unannounced name, rather than the alphanumeric nomenclatures used by the McLaren Sports Series and Super Series; the name, along with information on maximum possible speed, will be disclosed nearer to the car’s reveal.



Volkswagen I.D. R Pikes Peak

▼ **Volkswagen** has named its latest motorsport project the I.D. R Pikes Peak. This all-electric prototype racing car will compete in the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb on June 24 in Colorado. The four-wheel-drive racecar points to the sporting potential of the I.D. family of all-electric vehicles and is also the first step toward a closer relationship between Volkswagen R and Volkswagen Motorsport. Volkswagen plans to offer more than 20 fully-electric cars by 2025. The first production model in the I.D. family is scheduled to enter production at the end of 2019 in Zwickau, Germany. The Pikes Peak hillclimb, also known as the “Race to the Clouds,” has been held since 1916 in the Rocky Mountains near Colorado Springs. Its 12.4-mile route runs from just above 9,000 feet to the summit at 14,115 feet above sea level. Volkswagen last entered the Pikes Peak hillclimb in 1987 with a 652-hp dual-engine Golf, but did not win. “It is about time we settled the score,” says Volkswagen Motorsport Director, Sven Smeets. The record in the electric prototype class currently stands at 8:57.118 minutes, set in 2016 by New Zealand’s Rhys Millen.

▼ The unbelievably fast Rimac C\_Two electric hypercar made its North American debut at the New York International Auto Show. The car puts out a combined 1888 horsepower and 1696 lb-ft of torque from its electric motors, for a 0-to-60 mph time of just 1.85 seconds and a top speed of 258 mph. Designed by Rimac Automot-

▼ **Genesis** unveiled its all-electric, high-performance Essentia concept at the New York show, reimagining the brand’s “Athletic Elegance” design paradigm for future



Genesis Essentia concept

Genesis product and forecasting performance and technology. The brand’s first battery electric vehicle, it features a lightweight carbon-fiber monocoque, powerful multi-motor electric powertrain and custom-tailored interior. Essentia is the brand’s initial concept for a true GT car, conceived as a capable, thrilling sports car designed to counter the complexities of a modern lifestyle with serenity, clarity, and beauty. Inspired by classic Gran Turismo proportions, Essentia has a long hood and swept-back cabin. The carbon fiber-bodied Essentia concept—finished in Stardust Gray Metallic—is low to the ground and instantly recognizable by its graceful silhouette. Its front fascia introduces an evolution of the Genesis Crest Grille that highlights efficiency and aerodynamics. Visible through a transparent hood are the advanced carbon fiber chassis, pronounced formula car-style nose cone and pushrod suspension. Intakes left and right of the grille act as air curtains, streamlining airflow around the front corners. Flanking the grille are signature Genesis quad lights—first used on the GV80 concept—using laser optical technology to integrate extremely thin, flush headlights into the body. Extending onto a side blade aft of the front wheels, the lights create a unique light signature. Functional air outlets just behind the front wheels reduce pressure buildup and drag. The side profile is dominated by an “anti-wedge” parabolic line providing visual structure while also emphasizing overall length. Butterfly

doors are opened and closed via a sensor mounted in the B-pillar integrating fingerprint controls and biometric facial recognition. The rear of Essentia is defined by an aerodynamic cut-off surface that hous-

es the flush rear quad lights and emphasizes the muscular rear haunch. A rear diffuser surrounded by carbon fiber acts as an integrated venting solution for the rear wheel arch. Midas metal copper, also used as trim on the bespoke wheels inspired by the Genesis G-Matrix philosophy, surrounds the daylight opening.

▼ **McLaren** unveiled a track-only version of its new Ultimate Series McLaren Senna



McLaren Senna GTR

at Geneva—the McLaren Senna GTR. The car has been confirmed for up to 75 examples, to be hand-assembled in Woking, England, in 2019. Expressions of interest (a step prior to orders) are already being taken, with exact technical details to be confirmed later this year. Based around the same carbon fiber Monocage III structure as the Senna, the Senna GTR will be similar to the road-legal car’s 2641 lb dry

weight, with more power and torque from its 4.0-liter twin-turbo V8 than the ±789 hp and 590 lb-ft (800PS/800Nm) of the road car—at least 825PS (±814 hp). A race transmission, revised double wishbone suspension, Pirelli slicks and up to 1000 kg (±2205 lb) of downforce suggest the Senna GTR will post the quickest McLaren circuit lap times outside Formula 1. The car will have a wider track and new fenders front and rear, the body modifications simplified by fenders and other aerodynamic components having been designed as “clipped on” to the cockpit structure. The Senna GTR will also feature a new wheel design specifically for circuit use. The front splitter of the Senna GTR concept is larger and the rear diffuser is both larger and extends further back than the road-car components, for improved aerodynamic performance. The rear deck is the lowest of any McLaren, aiding aerodynamics and cooling, and helping to optimize performance of the active rear wing, and the outer skin of the doors has been tucked in to better channel airflow. Unlike the road-legal McLaren Senna, the Senna GTR will feature a polycarbonate “ticket window.” A single-make race series is part of a program of Pure McLaren track events, allowing owners with the minimum of an International D-grade license



▼ The **Jaguar I-PACE**—the first all-electric production vehicle from the brand—delivers an estimated range of 240 miles, with a zero-to-80 percent charge of its 432



2019 Jaguar I-PACE

pouch cell 90kWh lithium-ion battery pack in around 40 minutes using publicly available 100kW DC rapid charging facilities. Home charging with a 230V wall box does the same overnight in just over ten hours. A suite of range-optimizing smart technologies includes a battery pre-conditioning system to warm or cool the battery—and cabin—to optimal temperature while plugged in to power, reducing the need for the vehicle to tap into its driving range for this. Two Jaguar-designed concentric electric motors at each axle—with driveshafts passing through the motors themselves for compactness—provide performance and all-wheel-drive traction. The motors' high torque and efficiency combine to deliver sports car performance, hitting 0-to-60 mph in 4.5 seconds. Light, stiff aluminum body structure with advanced riveting and bonding technology, together with the structural battery pack, provides the highest torsional rigidity of any current Jaguar. The battery is placed centrally between the two axles and as low as possible, for a low center of gravity and 50:50 weight distribution. Along with advanced double wishbone front and integral link rear suspension (with standard active air suspension and optional configurable adaptive dynamics), this delivers agile handling and notable ride comfort. The vehicle's sleek, coupe-like silhouette was influenced by the Jaguar C-X75 supercar concept, echoing its cab-forward short, low hood, aero-enhanced roofline and squared-off rear with curved rear window,

helping reduce the coefficient of drag to just 0.29 Cd. Active vanes in the grille open for cooling and close when not needed, redirecting air through an integral hood scoop for smoothest airflow. Jaguar I-PACE

has the InControl Touch Pro Duo infotainment system that first debuted on Range Rover models—a pair of touchscreens that work in conjunction with capacitive sensors and tactile physical controls to make the new system intuitive to use.

▼ Like the rest of the **Pirelli** Collezione tire range for prestigious historic cars, the new Stelvio Corsa tire, created specifically for the Ferrari 250 GTO, incorporates cut-

**Pirelli Collezione highlights:**  
Stelvio Corsa, Cinturato P7, Cinturato CN36, Cinturato P5, P700



ting-edge technology into the original tire design. Pirelli and Ferrari displayed this latest tire on the Ferrari 250 GTO at the classic Coppa Milano-Sanremo Historic Rally, where Pirelli is a partner. The new tire was shown to the public for the first time on this record-breaking car, one of only 36 built from 1961 to 1964, which had sold for \$38.1 million at Bonhams Quail Lodge Auction in Carmel, during Monterey and

Pebble Beach Car Week in August 2014. Pirelli displayed a number of tires from the Collezione range at the Paddock Club in Monza, where the Coppa Milano-Sanremo Historic Rally starts. The Pirelli Collezione family caters to the owners of some of the world's most desirable cars made between 1950 and 1980, helping them to maintain perfect originality. Tread patterns and sidewalls are similar to period tires, yet complemented with state of the art technology. With new advanced compounds, the Pirelli Collezione tire range offers better wet grip for high safety and reliability. During development, Pirelli engineers use the same parameters that the car designers at the time worked with, to perfectly complement original suspension and mechanical characteristics. Pirelli Fondazione archive images are also referred to in the design process. Production applies bespoke techniques similar to those used in motorsport. The end result combines performance, style and authenticity. Stelvio Corsa history goes back to Alberto Ascari of Milano claiming consecutive world titles, 1952 and 1953, in the newly-created Formula 1 world championship, driving a Ferrari 500 with Pirelli Stelvio tires. In 1954, Maurice Trintignant and Froilan Gonzalez won Le Mans in a Ferrari 375 Plus with Stelvio Corsa tires. Other Pirelli tires were born after World

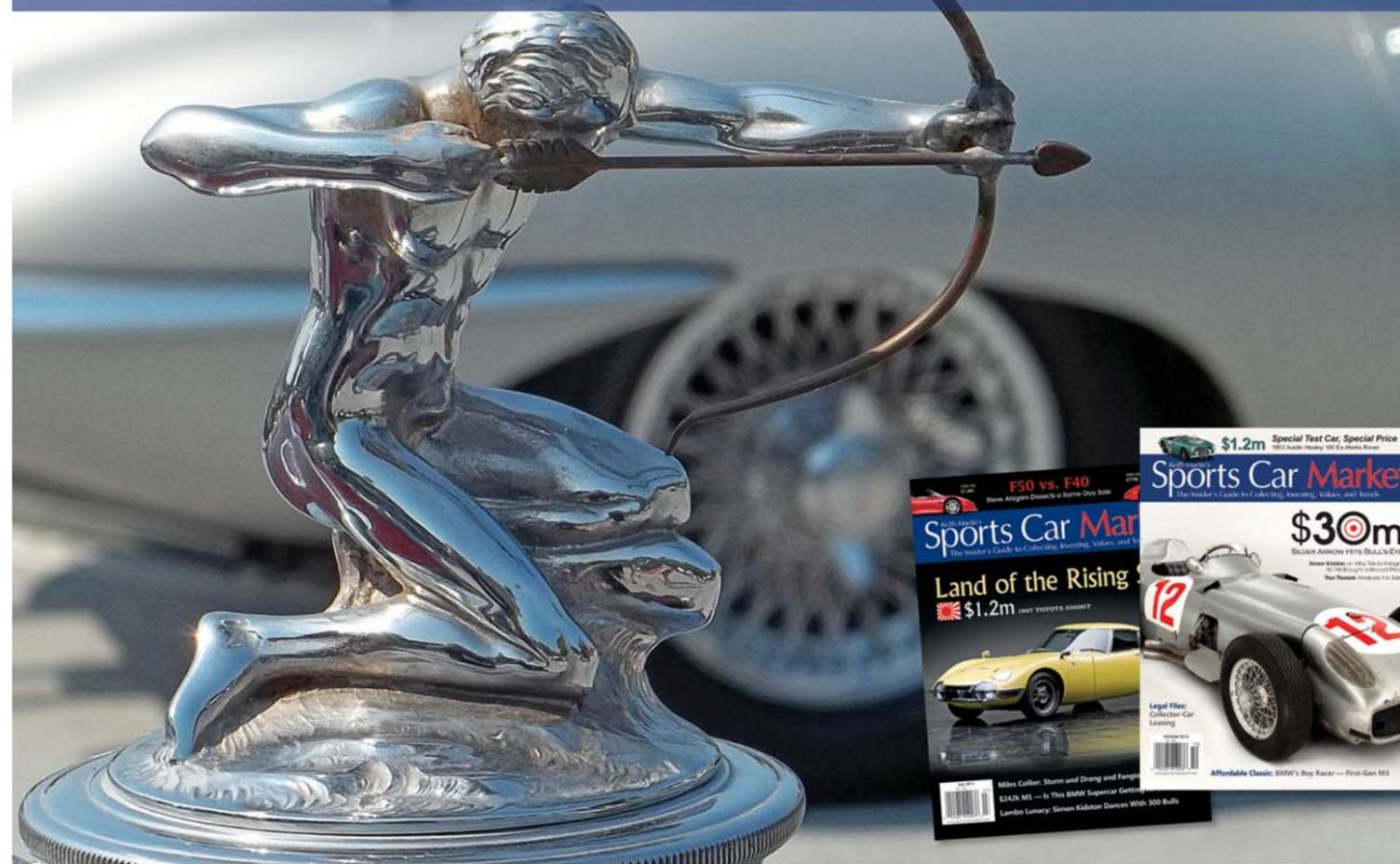
War II, but the Stelvio Corsa represented the most performance-oriented product right up until the mid-1960s. Pirelli decided to re-evolve this legend to create a dedicated tire for the Ferrari 250 GTO, the most expensive classic car in the world. No other size is available and no other car can use the Pirelli Stelvio Corsa. Other Pirelli Collezione tires have been manufactured for classic Maserati, Porsche and others. ■

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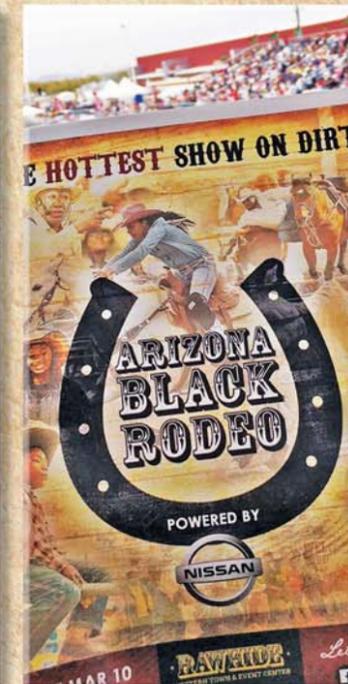
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## SECRETS AND SPURS by Joe Sage

Nissan USA, headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, is heavily involved in Arizona.

For a taste of the Old West, Nissan Titan Pickup Truck sponsors the Arizona Black Rodeo, held each year at Rawhide Western Town and Event Center on the Gila River Indian Community.

And for a taste of the New West, they have the Nissan Technical Center North America (NTNCA) Arizona Test Center, a proving ground commonly known as simply ATC. The facility is a key component in the complex chain of events that leads to the new vehicles you see in Nissan showrooms, working hard in the chicken-and-egg sequence of goals, trials and adjustments that perfect a vehicle's engineering—a process Nissan calls "total vehicle development," which involves all design, engineering and technical operations.

Nissan's Old and New West came together for us with an immersive session at ATC, bookended by an Arizona Black Rodeo preview lunch one day and then the Rodeo itself the next.

The Arizona Test Center is a 3,050-acre expanse near Stanfield, southeast of Maricopa and about 45 miles south of downtown Phoenix, in the middle of agricultural country. Much land within the ATC is farmed—and not by stealth-trained Nissan farm employees, but rather by area farmers who themselves have learned how to keep a secret. We, on the other hand, handed over our cameras and phones at the gate.

Arizona's low desert terrain is an ideal environment to test Nissan vehicles for hot weather dura-

bility, engine cooling and air conditioner performance, but the purpose-built facility keeps busy with a wide range of duties year-round.

The ATC proving ground has about a dozen different components (11 or 13, as they group a couple of things). The High Speed Oval is a 5.7-mile asphalt-concrete three-lane track, steeply banked so its turns are handling-neutral at 130 mph, the speed at which centrifugal force and gravity even out and take you around the curve hands-free, as we did in a Nissan Titan full-size pickup.

A Durability Test Area breaks into eleven over-all tasks, from frame-twisting to corrosion, Belgian block surfaces, water and mud hazards of multiple depths, off-road testing and curb impact.

A Ride Comfort Course has at least 15 specialty surfaces—including an innuendo-bearing New York Road, railroad crossings, waves, dips, coarse and smooth aggregates (including European spec), asphalt patches, various undulations, impacts, potholes and more. Distinct from the Durability area, these are used to test and develop for ride comfort and for road noise inside the vehicle.

Some Marketability Course features also seem similar to the Durability and Ride Comfort areas, but are engineered to challenge vehicles in a range of North American real world conditions at closer to real world speed and dynamics. Sixteen "road events" include bridge expansion joints, broken concrete, chatter bumps, manholes, off-camber turns, bottoming-out bumps and other challenges of surface, form and condition. There is innuendo here,

too, in a Michigan Harshness stretch, and maybe a compliment in the San Gabriel curves and climbs.

A City Course is mostly about pattern, a system of interconnected squares that can be adapted to numerous urban scenarios.

The Grades area has four concrete slopes of 16, 20, 25 and 30 percent grades. (For perspective, Interstate highways are limited to six percent, or seven in extreme mountains at 55 mph or lower.) Tackling these in the Titan provided a great chance to look around at all the secret terrain, all at once, from the highest point in the facility, but you cannot see in front of you at all as you prepare to descend—much as in many off-roading situations.

A Soak Shed and Wind Breaks (seems like two things, but one by their count) sound obvious, but are actually for testing engine cooling (and air conditioning) in heavy winds from all directions, which can eliminate normal cooling benefits of motion.

Curb impact, addressed in the Durability area, gets very specific in the Structural Strength Pad. If you haven't thought much about curb impact (other than what a mistake may have just cost you), you will after you stand nearby as Nissan engineers slam the 5700-to-7400-pound Titan through wild slide skids to the point of impact with the 100mm Curb. Bam! We take it for granted that we'll drive away with rubber intact and air inside, but this test shows how critically such a detail is addressed.

The Vehicle Dynamics Area, a combination of large and small pads, is adaptable to a number of tasks including lateral G forces and skid dynamics.

The Low Friction/Noise Pass-by Facility is another we'd count as two, with an area of basalt tiles that very effectively represent an icy road and an-

other area with lateral sound-testing equipment.

Indoor activities at the Vehicle Dynamics Lab include K&C (kinematics and compliance) testing for suspension, a four-post shaker for body rigidity and vibration, and many more things we either couldn't see or could but can't tell you about.

We've driven the Nissan Titan at a number of award-granting comparo events, multiple times (where it has sometimes taken the top prize)—the Texas Truck Rodeo, Mudfest Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year Awards in the Pacific Northwest and the Active Lifestyle Vehicle Awards in Arizona—but ATC is the original ultimate challenge, the original bar-set-higher-than-high, the place that works hard to assure the trucks should breeze through our competitive courses in other locations.

Having scrutinized the Titan before, we concentrated more on the world outside at this event, as we drove on nearly every one of the above courses in one busy afternoon. We did get to check out the new Nissan Titan King Cab for the first time—a neat combination of the high-utility extended cab from their small trucks of the '70s and '80s, crossed with the full-size half- and heavy-half-ton capabilities of the Titan—and look forward to some dedicated drive time in it again before long.

We've driven other top secret development and track sites with other manufacturers, including two of the Detroit Three's truck- and/or off-road-specific test facilities. It's always enlightening. While you might find yourself thinking these vehicles are built to conquer the test track—sort of like studying in school just for the exam—it's more the other way around. These facilities are built to conquer the vehicles, and it's not until a vehicle comes out

on top that it's ready for final manufacture and sale.

Overall, the process of developing a new vehicle is mind-bogglingly complex. The fact that people will camp out in line for a new smartphone that has maybe one new feature each year is laughable in the face of vehicle development, which includes the equivalent of that smartphone as just one of hundreds or thousands of details that all have to work in concert, as multiple tons hurtle down the highway at 100 miles an hour, while protecting the lives and safety of those inside. Multiply this by about 350 or more vehicles available in the marketplace each year (all in far stiffer competition than a handful of phone brands). Multiply that by also having new models each year, which also have to meet ever-evolving external regulations. The fuse burns at both ends in the vehicle design process, as styling, engineering, market positioning and budgetary goals all collide with and ultimately benefit from all this developmental testing.

Each vehicle starts as an idea and a sketch, but the real world throws up a range of challenges. When a new vehicle is released and some colleague or enthusiast inevitably says, well, they ought to make a hatchback (or offer a different transmission, or some other variable), it's interesting to grasp just what a complex process such a seemingly simple demand would precipitate.

NTCNA nationwide employs over 1,200 people, many at the Arizona Test Center, and represents an investment of \$238 million. Other Nissan facilities include the NTNCA home base in Farmington Hills, Michigan; a research center in Silicon Valley; an e-Powertrain Center in West Sacramento; and Nissan Design America studios in San Diego. ■

## ARIZONA BLACK RODEO

The ABRA-sanctioned Arizona Black Rodeo is one of the largest and most popular African-American events in Arizona, attracting more than 9,000 rodeo fans across a week-end of Western experiences. The event is committed to keeping the contributions of African-American western heritage alive by offering a fun, family-oriented event for residents and visitors alike. The Arizona Black Rodeo continues to build its reputation as a unique cultural and educational experience for an audience of all ages.

The Arizona Black Rodeo is sponsored by Nissan Titan Pickup Truck, who also invited us to lunch with Cloves Campbell—publisher of the *Arizona Informant*, Arizona's largest African-American newspaper, and chairman emeritus of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA)—for an overview of the Black Rodeo. The Arizona Black Rodeo Association (ABRA) has six core values: Youth, Community, Agriculture, Education, Health and Entertainment. The Rodeo evokes African-Americans' heritage in shaping Arizona and the West—an estimated 20 percent of late 19th century cowboys were African-Americans—with special emphasis on family values and a way for youth to gain new hands-on experiences.

Next was our Nissan Arizona Test Center tour, then an evening of BBQ at American Legion Post 65, hosted by Campbell, with personal introductions to the cowboys and cowgirls who would perform the next day.

On Saturday, it was off to Rawhide Western Town for a pre-show tour, contestant and VIP introductions, then the rodeo itself. More than 9,000 fans enjoyed a seriously fun event on a perfect Arizona spring day.

For more information, visit: [azblackrodeo.wixsite.com/azbr](http://azblackrodeo.wixsite.com/azbr) ■

# Island Spirit

## HYUNDAI KONA HAS ITS RITE OF PASSAGE ON THE BIG ISLAND

BY JOE SAGE

We've done launch drives for Hyundai Santa Fe in Park City, Utah and Hyundai Tucson in Minnesota. But for the new Hyundai Kona, it was no cliché to hold the event in no place other than the Kona Coast on Hawaii's Big Island. "We know this wasn't convenient," said communications director Jim Trainor by means of apology, "but it fits the car perfectly!" We didn't hear anyone complaining. In fact, with non-stops to Kona from Phoenix, it was only an hour or so more than, say, a flight to Boston. And our sacri-

fice (you're welcome) will help to pass that Hawaiian island spirit on to each new Kona owner.

**THE SEGMENT:** With healthy sales in its existing lineup of Tucson and two flavors of Santa Fe, Hyundai waited a little longer than some to expand its CUV lineup toward the smaller end—a group known generally as subcompact crossovers, but for Kona called the small CUV (which Hyundai acknowledges is not an EPA or other standard industry term). This smallest segment has grown at more than twice the rate of compact CUVs. Call them what you will, all but one in Hyundai's identified competitive set (see caption) are first-generation vehicles, making this a "wild, wild West category," per corporate product VP Mike O'Brien—ripe for innovation and open to conquest.

**KONA'S BIRTH:** Much like a mid-Pacific volcano, Kona's internal energy preceded and determined its final form. We remind people often that "design" is not styling, but the comprehensive effort of engineering, packaging and styling. We also encourage people to look at a vehicle on the road from the ground up, to imagine its stance, suspension and drivetrain, rather than just that dominant sheet metal. It's an interesting drill and, atypically, was the process behind Hyundai Kona.

Proportions and attitude were the vehicle's con-

ceptual starting points. Designers say probably 80 percent of a vehicle's appearance is dictated not by its skin, but by its proportion. "When you look at the side view—the distribution of engine, cargo and passenger space, the roof height, the height from the ground—those are the things that really determine your first impression of the product, not the surfacing," O'Brien says. "That comes later."

Proportion is driven by the packaging of powertrain, wheels and suspension, cargo and people inside; and "attitude," which in turn comes down to stance. As an example, O'Brien cites a football player, who will have a wide variety of stances, each with its own mission, each conveying a message. For the new Kona (rare in that its name was determined before the rest of the process), the design chief pushed the team with an active discussion of stance, leaning ever more into the conversation until all had an attitude that was "aggressive and expressive" in their creative minds, a stance that gave the Hyundai Kona life.

The islands kick in, too, with concepts of "line" and layers. Line might be considered as the first broad strokes, defining an "active urban adventure lifestyle" (even if the Big Island is not particularly urban), with its sheet metal suggesting the "random spontaneity" of a lava flow—"an improvised

Kona's competitive set includes Chevy Trax, Ford EcoSport, Honda HR-V, Jeep Renegade, Nissan Kicks, Toyota C-HR and others. Hyundai is about to realign their existing models a bit, too: Tucson still a subcompact, compact Santa Fe Sport now just Santa Fe, and three-row midsize becoming a new Santa Fe XL.

approach with a sense of unpredictability." It solidifies in final form with a nod to the smoothness and serenity of the sky in the glass area; dynamic adventure of the mountains for the sheet metal; and the solid strength of the earth beneath. The base conveys not, say, motion and speed as you might when designing a coupe, but the tough and durable off-road and all-weather capabilities of a CUV. These conceptual thoughts appear to have borne real fruit in the stable yet aggressive final product. The combined feel of durability and adventure is also presented in bodywork above the fenders, wrapping around both front and rear, tough surfaces that can handle outdoor or urban abuse.

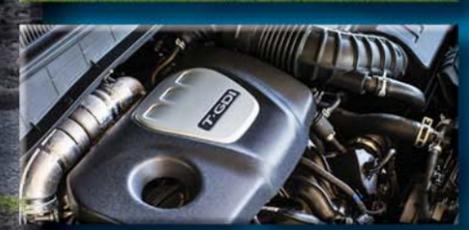
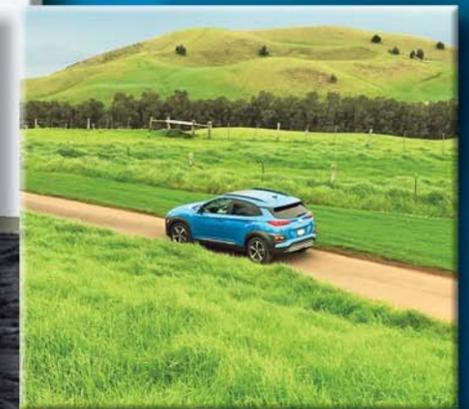
The interior focuses on "companionship," an inviting atmosphere, ready for whatever you want to do on any given day (as faithful and eager as your dog). "Exposed technology" is easy to understand without explanation. Clear graphics and lime green accents (on upper trims) support this simplicity.

Because this is a young segment—that wild, wild West concept—it avoids what O'Brien describes as a convergence in other vehicles' sizes, where dimensions have evolved to all be within

fractions of an inch among brands. Not so in this segment, where dimensions inside and out vary widely. Comparative tables showed a notable achievement for Kona in providing tight and nimble packaging with highly competitive interior space.

Hyundai Kona has a 147-hp 2.0L engine in two lower trims and a 175-hp 1.6L turbo in two top trims. Fuel mileage is about the same for either (exactly the same combined; a point better for the 2.0L on the highway; and a point better for the 1.6L turbo in the city), making the decision largely about cost (the lower trims range \$5200 to \$6100 less than the higher) versus notably more torque (195 vs 132 lb-ft) and a 7-speed DCT transmission in the turbo, both desirable, as well as of course inclusions at each trim level (such as wheel size and audio, with the vast majority of features the same on all). Each trim level is available as a front-wheel- or all-wheel-drive model, with a price differential of \$1300 on any (and with a more sophisticated multi-link rear suspension on AWD builds).

We drove the 1.6L turbo for one full day on the



### SPECIFICATIONS

#### SE, SEL

ENGINE	.....2.0L D-CVVT multi-point fuel inj
HP/TORQUE	.....147 hp / 132 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....12.5:1
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd automatic
MPG	.....FWD: 27/33/30 (city/hwy/comb)
	.....AWD: 25/30/27 (city/hwy/comb)

#### LIMITED, ULTIMATE

ENGINE	.....1.6L turbo D-CVVT direct inj
HP/TORQUE	.....175 hp / 195 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.0:1
TRANSMISSION	.....7-spd DCT
MPG	.....FWD: 28/32/30 (city/hwy/comb)
	.....AWD: 26/29/27 (city/hwy/comb)

DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD / optional AWD
STEERING	.....motor driv rack & pinion, col mt
SUSPENSION	.....F: McPherson strut w coils, gas shocks, advanced valving, stblzr bar
	.....R: Coupled torsion beam axle (FWD) / multi-link (AWD); gas shocks, adv valving
BRAKES	.....F: vented: SE 280, others 305mm
	.....R: solid: SE 262, others 284mm
WHEELS/TIRES	.....16", 17", 18" by trim level
TURNING CIRCLE	.....34.8 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....6.7 in
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....164.0 in / 102.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....19.2 / 45.8 cu.ft
FUEL CAPACITY	.....13.2 gal
WEIGHT	.....2890-3344 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....not recommended

BASE PRICES	.....\$19,500-24,700
OPT AWD (cost diff on any model)	.....+1,300

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Big Island, then the 2.0L on the second day, to and from some Pacific Ocean boat time that launched several miles from our base camp.

If driving on an island sounds like a limited experience, think again. Our drive took us from the sunny, dry Kona Coast on the west side, to downpours in the rainforest around Hilo on the eastern side. We ranged from huge, harsh lava fields on an island bearing several volcanoes, one currently active, to grassy ranch land and meadows with views of Maui through the clouds, just 26 miles to the north, shoreline to shoreline. And we ranged from sea level (of course) to almost 6,000 feet of elevation on the Saddle Road along the flanks of 13,803-foot Mauna Kea, the northernmost of the two primary peaks that comprise the Big Island (the other is Mauna Loa, 13,679 feet, both subject to revision in the course of volcanic activity).

And we had a ball. Fifteen years ago, a vehicle this size was almost unheard of, but as the formula is refined today, Hyundai has mastered it. Spacious and comfortable, we could have been easily talked into driving it around Hawaii for a month. Yes, that's an easy bet, but it has the guts and creature comforts for long-term driving here on the mainland, too, including with Arizona's own dramatic elevation changes. As far as cargo, 45.8

cu.ft. behind the front seats is enough for an impressive 2500 or so boxed magazines, a benchmark load for us. And a dual-level cargo floor provides hidden storage in the rear, useful when you leave a vehicle unattended at a Hawaiian beach.

A little bit of waiting has produced huge payoffs, as the all-new 2018 Hyundai Kona has come out of the chute winning awards and generating significant sales immediately.

**HYUNDAI KONA ELECTRIC:** Shortly after our return from the 2018 Kona drive in Hawaii, Hyundai announced a 2019 Kona Electric promising 250 miles of estimated range, enough to top every current competitor. The EV version of Kona will be powered by a high-efficiency 201-hp (150 kW), 291-lb-ft electric motor powertrain and high-voltage 64 kWh lithium-ion battery and will contain the usual high range of included driver assistance and connectivity features. The Kona Electric will be recognizable by its grille area filled with a debossed cross-hatch design containing its seamlessly integrated charging port for easy head-in parking at charging stations.

2019 Kona Electric models will be produced in Ulsan, South Korea and available in fourth quarter 2018, first in California, then other ZEV-focused states in the West and Northeast. ■

### WARDS 10 BEST INTERIORS

WardsAuto has named the new 2018 Hyundai Kona to the Wards 10 Best Interiors list, saying, "The Kona smashes the notion that a small-vehicle interior will be bland or have low-quality materials. Thanks to its matte black plastics, great head-up display, generous advanced-safety technologies and funky lime-green accents—all for under \$30,000... Hyundai's new small CUV knocked our judges' socks off." WardsAuto editors look for interiors that raise the bar not only for a particular brand but also for that vehicle's segment.

### ASG: BEST ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, BEST 5 ALL-AROUND PERFORMANCE

Granting Best Economic Performance to the new 2018 Hyundai Kona, Automotive Science Group (ASG) says, "In one of the fastest-growing segments, Hyundai's new crossover platform breaks onto the scene with class leading economic, environmental and social performance. The top-rated 2018 Kona outshines competitors in its class by an average of 3 mpg highway, revealing new possibilities for fuel economy gains and reduced fuel costs in the crossover segment." Best 5 All-Around Performance is a comprehensive data-driven assessment, analyzing economic, environmental and social performance indicators across a vehicle's life-cycle, and in relative comparison to 374 crossovers judged. ■





## Arizona's Valerie Thompson sets new world record

Eight-time land speed record holder sets new record of 328.467 mph and survives 343.7 mph airborne crash at Australia's Lake Gairdner

Photos: Louis Fischer, Valerie Thompson Racing and Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM)

Valerie Thompson of Scottsdale—America's "Queen of Speed"—achieved a new speed record on the salt flats of Australia, continuing to defend her title as "The World's Fastest Female Motorcycle Racer" while also pursuing the world's fastest title, any gender qualifier aside.

The 28th Annual Speed Week competition, hosted March 12-16 by Dry Lakes Racers Australia (DLRA) at Lake Gairdner, South Australia, was open overall to cars, motorcycles and trucks. The World Speed Trials, a first-time event that week for motorcycles only, was held March 17-19.

Thompson set a new streamliner record of 328.467 mph (528.616 km/h) during Speed Week competition on March 15, earning her membership in the DLRA 200 and 300 MPH Clubs. She is only the second competitor to gain membership in the DLRA 300 MPH Club and was honored with the "Fast Lady on the Lake" award.

The event also proved the superiority of leading edge streamliner design by team engineers Denis Manning and John Jans—the hard way. Thompson survived a horrific crash in the Team "7" Racing Streamliner while attempting to break the (gender-neutral) world's overall fastest motorcycle record of 376.36 mph (605.69 km/h) on the last day of the World Speed Trials.

According to Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) reports and team video, Thompson

had just passed the four-mile marker on a twelve-mile course when the rear of her streamliner rose off the racing surface, sending the vehicle airborne at 343.7 mph. Parachutes slowed the vehicle as it flipped and rolled multiple times, scattering wreckage for more than a mile across the Lake Gairdner salt flats. Thompson walked away with only minor bruises and lacerations.

A video of the crash by team member Lou Fischer can be found on YouTube.

"We had a singular goal of running 377+ mph to capture the record during the World Speed Trials," said Thompson. "We used Speed Week to test and tune the bike, and I'm happy we set a new record and received the 'Fast Lady on the Lake Award.' The wreck during the World Speed Trials was unfortunate, but we are not giving up on our quest for the new record," said Thompson. "Most importantly, we proved the superiority of the monocoque carbon fiber design and safety features utilized by Denis Manning and John Jans. Without their dedication to high speed safety engineering, I would not be talking with you now. Nobody has ever walked away from a 340+ mph crash on a motorcycle. I'd also like to thank the DLRA and all their race course workers who helped ensure my safety," added a grateful Thompson.

The team is working hard to identify what caused the problem. "We'll know more once we



analyze the onboard data collection systems and review films in more detail," said bike designer and AMA Hall of Fame member Denis Manning. "Valerie did an incredible riding job, doing everything she was supposed to and more. All of us at Team '7' Racing are relieved Valerie did not sustain any life threatening injuries."

### About Valerie Thompson

Valerie Thompson is an eight-time land speed record holder on a variety of bikes from Harley-Davidsons to BMWs and streamliners; a member of seven land speed racing 200 MPH Clubs and one 300 MPH Club, the first female to exceed 300 mph in Australia; and the first female on the Bonneville 200 MPH Club Board of Directors. Her racing career spans a decade, driven by a desire to go faster and break even more records.

Off the track, Valerie works as a vehicle presenter at Barrett-Jackson and Metro Auto Auctions in Arizona. Between her work, racing commitments and many special appearances each year, Valerie donates time to charitable organizations and inspiring children overcoming personal challenges. She was awarded the "American Women Riders Community Hero Award" in 2011.

Valerie Thompson will be inducted to the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum Hall of Fame in August (see below).

Her current quest to become the world's fastest motorcycle racer is the subject of P-51 Pictures' and MN8 Films' upcoming feature documentary, *Rockets and Titans*.

### The BUB Seven Streamliner

Team "7" Racing's BUB Seven Streamliner is an American purpose-built land speed bike designed by American Motorcycle Association (AMA) Hall of Fame member and multiple world speed record holder Denis Manning.

The vehicle has held the world motorcycle speed records of 350.884 mph from 2006 to 2008 and 367.382 mph from 2009 to 2010.

Team "7" Racing owners John Jans (machinist/build-er) and Joe Harralson (engineer/engine designer), with Manning as team leader, have the goal of reclaiming the world's fastest motorcycle title for the third time.

Less than 10 mph separates the Bub Seven Streamliner's top speed from the current record holder, creating a dramatic synthesis between driver talent and engineering ingenuity.

### Sturgis Museum Hall of Fame

The Sturgis Motorcycle Museum Hall of Fame in Sturgis, South Dakota recognizes truly legendary individuals who have made a long-term positive impact on the entire motorcycle community.

During the 78th Sturgis Rally (August 3-12, 2018), the Hall Of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, August 8, at the Lodge at Deadwood in Deadwood, South Dakota, where Valerie Thompson will be inducted into the Class of 2018. For individual tickets or tables of eight, visit [sturgismuseum.com](http://sturgismuseum.com) or call the Museum at 605-347-2001. ■



**328.467 MPH  
MARCH 15, 2018**



# Taming the twisties

BY SUE MEAD

Who wants “the bends”? Rally drivers and sports car enthusiasts do! Therefore, the Mediterranean island of Corsica was the perfect location to try out the all-new 2018 Jaguar E-Pace, on the mountainous topography nicknamed the “Island of 10,000 Bends.” In addition to appealing to vacationers and hikers, Corsica is a driver’s paradise, as a significant swath of its roadways are carved out of majestic terrain that stretches from sea level to nearly 9,000 feet, creating paths of tight snaking pavement and ominous switchbacks.

We drove along portions of the route used by

the Tour de Course—the World Rally Championship’s Rallye de France; it was not only fun, but it provided an opportunity to assess the powertrain and traction capabilities, as well as the comfort, of Jaguar’s new compact crossover crafted to blend sports car traits with sport utility cargo and passenger-carrying capability, in a small, upscale British-designed package.

Two years ago, Jaguar’s bigger F-Pace sport ute came to market, and has since more than doubled the marque’s annual sales. So, it’s no surprise that the E-Pace now follows, adding breadth to the heritage brand’s lineup and fueling hopes that it could become Jag’s top-selling model, as skyrocketing growth continues in the CUV segment of automotive transactions.

On sale now, the all-wheel-drive E-Pace is available in two engine configurations and a collection of trims starting with the base E-Pace, S and SE; high-performance R-Dynamic S, SE and HSE (see pricing in sidebar); and a special E-Pace First Edition model with the base engine. All have AWD traction, with an Active Driveline available.

Up front are a bold grille and LED headlights with signature J-blade daytime running lights that give the CUV an assertive attitude that’s unmistakably Jaguar. The short front, rear juts and pinched style of the side windows are reminiscent of the Jaguar F-Type’s scheme. The pitch of the roofline meshes with a bold side window treatment, giving the compact utility vehicle a sporty, purposeful appearance. The body sides have Jag’s familiar fuselage-like profile; muscular haunches taper toward the rear and contribute to the powerful stance of this five-passenger vehicle, while sharp creases along the front and rear fenders further emphasize its strength.

Inside is a warm, premium interior, surrounded by soft trim door casings and accompanied by sleek chrome door handles. Top-grade leather cosets. A fully-electronic instrument cluster sits behind the iconic Jaguar steering wheel that is highlighted by paddle shifters. A 10-inch InControl Touch Pro infotainment system is standard, while an optional 12.3-inch HD virtual Interactive Driver Display and full-color head-up display provide

safety without distraction.

The compact road-runner offers a generous 61.7 cu.ft of storage space behind the first row, plus deep front and rear door pockets. The rear cargo area has a gear-holding capacity of 31.7 cu.ft, significantly larger than its cousin the Range Rover Evoque (20.3 cu.ft). A hands-free “powered gesture” tailgate makes it possible to approach the vehicle and place objects in the loadspace without using the remote key fob. Illumination adorns the door handles and storage areas.

Under the hood is a turbocharged 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine, producing 246 hp and 269 lb-ft of torque, with 0-to-60 mph acceleration in 6.6 seconds. The turbocharged four-cylinder that powers the R-Dynamic model makes 296 hp and 296 lb-ft of torque and speeds to 60 in 5.9 seconds, with a top speed of 151 mph. Both engines are mated to a new nine-speed automatic transmission.

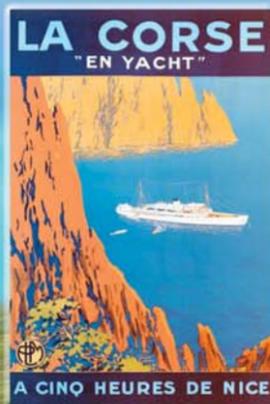
We drove the AWD E-Pace R-Dynamic S on pavement and along off-road tracks. Our top take-aways were its gorgeous looks, sporty handling and at-the-ready power that benefits from crisp shifts delivered by the paddle shifters.

Dynamic mode brings quicker shifts and also adjusts steering, throttle response, Adaptive Dy-

namics, AWD/Active Driveline, transmission shift strategy, dynamic stability control and torque vectoring. In Eco mode, upshifts come earlier to improve fuel economy.

Rain, Ice and Snow Mode provides enhanced stability in low-grip conditions, as well as revises the settings for Dynamic Stability Control, throttle response and transmission. Standard is All Surface Progress Control, a low-speed cruise control system that recognizes differences among road surfaces and improves handling in low-traction conditions. An all-new standard torque vectoring system reduces understeer and improves safety and stability in corners.

Also onboard is Jaguar’s exclusive Activity Key, designed for buyers with active lifestyles. This optional wristband key has no moving parts, requires no battery and is waterproof up to 59 feet deep. Jaguar’s connected car features bring a 4G LTE wifi hotspot, connected navigation, and InControl Apps. Available is a Meridian premium surround sound audio system, with 15 speakers packing 825 watts. Satellite navigation (standard on S, SE, and HSE models) benefits from dead-reckoning functionality that positions the vehicle even when GPS signals can no longer be received. ■



## SPECIFICATIONS

BODY / SEATING	.....5-door SUV / 5-passenger
ENGINE	.....2.0L turbo 4-cyl
HP/TORQUE	.....246 hp / 269 lb-ft
	<i>R-DYNAMIC</i> : 296 hp / 295 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....ZF 9-speed automatic
DRIVETRAIN	.....AWD (standard or active)
0-TO-60 MPH	.....6.6 sec / <i>R-DYNAMIC</i> : 5.9 sec
TOP SPEED	.....143 mph / <i>R-DYNAMIC</i> : 151 mph
STEERING	.....elec power-assist rack & pinion
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut w lower control arm, coils, passive damper & passive anti-roll bar; R: Integral multi-link w coils, passive dampers & passive anti-roll bar
BRAKES	.....F w/17" wheels: 12.8; R 11.8; Front w/18-21" wheels: 13.7
	<i>R-DYNAMIC</i> : Front 13.7, Rear 11.8
WHEELS / TIRES	.....18-, 19-, 20-, 21-inch
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....173.0 in / 105.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.4 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....6.4 in
CARGO VOLUME	.....24.2 / 52.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4035 lb / <i>R-DYNAMIC</i> : 4175 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....18.1 gal
MPG	.....21/28/24 (city/hwy/comb)
	<i>R-DYNAMIC</i> : 21/27/23 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICES	.....Standard .....\$38,600
	.....S .....41,500
	.....SE .....44,300
	.....First Edition .....53,550
	..... <i>R-DYNAMIC</i> S .....\$47,250
	..... <i>R-DYNAMIC</i> SE .....50,050
	..... <i>R-DYNAMIC</i> HSE .....53,100



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## A WEEK WITH : 2018 AUDI SQ5 3.0T QUATTRO TIPTRONIC

# ROAD WARRIOR

BY JOE SAGE

Audi Q5 moves into just its second generation for 2018, after a full decade of gen one, following the Q7's evolution by two show years and one model year. As with the Q7, the new Q5 is less curvaceous and loses much of its original classic streamliner look, gaining 2.3 inches of front headroom (but only 0.3 in the back) and more than three cubic feet of cargo volume (about a five percent increase). The new Q5 is about an inch longer, two inches wider, has a notable boost in horsepower, yet sheds about 45 pounds, for a three-point gain in city fuel mileage (though highway is the same, and its fuel tank is now smaller).

A regular Audi Q5 starts at \$41,500, the SQ5 at \$54,300. For this \$12,800 add-on, the 252-hp 2.0T cast-iron four-cylinder turbo upgrades to a higher-compression aluminum-alloy 354-hp 3.0L V6 turbo; the 7-speed dual-clutch trans moves to an 8-speed Tiptronic; wheels and tires are upgraded and upsized; and the trim level range runs a bit higher. Weight is up by 353 pounds against the standard Q5, length and wheelbase by fractions of an inch, and fuel mileage drops 3 or 4 points (both models require premium fuel).

The new Q7 and Q5 seem to have lost some of their prior style personality, though they now look more related. Audi evolution is slow and steady, simultaneously subtle and mildly alarming at first, then growing on you quickly.

Audi's user interfaces are among the best in the business, now adding a touchpad in front of the MMI controller, which along with the main screen gives you access to everything, some immediately, some less so.

We took the new SQ5 on a marathon turnaround to San Diego, 18 hours including three hours there and quick meals and fuel stops en route. Our drive was far better once we disabled an overly meddling lane keep system. We wanted cruise control but wished to disable its overly paranoid adaptive feature, but could only set that to minimum, at least an improvement. Our fuel mileage exceeded its statutory promise: 24.2 mpg overall, including a few miles of city streets in La Jolla.

We realized afterward that we had never once given the seats a second thought—the drive was both engaging and comfortable.

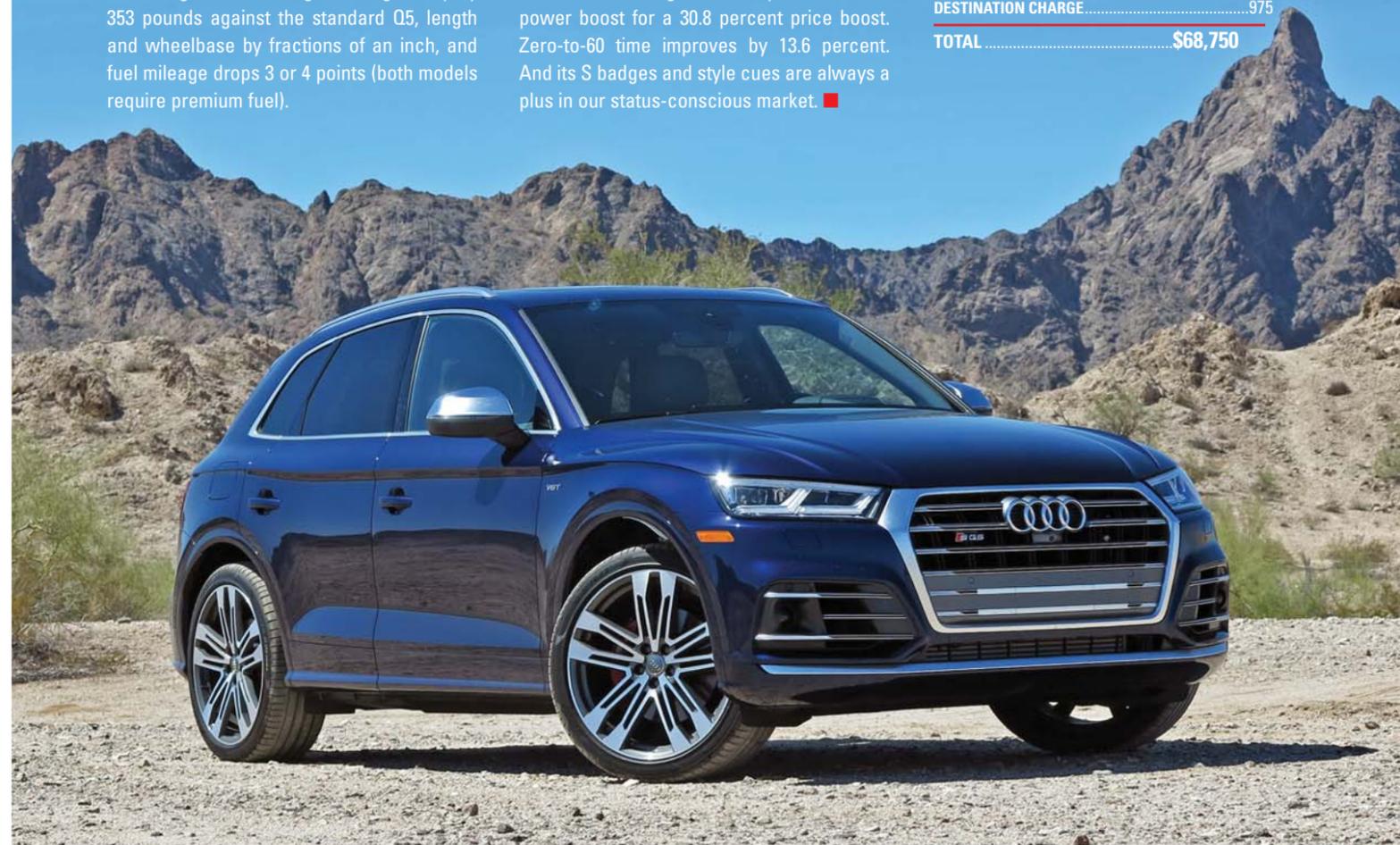
SQ5 versus Q5 gives a 40.5 percent horsepower boost for a 30.8 percent price boost. Zero-to-60 time improves by 13.6 percent. And its S badges and style cues are always a plus in our status-conscious market. ■

### SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....3.0T aluminum alloy V6 turbo/TFSI
DRIVETRAIN	.....quattro AWD
HP/TORQUE	.....354 hp / 369 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....8-speed Tiptronic
0-TO-60 MPH	.....5.1 sec
SUSPENSION...F:	Five-link independent steel spring;
R:	five-link indep steel spring, adaptive damping
STEERING	.....electro-mech speed-sensitive
BRAKES	.....F: 13.8" vented / R: 13.0" vented
WHEELS/TIRES	.....8x20 / 255/45 R20 summer perf
LENGTH/WHEELBASE	.....183.9 / 111.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.4 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....8.2 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....40.9 / 37.8 in
CARGO VOLUME	.....26.8 / 60.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4398 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....premium / 18.5 gal
MPG	.....19/24/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$54,300
NAVARRA BLUE METALLIC	.....575
PRESTIGE PKG:	Dual pane acoustic front side glass, heads-up color display, interior lighting plus, Bang & Olufsen 3D sound system, Audi connect Prime & Plus (6 mos trial), MMI nav w MMI touch, virtual cockpit, top view camera system.....4200
S SPORT PACKAGE:	Red brake calipers, sport adaptive air suspension, sport rear differential.....3000
DRIVER ASSISTANCE PKG	.....1800
NAPPA LEATHER INTERIOR	.....1250
DYNAMIC STEERING	.....1150
21" WHEEL PKG	.....1000
CARBON ATLAS INLAYS	.....500
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....975

TOTAL .....\$68,750





## Driving Our Future

**FORD TACKLES SAFETY CURRICULUM THROUGH DRIVING SKILLS FOR LIFE AND FORD FOCUS ON GIRLS' SAFETY EVENTS**

By Stephanie Jarnagan

Photos: Sam VarnHagen / Ford Motor Company Fund

Inexperience and distraction are the leading causes of auto crashes for teen drivers. To help combat these driving challenges, late last year the Ford Motor Company Fund brought two separate programs to the Metro Phoenix area—the hands-on Ford Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) training program and a new pilot event for younger girls dubbed “Ford Focus on Girls’ Safety.”

More than 1,000 teens and parents received hands-on teen driver training in Phoenix as part of the 2017 Ford DSFL program, which has trained more than 10,000 teens and parents in Arizona over the past decade.

Across the US, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among teenagers. The award-winning Ford DSFL program helps new drivers stay safe behind the wheel by pairing newly licensed drivers with professional driving instructors, who focus on the issues and obstacles drivers face that cause crashes, including vehicle handling, hazard recognition, speed and space management, and distracted and impaired driving.

“We were pleased to be able to expand our efforts in 2017, to help reduce the number of crashes and fatalities through real-world training and teaching improved decision-making skills,” said Jim Graham, global manager, Ford Driving Skills for Life. “Partnering with our Arizona Ford dealers, the Arizona Governor’s Office of Highway Safety and local law enforcement, we believe we are making a substantial contribution to safer driving for local students and parents in the Phoenix metro area.”

Research conducted for the Ford DSFL program also shows that teens tend to follow in their parents’ footsteps when it comes to driving habits. Parents can help address the problem simply by setting a good example behind the wheel. This can include everything from not speeding or texting and buckling up, to teaching their children how to scan for potential hazards while driving.

Taylor Pennington completes the distracted driving course, which demonstrates to teens the dangers of texting while driving, using a coned course.

### Reaching pre-teen and teen girls and parents

Recognizing a need to expose teen girls to a number of personal and mobility safety issues, the Ford Motor Company Fund debuted the “Ford Focus on Girls’ Safety” event at Gilbert High School, prior to the Phoenix Ford DSFL events.

The free half-day event had girls ages 11 to 17 and their parents rotating through four sessions and learning key lessons about personal safety, basic vehicle maintenance, distracted driving and digital citizenship. A central part of the instruction focused on making better driving decisions by highlighting the dangers of impaired and distracted driving, which were demonstrated via a hands-on drivable course (for licensed or permitted drivers) and through Ford’s impaired driving suits, which allowed girls to experience what using drugs or alcohol does to your vision.

“The distracted driving session was eye opening, because you could actually see how many cones were run over while the drivers tried to text a message,” said Lexi Woolsey, a 14-year-old Gilbert resident who attends Payne Junior High. “Those drivers actually look a lot like drunk drivers on the road, because they can’t stay in their lanes and aren’t paying attention.”

Girls also learned about safety when using ride-sharing and ride-hailing services, and practiced going “Chihuahua crazy” in a personal safety session led by retired DPS officer and Gilbert resident Laurie Latham of AZPlayItSafeDefense. She taught the girls to be vocal and use their most powerful weapon—their legs—to kick at an assailant. Retired police officer Frank Griffiths also spoke to the girls about the dangers of social media, while parents learned about the effects of social media on teenage brains with Katey McPherson, executive director of The Gurian Institute.

San Tan Ford’s service team taught girls and their parents basic maintenance skills like how to check fluid levels in their vehicle, jump a car battery using new jump starters that do not require another car to be hooked up, change a dirty air fil-



ter, check tire tread wear and more.

A highlight of the event was a keynote by six-time Olympic gold medal swimmer Amy Van Dyken-Rouen, who shared her personal story of resiliency. As a child, she had severe asthma and couldn’t even swim a full lap across the pool until she was 11. She won six gold medals over two Olympics, and she passed around all six of those

### SAVE THE DATE:

**Ford Driving Skills For Life is slated to return to Phoenix Nov. 8-12, 2018.**

**For online curriculum, or to sign up to be on the information list and be the first notified when registration opens for future sessions in Arizona, visit [www.DrivingSkillsforLife.com](http://www.DrivingSkillsforLife.com).**

medals for the audience to touch. On June 6, 2014, she was involved in an ATV accident that severed her spinal cord, leaving her paralyzed from the waist down.

“Amy has spent her entire life overcoming the odds, and we couldn’t have asked for a better role model to speak to these young girls,” said Yisel Cabrera, community relations manager at the Ford Motor Company Fund. “We hope this inaugural event equipped the girls with valuable life lessons that pertain to mobility and personal safety, especially as they approach driving age.” ■

(At right, top to bottom) High school students complete the vehicle handling course while driving Ford Mustangs—a highlight of Ford DSFL.

Keith Johnson, a student at the East Valley Institute of Technology, attempts to walk a straight line with officers while in Ford’s impairment suit, which simulates drunk driving.

The speed and space management course at Ford DSFL includes abrupt stops and lane changes.

Impairment goggles are given to teens to simulate drunk or drugged driving.

Julie Drake, 16, Liberty High (driver) and Grace Camblin, 15, Mountain Pointe (back seat) completed the impaired driving course using virtual reality goggles that simulate drunk driving.



# Dual personality performance

New generation is lighter and quicker and loaded with tech.

BY SUE MEAD

There are a passel of autos that are endowed with a swoopy appearance, big wheels and a sports performance badge. The 2018 Audi RS 5 is one. However, this Audi sports coupe is a standout in the crowd for its split personality and best-in-class top speed. Developed on the track and for the track, the RS 5 has been injected with Audi's performance DNA that spans decades of motorsports history. And, at the same time, it has a temperament and persona that makes it a quiet grocery-getter, should that be your mission. It makes sense that this German automaker's "rat-pack" of high-end, highly-calibrated RS models has attracted attention from an American audience, as following the introduction of Audi Sport, they saw a 72 percent sales increase in RS/R models.

Unveiled a year ago at the 2017 Geneva Motor Show, the 2018 Audi RS5 Coupe is a smooth, quiet, comfortable grand tourer that has been worth the wait. It is the top-of-the-line model in the A5

family and has the chops and style to turn heads and make hearts race with its all-new exterior design and a newly-developed 2.9-liter V6 bi-turbo engine that pulses with 444 hp and 443 lb-ft of torque and a 0-to-60 mph time of 3.7 seconds. On sale soon, it will start at \$69,900; a Sportback version will follow.

Its all-new looks are powerful from every angle. In front it's been penned with a strong, wide stance beset with Audi's honeycomb singleframe grille and massive air intakes. The side profile flows with a wave-design shoulder line, flared fenders housing 19-inch forged alloy wheels shod with 265/35 XL summer performance tires—or available 20-inch with 275/30—and widened doorsills trimmed with matte aluminum-optic around the side windows and side mirror housings. Punctuating the back are an RS-specific rear diffuser blade, a trunk-mounted rear lip spoiler and large dual-oval exhaust outlets.

Although it's 2.9 inches longer, it weighs 132 lb

less than the previous model; 33 lb of its weight savings comes from extensive use of aluminum stampings, extrusions and body castings.

Slipping into the car after an overnight at a swanky Scottsdale locale, I found a stunning and clean interior with a wing-design wraparound dash, standard stitched leather seats with front massage, soft-sheen aluminum and carbon-fiber trim; optional are contrast stitching and red stripes. Appealing is Audi's three-spoke multifunction flat-bottom steering wheel with RS badging and shift paddles, as well as stainless-steel pedals.

As a tester who enjoys safe speed, I appreciated the configurable "virtual cockpit" digital instrumentation pack and the new RS-specific heads-up display that displays engine oil temperature, lap time and shift lights, in addition to speed and navigation information. I was ready for a day of driving that took our collective through the Fountain Hills area, as we headed to the Roosevelt Lake for our picturesque lunch stop.

The powerful engine is shifted through a new eight-speed automatic transmission that replaces the seven-speed dual-clutch version used previously and improves fuel economy. Audi's quattro system delivers 60 percent of the torque to the back under normal conditions, although 85 percent can move to the front, if needed. Torque can be sent to each of the rear wheels to enhance traction; each wheel is braked when needed to help cornering stability. Audi drive select has four modes—Comfort, Auto, Dynamic and Individual—that adjust gear shift points, steering, throttle response, damper control and adaptive cruise control (depending on vehicle options) for the mode selected. Performance is boosted with the RS-fixed suspension and available Dynamic Ride Control. A delightful mix of highway driving, as well as a collection of twisty two-lanes, gave us ample opportunity to assess performance and handling.

The RS 5 rides 0.3 inch lower than the S5 with Dynamic Ride Control; a Dynamic Pack brings red brake calipers and RS sport exhaust with black tips. My ride was set up with the Dynamic Plus

Pack that bundles a tire temperature and pressure display function, and a carbon-fiber engine cover—it can reach a top speed of 174 mph and stops efficiently with the 15.7-in. carbon ceramic brakes that are included in the package.

Of note was the comfort of both the front seats and the rear seats. Despite its coupe lines, a slight stretch in its wheelbase gives rear-seat passengers almost an inch more kneeroom.

Standard are Audi's advanced key, with keyless start, stop and entry and hands-free trunk release; rain and light sensors for automatic windshield wipers and headlights; rear view camera; Audi side assist with pre-sense rear, rear cross traffic assist, and vehicle exit assist; pre-sense city with pedestrian and vehicle collision warning and braking; and an automatic parking system for both parallel and perpendicular spaces.

Also of note are Apple CarPlay and Google Android Auto integration; Audi's optional MMI touch with handwriting recognition; and the Bang & Olufsen audio system. The four-seater has 11.6 cubic feet of luggage space in the trunk. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....2.9L TFSI biturbo intercooled V6
HP/TORQUE	.....444 hp / 443 lb-ft
	<i>prior gen: 450 hp / 317 lb-ft</i>
TRANSMISSION	.....8-speed Tiptronic
	<i>prior gen: 7-spd DCT w auto-shift</i>
DRIVETRAIN	.....quattro AWD: 40/60 front/rear
	torque normal; front 85 max, rear 70 max
0-TO-60 MPH	.....3.7 sec / <i>prior gen: 4.5 sec</i>
SUSPENSION	.....F: new lightweight five-link
	w optimized steering-rack placement
	direct at wheel centers. Standard RS sport
	suspension sits 7 mm lower than S5 Coupe.
	• Available RS Sport Suspension Plus w
	Dynamic Ride Control w steel springs &
	adjustable dampers connected via diagonal
	oil lines and central valve increases sup-
	port & reduces pitch & roll movements.
BRAKES	.....Standard: RS steel brakes w
	cross-drilled discs & 6-piston front calipers
	in black or optional red, both w RS logo.
	Optional: carbon ceramic front brakes (w
	Dynamic plus pkg); F/R calipers on carbon-
	ceramic brakes are grey w RS logo
WHEELS / TIRES	.....19-in / 265/35 summer perf;
	available 20-in 275/30
WEIGHT	.....3990 lb / <i>prior gen: 4009 lb</i>
MPG	.....18/26/21 (city/hwy/comb)
	<i>prior gen: 16/23/18 city/hwy/comb</i>
BASE PRICE	.....\$69,900
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....\$975



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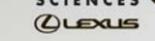
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# Proof.

by Joe Sage

The Toyota Camry Hybrid seems to be proof—if any more were needed—that a dedicated hybrid lineup like Toyota's own Prius has become little more than a novelty item, with its over-the-top styling coupled with that fact that a hybrid powertrain is not as distinctive a trick as it once was.

If shopping for a sporty car 40 years ago, a fuel-injected engine was a really big deal, with special badges and even pop tunes singing their praises. Now they are ubiquitous and taken as a given.

Today, any of various hybrid powertrain schemes are not much more noteworthy than fuel injection once was. This hybrid, based on the longstanding, hot-selling Camry itself, seems to be proof of that. Not that the car itself is not noteworthy—it is that, as well as highly praiseworthy—but it makes the Prius group seem ever more superfluous.

We had surprised ourselves when we drove the new non-hybrid Camry XSE at the Active Lifestyle Vehicle Awards comparo last fall. Wow. That was not your grandma's Camry, or maybe it was, depending on your grandma. It was a fabulous drive, strong and sure-footed, nicely outfitted and quick. Thus we welcomed the Camry Hybrid into our fleet with a good mix of optimism and enthusiasm.

And it delivered.

This is a spacious five-seat midsize sedan with mid-to-upper 40s fuel mileage even in top trim, or well into the 50s in the base LE model (see sidebar), competing effectively with—or beating—

any Prius model (other than the Prius Prime PHEV in full electric mode, apples'n'oranges). The Prius lineup is less expensive than Camry, but they could surely give Corolla the same treatment this Camry Hybrid has received and close that gap.

The Camry Hybrid comes in a more mainstream package than Prius, highly stylish, while also aiding in its stealth characteristics, useful since it can launch powerfully with a combined 163 lb-ft of gasoline plus 149 lb-ft of electric torque. Potent.

The Camry Hybrid XLE has a well conceived user interface that combines a stylistically unobtrusive high-function screen with knobs, buttons and switches for a number of tasks best not requiring the distraction of a screen. The beautiful premium leather interior, ours in a light lambskin shade, features currently fashionable quilted seat areas, but in a nicely balanced ratio to their smooth bolsters.

The drivetrain is responsive and strong, as are the brakes, with the exception, typical of regenerative systems, of seeming a little behind or ahead of our intentions occasionally (test drive this to get a feel for it). We experienced no torque steer or lane darting despite its front-drive layout. Suspension was smooth through aggressive corners or across drainage troughs; steering is highly responsive, never quirky or jerky; even auto stop-start is smooth, a rarity, perhaps benefiting from the electric-only quiet when you start your drive in the first place—really, they've solved everything.

While this mainstream Camry Hybrid—with so much hybrid drivetrain goodness *plus* general midsize sedan goodness—encroaches on Prius's terri-

## SPECIFICATIONS (XLE)

ENGINE	2.5L 4-cyl 16v twin-cam alum alloy block/head
ELECTRIC MOTOR	permanent magnet synchronous
BATTERY PACK	6.5 Ah nickel-metal hydride (Ni-MH)
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
HP/TORQUE	Gasoline engine .....176 hp / 163 lb-ft Elec motor.....118 hp / 149 lb-ft Combined.....208 horsepower
TRANSMISSION	electronically controlled CVT
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson w stblzr bar; R: dbl-wishbone multi-link w stblzr bar
STEERING	elec power rack-and-pinion
BRAKES	regenerative: F: 12.0" vented / R: 11.06" solid
WHEELS/TIRES	8x18 alloy / P235/45 R18
LENGTH/WHEELBASE	192.1 / 111.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	38.0 ft
CARGO VOLUME	15.1 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3571 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	13.0 gal
MPG	44/47/46 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$32,250
AUDIO PKG W OPTIONS	Bird's eye camera (1050), adaptive auto on/off LED heads (415), Power tilt/slide moonroof (845), Entune 3.0 audio w JBL Clari-Fi, connected nav, app suite, wireless phone charge (1800). Total:.....4110
DESTINATION CHARGE	895
TOTAL	\$37,255

## "LE" BASE MODEL KEY DIFFERENCES

BATTERY PACK	4.0 Ah lithium-ion (Li-ion)
WHEELS/TIRES	6.5x16 steel / P205/65 R16
TURNING CIRCLE	37.4 ft
WEIGHT	3472 lb
MPG	51/53/52 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$27,800

tory, the XLE's premium touches must have Toyota working extra carefully to keep it from encroaching upon Toyota Avalon—not to mention Lexus.

Toyota has an extensive lineup, and this car—in just three trims—seems capable of competing with about half of it. ■



# WIDE OPEN BAJA

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STORY AND PHOTOS BY PAUL STRAUSS THEAWESOMER.COM 95OCTANE.COM

**W**ide Open Baja offers incredible off-road experiences for adrenaline junkies. Drive a \$100,000 purpose-built race buggy on the same treacherous dirt and rock trails that comprise the famed Baja 1000 course, and enjoy restful evenings after each day's thrills.

The company offers off-road adventures that kick off in Ensenada or Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Trips range from half-day outings to a four-day, all-inclusive, immersive adventure. For those looking to truly push the envelope, they can even help you run the actual Baja 1000 race.

We headed for the Ensenada route, which kicks off with your arrival in San Diego, California. We were greeted at the airport by our lead driver and instructor, Darrin, who shuttled us across the border into Tijuana and points south.

We kicked off our three-day trip through Northern Baja with a fantastic oceanside lunch of chile rellenos and margaritas at Gary's La Fonda, as we

made our way south from Tijuana to Ensenada.

We spent our first night at the famed Horsepower Ranch, a frequent hangout for Baja racers, packed with memorabilia and offering a restful oasis before our first day on the punishing desert trails.

As morning broke, we took some time to familiarize ourselves with our custom-built Baja challenge car and safety protocols before putting on our helmets and strapping into our five-point racing harnesses.

Each of Wide Open Baja's custom-built buggies is equipped with a GPS for tracking its position and a radio system which keep you in communication with other drivers in your group. Radio communication is critical for relaying hazards and driving instructions to the cars behind you.

Heading out into the desert, we got our first taste of Baja's rugged terrain. Fortunately, each car is equipped with ginormous all-terrain tires

and a suspension system with an incredible 18 inches of wheel travel.

Each excursion is accompanied by a Baja race crew, including a lead car driven by a professional trail guide and a truck carrying spare equipment, fuel and even a spare buggy that you'll meet up with at checkpoints throughout the ride. Our co-driver was Charlie, Wide Open Baja's tech expert, who knows the trails like the back of his hand.

Despite what you might think, riding across the dusty and rocky desert trails at speeds up to 90 mph is surprisingly comfortable in Wide Open Baja's cars, thanks to the huge shock absorbers, padded, suspended racing seats, and full-face helmets with fresh air ventilation.

Normally, when you see huge rocks in the middle of a path, you avoid them. Not so with these off-roaders, which crawl over boulders like it's nothing.

As you delve deeper into the desert, you realize just how isolated you are from civilization. There are no distractions, so you can focus 100 percent of your mental energy on negotiating the challenging trails.

After a full day driving nearly 200 miles of rugged trails, we found our way to our next stop—Mike's Sky Rancho—a hideaway about 5,000 feet up in the mountains. It's a rustic, quiet and peaceful getaway that's served as a stop for Baja racers for 50 years.

There we were greeted by a friendly German Shepherd dog named Rocky—who likes to play fetch with rocks, naturally. Be sure to give him some belly rubs if you see him.

As we finished each day of intense driving, we were greeted with a cold beer (or three) and some of the most peaceful and relaxing settings to restore our energy for the next day's drive.

We woke for another day on the trails, and the climbs got steeper, the rocks got more slippery, and basically every hill and corner was completely blind. It's thrilling and nerve-racking, but immensely satisfying as you move through the white-knuckle terrain.

It was a nailbiting morning, driving some of the most dangerous and precarious trails we'd encounter, but the payoff was huge—amazing, unspoiled vistas of the Pacific Ocean.

We took some time to contemplate at the top of a bluff overlooking the ocean, then headed back towards downtown Ensenada for our last night and a well-deserved rest.

We spent our last night at the beautiful and relaxing Estero Beach Hotel, a luxurious beachside resort where we enjoyed a much needed soak in the hot tub, and took in one last Pacific sunset before heading back to the States.

As we bid farewell to our trusty four-wheeled steed, a proud sense of accomplishment washed over us. We had just driven nearly 400 miles of the vaunted Baja 1000 course, in the exact same kind of vehicle that professional off-road racers ride in.

Along the way, our focus and nerves were tested, with every hill, curve, and terrain providing a new and surprising challenge. And while there's certainly some danger here, we always felt safe thanks to Wide Open Baja's amazing and professional crew, and the incredible car they built. ■



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## SOULFUL EVOLUTION.

by Joe Sage

This Mazda6 was with us for only a short time, just a few days between business travel to Michigan and then to Hawaii. This turns out to have been appropriate, as the car we received, model year 2017.5, would also be with the world for only a short time, a holdover of the 2017 model until a new 2018 Mazda6 would be released just a month or two later. It gives us a chance for a good heads-up on what the new Mazda6 holds in store.

It's too bad we didn't have it longer. The Mazda6 is a fine car, always has been. We picked it up well after midnight, after a long couple of travel days in a hellaciously long couple of weeks, and finding all our controls and settings in the dark was easy, not the case with all too many even in broad daylight. Setup is all intuitive, a really clean design.

The about-to-be-released 2018 model is a refresh, as well as a bit of a recalibration, pushing things up the power curve and upscale in several key ways. Models from Grand Touring on up receive a new 2.5-liter turbo (similar to that in the big CX-9 SUV) packing 250 hp, a 35.9 percent gain from the 2017.5 Grand Touring (if you run on premium gas; on regular, it's 227 hp, up 23.3 percent, a tradeoff you can play either way at any time).

Did we say Grand Touring on up? Yes, whereas Grand Touring has traditionally been the top trim for many Mazda models, there will now be Grand Touring Reserve and Signature trims above that, which is in line with Mazda's recent directive to move things upscale overall in response to their analysis of their own shoppers and buyers, as well as industry and market trends. Inclusions change

in various ways, but the Grand Touring drops from 2017.5's \$30,695 to \$29,200, while Grand Touring Reserve and Signature run \$31,700 and \$34,750.

The power boost is most welcome, as the 184-hp spec is better suited to a smaller car, though it's not mandatory for your 2018 purchase—Sport and Touring trims still have the naturally aspirated 2.5L (up 3 hp, still 35 mpg highway), while Grand Touring and up receive the turbo. (And Sport still offers a 6-speed manual, which of course we wish were also available with at least one of the turbos.)

The 2018 Mazda6 also receives an all-new interior including ventilated seats, Nappa leather (including new colors), Japanese sen wood and UltraSuede NU finishes in the new Signature trim.

This adds up to it being a nice time to be shopping for the Mazda6. You will find many things to appreciate in the new 2018 model, available turbo power chief among them, while non-turbo buyers can now surely get a great deal on a 2017.5. ■

### SPECS: 2017.5 GRAND TOURING

ENGINE	.....2.5L DOHC 16v 4-cyl / 2018: 2.5T turbo
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD
HP/TORQUE	.....184 hp/185 lb-ft / 2018 turbo: 250/310
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd SkyACTIV Sport w Sport mode
TOP SPEED	.....137 mph / 2018 turbo: 149 mph
SUSPENSION	.....F: indep MacPherson, coils, stblzr bar R: indep multi-link type, coils, stblzr bar
STEERING	.....speed-sensing electric power
BRAKES	.....diagonal hydraulic; electronic parking 11.7x1.1 vented front, 10.9x0.4 solid rear discs
WHEELS/TIRES	.....19x7.5 dk silver alloy / P225/45 R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....191.5 / 111.4 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....36.7 ft
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.2 / 38.7 in
WEIGHT	.....3305 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	.....regular unleaded / 16.4 gal
MPG	.....27/35/30 (city/hwy/comb) / 2018 turbo: 23/31/26
BASE PRICE (2017.5 GRAND TOURING)	.....\$30,695
MACHINE GRAY METALLIC PAINT	.....300
GT PREMIUM PKG:	i-LOOP regenerative engine braking, active grille shutters, shifter LED accent lighting, bright finish interior trim, Nappa leather trim, heated rear seats, heated steering wheel w stitching, black headliner..2500
CARGO MAT	.....75
DOOR STILL TRIM PLATES	.....125
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....875
TOTAL (2017.5 GT AS TESTED)	.....\$34,570



Shown are our recent 2017.5 Mazda6 in Machine Gray Metallic and, above that, the 2018 Mazda6 in Soul Red Crystal Metallic.

# Prestazioni scatenate

## Performance unleashed

BY DAVE STALL

There was a time when supercars were very difficult to drive on US roads. 55 mph didn't sit well with V10s, V12s or even some supercharged or turbocharged V6s and V8s. Although the speed limit has long since been raised above 55, a true supercar needed to be running over 100 mph. Then all the engine and suspension technology would kick in to give you the ride you're looking for. Unfortunately, this kind of enjoyment was not possible (or legal) on the streets.

Fast forward to today, and the supercar has got street creds at any speed.

A perfect example is the 2018 Lamborghini Huracán Performante. This top-of-the-line supercar is at the top of its game: it's got looks, style, speed and yes—safety.

And to prove it, I was invited to Thermal Raceway, a private track club in Riverside County, California, for a spirited run around this amazing road course at max speed. Here, 100 mph is not only allowed, it's encouraged!

To set the stage, the Performante is powered by a V10 engine producing 630 horsepower, backed by an LDF 7-speed dual-clutch transmission that

allowed a professional driver to travel the famous 1/4-mile in 10.4 seconds and hit 135 mph on the Nürburgring, navigating the track in a record-setting—for production cars—6 minutes and 52.1 seconds.

Lamborghini's R&D boss Maurizio Reggiani calls this a 360-degree approach to performance. This means more power, less weight, suspension improvement and additional aerodynamics.

What makes the Huracán Performante rise a grade above the base Huracán are little touches like titanium intake valves, hotter intake camshafts and free flowing exhaust with an amazing sound quality. Not only does the exhaust enhance the driving experience with its sweet resonance, it also boosts horsepower by 30 over the stock Huracán. The Performante revs lower by 25 rpms. Peak torque is increased from 30 lb-ft to 443

Thermal Raceway is in Riverside County, at 61980 Tyler Street, Thermal, California 92274, just in case you want to join: [www.thethermalclub.com](http://www.thethermalclub.com), or call 760-239-6844.



at an unchanged 6500 rpm, which creates a smoother power curve above 4,000 rpm.

The Performante lost about 90 pounds thanks to the addition of a lot of weight-saving carbon fiber parts and pieces. Actually Lamborghini has developed their own carbon fiber, quite simply called Forged Composite technology, that looks like water flowing versus little squares.

The chassis had to be reinforced to match the thrust, so Lamborghini gave the Huracán 10 percent stiffer springs and thicker sway bars, with a 15 percent increase in roll stiffness.

The Lamborghini also gets an aerodynamic system called ALA, which stands for Aerodinamica Lamborghini Attiva. This system comes with a front spoiler and a wing in the rear that produce 770 pounds of downforce at 193 mph. At high speeds, the rear wing will keep the Huracán from literally taking off and becoming airborne. Motorized flaps (an electro-actuated system is 80 percent lighter than hydraulics) add to downforce by pushing air over the top or into the hollow rear wing.

The Performante has three driving modes: Strada (street), Sport and Corsa (track/racing) mode. As we mentioned, the V10 engine is backed by a very smooth LDF 7-speed dual-clutch transmission, which handles the power with ease, and massive steering column-mounted (not steering wheel) paddle shifters that are easy to use, even in a turn.

The interior is fighter-pilot inspired, communicating its lightweight and aerodynamic purpose. Vents, paddles, handles and center console are created from Forged Composite. Dark-toned lightweight Alcantara fabric reflects its racing heritage, including on sports seats, with an optional lasered "Y" graphic (comfort seats with the same trim are also available). A special ALA graphic in the instrument panel shows when and how the system is working, including aero vectoring. New digital cockpit displays are configurable by driving mode selected: Strada, Sport or Corsa, with data on downforce and drag. Apple CarPlay apps include a Lamborghini telemetry system, so you can record, replay and study your own performance.

Getting set to drive the Thermal race track was pretty simple, and once the car reached operating temperature, the carbon ceramic brakes did their job. Reaching redline was rather quick until, you became one with the Performante—then the fun really began.

It was the best time ever, driving the Lamborghini Huracán Performante, and charging around Thermal at track speed was a dream come true.

But how does it drive on the street? To answer my question, Lamborghini sent me a beautiful white Performante, with aggressively raked rally stripes in the Italian flag colors of red, white and green smartly placed at the bottom of the doors.

This car was a growler when started up first thing in the morning, thanks to its amazing free-flowing exhaust.

The Performante has one great feature that you would think is exclusive to low-riders: the front end raises and lowers. This allows the driver to pass over speed bumps and park the car without damage to the trim.

The Pirelli P Zero tires did exactly what they were designed to do, and that is stick!

If there was a negative, it is the limited adjustment options for the driver's seat. The issue with the seat was not enough to dim my enthusiasm, as the Performante is truly a driver's car, and whether you take it out for a Sunday drive or to track day, it will satisfy the best and worst driver out there.

Is it worth the starting price of \$274,390? Without a doubt! This is the kind of car you'd make sacrifices to own. Major sacrifices. However, the privilege of ownership comes with a caveat: don't be stingy and keep it garaged in your collection! This is a car that needs and wants to be driven. Let'er loose! ■

### SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS	.....Hybrid aluminum & carbon fiber
OUTER SKIN	.....Aluminum & composite
ENGINE	.....5.2L V10,IDS+MPI dual injection
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....12.7:1
TRANSMISSION	.....LDF 7-speed dual-clutch
DRIVETRAIN	.....electronically controlled AWD, rear mech self-lock differential
HP/TORQUE	.....640 hp / 442 lb-ft
0-TO-62 MPH / TOP SPEED	.....2.6 sec / 202 mph
HP/TORQUE	.....640 hp / 442 lb-ft
STEERING	.....Electromechanical power (optional LDS w variable steering ratio)
SUSPENSION	.....Aluminum double-wishbone, dual springs, hydraulic dampers (Magne-Ride electromagnetic dampers available)
BRAKES	.....Hydraulic dual-circuit system w vacuum brake servo unit, carbon-ceramic discs, ventilated/cross-drilled. F: 380x38mm 6-piston aluminum calipers R: 356x32mm 4-piston aluminum calipers.
WHEELS	.....F: 8.5Jx20" R: 11Jx20"
TIRES	.....Pirelli P Zero Corsa F: 245/30 R20 / R: 305/30 R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....177.4 in / 103.15 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.73 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	.....3.53 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIB	.....3047 lb / F/R 42/57%
FUEL CAPACITY	.....21.9 gal
MPG	.....14/19/16 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$274,390



# Rolling art has its own art gallery

BY JOE SAGE

From its birth as the successor to the Silver Ghost in 1925, Rolls-Royce Phantom—the world's longest-standing automotive nameplate (see sidebar)—has carried the world's most influential and powerful people—heads of state to generals, royalty to rock stars, stars of the silver screen to titans of industry—to history's most defining moments.

We spent a day with Elizabeth Williams of Rolls-Royce North America and Beli Merdovic of Rolls-Royce Motorcars Scottsdale, for some hands-on time with the latest iteration.

**THE NEW CAR** This is the eighth generation of Phantom, revealed last year. It has an all-new aluminum architecture (which other models will start to move to, as well). As always, says Merdovic, it has "surprise-and-delight features you may not see in ordinary vehicles. We still have our coach-style doors and the umbrellas in the doors. But once you sit in the back seat, you'll really get to see all the features, bits and elements that make a Rolls-Royce what it is."

Williams says the Phantom is "the pinnacle product for Rolls-Royce. While developing the Phantom 8, they spent a lot of time putting extra layers of soundproofing in there and made sure every element was thought of,

whether it was road noise from tires, or organ pulls for opening and closing the vents, everything is just whisper quiet."

A new computerized transmission is precognizant, knowing the approaching road to an extremely high degree of accuracy, via GPS. "I wanted to see how that works," says Merdovic, so he went for a ride "thinking about one thing only, listening for how the transmission does it." The lesson? "I have no idea! I was concentrating on the shifting, and it really works. It will downshift before a turn or grade, but the thing is, in this car I couldn't even hear or feel the transmission, it's so smooth. It's the closest to a magic carpet ride that any automobile has ever come to."

The move to aluminum architecture took off significant weight, but was not designed for weight savings per se, as final weight is much the same as before, made up by new soundproofing and over 50 onboard computers.

Rolls-Royce consistently surprises us with very nimble handling for such large cars. In the new Phantom, this is aided by a new four-wheel steering setup.

**THE GALLERY** A Rolls-Royce is itself a piece of rolling art. Nonetheless, there are irresistible add-ons for even more expression—such as the \$12,000 starlight headliner seen before in the Wraith. The new Phantom takes artistic imagination to a new level with The Gallery—whereby you can have priceless original art built into the dashboard (for a price).

The face of the dash is an uninterrupted full width panel of glass—not only a clean presentation of instruments, but also a space to

showcase anything from exotic woods, metals or textiles, to one-of-a-kind sculptural artwork—or your own. The Bespoke division has had artists and master artisans from around the world interpret the space (see the process at greatphantoms.com; one example is shown below). Or "if you want to put your children's artwork in there, we can work with our Bespoke team to have that done," says Williams.

**THE BUYER AND PROCESS** There is great variety among the buyers of Rolls-Royce, with a preponderance of athletes, successful young business people and wealthy recent retirees. Anyone thinking that this is an older person's car is easily enlightened by going for a spin in one, to feel this big, heavy car running through the turns—so smooth, so fast and feeling much smaller. They are hooked.

Many buyers at the Scottsdale dealership are from the Midwest, where such a car may be too showy, but they fly here in their private jet and, with some quick latitude and attitude adjustment, can happily move to the Rolls.

Personalization is inevitable—and significant. About 20 percent of customers here want a bespoke car, which takes months, but 80 percent want to impulse buy (which still almost always takes more than one visit). In the rest of the world, bespoke builds are by far the norm—"99 percent" in the UK, Merdovic says. "This puts a burden on some of us here," he says, as they themselves design a number of cars to have in stock, with options, colors and details likely to please unknown buyers of off-the-lot cars (and young entrepreneurs' tastes do tend to run much wilder

than the typical Midwestern retiree's).

The dealership's work on this is reminiscent of the difference between buying land and hiring an architect to custom build a home versus buying a one-of-a-kind custom home already built on speculation.

The basis point for a Phantom is in the mid-\$400s, with the extended wheelbase closer to \$500,000. Options typically add about 10 percent, and going bespoke to a reasonable degree adds 10 more. The sky is the limit on bespoke, but most are simply seeking a color and overall look that's different from neighbors (many of Merdovic's customers share the same affluent neighborhoods). Each car is very different, but expect a standard to run about \$520,000 and an EWB in the low \$600s.

As an extreme example, Merdovic tells of a customer who wanted a carbon fiber body, which he first thought was likely impossible. But the factory said no problem—but it would take a long time and be quite expensive, as they would have to build ten, to satisfy crash

testing. That customer "changed his mind."

Williams notes "there are customers who are willing to stick through the bespoke process, while for some it's just not worth it."

**OUR RIDE AND DRIVE** We took both versions to Bartlett Lake, with the option of being chauffeured or driving ourselves, swapping cars and positions with both the chauffeurs and a few colleagues. Our default on anything is to get behind the wheel, but we figured the whole point of a Phantom EWB is life in the elegant rear seat expanses, so we opted for the chauffeur, outbound. For the return, we took the wheel of a standard wheelbase. Colleagues who rode in the back of the standard wheelbase noted that it was more conventional than the EWB, but "still all Rolls-Royce."

The power, grace and presence of the Rolls-Royce Phantom are undeniably noteworthy, as are its road characteristics, experienced from front or back. Once again, they have proven that when your taste and desires are this exquisite, nothing else will do. ■

The Gallery's Astrum example evokes both natural and man-made starburst formations (as in sea urchins, plants, explosions and skies), emanating from a single brilliant cut diamond, encased in platinum. Solid silver spears (hand-filed, soldered, shaped and polished) bear pear-cut amethysts. The curved backing provides visual depth and is engraved with a guilloche effect, a technique found in the finest jewelry. A rich amethyst lacquer, Violet de Nuit, reflects and intensifies the color of the stones at the ends of the spears. The clock (for many customers the jewel of the interior) has its own guilloche design in sterling silver, also with amethyst tint. Fine wires laser-welded to the spears fix their positions against the backdrop.



## PHANTOM HISTORY

The first Rolls-Royce Phantom was developed in great secrecy, code-named Eastern Armoured Car, suggesting an intent to build the kind of military vehicles used by Lawrence of Arabia in World War I (armor plates were left lying around the factory to confuse those trying to glean the projects secrets). Phantom I, with a 7,668-liter straight-six engine, was an instant success. ♦ When GM opened its proving ground in Michigan, none of their cars could run even two laps of the four-mile circuit at full throttle without damaging their engines. But Phantom I could do it at a steady 80 mph without failure. ♦ A Phantom II followed in 1929, then a third Phantom, a 12-cylinder, from 1936 until World War II. Its final chassis was built in 1941, but coachwork was held up until 1947. With no replacement known, it seemed the story was over. ♦ But in 1950, Phantom IV was built as a one-off for Prince Philip and then-Princess Elizabeth. Once seen, a further 17 were commissioned exclusively for other royal families and heads of state around the world. Fitted with a straight-eight and revolutionary new gearing, it performed superbly at low speeds, essential for ceremonial parades, and featured a kneeling version of the famous Spirit of Ecstasy hood ornament. ♦ The Phantom V was produced from 1959 to 1968, with a 516 (roughly one per week) built for everyone from the Queen Mother to governors of Hong Kong, King Olav of Norway, Elvis Presley and John Lennon. ♦ The long-running Phantom VI (1968-90) included a raised-roof Silver Jubilee Car for the 25th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, later used at the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, in 2011. ♦ From the last Phantom VI in 1990, it took another 13 years for the next to arrive. After corporate shakeups and mergers, a split-off of Rolls-Royce aircraft engines, and the acquisition of the car brand by BMW, a new factory and car were announced in 2003—the first Goodwood Phantom (or Phantom VII), built at a new facility in Goodwood, England. Highly contemporary yet timeless recognizable, it included every imaginable luxury and a few new ones, such as tefflon-coated umbrellas stashed in the doors and self-leveling wheel center badges. ■

## GEN-8 PHANTOM SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....	48-valve dir injection V12
HP/TORQUE.....	563 hp / 664 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....	Satellite Aided Transmission (SAT) w/ ZF 8-Speed
DRIVETRAIN.....	RWD
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED.....	5.1 sec / 155 mph
STEERING.....	four-wheel steering
SUSPENSION.....	double-wishbone front, 5-link rear, self-leveling air suspension
WHEELS / TIRES.....	22" / silent-seal-tech tires
LENGTH / WB.....	SWB 227.2 in / 139.8 in
.....	EWB 235.8 in / 148.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....	SWB 42.9 ft / EWB 45.2 ft
WEIGHT.....	SWB 5643.8 lb / EWB 5754.1 lb
CARGO VOLUME.....	19 cu.ft
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	premium unl / 23 gal
MPG.....	13.3 / 29.1 / 20.3 (urb/exurb/comb*)

\*(manufacturer's tests; EPA t.b.d)

# What Do You See From Your Lens?

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## A WEEK WITH : 2018 TOYOTA 4RUNNER 4X4 TRD OFF-ROAD PREMIUM

# Eternal.

BY JOE SAGE

Before SUVs were SUVs, there were a few tough guys: the Jeep CJ, Ford Bronco, big Chevy Blazer, Land Rover Series I and II, and Toyota Land Cruiser J40. Toyota today has six crossover and SUV vehicles, from the low-\$20s C-HR to the mid-\$80s, with Land Cruiser now a luxury model. At lower middle cost is the 4Runner, today's tough guy. Its popularity exploded when it came on the scene in the mid-'80s. Now in generation five (since 2010), its same general aura and dedicated following have lasted for the duration, and why not? The 4Runner itself also seems to last seemingly forever. It's also known for holding its value, which is where we tuned in.

A recent social media post of someone's kid's math problem had the parents buying a new 4Runner for X number of dollars. It would depreciate some stated amount per year, and the vehicle would pass to the kid when it hit a certain threshold. Car people responded saying, "What, are you nuts? It's a 4Runner! They never depreciate!" We soon received this sample and figured we'd find out why.

The 4Runner formula includes a solid frame and suspension that are equally suited to off-roading and highway comfort. Its controls are classic, with burly knobs for heat/AC and audio, easy to use without taking your eyes off the road or your gloves off your hands. Ours had leather-like, lightweight, easily cleaned SofTex upholstery. 4Runner is surely one of the most trucklike SUVs you are going to find.

We drove it up into the snows around Flagstaff; the automatic hunted for gears at times on the I-17 climb, but speed stayed consistent.

We'd wish for an available manual on at least some trims, as on Tacoma. We'd like more device connectivity moved into the console box (secure from both off-road thrashing and from thieves' eyes) and a better rear camera, which seems to attract any and all dust, mud, rain and ice in its current position.

There are six trims of 4Runner, from \$34,610 to \$44,980. Three of the six are available as 4x2 rear-drivers, making nine. All have the same V6 and 5-speed automatic. Fuel mileage is not particularly a bragging point, though it did seem to deliver what it promised: Fancy Limited trim and max-off-road TRD Pro are over \$40 grand, with two other TRD off-road-ers (including this) not far behind.

### SPECIFICATIONS

SEATING CAPACITY	.....five (seven opt)
ENGINE	.....4.0L DOHC 24v V6 w dual indep VVT-i
DRIVETRAIN	.....part-time 4WD w Active TRAC
HP/TORQUE	.....270 hp / 278 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....5-speed ECT automatic
SUSPENSION..F:	coil indep dbl-wishbone w stblzr bar
.....R:	coil 4-link rigid type w stblzr bar
STEERING	.....power assist var gear rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....vented discs: F 13.3" / R 12.3"
WHEELS/TIRES	.....7.5x17 alloy / P265/70 R17 M/S
LENGTH/WHEELBASE	.....191.3 / 109.8 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.4 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....9.6 in
APPROACH/DEPARTURE	.....33 / 26 degrees
CARGO VOLUME	.....46.3 / 88.8 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4750 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....5000 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	.....87-oct reg unl / 23.0 gal
MPG	.....17/20/18 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$39,295
SLIDING REAR CARGO DECK W STORAGE	.....350
POWER TILT/SLIDE MOONROOF W SUNSHADE	.....850
(KEEP IT WILD SAVINGS)	.....750
FIRST AID KIT	.....30
HITCH BALL MOUNT	.....60
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE KIT	.....59
UNIVERSAL TABLET HOLDER	.....99
PAINT PROTECTION FILM	.....395
REMOTE ENGINE START	.....499
CONVENIENCE PKG:	
Exhaust tip, wheel locks roof rack cross bars	.....355
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....960
TOTAL	.....\$42,202

*4Runner's persona is burly. Tough. Not graceful. Not supposed to be. It looks and feels purpose-built and sturdy inside and out.*



# PICKING WINNERS. OR NOT.

**A FUN DAY OF NHRA AT WILD HORSE PASS MOTORSPORTS PARK**

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RANDALL BOHL

As in years past, we visited the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Arizona Nationals at Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park with Wally Cahill, who does the *Good Morning Arizona* car reviews on 3TV Phoenix, Sunday mornings. Normally, meteorologist Kim Quintero broadcasts driver interviews live from the races, but this year, no pun intended, Kim was a bit under the weather. Thus the live remote schedule was altered to Wally doing a review—this year of a 707-hp Dodge

Challenger SRT Hellcat Widebody in Octane Red—and one driver interview.

We met up with Wally predawn in the pits, at the trailer of Funny Car driver Ron Capps of Don Schumacher Racing. Even if you're not a big drag racing fan, you may know Ron from the NAPA Auto ads he's done for years.

Capps was given a tour of the Challenger Hellcat as Cahill gave his review of the car, and when Wally opened the trunk to show off its massive subwoofers, he also pulled out a guitar signed by Alice Cooper—a perk awaiting the purchaser of this particular Hellcat from Airpark Dodge Chrysler Jeep, Alice's dealership in Scottsdale.

From there, we went down to the Kalitta Motorsports camp and met with JR Todd, driver of the DHL-sponsored Funny Car, for the second live shot interview of the morning, at about 9:15 am. Given that Kim Quintero broadcasting live would have done as many as eight

spots, this was an easy start to the day, so we retired to the Don Schumacher Racing hospitality tent for hot coffee on a chilly morning and saw Top Fuel driver Leah Pritchett chatting up the crowd and presenting Sparkling Ice, naturally flavored sparkling water. A complimentary bottle of Ginger Lime came in very handy later, as the day warmed from three layers of clothing to T-shirt weather.

At this point, our favorite racers to watch for the day had been chosen in a completely unscientific way: Ron Capps or JR Todd in Funny Car, Leah Pritchett in Top Fuel, and Erica Enders in Pro Stock, simply because we had met her in previous years.

As pre-race got under way, we headed for the grandstands to be spectators for the day. The first round went well for three out of "our" four drivers. Number four qualifying Leah Pritchett defeated number 13 qualifier Troy Buff in Top Fuel. Number eight qualifying JR Todd

was defeated by number nine qualifier Matt Hagan—"our" first upset of the day, although Matt Hagan is a former champion never to be taken lightly. "Our" man now in Funny Car, number two qualifier Ron Capps, defeated number 15 qualifier Tim Wilkerson handily.

In Pro Stock, Erica Enders, also a number two qualifier, defeated number 15 qualifier Steve Graham.

It was a good first round for "our team." Second round competition changed everything. Leah Pritchett smoked the tires and was defeated by number 12 qualifier Scott Palmer, who would go on to beat Greg Carrillo of Glendale, Arizona, who, it happens, had been a giant-slayer in rounds one and two and had become the home town favorite in the grandstands.

Greg Carrillo qualified 16th and defeated both Tony Schumacher and Antron Brown on his way to meet Scott Palmer in the semifinals. Palmer would prevail and be the underdog, going into the finals against number two qualifier Steve Torrence. By the end of sec-

ond round in Top Fuel, it was clear that the track was hotter and slicker than during qualifying, and the big hitters were having trouble getting the power to the ground.

In Funny Car, it was no different. Ron Capps smoked the tires and was defeated by number 10 qualifier Shawn Langdon, who had upset Cruz Pedregon in round one, another victim of tire smoke. Langdon went on to run a respectable 3.95.8 and 325.77 mph in the semifinals, but lost to Tommy Johnson Jr, who was now on his way to face number one qualifier Courtney Force in the Funny Car final.

In Pro Stock, Erica Enders was upset by number seven qualifier Chris McGaha on a hole shot win—Erica running 654.9 to Chris's 656.1. The difference was at the starting line, as Chris cut a .031 light to Erica's .057. McGaha continued his lightning fast leaves, defeating Alex Laughlin in the semifinals with a .016 reaction time and winning the Pro Stock final over Jason Line with a .007 reaction time, as well as outrunning Line 6.529 to 6.538.

After all of the upset races of the day, the

Funny Car final did find Courtney Force the number one qualifier, having run roughshod over her side of the ladder, facing number six qualifier Tommy Johnson Jr.

There was to be no surprise in the Funny Car final—Courtney laid down a beautiful 3.834 elapsed time at 337.16 mph, to Tommy's trailing 6.814 at only 101.57 mph.

The Top Fuel final was a similar scenario, as number two qualifier Steve Torrence—having run through his side of the ladder with solid performances—met good friend but underdog Scott Palmer and ran a blistering 3.729 at 330.72mph to Scott's lagging 6.449 at only 102.70 mph.

As is often the case at the races, conditions change, track temperature is all important, and tuner and driver skills were tested. We saw a lot of driving on this day—some would call it a "pedal-fest" in the fuel ranks. It was not a driver's dream, but quite a show for the sold-out crowd.

It's always a good day at the races, even if "our team" didn't win. ■

Below: Funny Car winner Courtney Force. // At right (left to right, top to bottom): Ron Capps in Funny Car; Leah Pritchett in Top Fuel. // Ron Capps checks out the Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Widebody with 3TV's Wally Cahill; JR Todd; Leah Pritchett; Ron Capps checks out the Alice Cooper-signed guitar included with the Hellcat. // JR Todd in Funny Car; Top Fuel winner Steve Torrence.



# CMP MOTORCYCLES

## Seamless

Bit-of-both-worlds tech BY JOE SAGE

Skim the specifications for this Honda Clarity Plug-In Hybrid. Try to find any downside. Not that long ago, such a car's battery would have been heavy and bulky and taken room from passengers or cargo. The model would likely be relatively expensive yet small overall, short on power and maybe not even that great on fuel economy.

But now, in the mid-\$30s, you get a roomy cabin, spacious trunk—along with over 200 hp, over 100 MPGe and 47 miles of electric-only range. You can plug in to boost hybrid power and range—or to have a pure EV. You can run in Normal or Sport hybrid modes, or with many daily routines within its 47-mile EV range, you can run in Econ mode and maybe never even visit the gasoline pumps. Or forget all that and drive indefinitely on just gasoline—no limits to your weekends, 42 mpg—and by applying HV mode, recharge your battery, too.

The fuel tank is just seven gallons, but that's good for about 300 miles of gasoline-only driving (Honda states 340 miles as a combined EV-only and gasoline-only range).

It's a seamless set of powertrain options, covering a full range of power and/or fuel economy.

Superlatives include Honda's widely implemented righthand rear camera; smooth, quick power; a long-overdue elimination of front-drive torque steer; intuitive drive mode switching; a silent launch in EV mode; and a seamless switch to gasoline—almost imperceptible even if focused on it.

That smooth EV-to-gasoline operation is reflected in an also-seamless binnacle graphic that runs from green (charge) to blue (power). Even the auto start/stop function runs seamlessly in this car.

Clarity PHEV is one of an equally seamless set of powertrain options from Honda. The Clarity lineup includes a full EV, this PHEV and a Fuel Cell model (once the only Clarity). For a hybrid, not plug-in, you visit the Accord Hybrid and for 2019 also the return of the Insight, Honda's original hybrid model.

We could divide this into the good, the bad and the jury is out—but that might put too much emphasis on the bad, and we did thoroughly enjoy driving the Clarity PHEV. Power on tap always felt like even more than its numbers, whether lane-changing, jockeying for freeway ramp preeminence or cruising the open road. We also always love Honda's LaneWatch right-side-rear camera.

The bad were: a first-seen-in-Acura shift interface that's a collection of rectangles, circles and trapezoids that you either push or pull, all of which distract; the lefthand mirror's wide-angle split (at odds with horizontally-set human eyes); and a touchscreen entirely too demanding of attention (even one off-on-volume knob could solve a lot).

The new-last-year Clarity lineup evokes the rear-wheel-skirt styling of the original two-seat Insight a bit, though the newer Insights no longer have that. Our jury is out on this—distinctive but somewhat awkward, arguably the opposite of seamless, and to us ironically looking more like an older Insight than the new Insight does.

The benefits of a PHEV—perhaps the least understood powertrain, but often the most popular to those who are familiar with it—are both profound and subtle. In a nutshell, unlike a hybrid, which is basically a closed system that gets its electricity from the actions of the car itself, the plug-in hybrid introduces electricity from an outside source, but is not limited to just that as on an EV. It's arguably a best of both worlds or at least bit-of-both-worlds solution. And it works. Seamlessly. ■

### SPECIFICATIONS

SEATING CAPACITY	.....five
ENGINE	.....1.5L 16v DOHC i-VTEC inline-4
HP/TORQUE	.....103 hp / 99 lb-ft
ELECTRIC MOTOR	.....AC permanent magnet synchronous
HP/TORQUE	.....181 hp / 232 lb-ft
TOTAL SYSTEM HORSEPOWER	.....212 hp
BATTERY	.....17 kWh Li-ion, 6.6 kW onboard 32A charger
FULL CHARGE TIME	.....(240v) 2.5 hrs / (120v) 12 hrs
TRANSMISSION	.....fixed, single speed, variable ratio
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD
SUSPENSION	.....F: McPherson; R: multi-link
STEERING	.....electric power assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 12.3 vented disc / R: 12.2 solid disc
WHEELS	.....18" hybrid aerodynamic
TIRES	.....235/45 R18 94V Michelin Energy Saver
LENGTH / WB	.....192.7 / 108.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.4 ft
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.2 / 36.2 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....15.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT (DISTRIB F/R%)	.....4059 lb (57/43%)
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	.....regular unleaded / 7.0 gal
FUEL ECONOMY	.....MPG
	.....44/40/42 (city/hwy/comb)
	.....MPGe
	.....110 (comb)

**BASE PRICE** .....\$36,600

**EVERYTHING IS INCLUDED:** aluminum hood/trunk/fenders/doors, var interm wipers, security system w remote entry, one-touch signals, LED taillights, body-color spoiler, smart entry w walk-away lock, body-color pwr mirrors, LED signals, LED DRLs, LED headlights w auto on-off & high-low, dual-zone climate, pushbutton start, HomeLink remote, auto-dim mirror, pwr windows auto up-down w illum switches, pwr locks w programmable auto lock, cruise, tilt-tele wheel w illum controls, center console w armrest & storage, illum vanity mirrors, LED map lights, glasses holder, 12v pwr outlets, cupholders, sliding visors, seat-back & smartphone pockets, electronic trunk release, rear defroster, cargo light, heated front seats, 60/40 rear seats w armrest, 180w 8-spkr audio, 8" touch display, Android/Apple, SiriusXM, HE, Bluetooth, Pandora, SMS text, USB interfaces, adaptive cruise, lane keep assist, road departure mitigation, vehicle stability, ABS & EBD, brake assist, multi-angle rear cam w dynamic guides, fwd collision warning, lane departure warning, collision mitigation braking and more.

**TOURING TRIM (\$3200 DIFF) ADDS:** perforated leather-trim seats, 8-way power 2 memory driver's seat, 4-way power passenger seat, leather-wrapped steering wheel, satellite nav w voice recog & turn-by-turn & digital traffic,

**DESTINATION CHARGE** .....890

**TOTAL** .....\$37,490



### STANDARD TURBO KIT

Fits all Twin Cam® applications from 88CI to 110CI. Includes a 3pc finned plenum, complete exhaust, TiAL™ blow off valve and wastegate, Accufab clamps, billet cam cover, oil feed & drain lines, pre-programed Thunder-Max tuner, high flow injectors, 2-bar map sensor, and all necessary hardware. CMP Turbos™ are assembled and ready for installation. Polished kits come standard with a chrome RSD cam cover and polished Accufab clamps.

#### RETAIL PRICING:

COMPLETE BLACK KIT \$7895  
COMPLETE BLACK & POLISH KIT \$7995  
COMPLETE FULL POLISH KIT \$8195



### HIGH OUTPUT KIT

Fits all Twin Cam® applications from 111CI to 124CI. Includes a Garrett® ball bearing turbo, 3pc finned plenum, complete exhaust, TiAL™ blow off valve and wastegate, Accufab clamps, billet cam cover, oil feed & drain lines, pre-programed Thunder-Max tuner, high flow injectors, 2-bar map sensor, and all necessary hardware. CMP Turbos™ are assembled and ready for installation. Polished kits come standard with a chrome RSD cam cover and polished Accufab clamps.

#### RETAIL PRICING:

COMPLETE BLACK KIT \$8495  
COMPLETE BLACK & POLISH KIT \$8595  
COMPLETE FULL POLISH KIT \$8795



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# On top of its game

By Joe Sage

Ram Trucks chose that finest of driving locales, Arizona, to launch its all-new 2019 Ram 1500 pickups, a chance for all to experience our unbeatable combination of smooth highways, aggressive freeways, rugged trails and impeccable weather. We met near Carefree, drove down toward Mesa, back up along Bush Highway and Saguaro Lake, settling in on the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation for an afternoon of serious off-roading.

Ram sales have grown every year, from 260,000 to almost 700,000 by 2017, and for two years in a row, Ram 1500 has won the top overall brand loyalty spot for half-ton pickups. Ram chief Jim Morrison expects this to continue through 2018, noting that sales are already up year-over-year, and with the new 2019 Ram 1500 now on sale, he anticipates another good boost.

**WHAT'S NEW?** Everything: body, frame, engines, transmissions, suspension, interiors, electrical systems, entertainment, safety features, even wheels (fifteen styles and sizes from 18" to 22").

And styling. The new 2019 Ram pickup line is that most successful of redesigns—noticeably different, yet immediately recognizable. Headlights and fenders have been raised, only about an inch

and a half, which some thought moves away a bit from their “big rig” look of the past quarter century. But then again, big rigs have also evolved.

Committed to steel, Ram has 98 percent high-strength steel in the frame, over 50 percent light-weight steel for cab and box, and aluminum just for the hood and tailgate. It saves weight, while also promising “the strongest 1500 ever.”

Shaving weight benefits fuel economy, but has also enabled a boost of load capability by over 20 percent, to as high as 2320 pounds of payload and 12,750 pounds towing.

New eTorque engines (more on this below) match power to those higher loads



while also increasing MPG—they expect a 10 percent boost overall when EPA numbers are final.

All the new trucks are four-door crew or quad cabs (crew only in higher trims, while Rebel adds a quad). For a two-door single cab, you can still buy the old style truck for at least the rest of this year.

The model range is familiar, from the work-oriented Tradesman up to luxury Limited, but with more inclusions or availabilities lineup-wide than ever. Options available on any trim include air suspension for \$1795, an off-road package for just \$795, and popular RamBox storage for \$995.

The centerpiece of the new Ram 1500's interior is its top tech touchpoint—a new 12-inch Uconnect screen on top models (with familiar 8.4-inch or 5-inch screens down the line). The 12-incher can run huge full-screen navigation or split between that and, say, audio, both still with prodigious real estate. Top audio is a 19-speaker 1900-watt Harman Kardon unit, and new SiriusXM 360L on-demand makes any drive more entertaining.

Interiors have been comprehensively reworked with attention to authentic, rugged and stylish materials, durability and luxury—from base Tradesman up to the premium trims. “The amount of real wood, real leather and real metal in our trucks is second to none,” says Morrison.

Frame and suspension have been completely reengineered for ride, handling, comfort, safety and heavier loads. The frame is about four inches

longer, to accommodate cabs extended by four inches over the prior model—an inch added in front and three in the rear—for a whopping 45 inches of rear legroom (just one of the benefits that make the rear more enticing than ever). The enlarged cab also contributes to increases in storage space throughout—twice that of any competition, they say—with more power outlets and lighting.

Prices run from \$31,695 for a 4x2 Tradesman Quad Cab (see sidebar) to \$57,690 for a 4x4 Limited Crew Cab with 6'4" bed (just a few hundred dollars more than the prior trucks, but with huge upgrades). Some trucks are even more affordable this year, such as a new Rebel Quad Cab 4x4.

**EXTERIOR:** Exterior design chief Joe Dehmer calculates that since the company has been building trucks since 1914, this could be considered the 15th generation. “That’s lots of heritage,” he says, noting they “established the ‘big rig’ DNA in 1994, and it still sets us apart from any other, so we wanted to carry that forward.”

The grille loses its forward slant, now vertical and integrated with the bumper. Gone are the long dominant cross-hairs, with “R-A-M” now the bold signature element (on tailgates it’s now the Ram’s head, except on Rebel). There are three headlight configurations, and subtle body sculpting creates an hourglass shape to lighten visual heft.



## SPECIFICATIONS

**FORMATS** ..... Quad cab, crew cab, 4x2, 4x4  
**SEATING** ..... (Quad or crew) six  
**CONSTRUCTION** ..... Ladder-type frame, steel cab, double-wall pickup box  
**ASSEMBLY** ..... Sterling Heights, Michigan

### ENGINES:

**3.6L PENTASTAR V6 W eTORQUE**  
**HP/TORQUE** ..... 305 hp / 269 lb-ft  
 —plus up to 90 lb-ft from motor-generator  
**FUEL** ..... unleaded regular 87 octane

**5.7L HEMI® V8**  
**HP/TORQUE** ..... 395 hp / 410 lb-ft  
**FUEL** ..... 89 octane recm / 87 okay

**5.7L HEMI V8 W eTORQUE**  
**HP/TORQUE** ..... 395 hp / 410 lb-ft  
 —plus up to 139 lb-ft from motor-generator  
**FUEL** ..... 89 octane recm / 87 okay  
**TRANSMISSION** ..... 8-speed automatic

### TRANSFER CASES:

**BW 48-12 PART-TIME**  
 ..... 2HI, 4HI locked, 4LO locked, neutral  
**BW 48-11 ON-DEMAND**  
 2HI, 4 auto, 4HI locked, 4LO locked, neutral

**AXLES** ..... FRONT: 215mm  
 REAR: 235mm w avail open, limited slip or electronic lock diff, opt thermal mgmt axle

**RATIOS** ..... 3.21, 3.55, 3.92  
**ALTERNATOR** ..160A, 180A, 220A (special pkg)  
**BATTERY** ...Group 94R low-mntce H7 730 CCA

**SUSPENSION** ..... F: upper/lower A-arms, coils, twin-tube shocks, stblzr bar.  
 R: five-link w track bar, progressive coils, stblzr bar, twin-tube shocks, solid axle.

**OPTIONAL F/R:** air suspension.  
**BRAKES** ..... F: 14.9x1.2 vented w 2.2" twin-piston pin-slider caliper, ABS.  
 R: 14.8x0.87 solid w 2.2" single-piston pin-slider, ABS.

**QUAD CAB** ..... bed length 6'4"  
**LENGTH / WHEELBASE** ..... 228.9 in / 140.5 in  
**TIRES** ..... 275/55R20

**GROUND CLEARANCE** ..... 2WD: F 7.8", R 8.7"  
 4WD: F 8.2", R 8.7"  
**APPR/BKVR/DEPART\*** ..... 2WD: 18.1 / 19.5 / 25.2°  
 4WD: 18.9 / 19.9 / 25.0°  
 \*(stats vary slightly w air suspension)

**CREW CAB** ..... bed length 5'7" or 6'4" LWB  
**LENGTH / WB** ..... 5'7" bed: 232.9 in / 144.6 in  
 ..... LWB 6'4" bed: 241.8 in / 153.5 in

**GROUND CLEARANCE** ..... 2WD: F 7.8", R 8.7"  
 4WD: F 8.2", R 8.7"  
**APPR/BKVR/DEPART\*** ..... 2WD: 18.1 / 18.4 / 25.0°  
 4WD: 18.9 / 18.7 / 24.9°  
 \*(6'4": stats vary w 5'7" bed &/or air susp)

**TURNING CIRCLE** ..... 45.1 to 48.7 ft  
**FUEL TANK** ..... 23 / 26 / 33 gal  
**MPG** ..... 3.6L V6 4x2 / 4x4 ..... TBA  
 ..... 5.7L V8 4x2 ..... 15/22/17 (city/hwy/comb)  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 15/21/17 (city/hwy/comb)

### TOW CAPACITY:

**QUAD CAB 6'4" BOX**  
 3.6L Pentastar V6 ..... 4x2 ..... 6,640-7,750 lb  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 6,460-7,290 lb  
 5.7L HEMI® V8 ..... 4x2 ..... 8,540-12,750 lb  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 8,270-11,460 lb

**CREW CAB 5'7" BOX**  
 3.6L Pentastar V6 ..... 4x2 ..... 6,590-7,390 lb  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 6,280-7,280 lb  
 5.7L HEMI® V8 ..... 4x2 ..... 8,340-11,530 lb  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 8,090-11,290 lb

**CREW CAB 6'4" BOX**  
 3.6L Pentastar V6 ..... 4x2 ..... 6,550-8,420 lb  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 6,320-8,220 lb  
 5.7L HEMI® V8 ..... 4x2 ..... 8,330-11,520 lb  
 ..... 4x4 ..... 8,080-11,320 lb

Cameras and parking sensors are fully integrated into mirrors and bodywork, and rather than a mast, the antenna is now integrated into the roof-mounted dorsal satellite receiver.

**INTERIOR:** Interior design chief Ryan Nagode had the task of implementing rich soft-touch materials that also can take "a bit of abuse." Ergonomics are improved, with the center screen moved up to better fit the user's "reach zone." The screen interface has been redesigned with swipe-left-right "cards" that keep you from having to dig deep into the system. The additional interior dimensions allow a new dual-pane sunroof. A wireless charger is available on most trims, and a new media center lets you charge and display your phone at the same time. A big new console with almost 40 liters of storage houses five USB ports (four are faster Type C and three can be fully functional in the screen simultaneously). The rear includes cupholders plus a spot for rear passengers to set up their tablet, and rear storage areas can handle anything from a 15-inch laptop to long items like builder's levels or fishing rods. Some 151 liters of total vehi-

cle storage are said to be double that of the closest competitor. Climate control is all new, partly driven by the bigger cab. The drivetrain hump is eliminated in the rear for flat-floor comfort. Drive controls—rotary shifter, four-wheel-drive, hill control and such—are grouped together handily.

Seats also lost weight, enabling new features. Front seats can be set 20mm lower and combine with a new tilt/telescope wheel for a wider range of fit. There are four-way power lumbar and four-way adjustable headrests, and the passenger seat gets the same range as the driver. Seats front and rear have three levels of heating, three of venting, and rear seats in higher trims can recline, with a fold-down center area creating individual spaces.

The binnacle cluster is also new, a seven-inch screen with 3D color graphics and functions, and seven reconfigurable zones (or the option of wiping all that info clean, leaving just a speedo).

Six different interior styling themes reflect different models, including instrument fonts and colors that relate to the spirit of each. There are four interior color schemes, and bench seats are avail-

able throughout all trim levels (except Rebel).

**ENGINEERING:** Ram engineering head Rob Wichman points to a nine percent improvement in aerodynamics (and a Cd of .357), along with 225 pounds of weight reduction, as key not only to efficiency, durability and payload, but to improved ride, handling, steering and braking. Forty percent of the aero improvement was achieved simply by raising the box 35mm (less than 1.5").

An active front air dam shaved an equal amount. This deploys at 35 mph, retracts at 15 mph, and is clutched, so if you encounter an obstacle, it retracts, then redeploys. (This is on standard suspension trucks, while air suspension lowers itself at speed to achieve similar aero improvement and also lower by two inches for access and egress.)

The safety and security features list now tops 100, from familiar items such as blind spot and rear cross traffic alerts, to tech tailored to a big pickup, from 360-degree surround cameras to trailering ("you don't need a PhD in trailer-hookup-ology to make it work with our trucks," says Morrison).

Additional efforts have improved both active



and passive (avoidance and post-event) crashworthiness. High-strength and advanced high-strength steels, also benefiting from new hydroform processes, not only shave weight but create more continuous protective zones. A splayed rail frame design up front mitigates both front and offset impact, while additional blocking protects the cab.

Adaptive cruise and lane keep assist with haptic feedback are joined by two-stage forward crash mitigation. A new fully automatic trailer detect feature learns the length of your trailer as you turn, adding to lane change warnings while towing.

Vehicle dynamics are improved for 20 percent better roll stiffness by a stabilizer bar mounted aft of the front wheels. Five-link rear coil suspension increases payload while, combined with variable-rate rear springs, also improving ride. Stopping distance is best in class, with brake pad area up by 18 percent and rotors an inch bigger front and rear.

When the heavy HEMI engine goes into four-cylinder mode, it can cause vibration. New active tune mass modules (ATMM) counteract this by 180 degrees, so occupants feel nothing. And a clever system works like noise-cancelling headphones, using the speakers of the audio system to create a peaceful cabin at all times on all trims.

**POWERTRAIN:** The new Ram 1500's engines feature eTorque, which pairs a heavy duty motor-generator unit with a 48-volt power pack unit to achieve four goals—improved fuel economy, per-

formance and drivability, while supporting the increased payload and towing.

Ram powertrain engineer Gay Kent says the system has four functions: [a] replacing the role of the alternator; [b] providing quicker engine start-stop than a starter-based system, spinning up smoothly in less than half a second; [c] becoming part of the power curve, adding up to 90 lb-ft of torque on the V6 and 139 lb-ft on the V8 from the motor-generator, also blending torque strategically during shifts and deceleration; and [d] creating regenerative hybrid power during acceleration and braking, feeding the 48-volt lithium-ion battery back. The power pack—a 12-cell nickel-manganese-cobalt unit—plus 3kW DC-DC converter and battery pack control module together are about the size of a small briefcase and are tucked behind the rear seat.

The 8-speed transmissions have also been developed to work tightly with the engine control module and now have over 40 shift maps, assuring seamless selection of the right gear at all times.

**EVOLUTION:** The new eTorque engines—3.6L Pentastar V6 and 5.7L HEMI V8—are deep into development. For our launch drive, all models were outfitted with the traditional HEMI V8. As production of the 2019 models gets fully underway, upper trims will have this HEMI at first, while V6 models will only have the new eTorque V6. The eTorque HEMI V8 will join the lineup next.

And—expect an EcoDiesel next year. ■



## MODELS AND PRICING

### TRADESMAN

4x2	Quad	\$ 31,695
	CREW	34,495
	CREW 6'4" box	+300
4x4	Quad	35,195
	CREW	37,995
	CREW 6'4" box	+300

### BIG HORN

4x2	Quad	35,695
	CREW	38,395
	CREW 6'4" box	+300
4x4	Quad	39,195
	CREW	41,895
	CREW 6'4" box	+300

### REBEL

4x2	CREW	43,995
4x4	Quad	44,695
	CREW	47,495

### LARAMIE

4x2	V8	Quad	40,690
	V8	CREW	43,390
	V8	CREW 6'4" box	+300
4x4	V8	Quad	44,190
	V8	CREW	48,890
	V8	CREW 6'4" box	+300

### LONGHORN

4x2	V8	CREW	51,390
	V8	CREW 6'4" box	+300
4x4	V8	CREW	54,890
	V8	CREW 6'4" box	+300

### LIMITED

4x2	V8	CREW	53,890
	V8	CREW 6'4" box	+300
4x4	V8	CREW	57,390
	V8	CREW 6'4" box	+300

- Models are priced with 3.6L Pentastar V6 eTorque unless noted as V8 (5.7L HEMI), with eTorque HEMI to follow on all later.
- Tradesman, Big Horn and Rebel trims are all eTorque V6 at this time; Laramie, Longhorn and Limited are all HEMI V8.
- Quad cab models have a 6'4" bed. Crew Cab models have a 5'7" Bed standard or are available with Long Wheelbase 6'4" Bed (except Rebel). The price difference for LWB is \$300 for any when available. There are no quad cab versions of Longhorn or Limited trims.
- An Off-Road Package is \$795 on any trim.
- Air suspension is \$1795 on any trim.
- Special limited editions and appearance packages are also available, including Lone Star Edition, Kentucky Derby Edition, Big Horn Sport, Big Horn Black, Laramie Sport, Laramie Black and others, ongoing or at various points in time.





# Cruising through Cascadia

Traveling from Arizona to the Pacific Northwest in an RV towing a Jeep

By Stephanie Jarnagan

**H**ans Christian Andersen is credited with saying, "To travel is to live." As parents of three children ranging in age from 7 to 14, we are doing our best to instill this philosophy within each of them. And to help us do that, three years ago we purchased a 34-foot Coachmen Mirada RV and committed ourselves to planning epic summer vacations for the next few years.

With one major RV road trip under our belt that covered 10 states and 13 national parks, surely we learned enough to make our six-state loop from Arizona to the Pacific Northwest more manageable.

The main takeaway from our first trip to Yellowstone was that including too many stops on our trip is a royal pain due to the set up that goes into an RV. Sure, it looks convenient, but the sewer line doesn't hook up itself!

In order to reduce our workload and the likelihood of grumpy travelers, our two-week Pacific Northwest trip was divided into just three major stops: Trinidad, California; Seaside, Oregon; and Seattle.

### Jaw-Dropping Redwoods in Trinidad

We booked three nights in the small town of Trinidad, California, a tiny coastal fishing village that serves as a gateway to Redwood National and State Parks. Our stay at Emerald Forest Cabins & RV turned out to be our favorite lodging on the trip. The entire park is riddled with redwoods, and our particular site featured a huge redwood stump (6 feet tall by 10 feet wide) that made for an excellent kids' climbing structure complete with banana slugs.

The village of Trinidad, which is actually the smallest incorporated city in California with just over 300 residents, is quaint and picturesque, with rugged coastline and ocean bluffs overlooking coves dotted with fishing boats.

We enjoyed an afternoon interacting with local sea otters that didn't seem the

(Left) Campsite at Emerald Forest Cabins & RV in Trinidad, California, with the author's family's 34-foot Coachmen Mirada RV and Jeep at the ready.

(Right, top to bottom) RV cruising along the Oregon coast on US 101. // Ten-foot-wide redwood stump complete with banana slugs delighted the kids at our Emerald Forest Cabins & RV campsite. // Iconic Trinidad Head Memorial Lighthouse built in 1947 pays homage to those lost at sea. // The kids got a kick out of driving through the historic Tour Thru Tree in the redwood forest at Klamath, California.



slightest bit frightened of us. We also were given a gift of 22 fresh crabs from some young fishermen finishing up their day's work. We promptly cooked them that night in our RV and had so much crab that we ended up sharing with several camping neighbors.

Our day trip to the Fern Canyon Trail was a highlight, especially when the kids found out that portions of *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* were filmed there. Ironically, the hike was not about the fabled redwoods, but more about the ferns that line the almost completely vertical canyon walls, which hug a shallow stream that serves as the hiking path.

### Sunken Ships in Seaside

We traveled along US 101 up to our second destination, just outside Seaside, Ore-



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gon. The 101 extended our drive time from Trinidad by about three hours, but the scenery was worth it. We caught glimpses of iconic towering rock formations just off the coastline, as well as the telltale signs of dairy farming towns like Tillamook, Oregon (home to my favorite brand of cheese!)

Our final destination was the Astoria/Warrenton/Seaside KOA, which was located in Hammond, Oregon, just a short drive from its more popular namesake cities. The KOA was family-oriented and very busy—the free pancake breakfasts are a perk resulting in big crowds.

Just across the street from the KOA near Fort Stevens, we explored a 112-year-old shipwreck that you can walk up to at low tide. The Peter Iredale was a four-masted steel barque sailing vessel that ran ashore in 1906 en route to the Columbia River. Tourists are able to get up close and personal, even climbing on parts of it to capture pictures.

This leg of our adventure also included a trip to the Columbia River Gorge east of Portland, where we were lucky enough to visit the Multnomah Falls before the Eagle Creek Fire nearly destroyed the historic lodge last year. Luckily the lodge was saved, but the damage to the surrounding natural habitat was significant. Billed as the tallest waterfall in Oregon, the falls include two drops that span 620 feet.

### Sunshine in Seattle

From Seaside, it was a relatively short jaunt to our final destination of Dash Point State Park, strategically located between Tacoma, Washington, and Seattle. We spent three glorious days filled with nothing but sunshine, soaking up all the touristy Seattle sights, like Pike Place Market, the Space Needle, Kerry Park and the infamous gum wall.

We also opted to get a little history of the area via Bill Speidel's Underground Tour. There we learned about the Great Seattle

(Clockwise from top) Checking out the wreckage of the Peter Iredale at Hammond, Oregon. // The short hike on the Fern Canyon Trail included picturesque scenery that was a backdrop for *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*. // Dash Point State Park is a centrally located destination sandwiched on the Puget Sound between Seattle and Tacoma. // Multnomah Falls in the Columbia River Gorge outside Portland. // Dash Point beach fun. // View of Mount Rainier from Seattle Center, with Key Arena and the arches of Pacific Science Center in the foreground and the Seattle Great Wheel on Pier 58 in the distance.



Fire of 1889 that destroyed 25 blocks and resulted in the Pioneer Square neighborhood being rebuilt 22 feet above the pre-fire street level. Parts of the spooky remnants left behind in the fire are still accessible and showcased on this tour.

Now an auto enthusiast's trip to Washington would not be complete without a stop at the famed LeMay–America's Car Museum in Tacoma. From classics to exotics, alternative engines to motorsports mania, there was something for each of us to enjoy. My kids took a liking to the classic Fords on display, making me swell with pride (disclaimer: I work with the Ford Motor Company Fund).



All in all, this road trip was most definitely smoother than our inaugural epic RV adventure (minus the time we lost the RV keys for three hours, but who even remembers that?). We were blessed with amazing weather—oddly enough not a single drop of rain until we hit a monsoon coming home in Wickenburg, Arizona.



Our trip concluded with another valuable life lesson appropriately imparted by Chief Seattle: "Take only memories, leave only footprints." Mission accomplished. ■



# Supercar presence, econocar fuel mileage

Sexy luxury performance coupe has an active personality—and a bit of a temperamental streak BY JOE SAGE

The all-new-for-2018 Lexus LC 500h looks and feels like a \$300,000 supercar, costs \$96,510, has electrified drivetrain torque in spades, and sips fuel at 35 mpg like an econocar.

A non-hybrid LC 500 runs \$92,000. When Lexus introduced the new ES 300h hybrid for 2013, its

price differential was just \$2850, unprecedentedly low at the time. They've stayed true to this thinking with the LC 500 and 500h (pro rata, the \$4510 step up is less than on the ES). The V8 gasoline LC has more horsepower (471 to the hybrid's 384, or 22.6 percent more), while the hybrid's 35 mpg high-

way beats the regular LC's 26 mpg by 19.2 percent, the hybrid's 26 mpg city is 62.5 percent better than the other's 16, and its 30 mpg combined is 58 percent better. Whatever your own driving pattern, the hybrid will pay down its difference every day.

The Lexus LC 500h is yet another example of



how a hybrid powertrain can augment even a performance coupe with exotic aspirations, and no longer be the kind of odd duck they were 15 years ago (and still are, in models left over from then).

We drove the LC 500h from the northeast Valley to ISM Raceway and back—95 miles round-trip—several times during a recent race weekend, and it turned a lot of heads even there, surrounded by a sea of racecars. (Some staff suggested we take it out on the track—and of course bring them along.)

That freeway time amounted largely to accelerating and steering, but the LC 500h was master of all it surveyed, achieved 32 mpg while being driven aggressively, made our long drives painless with its 915-watt Mark Levinson audio system, and surrounded us with a cabin rich, luxurious, and cleverly designed and appointed in many ways.

Our fuel mileage stayed above 30 mpg for the duration, even though the balance of our driving was on local surface streets with traffic, lights and other inefficiencies. Impressive.

The instrument panel and console look neat and complete, uncluttered and clean. Some features are exemplary, such as five drive modes that are electronically switched, so exiting one takes you straight to a most likely other, rather than being three or four clicks away in a mechanical series.

Others, though, are complex and distracting. Key among these is the Remote Touch Interface (RTI). Keeping the screen slimmer and in the driver's line of sight prompted moving much of its control to other locations, notably a touchpad where your

hand falls naturally, next to the (also slim and elegant) shifter. The touchpad is being implemented across the lineup in place of a joystick that preceded it on other models, which had always been finicky and jumpy. But despite its neat, flat nature, we find the new interface also jumpy and finicky.

Is it just us? We scoured user forums online, finding general agreement that it was an improvement over the joystick, but comments were divided between those who hated it and those who swore that if you work with it for a month, or some as little as a week, you'd master and even enjoy it. Maybe someday we'll have that luxury of time with one. Many also had simply found ways to avoid it, by using steering wheel controls or by just forgoing normally key features—such as heated seats.

This car, for its price, stellar fuel mileage, very healthy performance and standout luxury fitments, could take the world by storm—but for that touchpad. If we could buy one without that, we would.

Things that are optional, by the way, are all quite desirable and priced very reasonably for all they offer. (Heck, we're not sure you could buy one wheel this nice for \$1400, aftermarket.)

Test drive this Lexus. You'll have an exhilarating time behind the wheel. You'll enjoy the comforts of its stylish premium cabin. And we recommend you take the opportunity (as we always recommend with any vehicle, actually) to really give the user interface a serious shakedown session. That last point is critical, as the touchpad controller may be a make-or-break detail for some. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

STRUCTURE	.....unitized steel body / frame
DRAG COEFFICIENT (Cd)	.....0.33
SEATING CAPACITY	.....four
HYBRID SYSTEM	.....series/parallel system
ENGINE	..3.5L DOHC 24v V6 alum block/heads
• HP/TORQUE	.....engine: 295 hp / 256.7 lb-ft
ELECTRIC MOTOR	..perm magnet synchronous primary gen, engine start, eng spd control
BATTERY PACK	.....Lithium-ion 84 cell 310.8V nominal, 650V system
• TOTAL SYSTEM POWER	...354 horsepower
TRANSMISSION	.....multi-stage hybrid trans
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
0-TO-60 MPH	.....4.7 sec
TOP SPEED	.....155 mph
STEERING	.....elec speed-sense rack & pinion
SUSPENSION	.....F: multi-link / R: multi-link
BRAKES	.....F: 15.7" vented, 6-piston calipers; R: 14.1" vented, 4-piston calipers; F/R: aluminum calipers, high-friction pads
WHEELS	.....standard 20" cast aluminum; optional 20" or 21" forged aluminum
TIRES	.....20" F 245/45RF20, R 275/40RF20 optional 21" F 245/40RF21, R 275/35RF21
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....187.4 in / 113.0 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5x5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....35.4 ft w/ Active Rear Steering 34.8 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....37.2 / 32.5 in (front 36.8 with CFRP roof)
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.0 / 32.0 in
CARGO VOLUME	.....4.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIB F/R	.....4435 lb / 52/48 %
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....91 premium unl / 22.2 gal
MPG	.....26/35/30 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	..... <b>\$96,510</b>
CONVENIENCE PKG:	Intuitive park assist, blind spot monitor, rear cross traffic alert
21" FORGED WHEELS	.....1440
HEADS-UP DISPLAY	.....900
LIMITED SLIP DIFFERENTIAL	.....390
AUDIO:	Mark Levinson Premium Surround w/ 13 spkrs, 915w Reference Sound
PERFORMANCE PKG:	Alcantara sport seats w/ 8-way power adjust, carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) composite roof, active rear steering, VGRS, active rear spoiler, alcantara headliner, carbon fiber door sill
CARGO NET - SPIDER	.....65
KEY GLOVE	.....20
CARPET TRUNK MAT	.....105
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....995
TOTAL	..... <b>\$108,605</b>

Below: the Remote Touch Interface (RTI) pad that "allows tapping and flicking"—and prompts some cursing and avoiding.



# NASCAR SPRING RACE WEEKEND

FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY MARCH 9-10-11  
 LAST NASCAR EVENT WITH OLD STANDS, INFIELD, START-FINISH LINE  
 PHOTOS: RANDALL BOHL

NASCAR Spring Race Weekend kicked off with practice sessions for both the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR XFINITY Series on Friday; up and coming NASCAR drivers in the DC Solar 200 NASCAR XFINITY Series Race on Saturday; and NASCAR Goes West with Champions Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch taking on young guns like Kyle Larson and Chase Elliott on the track on Sunday.

**FRIDAY: GATORADE POLE DAY:** Reigning Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series champion Martin Truex Jr. started his quest for a first career win at ISM Raceway by claiming the pole on Friday for the TicketGuardian 500—his second career pole here, with a lap of 136.945 mph, giving him two top fives and eight top 10s in 24 races here. His best finish was a third in last November's Can-Am 500, during an incredible run to his first Series championship.

Truex was trailed by three young guns also searching for their first win at ISM Raceway—Kyle Larson, missed the pole by six one-hundredths of a second, and started alongside Truex on the front row, then Chase Elliott and Tucson native Alex Bowman, Hendrick Motorsports teammates. Rounding out the top five was Joey Logano, winner of the 2016 fall race.

**SATURDAY: DC SOLAR 200:** Brad Keselowski, driver of the No. 22 car for Team Penske, overcame a stage two pit road speeding penalty and multiple weather delays to outlast the field in the DC Solar 200 NASCAR XFINITY Series (NXS) race at ISM Raceway. With Keselowski's victory, Roger Penske became the winningest team owner in ISM Raceway history with

15 including six in NASCAR. Keselowski had to endure two red flags for rain during the race. The first came on lap 47 at the end of Stage 1 and lasted for an hour and 34 minutes; the second was at the end of Stage 2 for 25 minutes. In his second career NXS win here, he led 66 of 200 laps, including the final 22.

Pit road strategy, with four cautions and two red flags, led to 10 lead changes throughout the race. Justin Allgaier, 2017 DC Solar 200 winner, earned the pole Saturday afternoon, led a race-high 76 laps and finished second, Kyle Busch third, rookie Christopher Bell fourth and Jamie McMurray fifth.

**SUNDAY: TICKETGUARDIAN 500:** Kevin Harvick, driver of the No. 4 for Stewart-Haas Racing, became the first driver since 2015 to win three consecutive races in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series by claiming the victory in Sunday's TicketGuardian 500—his ninth career victory in Phoenix, extending his all-time wins record here. It was also Harvick's 40th career win, tying him with NASCAR Hall of Famer Mark Martin for 18th on the career wins list in the Monster Energy Series, and positioning him as Series points leader after four races.

Kyle Busch, who led a race-high 128 of 312 laps, finished second, Chase Elliott third, Denny Hamlin fourth and 2017 Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series champion Martin Truex Jr fifth.

**NOVEMBER NASCAR AND REDEVELOPMENT GRAND OPENING:** Dates are set for the Can-Am 500 Monster Energy Series Playoff race weekend: November 9-10-11, 2018. Tickets are already on sale,



**ISM RACEWAY**  
 PHOENIX, ARIZONA

available online at ISMRaceway.com, by phone at 1-866-408-RACE (7223) or in person at the ISM Raceway ticket office in Avondale.

November NASCAR Race Weekend will mark the grand opening of the new ISM Raceway, after the completion of the \$178 million ISM Raceway Project Powered by DC Solar redevelopment. Fans will be able to experience all aspects of the track's modernization, from the infield Fan Zone, to free in-seat wifi, to a Cup Garage that's more accessible than ever.

The weekend will also feature the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Lucas Oil 150 on Friday and the NASCAR XFINITY Series 200 on Saturday.

All three national series will be hosting their final Playoff elimination races, determining the final four who will compete at Homestead for the series title.

**NASCAR 2019:** The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series returns here with TicketGuardian 500 race weekend on Sunday, March 10, 2019, again part of NASCAR's West Coast Swing at the start of the season, along with Las Vegas Motor Speedway and Auto Club Speedway. Details for the NASCAR XFINITY Series and NASCAR Camping World Truck Series will be announced at a later date. ■



Kevin Harvick

# INDYCAR PHOENIX GRAND PRIX

FRIDAY-SATURDAY APRIL 6-7  
 FINAL NIGHT OF OLD STANDS, INFIELD, START-FINISH LINE  
 PHOTOS: RANDALL BOHL

As stars of IndyCar took over the track at ISM Raceway for this spring's Verizon IndyCar Series Desert Diamond West Valley Casino Phoenix Grand Prix—the second IndyCar race of the season—the weekend was filled with events.

**MARIO ANDRETTI'S FINAL WIN REUNION:** Racing legend Mario Andretti holds a special place in ISM Raceway's rich open-wheel history. The 1993 IndyCar race here, 25 years ago, culminated in Andretti's last open-wheel victory, as he became the oldest IndyCar winner on a traditional course, the first driver to win IndyCar in four different decades and the only driver to win in five consecutive decades. He still holds IndyCar records for most starts, most pole positions, most laps led and most career top-three finishes. ISM Raceway offered commemorative items for fans, plus a panel discussion and fan autograph session with Andretti and drivers from the 1993 race: Emerson Fittipaldi, David Kudrave, Arie Luyendyk, Bobby Rahal, Lyn St James, Paul Tracy, Al Unser Jr and Jimmy Vasser.

**FRIDAY: PRACTICE AND QUALIFYING:** After daytime practice, qualifying ran into the evening, as the Grand Prix field was set for Saturday. Continuing an impressive start to the season, Sebastien Bourdais claimed the pole, joined on the front row by defending race winner Simon Pagenaud, a fellow Frenchman, while teammate Pietro Fittipaldi, grandson of open-wheel legend Emerson Fittipaldi, qualified 10th in his first race

here. Also in the top five were Will Power, Alexander Rossi and James Hinchcliffe.

**SATURDAY: PHOENIX GRAND PRIX:** Defending Verizon IndyCar Series champion Josef Newgarden captured his first career Phoenix win, moving from fourth to first in the closing laps. Sebastien Bourdais, winner of the season's first race, had won the pole and led early, but lost ground on the first round of pit stops, when his car made contact with one of his tire changers. Though he recovered to finish the pit stop, Bourdais had to serve a pass-through penalty for the incident. After a caution on lap 230, Newgarden had come down pit road from the lead for fresh tires, restarting in fourth with just six laps to go. Within one lap, he was up to second, hot on the heels of the leader, rookie Robert Wickens, who put up a tough fight. But Newgarden regained the lead with three laps left and hung on. "This was a team victory," said Newgarden. "They gave me the pit stops. They had the strategy (and) they made the right call." Newgarden and Wickens were joined on the podium by third-place finisher Alexander Rossi. Rounding out the top five were former series champs Scott Dixon and Ryan Hunter-Reay. Bourdais finished 13th.

**CHAMP CAR SERIES:** The USAC Silver Crown Champ Car Series held its qualifying session on Friday, with three-time series champion Kody Swanson claiming the pole for Saturday's Phoenix Copper Cup and aiming for his first win here,



**ISM RACEWAY**  
 PHOENIX, ARIZONA

after finishing second last year. Last year's winner Bobby Santos started in second. Much like last year, Swanson put up a fight against Santos, leading 13 laps, but losing the lead to Santos on lap 80 after an intense side-by-side battle.

**VINTAGE DESERT CLASSIC:** The Vintage Desert Classic Presented by *Classic Racing Times* gave fans a chance to watch over 30 vintage Indy cars take laps on the track both days—including some of Mario Andretti's cars.

**QUARTER MIDGETS:** USAC .25 Midgets staged qualifying and heat races for competitors age 5 to 16, in 12 classes, on a temporary 1/20th-mile oval on the DC Solar Power Pavilion throughout both days in the Phoenix Mini Copper Cup.

**OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW:** The Phoenix Grand Prix would be the last event to cross the longstanding start-finish line, and the stands along that straightaway would soon be removed, along with the media center, medical center, garages and RV parking on the inside of the oval. Come November 2018, all will be new in time for NASCAR (see previous page) as well as for future IndyCar seasons. ■



Josef Newgarden

## Instant winner.

BY JOE SAGE

What do you get when you set out to create a new car that can economically take on anything from a BMW to a Porsche Panamera? What if it's from a company that's never built such a thing before? If the company is Kia, you expect great things, as they've proven time and again—with both sales and product variety growing exponentially—that they can do anything they set their minds to. Case in point: the Kia Stinger.

With four doors, available with both 4- or 6-cylinder turbos (255 or 365-hp), rear- or all-wheel drive, and starting at \$31,900, Stinger can be compared to many things, from the German and Asian premium performance brands they autocrossed Stinger against at media and consumer events (it beats a V6 Panamera in the 0-to-60), to, say, a Charger SRT, based on Kia's economy-minded roots. This car can compete with any number of others. Or is it in a world of its own? You get to decide.

One thing we inevitably learn in a weeklong drive is what kind of self-comparative fellow travelers will come out of the woodwork, unprompted. Vehicles aggressively tailgating and challenging us

included many BMWs, an aggressive Z-car, a few VW GTIs, an Audi SQ5 and a Ford SVT Lightning pickup, as well as a couple of old Honda Civics and an older Ford Escape. A Kia Sportage tagged along for quite some time, probably out of sibling curiosity. Both the awareness of this all-new car and its competitive set self-define as broad and deep.

We put a lot of miles on the Stinger. The transmission is so well-spaced and responsive, we didn't even think of going to the paddles for some time, then did as traffic got thicker and we needed to grab tight spots readily. Either way, we enjoyed a great deal of power and control, proof that even this four-cylinder version can deliver the full pride and promise of the new Stinger brand.

It was good to have so much recognition, as the production Stinger's styling had struck us as much tamer than the GT4 Stinger concept show car that preceded it. But we had a race commentator step up in the ISM Raceway parking lot, not knowing what it was yet, but sure it was something special. We had a Dubai-caliber gold-and-silver-plated geometric-camo high-dollar Mercedes-Benz sedan stop cold in traffic coming the other way, the driver punch his fist in the air and yell, "Yeah! Kia Stinger!" And many other thumbs-ups. Clearly, the

### SPECIFICATIONS: KIA STINGER 2.0T

ENGINE	.....2.0T twin scroll turbo 16v 4-cyl
HP/TORQUE	.....255 hp / 260 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD (AWD available)
TRANSMISSION	.....8-speed auto w paddle shift
ACCEL 0-TO-60	.....5.9 sec
STEERING	.....electric rack & pinion / constant
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson, R: Multi Link; gas shocks
BRAKES	.....F 12.6 single-piston vented disc, .....R 12.4 single-piston solid disc
WHEELS/TIRES (F/R)	.....8.0Jx18 alloy / P225/45R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....190.2 / 114.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....23.3 cu.ft / 40.9 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3611 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	.....prem rec / 15.9 gal
MPG	.....22/29/25 (city/hwy/comb)

**BASE PRICE (2.0T) .....\$31,900**

**INCL:** Drive modes, leather interior, 8-way/6-way pwr front seats (heated), 7-in touchscreen, Android/iOS, rear camera, Bluetooth, SiriusXM, auto-dim mirror, keyless entry/start, 60/40 rear seats, dual zone auto climate w 2nd row vents, front/rear park sensors, ESC, traction control, acoustic glass and more.

**ADVANCED DRIVER ASSISTANCE PACKAGE .....2000**

**DESTINATION CHARGE .....900**

**TOTAL .....\$34,800**

model has taken on a high degree of buzz very quickly and completely.

Put it all together, and it seems the Kia Stinger can compete successfully in the marketplace with premium performance imports, domestic muscle cars and, well, certainly any other \$31,000 cars. ■

## Nice on the ice.

BY DAVE STALL

Did you know that a guy from San Diego knows how to drive in the snow? You can stop laughing now, just as you won't laugh when you find out that the folks at Kia have created an incredible sporty four-door sedan with a 365-horsepower 3.3-liter V6 under the hood. Hit 0-to-60 mph in 4.7 seconds. With its 376 lb-ft of torque backed by an 8-speed paddle-shifting automatic, the Stinger GT will give you performance found in much more expensive cars. Top speed is 167, best in class.

Here's the bottom line. I have driven many a car on streets and tracks, but in a side-by-side drive, Stinger easily out-handled its competition: BMW, Infiniti, Porsche Panamera—a huge job well done by the Kia performance team, lifted from the Germans, who have put the spark in the Stinger GT.

You can't help but like the aircraft-inspired cockpit's great gauge layout designed with the driver in mind. It has all the creature comforts city road warriors need: USB ports, heated seats, navigation and a slew of safety features. But this isn't about the car in town or an autocross slalom. It is about putting a Kia Stinger GT AWD to the test in the snow. The last time I drove in the snow was in Korea

in the US Army driving a 10-ton tow truck—nothing like driving a Stinger on the freeways of Southern California. Kia must have thought the same thing, so they brought me to Crested Butte, Colorado and, with the help of an amazing track prep crew, built an ice race track—not a circle, but a six-turn road course. Then they put me on the snow course in a bone stock Kia Stinger with street tires. Look ma, no studs!

The AWD Stinger on ice and snow benefits immediately from its rear-drive basis and the car's long wheelbase (which resists spinning), an attribute that also delivers its spacious cabin. The car's electronically-controlled dynamic torque vectoring system monitors driver inputs and road conditions and automatically applies power and braking force to the appropriate wheels—between front and rear, and side-to-side—to help maintain course in a full range of adverse conditions. If there is slippage, power is seamlessly redirected—up to 50 percent to the front wheels, and in Sport mode up to 80 percent to the rear wheels.

If you live in snow country, this car is for you. Once I went around the course a few times, I became very comfortable what the Kia Stinger GT would do in all weather circumstances and challenges. As the day went on, the sun came out and started to melt the track a little, which gave us a

### SPECIFICATIONS: KIA STINGER GT 3.3T

ENGINE	.....3.3T twin turbo 24v V6
HP/TORQUE	.....365 hp / 376 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	.....AWD (RWD available)
TRANSMISSION	.....8-speed auto w paddle shift
ACCEL 0-TO-60	.....4.7 sec
STEERING	.....electric rack & pinion / variable
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut; .....R: Multi Link; gas or electric shocks
BRAKES	.....F: Brembo 4-piston 13.8 vented disc .....R: Brembo 2-piston 13.4 vented disc
WHEELS	.....F 8.0Jx19; R 8.5Jx19
TIRES	.....F P225/40R19; R P255/35R19 (optional for AWD: 8.0Jx18, P225/45R18)
WEIGHT	.....4023 lb
MPG	.....19/25/21 (city/hwy/comb)

**BASE PRICE (GT 3.3T w/ AWD) .....\$40,550**

different surface to deal with. Slushies, anyone? Slush was no issue at all for the Stinger. It was as if the car knew what we were trying to do and controlled the situation to the max.

If grading it, I would give the Stinger 10 out of 10 for handling. Whether you think you need it or not, opt for the AWD. If nothing else, it is an added value when you sell or trade it in—which I doubt you'll even want to do, after discovering how Kia has raised the game in all weather conditions, no matter how much winter traveling you do.

All-wheel drive is available on all trim levels of the Stinger, 255-hp 2.0L turbo or 365-hp 3.3L turbo V6, at \$2200 on any model across the lineup. ■

- RECENT AWARDS**
- BEST OF THE YEAR IN *MOTORWEEK* 2018 DRIVERS' CHOICE AWARDS
  - *ROADSHOW* BY CNET SHIFT AWARD FOR 2018 VEHICLE OF THE YEAR
  - FINALIST FOR 2018 NORTH AMERICAN CAR OF THE YEAR AWARD
  - *AUTOTRADER'S* 2018 10 BEST CAR INTERIORS UNDER \$50,000
  - WARDS 10 BEST ENGINES LIST





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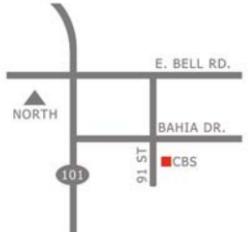
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DAY TRIP : DESERT VALLEY AUTO PARTS JUNKYARD

# RESTO RESOURCE

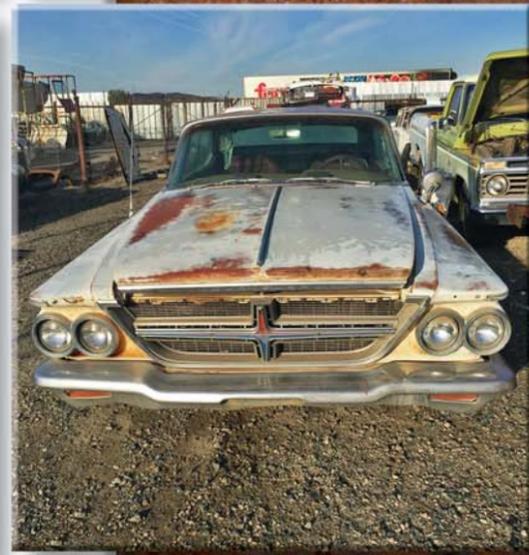
STORY AND PHOTOS BY TYSON HUGIE

I clearly don't watch enough TV, because somehow I missed the fact that a local Phoenix area junkyard was the set of a Discovery Channel TV show back in 2011. The series, *Desert Car Kings*, was filmed at Desert Valley Auto Parts (DVAP), on 7th Avenue between Pinnacle Peak and Happy Valley Roads, north of Deer Valley Airport, in the northern reaches of Phoenix. I haven't been able to find any episodes online but there are a handful of short clips on YouTube and it looked like a pretty cool series.

The desert is indeed a great place to look for vintage cars and parts. While interiors, dashboards, rubber and vinyl trim pieces age and crack terribly, usually the fundamental body parts—frames, panels and engine components—stay remarkably rust-free and preserved. I frequently visit the local junkyards for that reason, but the ones I've been to have much newer cars in them and sometimes aren't very well organized. DVAP was laid out in a very orderly fashion, by make.

*Desert Car Kings* lasted for just one season and 10 episodes, but one of the things they did during the show was restore cars from the junkyard. That's always sort of been a fantasy of mine: plucking a car from the path of imminent destruction (the crusher), giving it new life, and putting it on the road.

We visited DVAP on a Saturday morning and got more than our \$2 admission worth wandering around and checking out the inventory. In the end, we didn't make any purchases. At least not yet. ■



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MARKET SHARE IS UP BY **1.3 PTS**

SINCE INTRODUCING ALUMINUM ALLOY BODY IN 2014

AVERAGE TRANSACTION PRICES HAVE INCREASED **\$6,700**

**2017 SALES**  
896,764 F-SERIES SOLD  
\$46,000 AVG TRANSACTION

53% RECORD SALES GAP

896,765 F-SERIES   585,864 SILVERADO

FORD F-SERIES **\$41 BILLION**  
COCA-COLA **\$35 BILLION**  
NIKE **\$34 BILLION**

**ALL-NEW EXPLORER & ALL-NEW ESCAPE COMING SOON**

EXPEDITION   EXPLORER   ESCAPE   ECOSPORT

## A look inside the Ford crystal ball

By Joe Sage

**W**e recently joined a select cadre of media on a secret mission to the Ford Dearborn Development Center in Michigan, where they discussed current market trends, shifting technologies and future products. Much of the session remains top secret, but there is still plenty of news we can share with you.

**SHIFT TO FLEXIBLE ARCHITECTURE:** While preparing to deliver a new vehicle portfolio—replacing more than 75 percent of its current lineup and adding four new trucks and SUVs by 2020—Ford is working to increase product speed to market, improve quality and further reduce complexity and cost.

Key to these efforts will be a move to flexible vehicle architectures, with more parts shared in common across models. This in turn will cut new product development time—"from sketch to showroom"—by 20 percent, while achieving an estimated \$4 billion in engineering efficiencies.

Five flexible vehicle architectures—body-on-frame, FWD unibody, RWD unibody, commercial van unibody and battery EV—will be paired with module sets for powertrain, electrical pack and specific vehicle configurations.

Some 70 percent of each vehicle's content will reflect this new shared approach, with 30 percent—including grilles, hoods, doors and more—customized for each vehicle. Data-driven analytics will show which technologies customers use most often, helping to determine which features to expand and invest in, and which to eliminate. This approach will reduce manufacturing complexity, in turn reducing plant overhead, while improving consumer pricing, though also reducing the need for sales incentives on unsold products.

Ford already has simplified orderable combinations on SUVs by 80 percent since 2014, including a staggering 97 percent reduction on a new Edge coming later this year.

**CONNECTED VEHICLES:** As Ford updates, replaces and launches these new vehicles, all will include 4G LTE high-speed cellular modems, standard, with new features and wireless access to the latest software provided via over-the-air updates.

**FRESHEST TRUCKS:** Even with an ever higher mix of hybrids and EVs as a key component of Ford's push to a 75 percent new lineup by 2020, 86 percent of the new vehicle family will be trucks and SUVs, which continue to be increasingly popular.

**MARKET SHARE:** The Ford F-150 has been America's best-selling truck for 41 years and Ford commercial trucks have been the best-selling for 33 years. The company is particularly proud that its market share has risen since the F-Series went to aluminum build starting in 2014, even as customers buy ever higher, more expensive trim levels. Ford data shows the gap between F-Series and Chevrolet Silverado sales has widened to a record. They also proudly pointed out that F-Series now has higher sales than huge brands Coca-Cola or Nike.

**EXPEDITION-ECOSPORT-EXPLORER-ESCAPE:** Ford's familiar family of SUVs and crossovers is already growing this year, with the introduction of the new EcoSport and a redesigned Expedition, both off to solid starts. The gen-5 Explorer has been a huge hit, and we had a secret look at the gen-6 Explorer and a gen-4 Escape, both coming soon.

**BRONCO-"???"-HYBRIDS:** More big news was covered—literally—with the top secret new Bronco and another top secret completely new off-roader that is yet to be named. Both of these are so secret that—although we saw what was under the covers of many other future models—when covers were pulled off these, there was just another cover beneath, reminding us of the online GIF of a guy endlessly removing his sunglasses to reveal yet another pair. We're happy to hear that upcoming hybrid versions of both the Explorer and Escape will offer all-wheel drive.

**RAPTOR VS... PORSCHE?!** Here's a statistic few may have ever thought to look up, but once seen cannot be unseen. We know the Ford F-150 Raptor is popular with fans, but it does sell very well—in fact, it turns out that just this one specialized model outsells every Porsche in their lineup, combined.

**HYBRIDS VS TOYOTA:** If you think beating Porsche is something, here's another statistic that can't be unseen. As Ford increasingly brings hybrid and PHEV technology mainstream (ultimately to every SUV and crossover they offer), they forecast their hybrid sales will pass Toyota's in 2021.

**CO-PILOT360:** New Ford Co-Pilot360 driver-assistance technology arriving this fall will include standard auto emergency braking with pedestrian detection, blind spot information with cross traffic alert, lane keeping assistance, rear camera and automatic high beams. In 2019, Ford will add reverse brake assistance technology to avoid hitting things while backing up.

**FORD MUSTANG SHELBY GT500:** That's a whole lot of news and a hint at a whole lot of secrets. The future is heavy on trucks and SUVs, but there was one last thing: they pulled the wraps off a not-yet-quite-final version of the upcoming new Ford Mustang Shelby GT500, of which we can give you only the glimpse at right—and nothing more.

Stay tuned! ■

TWO NEW OFF-ROAD SUVs:  
ALL-NEW BRONCO AND A YET-TO-BE NAMED RUGGED SMALL UTILITY COMING SOON

**HYBRID VERSIONS OF EXPLORER & ESCAPE COMING SOON**

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**IN 2021, FORD MOTOR COMPANY EXPECTS HYBRID SALES TO SURPASS TOYOTA**

**FORD CO-PILOT360**

5 STANDARD FEATURES

	FORD	TOYOTA	HONDA	CHEVROLET
AUTOMATIC EMERGENCY BRAKING WITH PEDESTRIAN DETECTION	✓	✓	✗	✗
BLIND SPOT INFORMATION SYSTEM WITH CROSS TRAFFIC ALERT	✓	✗	✗	✗
LANE KEEPING SYSTEM	✓	✓	✓	✗
AUTOMATIC HIGH BEAMS	✓	✓	✗	✗
REVERSE CAMERA	✓	✓	✓	✓



## THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



▼ **Electra Meccanica** (builders of the SOLO all-electric commuter vehicle) took the wraps off the Tofino electric car development chassis at the 98th Vancouver International Auto Show in March. The chassis has an aircraft composite (FRP/aluminum) tub structure weighing only 175 lbs, with front and rear aluminum subframes and an aluminum cowl brace for added structural rigidity, atop double-A-arm front and five-link rear suspension, both with adjustable dampers. The UQM performance motor and dual floor-mounted battery packs were also shown in place. The Tofino has a 92-inch wheelbase, with classic sports car dimensions: 153 inches long, 56 inches wide, and 49 inches tall to the top of the roll bars. Other highlights shown included heated Recaro seats, universal J1772 and DC fast charging outlets, four-wheel Wilwood performance brakes (12.88-inch vented, 6-piston front, 4-piston rear) and classic style 17-inch alloys from Boyd Coddington Wheels. The two-door convertible Tofino will be revealed later, expected to start at \$50,000.

▼ **Hyundai** Hope On Wheels (HHOW), a 501c3 nonprofit organization, celebrated its 20th year in the fight against pediatric cancer with plans to exceed \$145 million toward pediatric cancer research. The campaign theme for this year is: 20 years of saving lives and creating hope, in the fight to end childhood cancer. The annual event took place during preview night of the New York International Auto Show. Be-

gun in 1998 by Hyundai and its US dealers, HHOW is one of the longest continuously running corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in the auto industry. The program was begun in the Boston area and quickly traveled to support children's hospital throughout the US with research grants to help find cures and to improve care for children fighting cancer. In 2018, 53 new Children's Oncology of America member institutions in the US,



chosen by a peer-reviewed and competitive selection process, will receive a combined \$15 million in pediatric cancer research grants.

▼ **Legendary ice cream van maker Whitby Morrison** is giving visitors to the *Confused.com* London Motor Show 2018 in May something to savor as it unveils its latest model on the "Built In Britain" fea-

ture at the show. Ahead of the summer season, the family-run British manufacturer is launching its 2018 van, based on the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 314 SWB, which is hand-built in Britain and distributed worldwide. Famous for its bespoke ice cream vans, Whitby Morrison—now in its third generation of family management—has provided the vehicles that drive smiles on faces in streets across the world since 1962, from its purpose-built facility in Cheshire. Visitors can climb inside and pretend to create their very own Mr Whippy, serving up fun for the whole family.

▼ **BMW Group** and **Daimler AG** have signed an agreement to merge their mobility services business units, subject to examination and approval by competition authorities. The two plan to combine and strategically expand their existing on-demand mobility offering in the areas of car-sharing, ride-hailing, parking, charging and multimodality. Each company will hold a 50 percent stake in a joint venture model comprising both companies' mobility services. Working as partners, both

companies are addressing challenges arising from urban mobility and changing customer demands, and cooperating with cities, municipalities and other interest groups to improve quality of life in major cities. They expect the combined effort to make it easier for customers to experience and use sustainable mobility services. The two companies will remain competitors in their respective core businesses.

▼ **Mercedes-Benz** celebrated the 50th anniversary of their introduction of the 300 SEL 6.3 (W 109) at the Geneva Motor Show in March, 1968, a dream car at the



time, billed as "one of the fastest and most spirited series production cars on the world market." The 3924-pound top-of-the-line luxury model delivered sports car performance from a 250-hp 6333cc V8 (adapted from the W 110 limousine): 0-to-62 mph in 6.5 seconds and a top speed of 136.7 mph, outstanding at the time. Only the "6.3" lettering on the rear deck lid, twin halogen headlamps, and front fog lamps distinguished the discreet flagship model. The 300 SEL 6.3 started as an idea by test engineer Erich Waxenberger. Initially without the knowledge of his higher-ups, he constructed a test car, but the boss soon heard the growl of the prototype's engine as it passed by his office, called Waxenberger—and okayed further development. The car had internally ventilated discs all round, power steering, rapid-shift four-speed automatic, locking differential, power windows and pneumatic central locks. The 300 SEL 6.3 continues to be a big draw in the collector market.

▼ After months of preparation, work has started on construction of two LNG-powered vessels for logistics within the **Volkswagen** Group. Volkswagen Group Logistics, operator Siem Car Carriers and shipyard Xiamen Shipbuilding celebrated the "steel cutting" (the shipbuilding equivalent of laying a foundation) with an official ceremony in Xiamen, China. From 2019, the two ships, powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG), will carry Volkswagen Group vehicles from Europe to North America.

LNG drive systems aim to significantly reduce the ships' atmospheric pollutants.

▼ **FCA US LLC** will honor the legacy of the Dodge Viper as the Conner Avenue As-



sembly Plant, former production home of the iconic Viper, will get a second life as an internal meeting and display space that will showcase the company's concept and historic vehicle collection. Renamed Conner Center, the former manufacturing facility, in a Detroit neighborhood just south of famed 8 Mile Road, will have storage space for 400 concept and historic vehicles—previously housed in several locations—and exhibit space for 85 of



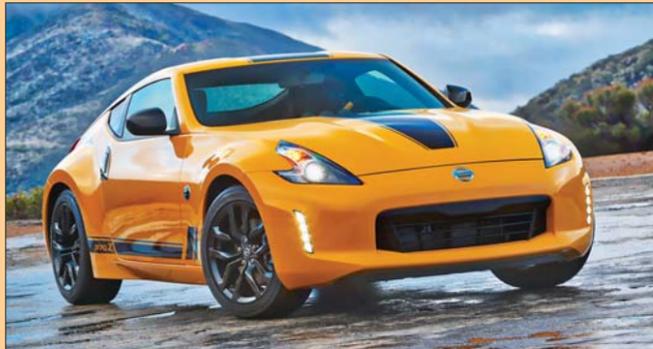
them. About 77,000 of the plant's roughly 400,000 square feet of floor space will be dedicated to displaying vehicles like the 1902 Rambler, the oldest in the collection, to one of the most significant, the 1924 Chrysler Touring. The plant's administrative offices will be converted into nearly 22,000 square feet of meeting space of various sizes. The facility, built in 1966, should be available for use by internal

groups and departments in the second quarter of 2018 and could also open its doors to the public in the future. The company also auctioned Viper memorabilia to benefit the United Way for Southeastern Michigan. Production of the Dodge Viper came to an end on August 31, 2017.

▼ **Jaguar Land Rover** North America celebrated the official opening of a new North American Headquarters in Mahwah NJ, ahead of the New York auto show, with three days of events for employees, VIP guests, customers, retailers, students and local government officials. A seminar for design and technology students from five area colleges had designer-led presentations of the new all-electric Jaguar I-PACE and luxury Range Rover SV Coupe, plus a Q&A about working in the automotive industry. The new 144,000 sqft facility on a 12-acre campus is a \$30 million-plus investment by Jaguar Land Rover, with more square footage, a showroom with the latest Jaguar and Land Rover models, and a 30,000 sqft product research, training and development center. The building has 78 conference rooms and meeting spaces, 498 workstations and over 85 indoor and outdoor wireless access points, for a more collaborative workspace and open environment. EV chargers are available on site

# UPCOMING FEATURES

Nissan 370Z



Ford Mustang GT



Mercedes-AMG SLC43



2018 Overland Expo West



Lyn St James Talladega 30th Anniversary



Bonneville Motorcycle Speed Trials



Mudfest: Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year Awards



Goldfield Ghost Town and historic Mammoth Gold Mine



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— Cheers! Michelle

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