

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 2
MARCH-APRIL 2025

**AUCTION RESULTS
CONCOURS HIGHLIGHTS
DRIVES INCLUDING SPORTY CARS OF ALL
TYPES AND CROSSOVERS OF ALL SIZES
PLUS COMPAROS, ADOT UPDATES
AND MUCH MORE!**

Volkswagen
ID. BUZZ

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS



Drive Toward a Cure for Parkinson's Disease
... Driving Has Never Meant More!



Thursday, October 10, 2024: Drive Toward a Cure celebrates Sam Posey as a Legend of Motorsports and Champion of Parkinson's at Lime Rock Park, CT.

We are inspired by the **Cars and Camaraderie**® within automotive culture, found in equal measure among both enthusiast communities and industry professionals. **Drive Toward a Cure**® events harness the passion for cars and driving and turn that power into support for ongoing efforts to improve the lives of those living with **Parkinson's Disease**, as well as the research that will hopefully one day lead to a cure.

From our *signature* events, to the grassroots movement of programs from coast-to-coast, we invite you to join us as we **Drive Toward a Cure for Parkinson's Disease!**

Let us motivate you to create or turn an existing event into a powerful fundraiser by allowing your group to give back and make the day more meaningful. Better yet, challenge others in your area to see who can raise the most money and drive the most miles to foster awareness! Get in touch at info@drivetowardacure.org.

It's TIME to END PARKINSON'S
 BRM Chronographes Model V1246SADTC Automatic. Numbered limited edition.
 20% of the sale benefits Parkinson's
Reserve Yours at
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SAVE THE DATE:
APRIL 5, 2025
Music & Motion 2.0
 at The National Automobile Museum, Reno + virtual

Drive Toward a Cure is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

News, event registrations, and donations at
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Motorsports	Phoenix Raceway NASCAR Spring Weekend A 5
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Special Event	Arizona Concours d'Elegance 2025 C 22 Information on the major trophy winners and other highlights from this resurgent Arizona Auction Week-dovetailed event.
ADOT	I-10 interchanges, Tucson D 25 The Arizona Department of Transportation seems to be the busiest they've ever been, with huge projects everywhere simultaneously. Getting onto and off I-10 in Tucson will soon be much improved.
A Week With	2025 Subaru WRX tS 26
Vehicle Comparo Event	TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo 2024: part 3 E 29 Like other regional press group comparos, this don't-miss Texas event used to be a one-and-done, with winners announced immediately. Now they drag it out for months. So six months and half a model year after the actual drive, we find out now ... what was deemed hot then.
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COVER: 2025 Volkswagen ID. BUZZ -- past meets future as this new VW EV evokes the classic microbus. The cover shows one of a number of two-tone finishes, while our sample was an unexpected one-color silver, with a personality all its own. Check out our points of intrigue, wonder and loose ends, along with a few clues from their expanding European lineup, in this issue.



Kevin McCauley / Capturing the Machine

Mecum Auctions

“The significance of the passage of time.” Our cover vehicle, the brand new 2025 Volkswagen ID. BUZZ—a modern EV evoking the style and spirit of the classic VW microbus—has us thinking of past, present and future. In this issue overall, this is almost a theme, though purely by happenstance. The four January auctions, the Mecum Las Vegas motorcycle auction, and two concours events tend to showcase star vehicles of earlier eras, although all (Barrett-Jackson and Fountain Hills in particular) present a wealth of new vehicles, as well. What’s common to all is a high level of prestige and exotica. Our weekly drives in this cycle, on the other hand, all representatives of the immediately current era, largely lean away from the prestigious or exotic, though they do present their own formulas of presence, performance and/or value.

Digging into this timeline theme just a bit more, we bring you the long-awaited final winners of last fall’s TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo—which they decided to drag out for half a year, with information and results released (even to the participants) in phases. Generally, winners at such events represent the state of the times, usually driving the following year’s models (the future) at that time (the prior fall). But with the new arrangement in Texas, it’s harder to see it as breaking news, potentially no longer even current. (New vehicle cycles have become more irregular, too, especially over the past few years, through a combination of pandemic lockdowns, supply chain challenges, and government dictates affecting evolution of powertrains—perhaps mitigating these event-result delays.) Long a staple of our calendar and content, we’re wondering if these results are still valuable to you, the valued reader. (It also puts two Texas events, outside our boundaries, in every issue all year long, if we cover them). We have other regional comparos coming up, too—Washington State, Road America, Santa Cruz—though each is expected to present complete results promptly. We’d love to hear from you on the value and interest in these.

Wherever, whenever and however you define your favorites ... enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor



PUBLISHER/EXECUTIVE EDITOR:

Joe Sage

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS/PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Randall Bohl, Nick Calderone, Chris Collard, Sandra Muñoz Dorée and William Dorée, Tyson Hugie, Stephanie Jarnagan, BJ Killeen, Christina Lawrie, Mercedes Lilienthal, Sue Mead, JP Molnar, “LandSpeed” Louise Noeth, Doris Ong, Brenda Priddy, John Priddy, Kimatni Rawlins, Kelly Sallaway, Lyn St James, Tim and Kristin Sharp, Dave Stall, Paul Strauss, Valerie Thompson, Scott Tilley, Sherri Tilley, Aaron Turpen, Jan Wagner, Nicole Wakelin, Shawnda Williams, Kevin A Wilson, Meagan Wristen

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- NWAPA..Northwest Automotive Press Association
- PAPAPhoenix Automotive Press Association
- RMAPRocky Mountain Automotive Press
- SAMASouthern Automotive Media Association
- TAWATexas Auto Writers Association
- TxMPA ...Texas Motor Press Association
- WAJWestern Automotive Journalists

- ACMLeMay—America’s Car Museum
- Sturgis...Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame
- USFRA ...Utah Salt Flats Racing Association
- USMA.....United States Motorsports Association

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NASCAR SPRING WEEKEND MARCH 7-9, 2025

Phoenix Raceway’s Spring Weekend begins on Friday, March 7, with the **ARCA Menards Series General Tire 150**. The ARCA Menards Series has announced a television broadcast agreement extension with FS1 and FS2 that features a full season of live television coverage in 2025. The relationship, which began with Speedvision in 1999, is now extended through at least 2028. The race at Phoenix Raceway in March, a tandem race with the NASCAR Cup Series, will be a combination race with the ARCA Menards Series West

The action continues with NASCAR on Saturday, March 8, as the **NASCAR Xfinity Series** sees the sport’s future stars continue to prime themselves for the season ahead, in the **Call811.com Every Dig. Every Time 200**.

Then, on Sunday, March 9, the stars of the **NASCAR Cup Series** will vie for a key early-season win in the **Shriners Children’s 500**, working to lock themselves into the 2025 Cup Series Playoffs, heading toward NASCAR Championship Weekend, also once again being held here in November.

NASCAR CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND 2025

This coming fall, Phoenix Raceway will once again host the **NASCAR Championship Weekend**, October 31 to November 2, 2025.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Given the typical overwhelming demand, fans are urged to secure their seats and experiences immediately. For tickets, as well as for information on additional experiences and entertainment—including camping, parking, scanners, Infield Experience, Busch Light Lounge, Ally Curve hospitality club and more—call the Phoenix Raceway ticket office at 866-408-RACE (7223) or visit phoenixraceway.com.

Fans looking to buy or resell reserved seats can also do so at SeatGeek.com. ■

FRIDAY, MARCH 7

NASCAR Xfinity Series Practicetbd
NASCAR Cup Series Practicetbd

ARCA Menards Series General Tire 1505:00 pm

SATURDAY, MARCH 8

NASCAR Xfinity Series Qualifyingtbd
NASCAR Cup Series Qualifyingtbd

NASCAR Xfinity Series

Call811.com Every Dig. Every Time 2005:00 pm

SUNDAY, MARCH 9

NASCAR Cup Series Shriners Children’s 5003:30 pm

Schedule and details subject to change.



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Lucretia Torva | 480.251.3817
Instagram: @torvasm | torvafineart@gmail.com

AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE



▼ An award-winning 50-minute documentary, *Edith: Porsche's Volcano Ascent*, follows the successful attempt to climb the world's highest volcano in an extraordinary **Porsche 911**. Independent filmmakers TangentVector chronicle the four-and-a-half-year-long quest of a small team aiming to drive to the top of the world's highest volcano—Ojos del Salado, Chile—in a specially created Porsche 911, named Edith. The project was far from straightforward, with success coming at the final moment, after two failed attempts. Operating above 20,000 feet altitude, with temperatures far below freezing and only half the oxygen their bodies were used to, the team pushed the car to extremes. When it reached the summit, the only machines at a higher altitude than the 911 were aircraft and spacecraft. *Edith: Porsche's Volcano Ascent* debuted at Monterey Car Week last summer, going on to win "Best Documentary Feature" at the 2024 International Motor Film Awards. The film became available to viewers in the US and UK in December, through Prime Video via Prime Video Direct, and it is included in Delta Air Lines' in-flight entertainment through sometime this spring, celebrating Porsche and Delta's shared values—for over a decade, the two have partnered to elevate the journey for exclusive airport travelers via a dedicated fleet of Porsche vehicles.

▼ **Ford** kicked off this year's Detroit Auto Show with the show-ave reveal of a new Mustang GTD, including a Mustang GTD

Spirit of America build, celebrating 60 years of performance achievements, from Mustang's first win at the 1964 Tour de France to becoming the first car from an American brand to lap the famed Nürburgring in under 7 minutes. It's also what drove Craig Breedlove, a structural engineering tech in the aerospace industry, to buy a \$500 jet engine from a Korean War fighter plane and become the first person to break the 500- and 600-mile-per-hour



barriers on land, in his "Spirit of America" land speed craft. Ford Design has given the Mustang GTD Spirit of America a Performance White body with twin Race Red and Lightning Blue racing stripes, evoking the red, white and blue Mustang TriBar badge that debuted in 1964. The design also matches the overalls Craig Breedlove wore when he broke both those speed barriers in the 1960s. Breedlove's record-

setting efforts in a sport then dominated largely by European aristocrats and playboys helped inspire decades of American designers, engineers and inventors, including those in the Mustang GTD program. The build comes standard with a Mustang GTD Performance Package and features exposed carbon fiber as a primary element on the aerodynamic elements, including the front splitter, rear diffuser and spoiler—the spoiler also including Race Red end plates and a MUSTANG wordmark on its underside, a bold message to other cars about what just passed them. Mirror caps come in a choice of Race Red or exposed carbon fiber, while Race Red calipers are standard. Mustang GTD Spirit of America offers a package-specific leather-trimmed seat option with Dinamica inserts. Black Onyx features prominently on the seats, with a Race Red gradient stripe down the middle and Re-Entry White trimmings on the outsides, while Victory Blue stitching and other contrast elements provide a pop of color throughout the cabin. Paddle shifters, shift ring and IP badge are available in 3D-printed titanium. Ford boasts the all-

new 2025 Mustang GTD, including GTD Spirit of America, as the apex of any Mustang ever engineered by Ford, with 815 horsepower, 664 pound-feet of torque and a top speed of 202 miles per hour, the most of any street-legal Mustang ever.

▼ The **Aston Martin THOR Team** taking the British ultra-luxury performance brand back into the fight to win the 24 Hours of

Le Mans outright for the first time since 1959, has named the first two drivers in its lineup for the 2025 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC)—Alex Riberas (Spain) and Harry Tincknell (UK). Both have



extensive experience of racing Aston Martins during their storied careers and have played key roles in the development and preparation of the new Valkyrie hypercar challenger through last summer's testing program. The Aston Martin Valkyrie, set to have made its world championship debut in the Qatar 1812 km on February 28, is the only race car built to FIA Hypercar regulations to simultaneously contest both the WEC and the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship (IMSA) this year. Reviving the famous #007 and #009 Aston Martin race numbers for 2025, two of these 6.5-liter naturally aspirated V12-powered Valkyries, featuring race-optimized carbon fiber chassis, will be entered in WEC's top Hypercar class. Valkyrie will make its IMSA debut in the GTP category at 12 Hours of Sebring (March 12-14). Tincknell, 2016 European Le Mans Series champion and 2020 12 Hours of Sebring overall winner, carries the honor of driving the #007 Valkyrie. FIA World Endurance Championship and IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship class race winner Alex Riberas steps up in #009, the number on the Aston Martin DBR9 that scored back-to-back GT1 class victories for the brand in the 2007 and 2008 24 Hours of Le Mans.

▼ **Maserati** is celebrating their 110th anniversary, with events around the globe from exclusive unveilings and exhibitions, to track and road experiences—bringing history to life, showcasing a legacy of performance and innovation, and inspiring

the brand's future. The events were also used to unveil the Maserati GT2 Stradale—a technical and stylistic meshing of the MC20 and the GT2 created for the brand's return to GT competitions—and a Maserati

GranTurismo 110 Anniversario special series in a limited edition of 110 units. Anniversary celebrations started this winter in Modena, Italy, with a two-day event including members of the Maserati Italia Club, the Panini family, the grandchildren of Ettore Maserati and actress Matilda De Angelis. Featured were a grand parade showcasing 110 Maseratis, both contemporary and classic, a series of institutional and cultural visits, and a luxurious gala din-



ner at Massimo Bottura's renowned Casa Maria Luigia. Next came Tokyo, with a grand celebration hosted at the luxurious Prince Hotel and another impressive lineup of 110 Maserati vehicles, representing the community of owners, with a scenic convoy tour from the streets of Tokyo to the picturesque landscapes of Chiba. Dubbed "Celebrazione dei 110 Anni di Maserati," the event included the GT2

Stradale unveiling by Maserati Japan CEO Takayuki Kimura, with a spectacular fireworks finale. From there, the celebration was off to South Korea, Miami, Shanghai and Beijing. Watch for news of more.

▼ **OpenRoad Insurance** launched in 2024 to provide better coverage and lower costs for classic and collector vehicle owners, distinguished by an agreed-value policy that insures vehicles based on market worth, considering factors such as rarity, condition and historical significance. The new insurer says the meteoric rise in US rates has been being subsidized by collector car owners, with standard auto insurers continuing their efforts to recover from unprecedented losses during COVID-19 due to spikes in catastrophic insurance claims and increased vehicle repair costs. As a result, US drivers—including less risk-prone collector car owners—have experienced the largest rate increase in nearly 50 years. OpenRoad notes that while conventional bundling programs may provide some relief for daily drivers, many collector car owners are paying more than they should. In the event of a claim, OpenRoad offers coverage for OEM parts and allows customers to choose their preferred repair shop. They offer reimbursement for roadside emergency support services at no ad-



with plans to operate in 30 by this summer. They have also seen significant interest among insurance agencies and brokerages, registering over 1,000 new partners in the past few months who seek another



option for their clients. Visit OpenRoadAutoInsurance.com for more information.

▼ A standard production **Hyundai IONIQ 5** logged a record-breaking total elevation change of 5,802 meters over an over-4,900 km journey across India, achieving a Guinness World Records™ title for the Greatest Altitude Change by an Electric Car. The record attempt was organized by Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) and driven by the professional team from Evo India. The journey began at India's highest drivable point, Umling La in Leh Ladakh, 5,799 m above sea level, and finished in Kuttanad, Kerala, three meters below sea level. The feat was accomplished over 14 days, tackling challenging terrain and extreme climatic conditions—from freezing temperatures and steep mountain passes in the Himalayas, to humid coastal regions in Kerala—highlighting the EV's resilience, technology and performance. The Hyundai IONIQ 5 has a high-capacity 72.6 kWh battery and boasts notable driving range, with advanced safety and smart technologies.

▼ American racing hero **Dan Gurney** was being anything but subtle in 1961, when he entered a slightly modified brand new stock '61 Chevy Impala to race against smaller displacement cars at the British Saloon Car Championship at Silverstone, in that year. The car then fell off the radar for 63 years, but was found late last year. Now, 64 years later and having made its

way to his ownership, Gurney's son Justin Gurney will celebrate family history at the **Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion** this summer, debuting his dad's long lost Chevy in a new role as pace car for the

Dan Gurney Saloon Car Trophy Race during the event. "My dad loved this car and always talked about it," says Justin Gurney, now the president and CEO of famed All American Racers. "There's a photo of him driving it, in our office's hallway, and a large mural in the shop." That 1961 appearance, you see, had been bittersweet, as the Impala was banned before the next race, after its lone appearance—where Gurney had been leading before a wheel



Dan Gurney's 1961 Chevrolet Impala 409

broke on the second-to-last lap. "Dad wasn't very happy with the ban prior to the second race and tried to argue his case," says Justin, "but in the end realized he couldn't fight city hall and sold it on the spot." [Dig into Tom Cotter's barn finds for details of the car's rediscovery, which were not provided in this context—Ed.] When the Impala had been restored, its original 409 engine couldn't be found, so a differ-

ent 409 engine had been installed. But when the owner expressed interest in selling the car to Justin, the original 409 with matching numbers was found—as the power plant inside a boat. When the container bearing the long lost car arrived in the Port of Los Angeles late last year, after a circuitous route through Scotland, Europe, the Panama Canal and Canada—through which Justin had carefully tracked its movement—he anxiously unlocked and swung open the door to see the Impala for the first time, with the accompanying original 409 engine. "It was an emotional experience to sit on the bench seat and take hold of the steering wheel. It even has the original AM radio that dad kept intact, although this car is so loud, there is no way you could hear music!" Justin was anxious to show the Impala to his mother Evi and give her a ride around town. And rumor says he may take her out as a passenger during the pace laps at the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion, August 13-16, 2025, at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca outside Monterey, California. Rooms go fast for Monterey Car Week, so plan now. Individual and multi-day tickets, VIP hospitality packages and camping may be found online at WeatherTechRaceway.com or by calling 831-242-8200.

▼ **Honda** has premiered prototypes of the first two models in a new 0 Series line of battery electric vehicles—the Honda 0 SUV and Honda 0 Saloon, based on the company's newly developed dedicated EV architecture. Building on the Space-Hub concept model unveiled a year earlier, the



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Honda 0 SUV applies a “Thin, Light, and Wise” approach to yield a spacious cabin with outstanding visibility and flexibility. The interior of the SUV prototype illustrates the company’s direction for its fu-



ture Honda 0 Series EVs to be an “ever-advancing space” for people, through “ultra-personal optimization” and a digital UX made possible by the ASIMO OS. Adoption of a steer-by-wire system enables integrated control of by-wire systems including steering, suspension and brakes. Honda also debuted its original vehicle operating system (OS), the ASIMO OS, for use in Honda 0 Series models. The use of the ASIMO name pays homage to the Honda ASIMO robot. Additionally, Honda announced an agreement with Renesas Electronics Corporation to develop a high-performance system-on-chip, to be introduced on the next generation of 0 Series models in the later 2020s, as well as a new energy service through the Home Energy Management System. A production model based on the Honda 0 SUV prototype, to be built at the Honda EV Hub in Ohio, is scheduled to launch in North America in the first half of 2026, followed by global markets, including Japan and Europe.

▼ AC Cars has announced the next stage in the development of the **AC Cobra** GT Roadster and GT Coupe, with news of an all-new entry point engine option for the legendary family of sports cars. Joining the normally aspirated and supercharged V8 models already developed, a new, high-performance 2.0-liter engine will be formally announced this year for both the open and fixed-top models for 2026 onward. Retaining the same unique aluminum chassis, carbon fiber bodywork and dis-

tinctive interior as the existing cars, the new models will bear all the hallmarks of Britain’s oldest active vehicle manufacture. Ensuring that cars remain faithful to the brand’s heritage, the new engines will

remain performance-orientated. Teaming with an as-now unnamed global leader in hybrid and internal combustion power-train solutions, AC Cars will develop the engine to suit the characteristics and potential of its GT platform. The new unit will run in two different states for tune, depending upon the model of car. Inherently lighter than the V8 models, the new cars will also benefit from additional weight saving through the use of more carbon



fiber for relevant elements of the chassis. The full specification for each engine and their production power outputs will be announced this spring, but are expected to be up to 390 horsepower. In addition to the new engine options, AC Cars is also introducing a new dual-clutch gearbox option for the car, available alongside a six-speed manual option. Final pricing is not confirmed, but is expected to start from

£235,000 (about \$287,000) including VAT. Reservations are open at www.AC.Cars.

▼ **Toyota** Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc. (TEMA), inclusive of Toyota Motor North America (TMNA) R&D, has been selected to receive \$4.5 million in funding from the US Department of Energy, Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) It’s part of the Catalyzing Innovative Research for Circular Use of Long-lived Advanced Rechargeables (CIRCULAR) Program, designed to support a circular domestic supply chain for electric vehicle (EV) batteries. TEMA’s Toyota Research Institute of North America (TRINA) division will administer the project—Development of an Autonomous Robotic Disassembly Process for Applications in Battery Pack Circularity—in collaboration with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and Baker Hughes’ inspection technology product line, Waygate Technologies. The project aims to develop an industry-relevant template for a 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) facility of the future, resolving primary bottlenecks in current battery supply chain circularity—which are the automation of battery pack disassembly, data-driven battery classification, and addressing cell degradation. Teams

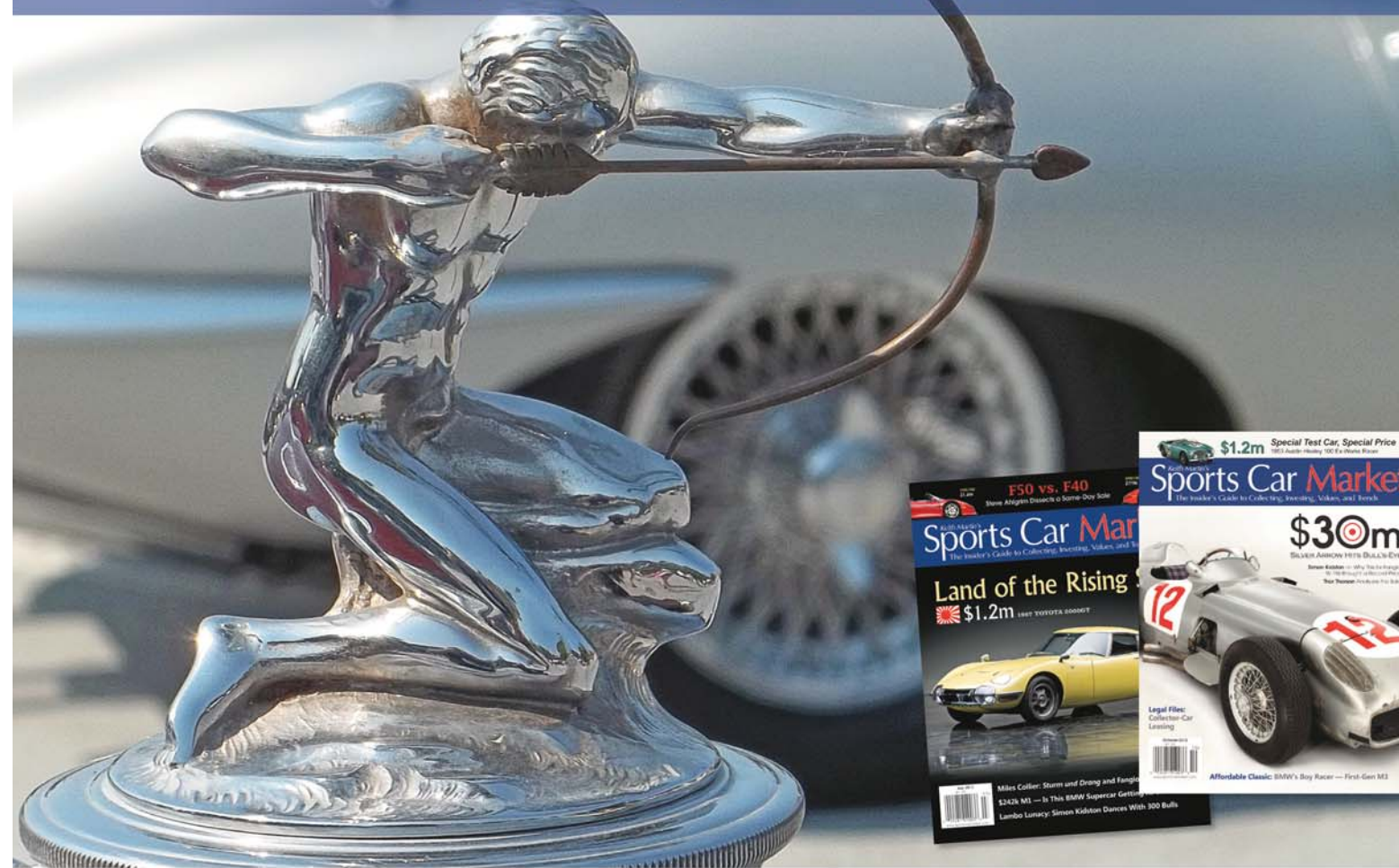
working on the project will develop an automated pack disassembly process, advanced diagnostic tools and protocols for module and cell 3R classifications, and a refabrication method for 3R cells into new energy systems. Together, these innovations envision a scenario where end-of-life lithium-ion batteries are systematically evaluated, classified and reused prior to being considered for recycling. ■

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Past meets future

BY JOE SAGE

HIGHLY INTRIGUING, WITH MORE FUTURE TO FOLLOW

Everyone has a great VW bug story, and almost as many have one with the VW bus, both of them ubiquitous at the happiest end of the scale, especially during the turbulent and adventuresome 1960s and '70s, especially here in the States. Fun. Simple. Useful. And economical, to buy and to operate. Easy to fix (which was fortunate, given the ridiculous miles some people piled on them). It's no wonder people have long clamored for them to return, or something like them.

Volkswagen did bring back the bug—twice—earlier this century, first as the highly stylized New Beetle, then as a more conventional simply-named

Beetle, with shared modern chassis and power-trains and to enthusiastic audiences.

But everyone still wanted to see the bus again. Appropriately named, the new VW ID. BUZZ not only answers the age-old question of whether the VW bus might ever return, but it returns as a highly anticipated addition to the growing VW EV stable.

The commonalities of style and form factor between the classic VW bus and the new VW BUZZ are readily apparent. There are also evolutionary differences large and small.

Huge interior capacity carries forward similarly. The US version has three rows, and cargo volume

is huge in any configuration (see specs).

We were surprised to receive one in pure Metro Silver Metallic, as promotional materials had all shown it in two-color schemes, more in line with the classic and available in a wide range of colors (most in color plus white, one in red and silver). There is also an all-black. Despite the nostalgic appeal of the two-tones, we also liked our silver sample. Atop its already long, lean stature and shape, it makes it almost a whole different vehicle, reminding us variously of an Airstream trailer or a self-propelled rail car from the streamliner era. So, we'll take one silver and one two-tone, please.

This color helps with those perceptions, but its length is what defines it, almost as long as a single-cab full-size pickup. And yet it proved highly maneuverable, easy to navigate and park in town. (In fact, although we generally tend toward all-wheel-drivers, the rear-drive version has an almost five foot tighter turning circle, an intriguing variable.) We wondered about the possibility of a future shorter two-row version, discovering that this already exists as an alternate build in Europe.

Its length also suggests room for a very large battery, though its range (231 miles) is not all that much. A shorter version would presumably be even less. (Europeans generally do shorter drives.)

Despite sliding doors—plural, both sides—the ID. BUZZ is not considered a minivan, but rather a multipurpose vehicle. This is in line with another variable we'd be curious to see, a panel-van version, as in the classic microbus. (Of course, you could accomplish this yourself, various ways.)

Styling is well executed, tip to tail. Despite its very clean and streamlined look overall, the ID. BUZZ bears many a compelling detail, from lights to windows and more. Its echo of the classic microbus's V-shaped front trim works well and is in line with its build, which suggests a frunk (front trunk), but is simply minor service access. One neighbor particularly liked its wheels, which we agreed are a neat combination of the super-aerodynamic discs of the first EVs and the multispoke alloys of most current vehicles.

Most notably, perhaps, where the original bus had your feet and legs right up against the front wall of the vehicle, highly vulnerable in a crash, the new one of course has a full crash impact zone, and the driver is farther back than it seems. Yet the driver's seat position, high and fairly upright, gives you much the same commanding feel of the classic, just without that risk. (You would think this might also allow a thicker battery, and

(cont'd)

Bug, beetle, bus and microbus are all basically nicknames, although at times informally formalized. Capitalize them or not, at your whim. The bus has borne such official names as Transporter, Kombi, Bulli, Station Wagon or simply Type 2. "VW bus" or "VW microbus" are immediately recognizable. And "VW bus" sets the stage here, for "VW Buzz," or officially the "Volkswagen ID. BUZZ."



SPECIFICATIONS

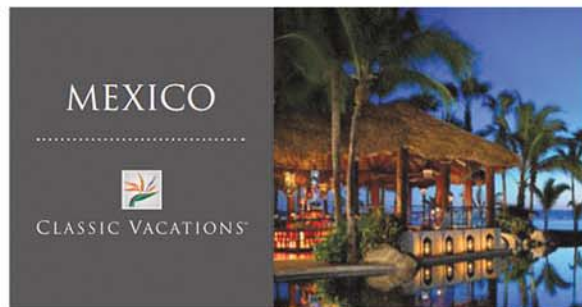
ASSEMBLY.....	Hannover, Lwr Saxony, Germany
ROWS / SEATS	3 / 6 (note: RWD is 7)
MOTOR / TRANS BUILD	Germany / Germany
PARTS CONTENT	Germany 25% / China 24% / US/Can 1%
MOTORS	(AWD) F: ASM asynchronous; R: PSM permanent magnet synchronous
BATTERY	Li-ion, 91/86 kWh (gross/net), 208 cells, 13 cell modules, 442 V
HP/TORQUE	335 hp / F: 99, R: 413 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	4MOTION® AWD
TRANSMISSION	2 single-spd, front & rear
TOP SPEED	99 mph
SUSPENSION	F: strut-type w lower control arms, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar; R: multilink w coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar
STEERING	electric rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 15.0x1.2 vented disc; R: 13.0x2.0 drum brakes
WHEELS	F/R: 8Jx20 / 9.5Jx20 alum alloy
TIRES	F/R: 235/50 R20 / 265/45 R20 a/s
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	195.4 / 127.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.3 in
APPR / DEPART / BRKVR	17.5 / 19.5 / 13.6°
TURNING CIRCLE	AWD 42.7 ft (note: RWD is 37.4 ft)
HEADROOM (w/o glass roof):	
.....(F/2/3)	40.6 / 41.0 / 38.7 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	37.5 / 39.9 / 42.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	18.6 / 75.5 / 145.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	(AWD) 6197 lb
GVWR	7408 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(unbraked) 1650 lb; (braked) 3500 lb
CHARGING TIME:	
DC FAST CHARGE	10-80 percent: 26 min
ELEC CONSUMPT (COMB)	42 kWh/100 miles
RANGE	231 miles
MPGe	87/74/80 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$67,995
PAINT: Metro Silver Metallic	nc
INTERIOR: "Copper" leatherette	nc
BATTERY: 91 kWh	nc
DESTINATION CHARGE	1550
TOTAL	\$69,545

2025 VW ID.BUZZ LINEUP

	RWD	AWD
Pro S	\$59,995	—
Pro S Plus	63,495	▼ \$67,995
1st Edition	65,495	69,995



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maybe it did, but we wondered if even another half-inch or inch of height could have added notable battery range. These are the tradeoff areas engineers work on the hardest.)

One surprise is that, despite the vehicle's generous length, front legroom is just 37.5 inches, far less than most front rows (typically 40-42 inches or more). Compounded by this is the distance from front door jamb—farther back than usual, to accommodate front wheels within such a short front nose—tight enough to snag your foot or pants leg on the seat track upon egress.

You will notice the updated cab format as you first step in—the A-pillars are sizable and far forward, seeming to block significant areas of your view, but you quickly get used to this especially in ever-changing motion, with any blind spots largely forgotten. Its deep instrument panel includes a large center bulge for forward-facing cameras or sensors, but despite being inside, this reads somewhat like a hood scoop from the driver's position, not objectionable, in fact kind of cool.

The floor is flat, which contributes to its spacious, open feel and vaguely seems to echo the classic, till we recall that those, despite being rear-transaxle and rear-engine, did have a hump for the shift cable. Be forewarned—if you put anything on the passenger side floor, whether a bag of groceries or a 40-pound package, it will likely slide straight over to your feet and pedals with force, at your first right turn. If we owned one, we'd be devising some sort of a block, and we wonder whether VW may do that themselves.

Driving is top notch for go-power—loads of power and torque, with smooth range through its 4MOTION combination of two single-speed transmissions, front and rear. Turns are precise and belie its significant wheelbase. The long wheelbase and extremely short overhangs make urban speed-bumps smooth and easy.

The one thing that disappointed us in the drive experience was its braking. We had noted that it has rear drum brakes, not very common, but not out of the question. Possible reasons could include cost-cutting, but that seems unlikely in a somewhat pricey and thoroughly outfitted vehicle. More likely, we might guess it has to do with factors of space, heat or both. But we were never fully comfortable with the brakes' response. We will follow up on this with engineers when we get a chance.

Many factors of the ID. BUZZ had us contemplating its best uses. Interior volume, generous in both seating and cargo space, is ideal for the proverbial soccer team. It also transmits a lust for a good long trip on the open road—partly as it evokes tales of the classic bus, partly from the Airstream or rail car feel. But that's when you realize its range is pretty limited, which adds up to a lot of

(At right, top to bottom) The classic Volkswagen microbus; the new ID. BUZZ (shown here in Mahi Green Metallic and Candy White); two wheelbases available now in Europe (Länger und Kürzer, or longer and shorter); and VW's smallest- yet new EV, the ID. EVERY1, just introduced.

long charging stops, even just traveling one state away in any direction, or even within Arizona.

One friend asked whether the AC is effective—up into summer-in-Phoenix levels—given its large interior volume, but we had no way to know that at this time of year.

It is guaranteed that every first drive includes mysteries in the interface (a topic in itself, as there are any number of situations where someone has to drive someone else's vehicle, perhaps urgently). Most, an owner will get used to, while some are forever—which may include the oddities of arriving, starting, shutting down and leaving. You can indeed start or stop via the usual button, but you don't really need to—the vehicle assumes when you've arrived and when you're done. In short, we felt downsides to the uncertainty in this. A power window setup using just two switches for four windows (plus a non-intuitive contextual touch panel in with the mirror controls to access the rear ones) is another area of intrigue, long story short.

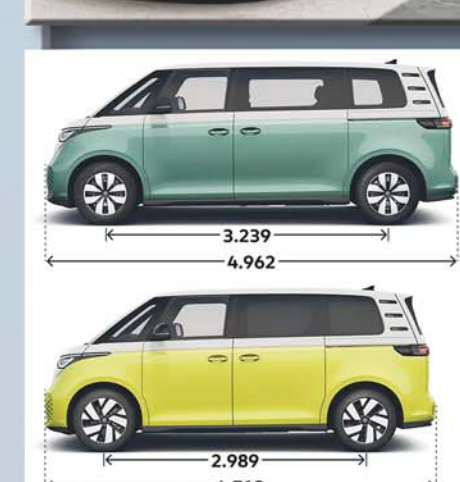
The ID. BUZZ is a successful styling drill, head-turner and conversation-starter, no question of that. Its length makes for a bold presence, and we generally like it. A good handful of engineering details and human factor nitpicks in particular clearly did catch our attention, though most can be conquered via familiarity. As for brakes, we're curious about an upgrade in the future and would investigate our own potential upgrade if we bought now.

In addition to the shorter wheelbase or panel van possibilities, we would be curious to see gasoline versions of any or all. The full Volkswagen ID lineup's roadmap has been clear, but the crystal ball is currently a little muddier, industrywide.

As the classic VW bug and bus had their family-of-two synergies, anyone familiar with the popular ID. 4 EV, already here for several years, will find commonalities, as well. In fact, the ID family is more extensive, and the small end is headed even smaller, at least in Europe as of now, including an ID. 3, joined now by a just-this-minute-introduced ID. EVERY1, set to be the smallest, most affordable and most efficient in the family to date.

Although we generally spot any notable new vehicle quite promptly and in multiples around these parts, as of the moment we have only seen one of these in the wild, and a search of the online consumer site showed only one in stock at a dealer.

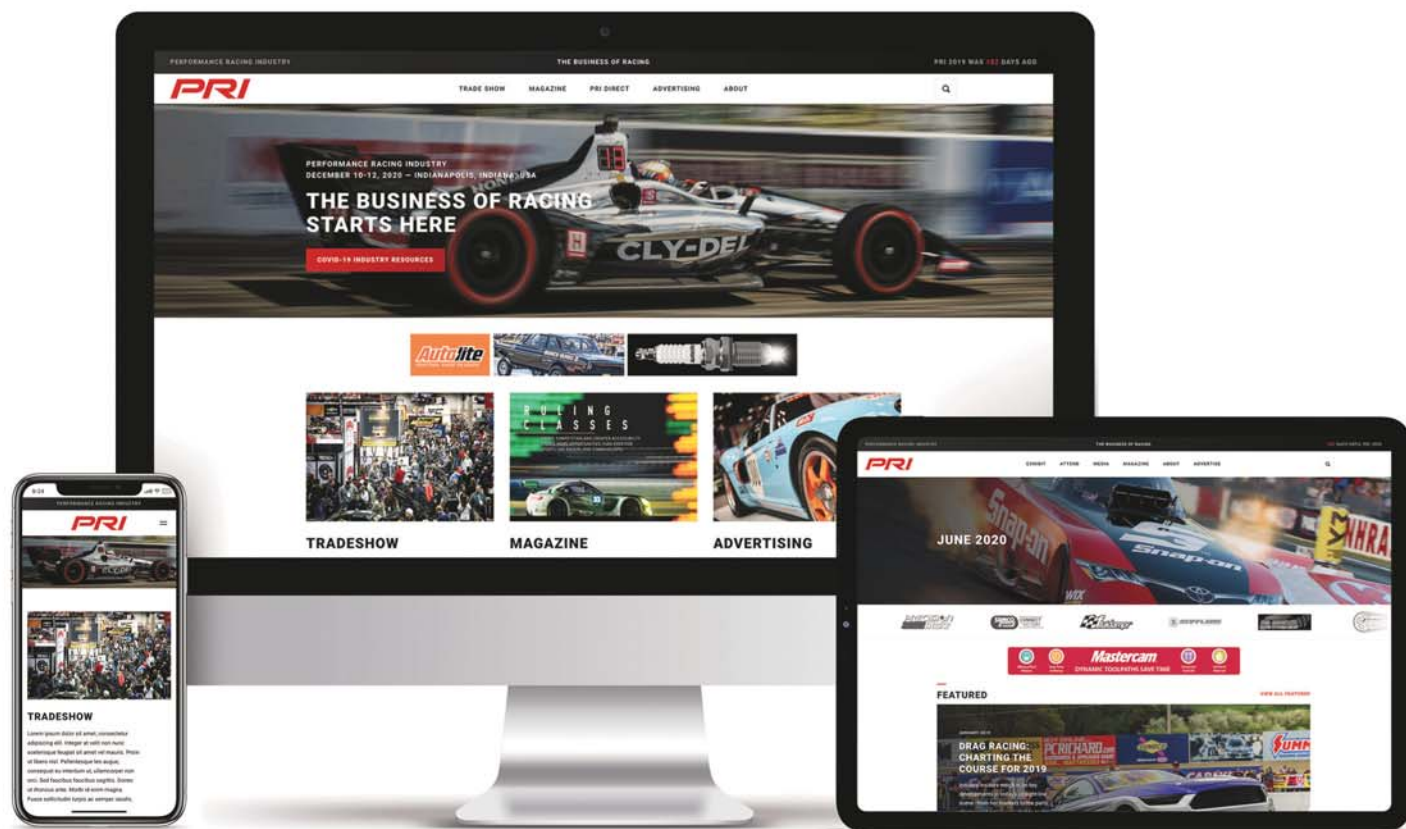
They may proliferate like mad, or not. But if this interests you, we suggest you get your name and deposit in early. First-year nitpicks aside, the VW ID. BUZZ is almost certain to sell like hotcakes. ■





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SPECIAL EVENT : CONCOURS IN THE HILLS 2025 / FOUNTAIN HILLS

Concours in the Hills 2025

"The Greatest Car Show on Grass,"
Concours in the Hills, returns to its spectacular lake view setting in Fountain Hills for its 11th year on Saturday, April 19, 15, from 10 am to 3 pm. The event takes place in Fountain Park, 12925 N Saguaro Blvd, Fountain Hills AZ. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. For more information: phoenixchildrensfoundation.org/signature/concours/

Photo courtesy of the event.
Details subject to change.

The show features a stunning display of vehicles, showcasing everything from contemporary and classic race cars to exotic high-performance cars, muscle cars, sports cars, hot rods and military vehicles, as well as helicopters and motorcycles.

Concours display categories include:

- European
- Domestic
- Asian
- Race Cars
- Off-road
- Military
- Motorbikes
- Alternative Fuel

Attendees have the opportunity to get up close and personal with the rare and exotic, all for a good cause. You'll find a day of great cars, lots of tasty food and refreshment trucks, over 100 dealer and aftermarket tents, and music, all in the spectacular setting of Fountain Park. There are also a few big raffles with the chance to perhaps walk away with some great prizes, courtesy of

various major sponsors.

Cars come from all over Arizona, California, Nevada and New Mexico to participate. The event is supported by leading car clubs of Arizona representing Audi, BMW, Cadillac, Corvette, Ferrari, Ford GT, Jaguar, Lamborghini, Lotus, McLaren, Mercedes-Benz, Mustang, Porsche, Viper and others.

Concours in the Hills benefits Phoenix Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, as well as the Cardiothoracic Surgery Support Fund.

Funds raised finance innovative research, cutting-edge technology, recruitment of leading physicians, and child-friendly programs that make the hospital environment more comfortable for young patients.

Thanks to the Concours giving community, the event has raised over \$1.6 million for Phoenix Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders and the Cardiothoracic Surgery Support Fund since 2018, helping to ramp up advancements in world-class pediatric health care. ■

RESCHEDULED
Weather pushes date to April 19



PUT TOGETHER RIGHT

BY JOE SAGE

Evolution at Subaru is generally gradual and steady and always on brand. Anybody will recognize the Subaru Outback, fundamentally the same, yet constantly revised, renewed and updated, for a little over three decades. One reason it remains so familiar is that it's a survivor. Along the way, it has eclipsed the Legacy Wagon from which it was derived, also leaving an Impreza Outback in its wake. In its sixth generation (since 2020), the Outback spawned a Wilderness version (for 2022), enhancing its off-pavement credentials and in fact erasing some clearance advantages the smaller Crosstrek had—at least until Crosstrek received its own Wilderness treatment about two years later, subsequently also applied to Forester, although

that one did not continue for 2025 (though they are still building and selling the 2024 Forester Wilderness). We've had all three Wilderness variants in our fleet, but this is none of those.

Outback has its own beefy and highly capable feel, Wilderness trim thus seeming like top dog. But it turns out dirt is not everything to everybody.

Here we have the Touring XT, the actual top trim among fully nine versions (see sidebar). This version wears more of a city suit, ours in a crisp Cosmic Blue Pearl. The Touring level brings many style and function niceties—from power-folding satin chrome mirrors, black silica and body-color details, to power moonroof, a 180-degree front monitor, Nappa leather interior, vented front seats, a top Subaru Starlink infotainment system and more.

Atop that, XT brings a beefier engine. Also used on Wilderness, it's a 2.4-liter, smaller than the standard 2.5L, but adding a twin-scroll turbocharger and intercooler, bringing horsepower up from 182 to 260 and torque from 176 up to 277 lb-ft in any XT (as on Wilderness).

Considering a total Outlander price range from under \$30 grand to the low \$40s, you really can't lose—Touring XT is a tremendous value for all it includes, while others have their own value through various combinations of price and inclusions.

While this has the standard ground clearance of the overall Outback lineup (8.7 inches vs 9.5 in the Wilderness build), they all have the same high-spec suspension build. Either Boxer engine has a chain-driven camshaft. Both engines are paired with a CVT with 8-speed manual mode, though the XT variants (and the Wilderness) are higher-torque

units. Touring XT also moves to 18-inch wheels.

Any one of the Outbacks is ready for just about anything you can throw at it. Deferring perhaps to this one's stylish, refined appearance and its tire and wheel set—but more likely to our overall very busy week in town—we didn't take it off-pavement, though the specs show just where it falls, with advantages in the same key points as Wilderness other than wheel and clearance differences.

We did take a run up the Beeline Highway, a chance to open up its engine and try out its handling on climbs and curves at speed. To quote our own voice memos, "if there is any flaw of any consequence, we didn't find it." We equally enjoyed our Touring XT in town, where freeway ramp performance was tops—on 90-degree turns and

merges at speed, entering; or in that burst of newfound freedom, exiting. Lanes held firm, and power held strong. Whether you are a fan of CVTs or not, in this, we felt no noticeable pause or loss through shifts (better than many automatics).

It's not at all hard to see why the Subaru outback is so popular and its customers so loyal.

That original Legacy Wagon was of course an offshoot of the foundational Subaru Legacy sedan. The Legacy sedan is still with us for 2025, in fewer builds than the Outback wagon (see sidebar), and note that we do have the Legacy sedan scheduled here in a few weeks (see next issue). But according to Subaru, this will be the sedan's last year.

Thus the legacy of the Legacy will become not Legacy but Outback. At least for now. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Lafayette, Indiana
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 50% / Japan 30%
ENGINE	2.4L DOHC 16v 4-cyl BOXER, twin-scroll turbo, intercooler, alum/alum, chain-driven cams, dual active intake/exhaust valves, sequential multi-port injection w cylinder head dir inj & ETC
HP/TORQUE	260 hp / 277 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.6:1
TRANSMISSION	high-torque Lineartronic CVT incl 8-spd manual mode and paddles
DRIVETRAIN	active torque split AWD w electronically managed variable hydraulic transfer clutch, driver-selectable X-MODE w enhanced wheel spin logic
SUSPENSION	4-wheel indep, raised; F: MacPherson-type struts w internal rebound springs, alum lower L-arms, coils, stblzr bar, liquid-filled engine mounts; R: dbl wishbone, coils, stblzr bar
STEERING	variable-ratio elec pwr assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 12.4 vented disc, dual-piston; R: 11.8 vented, single-piston
WHEELS	18x7 alloy, black w machine fin
TIRES	225/60R18 100H all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	191.1 / 108.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.7 in
APPR / DEPART / BRKOVER	18.2 / 21.7 / 19.4°
TURNING CIRCLE	36.1 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w moonrf) 39.1 / 39.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.8 / 39.5 in
CARGO CAPACITY	32.6 / 75.6 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3946 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(XT) 3500 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY .....	.87 oct reg unl / 18.5 gal
MPG	22/29/25 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$42,795
ALL-WEATHER FLOOR LINERS	141
DESTINATION CHARGE	1420
TOTAL	\$44,356

2025 OUTBACK / LEGACY LINEUP

OUTBACK WAGON	
(base)	\$28,895
Premium	31,195
Onyx Edition	36,105
Limited	37,855
Onyx Edition XT	39,360
Wilderness	39,960
Limited XT	40,195
Touring	40,345
Touring XT	42,795
LEGACY SEDAN	
(base)	\$24,895
Premium	27,195
Limited	34,005
Sport	34,495
Touring XT	38,195

LEGACY SEDAN ENDS PRODUCTION

Production of the 2025 Subaru Legacy sedan will end in spring 2025. Created for the US market, it was the first Subaru manufactured in the US, at Subaru's new Indiana plant. The Legacy Wagon went on to become the basis for the Subaru Outback, which continues as of now. Subaru has said they will produce eight EV models by calendar year 2028. ■

The Honda Civic Hatchback is defined by its form factor, though more of a utility hatch than a hot hatch by most comparisons. Cargo volume behind the seats increases from 14.8 cu.ft. in the sedan to 24.5 in the hatchback (not quite apples-to-apples, as the two styles are measured a little differently), plus you can carry larger items with rear seats down—the tradeoff, as always, being lockability of a separate trunk in a sedan.

It is in fact fairly hot in its hybrid form, an option on the Civic Hatchback Sport and baked in on the Hatchback Sport Touring we're driving here—a combined system bumping total horsepower from 150 in the base LX (sedan only) or non-hybrid Sport (sedan or hatch) from a 2.0-liter four-cylinder, to 200 in the hybrid, and torque from 133 to a whopping 232 lb-ft combined in the hybrid variant. Note that all of these, as well as their sedan cousins, have a CVT (continuously variable transmission).

Civic does not stop there. You can still opt for the Si, with 200 hp from a 1.5-liter engine, smaller but turbocharged, a more potent sedan priced in the middle of the hatches. Civic Si—also a front-

driver—does have a manual transmission, a big plus to us. On the other hand, it brings you back to the sedan's format and cargo volume.

Or you can push the budget from there, topping out with the Civic Type R, bearing more of a boy racer look and a 2.0-liter turbo (bigger again AND turbocharged) with 315 hp and 310 lb-ft. Priced at \$45,895, Type R's 39 percent higher price tag delivers 57.5 percent higher horsepower and 33.6 percent more torque, a solid value by pure relativity. As with the Civic Si, Civic Type R remains a front-driver but does have a manual transmission.

This gives you a lot of choices, but it can be distilled down to just a few—three by base powertrains (regular 2.0, 1.5 turbo or 2.0 turbo); four when you split out the hybrid 2.0s; five when you factor in the sedan-hatch variable on the 2.0s; and a few more when you compare trim levels just on the 2.0s. Honda does keep things simple with each trim level clearly self-defining and complete.

The hybrid is the the headline news this year, though, coming in as the most powerful non-Type R Civic ever, and at its very favorable price point.

Not to be overlooked in the power comparisons, the hybrids also deliver 50/45/48 mpg in hatchback form, 50/47/49 as sedans. Compare this with 22/28/24 mpg in the Type R, and the value differential has a whole new dimension.

You just have to accept the hybrids' lack of a manual transmission—or go with the Si (rated at 27/37/31 mpg) or the Type R, also factoring in the hatch-sedan variables.

All that said, we had a lively week with our Civic Hybrid Hatch. Power is prompt and plentiful (with more of a zippy than throaty soundtrack), handling is precise, belying virtually any traces of its front-drive architecture. It's also a handsome unit, both in its hatchback form and in our sample's Boost Blue paint, a traffic or parking lot standout.

Put it all together and, even as a new offering, Honda—who have been quietly building great hybrids for years—expect the new Civic Hybrids to promptly comprise 40 percent of sales. Despite the usual handful of nitpicks with interface, settings and such, overall (although we don't actually rate this way) we give this five stars. ■

Turn up the volume

POWER, UTILITY AND FUEL EFFICIENCY IN A SOLID VALUE FORMAT

BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....	Greensburg, Indiana
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD.....	Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT.....	US/Can 50% / Japan 20%
ENGINE.....	2.0L Atkinson inline-4, 16v DOHC Dual-VTC
HP/TORQUE.....	141 hp / 134 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO.....	13.9:1
ELECTRIC MOTOR.....	AC synchr perm-magnet
HP/TORQUE.....	181 hp / 232 lb-ft
COMBINED SYSTEM OUTPUT.....	200 hp
TRANSMISSION.....	two-motor hybrid system
DRIVETRAIN.....	FWD
DRIVE MODES.....	econ/normal/sport/indiv
SUSPENSION.....	F: MacPherson strut, 26.5x4.5 tubular stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 17.5 solid stblzr bar
STEERING.....	var ratio elec pwr-asst rack & pinion
BRAKES.....	F: 11.1 vented; R: 10.2 solid
WHEELS.....	18-in alloy, matte shark gray inserts
TIRES.....	235/40R18 91W all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....	179.0 / 107.7 in
HEADROOM (F/R).....	37.6 / 37.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R).....	42.3 / 37.4 in
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	na
TURNING CIRCLE.....	38.1 ft
CARGO CAPACITY.....	24.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT.....	3289 lb
WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION.....	62/38%
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	reg unl / 12.4 gal
MPG.....	50/45/48 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE.....	\$32,950
PAINT: Boost Blue Pearl.....	455
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	1095
TOTAL.....	\$34,500



2025 HONDA CIVIC LINEUP

CIVIC SEDAN.....	MPG	
LX.....	32/41/36	\$24,250
Sport.....	31/39/34	26,250
Sport Hybrid.....	50/47/49	28,950
Sport Touring Hybrid.....	*	31,950
CIVIC HATCHBACK.....	MPG	
Sport.....	30/38/34	\$27,450
Sport Hybrid.....	50/45/48	\$29,950
Sport Touring Hybrid.....	*	32,950
CIVIC Si.....	MPG	
Si.....	27/37/31	\$30,250
Si w summer tires.....	*	30,550
CIVIC TYPE R.....	MPG	
Type R.....	22/28/24	\$45,895

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ARIZONA CONCOURS BEST OF SHOW WINNERS & HIGHLIGHTS

A majestic Duesenberg Model J and a flawless Mercedes-Benz 300 SL were named Best of Show winners, pre-war and post-war, respectively, for the 7th staging of the Arizona Concours d'Elegance, held Sunday, January 19, on the parklike grounds of the Scottsdale Civic Center. Thousands enjoyed the display of fine automobiles and motorcycles in ideal sunny weather.

The curated and judged Arizona Concours presents some of the world's greatest collector vehicles, ranging from early 20th Century runabouts through the Art Deco and Classic eras, to sports cars and exotics from more recent years. The event is presented in partnership with Scottsdale Arts, the organization responsible for an array of artistic services in the city. The theme this year was "The Art of Automotive Engineering."

Pre-War Best of Show winner was a 1929 Duesenberg Model J Butterfly Dual Cowl Phaeton owned by Valerie and Aaron Weiss

of San Marino, California. In immaculate condition, the dark green Duesy had a powerful presence on the show field. This example of the Model J—Duesenberg's greatest model—wears a bespoke Murphy body designed by Franklin Q. Hershey with the distinguishing feature of a rear windshield and cowl, split in half to ease passenger entry and exit.

Post-War Best of Show went to the 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Roadster, owned by DJSKI, LLC of Phoenix. This terrific example of the German automaker's grand touring roadster—their followup to the iconic "Gullwing" coupe—gleams in black over a cream leather interior. This 300 SL was brought to Arizona in 1967, where it was kept for 50 years by a fastidious owner. A true numbers-matching example, it completed restoration in 2023.

The Mona Lisa of classic automobiles, the 1937 Bugatti Type 57 Atlantic coupe, with its evocative streamlined shape and signature raised and riveted seams—one of just three

built—drew a constant crowd. Most were amazed they could get so close and personal with what is usually a cordoned-off automotive artwork. Standing with it was a recently minted factory homage to the Atlantic, a 2023 Bugatti Chiron SS with bespoke details including paint matching the 1936 car, hand-stitched and painted silhouettes of the Atlantic, and the newer car's name: Bugatti Chiron SS 57 One of One. The two Bugattis, part of a featured class of glamorous French cars, were not judged for class awards but did each receive a special prize as a Bugatti of Timeless Design.

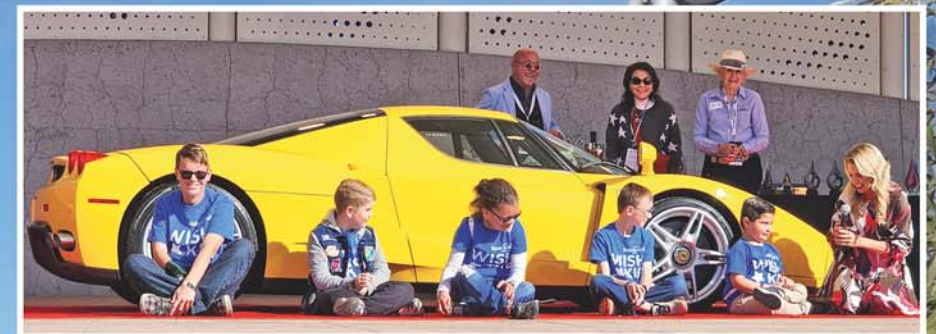
Proceeds from the Arizona Concours supports local artists and art programs, as well as longstanding beneficiary Make-A-Wish® Arizona, the organization that provides wishes-come-true for children battling life-threatening medical conditions. Another focal point of the event is the Make-A-Wish Trophy, chosen by kids from the program. This award went to an eye-catching bright yellow 2003 Ferrari Enzo, an appropriate choice for these young car enthusiasts, who presented a whimsical handmade trophy to the winner. ■



(Top to bottom) The Post-War Best of Show 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster and Pre-War Best of Show 1929 Duesenberg Model J Butterfly Dual Cowl Phaeton receiving their awards.

The 1937 Bugatti Type 57 Atlantic coupe and 2023 Bugatti Chiron SS 57 One of One, in dawn's early light before the Concours.

Make-A-Wish® kids with their 2003 Ferrari Enzo special trophy winner. (Rob Mains photos.)



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I-10 reconstruction between Ruthrauff and Ina Roads, Tucson

The Arizona Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are working to improve safety and traffic flow on I-10 between the Ina Road and Ruthrauff Road interchanges in Tucson. A related Pima County project to extend Sunset Road between I-10 and River Road will be built at the same time. Construction began in February 2023 and the project is expected to be completed by late 2025.

Key elements of the project include:

- Reconstructing and widening nearly four miles of I-10 from three lanes to four lanes in each direction
 - Adding auxiliary lanes to create two-lane entrance and exit ramps at all interchanges in this section of Interstate
 - Replacing the existing inside shoulder pavement on I-10 to add an additional lane in each direction near the Ina Road interchange
 - Reconstructing the traffic interchange at Orange Grove Road, including providing additional vertical clearance under I-10
 - Reconstructing the Cañada del Oro Wash and Rillito River I-10 bridges to provide sufficient clearance
 - Constructing new bridges to carry Sunset Road traffic over the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and the Rillito River
 - Constructing an access path to Chuck Huckelberry Loop from Sunset Road
- Additional work includes constructing bridges and retaining walls as needed throughout the project area and providing drainage, lighting, landscaping and other improvements. At the completion of the project, I-10 will have four travel lanes from 22nd Street to Ina Road.

Crews are currently moving into the final stages of this project, Phase 4: Sunset Interchange/Sunset Links. This phase will create new access to the Interstate by extending Sunset Road east of I-10 to River Road. This involves building new bridges over the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and the Rillito River, an element of the project funded by Pima County.

The Sunset Road interchange is expected to open in conjunction with the completion of the project in late 2025.



Traffic restrictions

In Phase 4 of construction, the following road restrictions are anticipated:

- Sunset Road will be closed between Silverbell Road and I-10 for the duration of the project, as will the Sunset Road entrance and exit ramps.
- River Road will be reduced to a single lane in each direction while the connection to Sunset Road is constructed.
- The westbound frontage road will be closed near Sunset Road. It will be converted to a two-way road between the closure point and the Ruthrauff Road on-ramp to westbound I-10 (with no direct access back to Ruthrauff Road).
- A temporary exit ramp on eastbound I-10 will access businesses located on the eastbound frontage road between Sunset and Ruthrauff Roads.
- The Ruthrauff Road/El Camino del Cerro interchange and the Ina Road interchange will remain open during construction.

For information about current project-related restrictions and closures, please visit az511.gov or call 511, except while driving. ■



tS: tuned by STI

WRX's new top performer by Joe Sage

Facing well-known industrywide global regulatory and powertrain headwinds and uncertainties, Subaru opted not to bring a new WRX STI to market this year. While demand is fine now, its market couldn't be assured for enough years to recoup development costs. (The murky crystal ball may already be shifting—see sidebar.) But fear not—the new WRX tS, tuned by STI but utilizing more of the basis vehicle, is here instead.

Top performance variants of WRX had evolved through the WRX STI era, to the stripped-down WRX TR (tuner ready), which, as its name implied, was aimed at buyers who were likely to start modding their car the day they got it home from the dealer. Now the new WRX tS has basically done the best mods for you, straight from the factory.

The full WRX lineup has the same 271-hp 2.4L turbo boxer, while WRX tS is 6-speed manual-only,

with active torque vectoring. The WRX tS features new STI-tuned suspension with electronically controlled dampers and revised suspension tuning, high-performance Brembo brakes, 19-inch wheels with Bridgestone Potenza S007 tires, hood scoop, brake cooling inlets, a mild spoiler, quad exhaust pipes, a new LCD digital cluster, Recaro seats, and a range of style cues inside and out. Most of the performance details have additionally boosted specs.

All this is priced at \$45,705 in a fairly tightly spaced lineup starting at \$35,750. (Also at \$45,705 is a WRX GT with CVT shift.)

Notable details in the WRX tS's basic specifications are its tight wheelbase to overall length—in fact, the tS, with its different wheels, suspension and brakes—has a turning circle about 9 inches tighter than the others, as well as lighter weight than upper trims, augmented by lightweight com-

ponents and also its power moonroof delete.

Also notable is exceptional front legroom, over 43 inches. This is always welcome for us taller people, but was especially so as we investigated the manual transmission and drive modes.

The tS does not have rev-matching (blip-shifting), to us a good sign—something many incorporate to assist the unfamiliar manual shifter and something we turn off as soon as possible. The transmission is lively—easily taking you through the first three gears in very short order, as you turn from a side street stop onto a busy highway when the light turns green. We played with sport plus mode at first, which did not seem to affect shifts notably, but was a bit too lively in town. (It never stalled, but pedal action could give us a good goose.) But the solution was a familiar one—the enthusiast driver needs to get leg-to-clutch distance just right, and this legroom gives great latitude, leading to shifting perfection. (We ignored modes from that point, which also suits us, best straight out of the box.) The one thing we did still

encounter were surprisingly strict rev limiters, but you soon get clutch action and shift patterns perfected in line with that headroom.

The apparent bonus from this tight shift pattern is that while this powertrain puts out 271 hp versus 310 in the last STI (straight across 12.6 percent less), shift mapping in the tS makes it arguably unlikely that you will regularly miss it.

The ride is very firm and tight. Cruising on our freeways, where any kind of rough surface is rare, this feels just right. On a sweeping flyover ramp, you will feel the seams, but this is just an opportunity to enjoy a great command experience.

Much as when the big wing came off the STI in 2015, this version of the WRX is sure to reach a wider, if less exclusive, enthusiast group than ever. It may not be quite as far along the scale to really extreme, but then again, it's as close to that end of the scale as things get, currently.

Note in the sidebar the potential emergence of a more extreme performance machine coming to light. But one person's waiting game is another's opportunity, and the heroic solution of the WRX tS is right in front of you, right now. The best news is, there are no wrong choices. This is a keeper. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Gunma, Japan
CHASSIS/BODY	.....Subaru Global Platform w full inner frame construction w alum hood & front fenders, ring-shaped reinforcement frame safety structure
ENGINE	.....2.4L 4-cyl boxer high output, twin-scroll turbo & intercooler, DOHC, chain-driven cams, DFI, ETC, dual active valve control (intake/exhaust), alum/alum
HP/TORQUE	.....271 hp / 258 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.6:1
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd manual
DRIVETRAIN	.....Contin AWD w viscous-coupling locking center diff (more torque to wheels w best traction)
SUSPENSION	.....4-wheel indep: (tS) STI sport-tuned Electronic Adjustable Ride Control w damper settings shown in drive mode select / display; F: MacPherson-type struts w internal rebound springs; alum lower L-arms w pillow ball mounts & bushings, coils, stblzr bar; (tS) STI-tuned electr adj dampers; R: dbl-wishbone w subframe, pillow ball bushings for lower lateral links, coils, stblzr bar; (tS) STI-tuned electr adj dampers
STEERING	.....quick-ratio dual-pinion elec pwr-asst r&p
BRAKES	.....(tS) Brembo Performance system: F: 13.4 cross-drilled, 6-piston monoblock calipers; R: 12.8 cross-drilled, 2-piston monoblock calipers
WHEELS	.....19x8.5 alum alloy, satin gray
TIRES	.....245/35R19 93Y summer perf
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....183.8 / 105.2 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....39.8 / 36.7 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....43.1 / 36.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5.4 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....(tS) 36.06 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	.....12.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3430 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....91 oct rec'd / 16.6 gal
MPG	.....tba
BASE PRICE	.....\$45,705
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1170
TOTAL	.....\$46,875

2025 SUBARU WRX LINEUP

	.....6MT	.....*SPT
WRX Premium	.....\$35,750	.....\$37,100
WRX Limited	.....40,130	.....41,680
WRX tS	.....▼ 45,705--
WRX GT	.....--	.....45,705

*Subaru Performance Transmission is a Lineartronic CVT with 8-spd manual shift modes

NEXT? TOKYO S210 PROTOTYPE



Still watching the horizon for any clues to a possible future WRX STI? Well, tune in to this: Subaru and its motorsport subsidiary STI unveiled a Japanese market S210 prototype at Tokyo Auto Salon 2025 in January.

The S210 prototype is race-bred, incorporating technology and knowledge from the Nurburgring 24-Hour Race. Customized models with various STI performance parts were also displayed, giving more than a subtle hint as to a future consumer build.

The engine, based on the WRX S4's FA24, has a newly developed air cleaner, intake and pre-turbo ducts, and a low back pressure muffler with a new large diameter tail pipe with a cannonball-shaped chamber, all introduced to dramatically reduce intake and exhaust resistance. A specially tuned ECU has a maximum output development target of 300 hp, with notably linear torque in acceleration. As presented, it would be the first S-series vehicle with the Subaru Performance Transmission (as on the WRX tS). Engineers promise to tune shift characteristics to match engine output, to date boasting a high degree of controllability.

Suspension has specially tuned electronic control dampers, coil springs and newly developed rear stabilizer bushes. Riding atop STI Flexible Performance Wheels with specific shapes front and rear, the prototype has Michelin 255/35R19 high-grip tires.

Brakes include Brembo 6-pot front calipers, special brake pads, and front and rear drilled rotors, with tuned electric boosters.

Aerodynamic features include newly developed STI Sport Side Garnish and STI Dry Carbon Rear Spoiler to regulate air flow and achieve high handling performance.

The interior concentrates on black tones, with red details, so the driver can concentrate on situational awareness and driving. New Recaro 8-way power seats have carbon backrests for high grip and comfort.

Stay tuned for further information. ■



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AND FINALLY.... TRUCK RODEO TOP WINNERS

Photos: Kevin McCauley / Capturing the Machine

This took awhile. In late *September*, we joined the Texas Auto Writers' Association (TAWA, of which we are a member) for their annual Texas Truck Rodeo comparo event, a longstanding don't-miss-it item on our calendar. At its roots off-road-centric, the event was once again held on a specially engineered course on the grounds of Eagles Canyon Raceway outside Decatur, Texas. Paved country highways outside the gates were available for vehicles that lean more in that direction.

A total of 41 automotive media drove 29 vehicles in 11 categories (14 SUVs and eight pickups by brand and model, with multiple variants of several). Collectively, we then vote for the best.

Although a competitive event in a rapidly evolving market, rather than announcing results upon completion, they now string it out for months.

Refer to our *November-December 2024* issue for our original details and commentary for each vehicle, but no awards yet. Rather, the category awards were voted a few weeks later, once we were all back home, with winners revealed at the San Antonio Auto Show in late November (refer to our *January-February 2025* issue), as follows:

CATEGORY WINNERS: PICKUPS

- Compact: Hyundai Santa Cruz
- Midsize: Toyota Tacoma
- Full-Size: Ram 1500
- Heavy Duty: Ram 2500 Rebel
- Luxury: Ram 1500 Tungsten
- Off-Road: INEOS Grenadier Quartermaster Fieldmaster

CATEGORY WINNERS: SUVs

- Subcompact: Nissan Kicks SR
- Midsize: Lexus GX 550
- Luxury: Genesis GV80
- Off-Road: INEOS Grenadier Trialmaster
- Electric: Kia EV9

TRUCK OF TEXAS, SUV OF TEXAS

Top trophies were voted on after that, then announced later still, at the Houston Auto Show in late January. These final superstars are shown at right—both coincidentally from now-Texas-based Toyota-Lexus. (Though they have seven US assembly plants, their San Antonio truck plant now produces Tundra and Sequoia, with Tacoma assembly moved to Mexico, while Lexus GX is Japan-built.)

And now, just like that, it's time for the same group's track-and-road-based Texas Auto Roundup in late April, presumably to stretch out similarly. Watch for a first overview in our next issue. ■



TRUCK OF THE YEAR: TOYOTA TACOMA



SUV OF THE YEAR: LEXUS GX 550

Arizona Auction Week 2025

Arizona January Auction Week hit a high of eight events in 2020, just as pandemic restrictions entered the realm. Affected years saw various live, remote, restricted, canceled or rescheduled events, bouncing back to four events in 2023, then five in 2024, settling back at four this year.

Though fewer than that high point, all is alive and well in attendance, sales and some extended schedules, and Arizona's position on the calendar keeps it a great winter destination, as well as the critical first indicator of directions in the hobby-slash-industry for the coming year.

It also sets the stage for Mecum's spring auction here and for Barrett-Jackson's new fall event added last year.



Barrett-Jackson 54th Annual Scottsdale Auction

Nine days: Saturday, January 18 - Sunday, January 26, 2025

WestWorld of Scottsdale, Loop 101 & FLWright Blvd, Scottsdale AZ 85260

BARRETT-JACKSON kicked off the 2025 auction calendar with their flagship Scottsdale "Ultimate Automotive Lifestyle Experience" event, achieving \$198 million in total auction sales, with a 100 percent No Reserve docket featuring 2,013 collectible vehicles achieving over \$193 million from more than 6,000 registered bidders. Almost a thousand pieces of authentic automobilia (957) sold for over \$5.2 million. And a new record was set with 15 hours of live television coverage on the History Channel.

Continuing their longstanding commitment to charity—over \$162 million to date—\$6,205,000 was raised through the sale of five vehicles (see next page), led by the 2025 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 VIN 001 (Lot 3005) for \$3.7 million. As part of the charity initiative, longtime Barrett-Jackson friend and collector Ron Pratte donated his 2024 Ford Mustang Dark Horse VIN 001 to be sold during the Palm Beach Auction, with 100 percent of the hammer price benefiting the Tunnel to Towers Foundation. The FDNY Ceremonial Unit, along with the FDNY Emerald Society Pipes and Drums, performed during the Opening Night Gala in honor of Barrett-Jackson's committed support.

Sammy Hagar and Friends Michael Anthony, Kenny Aronoff and Vic Johnson headlined the second annual Rock the Block concert on Friday night before opening day. The first Saturday was Coca-Cola Family Day, with free admission for kids 12 and under, with STEM Fest presented by Honeywell, part of Barrett-Jackson's Gearing Towards the Future initiative. Also on Saturday, fifty world-class custom vehicles crossed the auction

block as part of the Barrett-Jackson Cup Parade presented by Castrol (see next page).

The top 10 vehicles sold at the 2025 Barrett-Jackson Scottsdale Auction included:

- 2023 Hennessey Venom F5 Roadster.....(Lot 1403)..... \$2,200,000
- 2014 Pagani Huayra.....(Lot 1385).....1,925,000
- 2020 Ford GT Liquid Carbon Special Edition.....(Lot 1398).....1,760,000
- 1987 Porsche 959 Komfort.....(Lot 1381).....1,457,500
- 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing Coupe.....(Lot 1406).....1,402,500
- 2019 Ford GT.....(Lot 1369.1).....1,210,000
- 2022 Ford GT.....(Lot 1384.1).....1,100,000
- 1977 Ford F-150 Custom Pickup "Hoonitruck".....(Lot 1365).....990,000
- 1963 Chevrolet Corvette Custom Split-Window Coupe.....(Lot 1368).....990,000
- 1967 Chevrolet Corvette Custom Convertible.....(Lot 1367).....935,000

The top three automobilia sales included:

- 1920s Texaco Oil Pipe Organ Visible Gas Pump.....(Lot 9454).....\$102,000
- 1941 Wurlitzer Model #850 Peacock Jukebox.....(Lot 9467).....75,000
- Large 1950s ESSO Aviation Neon Porcelain Sign.....(Lot 9395).....72,000

Celebrities in attendance during this year's auction included Sammy Hagar, Mike Rowe, Rick Henrick, Adam Ferrara, John Staluppi, Ron Pratte, Drew Brees, Reggie Jackson, Jesse James, Jeff Gordon, Kurt Busch, Tony Stewart, Mark Martin, Casey Mears, Kyle Larson, Chuck Zito, Jacoby Ellsbury, Kenny Dillingham, Peter Brock, Dave Kindig, Chip Foote, Camilo Pardo, Aaron Shelby, Chip Ganassi and Cody Walker.

Next up for Barrett-Jackson is Palm Beach, April 24-26, with tickets and VIP packages available now and consignment and bidder registration underway. The Scottsdale Fall Auction returns for its second year, October 15-18, again at Westworld of Scottsdale.

▼ www.barrett-jackson.com



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Barrett-Jackson charity highlights

To date, Barrett-Jackson has raised more than \$162 million for charity. At this year's Barrett-Jackson Arizona January Auction, five vehicles raised a total of \$6,205,000 for charitable causes. "I'm especially proud of our support for important charities again this year," said Steve Davis, president of Barrett-Jackson. "We not only raised millions of dollars but also critical awareness that will help make a positive impact on so many communities." Charity vehicle sales included:

2025 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 First Retail Production VIN 001

(LOT 3005) The winning bidder will receive the first retail production 2025 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1, VIN 001, configured to their preference (sample shown at left). Powered by the LT7, a 5.5-liter, twin-turbocharged DOHC flat-plane crank V8 engine that produces 1,064 hp at 7,000 rpm, this brings the most power ever from a factory Corvette.

- 100% of hammer price to benefit the American Red Cross**\$3,700,000**

1962 Dodge Power Wagon Custom Truck "Project S.W.E.A.T."

(LOT 3004) With four-wheel drive, 1,000+ hp (with documentation), an 8-speed automatic, suicide doors, custom interior with Dakota Digital gauge cluster, Pioneer entertainment system and Restomod climate-control, this custom Power Wagon sits on 18-inch wheels with 37-inch tires. (Shown at left.)

- 100% of hammer price to benefit the mikeroweWORKS Foundation.....**\$1,500,000**

1988 Chevrolet Corvette 35th Anniversary Edition

(LOT 3003) Powered by a 245-hp 5.7-liter V8 engine mated to a 4-speed automatic transmission and with only 7,370 miles, this is from The David M. Ressler Collection.

- 100% of hammer price to benefit the Driven Hearts initiative for the American Heart Association**\$530,000**

2024 Shelby Ford F-150 Raptor R Barrett-Jackson Edition Pickup

(LOT 3002) Powered by a 5.2-liter supercharged V8 engine delivering 900+ horsepower, this truck is in the Shelby Registry and has a unique Shelby Serial number. (Shown at left.)

- 100% of hammer price to benefit the Carroll Shelby Foundation and the African Parks Foundation of America.....**\$325,000**

2021 Ford F-150 XLT Custom Pickup

(LOT 3000) A Chip Foose and RealTruck collaboration, this truck was designed and built at Foose Design Headquarters in California and is powered by a 400-hp 3.5-liter V6 EcoBoost engine with a 10-speed automatic transmission.

- 100% of hammer price to benefit The Progeria Research Foundation.....**\$150,000**

TUNNEL TO TOWERS: During Arizona Auction Week, Barrett-Jackson also announced their commitment to help raise awareness and funds for Tunnel to Towers Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting US military veterans, first responders and their families, partnering with the Foundation to help raise funds and awareness by donating exhibitor space at each of its three auctions—Scottsdale in January, Palm Beach in April and Scottsdale in October. In a generous show of support for this unique partnership, longtime friend of Barrett-Jackson and renowned car collector Ron Pratte has donated his 2024 Ford Mustang Dark Horse VIN 001 to be sold during the 2025 Palm Beach Auction, with 100 percent of the hammer price benefiting the Tunnel to Towers Foundation.



Barrett-Jackson Cup highlights

The **BARRETT-JACKSON CUP** during January 2025 auction week featured 50 world-class custom vehicles selected by members of the Barrett-Jackson team, then judged by custom builders Bobby Alloway and Troy Trepanier. On the first Saturday of the event, the vehicles were on display in the auction arena, then crossed the auction block as part of the Barrett-Jackson Cup Parade presented by Castrol. That evening, they moved to a specially designated area, where they were displayed throughout the week. During each of the five weekdays of the nine-day event, one Top Five finalist was revealed by the judges. From these, an overall winner would be awarded the coveted Barrett-Jackson Cup and the title of "Ultimate Best in Show," along with other prizes. Each vehicle also competed to win the "People's Choice" vote via social media. On the second Saturday of auction week, both winners were announced from the auction block.

- ULTIMATE BEST IN SHOW** (at left)
1968 Dodge Charger - owned by Ed Ganzinotti - built by Classic Car Studio
- PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD** (at left)
1986 Chevrolet C10 Squarebody - owned by Bruce Griffin - built by Goolsby Customs ■



Bonhams | Cars

14th Annual Scottsdale Auction
 Saturday, January 25, 2025 (preview Thur-Fri Jan 23-24)

Westin Kierland Resort & Spa, 6902 E Greenway Pkwy, Scottsdale AZ 85254

BONHAMS | CARS returned once again to the beautiful lawns of the Westin Kierland Resort for their 14th Annual Scottsdale Auction, presenting a selection of over 130 collector cars ranging from meticulously restored classics and historic racers to modern supercars. As busy Arizona Auction Week's schedule solidified, they moved the sale from an overloaded Friday to Saturday.

- With a four-way tie at number 9, the top sales were as follows, including premium:
1. 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing Coupe.....(Lot 154P).....\$1,490,000.00
 2. 2006 Mercedes-Benz SLR 'McLaren Edition'.....(Lot 151).....715,000.00
 3. 1992 Porsche 911 'Type 964' Turbo 3.3 Coupe.....(Lot 164).....257,600.00
 4. 1971 Mercedes-Benz 280SE 3.5 Cabriolet.....(Lot 136).....250,000.00
 5. 2014 Ferrari F12 Berlinetta.....(Lot 128).....*NR 201,600.00
 6. 1987 Nissan Skyline 'Type HR31' GTS-R NISMO Group A (Lot 156).....201,600.00
 7. 1961 Mercedes-Benz 190 SL Roadster.....(Lot 137).....156,800.00
 8. 1967 Mercedes-Benz 250SL Convertible.....(Lot 146).....NR 134,400.00
 9. 1993 Land Rover Defender 110 NAS.....(Lot 129).....NR 112,000.00
 10. 1978 Porsche 930 3.3 Turbo Coupe.....(Lot 132).....NR 112,000.00
 11. 1990 Mercedes-Benz 250GD 'Wolf' By Expedition Motor Co.(Lot 138).....NR 112,000.00
 12. 1999 Rolls-Royce Park Ward Limousine (one of 4 factory)(Lot 177).....NR 112,000.00
- *NR = Sold Without Reserve

At \$1,490,000, the top sale, a 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing Coupe in DB180 Silver over Navy Blue leather, fell right in its estimated range of \$1,450,000-1,550,000.

The number two sale, an extremely rare 'McLaren Edition' of the 2006 Mercedes-Benz SLR—originally purchased in 2006 as a standard SLR supercar, it was returned to the factory in 2011 to be transformed as part of a new program for SLR owners—at \$715,000 was very close to its estimated range of \$725,000-825,000.

All sales beyond the top 12 were under \$100,000. Of particular note was Lot 111, the 1967 Jaguar E-Type 'Series 1.5' 4.2-Liter Roadster, a rare early 265-bhp inline-6 with three SU carburetors, 4-speed manual, 4-wheel independent suspension and 4-wheel disc brakes, in its original Opalescent Silver Grey over Red, selling without reserve for \$78,400 including premium. Also followed closely was Lot 130, the 1961 Land Rover Series II 88-inch Hardtop, originally owned by Arthur Miller and his wife, Marilyn Monroe, selling at just \$28,000 including premium.

Representing the overall high-end variety at Bonhams were such consignments as the 1970 Oldsmobile 442 W-30 Hardtop Coupe from the Golden State Muscle Car Collection; the 1959 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Convertible; the 1934 Packard Twelve 1107 Coupe; and the 1950 Bentley R-Type SSS Saloon. Full results can be found online.

Bonhams | Cars—part of the Bonhams global network of auction houses, with dedicated motoring departments in London, Paris, Los Angeles, New York, Brussels and beyond—offers live, online and private platforms, with 17 live collector car auctions annually and serving as official auction partner for prestigious events from Formula 1 to Historic Grand Prix of Monaco to Newport. Bonhams achieved top sale at Arizona Auction Week in 2024 with the 2022 Bugatti Chiron Super Sport 300+ at \$5,175,000.

Upcoming auctions include Paris, Goodwood, Miami, Bonmont and Monterey.

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MAG Auctions
January 2025 Collector Car Auction

Friday-Sunday, January 24-26, 2025 (check-in Jan 21-23)

Cubs Stadium at Sloan Park, 2330 W Rio Salado Pkwy, Mesa AZ 85201

MAG AUCTIONS—the Motorsport Auction Group, LLC—is based in Sparks, Nevada, and the auction house for Reno's famous Hot August Nights. They become the direct successor to Silver Auctions, which ran Arizona events including this one for many years, before the ownership and name change several years back. Much remains familiar, year to year, while there are also signs of evolution—which may be within the hobby, may be within the auction itself, or most likely are a synergy of both. Most often held at the We-Ko-Pas Casino Resort at Fort McDowell outside Fountain Hills, the event has changed venue a couple of times, this year to a new location at the Chicago Cubs' spring training stadium in Mesa.

We have long noted MAG (and Silver before it) as being more budget-accessible, with most vehicles ready to drive home from the event, and often with beautiful examples of not-quite-ultimate variants (although perhaps having led less abusive lives), such as a 389 4-speed 1965 Pontiac Le Mans instead of a GTO, or many other examples. It has always seemed worthwhile for even the casual attendee to bring a pocket of cash.

There are, however, an increasing number of full-pedigree entries, with prices strong at the higher end, though there is still plenty along a wide price scale.

Some of this may be reflected in some unsold vehicles, as well, as the higher end of these reflect rising hopes and expectations at this event.

(Note that these may still find buyers in post-sales, not reflected here.)

They have not charted their top sales, but a fairly deep scouring of the hundreds of results yields the following useful benchmarks. A sampling of top sales (buyer premium included) shows the following range and variety:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1969 Ford Mustang Boss 429.....(Lot S230)..... | \$232,000 |
| 1965 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible (327/auto, 500 odo).....(Lot 382)..... | 129,600 |
| 1979 Porsche 911 Turbo 930 Turbo Slant Nose Conversion.....(Lot 403)..... | \$89,600 |
| 1959 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible (pink).....(Lot 389)..... | \$86,400 |
| 1979 Porsche 911SC Targa.....(Lot 384)..... | \$58,000 |
| 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air 2 Door.....(Lot 387)..... | \$54,000 |
| 1968 Chevrolet Camaro Resto - Mod.....(Lot 160)..... | \$48,600 |
| 1966 Chevrolet Nova.....(Lot 176)..... | \$47,520 |
| 1969 Chevrolet Chevelle Pro Touring Custom.....(Lot 151)..... | \$45,900 |
| 1967 Chevrolet Nova.....(Lot 428)..... | \$45,360 |

A sampling of unsold vehicles in the higher price range also offers insights on the direction of future consignments and sales. Some of this growth simply reflects trends in the general supply, but it suggests to us that a wider and higher range of sellers are becoming interested in the MAG event, and the corresponding buyers will be arriving.

- | |
|---|
| (NOT SOLD): 2024 Land Rover Autobiography.....(Lot 179).....HIGH BID: \$147,500 |
| (NOT SOLD): 1973 Ford Bronco.....(Lot 186).....HIGH BID: 115,000 |
| (NOT SOLD): 1966 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible.....(Lot 187).....HIGH BID: 92,500 |
| (NOT SOLD): 1959 GMC 2500 HD Ext Cab Short Bed 4x4.....(Lot 239).....HIGH BID: 60,000 |
| (NOT SOLD): 1937 Ford Custom Roadster Hotrod.....(Lot 183).....HIGH BID: 55,000 |

Up next for MAG Auctions as of now are a sale in Salem, Oregon, in June, then their huge Hot August Nights event in Reno in August.

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RM Sotheby's
27th Annual Automobiles of Arizona
Inaugural Concierge Auction: Thursday, January 23, 2025
Auction: Friday, January 24, 2025 (preview Th-Fri Jan 23-24)
Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa, 2400 E Missouri Ave, Phoenix AZ 85016

RM SOTHEBY'S kicked off the 2025 auction season at their landmark location at the Arizona Biltmore achieving over \$31.6 million in sales during a single-day auction, as bidders from 19 countries competed for a diverse selection of cars, from pre-war classics to modern supercars, with a 95 percent sell-through rate. Several lots set new auction records, including the 1931 Bentley 8-Litre Convertible Victoria by Murphy at \$3,195,000 and the 2015 Ferrari 458 Speciale at \$786,000.

Top sale was the 1958 Ferrari 250 GT LWB Berlinetta 'Tour de France' by Scaglietti sold for \$3,772,500, one of only 28 single-louver, covered-headlight examples, previously part of renowned collections like Pierre Bardinon's Mas du Clos. Delivered in unique Oro Chiaro over Bordeaux leather, its rich history includes a 3rd-in-class finish at the 1960 1000 KM Buenos Aires and a win at the 1958 Aosta-Pila Hillclimb.

Next by sale price was the 1931 Bentley 8-Litre Convertible Victoria by Murphy, a one-of-a-kind and the only 8-Litre Bentley with American custom coachwork, at a record-breaking \$3,195,000. With a well-documented history, it features a concours restoration by Bentley specialists RC Moss and has its original body, chassis, engine, gearbox and all major components.

Outside the Top 10, the 1984 Audi Sport quattro, a rare Group B homologation special, for at \$758,500, massively surpassed its pre-sale estimate of \$375,000-475,000



and further confirming Group B appeal. Raced extensively by Steve Beddor, this car set records at the Virginia City Hill Climb and was retained by the Beddor family since new. The Top 10 lots sold at RM Sotheby's include:

1. 1958 Ferrari 250 GT LWB Berlinetta 'Tour de France' by Scaglietti(Lot 160)\$3,772,500
2. 1931 Bentley 8-Litre Convertible Victoria by Murphy.....(Lot 165)\$3,195,000
3. 1939 Bugatti Type 57 C Atalante by Gangloff(Lot 168)\$2,370,000
4. 1956 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Gullwing(Lot 159)\$2,040,000
5. 1962 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Roadster(Lot 138)\$1,325,000
6. 1958 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Roadster(Lot 156)\$1,259,000
7. 2019 McLaren Senna(Lot 181)\$1,077,500
8. 2020 McLaren Senna GTR.....(Lot 163)\$973,000
9. 2015 Ferrari 458 Speciale.....(Lot 145)\$786,000
10. 2014 Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Black Series.....(Lot 176)\$775,000

RM Sotheby's stakes a claim as the world's largest collector car auction house by total sales. With over 45 years in the collector car industry, RM's vertically integrated range of services includes auctions (live and online), private sales, estate planning and financial services, coupled with an expert team of Car Specialists. An international footprint provides service to the wide global collector car market. RM Sotheby's is currently responsible for six of the top ten most valuable motor cars ever sold at auction.

Next for RM Sotheby's was their Paris event in early February, grossing a new European record of over 69 million euros, including the top sale, the 1964 Ferrari 250 LM at almost 35 million euros, followed by Miami at the end of February. Coming up for RM are events in Europe and the Middle East, then a return to the US at Monterey in August.

▼ www.rmsothebys.com ■



Popularity can lead to variety, and Hyundai Tucson has plenty of both. With a midcycle refresh for 2025—revealed fully a year ago, at the 2024 New York show—there are 16 versions.

Five basic 187-horsepower gasoline powertrain trim levels are available with either FWD or AWD.

Then there are four Hybrids, plus two PHEVs (plug-in hybrids), with their usual balancing points—a bit more weight and complexity, higher fuel mileage, similar horsepower but higher torque, and higher price. All hybrids and PHEVs are AWD.

Of the ten non-hybrids, our sample is tops. Out of the full set, it sits not far from the midpoint by price. Then again, the ratio of price to fuel mileage gained is—well, we ran this, but there are fully ten different fuel mileage rating sets for these 16 builds. The surprise was that standout highway fuel mileage (35 in most of the hybrids and PHEVs, versus 30 in ours) is 17 percent higher, but the price for even the top PHEV is just 18 percent more. The biggest spread is at the low end of price and features—with a FWD gasoline Tucson rated 33 mpg highway, but a Blue Hybrid 38. You can get into

city and combined figures, too, for more madness. The main point is that product planning has been performed magically—every possibility comes down to which one rings your bell and fits your wallet. No-one goes home disappointed.

These were perfect wheels for us during the first half of auction and concours week: lots of chasing around, lots of parking and dashing, some things to carry along, and it was great at all of it—nimble in the tight spots, spacious on the long hauls, precise on the competitive freeways.

For maximum routine enjoyment—simple acceleration and cornering, power through double turns onto freeways and such—we were happiest going for sport mode every time, even for rough surfaces, which often work the other way. Modes, in fact, are a bragging point for 2025, which seems largely unchanged overall, but has a host of revisions and new features in its details. Added are a MyDrive mode, combining your favorite various attributes from the others, not uncommon. But real innovation arrives in Baby Mode, which keeps acceleration a little calmer and smooths out other

2025 HYUNDAI TUCSON LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
SE	\$28,605	\$30,105
SEL	30,465	31,965
SEL Convenience	32,915	34,415
XRT	32,915	34,415
Limited	38,545	40,045

HYBRID		
Blue Hybrid	\$33,365	
SEL Convenience Hybrid	36,365	
N Line Hybrid	38,115	
Limited Hybrid	41,195	

PHEV (PLUG-IN HYBRID)		
SEL PHEV	\$39,630	
Limited PHEV	47,340	

disturbances; and in Green Zone mode, a subset of pure EV mode (on those applicable) to keep things optimized (or as enforced) in specific urban zones with specific “eco-focused” mandates.

We had a few nitpicks in the details, most of them easily solved with deeper dives, some maybe even preferable to some people. With plentiful competition in this segment, a great many buyers both start and finish their search right here. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Montgomery, Alabama
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	US / US
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 55% / SKorea 30%
ENGINE	Smartstream 2.5L 4-cyl, DOHC 16v, GDI+MPI, alum/alum
HP/TORQUE	187 hp / 178 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	13.0:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	HTRAC AWD, active on-demand
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w coils, gas shocks, stblzr bar; R: multi-link, gas shocks, stblzr bar
STEERING	motor driven pwr rack & pinion, col-mtd
BRAKES	F: 12.8x1.2 vented; R: 12.0x0.4 solid
WHEELS / TIRES	19x7.5J alloys / 235/55R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	182.7 / 108.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(AWD) 8.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	38.6 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w pano snrf) 38.1 / 39.0 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.4 / 41.3 in
CARGO CAPAC	SAE (max) 38.7 (41.2) / 74.8 (80.3) cu.ft
WEIGHT	3801 lb
TOW CAPACITY	1650 lb (w brakes 2000 lb)
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 14.3 gal
MPG	24/30/26 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$39,795
PAINT: Ultimate Red	470
CARPETED FLOOR MATS	210
DESTINATION CHARGE	1395
TOTAL	\$41,870

Note sticker price varies from current info (see chart).

POPULAR FOR BEING POPULAR

BY JOE SAGE



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Mecum Las Vegas 2025: highest-grossing motorcycle auction ever, breaks multiple records

Top sellers: (below) 1915 Cyclone V-Twin (Lot S106.2) selling at \$1,320,000. (At right) 1938 Crocker Twin, 1913 Henderson Four and 1914 Minneapolis Single.



The world's largest vintage and antique motorcycle auction, Mecum Las Vegas, set a number of significant records in the collector motorcycle world, at its recent 34th annual event. Not only was it the most successful and highest-earning motorcycle auction ever, with \$27.2 million in overall sales, but it also achieved several world record-setting individual motorcycle sales.

Leading all sales at the Las Vegas event—and at any public motorcycle auction ever—the 1915 Cyclone V-Twin (Lot S106.2) became the first motorcycle to sell at public auction for over \$1 million, reaching \$1,320,000 as spirited bidding quickly pushed the price into seven figures. Aside from its extreme rarity and general desirability as a highly significant piece of motorcycling history, the Cyclone also boasts a comprehensive restoration by ex-

pert restorer Stephen Wright. It also had special status as a member of the revered Urban S Hirsch III Collection.

In fact, a full eight of the top 10 motorcycle sales in Las Vegas were from the Hirsch Collection, including the second highest seller, a 1938 Crocker Twin (Lot S108.2) at \$880,000, making it the most valuable Crocker ever sold at public auction and one of the top five most valuable motorcycles of any marque ever sold at public auction.

While motorcycles from 13 distinct decades were on offer at Las Vegas, historic antiquity definitely came out on top this year with all but one—the 1974 Ducati 750SS (Lot F199)—hailing from the first half of the 20th century or earlier, as in the case of the No. 10 top seller, a 1898 De Dion-Bouton Tricycle (Lot S123) that sold for \$165,000, becoming the

most valuable De Dion of any type (three or four wheels) ever sold at public auction.

Thanks in large part to an excellent inventory that attracted big crowds and enthusiastic bidding, total overall sales at the 2025 Las Vegas motorcycle auction reached \$27.2 million, eclipsing the event's own previous record by almost \$1.5 million and setting a new world record as the highest total ever achieved at a motorcycle auction.

The top motorcycle sales at the Las Vegas 2025 auction included:

1. 1915 Cyclone V-Twin(Lot S106.2) ...\$1,320,000
2. 1938 Crocker Twin(Lot S108.2)880,000
3. 1913 Henderson Four.....(Lot S130)352,000
4. 1914 Minneapolis Single....(Lot S131.1)264,000
5. 1974 Ducati 750SS(Lot F199).....198,000
6. 1928 Indian Ace.....(Lot F163).....192,500
7. 1925 Henderson Deluxe.....(Lot F164).....187,000



8. 1929 Indian Model 401 Four.....(Lot F245)....184,250
9. 1915 Williams Clady(Lot S144) ...170,500
10. 1898 De Dion-Bouton Tricycle ..(Lot S123) ...165,000

The calendar-leading Mecum Las Vegas event demonstrates an already-strong market that is on the rise.

January 2025 goes down as a big month in Mecum Auctions history, with nearly \$255 million in combined sales from Las Vegas and their World's Largest Collector Car Auction held in Kissimmee, Florida.

Next on the Mecum calendar is Glendale 2025, right here at State Farm Stadium from March 18-22, featuring about 2,000 classic and collector cars crossing the auction block.

For complete auction results via a free MyMecum account, for more details on upcoming auctions, or to consign or register as a bidder, visit Mecum.com. ■



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A GOOD THING GOIN' BY JOE SAGE

Genesis GV80 suffered the fate of many products and businesses, launching in 2020 during the distractions and general chaos of covid lockdowns. But you do not want to miss it.

Nominally a midsize, this largest of three Genesis SUVs evokes more of the style and character of the larger sedans that launched the brand. Refreshed for 2025, GV80 has a new interior and revised style details inside and out. But while differences can be identified point by point, there is no mistaking it overall. You don't mess with success.

There are seven different versions available of the GV80, distilling down to four trim levels, two engines (plus an even more powerful version of the larger one) and two body styles. It's both simpler and more complex than that sounds, as not

every combination exists. (Also, all are all-wheel-drive.) The smaller engine comes in four trim levels, the larger engine in just the top two of those trims, making six two-box SUVs. The Coupe body style is not specified by trim, but matches the top trim of the others. That's the one with a few more horses, though, as perhaps they thought body style alone would not be enough to help people decide (and even then, its price is only \$150 higher).

Stepping inside and sitting down is a perfectly impressive premium experience, with luxury quilted and bolstered seats in a tame and businesslike, even sporty pattern. Materials vary a bit by trim and price, but (although we haven't seen the others) the experience is always top tier. This first impression alone is enough to see the value in a base

trim at just \$58,200.

Power is likely to be a bigger differentiator than trim level, for most buyers, at least in the upper two trim levels, where both engines are available. It's about \$8 or 9 grand more to move from the 300-hp 2.5T to the 375-hp 3.5T. The use of key aluminum body panels keeps weight somewhat under control, but at 5,000-plus pounds, more horses are a plus, although fuel mileage drops three points city and two points highway or combined. More simply, it's 25 percent more horses for 12.5 percent higher cost, a twofold advantage for the power difference. A wild card—only the bigger engine SUVs have a third row, while the 2.5T is a two-row.

As for the Coupe, that's another 9 percent jump in horsepower for virtually no change in price, but it's also a two-row despite the bigger engine. Cargo volume is close enough not to matter to a lot of people who value its style—about 10 cubic feet

less with the second row down, or about six less behind an erect second row.

As with everything from home repairs to hotel service, we've noticed that often the less we had to say about a vehicle over a week, the better it was—perhaps less obvious in specifications, but more noticeable in the voice memos we accumulate during our time with each. Our hearts kind of sink when we see we have made dozens of remarks—not only because we have to play them all back and transcribe them, but also because we've almost surely noted a lot of annoyances large and small. But the Genesis GV80? This generated a grand total of just four notations. Wow. We knew we had been impressed from the get-go, but it is a tacit commendation that we had just about nothing to nitpick (see sidebar note about the shifter and its confusing companion).

Overall, it's hard to beat what we said the first time we drove the Genesis GV80 in 2021: first impressions are important. Lasting impressions are, too. And this is a beauty inside and out. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Ulsan, South Korea
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	SKorea / SKorea
PARTS CONTENT	SKorea 85% / US/Can 3%
SEATING	(opt: Prestige) eight
ENGINE	3.5L twin turbo-6 24v DOHC w dual CVVT, alum/alum, dual exhaust
HP/TORQUE	375 hp / 391 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	11.0:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd auto, shift-by-wire, paddles
MODES	comfort-smart-eco-sport-custom
DRIVETRAIN	AWD, electronic LSD
SUSPENSION	F/R: multi-link, high performance gas shocks, electronically controlled, road preview
STEERING	rack-mtd motor-driven pwr rack & pinion, variable ratio
BRAKES	F: 14.9 vented, 4-piston; R: 14.2 vented, 1-piston; integrated electronic booster
WHEELS / TIRES	(opt) 22x9.5J / 265/40R22
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	194.5 / 116.3 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	39.3 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	40.2 / 38.4 / 34.3 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.6 / 38.7 / 30.3 in
CARGO CAPACITY	36.5 / 71.7 / 108.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	5082-5148 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(w trailer brakes) 6000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	prem unl / 21.1 gal
MPG	16/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$79,300
PAINT: Uyuni White (UYH)	.650
DESTINATION CHARGE	.1350

TOTAL	\$81,300
<i>Note sticker price varies from current info below.</i>	

2025 GENESIS GV80 LINEUP

GV80 2.5T (300 hp)	
2.5T Standard	\$58,200
2.5T Select	62,100
2.5T Advanced	66,100
2.5T Prestige	70,950
GV80 3.5T (375 hp)	
3.5T Advanced	\$74,300
3.5T Prestige	▼ 79,800
GV80 3.5T COUPE (409 hp)	
3.5T	\$79,950

(At right) Genesis masterfully locks in key identifiers—Two-Line lights and other details; Crest Grille—with refreshes kept simple. One quick way to spot the newest generation is its “double-layered” grille.

The stepped-scale quilting of the GV80's luxury seating surfaces adds to an interior experience beyond its price, while also reflecting key exterior style points.

One criticism is with dueling knobs on the console—a less-needed controller competing for tactile attention with the shifter, leading to either a crisis or eye-off-road distraction, e.g. in parking lots.

The 3.5T Coupe, \$150 more, is further differentiated by a bump from 375 to 409 hp.



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Shown: Vintage Iron Speed Shop Clock / SKU: 09-BKG-VI

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— Thanks again, "JR" Jean

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Simplicity BY JOE SAGE

It might seem we always get the fanciest, most luxurious, most powerful, most off-road-worthy version of whatever we're sampling. And that is often the case, but not always. Case in point: of seven versions—four trim levels and, in three out of four of those, a choice of front- or all-wheel drive—this is the bottom, or entry, version.

The 2025 Volkswagen Taos has been refreshed this year inside and out. All have the same 174-hp 1.5L turbo-four. All are quite affordable, starting in the mid-20s and hitting the very finest in mid-30s. Thus value is a theme throughout—which brings us back to perhaps why we received the base unit, to make sure none of us miss that key point.

Value, by definition, is available at any price point, when quality, price, features and service are in line. Nonetheless, details that are merely expected at the top end are more likely to be delights at the more affordable end.

Power-to-weight is quite sufficient in this small but comfortable unit. Its 8-speed automatic is well mapped, though it may present a minor delay in

aggressive maneuvers. It does have a supremely convenient manual mode—the traditional approach, distinct from drive modes—though we noted that we did not go for it often. It's a pretty sweet automatic, as is. Ours was a front-driver (we would hope to pay \$1700 for AWD, by habit), but even when maximally challenged, entering a busy boulevard with sudden acceleration and a 90-degree twist, torque steer was blessedly absent.

We often marvel at how VW does, in fact, keep their relative pricing down (notably within the overall VW Group family), as various tech elements and features have become expected at all price points, industrywide. Some is done with materials and finishes, of course. But simplifying features for price positioning sometimes seems challenging enough, you wish they'd just included them.

A base trim may be satisfying as is, for some, or motivational for others who will someday move up the ladder. Either way, our \$25k Taos evoked the simple pleasures of simpler times, even reminding us of the joys of many people's first car, the eminently capable VW bug. Great value can be found in simplicity. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....	Ciudad Pueblo, Mexico
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	.....	Mexico / US
PARTS CONTENT	.....	Mexico 39% / US/Canada 15%
ENGINE	.....	1.5L inline-4, turbo/intercooled, 16v, DOHC, TSI, alum/alum, cast iron crank
HP/TORQUE	.....	174 hp / 184 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....	11.5:1
TRANSMISSION	.....	8-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....	FWD
SUSPENSION	.....	F: strut-type w lower control arms, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar; R: multilink w coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar
STEERING	.....	rack & pinion, elec pwr assist
BRAKES	.....	F: 12.3 x1.0 vented; R: 10.7 x0.4 solid
WHEELS / TIRES	.....	7Jx17 alum alloy / 215/55 R17 a/s
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....	175.9 / 105.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....	7.6 in
APPR / DEPART / BRKOVER	.....	17.5 / 25.0 / 18.2°
TURNING CIRCLE	.....	34.8 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....	40.7 / 39.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....	40.1 / 37.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....	24.9 / 99.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....	3441 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....	reg unl / (FWD) 13.2 gal
MPG	.....	(FWD) 28/36/31 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....	\$24,995
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....	1425
TOTAL	.....	\$26,420

2025 VW TAOS LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
S	\$24,995	\$26,695
SE	27,895	29,595
SE Black	30,145	31,845
SEL		34,695



Easy choice

Clear lineup, clear options BY JOE SAGE

While Malibu is the only remaining “car” in the Chevrolet lineup (Corvette has its own category of one), their SUVs and crossovers are many—fully nine, counting two EVs. Equinox, driven here, is bigger than Trax and Trailblazer, smaller than Blazer and Traverse. Tahoe and Suburban remain of course the biggest of all, but setting those aside plants Equinox firmly in the center of the scale, despite its nominal status as a compact.

Through both steady evolution and more abrupt changes in the lineup—names disappearing, reappearing or transferring to a different type of vehicle—Equinox has stayed true to its concept, mission and image. Born in model year 2005, Equinox entered its third generation in 2018 (for which we attended a launch drive in the Carolinas—and on the vernal equinox, as fate would have it).

Here, we have its fourth generation for 2025.

The solar equinox, vernal or autumnal, is a signal of great change, a bookmark between the seasons. Chevy’s new gen-four Equinox is somewhat

the same—a totally new build based on a new platform adaptation. We might have thought this would be shared with its EV variant (the two EV crossovers are badged as Equinox and Blazer), but they are quite different, including their platforms.

While Chevy’s overall stairstep of SUVs is so diverse, variables within just the Equinox model are quite simple—an approach that makes shopping much easier. Equinox has six versions, but it can be seen as simply as two—the most affordable LT, starting in the \$20s, or a top trim for only \$4,400 more. “Two” becomes six [a] because in each case, there is a choice of FWD or AWD (\$2,000 more on any), and [b] because top price actually brings a choice between two top trims—either the RS or ACTIV, either at the same price, making the choice simply about taste and purpose. RS is more urban, ACTIV more outdoorsy, each one mostly defined by styling details, plus with ACTIV equipped with dirt-purposeful 17-inch wheels and all-terrain tires.

The front-drive-vs-AWD decision goes beyond the obvious, with the all-wheel-driver sporting a conventional automatic versus the FWD’s CVT, also with a much lower final drive ratio, a higher

tow capacity and—surprisingly, given typical additional AWD hardware—a bigger fuel tank.

We would tend to favor AWD in general, all the moreso with those variables. Plus we experienced a possible bonus reason—though a great handler and potent performer overall, we noted occasional classic front-drive-based torque steer when it mattered most, such as diving into a multi-lane boulevard from a side entry, having to precisely hit a lane while applying a sudden burst of speed. We figured sport mode might conquer that (as is often the case in many), but modes only include normal, snow-ice, or (on ACTIV only) off-road. We did find success, however, with its AWD lock-in button.

The lightweight Equinox feels considerably more powerful than its numbers, and the vehicle itself sits at a value point in the Chevy SUV lineup. We were reminded of a real estate maxim, that you achieve the best value by buying a less expensive home in a more expensive neighborhood. Among their SUVs overall, this achieves that. And then within the Equinox lineup itself, you could say this top trim achieves its value by the opposite approach. This all seems to add up to a win-win. ■

2025 CHEVROLET EQUINOX LINEUP

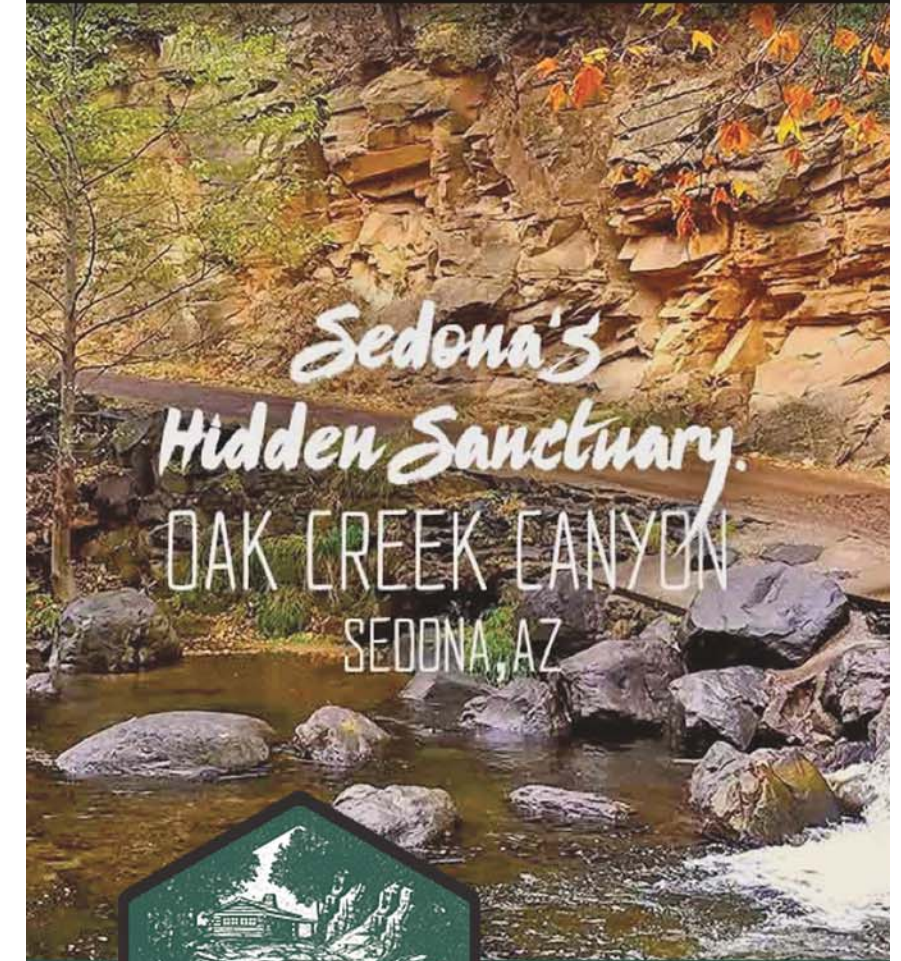
	FWD	AWD
LT	\$28,600	\$30,600
RS	33,000	35,000
ACTIV	33,000	35,000
+ EQUINOX EV (nominally related)	...from \$41,900	



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	San Luis Potosi, Mexico
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Mexico / US
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 15% / Mexico 49%
ENGINE	1.5L 4-cyl turbo DOHC 16v, dir inj VVT, alum
HP/TORQUE	175 hp / (AWD) 203 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	(AWD) 8-spd auto Hydra-Matic 8T45
DRIVETRAIN	(opt) AWD
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w specifically tuned coils, direct-acting stblzr bar; R: four-link indep
STEERING	dual pinion rack elec pwr
BRAKES	4-whl disc, Duralife rotors, low-drag calipers
WHEELS/TIRES	17-in alum / 235/65R17 A/T
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	183.2 / 107.5 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	(pano rf) 38.2 / 37.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.9 / 39.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	tba
TURNING CIRCLE	37.1 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	29.8 / 63.5 cu.ft
TOW CAPACITY	(AWD) 1500 lb
WEIGHT	(base LT) 3428 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / (AWD) 15.6 gal
MPG	24/29/26 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$35,000
PANORAMIC SUNROOF	1495
SAFETY & TECHNOLOGY PKG:	HD Surround Vision, rear pedestrian alert, traffic sign recog, front fog lamps, rear camera mirror, rear camera mirror washer
	1085
CONVENIENCE PKG III:	8-way pwr & 2-way pwr lumbar front pssngr seat, vented front seats, memory settings, heated outboard rear seats
	950
SUMMIT WHITE ROOF	incl
(UNIVERSAL HOME REMOTE NON-FUNCT.)	(credit: 50)
DESTINATION CHARGE	1395
TOTAL	\$39,875

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



Sedona's
Hidden Sanctuary.
OAK CREEK CANYON
SEDONA, AZ



Where to stay
Things to do
oakcreekcabins.com

Southwest Media Communications

In the name of simplification, or at least clarification, during an industrywide time of evolution and experimentation, particularly with electrification, the Mazda SUV-crossover lineup has become quite extensive, with a new set of alphanumeric names to learn along the way.

As with any number of other manufacturers, the Mazda SUV lineup has almost totally eclipsed its cars. Only the eternal (everyone hopes) MX-5 Miata sports car, as well as both sedan and hatchback versions of Mazda3, survive as of now.

The SUVs and crossovers have long borne CX-numeric nomenclature and (mostly) continue to do so. A recent EV effort following suit under an MX-numeric badge has been set aside, though something new could arrive at any time. For now, electrification is focused on hybrid boost and plug-in hybrid variants of CX-numeric gasoline models.

Atop all that, however, the prior generation of CX-single-digit-numeric SUVs has moved, though not all at once, to CX-double-digit models. These,

in turn, have not been mere rebadgings of the single-digits, but rather new vehicles—a staggered introduction new generation with a spotlight on new powertrain-flexible platforms. You could say the MX was the tail that wagged this whole dog.

At a glance, it may have seemed as simple as CX-50, CX-70 and CX-90 replacing existing or previously existing CX-5, CX-7 and CX-9. But each of those has had its own individual story, style and niche. This is underscored by the decision to keep the exceptionally popular CX-5 in the mix for now, even in the company of the new CX-50. And as the past CX-7, with its distinctly different wagon leanings, had already been discontinued, the CX-70 falls clearly into the new SUV continuum.

The good news is that this can all largely be ignored, with your attention simply applied to those that interest you the most.

However, it sets the stage for an area still ripe for clarification. The full SUV lineup pricing chart at lower right reveals the CX-70 is pricier than the

CX-90, sure to puzzle any shopper. The two are actually the same basic vehicle—same size, either towing up to 5,000 pounds, and so on. But whereas the CX-90 is a three-row (seating seven or eight, varying by trim level), the CX-70 is a two-row (seating five). However, while two rows and five seats may sound like “less,” the CX-70 generally goes all-in on a higher level of finishes and features.

That said, the three-row CX-90 has a highly premium interior, itself. You’ll notice it right away in such niceties as second row sunshades, full-size third row headrests and such, as well as notable attention paid to materials and finishes you will find distinctly different from others in the market.

If you need three rows, the decision is predetermined. But if you could largely get by with two,

you can go with either. It will be hard not to come back to the CX-90 doing functionally all the same—and then some, for times when you just might need more seats—for \$2,600 less (base).

That much squared away (as much as it can be), this is a powerful, premium, high-style beast. It’s a moderate heavyweight, at 4,901 pounds for our top (non-PHEV) version, although it’s easy to find heavier competitors. Its powerful 3.3-liter inline-six turbo powerplant quietly adds something others make great fanfare of—a 48-volt mild hybrid boost system. An unusual (and big) plus with Mazda is that they often engineer so you can run on either regular or premium fuel, with their full blessing, stating power output either way—in this, 340 hp on premium, 319 on regular. Power in town, economy on a long road trip, or other bargaining points are yours to make. Add a few more horses to this from the hybrid boost, but a whole lot more torque—raising the engine’s 369 lb-ft to a whopping 482.

The engine itself has a rich, throaty sound for a turbo-six, a nice effect. After a full stop, though, it comes back to life with quite a clatter, all the more reason to defeat auto-start/stop (hard to find at first, but easy once you learn this is “iStop”). The ride is smooth and solid, very firm on speedbumps, although still not harsh or abrupt.

Though not a likely choice for off-roading, its tires have healthy, wide sidewalls despite the 21-inch wheel size, making it great for using its 5,000-pound tow capacity (on upper trims, with the same power but adding tow mode) to bring weekend toys to weekend places.

The key to Mazda is that—unlike several of the other biggest Japanese manufacturers, each with separate mainstream and luxe-premium name brands—Mazda several years ago declared they would simply move their mainstream brand upscale into premium territory, while maintaining value. This has worked out very well. ■

Quick math quiz: is 90 more than 70?

BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Hofu, Japan
ROWS / SEATS	.....three / (Prem Plus) six
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	.....Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	.....Japan 90% / US/Can 0%
ENGINE	.....e-SKYACTIV G 3.3L inline-6 turbo
BOOST	.....48V Mild Hybrid Boost w i-Stop
BATTERY	.....44.4V / 0.33 kWh / 7.5 Ah
MOTOR/GENERATOR	.....11 kW
HP/TORQUE	.....(prem fuel) 340 hp / 369 lb-ft .....(reg fuel) 319 hp / 369 lb-ft .....(elec motor) 16.6 hp / 113 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....SKYACTIV-Drive 8-sp auto w manual-shift mode
DRIVETRAIN	.....i-ACTIV AWD
DRIVE MODES	.....Sports, Off-road, Towing
TOP SPEED	.....130 mph
SUSPENSION	.....F: dbl wishbone; .....R: multilink
STEERING	.....elec power rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....diagonal hydraulic; .....F: 13.7 vented; R: 13.8 vented
WHEELS	.....21x9.5J alum alloy, machine cut
TIRES	.....275 / 45 R21 M+S
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....200.8 / 122.8 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	.....(mnr) 39.6 / 38.4 / 36.8 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	.....41.7 / 39.4 / 30.4 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....8.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.1 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	.....15.9 / 40.1 / 75.2 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4901 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....5000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....prem rec'd / 19.6 gal
MPG	.....23/28/25 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$56,450
PAINT: Platinum Quartz Metallic	.....nc
SECOND ROW CAPTAIN'S CHAIRS	.....nc
TURBO S PREMIUM PKG: 150W accessory power outlet, windshield wiper deicer, ventilated rear seats	.....incl
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1455
TOTAL	.....\$57,905

2025 MAZDA CX-90 LINEUP

3.3 Turbo	Select	.....\$37,845
	Preferred	.....40,945
	Premium Sport	.....46,400
	Premium Plus	.....49,400
3.3 Turbo S	Premium	.....\$52,950
	Premium Plus	.....▼ 56,450
PHEV	Preferred	.....\$49,945
	Premium Sport	.....54,900
	Premium Plus	.....57,950

2025 MAZDA SUV FULL LINEUP

CX-30	.....from \$24,995
CX-5	....." 28,570
CX-50	....." 30,300
CX-50 Hybrid	....." 33,970
CX-70	....." 40,445
CX-90	....." 37,845

We particularly enjoyed the 12-speaker Bose audio system, for a bit of an unusual reason. Though not confirmed with Bose engineers, its specialized profiles seemed to us to isolate, enhance, re-separate and remix key elements in the style of the very best (and thus rarest) enhanced remixes. Most will probably just notice the system sounds great, but we had fun with this.

THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS

Rolls-Royce manufacturing at Goodwood



▼ In 2024, the **Rolls-Royce** Bespoke Collective of specialist designers, engineers and craftspeople undertook some of their most creatively daring and technically challenging commissions to date. These projects incorporated innovative materials, features and craft techniques never seen before on a Rolls-Royce motor car, resulting in one-of-a-kind, emotionally resonant masterpieces which reflect each commissioning client's interests and personality. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars' Bespoke offering reached record levels in 2024, as Bespoke content value increased an average of 10 percent per vehicle year-on-year, reaching the highest level in the company's history. Commissions drew inspiration from diverse themes, ranging from natural phenomena, to the marque's heritage, to personal milestones and classic films. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars has now announced an investment of over £300 million to extend its manufacturing facility at Goodwood, Chichester UK. The extension will create additional space for the increasingly complex and high-value Bespoke and Coach-build projects, as well as readying the manufacturing facility for a transition to an all-battery electric vehicle (BEV) future. This is the single largest injection of capital since the plant opened in January 2003, at that time employing about 300 people and producing just one motor car a day. While the Goodwood manufacturing plant has undergone significant internal changes over these 20 years, the building itself has remained largely unchanged, while staff

numbers have since increased more than eightfold, and the marque now produces up to 28 vehicles a day. More than 2,500 are now employed at the Home of Rolls-Royce at Goodwood—including highly skilled manufacturing and craft specialists—along with about 7,500 people in the company's wider UK supply chain. In 2023, an independent study by the London School of Economics (LSE) demonstrated that Rolls-Royce Motor Cars con-



tributes around half a billion pounds to the UK economy every year, a leading representative of UK publicly traded companies (PLCs). Planning permission was granted in 2024—fittingly, during the 120th anniversary of the first meeting between Rolls-Royce co-founders, The Hon. Charles Stewart Rolls and Henry (later Sir Henry) Royce, on May 4, 1904. Site preparation and landscaping work are now underway.

▼ Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE), IMAX Corporation, **Mercedes-Benz** and DTS, Inc., a subsidiary of Xperi Inc., have announced that RIDEVU, SPE's in-car entertainment service, will make IMAX Enhanced movies from Sony Pictures' library readily available in vehicles later this year, starting with customers of applicable Mercedes-Benz models equipped with the MBUX Entertainment Package Plus and an active Mercedes-Benz connect subscription. This service enhancement introduces an immersive in-car entertainment experience, bringing the largest catalog of IMAX Enhanced movies from Sony Pictures' library like *Venom: The Last Dance*, *Spider-Man: No Way Home* and *Uncharted* from home to the car. IMAX Enhanced is the only way to experience IMAX's signature picture and sound outside of a theater. RIDEVU delivers these select films featuring IMAX's expanded aspect ratio (EAR), IMAX's proprietary DMR process and DTS:X sound, available in multiple dubbed languages. SPE's RIDEVU video entertainment service is available in the US, Japan,

UK, Ireland and Germany. The service is fully integrated with select OEMs, including Mercedes-Benz as the first global automotive OEM. It offers access to thousands of movies to buy, rent or stream. With RIDEVU, consumers can enjoy hours of entertainment on in-car multimedia displays or on iOS and Android devices, use Screen Manager to easily control playback across all screens from the vehicle's cen-

tral multimedia display, and entertain passengers with individual or shared viewing experiences on up to six screens. Content can be accessed by front and rear seat passengers, as well as by the driver on the

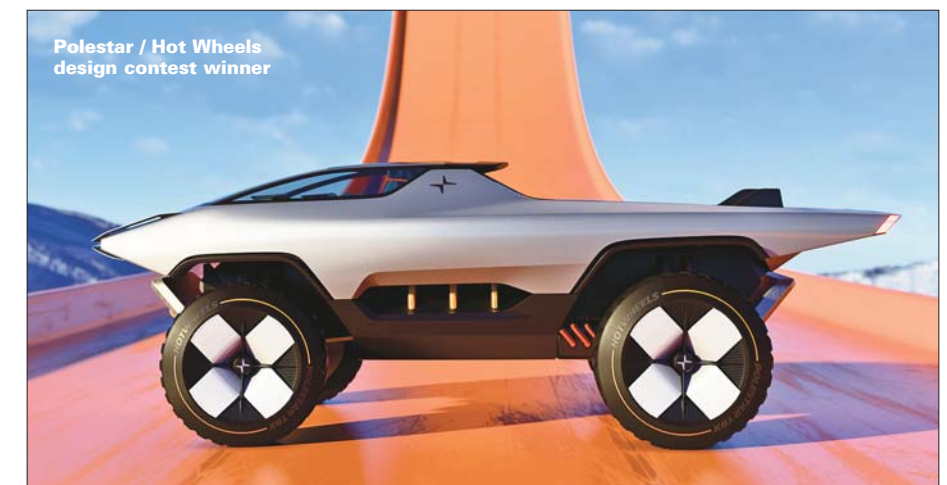


central display when the vehicle is parked.

▼ The **Goodyear** Tire & Rubber Company is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Goodyear Blimp with flights over more cities, appearances at new events, chances for fans to fly, limited-edition collectors' items and a few larger-than-life-surprises—all bringing the American icon closer to its fans in 2025 to commemorate its past, present and future. Goodyear recognizes June 3, 2025 as the official anniversary date, 100 years since the inaugural flight of its first branded blimp, Pilgrim. The Goodyear Blimp is woven into the fabric of America through countless cultural moments and historic events. Starting with Pilgrim in 1925, Goodyear Blimps have served as a public relations vehicle to drive brand awareness for the company and delight fans in communities across the country. Through the years, the blimp has appeared at marquee events, from the Olympics to the first Super Bowl, been featured in famous songs, movies and television shows, generated millions of dollars for charities and communities, and even aided the US Military effort during WWII. To continue making its mark on history, Goodyear will this year fly to more destinations and events across the globe, flying through more than 100 cities across North America and Europe. Aerial appearances at the biggest matchups in sports, as well as first-time appearances at music and other cultural festivals, will give even more fans a chance to see the famous airship first-

hand. The celebrations kicked off as the Goodyear Blimp returned to Rose Bowl Stadium on New Year's Day, to announce the significant milestone at the 111th annual Rose Bowl game, also marking the

70th anniversary of aerial coverage, a concept the Goodyear Blimp pioneered over the stadium in 1955. While the popular airship has been witnessed by millions of people around the world from the ground, each year, only 0.0006 percent of Americans can say they have flown in the Goodyear Blimp. For the first time ever, this year, Goodyear will be giving three lucky US fans a chance to join this exclusive club and win a flight via the "Buy for a Chance



to Fly" sweepstakes, each winner receiving a blimp flight certificate for two passengers redeemable at any of Goodyear's three US airship bases (Carson, California; Pompano Beach, Florida or Akron, Ohio) along with a \$3,000 voucher for travel and accommodations. Through April 10, 2025, fans interested in winning a flight can purchase tires on Goodyear.com or through Goodyear's Auto Service or Just Tires net-

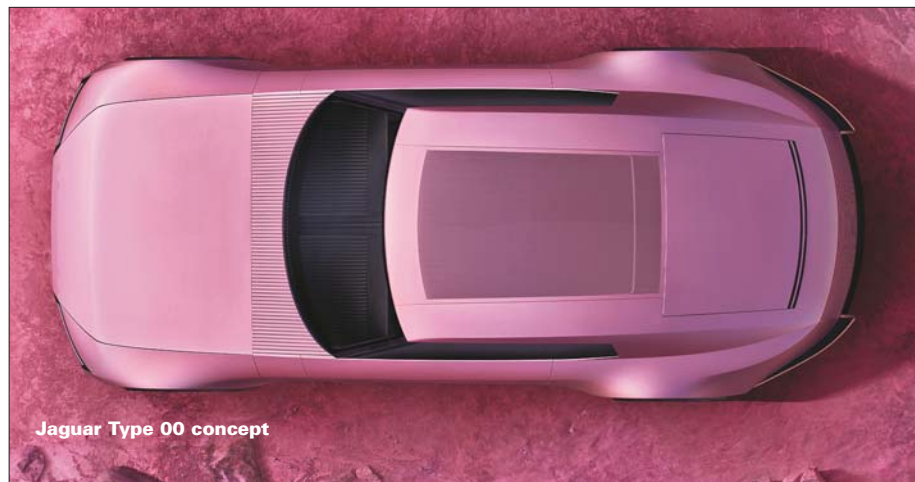
work, or enter the sweepstakes via a form on Goodyear.com (no purchase necessary; terms and conditions apply). Fans can also participate in this exciting milestone by donning the newest line of blimp merchandise and staying up to date on the latest celebratory activities by following the Goodyear Blimp on social media and by visiting Goodyearblimp.com.

▼ Swedish performance EV manufacturer **Polestar** has announced the winner of its 2024 Design Contest, held in collaboration with Hot Wheels, with contestants invited to submit designs inspired by 1:64 scale and Polestar's design language. First prize went to Shashank Shekhar, a professional designer from India, for his rugged off-roader, "Polestar TRX." With exaggerated proportions and sleek surfaces, the concept is a bold interpretation of Polestar's normally subtle design philosophy. The design becomes the first Polestar to be included in Hot Wheels toy car series, with the die-cast collectable available for consumers this summer. "I'm thrilled to win. This will be the first design in my career to be produced, so it's a big deal for me. I never thought that someday, something I have created would end up as a Hot Wheels car. It has been a great journey, and I've had an amazing time so far. Something

KEEP RIGHT >>

while still incorporating elements of Polestar's signature minimalist design aesthetic into its interface.

▼ **Jaguar** has declared a return to its



Jaguar Type 00 concept

original ethos to "Copy Nothing." Following this winter's debut of a bold new visual identity, the next step in its transformation has been the reveal of a distinctive design vision in the Jaguar Type 00 concept, with forms and proportions suggesting future Jaguars. Pronounced Type Zero, the concept defies electric vehicle convention, featuring a long hood, sweeping roofline, fastback profile, boat-tail and 23-inch alloy wheels for a dramatic silhouette. Elements inspired by Jaguar's heritage include use of the leaper logo. Flush surfaces, a glassless rear tailgate and a panoramic roof with body-color-harmonized glazing create a sense of sculpture. The Type 00 concept is presented in two colors, Miami Pink and London Blue, reflecting the Art Deco surroundings of its South Florida reveal, along with its British heritage. The first production car will be an electric four-door GT, to be revealed in late 2025 and built in the UK. The new model will use dedicated Jaguar Electric Architecture (JEA) and target a range of up to 478 miles WLTP and 430 miles EPA, adding 200 miles of charge in as little as 15 minutes. Type 00 embodies a Jaguar creative philosophy of Exuberant Modernism from the debut of its new brand identity. Jaguar's transformation into an EV-only brand extends beyond the products it designs and engineers, to a reimagining of the entire brand. The "Type" prefix carries Jaguar's provenance from models like the pioneering E-type. The first Zero references zero tailpipe emissions, and the sec-

ond represents its status as car zero in a new lineage. Its design is based on Jaguar's new creative philosophy, to be represented in both the new artistic visual identity and the way it builds relationships

with clients, founded on three fundamental characteristics:

- Exuberant (vibrant, uninhibited and fearless in the vehicles it creates and moments it curates);
- Modernist (future-facing, curious and inspired by the world, while respectful of the past, not dictated by it); and
- Compelling (holistic, sensory and extraordinary, generating meaningful connections with clients).



The new JEA architecture was developed from scratch with goals of a captivating driving experience, engaging handling and exemplary ride comfort. The latest electrification technologies and designs are intended to make future Jaguars stand out in an increasingly homogenous EV market. The new Jaguars will come to life in a select number of exclusive new brand stores for clients around the world. These

environments will present an immersive step into the world of Jaguar, while embracing each setting and its local culture. These will be complemented by a wider global network of luxury retailers. Jaguar's first new brand store will be in the heart of the luxury fashion district of Paris, in the 8th arrondissement.

▼ Following record year-over-year EV sales in 2024, **Ford** is extending the Ford Power Promise complimentary home charger and standard installation through March 31, 2025. The program—developed from customer and dealer insights about real barriers faced when deciding if an EV is the right choice—aims to help people benefit from the convenience of filling up at home, with a complimentary Ford home charger. Key features of the Ford Power Promise include:

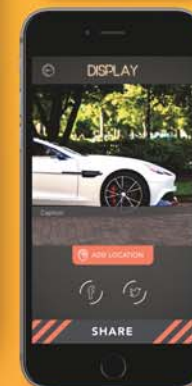
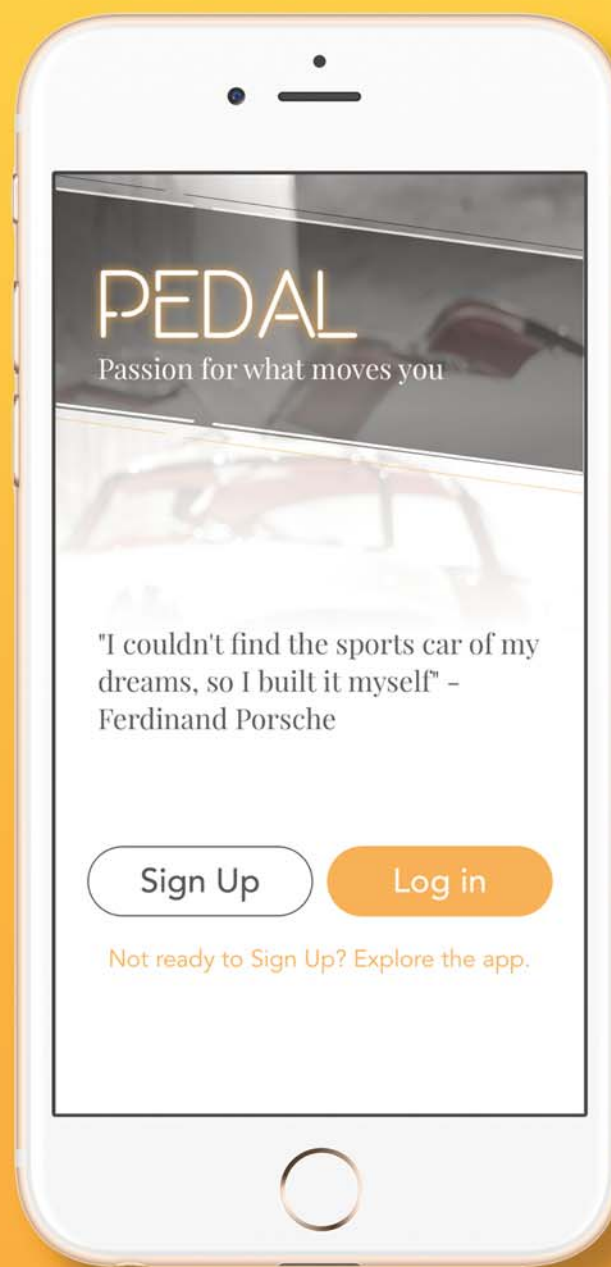
- Eligibility of retail purchase or lease customers of qualifying vehicles to receive a complimentary home charger and standard installation at their home;
- Simplified on-the-road charging with the BlueOval Charge Network, locating chargers across networks, including Tesla Superchargers, with Plug and Charge via the FordPass app;
- An eight-year/100,000-mile high-voltage battery warranty; and

- 24/7 support from a dedicated team of Ford advisors, including complimentary roadside charging assistance.

The Ford Power Promise complimentary home charger program is available to retail customers who purchase or lease a model year 2024 or model year 2025 Mustang Mach-E, F-150 Lightning or E-Transit Cargo Van by March 31 from participating Ford dealers. ■



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UPCOMING FEATURES

Land Rover Defender 110



Mecum Auction Glendale 2025 results



Kia K4 GT-Line



NWAPA Mudfest: Outdoor Activity Vehicle comparo



Nissan Rogue Rock Creek Edition



Sally McNulty - Arizona racer and race car builder



Courtesy Sally McNulty

New Toyota 4Runner



TAWA Texas Auto Roundup comparo



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