

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 4
JULY-AUGUST 2007

KIA TAKES OFF!

The new Kia Rondo rounds out an increasingly complete vehicle lineup. Accolades pour in for quality, safety, value and owner satisfaction. And www.kiamatch.com will put you in touch with the right Kia for you.



Plus...

- The new Ford Taurus and Taurus X • Buick Riviera concept from Shanghai
- Russo and Steele Monterey • Scottsdale auction land challenge
- GM stars in Transformers • Electronics and gadgets... and more



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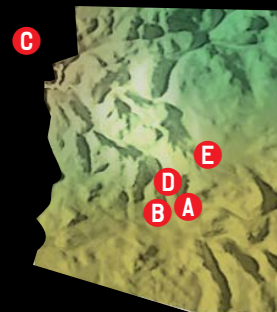
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COVER: 2007 Kia Rondo. Photo courtesy Kia Motors America, Inc.

Things certainly don't slow down around here as the temperature rises. We've recently spent some time with Ford, as they introduce their new Taurus and Taurus X, which replace, respectively, more or less, the prior Taurus AND the interim Ford Five Hundred, and the prior Taurus wagon and the Ford Freestyle. We drove the old and new to Payson and learned plenty about what is more than just a rebadging program. Rated the safest full-size car in America, these are worth a look.

Then Kia came to see us, bringing their new Rondo, Sportage and Sorento SUV/crossover lineup. If you haven't been seeing their fun new TV ad campaign, you have missed some real entertainment, but you also may not know about www.kiamatch.com, which dovetails with the commercials and directs you to your ideal Kia mate. Spend a little time there, and you'll join well over 100 million others.

One thing to do as the temperature rises is, of course, to catch a great air-conditioned flick. If you go see *Transformers*, you'll find GM has really made their mark.

Scottsdale and the Phoenix area are, of course, home to some of the world's best-known and largest car auctions in midwinter, but you may not know that Barrett-Jackson runs a second auction in Palm Beach, Florida, in the spring, and Russo and Steele runs one in Monterey, California, in August, synchronized with the longstanding high-profile Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance and the Monterey Historic Races. What a great opportunity to escape the heat and head up the Pacific Coast!

Buick, generally a sleeper or less in the enthusiast world, made some big waves at China's recent Shanghai auto show, and we bring you one of those highlights, the innovative Riviera concept. Enjoy the ride.



Joe Sage
Publisher/ Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

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GM ACHIEVES KNOCKOUT PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN THE ACTION FLICK TRANSFORMERS



If you have any kids, teens and/or adults in your household, odds are good you're going to be seeing *Transformers*, the new sci-fi action flick adapted from Hasbro Toys by DreamWorks and Paramount Pictures. (The film opens July 4th.) What you may not know is that this is, well, a pretty great car flick, too.

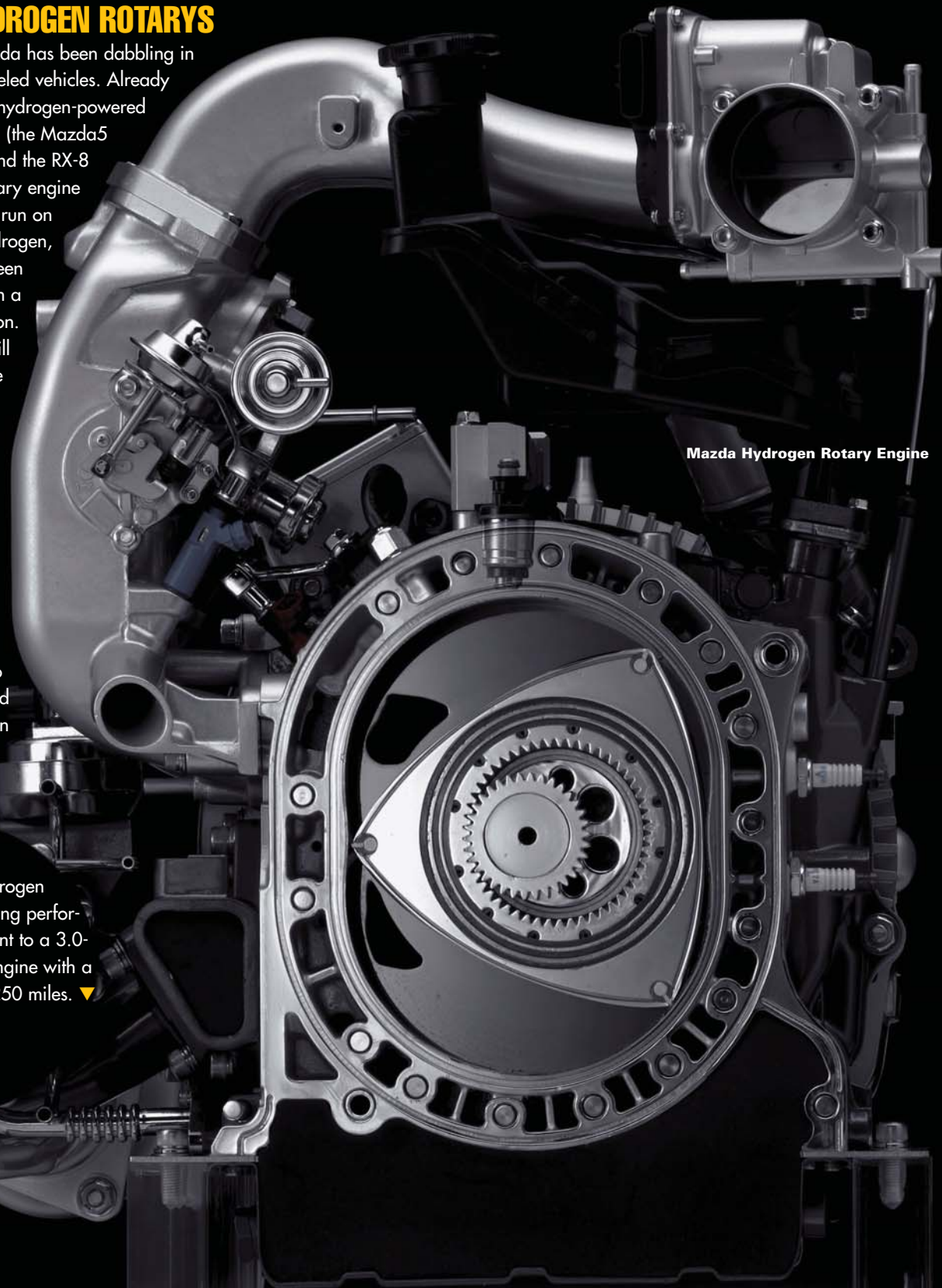
Cars and car shopping enter the plot right at the start, and an rusty not-quite-classic yellow Camaro (with racing stripes!) catches the eye, and purse, of the movie's hero. We don't want to be plot spoilers (though you may already see some family resemblance between the machine on the facing page and the one at the top of this page), but it's not that long before the new-we-hope-for-2009 Camaro enters the scene. The Camaro is the obvious show-stopper, and probably the one most people want to buy on their way out of the theater, but GM has done a bang-up job of getting a wide range of their vehicles in this movie. Not a full range, mind you: a wide range—from a trim little Solstice roadster to a bone-crushing GMC TopKick truck, which is enough to give the fourth vehicle, a Hummer, a run for its money, and then some.

"Bumblebee™" the Chevrolet Camaro is a central character in this saga of aliens who take mechanical forms when on Earth. "Ironhide®" changes from a GMC TopKick medium-duty truck. "Autobot Jazz" converts from a Pontiac Solstice in hardtop format, and a Hummer H2, modified as a rescue vehicle, changes into "Autobot Ratchet®." Buzz about the roles that these vehicles play in the movie has been spreading since a quick glimpse of the new Camaro was spotted in Paramount's *Transformers* trailer, which began appearing in theaters on December 20, 2006. This clip, which became the most-viewed movie trailer on Yahoo!, also contains images of the Solstice, H2 and TopKick for fans who were quick enough to freeze-frame it. ■



MAZDA HYDROGEN ROTARYS

In Tokyo, Mazda has been dabbling in hydrogen fueled vehicles. Already testing is a hydrogen-powered Premacy minivan, (the Mazda5 in the US) and the RX-8 sports car. The rotary engine in the RX-8 can run on gasoline or hydrogen, switching between the two fuels with a push of a button. Mazda says it will expand the program to increase the power of the Mazda5 hydrogen rotary-engine hybrid by 40 percent in 2008 and extend the driving range to 124 miles. They also plan to launch a hybrid vehicle based on the hydrogen rotary engine early in the next decade and develop a redesigned hydrogen engine with driving performance equivalent to a 3.0-liter gasoline engine with a range of almost 250 miles. ▼



Mazda Hydrogen Rotary Engine



Audi R8

Born in Ingolstadt, bred at Le Mans, the 2008 Audi R8. For more information and technical specs, see *Arizona Driver Magazine*, March/April 2007.

R8—AUDI'S FIRST SUPERCAR

▲ Initial drive impressions of Audi's new R8 supercar give the high performance two-seater rave reviews. With dynamic styling, a 420-hp V-8 engine tucked behind the seats and a plethora of other high-tech innovations, the R8 is being compared to names like Porsche and Ferrari. The R8 uses an all-wheel-drive configuration and a choice of a manual shifting automatic or a manual transmission. The R8 frame and body utilize a lightweight aluminum-frame structure. The underside is fully enclosed like a race car, to enhance aerodynamics. The R8 was developed in conjunction with the Lamborghini Gallardo (which is also owned by Volkswagen), so many components are similar. The big difference, according to those who have driven it, is that the R8 is an everyday driver that is as comfortable in stop-and-go traffic as it is at 150 mph. Audi has set the price at \$109,000 for the six-speed manual transmission version of the R8, and

\$118,000 when equipped with the six-speed R tronic automatic gearbox.

MAZDA MIRROR BACKUP CAMERA

Mazda will be the first automaker to offer a backup camera built into the automatic dimming mirror. Available first in the new CX-9 crossover SUV the system will activate when the vehicle is shifted into reverse. The LCD screen automatically appears within the reflective surface of the mirror, showing a real-time panoramic view of the area to the rear of the crossover. Vehicles with a DVD navigation system will get the rear image on that display screen. The system is available as a dealer-installed option for \$675. We're sure this is a feature that will soon find its way into other Mazda vehicles and then into other brands.

GENERAL MOTORS INTELLIGENT CARS

General Motors has been demonstrating the latest level of its experimental vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) communications in an

effort to get their technology accepted as the standard for future accident avoidance systems. The V2V technology allows a vehicle to broadcast its location ten times per second, while monitoring the positions of hundreds of other vehicles at the same rate, within a broadcast range of just under 1,000 feet. Within this range, the vehicle can provide services such as warning of vehicles in the driver's "blind spot" or tracking vehicles in the distance, fore or aft, that may pose a danger. When a car, with V2V, closes in on a stopped or slow-moving car equipped with the same system, it warns the driver with a flashing light and vibrating seat, to prevent a collision. If the driver does not act, the system can actually brake the car. At this point, the system is too expensive for the general public, but as the price of components comes down we could see systems like this in most vehicles.

KEEP RIGHT >>

3 CHEVY MINI CARS TEST WATERS

The annual New York Auto Show was a coming out party for Chevrolet's three new mini size concept cars, fresh from the GM design studio in Incheon, South Korea. Developed from GM's global mini architecture, the concepts demonstrate flexibility, creativity and innovative focus of design from GM's Asia Pacific region. The Chevrolet Beat concept was a drivable model built in India, while the Chevy Groove and Trax micro urban crossover concepts were built at the GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan. To test consumer acceptance, GM has a website (www.vote4chevrolet.com) where people can vote for their favorite of the three. ▼



Chevy Beat concept
Chevy Groove concept
Chevy Trax concept



2008 Subaru Tribeca

Gone is the "distinctive" snout of the original 2006-2007 B9 Tribeca, originally intended to become a Subaru trademark throughout the model lineup.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

SUBARU QUICK CHANGE FOR TRIBECA

▲ Responding to the critics and consumers, Subaru has made significant changes to the B9 Tribeca even before it reached its second birthday. The first change is the name that drops the B9, which according to Subaru was significant in their aeronautical history, but mostly unknown in the U.S. market. Then the puckered grille was changed to a more traditional but winged look again paying homage to the company's aviation history. Prices were lowered about \$1,000 and the six-cylinder boxer engine was made lighter and now with 11 more horsepower bringing it up to 256. The new engine will also run on regular gasoline.

ELECTRONIC BRAKES BY 2010

If the "build a better mousetrap..." analogy carries over to brakes, Siemens VDO may have a better mousetrap, and many automakers are beating a path to their door in Regensburg, Germany. The mousetrap in this case is the electronic wedge brake, a brake-by-wire system that uses an electronic signal to transmit commands from the brake pedal to the

calipers. The system weighs up to 30 pounds less than a conventional hydraulic system and simplifies the vehicle building process. The wedge brake is simply plugged into a wiring harness without having to run hydraulic lines around the car. These brakes will not lock up, even at full braking, plus they will stop on ice in about 15 percent less distance than conventional brakes. Watch for manufacturers to start installing the Siemens brakes on 2010 models.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT ELDERLY DRIVERS

Currently about 11 percent of licensed drivers are over 65 years old, but that number is expected to rise to near 70 million drivers or about 25 percent of drivers by 2030. Everyone is aware of the perceived and real problems facing these aging drivers. In a special report, similar to the one they did on teen drivers in September 2006, *AutoWeek* magazine has done a special report entitled "What to do about Elderly Drivers." The report defines the situation, shows what is being done and helps people who have aging drivers in their family. Especially helpful is a segment of the report called "Giving up your Keys," which includes a

checklist of signs that a driver should quit, and information on the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety computer program called "Roadwise Review," to help people evaluate their own abilities. The report is available free online at www.autoweek.com. Viewing the report does require registering, though there is no charge.

ONSTAR PARTNERS WITH MAPQUEST

MapQuest® is a great travel planning website; put in your starting location and destination, then it gives you turn by turn instructions and maps. Starting this summer, that will get even easier when MapQuest and OnStar (the General Motors communications system) will roll out joint a pilot program. It allows OnStar® subscribers to plan their trip on their home computers using MapQuest and then download the information into their car's OnStar Turn-by-Turn navigation system. The directions are then played back at the appropriate times on the trip. Later in 2007 the program will be available to all subscribers with the optional navigation upgrade. The Turn-by-

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FORD ADDS FLEX TO THE LINEUP

Looking a little bit like a larger and stretched version of the Scion xB, the upcoming Ford Flex crossover will fill the slot left by the discontinued Freestar minivan. According to the Ford Design gurus, J Mays and Peter Horbury, minivan sliding doors are expensive, and by using conventional car doors they were able to save a lot of money that could be used to upgrade materials and accessories. Removing the sliders also give the Flex more of a stylish adult image and still have room for seven passengers. As it goes on sale this summer, the front-wheel drive Flex will be powered by Ford's 3.5-liter V-6 engine and a six-speed automatic transmission. All-wheel drive will be an available option. Horbury said the Flex would target families who want most of the benefits of a minivan without the minivan stigma. ▼



2009 Ford Flex



Chrysler Sirius Backseat TV™

SIRIUS Backseat TV programming from Nickelodeon, Disney Channel and Cartoon Network are on select 2008 Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep® vehicles.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

Turn system was first introduced in February 2006 and is included as standard equipment for the first year of service on all 2007 Buicks, nearly all 2007 Cadillacs and a number of other 2007 GM vehicles. The service is a \$100 upgrade on many other 2007 GM cars and trucks.

CHRYSLER SIRIUS BACKSEAT TV™

▲ Chrysler Group is the first automaker to offer SIRIUS Backseat TV™. The innovative system will have three channels of live programming from Nickelodeon, Disney Channel and Cartoon Network. The system is being rolled out first in the 2008 Chrysler Town & Country and Dodge Caravan minivans, but will be expanded soon to the Chrysler 300, Dodge Charger, Dodge Magnum, Jeep Commander and Jeep Grand Cherokee. The system can be combined with a dual DVD that can play different media at the same time, the MyGIG™ Multimedia Infotainment System and the unique Swivel 'n Go™ seat system to make the ultimate rear seat

entertainment group. Backseat TV allows passengers to watch TV, while front seat passengers can still listen to SIRIUS Satellite Radio. Backseat TV is available for \$470, which includes the first year of service, when packaged with Chrysler Groups Rear Seat Entertainment System and SIRIUS Satellite Radio. After that the service will cost \$7 per month in addition to the \$12.95 per month satellite charge.

SERIOUS CHANGES TO LEXUS LX 570

For 2008, Lexus has made significant changes to the full-size LX SUV. Starting with a 5.7-liter 381-hp V-8 engine (that's up 113-hp from the previous LX 470) the new Lexus will be renamed, appropriately, the LX 570. It also gets a new six-speed automatic transmission, electrohydraulic suspension and active height control to reduce body roll and improve on-road comfort. For off road the wheel travel has been increased, there's a crawl control mechanism and multiterrain antilock brakes. The styling gets a more sophisticated look from the Lexus L-finesse design theme. Eight-passenger seating space is improved thanks to four more

inches in length and one inch in width. The LX 570 goes on sale early in 2008.

CWORLD'S FIRST SCENTED TIRES

Tire maker Kumho is now producing the world's first scented tires. After more than a year of research engineers were able to replace the "black rubber" scent with heat-resistant oils the scent of lavender. Plans also call for orange and jasmine scents. The ECSTA DX tires were designed to appeal to female consumers who drive sedans. The tires are engineered to deliver low noise levels and ride characteristics on par with leading tire brands. Prices start at \$119 for the 205/60R16 tire. For dealer locations go to www.kumhotireusa.com.

SATURN HYBRID HAS LOWEST PRICE

With a base price starting at \$22,695, the Saturn Aura Hybrid is said to be the lowest priced hybrid on the market for 2007. The Aura received EPA ratings of 28 mpg for city driving and 35 mpg on the highway which is 30 percent better

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>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

than the non-hybrid version. The Aura Green Line is powered by a 164-hp, 2.4-liter four-cylinder engine and an electric motor/generator which provides electric power assist during acceleration. The system shuts off the gasoline engine while idling to save gas and uses regenerative braking to capture electrical energy to charge the battery. In addition to the improved fuel economy and lower price, the Aura qualifies for a \$1,300 tax credit.

GM SMART MATERIALS ADAPT

General Motors engineers have developed new smart alloy and polymer materials that can change their shape, strength, and/or stiffness when heat, stress, a magnetic field or electrical voltage are introduced to the material. This will allow designers to develop movable vehicle features like active louvers that open when more ventilation is needed, "smart" air dams that activate when needed and "Smart" grab handles that deploy when the passengers need them. The new materials will start to appear on vehicles by 2010.

HAMMER & COOP RERUNS

If you didn't catch the original six webisodes of MINI's Hammer & Coop web-based films, they are all available on the www.hammerandcoop.com website. The action-packed adventures of Jim Turtledove (Hammer) and his sidekick Coop (the MINI) are fun as they fight crime to save the American way. The sight also allows the viewer to customize and select a name for their own MINI. The mini films are also on popular online sites including Second Life, MySpace and YouTube.

TAKING CORVETTE UP ANOTHER NOTCH

Keeping up, or ahead of the Joneses, is an important task for the top-level performance cars, and Corvette plans to do just that for 2008. Three years into the sixth-generation cycle, Chevrolet has announced the standard engine will be enlarged from the present LS2, 6.0-liter 400 hp to a new LS3, 6.2-liter 430-hp V-8. An optional two-mode exhaust system raises the horsepower to 436. Performance figures for the new engine

list a 0 to 60 mph time of 4.3 seconds and a top speed of 190 mph. The new model gets standard OnStar with navigation, XM radio and automatic dimming mirrors. The interior is also more luxurious. Prices have not been announced, but they will probably be a bit higher when it goes on sale in August. The super high performance Z06 will have the same 505-hp engine as the 2007 model, but it will get the other enhancements.

HYUNDAI TO OFFER ELANTRA WAGON

Moving into yet another segment, Hyundai plans to offer a sporty Elantra wagon next year to compete with cars like the Toyota Matrix, Mazda3 five-door and Dodge Caliber. The new five-door hatchback has been developed from the i30 scheduled to go on sale in Europe and Korea this spring. The Elantra will offer customers more space for "things", a sportier look, better handling and fuel economy than the small SUVs. Power for the U.S. model will come from a 2.0-liter four-cylinder rated at 138-hp. The entry-level wagon will come with a 5-speed manual transmission and an optional 4-speed automatic. Prices have yet to be announced, but expect a base price in the \$18,000 range.

MAD MAPS KEEP EXPANDING

In an era when directions are digital and GPS navigation gets you there easily, it's refreshing to unfold a glossy MAD (Motor Adventure Destination) Map. Created by San Francisco Bay Area woman motorcycle rider, Jenny Lefferts, Mad Maps offers an off the beaten track route guide to fun roads and interesting sights in the area. A new product from this MAD crew is a series of Get Outta Town (GOT) maps featuring fun drives outside 25 major cities. The GOT maps are much smaller and manageable, too. MAD Maps were designed to appeal to motorcycle riders, but they work great for anyone who likes the road less traveled. In addition to roadside attractions, there are listings of roadhouses and other fun stops along the route. MAD Maps are available at book and travel stores or online at www.madmaps.com. MAD Maps will soon be available on digital devices via TeleAtlas for use on personal navigation devices from TomTom.



Mercedes-Benz CLK63 AMG Black Series

As a new generation of super coupes hits our shores, including the all-new Audi S5 and the latest BMW M3, Mercedes-Benz AMG ups the ante, too.

PERFORMANCE ESCALATION

▲ As BMW readies the new generation M3, this time with a 4.0-liter, 420-hp V-8, Mercedes-Benz is preparing its answer in the form of the CLK63 Black Series. As it debuted at the New York auto show, the CLK is essentially a street version of the F1 pace car. With a 6.2-liter V-8 engine rated at 500-hp, the CLK is capable of 0 to 60 mph times of only 4.1 seconds and top speed of 186 mph. The other competitor about to debut is Audi's RS5, which comes in the new S5 coupe. The Audi will get its power from a 4.2-liter, 420-hp V-8. Another entry to the horsepower war is the upcoming Lexus IS 500F with a 5.0-liter, 400-hp plus V-8.

HYDROGEN ON DEMAND

A Purdue University professor, Jerry Woodall, and his students have invented a way to use an alloy of aluminum and gallium to create hydrogen. In a chamber, about the size of a vehicle fuel tank, water is added to alloy pellets. The pellets react with water and break it down into hydrogen and oxygen. The oxygen is released into the atmosphere, while the

hydrogen is captured and burned in conventional engines converted to hydrogen fuel or in more efficient fuel cells. The hydrogen is made on demand with no need to have costly storage tanks or go to filling stations. Currently, the cost of producing the alloy pellets is higher than fuel prices, but that cost could come down if the materials are recycled. Woodall says one of the obstacles in the further development has been lack of research funding.

HYBRID HEMIS

Chrysler plans to offer Hemi-powered hybrid versions of the Dodge Durango and Chrysler Aspen SUVs in 2009. The 5.4-liter V-8 engines, will be mated with the new dual mode transmissions that were developed jointly by DaimlerChrysler, BMW and General Motors. The Hemi engines will have the current cylinder-deactivation system that shuts down four-cylinders when the extra power is not needed. Chrysler says the combination will get about 25 percent better fuel economy than current Hemi models for highway driving and 40

percent better fuel economy in city driving. The dual mode transmission uses electric power alone at low speed city driving and the gas engine with an electric motor assist at higher speeds. The system was designed to work with rear-wheel drive vehicles with body-on-frame architecture.

NEW CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA CONCOURS

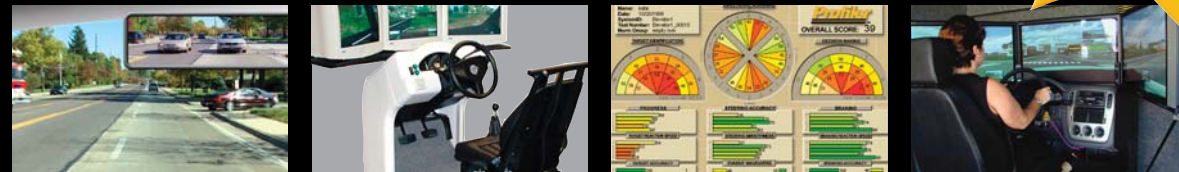
A separate new feature of the annual Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance week (August 12 through 19, 2007) on California's Monterey Peninsula will be the first annual Carmel-By-The-Sea Concours on the Avenue. The competition will focus on vehicles built between 1946 and 1971. The beautiful area of downtown Carmel will be closed to traffic and this year more than 130 cars are expected for the juried competition. Judging for the Tuesday, August 14 event will be from 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. ■

Auto News Update includes news compiled for *Arizona Driver* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

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QUIZ : CAR SMARTS



- How much carbon dioxide does an average vehicle spew into the atmosphere every year?
 - 3,000 pounds
 - 6,000 pounds
 - 12,000 pounds
 - 18,000 pounds
- Brabus is most associated doing after-market tuning of which brand vehicles?
 - Audi
 - Mercedes-Benz
 - BMW
 - Volkswagen
- Suzuki broke an all-time US sales record in 2006 by selling how many vehicles?
 - 100,900
 - 200,900
 - 300,900
 - 400,900
- How many Volkswagens have been sold in the US since the first Beetle in 1949?
 - 7 million
 - 10 million
 - 13 million
 - 16 million
- How long has the Baja 1000 off-road race been run on Mexico's Baja peninsula?
 - 25 years
 - 32 years
 - 39 years
 - 46 years
- Rolls-Royce expects to double its annual production to what level after it adds a smaller car in 2010?
 - 1,600 cars
 - 3,200 cars
 - 6,400 cars
 - 12,800 cars
- Which motorcycle company was first to offer an air bag?
 - BMW
 - Honda
 - Harley-Davidson
 - Yamaha
- What percentage of new car buyers were over 50 years old last year?
 - 24 percent
 - 36 percent
 - 48 percent
 - 60 percent
- By government mandate, when will all new passenger vehicles be required to have an electronic stability control system?
 - 2008
 - 2010
 - 2012
 - 2014
- What percentage of new car buyers said they would be willing to switch brand of cars to get the color they wanted?
 - 10 percent
 - 20 percent
 - 30 percent
 - 40 percent
- What diameter wheels were on the original Minis when they debuted in 1960?
 - 10-inch
 - 12-inch
 - 14-inch
 - 16-inch
- What percentage of the 40,285 new car franchises in the US are import brands?
 - 27.3 percent
 - 35.9 percent
 - 41.4 percent
 - 50.2 percent
- Which automotive brand has models called the Pure and Passion?
 - Mini
 - Smart
 - Saturn
 - Scion
- What percentage of new vehicle loans in 2006 were for 61 months or longer?
 - 17 percent
 - 31 percent
 - 44 percent
 - 55 percent
- What's the engine redline for the new BMW V-8-powered M3?
 - 6,400 rpm
 - 7,400 rpm
 - 8,400 rpm
 - 9,400 rpm
- Which of the following produces the least carbon dioxide (CO2) annually?
 - Kia Rio
 - Honda Civic Hybrid
 - Toyota Prius
 - Honda Fit
- When was the last rear-wheel drive Toyota Corolla built?
 - 1984
 - 1987
 - 1990
 - 1993
- When did BMW stop building the 90-inch long Isetta car?
 - 1956
 - 1959
 - 1962
 - 1965
- What percentage of the new vehicles purchased in 2006 were leased?
 - 12.5 percent
 - 18.1 percent
 - 25.3 percent
 - 31.9 percent
- When was the first BMW M3 performance car offered for sale in the US?
 - 1983
 - 1986
 - 1989
 - 1992
- How many tanker trucks of gasoline does it take to carry the gasoline consumed by US vehicles each day?
 - 20,000 tankers
 - 40,000 tankers
 - 60,000 tankers
 - 80,000 tankers
- What is the concept name Hyundai has given to its new V-8-powered, rear-wheel drive sedan, scheduled to debut in 2008?
 - Oracle
 - Sun
 - Phoenix
 - Genesis
- How long had Ford owned Aston Martin before selling it earlier this year?
 - 10 years
 - 13 years
 - 16 years
 - 20 years
- What percentage of auto dealer web-sites offers an online credit application?
 - 31 percent
 - 58 percent
 - 76 percent
 - 89 percent
- Which fuel produces the highest BTUs (British Thermal Units) per gallon?
 - Diesel fuel
 - Biodiesel
 - Gasoline
 - Ethanol (E85)
- What percentage of consumers in the market for a new vehicle said the current gas prices are having little or no effect on the vehicle they are planning to purchase?
 - 12 percent
 - 19 percent
 - 27 percent
 - 38 percent
- Which foreign auto manufacturer has the highest percentage of domestic content (US and Canadian parts) in their vehicles assembled in North America?
 - Honda
 - Toyota
 - Nissan
 - Mercedes-Benz
- Who builds the 3.5-liter V-6 engine that powers the Saturn Vue?
 - General Motors
 - Holden
 - Mitsubishi
 - Honda
- Which automaker was first to offer an eight-speed automatic transmission?
 - Mercedes-Benz
 - BMW
 - Lexus
 - Audi
- How many weeks of a family's income are required to buy an average new car?
 - 18.5 weeks
 - 24.7 weeks
 - 33.1 weeks
 - 42.8 weeks
- What percentage of hybrid owners are over 55 years old?
 - 17 percent
 - 31 percent
 - 43 percent
 - 52 percent
- Which of the following vehicles has an owner's manual with the most pages?
 - BMW 550i
 - Mercedes-Benz GL
 - Cadillac Escalade
 - Lexus LS 600h L

ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE >>

>ANSWERS (quiz on previous page)



1. Answer: c. According to Toyota, the average vehicle spews six tons (12,000 pounds) of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year.
2. Answer: b. Brabus is famous for the Mercedes-Benz models it modifies. It also does after-market tuning of the Maybach luxury sedan and Smart small car, which are both owned by Mercedes-Benz.
3. Answer: a. Suzuki broke an all-time sales record in the US in 2006 by selling 100,900 vehicles.
4. Answer: c. Volkswagen sold its 13 millionth vehicle (a Wolfsburg edition Jetta) in the US in March.
5. Answer: c. The Baja off-road race has run for 39 years.

6. Answer: a. Rolls-Royce plans to build a new smaller car to be slotted under the Phantom at a price level between \$263,000 and \$394,000. Rolls sold 805 cars worldwide in 2006 and expects to double that to 1,600 once the new smaller car comes on line in 2010.
7. Answer: b. Honda was the first company to offer an air bag on a motorcycle, and in their case, it was in the top of the line Gold Wing which also has available features like liquid-cooled six-cylinder engine, GPS navigation, antilock brakes and six-speaker sound system.
8. Answer: c. According to a HarrisInteractive survey, 48 percent of 2006 new car buyers were over 50 years old.
9. Answer: c. The government has required all passenger vehicles to have electronic stability control by 2012.
10. Answer: d. A recent DuPont Automotive poll ascertained that 40 percent of car buyers would be willing to switch brands to get a vehicle in a preferred color.
11. Answer: a. When the original Mini debuted in 1960 it was equipped with 10-inch wheels. In 1984 the wheels were upgraded to 12-inches. The current model is equipped with 15- and 16-inch wheels.
12. Answer: a. According to *Automotive News* 10,988 (27.3 percent) of the new car franchises in the US are import badged vehicles.
13. Answer: b. The new Smart ForTwo mini car (which is owned by Mercedes-Benz,) will sell three models: the base Pure which will sell for about \$12,000; the Passion coupe at \$14,000 and the Passion Cabriolet which will be priced at around \$17,000.
14. Answer: d. According to the Consumer Bankers Association, 55 percent of the car loans in 2006 were 61 months or longer. In 2007 they project that number will rise to 61 percent.

15. Answer: c. The high revving 4.0-liter engine in the new BMW M3 has a redline of 8,400 rpm.
16. Answer: c. The Toyota Prius produces only 5 tons of carbon dioxide annually. Honda Civic Hybrid 6 tons. Honda Fit 8 tons. Kia Rio 8 tons. (With similar numbers are Honda Civic GX 7 tons; Honda Civic, Hyundai Accent, Toyota Yaris, Toyota Corolla and Toyota Camry Hybrid all 8 tons.
17. Answer: b. The last generation of the rear-wheel drive Toyota Corolla was built from 1984 through 1987. After that it went to front-wheel drive. The rear-drive cars are popular with people who do "drifting."
18. Answer: c. BMW bought the license and tooling for the Italian-designed Isetta in 1954 and built it until 1962. The egg-shaped car was originally powered by a 9 hp engine that was later increased to 12 hp.
19. Answer: c. 25.3 percent of the new cars purchased in 2006 were leased.
20. Answer: b. The BMW M3 performance edition arrived at US dealerships in 1986 as a 1987 model.
21. Answer: b. It would take about 40,000 tanker trucks, each holding an average 9,000 gallons of gasoline to supply the gasoline needed by US vehicles each day.
22. Answer: d. Hyundai's rear-wheel drive, V-8 powered sedan concept is called Genesis, and it hopes to compete with cars like Mercedes E-Class and BMW 5 Series at a significantly lower price.
23. Answer: b. Ford originally bought 75 percent of Aston Martin 20 years ago in 1987, but purchased 100 percent of the company 13 years ago in 1994.
24. Answer: c. The NADA says 76 percent of websites have a credit application available.
25. Answer: a. According to *Motor Trend*, Diesel fuel produces 128,700 BTUs per gallon. Biodiesel 117,093. Gasoline 115,400. Ethanol (E85) 81,844.
26. Answer: c. According to Kelley Blue Book, 27 percent of respondents said that high fuel prices had little effect on the vehicle they were planning to purchase.
27. Answer: b. Toyota vehicles assembled in the US and Canada have an average 73 percent domestic content, according to the NHTSA and the automakers. Honda 68 percent. Nissan 64 percent. Mercedes-Benz 62 percent.
28. Answer: d. Since 2004, the V-6 Saturn Vue engine has been built by Honda. That will change in 2008 with a choice of two V-6 engines, both built by GM (a 3.5-liter, 222-hp pushrod and a 3.6-liter, 257-hp DOHC engine).
29. Answer: c. Lexus was the first to offer an eight-speed automatic transmission, in the 2007 LS model.
30. Answer: b. According to the Comerica Bank's quarterly study, for the first quarter of 2007, it will take 24.7 weeks of the typical American family's income to buy the average new car. That is down 1.5 weeks for the same period in 2006.
31. Answer: c. A J.D. Power and Associates' study of hybrid vehicles shows that younger customers cannot afford hybrid vehicles and that 43 percent are being purchased by people 55 years old and older; another 29 percent are between the ages of 45 and 54.
32. Answer: d. According to USA Today, the Lexus LX 600H L owner's manual totals a massive 1,097 pages. The Mercedes-GL SUV totals 983 pages. Cadillac's Escalade is 574 pages. The BMW 550i manual is 253 pages plus there are supplements like a quick-start guide, Atlas, dealer list, etc. that add 264 pages.

The Car Smarts quiz includes news and trivia from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

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University of Phoenix Stadium

Check Out the Classic Rides!

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 2007

- Corvettes - All Years
- Muscle Cars - All Years
- Street Rods (Roadster/Coupe) - Pre '50
- Street Rods (Sedan/Truck) - Pre '50
- Original Cars - All Years
- Custom Cars - All Years

SUNDAY, JULY 15, 2007




- Classic Cars - All Years
- Original Trucks - Pre '60
- Original Trucks - '70+
- Custom Trucks - All Years
- European Imports - All Years


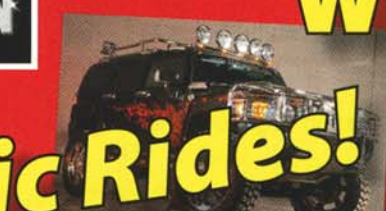



On the Air-Conditioned Concourse Level

To enter your vehicle, download the Registration Form at www.MensLuxuryToyExpo.com

JUDGED

AUTOSHOW


home | model overview | find a dealer

kiamatch.com

DRIVE THE ONE YOU LOVE

The decisions start immediately, and they're not always easy: Which of these traits do you seek in a car mate?

- Appreciates the outdoors?
- Great with kids?
- Always in the know?

This is indeed a lot like dating—can't we have it all? One thing for sure, at www.kiamatch.com, you are likely to run through the options more than once. And it's likely you'll find yourself wanting to fill more than one bay of your garage with the matched results. After all, the choices are tailor-made to suit your particular wants and needs.

- We start out by selecting "Always in the know," and it just gets more challenging.
- Elegant, well appointed, and appreciative of the finer things in life? Check!
 - Hardworking and dedicated to making me a success? Check!
 - Authentic, enthusiastic, and willing to go where the wind takes them? Check!
 - Intelligent and frugal, but always up for a good time? Check!

But again, we can only select one, so we go with #2... a vehicle that'll do our heavy lifting and hand us the fruits of its labor? Not a bad option. Nonetheless, the full tantalizing array of possibilities (see pages 22-23) is flashing by on the screen the whole time.

So let's see... the enticing next click will get us down to serious business:

find my vehicular soulmate

Now, our electronic friend is doing some very serious thinking on our behalf...



computing compatibility

And the vehicle for us, based on those two criteria, is..... the Kia Optima!

Meet your match: The Kia Optima

When you think of the one you love, it's often the little things that count. The available 17-inch alloy rims. The 5-speed Sportmatic® transmission. The optional power sunroof. The sweet sound of an available 7-speaker Infinity® sound system. The scent and feel of luxurious leather-trim seats*. The acceleration of an available 185-hp V6. If you're into lots of little pleasures from a midsize sedan, then the Optima is sure to pull your heartstrings for hundreds of thousands of miles to come.



Hmmm. Is that right? But Kia doesn't tie you down to its first suggestion...

date an Optima

see other mates

So, let's try again.

- Appreciates the outdoors... okay... it's not too big a stretch to anticipate being matched with an SUV or crossover... and the next options are just twofold:

- Big, strong, and not afraid to get dirty? Sure... maybe... but does it have to be all three? The whole lineup probably qualifies as strong and unafraid, just not "big."
- Full of adventure and style. And ready for any occasion? Again, we want to check both, but can only check one, so, we're compelled to try it twice:

- Big, strong, and not afraid to get dirty? The Kia Sorento is the one for us.
- Full of adventure and style. And ready for any occasion? The Kia Sportage.

DRIVE THE ONE YOU LOVE

match found!

DRIVE THE ONE YOU LOVE

KiaMatch.com offers you what other car dating sites can't: A real, heartfelt, honest relationship with a car you're guaranteed to love. You're just a few questions away from finding the love of your life.

Using our state-of-the-art compatibility program, answer some simple questions. Then sit back and relax, while we locate your perfect match.

Which of these traits do you seek in a car mate?

- Appreciates the outdoors
- Great with kids
- Always in the know

A car I could fall in love with would be:

- Elegant, well appointed, and appreciative of the finer things in life.
- Hardworking and dedicated to making me a success.
- Authentic, enthusiastic, and willing to go where the wind takes them.
- Intelligent and frugal, but always up for a good time.

Back to the home page...

- Great with kids? Well...

"Well-rounded, family-minded, and practical" brings you the Sedona minivan (predictably enough after having checked "kids"), but "Sensible, with a passion for whatever's next" gives more of a surprise, pegging us as the target market for the new Rondo (see pages 22-23 and 24-25).

However long you play the dating game, and whenever you decide you've found something of interest, clicking the "date" button brings you the kind of build-your-own interface common to pretty much all brands. But what a fun way to get to that... fun and actually useful and a bit thought-provoking.

It's all part of efforts by Kia Motors America, Inc., to get the word out about a wide-ranging lineup and that they have a lot of fun in mind for their owners, as they also make sure people learn about their strong and rapid advances in safety and quality, while if anything increasing their value proposition. Despite all their awards (see sidebar), proven quality and reliability, years in the market and ever-increasing sales, the phenomenal 10-year/10,000-mile warranty that was first used to comfort an unfamiliar US market about Korean vehicles remains in place.

Riding the crest of 13 straight years of record sales in the US, Kia is intent on getting its brand message more widely into the American psyche. Their philosophy is that brand perception equals what is delivered versus what has been promised. Knowing they hold a strong hand, their motto appropriately is "The Power to Surprise." Kia is intent on letting people know not only about its vehicles' value, but also their quality and safety ratings, and not least their fun-to-drive character. (Kia considers it offers a more



The Kia Kue concept, unveiled in Detroit, is a strong indicator of the company's design direction.

engaging drivers' vehicle lineup than that of its parent company, Hyundai.)

Statistics establish a hearty foundation for objective criteria (quality, safety, even sales, as shown in the sidebar to the right). For the more subjective attributes of driving passion and pride of ownership, Kia has gotten quite creative. They seek to build what they call "tattoo quality" for the brand, and while they clearly have products for every demographic niche, they are specifically targeting younger buyers with a higher design interest.

If you've seen their current TV advertising, you know they're having a lot of fun... and being very effective. Kia's television ads have tested high with IAG as a motivator to "join the cool crowd," which is indeed a big step forward from the days of low price and competitive warranties. Kia's marketing department recognizes they are working with a very advertising-dependent brand.

The Kia website has tested #1 three times with J.D. Power and Associates, and statistics indicate that 60% of website visitors are "more likely to seriously consider" purchasing a Kia after their visit. What's more, Kia is working to gain more direct visitors seeking their specific site initially, as opposed to those who click through via the likes of KBB or Edmunds. The result? Kia has had 120 million site page visitors since December 30, 2006. One Kia ad run on MSN's site in early February saw daily traffic rise 386%, and also demonstrated that as many people came back and searched later as had initially clicked on the ad.

Kia's gender split is near-perfect: 52% female and 48% male. Metro Phoenix is one of their top markets, cracking Kia's

top ten in the US. (And Kia's US presence is significant: the biggest dealer in the world is in Tacoma, Washington; the second biggest is in Dallas. There are 640 Kia dealers in the US, of which 320, or half, are one-brand dealerships; and the one-brand dealerships are responsible for 75% of US sales.)

With a new design center in Irvine, California, and a new factory in Georgia, Kia has its finger on the pulse of American tastes and needs, and it shows. While seeking to cover a full range of demographic and utility needs, they make a point of not pigeonholing their prospective customers or their vehicles; this is apparent after spending some time at kiamatch.com. And yet they do not attempt to pursue a principle of all-things-to-all-people, which is a strategy, whether in marketing, politics or romance, generally destined to fail. Rather, they identify universal yet adaptable threads within a given product. For example, the new Rondo has been interpreted as being ideal for people entering a new stage in life, whether that means a first vehicle, marriage, children, a career move or retirement; that's quite a range of customers, but a message that remains surprisingly focused. Kia also avoids getting too specific with some vehicles' "type," as crossovers, small SUVs, tall wagons and the like muddy the waters industrywide. Rather, they apply their typical sense of fun—and purpose—by identifying vehicles in their own way. Take the new Rondo: a small SUV? a crossover? a tall hatchback? Call it what you will... Kia says its customers will know they are simply attracted to its high sense of "Rondoism." ■

2007 MILESTONES

Safety, Quality, Value Awards

With Sales to Match

SAFETY MILESTONES

Kia Sedona—Top Ratings by Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (see p23)

Kia Sedona—five-star NHTSA crash rating

Kia Sedona—first minivan to earn "Top Safety Pick" from IIHS in frontal, side and rear impact crash tests. IIHS calls it "the best minivan we've ever tested."

Optima is awarded top rating by IIHS in frontal and rear impact crash tests

QUALITY MILESTONES

Rio and Rio5—highest in Initial Quality in sub-compact car category (tie) by J.D. Power and Associates—Kia's first IQS segment winner.

Kia Rio and Rio5—Tops In Initial Quality Study by J.D. Power and Associates for second consecutive year

Kia Sorento and Sedona Top Strategic Vision Total Quality Index™

DESIGN MILESTONES

Kia Chief Design Officer Honored By Royal College of Art, just the third ever presented (see p25)

Kia Web Site is Highest in Usefulness—J.D. Power and Associates Study

CONSUMER-VALUE MILESTONES

Amanti and Spectra—"Most Delightful Vehicle" award from Strategic Vision

Spectra and Sportage—"Recommended Buys" by Consumer Guide

Sportage named one of the "Top 10 Coolest Cars Under \$18,000" by Kelley Blue Book's kbb.com

Sorento—"Best Midsize SUV" in Brand-Dimensions' Consumer Voice Awards

Sedona, Rio, Rio5, Spectra, Spectra5, Optima, Sportage, Sorento awarded prestigious "Best Bet"—*The Car Book 2007*

Kia Sedona "Best Minivan"—*Motorweek*

SALES MILESTONES

- 06/01/07 | Best May Sales Ever
- 04/04/07 | First Quarter Sales Record
- 03/01/07 | Record February Sales
- 02/01/07 | Record January Sales
- 01/03/07 | 13 Years Of Record Sales ■



Sorento



Sportage



Rondo



Sedona



Amanti



Optima



Spectra



Spectra5



Rio



Rio5

NEW VEHICLES : 2007 KIA LINEUP

Kia product planners have been very busy indeed

We've been test-driving and reporting on Kia vehicles for about five years now, and we've always had good things to say about their product niches, their functionality, and their fit and finish. It's probably fair to say we would receive the original test vehicles with fairly routine expectations, but as time has gone by, our enthusiasm has grown considerably.

The Kia product line has expanded to cover a full range of sedans, plus hatchbacks, one near-luxury car, one, then two, now three SUV or SUV-like crossover vehicles, and a solid minivan. Suspension and ergonomic improvements have arrived consistently, and at a surprisingly fast rate. Fit and finish demonstrate a commitment to quality (also reflected in 10-year/10,000-mile warranties). And their safety rankings

are impressive.

What's also been impressing us is their rapid advance in competitive styling. It seems apparent that the Koreans have developed a definite talent for mimicking the best, and they are clearly eager to keep topping themselves in the US marketplace. Their progress in styling is validated by a recent award from the Royal College of Art (see page 25).

We'd be hard-pressed to find any reason not to shop the Koreans with the same enthusiasm and expectations as Japanese, domestic or European brands. The commitment is big, and as a wave an anticipated growth hits, this is a great time to buy in at solid value.

And what's next? Concept vehicles shown by Kia at this year's auto shows have been knockouts. Stay tuned! ■

KIA SAFETY RATINGS

2007 Kia Sedona and Sorento Earn Top IIHS Ratings

The Kia Sedona minivan and Sorento SUV have both received "Good" ratings from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) for rear impact collisions. "Good" is the highest possible rating given by IIHS, representing the best protection for people of all sizes in a typical rear-end crash. IIHS bases their ratings of Good, Acceptable, Marginal or Poor on geometric measurements of head restraints and simulated crashes that, when combined, assess how well people of different sizes would be protected in an average rear crash. According to IIHS, injuries to the neck are the most commonly reported by victims of car crashes. The Sedona and Sorento's standard active head restraints offer optimum and essential passenger neck and back support and protection.

The Sedona received Kia's first five-star crash safety rating for each seating position from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) when it debuted in 2002, as well as the "Top Safety Pick" from the IIHS for the past two consecutive years. The current Sedona, both Long and Short Wheel Bases, includes six standard airbags (dual advanced front and front seat-mounted side air bags, and full-length side curtain air bags for all three seating rows), a four-channel, four-sensor, antilock brake system (ABS), and a tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS).

Building off of a five-star crash safety rating from NHTSA for both front and rear side impact crash tests in 2006, the 2007 Sorento now boasts even more standard safety features across all trim lines including advanced two-stage airbags, full-length side curtain airbags, four-wheel disc brakes with ABS, electronic stability control (ESC) and traction control (TCS), tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS), driver knee airbag, and three-point seat belts for all seating positions with adjustable anchors and pretensioners with force limiters in front. ■



2009 Kia Soul

KIA PLANS TO ADD SOUL IN 2008

Kia has the youth market in mind with its new Soul Crossover that debuts in 2008 as a 2009 model. From its wraparound windshield, that appears to extend back to the wide "C" pillar, to its rear-hinged rear passenger doors, the Soul is designed to for an active trendy lifestyle. The Soul measures about two inches shorter than the Volkswagen New Beetle. The front-wheel-drive Soul is powered by a 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine with a five-speed automatic transmission. Seating includes bucket seats in the front with a folding bench seat in the rear to expand the cargo area. Feature highlights include premium audio systems and adaptive cruise control. ■



DEFYING CATEGORIZATION AND EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

By Barbara & Bill Schaffer



It seems like we spend an inordinate amount of time trying to categorize some of the latest vehicle offerings. Our most recent labeling exercise was for the Rondo, which Kia officials labeled a crossover and we agree. (We've also heard it called a small minivan, wagon and five-door hatchback.)

It doesn't matter what it's called. The Kia Rondo is an excellent example of the passion and pride Kia is building into its vehicles. Rondo heritage dates back through two generations of the European Caren as it enters the North America market for the first time. The European design influence is obvious with the smooth exterior lines, high stance, sloped back "D" pillar and wagon styling.

Available in five- or seven-passenger configurations, we were amazed at the roomy interior, wide door openings, headroom and legroom (especially in the first two rows; the third row is more for an occasional adult or smaller children).

The inside has an abundance of convenient storage compartments and drink holders. Seats in both the five- and seven-passenger versions are split (60/40 in the second row and 50/50 in the third row) to easily tailor cargo capacity and shape to various flat surfaces.

Cargo space is limited to 6.5 cubic feet when all three rows are in place, but with the third row flat, there are 31.7 cubic feet of space for cargo. There is a compartment in the cargo area for the jack and tools. If those are removed, the compartment can be used to ice a few beverages.

Rondo comes in two trim levels and with two front-wheel-drive engine choices. A 2.4-liter, 162-horsepower four-

cylinder provides a comfortable level of performance to both the LX and EX models through a four-speed automatic transmission. An optional 2.7-liter, 182-hp V-6 engine with five-speed automatic transmission is available in both models.

Rondo pricing starts at \$16,995, including destination charge for the four-cylinder LX and goes to \$20,795 for the V-6 EX. Leather, convenience and premium packages add nearly \$4,000.

Ian Beavis, Kia Vice President of Marketing, said the Rondo is not being marketed to a particular demographic group; rather it is for a mindset, which he described as "Rondoism."

Price and target audience aside, Kia planners have taken no shortcuts on this vehicle. The Rondo uses quality materials in a well-designed and executed application to create the feeling of a much more substantial vehicle than we would normally expect at this price point.

On the road, the Rondo is exceptionally quiet and solid with little road noise. The ride is smooth and controlled with the feeling of a larger vehicle. Both engines provide spirited performance with respectable acceleration and passing power. The extra 20 horsepower of the V-6 makes a notable difference in power for a small fuel economy penalty. The four-cylinder engine gets a 21 mpg city EPA fuel economy rating and 29 mpg on the highway, while the V-6 gets a 20/27 mpg rating.

As the tenth vehicle in the Kia North American portfolio, the Rondo is not only attracting the attention of a growing number of satisfied Kia buyers, but has to be raising some concerns for other automakers—foreign and domestic. ■

KIA DESIGN AWARD

Kia Chief Design Officer Honored by Royal College of Art Joins Pininfarina and Giugiaro

Kia Motors Chief Design Officer Peter Schreyer has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Royal College of Art (RCA) in recognition of his contribution to automotive design. Schreyer, who most recently debuted the Kia ex_cee'd cabrio concept car at the Geneva Motor Show earlier this year and has been charged with establishing Kia's future design direction, is only the third automotive designer to be honored by the RCA since their establishment in 1967, joining fellow automotive designers Sergio Pininfarina and Giorgetto Giugiaro.

"(Kia has) given me the opportunity to shape its whole brand design and character, and seldom does a designer have such a clean sheet to work with," stated Schreyer. We have (shown) just where we might go, and I think we will surprise the entire automotive world with what we are planning for Kia's future."

Schreyer, 53, studied Industrial Design at the Fachhochschule (University of Applied Science) in Munich. He studied at the Royal College of Art in 1979-1980 under an Audi scholarship, then worked at Audi and Volkswagen, producing designs for vehicles such as the Audi TT and the VW New Beetle. He joined Kia as Chief Design Officer in 2006. ■



Pilot program opens HOV lanes to select hybrid vehicles



The Arizona Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Division launched a new pilot program in February of this year, qualifying low-emissions, energy-efficient vehicles for a special Alternative Fuel license plate affixed with a Hybrid decal, permitting the driver to use any High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) "carpool" lane in Arizona, regardless of the number of occupants. This pilot program allows specific vehicles to utilize the HOV lanes, reducing travel time for those individuals who drive eligible vehicles. The program is designed to promote energy independence and reduced fuel consumption while supporting improved air quality.

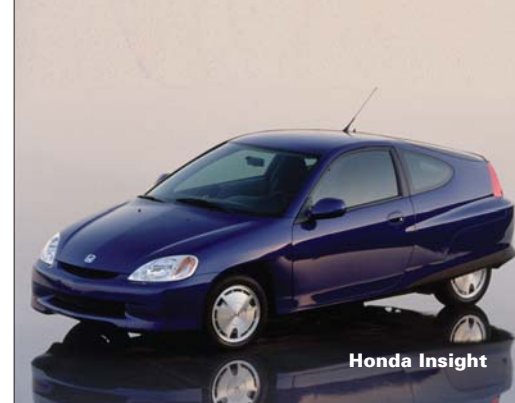
As criteria for eligibility, Arizona has elected that hybrid vehicles with at least 45% fuel efficiency in combined city-highway fuel economy, based on information provided by the US Department of Energy and US Environmental Protection Agency, will qualify for the pilot program. Additional information can be found at www.fueleconomy.gov. For now, just three vehicles (of any model year) meet the criteria: Honda Insight, Toyota Prius and Honda Civic Hybrid.

The state has limited the number of vehicles to keep the pilot program at a maximum of 10,000 participants. This pilot program could be discontinued if there are certain changes in Federal regulations or if the state detects undue degradation of the HOV lanes.

The plate can be ordered online at servicearizona.com or by mail using the Energy Efficient Plate Application (form # 96-0452). This plate is also available with the disability symbol added (to qualified applicants at no additional charge); this can not be ordered online.

Should the pilot program end, a replacement plate will be issued to existing participants and no additional fee will be charged.

For more information, visit the MVD's website, specific to this program, at www.azdot.gov/mvd/vehicle/EnergyEfficient.asp. Included are a complete list of Frequently Asked Questions, a few of which we are included here.



Honda Insight



Toyota Prius



Honda Civic Hybrid

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I participate in the Energy Efficient Plate pilot program?

You must have an eligible vehicle registered or leased in your name, have a current Arizona registration, and order online or by mail.

What vehicles are eligible?

All model years of Honda Insight, Toyota Prius, Honda Civic Hybrid.

Why is my hybrid vehicle not eligible for this pilot program?

All other hybrid vehicles did not achieve a 45% increase in combined city-highway fuel economy and/or they did not meet the Tier II emission levels established under the Clean Air Act.

What benefits do I get from participating in pilot program?

Access to the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes in Arizona, regardless of the number of occupants in the vehicle, giving you savings in gas, money and time.

Will my hybrid vehicle be eligible for the reduced vehicle license tax?

No. Only alternative fuel vehicles and bi-fuel vehicles are eligible for the reduced vehicle license tax.

How will law enforcement know I am eligible to drive in the HOV lane?

Approved applicants will receive an Energy Efficient plate, which is a special Alternative Fuel plate affixed with a Hybrid decal.

Can I personalize my Energy Efficient Plate?

No. For this pilot program, these plates may not be personalized.

If I buy an eligible vehicle, am I automatically enrolled?

No. Once your vehicle is titled and registered you may then submit your application.

What if I sell my vehicle, can I transfer my new plate?

No. You either surrender the plate to MVD within 30 days or submit a Plate Notice, form # 48-3302; your remaining credit will be refunded or transferred to another vehicle.

If I trade a vehicle with Energy Efficient Plate for another eligible vehicle will my plate and fees be transferred?

No. You will need to re-apply for the program. However, if applicable, you may request a refund or transfer your remaining plate credit to another vehicle. ■

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Russo and Steele Auction's other season

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL

Monterey Sports & Muscle at the Marriott

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THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY AUGUST 16-18, 2007



If you enjoy the big auction action in Arizona each January (and who doesn't), and if spending several days along the California coast during August sounds like a nice change from Arizona's monsoon season, what better combined solution than to head off to Monterey for the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, the Monterey Historic Automobile Races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, and Arizona's own Russo and Steele Collector Automobiles Monterey Sports & Muscle at the Marriott in downtown Monterey, now in its seventh year!

KEEP RIGHT >>



7132



7125



7155



7203



7122



7127



Opening Preview Cocktail Gala - Thursday night Two Evening Sales - Friday and Saturday nights

Here is a tantalizing sampling of cars entered by our June press date. For up-to-date information, see the Russo and Steel auction website at www.russoandsteele.com

1972 Lamborghini Miura P400 SV Consignment # 7132

It's not every day that a Lamborghini Miura is discovered; yet amazingly a late example has been found. This car, chassis number #5096, is the ninth-from-last Miura built, but has spent only three of its 28-year life on the road - the rest of the time it has been in various warehouses and garages. It was the very last prod. # Supplied to Lamborghini Great Britain.

Ordered new in left hand drive by Lebanese Trader Kamal (for temporary use in England and subsequent exportation to Lebanon), this SV was completed July 7, 1972, in white/white with factory-fitted air conditioning. A period photo of it can be seen in the *History of Lamborghini* book (Box), on page 150, parked outside the factory sometime in 1973, with temporary English registration QM4979. In late 1973, #5096 was exported to Beirut, Lebanon, but was subsequently exported again—this

time to the United Arab Emirates, to escape the constant shelling of the Beirut War! #5096 was stored for several years till it was sold in 1983 to its new owner in the US. However, upon exportation to America, the ship carrying the supercar was caught up in the shelling due to the blockade of the Straits of Hormuz during the Iran-Iraq War and was forced back to port to wait it out for a year and a half. Finally, 18 months after setting out, the car made it safely to the US, where it remained for the next 15 years. This late model Miura SV is complete and has the desirable split sump separating engine and gearbox oil supply, which helps prolong engine life.

Then a daunting restoration was performed at the experienced hands of Gary Bobileff, which took the best part of two full years and was hampered by the discovery that the factory-supplied replacement front bonnet and framework was in fact for a Miura S (one would think the factory might know the difference), resulting in the time-consuming need to hand-fabricate an entirely new front end.

The car's new owner, Gianfranco Capasso, was bowled over by the stunning result of the

car's restoration, after flying in to test drive his "new" prize. This SV is now resplendent in its new period-correct livery of "Blu Tahiti," silver wheels and sills, with "Senape" leather and blue dashboard top (altogether a far more inspiring scheme than its original white/white specification), as specified by the car's current owner. Some 450 miles of testing on some of California's best roads ensued (after which Capasso confessed to seeing 6,000 rpm in 5th gear!). "5096" is receiving some final fettling and is due to be shipped back to Connecticut where it would reside until December 2006, when the car was sold by Capasso to a Chicago based food distribution CEO. It's the most expensive Miura SV ever sold to date.

1957 Astro Sled Bubbletop Consignment # 7125

This is the ultimate Roth tribute car! A no-expense-spared, million-hour build by Big Daddy inspired Hot Rod Builder Dave Shuten. Dave also rebuilt Ed Roth's Mysterion, now sitting at the Petersen Museum. The Astor Sled features the ultimate hot rod motor: a blown hemi, a 1957 354 Cubic Inch with a Weiland Blower and eight Stromberg 97 carburetors, with a GM 350 turbo transmission. Also featured are 1959 Caddy taillights, 1964 Ford Galaxie bezels, and a 1957 Chevy rear axle.

The Astro Sled is a real piece of hot rod rolling art. Big Daddy would be so proud of this car!

1994 Lola T9400 Indy Car #11 Consignment # 7155

This was a backup car for driver Arie Luyendyk, of Indy Racing Team. The car is a complete 1994 Lola Indy Car with all components. Due to the car's alteration, it is classified as a driver. Car is in overall Good-Plus condition, and the car is operational.

Class: Indycar; weight: 1450 lbs (approx); age: 1994 (Chassis # 11 indicates 11th car manufactured in 1994).

Engine: Engine builder: unknown (built by more than one builder); Manufacturer: Buick (clearly printed on engine valve cover); Type: Indy Turbo V-6; Horsepower: 850+; Heads: Aluminum; Block: Steel; Fuel System: Fuel Cell; Fuel Pump: Hilborn; Fuel Type: Methanol; Oil/Water System: Water Radiator; Location: Left side mount; Oil Cooler Location: right side mount; Note: radiator is a replacement, and not original factory equipment.

Electrical System: Ignition: Yes (Buick ignition); Alternator: Yes (side mount); Battery: Yes (12 volt, mounted in right side pod); Data Logger: None (car has no data-acquisition system on board); Computer: None; Gauges: Analog; Note: Car was originally equipped

with a "P1" Data Acquisition System when it ran in 1994, but was later converted to analog gauges, with theme Boost Gauge being aircraft specification.

Transmission: Manufacturer: Lola (Factory); Gears: 6 speed; Shifter: Sequential (pull back to up-shift, push forward to downshift); Bell Housing: Lola (Factory).

Body: Body: Car #4; Construction: Carbon fiber; Wings: Configured with "High Down Force" front and rear wings; Color: Red and White; Condition: Very Good; Sponsor Decals: Target, Supercuts, Fuji Film, Gillette, Energizer, Bosch Coca-Cola, FedEx, Kleenex, Texaco Havoline, Racer magazine, Sparco.

Chassis: Type: Monocoque, Builder: Lola; Material: Carbon Fiber Tub; Condition: Very Good; Front Suspension: Unequal length A-arm pushrod (In-board Coil Over); Rear Suspension: unequal length A-arm pushrod (In-board Coil Over); Steering: Lola Rack and Pinion (Factory); Wheels: 15" Magnesium (front Penske and rear Unknown); Shocks: Adjustable (front Penske and rear Unknown); Brakes: Steel Rotors with 6-pot caliper (with carbon fiber Brake Scoops); Air Jack: Installed.

Interior: Material: Carbon Fiber; Fire System: Yes; Restraints: Sabelt 5-point, har-



ARIZONA LAND BATTLE

Russo and Steele fights to keep their land for Scottsdale '08

Russo and Steele has held the same parcel of land since 2002, located in North Scottsdale to the southeast of the Loop 101 freeway and Scottsdale Road interchange. After recently reapplying for their parcel of land from the State Land Department, Russo and Steele discovered that the Barrett-Jackson Auction, which runs its event at Westworld, a few miles to the east, in the same January timeframe as the Russo and Steele Auction, is applying for the Russo and Steele parcel for Barrett-Jackson vendor trailer parking.

Over the last six years, the State Land Department has renewed Russo and Steele's lease without incident. However, due to the growth of Russo and Steele's event, the event submitted an application on November 6th, 2006, for renewal that encompassed an additional section of land, for the 2008 event. This expansion required a new application for both parcels. Then in February of 2007, as requested, Russo and Steele prepaid their estimated lease amount. The additional section of land required a revised application that was submitted on March 22, 2007; this included a fully certified site survey, all applicable fees and an endorsement letter from the City of Scottsdale Economic Vitality Department.

On May 3, 2007, Barrett-Jackson submitted a conflicting application for the exact same parcel. On June 6, 2007 Russo and Steele were advised by the State Land Department of Barrett-Jackson's application. This action by Barrett-Jackson has now caused Russo and Steele's application approval to be delayed and will further trigger a lengthy administrative review process. Despite, Russo and Steele's confidence that their claim and arguments will win out in the end, there is still the chance that the lease may go to sealed bid. If this occurs, some fear that Barrett-Jackson's vast financial resources will give them the upper hand. ■

ness; Gauges: Analog; Steering Wheel: Momo Quick-Release; Pedals: Gas, Brake; Clutch: Lola (Factory); Condition: Very Good.

Spare Parts: Starter w/cart (36-volt with Delco Battery Cart, works), 2 Timing belts, Wheel (1 extra rear); Tires: 2 spare rears and 2 spare fronts (both used); Filters (Fuel and Oil); Transmission Gears (various), rotors, Turbo Housing, Miscellaneous wiring, "Wickers" Down Force Adapters, Fuel Pressure Regulator, Spark plugs and Injector parts.

1955 Mercedes 300 Gullwing Consignment # 7203

What can you say about a '55 Gullwing, but WOW! This fabulous nut and bolt correct restoration, matching number Gullwing is absolutely perfect. It was a 37,000 mile original Gullwing before restoration. The 300 SL Gullwings are appreciating in value daily. The car is coming out of a private collection and will dazzle all who lay eyes on her.

Silver exterior is stunning, with Red leather upholstery. Additional features include: 3 liter straight six motor, Bosch mechanical fuel injection system, 4 speed manual transmission, Red square weave carpet, VDO gauges, and Correct radio.

2004 Rat Fink Chopper Consignment # 7122

This was a big budget concept/prototype project from Rat Fink Choppers 2004. Number 1 of 1! This bike included the best components used in the motorcycle industry, including a S+S 113 Cubic Inch Motor with a 6 Speed transmission. The fiberglass Rat Fink is by, long time friend, Ed Roth and artist Jimmy C. A real rolling Masterpiece that runs great with speed capable of 130 MPH. This bike was one of the stars in Ed Roth's Tribute display at the Detroit Autorama, 2006.

1937 Lincoln Zephyr Consignment # 7127

This is a wonderful art deco 1937 Lincoln Zephyr Coupe that has been modified for beauty and comfort. It has a fuel-injected Ford 5.0 liter V8, five-speed manual transmission and a Ford 8.8 rear-end, power steering, air conditioning, power windows, and a hidden AM/FM/CD sound system that is acoustically great sounding. The car was beautiful from the factory, so only minimal exterior modifications were made to improve the flowing lines. The ride height was lowered; the fenders were welded on, giving it a somewhat European flair and smooth look; the rear license plate was removed and the license was put on the rear bumper where it belongs; the fuel filler was hidden and the stock grill was chromed.

The interior is done with black leather, wool headliner and wool carpet—no vinyl or

synthetics added! The original symmetrical dash was painted in a cherry burl over a gold mica base, which gives it great depth and life. The rest of the interior was in the original theme with subtle modifications, like power windows utilizing the original window cranks and the previously mentioned stereo system. A custom larger seventeen-inch banjo steering wheel, with a Zephyr script horn button, steers the car, which rides on nostalgic radial wide white walls with custom wheel covers.

The theme of the entire Zephyr is "if you did not know you would not know" (it is not stock). The Zephyr won Best in Class in the 2001 Concours d'Élegance in Forest Grove, Oregon. It has also won numerous awards including Best in Show, People's Choke, and many other awards in various shows around the Northwest.

992 Movie Batmobile Consignment # 7133

This is your chance to own one of the actual "Batman Returns" Batmobiles, Movie Car #3. TM & Copyright 1992 DC Comics, Inc. This is the most recognized movie vehicle of its time. This intimidating and sensational Batmobile was actually used in Warner Bros. record-breaking box office sensation "Batman Returns" and is now available to private collectors and museums. This is one of the world's most famous and unique automobiles and is one of the rarest and most desired collectibles imaginable.

1970 Plymouth Cuda Hemi Consignment # 7145

This vitamin C orange Hemi Cuda is a numbers matching rotisserie restored California car. This is one of 32 known Hemi Cudas with the N95 California emission control. It is one of seven orange with black vinyl top Hemi Cudas. It comes with original broadcast sheet and Galen Govier visual inspection report as well as the Chrysler registry. This rare Hemi is still titled in the original owner's name. Some of the options include 426 C.I. Hemi engine, 4 speed close ratio transmission with Hurst pistol grip shifter, Dana Super Track Pac rear, Instrument package, and black vinyl roof. This Cuda is one of one with the above options combination.

1965 Shelby Cobra Consignment # 7140

Carroll Shelby set his sights on the FIA World Manufacturers Championship for GT cars in 1964, designing a new generation of Cobra competition roadsters expressly for this purpose. Five of these Cobras were built. They came to be known as FIA Cobras, and along with the Daytona Coupes they brought the FIA World GT Manufacturers Championship

to Shelby American in 1965. A number of performance related competition enhancements were implemented in these cars (e.g. Weber 481DM carburetors, 12:1 compression & roller cam). However, the main differentiating characteristic of the FIA cars was wider and more prominently flared rear fenders (necessary because 8 1/2 inch wide rear wheels would be used along with larger tires), "cut-back doors" required by the larger rear fenders and front flared fenders (also to accept larger wheels and tires). The FIA Cobras were the ultimate performance version of the car that created the Shelby legend.

CSX7010 is not an imitation or knock-off, but instead an authentic Shelby continuation FIA Cobra, designed and manufactured to original FIA Cobra specs by Shelby American, Inc. As one of the first ten continuation FIA Cobras, CSX7010 carries an additional Signature Series plaque on its dashboard. CSX7010 was completed, less engine and transmission, at the Shelby factory in Las Vegas in October, 2000. The engine and transmission were added per its only owner's specs by Nostalgia Motorcars LTD in South Carolina (one of the few authorized Shelby American dealers).

CSX7010 features include: Short Block Ford Racing High Performance Sportsman engine (balanced and blueprinted), Aluminum Advanced Flow Research (AFI) heads with roller rockers, Weber-Look sequential fuel injection, Mallory Electronic distributor with HyFire 6A, Accel DFI, FIA Cobra correct valve covers, Ford Toploader transmission with Hurst linkage and FIA Cobra correct shift lever, Side Exit Exhaust - two sets (with resonators & straight), wheels correct for FIA Cobra with functional knock-offs, Goodyear Racing Sport Car Specials (Front 26.5X8, Back 26.5X10.5), Static cling vinyl decals and numerals can be easily removed and re-applied, Fire System, Kill Switch, Interior-FIA Cobra correct Stewart-Warner gauges in original configuration/location, FIA Cobra correct steering wheel, door reinforcing safety bars, racing driver seat, and driver and passenger 5-point Simpson racing belts.

CSX7010 is titled as a 1965 Shelby CSX7 and looks, runs, sounds and drives like the five original FIA Cobras. While CSX7010 is set up to race, this fine investment grade vehicle with less than 600 miles is also a great road drive and a stunning addition to any collection. The owners of Shelby Cobras, including CSX7010, share the legend and are listed in the Shelby American World Registry.

1965 Shelby GT350R Consignment # 7135

In 1965 Shelby American had won the FIA World Manufacturers Championship with their

289 Cobra Daytona Coupe driven by Bob Bondurant. In the same year, their GT 350 captured the B-production road racing championship. To capitalize on these successes, Shelby American created the Cobra Caravan. It embarked on a four week tour across the US, stopping at 12 major cities. 5R213 was completed on November 10, 1965, just in time to be loaded on the 40-foot-long enclosed trailer. On board were four Shelby automobiles, the world championed Daytona coupe, a Ford GT40, a 427 Competition Roadster and 5R213. It is one of 36 factory prepared competition models and is recognized by Shelby enthusiasts as the preeminent example of this highly collectable mark. The meticulous restoration features all the correct 1965 vintage components including a NOS set of Blue Streak tires.

1970 Chevrolet Chevelle SS L78 Consignment # 7143

This is an all numbers matching original Chevelle L-78 Convertible, and it comes with 3 build sheets. This is one of six L-78 convertibles known to exist. This is one of the most correct and is the rarest of the six because it has the M-20 4-speed transmission. The other five have the M-22 tranny. Its fathom blue, with white stripes, white power top, and white interior. Other options are power windows, tach and gauges, map pockets, power steering, power brakes, with discs up front, and it has the cowl induction hood. It is an original car with all numbers matching and 3 build sheets. This is your opportunity to own this real, and very rare car.

1948 Ford F1 Consignment # 7149

A 1948 Ford F1 pickup, complete frame off custom restoration. Many custom body modifications as well as additions from other popular truck models coupled with the latest modern interior and exterior additions. The interior is 100% genuine leather with bucket seats, a custom dash, Dakota Digital panel, iPod adaptable stereo, and electric windows. The exterior has a mild chopped top with the windshield remaining full sized, a wedged hood, suicide doors, custom electric tonneau cover, and a custom grille and front end, as well as other body modifications. The paint is a beautiful light root beer two tone with marbling. There are 20-inch rear and 18-inch front wheels with front and rear independent air bags. The motor is a fuel injected Ford 351 Windsor. It has a mild cam with rocker rollers and lots of chrome. Transmission is a 4 speed automatic overdrive coupled with a 9-inch rear end. There are many custom features that make this truck an absolute, one of a kind winner. ■

7133



7145



7140



7135



7143



7149



Arizona

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Ford Taurus Returns

*Taurus out, Five Hundred in. Freestyle added.
Five Hundred out, Taurus back in.
Freestyle out, Taurus X in.
Put it all together, and the 2008 models
are indeed both "new" and "improved."*

by Joe Sage



Extra touches of bling on lighting and trim provide an element of what Ford calls "eyeball."

The Taurus X provides ease of third-row seating entry through easy folding of the second row.

When Ford introduced the new Five Hundred sedan for 2005, it was slated to essentially replace the venerable Taurus in the company's product lineup. Ford kept producing the old Taurus as a rental and fleet vehicle for awhile (explained as an accommodation to the marketplace, but largely geared around the complexities of multiple plant changeovers and reassignments—much like production of a dual-purpose new-body F-150 and F-250 in the early '90s, a prior-body Super Duty before the F-250 changed over, and a "heritage" F-150 when the new 2004 F-150 was introduced).

The Ford Freestyle was introduced at the same time as the Five Hundred, as Ford dabbled in the category then just beginning to be known (and debated) as the crossover. Both were sound vehicles, though a little underpowered for their mass, and the availability of all-wheel drive widened their potential appeal considerably. Sales, however, never set the world on fire. On the heels of the Taurus being the world champ for years (then fighting off, and finally losing to, Toyota), this was painful for Ford.

The solution? Despite the fact the Taurus had lost ground to its competitors, and despite the name being off the public's radar for three model years, Ford has identified deep and wide brand equity in the Taurus name. Ford tells us

that Taurus is the third-most-recognized model name in Ford history (following the F-Series and Mustang). With 1500 brand name choices in the marketplace, and studies pegging the Five Hundred name at just 40% recognition, this was all too much to ignore. So with this foundation, Ford is bringing the Taurus back for 2008, as well as a companion Taurus X.

Is this new Taurus the Five Hundred, rebadged? Is the Taurus X a rebadged Freestyle, and/or is it the former Taurus wagon, but with that currently unfashionable word not appended? Or has Ford created all-new vehicles that just happen to be very similar to the Five Hundred/Freestyle team, which are leaving the lineup just as the heritage Taurus also fades from view? The company clearly presents these as all-new vehicles, and in many ways they are, but the lines of evolution are clear.

2008 TAURUS STYLE

You will not have any trouble spotting the newbies on the road: both sport Ford's latest signature grille, as applied on the Fusion, the Edge and several concept vehicles for the past couple of years. Other quick visuals include an emphasis on eye candy, what Ford calls "eyeball," from the grilles themselves, to the lenses,



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Lead Crash Safety Engineer Rob Randolph shows off the energy-absorbing shell that directs crash energy away from the cabin (see arrows in yellow zones) and has brought Ford four 5-star crash ratings for the new Taurus.

The Taurus instrument panel and cockpit are among the most elegant to be found in a domestic sedan, rivaling the best German brands.

Tim Stoehr demonstrates (by unloading) the prodigious trunk capacity of the Taurus, which Ford promotes as having SUV-like utility.

buckets and refractors of new lighting fixtures, to dual chrome exhaust tips, simple but elegant badging and more. Both also sport fairly aggressive air intakes below the front bumper.

THE SAFEST FULL-SIZE CAR IN THE US

What's going on here, however, is far more than skin-deep, although not all of that is new. The Five Hundred has already become a star of Ford's safety engineering, as proudly pointed out to us by Lead Crash Safety Engineer Rob Randolph, who joined us for the Arizona press launch on June 18. The 2008 Ford Taurus earned a top safety pick by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) and the government's highest available five-star ratings in all crash test categories. The IIHS "Top Safety Pick" rating can only be earned by vehicles that achieve the best-available safety performance in frontal, side and rear collisions and offer electronic stability control. In addition to being the only large family car to merit IIHS' Top Safety Pick rating, the new 2008



Taurus stands alone for having already received *four* 5-star (front, rear, front side, rear side) crash ratings from the the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Minor upgrades have been made to the Five Hundred shell for its evolution to Taurus duty, such as reengineering cross-members to accommodate engine changes, but the fundamentals are essentially the same for the '08 Taurus. The Taurus is promoted as the safest full-size car in the US (based on independent agency tests).

In addition to the energy-redirecting safety cage at the heart of the vehicle, there are adaptive load-limited seatbelts, side curtain airbags which add a full 6 seconds of rollover protection, a collapsible driveshaft and much more.

Electronic stability control (ESC) is an option on the Taurus and standard on the Taurus X. This feature, which is a few years ahead of anticipated industrywide government mandate, is engineered in response to the fact that half of accidents are solo/one-vehicle incidents, and ESC cuts their occurrence in half.

ENGINEERING AND PERFORMANCE

John Heider, in charge of drivetrain and vehicle dynamics for the new Taurus and Taurus X (as well as the Edge, Fusion, the upcoming Flex and the next Lincoln sedan), also joined us in Arizona. Whereas Randolph had already given us a clear indication that safety has been tops for quite awhile, only to be improved as applicable for this changeover, Heider makes it clear that much else has been readdressed, fine-tuned and reinvented for the new Taurus and Taurus X. To perfect ride, steering and performance, the new vehicles underwent exhaustive testing and tuning at Ford's new \$15 million Whitman, Arizona, proving grounds (recently moved from Florida).

We've already mentioned that the Five Hundred and Freestyle were short on power. The new vehicle boasts the same 263hp V-6 as the Edge and the Lincoln MKZ, which provides a 60-horsepower boost from its predecessor. This is mated with a 6-speed automatic, also from the Edge (and developed in cooperation with GM). Put these together, and the new Taurus not only offers a more potent performance package, but also achieves a 2mpg fuel efficiency increase.



The Five Hundred had been set up as more of a "driver's car," with a solid road feel communicated through the steering wheel. The Taurus market, however, has been deemed to prefer a softer sedan ride. Five Hundred owner feedback had indicated that a perceived harsh ride ("not like my Crown Vic" or "too European"). The new Taurus V-6 and 6-speed changes help with this. Newly engineered front strut tower braces, pendulum engine mounts and general chassis/suspension and other improvements combine to provide noticeably lower noise/vibration/harshness (NVH) figures.

Power steering has been reengineered with efficiency in mind—the system is off until ready to turn, which saves significant fuel—yet it provides the feel of high-end variable assist steering as a bonus.

All-wheel-drive models will follow, with a different front suspension.

WE HIT THE ROAD

Ford set us up with an excellent test drive, starting near Carefree, covering the back roads via Rio Verde to Fountain Hills, up the Beeline Highway (AZ 87) to Payson and back via the urban grid of the upper East Valley. Standard tires for these vehicles are a Continental riding on 17" wheels, but our vehicles were equipped with the optional 18" Pirelli P6 fitment.

To make sure we appreciated the changes applied to the new Taurus, versus the Five Hundred, we broke into teams of two, each team getting plenty of opportunity for each driver to experience each vehicle. We started with the Five Hundred. Most is as expected, with a spacious, modern and intuitive cabin,

presenting clear controls and instruments and a comfortable and effective HVAC (heat/vent/ac) system. Seats and adjustments are great, and there is plenty of backseat room for adults (which we successfully challenged on about three-quarters of the test drive, with different Ford engineers and executives joining us for some stretches). The ride difference is immediately noticeable; the Five Hundred was very sensitive to road surfaces (new pavement, older pavement, even some dirt), which can be a nice thing for a performance driver, but the Taurus was much more pliant. When we first changed over, we might have thought this ride was a little too soft by comparison, but that was forgotten within probably about a hundred feet. The new Taurus gobbled up the twisties and significant climbs of the Beeline with enthusiasm. We were able to pass and navigate the RVs and semis even on the curviest stretches and definitely at highway speeds.

Tim Stoehr, in charge of Ford sales for Arizona, New Mexico and Las Vegas, reminds us again that the new Taurus represents "way more than a name change." Ford has taken what they and their market consider the best of all attributes from Taurus heritage and the Five Hundred years, fine-tuned and upgraded throughout, and yet preserved the value status of the Taurus brand. The new Taurus enters the market with about a \$24,000 base price, and statistics show it should have a residual value 11% higher than the prior model. The new 2008 Taurus went on sale on June 17, and the Taurus X arrives in dealerships by late July. ■

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World premiere at Auto Shanghai 2007

China-designed gullwing coupe is a preview of Buick's new international design language: "It's Not East, Not West ... It's Buick."

The gullwing Riviera concept coupe was developed with global design input by the Pan Asia Technical Automotive Center (PATAC) in China, a design and engineering joint venture between General Motors and Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC). The Riviera was engineered to accommodate a new hybrid system that will go into production at Shanghai GM, the General Motors flagship joint venture with SAIC, in 2008, prior to the Beijing Olympics.

The fuel-efficient car, which will feature several technological and manufacturing advances, represents the latest achievement of GM and its partners in the promotion and development of alternative propulsion technologies in China. The Riviera also marks the return of a venerable Buick nameplate after an eight-year gap; the Riviera, in various prior iterations, has sold more than 1.1 million units in the US between 1963 and 1999.

This new Riviera, with its tightly stretched carbon fiber body panels, a combination of positive and negative curves, strong front and rear identities and gullwing doors hopes to capture the essence of Buick classics, while presenting a thoroughly 21st century design.

According to James Shyr, PATAC Design Director, the Riviera's curves and "earth and water" interior tones are drawn from diverse inspirations—from classic Buicks, to ancient Chinese artifacts, to modern electronic icons. Inside and out, the car seeks to transcend cultural or national boundaries.

Exterior design

The Riviera design is structured around the Buick tri-shield logo, sitting on a trihedral waterfall grille formed by three meeting planes. The Buick logo leads into a reflective strip through the hood, a nod to the distinctive mid-hood crease in classic Buicks. Elongated LED headlamps flow up the hood sides to three-section, top-mounted chrome portholes as a single piece of jewelry. Since Buick shows no signs of moving away from their longstanding portholes, this is an interesting style integration.

The logo, hood strip, headlamps, side mirrors and rocker covers all have "icy green" backlighting at night, matched by a backlit logo and exhausts at the rear.

Designers have incorporated several other



KEEP RIGHT >>

design signatures from the original Riviera generation, including a "double sweep spear" line along the bodyside and a flared tail design. The "Shell Blue" exterior color is a metallic silver with light blue accents, highlighting the coupe's exterior curves.

Gullwing doors, selected for their exotic appeal, access a two-plus-two seating configuration. Over six feet wide at their widest point, they add to the coupe's sleek sideline. At night, fully opened doors shine the "Buick" name on the ground.

The use of carbon fiber in all body panels made the gullwing engineering demands easier to realize and sharp, tight radius curves possible across the body surface. The Riviera sits on 21-inch 10-spoke forged aluminum wheels, combining polished and satin finishes, with low-profile tires. Side mirrors take their cue from Formula One cars, sweeping yet unobtrusive.

Interior design

The interior is conceived as a sanctuary. The use of rich blue and subtle creams, representing earth and water themes, are conveyed through high-quality leather bucket seats, plush carpet and a luxurious

padded steering wheel. Completing the organic feel, the roof comprises two shaded glass windows for more headroom and what Buick uncharacteristically calls a celestial connection for occupants. That alone is enough to confirm that things are due for a change at Buick. The interior has no discernable start and finish point for the front and sides, creating a comfortable lounge feel, futuristic yet somehow familiar.

The three-dimensional speedometer, inspired by past classics but modern in execution, complements a touchpad central console loosely modeled on a computer mouse. An LCD display screen crowns the central console. Electronic shifter pads replace the traditional transmission shifter. Controls are kept to a minimum to avoid driver distraction.

Ambient light strips are applied from across the console and inserted on the door liner, stretching to the front seats. Deliberately imitating precious Chinese jade stone, the lights are tinted a subtle icy green, which also offers tribute to a favored color of Buicks in days gone by.

Interior trim treatments abound—miniature aluminum tri-shields in the front

seat headrests, a wooden floor mat in the rear and a rear central armrest which can move to left or right to accommodate passengers of different sizes.

Plush royal blue Alcantara was chosen for the door, console and roof, while sandy white leather covers the lower door, lower console and seats.

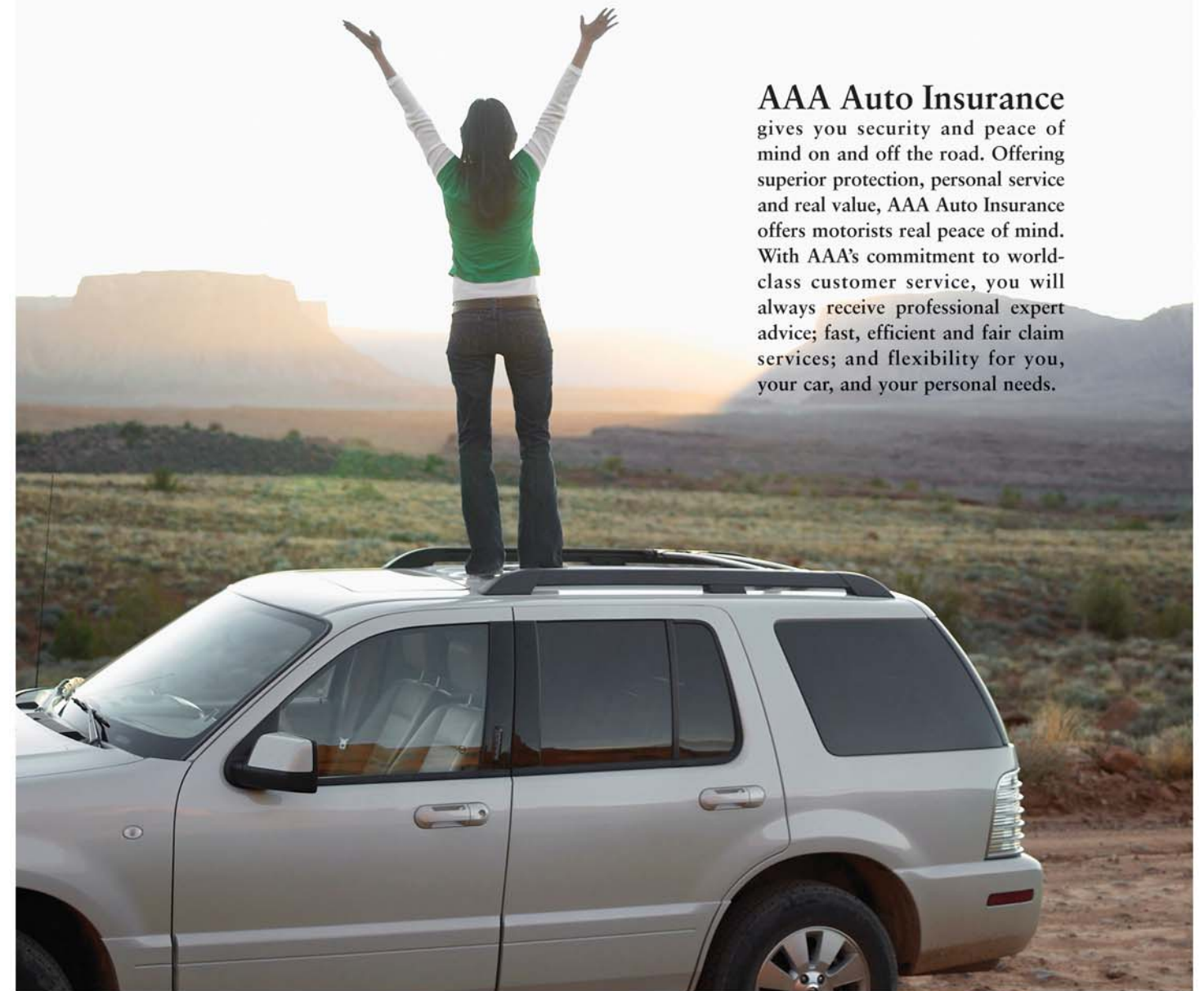
Ancient influences

The design team set out to create a modern global design—not something which could be superficially described as a Chinese car. At the same time, they sought to draw from various heritage outside the automotive industry for classic shapes, concepts and artifacts, to present a subtle Chinese essence and influence.

One strong influence was the yuanbao, a small curvaceous gold or silver ingot used in ancient China as currency and popular today as a symbol of ancient Chinese prosperity.

Buicks have long been popular in China, so this Shanghai concept has the potential to tap emotions and utility compatible with both East and West. It's definitely interesting to watch Buick push the envelope. ■

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BMW Z9 concept

■ **BMW** unveiled the Z9 concept recently at the Shanghai auto show. If the two-seater makes it into production, it will compete with the Mercedes-Benz SL-Class and the new Audi R8. Insiders say the convertible will be a front engine, rear-wheel drive configuration with an optional folding hardtop, but there may also be a coupe in the works.

■ **Hyundai** is adding a new entry-level GLS model to its new Azera lineup. The new version has a smaller 3.3-liter V-6 engine, as opposed to the 3.8-liter in the SE and Limited models. It's rated at 234-hp and gets an EPA rating of 21/28 mpg. The base price is dropped by \$1,300 to \$24,895 and includes features like audio system with CD and XM satellite radio, eight airbags and stability control.

■ Slow sales of the **Chevrolet** Monte Carlo have General Motors pulling the plug on the mid-size coupe. Famous as the most winning marquis on the NASCAR circuit, the Monte Carlo started life in 1970 to compete with the Ford Thunderbird. In better years sales topped more than 300,000 units annually but 2006 sales were just over 34,000.

Honda has earned the title of America's "2007 Greenest Automaker" from the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) for the fourth consecutive time. The award is given by the UCS on a biennial basis to the company with the lowest overall production of smog-forming emissions and global warming emissions (primarily CO₂) in its US automobile fleet.

more favorably with competitors like the Honda Civic. Both models and the performance version WRX will arrive at dealerships late this summer, but the higher performance WRX STi will come a year later.

■ **Volvo** is planning to drop their high performance "R" models after the 2007 model year. The designation was started in the 1990s with the T5R and is offered on S60 and V70 models currently. Enthusiasts had hoped to see the R versions expanded to other Volvo models but sales never reached anticipated levels. According to Fredrik Arp, Volvo Car CEO, the brand will continue to offer performance and fun-to-drive vehicles; it's just that they won't get a special designation in the future.

■ **Toyota** is developing a system that will



Honda Civic Hybrid

automatically slow a vehicle down when it enters a school zone. The system uses a camera to recognize a school-zone sign to make an automatic speed adjustment.

■ Like most new things automotive, the new generation **Subaru** Impreza sedan will be larger (4.5 inches longer and 2 inches wider) than its predecessor. On the other hand, the five-door, wagon ends up 2 inches shorter. Subaru officials are hoping the new model will compare

■ **Suzuki** will bring the Swift back to the US market around 2010, but not as the same four-cylinder econobox. The new Mini Cooper-sized Swift will be a high-performance hatchback like the ones sold in Europe and Japan. Other future plans call for a pickup based on the Nissan Frontier, the SX4 sedan that was introduced earlier this year along with two unnamed vehicles.

■ **Volvo** now offers optional dual-height booster cushions integrated into the rear seats of the new V70 wagons. The seats are designed to give the optimum seat belt geometry for children weighing 33 to 80



2007 Volvo V70 R

pounds and avoid the need to add aftermarket boosters for child safety. The seats are a \$300 option on all V70 wagons.

■ **Hyundai** announced plans at the recent Seoul auto show to import diesel-powered vehicles to the US market by the end of the decade. According to Lee Hyun-soon, head of research and development for Hyundai, sport utility vehicles will likely be first to get the 3.0-liter V-6 diesel engines.

■ The good news is **Volkswagen** plans to build the Scirocco sport hatchback. The bad news is that the US will not get the Scirocco, because they are afraid it would distract from the sales of the GTI hatchback. Both cars are based on the same Golf (Rabbit) platform.

■ The **ZF Group** is supplying a new electronic suspension with computer controlled shocks to virtually eliminate body roll during cornering. The continuous damping control system is currently used on high-end cars like Rolls-Royce, Ferrari and Maserati. However, in Europe, General Motors is offering the system on inexpensive Opel models including the Astra hatchback for about \$500.

■ The low-slung **BMW** Concept CS shown recently at the Shanghai auto show will probably be built, according to Tom Purves, CEO of BMW of North America. The exotic looking four-door will likely be a premium vehicle in the same category



BMW Concept CS

as the Mercedes-Benz CLS and upcoming Porsche Panamera, both which are being marketed as four-door coupes. The CS would become the top-of-the line above the current 7 Series, but below vehicles like the Rolls-Royce.

■ In an effort to make sure they are not losing their competitive edge, **Toyota** recently instituted a plan to send all 30,000 US workers back to school to relearn the basics and refresh their ability to perform the standard steps learned when they were hired. The program is expected to take a couple of years to complete, after which the same retraining will likely be done in the Japanese manufacturing plants.

■ Chase scene fans will like **Pirelli's** new short film, *Mission Zero*, starring Uma Thurman and directed by Kathryn Bigelow. It's only a few minutes long and features fast cars, guns and Pirelli's new PZero tires. Download it at Pirellifilm.com.

■ **Chevrolet** is suggesting its dealers put a Toyota Camry in their showrooms next to the 2008 Chevrolet Malibu so shoppers can compare styling, interiors, pricing and features. Production of the new Malibu starts in October; ads start in January.

■ Several car makers are scrambling to engineer cars that could sell for as little as **\$2,500** (but more in the \$6,000 to \$10,000 range) to sell in India, China, Brazil, Russia and other growing markets. While some have referred to the cars as



2008 Chevrolet Malibu

four-wheel bicycles, insiders say they are well designed, not bad looking and some will even pass US crash tests.

■ **Jeep's** new Liberty gets a total restyling for 2008 with a longer wheelbase and 2.5-inches more length. With its more refined look it gets features like a power sliding canvas roof that runs nearly the entire length of the Liberty roof



2008 Jeep Liberty

and can be opened from the front or the back seat. Other new features include rain-sensing wipers, remote start and memory seats. The Liberty rides on a new four-wheel independent suspension with rack-and-pinion steering.

■ In **California**, 100 gas stations are experimenting with a new technology that wafts a coffee aroma at the gas pumps in an effort to get more gas customers to come into the store to buy coffee and other items.

■ A Dutch company is offering custom name badges for Porsches. Rather than Cayenne or Carrera, your **Porsche** could have something like Tiffany or Mike's Ego or anything else you want. The first five Porsche style letters sell for \$450, and additional letters are \$60 each, making it an expensive ego booster. For more information, or to order, go online to www.nameyourporsche.com.

■ **Nissan** may scrap plans to build a heavy-duty pickup and may replace current body-on-frame SUVs with unibody construction. The heavy duty truck development was suspended because, from a business perspective, they thought "the risk was too high." By diverting development funds from dedicated frame they will be able to develop lighter, more fuel-efficient crossover style vehicles. Currently the only Nissan SUVs using body-on-frame construction are the Nissan Pathfinder and Armada along with the Infiniti QX56.

■ **Saturn** plans to offer two Green Line hybrid powertrains for the 2008 Vue. One will be a two mode hybrid that can be driven at low speeds by the electric motors alone. This version is expected to be rated at 29/40 mpg city/highway fuel economy. The other mild hybrid will have an electric booster motor for the gasoline engine. Prices have not been announced, however the two mode model will likely be about \$2,000 more and get about 25 percent better fuel economy. ■

Briefs & Rumors is a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

UPCOMING FEATURES

Mercedes-Benz E320 Bluetec



Diesels are looming large on our horizons. The new ones are powerful, quiet, smooth... and economical. Mercedes touts this one as their green diesel. We'll see if it lives up to its promise.

Monterey '07: Russo and Steele results, Pebble Beach Concours, Monterey Historic Races



What a weekend this will be, as Arizona's Russo and Steele heads to Monterey, joining the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance and Monterey Historic Races. We'll report back.

BMW 1 Series



The Germans have had smaller Euro cars forever, and BMW brought the MINI to our shores, setting the stage for our smaller car era. Next, BMW brings their diminutive 1 Series to the US.

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*Warranty is a limited powertrain warranty. For details, see retailer or go to kia.com. Based on comparison of 2006 and available 2007 models. **2007 EPA fuel-economy estimates are 21 MPG city and 29 MPG Hwy for 4-cylinder. Actual mileage may vary. Available. MSRP includes freight, exclude taxes, title, license, options and retailer charges. MSRP model shown with optional features. Watch out, cops. Actual prices set by retailer.

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