

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 2
MARCH-APRIL 2022



Hyundai Santa Cruz

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





#BeOneInAMillion

Help us cross the \$1,000,000 line for Parkinson's

Since 2016, **Drive Toward a Cure™** has been on a mission to support Parkinson's Disease research AND patient care, with donations benefiting the **Michael J. Fox Foundation** and the **Parkinson's Foundation**. Most recently, we created our own 'Access to Care' fund that supports **Parkinson's Foundation Centers of Excellence** throughout the country, in areas including Atlanta, Phoenix, Boston, Denver, Houston, Nashville, New York City, Portland and San Diego. And we're not done growing!

Having raised more than \$960k to date, thanks to generous donors, clubs, and organizations, we are on the cusp of crossing the \$1 million dollar threshold – **BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

Join our **#BeOneInAMillion** campaign to help us foster even more programs for 2022 and beyond, and to keep the momentum going. We're going for the Checkered Flag and with your help, those challenged by Parkinson's can win this race, so **#BeOneInAMillion!**



www.drivetowardacure.org/BeOneInAMillion

#BeOneInAMillion doesn't just mean making a donation. Ask us how you can organize an event like these...

Genau Autowerks (San Francisco) raised **over \$7,500** by inviting friends and customers to take part in a fun wine country drive to visit The Racers Group. With some key sponsors lined up, every penny of the registration fees went to support the UCSF Parkinson's Disease Clinic.



The **Peachstate Region** (Atlanta) of the **Porsche Club of America** raised **over \$5,300** simply by taking a regular club rally event and setting donation options for participants that included a "Gold Donor" level which 1 out of every 3 registrants opted for!



A rally to visit the 425 Magazine Northwest Idea House (Seattle) organized by **Lochwood-Lozier Custom Homes** and **Avants** raised **more than \$12,000** from registrations and generous donations in the days that followed.



Drive Toward a Cure is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.
News, event registrations, and donations at
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ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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COVER: The new 2022 Hyundai Santa Cruz "Sport Adventure Vehicle," considered by most to be part of a new breed of unibody, compact, spinoff and/or all-of-the-above pickups entering the marketplace, despite its don't-call-it-a-pickup new vehicle category. We're among the first to drive this and the new Ford Maverick (another compact unibody, and yes-call-it-a-pickup), both in this issue.



This issue brings you both the North American Car and Truck of the Year—the new eleventh-generation Honda Civic and the all-new Ford Maverick compact unibody pickup truck. And we just had the third winner—the North American SUV of the Year, the bigger new Ford Bronco—on the cover of our previous issue, as we took it for a rollicking romp in the rough. We lucked out on those—not only having them all scheduled before their wins were announced, but getting our hands on them during this chip- and supply chain-challenged model year.

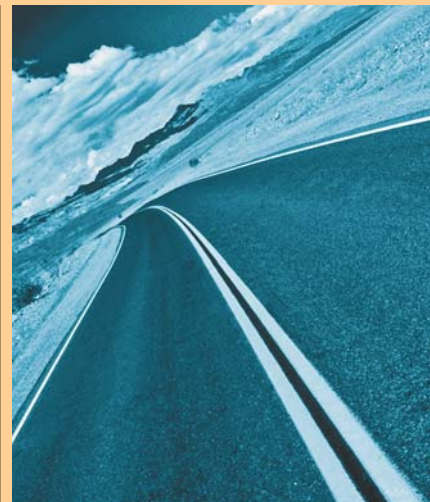
We sometimes spend less time finding the ten-millionth new word for how a vehicle handles in the curves, but look at why a new vehicle exists, how it fits into a growing complexity of options, especially as the number of vehicles in our market per year has grown from about 350 to about 450 over the past few years. Two of the vehicles in this issue are unibody pickups—or are they? One prefers to be called something else. Are they after the same buyer? Car of the Year Honda Civic continues to embrace the sedan market, and with their numbers, you'll see why. But they also like to branch out, so here we drive not one but two, one of which in particular reinvents its category. Others are either new in their own right, particularly specialized builds of something familiar or, in several cases, a bit of both. Cars, trucks and SUVs—an inevitable part of our matrix and yours.

But that's not all. After a rocky year in 2021, with various events cancelled, postponed or rescheduled, January also brought world-famous Arizona Auction Week, largely (but not completely) back to normal. As always, from the oldest to the newest, there was much to inspire any fan, and new world records were once again set.

The Arizona automotive business also continues to make news—from several pertinent announcements during Auction Week, to the latest from the state's burgeoning automotive manufacturing segment—all brought to you in these pages.

Enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor



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SturgisSturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame
USFRAUtah Salt Flats Racing Association
USMAUnited States Motorsports Association

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Staying ahead of the Curve

The three-year Interstate 10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project in metro Phoenix—the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)'s largest urban freeway reconstruction project—runs along 11 miles of I-10 between the Loop 202 (Santan/South Mountain) Freeway and I-17 near Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, with additional work on about a mile of US 60 between I-10 and Hardy Drive and on about a mile of State Route 143 between I-10 and the south end of its bridge over the Salt River.

If you drive through the project area on I-10, you have no doubt seen increased construction activity—especially near 48th Street, State Route 143 and Broadway Road; near Tempe Diablo Stadium; at Guadalupe Road; and south of Baseline Road.

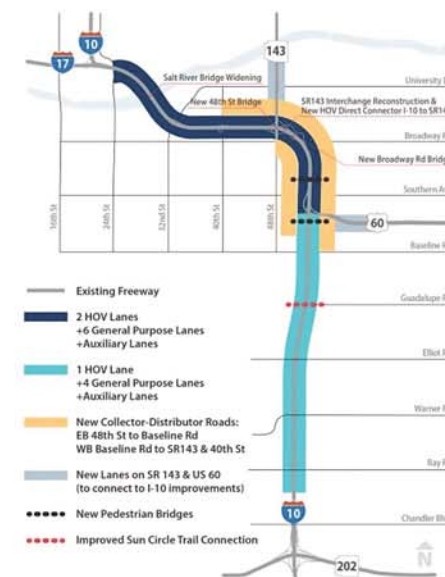
First opened in 1968, this stretch of roadway is being newly upgraded in many ways:

- Widening I-10 to six general purpose lanes and two high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes in each direction between US 60 (Superstition Freeway) and I-17, plus a fourth general purpose lane in each direction between Ray Road and US 60
- Adding Collector-Distributor roads parallel to I-10 between Baseline Road and 40th Street to separate through-traffic on I-10 from local traffic entering or exiting the highway
- Rebuilding the I-10 interchange with SR 143 to improve traffic flow and create direct connections between SR 143 and I-10 HOV lanes
- Replacing the Broadway Road bridge over I-10
- Replacing the 48th Street bridges over I-10
- Widening the I-10 bridges over the Salt River
- Building two bridges for pedestrians and bicyclists over I-10 between Baseline and Broadway Roads (at Alameda Drive and the Western Canal) and improving the Sun Circle Trail crossing at Guadalupe Road
- Building sound and retaining walls where warranted.

Work on a new Broadway Road bridge over I-10 is progressing with excavation for a second abutment, the supporting structure that carries the load of the bridge, followed by installation of rebar and forming the abutment foundation and wall.

In the median near Broadway Road, workers have been removing the concrete barrier and preparing to construct the center supporting column.

Since late December, workers have been installing drilled-shaft foundations to support the columns and abutments for the new 48th Street



bridges over I-10. There are five drilled shafts per bridge, each about 50 to 60 feet deep and ranging in diameter from 72 to 120 inches. Crews first tie rebar into steel cages that are then lifted with a crane, lowered into a drilled shaft and filled with concrete. In the I-10 median near Tempe Diablo Stadium (Alameda Drive), crews are installing a drilled-shaft foundation that will support a pedestrian and bicyclist bridge over I-10. As the drilled-shaft foundations pass integrity testing, crews begin constructing the supporting columns.

Existing light poles will be transplanted to new foundations between 24th and 40th Streets. The full area will receive new energy-efficient lighting.

The team strives to keep the roadway surface as smooth as possible, while also limiting such impacts as ramp, lane and highway closures.

A Public-Private Partnership (P3) and Design-Build (DB) project, projects are delivered by teams with one ADOT contract for design and construction services. Known as the Developer, the DB team for this project, known as Broadway Curve Constructors, is a joint venture of Pulice Construction Inc., FNF Construction Inc. and Flatiron Constructors, Inc. Project designers are T.Y. Lin International Group, Stanley Consultants and Aztec Engineering. You can follow the project at this dedicated website: i10broadwaycurve.com.





Chrysler Airflow Concept

▼ **Chrysler** has begun defining a new niche for themselves, as they unveiled the Chrysler Airflow Concept at CES 2022 in Las Vegas, announcing their commitment to launch their first battery-electric vehicle (BEV) by 2025, with plans for a full battery-electric portfolio by 2028. Chrysler will stand at the forefront of parent company Stellantis's domestic transformation to sustainable mobility technology that will make the world cleaner, safer and more seamlessly connected. The all-electric Chrysler Airflow Concept combines leading edge drive system technology with intuitive artificial intelligence (AI) and connected vehicle technology, forecasting a 350- to 400-mile range and fast-charging functionality. The Airflow Concept embodies new technology-forward styling for Chrysler, featuring an "elegantly dynamic" profile, announced up front by an LED-illuminated Chrysler wing logo on a full width grille and light blade. The concept's seamlessly connected STLA SmartCockpit is powered by STLA Brain, enabling extensions of every passenger's digital, work and home environments, all in sync, to create a personalized experience for each, with screens that can be simplified and grouped to individual needs and interests. The modern, spacious interior has an open, airy lounge feeling courtesy of natural light from a panoramic roof and a calming color palette, creating a comfortable space away from home and work. The STLA Brain platform is fully over-the-air (OTA) capable, designed to quickly deliver new features.

▼ After weeks of real-world testing, the all-new 2022 **Nissan** Frontier PRO-4X was named "Best Off-Road Truck" by the editors of *TFLtruck.com* (TFL), as evaluated against three other all-new 2022 model pickups. Comparative points included off-road prowess, technology, performance, trailer towing and efficiency. A multi-venue evaluation challenged the trucks in areas including Colorado's Webster Pass and



Nissan Frontier PRO-4X

Tombstone Hill trails, where the Frontier's midsize proportions did well on narrow trails, while the PRO-4X grade's standard Bilstein shocks and aggressive all-terrain tires made short work of most obstacles. The 2022 Frontier features a standard 310-hp 3.8-liter V6 and maximum 6,720-pound towing capacity, with best-in-class claims. Nissan's six-plus decades of continuous midsize truck presence were said

to contribute to a "bold new exterior, adventure-oriented interior and the latest driver assistance and connectivity technologies ... an authentic midsize truck with a range of body, drivetrain and equipment configurations carefully selected to fit customer needs." Inside, Frontier features an available 9-inch color touchscreen display with Apple and Android standard on all models, plus a standard 7-inch configurable Advanced Driver Assist binnacle display (both screens stated as largest-in-class). The 2022 Nissan Frontier is available in King Cab and Crew Cab configurations, 4x2 and 4x4 drive, and choice of S, new-for-2022 PRO-X (4x2 only), and SV PRO-4X (4x4 only) trims.

▼ From the start of 2022, the Geely design studio in Warwickshire UK has a new name—the **Lotus** Tech Creative Centre Limited (LTCC). The facility is already playing a key role in the ongoing transformation of Lotus from a UK sports car company to a Chinese-owned global performance car business and brand. The LTCC team continues to be led by highly experi-

enced designer Ben Payne in the role of managing director and head of studio. Based in the UK's automotive heartland, LTCC is a world-class automotive design facility delivering the complete range of disciplines—design strategy, exterior and interior design, user interface and user experience design, visualization, studio engineering, digital and physical modeling, plus color, materials and finish. It has

everything to support Lotus' expanding design workstreams. Under Payne's guidance, the LTCC team has taken the lead on creating a range of all-new, all-electric lifestyle cars for the next generation of



1929 Bentley Speed Six 'Le Mans'-style Tourer

Lotus customers. Taking core principles and Lotus DNA from more than 70 years of sports car design and evolving them, the result—receiving its world premiere in the spring—is the first-ever performance SUV from Lotus, the Type 132, to be followed by a four-door sports coupe (Type 133) and a smaller SUV (Type 134) in the coming years. LTCC is working in close collaboration with the design team at Hethel, led by Russell Carr, which will continue to spearhead Lotus' global sports car programs. A Type 135, the first EV sports car from Lotus, is already in development. Overseeing the work of both design studios is Peter Horbury, appointed senior VP and executive advisor of design at Lotus last September, who says, "LTCC and Lotus Design at Hethel ... are already collaborating closely with the other Lotus facilities around the world, such as Lotus Tech HQ in Wuhan, China, and Lotus Tech Innovation Centre in Raunheim, Germany."

▼ A prime example of Britain's first "supercar," the long-legged 1929 **Bentley** Speed Six Le Mans-Style Tourer—which dominated the Le Mans 24 Hours and has rallied, rambled and toured throughout Europe and the Middle East, is going up for sale with **H&H Classics** in the UK, at an estimated value of £500,000-600,000 (about \$665,000-800,000). Bentley dominated the early years of the Le Mans 24 Hours race, winning in 1924, 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1930. The marque's first victor, the 3 Litre, was succeeded by 4½ Litre

and 6½ Litre models—and it was the latter of these, known as the Speed Six in high performance guise, which the company's creator W.O. Bentley deemed his favorite. Displacing almost 1.1 litre per cyl-

inder, the Speed Six's mighty engine employed aluminum pistons, dry-sump lubrication, twin spark ignition and an advanced valve train. The quoted power output of 180 bhp was almost twice that of the contemporary Rolls-Royce Phantom I. The Speed Six was among the fastest cars money could buy and quickly developed something of a cult following, which has endured to this day. This magnificent beast, a survivor from almost a century



Porsche 911 GT3

ago, is one of just 182 6½ Litre Bentleys completed to Speed Six specification and can boast a top speed of well over 100 mph. Supplied new to E. Taylor Esq, in June 1929 (and first issued with the London registration number UU 5911), it has been entrusted to renowned marque specialist R.C. Moss for maintenance and improvement work during its current nineteen-year ownership. Living up to its

Tourer designation, the car has been much enjoyed on the 2005 Rallye des Alpes, the 2006 Bentley Tour of Aquitaine and Bordeaux, further afield in the Jordan III Rally (The Jewel) in 2007, and in the 2008 Eighth Autumn Ramble, 2009 Ninth Autumn Ramble and 2010 Summer Saunter to Ireland. Beginning life as an HJ Mulliner-bodied saloon on the shortest production wheelbase (11ft 6in), chassis BA2587 was extensively restored during the 1990s and early 2000s. The engine is stamped with the number BA2589S, which suggests that it is a factory service replacement unit, and the front axle is from a Bentley 4.5 Litre model. The body is a replica of those fitted to Bentley's team cars in period. This car will be for sale at the Imperial War Museum Duxford—about 50 miles north of London, 10 miles south of Cambridge—on March 16th.

▼ The latest 911 GT3—the top-performing model of the seventh-generation 911—has joined the fleet and is now available for customers to drive at the **Porsche** Experience Center driver development courses in both Los Angeles and Atlanta. This road car is designed to fulfill any driving enthusiast's wishes, with a high-revving, naturally aspirated engine that is virtually identical to the track-only 911 GT3 Cup race car.

CEO of Porsche Cars North America. “The feel, the sound and the dynamics make for a very special experience that anyone can enjoy on the closed track with personal instruction.” Experience Center custo-



mers will drive on a variety of track modules, some designed to simulate everyday driving conditions, others to provide more challenging environments. The following driving experiences are offered in LA: 90-minute 911 GT3; 90-minute 911 GT3 vs 911 Turbo; 4-hour 911 GT3 Accelerated; 90-minute 911 GT3 Generations (991 v. 992, available until March 31); and 4-hour 911 GT3 Generations Accelerated (also until March 31). Atlanta offers the same 90-minute options as LA. Detailed information for each program in both locations can be found at porschedriving.com.

▼ There are Mercedes-Benz S 500 and 580 4MATIC Sedans, Mercedes-AMG S 63 and 65 Sedans, a Mercedes-Maybach S 580 and 680 4MATIC Sedans and, as driven in our January-February issue, a Mercedes-EQ EQS 580 4MATIC Sedan, as well as an EQS 450+ and a Mercedes-AMG EQS, with parallel naming sets for other models. We had noted that the Mercedes-EQ EQS name is a bit redundant and suggested this convention may be subject to more evolution. Before the ink was dry on that issue came the introduction of a new concept EV—which in all its materials to date is called not a Mercedes-EQ, but rather the **Mercedes-Benz VISION EQXX**. Whether this, especially as a concept, is an aberration from, or a new direction for, the EQ brand and model naming scheme, we're not sure. But it seems worthy of a passing note of clarification. Range and efficiency are set to define the electric era, with ex-

ceptional range key to making EVs suitable for every journey and thus helping to increase overall adoption. Reduced battery size and weight are important to improving efficiency, and Mercedes-Benz is

hoping to lead the way, already having set a real-world range record with the 245-kW EQS 450+ in a recent Edmunds test, traveling 422 miles on one charge, 77 miles further than any other car previously tested. Not stopping there, engineers are working intensively to take range and efficiency to a completely new level. VISION EQXX is the result of a mission to break through technological barriers and demonstrate additional gains that are possible



through rethinking the fundamentals from the ground up, including advances across all elements of the electric drivetrain, as well as lightweight engineering and use of sustainable materials. VISION EQXX has an energy consumption of less than 10 kWh per 100 km (more than 6 miles per kWh); 95 percent efficiency from battery to wheels; more than 1,000 km (over 620 miles) on a single charge on public roads;

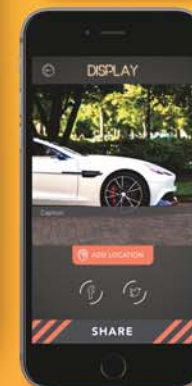
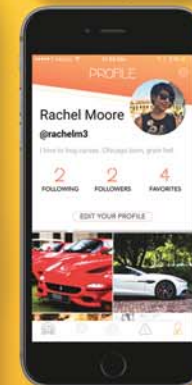
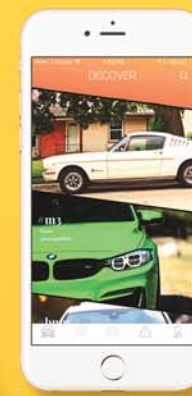
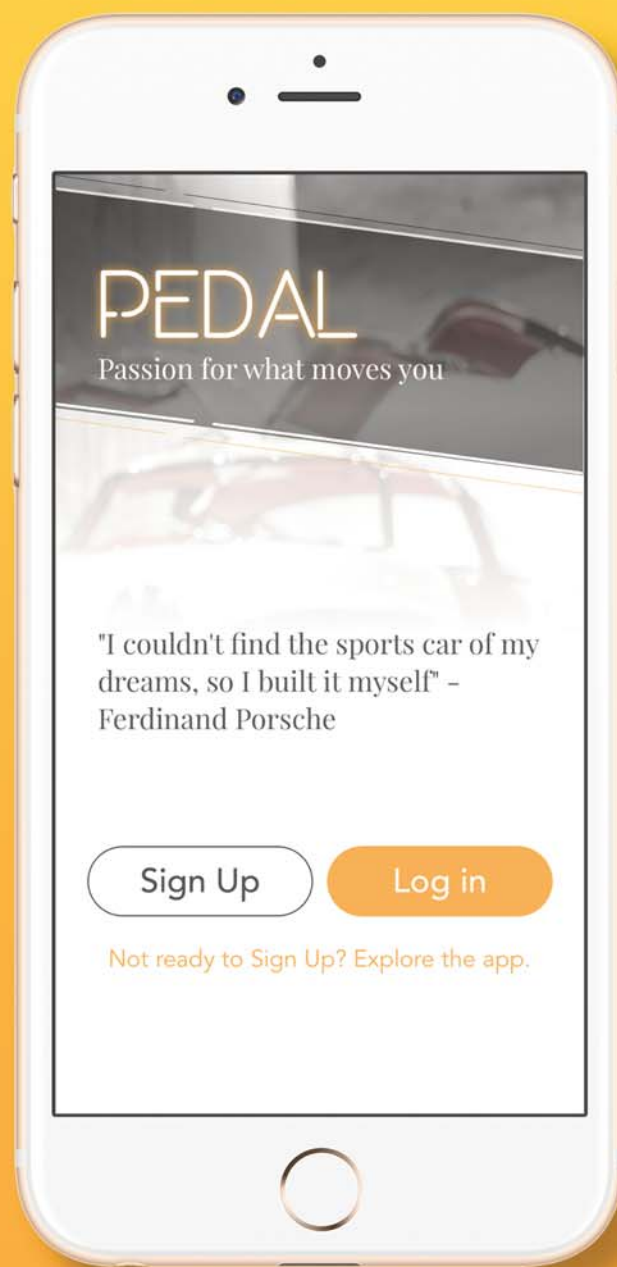
and all the energy of the big EQS sedan squeezed into the dimensions of a compact car—its battery pack holds almost 100 kWh of energy, yet has 50 percent less volume and is 30 percent lighter than the already benchmark pack in EQS. Among many lightweight engineering features, an electric-only chassis with an F1 subframe brings racing efficiency to the road in the VISION EQXX.

▼ The limited-edition **Acura NSX Type S** made its global debut as the brand's performance halo car at Monterey Car Week in 2021, and the Performance Manufacturing Center (PMC) in Marysville, Ohio, has now begun production. The engine is hand-assembled in a specialized facility within the Anna Engine Plant, also in Ohio. The first two to come off the line were painted in the facility's exclusive Gotham Gray matte paint finish. This matte-metallic finish requires new handling and shipping techniques at the PMC to ensure it is fully protected during transport to Acura dealers, including a new protective film applied to the car, and a new thicker and softer body covering for transportation. In addition, special training is being provided to Acura dealers to pass along instructions for proper care to owners. The Type S is instantly recognizable by distinctive and

more aggressive front and rear styling; the model also features unique five-spoke wheels, stickier Pirelli P-Zero tires, a retuned adaptive damper system, Type S decals and a standard carbon fiber roof. The car bears Acura's most powerful production drivetrain ever: an updated version of the supercar's twin-turbocharged



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V6 plus three-motor hybrid system that produces 600 hp and 492 lb-ft of torque. Its 9-speed DCT and torque-vectoring Sport Hybrid Super Handling All-Wheel Drive (SH-AWD) are also returned to maximize

performance. An available Lightweight Package includes carbon ceramic brakes, carbon fiber engine cover and carbon fiber interior package, reducing total curb weight by nearly 58 lbs. With a total run of 350 units, every NSX Type S was quickly reserved when pre-orders opened last August. PMC will finish production of the limited-run supercar this year.



Steve Saleen with Saleen S1

performance. An available Lightweight Package includes carbon ceramic brakes, carbon fiber engine cover and carbon fiber interior package, reducing total curb weight by nearly 58 lbs. With a total run of 350 units, every NSX Type S was quickly reserved when pre-orders opened last August. PMC will finish production of the limited-run supercar this year.

▼ We received a copy of the following customer-investor letter from Steve Saleen: "Steve Saleen here. I want to thank you for being a part of the Saleen community. Whether you are an owner, a future owner or an enthusiast, you are what makes Saleen so great. Saleen is about to undergo the biggest transformation in our nearly 40-year history, and I invite you to participate in it. You know about our Signature Line—high-performance vehicles we build from the chassis of Mustangs, F-150 trucks and our upcoming Bronco. You may also know about our Original Line—which includes the S7 supercar and the upcoming Saleen S1. Saleen is in the midst of transitioning to a new era of high-performance vehicles to compete amongst the world's best. We continue to evolve our Signature line to be best in class, as well as introducing our new Saleen Bronco. At the same time, we are also building the next generation of supercars and sport cars, which will also encompass electrification. As we move into this next phase, we are raising capital. And that is where you come in. We will soon be raising mon-

ey under Regulation A of the Securities Act to expedite our backlog built up during the Covid era. And we'll restart the certification of the Saleen S1, plus the development and production of the all-electric Saleen S5 supercar ... and this is just the beginning! We are anticipating a successful first round of financing that will enable us to introduce our new products. This will then allow the company to be in better position for future rounds of financing. But first, I want to invite the people responsible for the success of the Saleen brand to join us for this new, exciting opportunity. You can sign up to be the very first to access this investment opportunity at https://invest.saleen.com. You can read our offering circular as filed with the SEC (you will need this long link). Please note that the SEC has not yet qualified our offering and we are not accepting funds at this time. I hope you'll sign up to be one of the very first to learn more about this exciting opportunity. I would love to have you directly involved at the beginning of this next phase of the Saleen story."



Investment opportunity at https://invest.saleen.com. You can read our offering circular as filed with the SEC (you will need this long link). Please note that the SEC has not yet qualified our offering and we are not accepting funds at this time. I hope you'll sign up to be one of the very first to learn more about this exciting opportunity. I would love to have you directly involved at the beginning of this next phase of the Saleen story."

▼ Partnering with POWDR family-owned adventure lifestyle mountain resort destinations, the Subaru WinterFest tour showcases the Subaru Wilderness Family of vehicles. Harman Kardon will host remote outdoor satellite shows with bluegrass, indie and Americana bands, from a new, custom pop-up stage built from a 1999 Subaru Sambar. There are gear and environmental demos; dog-friendly experiences; tasty treats and warm beverages. Subaru owners get VIP treatment. Events run through mid-April at resorts in California, Utah, Colorado, Oregon and Vermont. For details, visit subaru.com/winterfest.

▼ Dodge//SRT and Mopar are partnering with Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) for the team's inaugural season in the 2022 National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Camping World Drag Racing Series. Nine-time Top Fuel national event winner Leah Pruett will drive a TSR Top Fuel dragster with Dodge Power Brokers and Direct Connection livery throughout the season, continuing a Dodge//SRT and Mopar partnership that started in 2016. Three-time NHRA Funny Car World Champion Matt Hagan continues his partnership with Dodge//SRT and Mopar that began in 2009, in his Tony Stewart Racing Dodge Charger SRT

Hellcat Funny Car. Hagan has driven a Dodge Charger Funny Car in 293 races, earning 39 career wins, 32 runner-up finishes and 43 No. 1 qualifier positions. The announcement opens a sixth "garage door" of the Dodge Never Lift campaign, which provides a two-year road map to the brand's electrified performance future. Visit Dodgegarage.com/never-lift to view the 24 Months of Muscle calendar. ■

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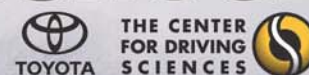
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Nailed it.

BY JOE SAGE

Grip a piece of 8.5x11 paper by the shorter side, hold it horizontally out into thin air, and it will maintain its shape. Now cut out a big chunk of it, so it's L-shaped, and you'll find that long part starts to lose its stability. This is a rough comparison of a unibody SUV to a unibody pickup, and it's a scenario that most manufacturers address by adding a buttress of some sort, whether streamlined or fundamental, to triangulate from cab to bed. It

works, but it detracts from that pure pickup look. Trust Ford to solve this to their high truck-building standards, with all that additional strength built into a classic pickup profile.

There are now a few companies producing unibody vehicles with a pickup bed, some more truck-like than others (some avoid saying the P word at all). Ford could have gone in any direction with this—after all, they had the car-based Ranchero years ago—but true to their bones, they have built a small truck that is unmistakably all pickup.

Our new Ford Maverick XLT is the middle of three trim levels. It's well built, period, but without keyless entry and start, power seats or a few other niceties. The beauty of this is that these decisions are in the product planning category, not the corner-cutting cat-

egory. One look at the lineup (lower right), and it's easy to see that they set out to keep the base model under \$20 grand and the top model under \$30 grand. Basic mission accomplished.

The basic truck starts out as a front-driver, with a hybrid powertrain standard—a first for pickups in the US. This drivetrain also has a continuously variable transmission (CVT).

They don't automatically include a lot of fluff, and we take this as a plus—you get the low price, and you're not forced to buy features. There are options, though, at all levels. Notably, ours includes the higher-output EcoBoost engine, which is bundled with all-wheel drive and a switch to an 8-speed automatic. This brings our price from lower-mid \$20s to mid-20s—and even if applied to the top model Lariat stays under \$30,000.

Ours also includes the FX4 off-road package. Though these trucks are presented as AWD, not 4x4, and do not have transfer cases, this affordable kit opens up some great back country terrain.

Of many options available, a notable one we do not have is an XLT Luxury Package (\$2500), which brings a long list of features including keyless entry and start, heated power seats and power mirrors, even a full size spare. We'd like all of that, and the truck would still be under \$30 grand.

This is right about where, on the one hand, you start reminding yourself that you can get one for under \$20 grand. Or, on the other hand, you start liking all the niceties and might think about moving up to the Lariat, as long as \$30ish is looming.

Lariat of course includes many of these features already. It also offers a Luxury Package (\$3750, but requires Ford Co-Pilot360, thus totaling \$4400). The list of inclusions on this one is lengthy, with one irresistible detail for us—B&O audio, to replace the

standard AM-FM unit. (Then again there are always custom installers to replace the base unit.)

Performance is solid. Unless absolutely seeking minimum purchase price, the engine (and drivetrain) in ours seems the clear choice—250 hp with the EcoBoost (including AWD and an 8-speed) versus 162 hp (with FWD and CVT).

The EcoBoost is one quiet, smooth-running engine—in fact, we did a doubletake at first, while parked, thinking it must be the hybrid, as it was running so silently. Even auto start-stop, a feature we generally disable, was so smooth we often didn't bother or flat out forgot about it.

We took our Maverick on a healthy run up I-17, a great situation for appreciating the basic safety and flexibility of the EcoBoost and 8-speed, even beyond its healthy performance in town. And we took it on some back country dirt roads, where its firm gear selections also equal specific control (as would a manual, if available). Of note, we never

(cont'd)



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico
CONSTRUCTION...unibody SuperCrew pickup, high-strength steel frame, mild steel body
ENGINE.....Cleveland OH or Valencia, Spain
ENGINE.....2.0L EcoBoost DOHC TI-VCT, alum
COMPRESSION RATIO9.3:1
HP/TORQUE250 hp / 277 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION(w 2.5L) 8-spd auto
DRIVETRAINintelligent AWD
SUSPENSION....F: indep MacPherson w coils, twin-tube hydraulic gas shocks, stblzr bars, alum lower control arm, steel subframe & cast knuckle;
 R: (AWD/FX4) indep multi-link trailing arm w monotube hydraulic gas dampers, coils, stblzr bar, steel subframe & cast knuckle
STEERING.....electronic pwr assist
BRAKES.....4-wheel disc
WHEELS.....17-in alum (FX4 pkg)
TIRES.....(AWD) 235/65R17 all-terrain
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....199.7 / 121.1 in
HEIGHT / WIDTH.....68.7 / not incl mirrors 72.6 in
OVERHANG (F/R)34.1 / 44.5 in
APPR / DEP / BRKOVER21.6 / 21.2 / 18.1°
GROUND CLEARANCE8.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE40.0 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)(w/o moonrf) 40.3 / 39.6 in
LEGROOM (F/R)(w 2.0L EB) 42.8 / 36.9 in
BED LENGTH.....54.4 in
CARGO WIDTH.....(wheelhouse) 42.6 in
CARGO VOLUME33.3 cu.ft
WEIGHT3731 lb
MAX PAYLOAD1500 lb
TOW CAPACITY2000 lb (4k pkg avail)
FUEL CAPACITY.....(2.0L) 16.5 gal
MPGtbd (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE\$22,280
EQUIPMENT GROUP 300A: XLT w 2.0L EcoBoost,
 8-spd auto, AWD3305
PAINT: Hot Pepper Red TC Metallic390
FX4 OFF-ROAD PACKAGE: (AWD only) 17" alum wheels, A/T tires, 6.5" productivity screen in cluster, front tow hooks, FX4 Off-Road decals, Hill Descent Control, skid plates, hitch receiver with 4-pin harness800
FORD CO-PILOT360: Blind Spot Info w Cross-Traffic Alert; full-size spare (incl on hybrid); Lane Keep Alert/Aid540
FLOOR LINERS: w/o carpeted mats135
17" WHEELS.....795
SPRAY-IN BEDLINER.....495
DESTINATION CHARGE.....1495

TOTAL\$30,235
 (Note: Our sample's price varies from info below.)

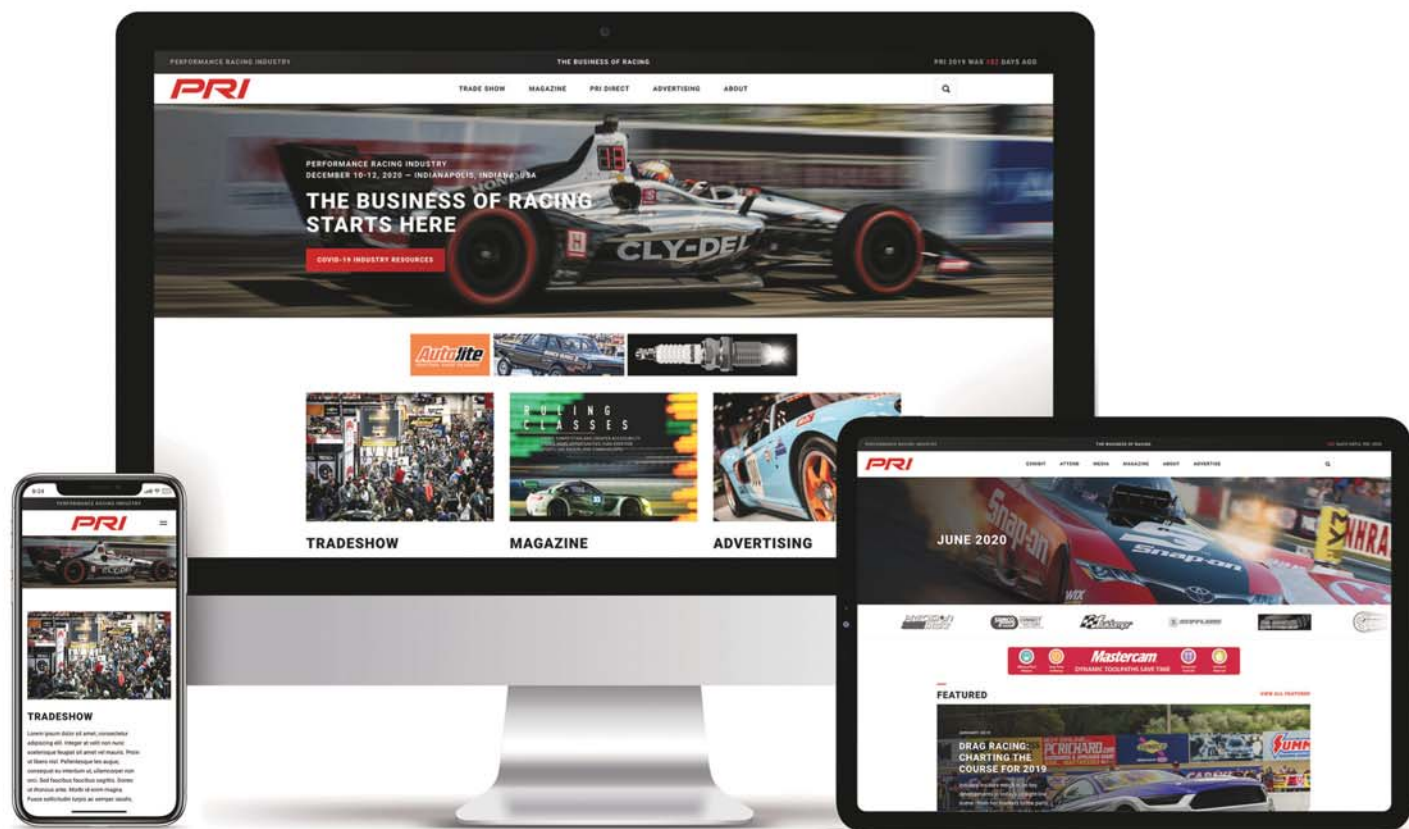
	MAVERICK LINEUP	
	FWD	AWD
	2.5L hyb	2.0L EB
XL	\$19,995	+3305
XLT	22,360	+3305
Lariat	25,860	+3305

Base configuration for each. Variables include:
 • **ENGINE/TRANSMISSION:**
 2.5L Full Hybrid w electronic CVT;
 or 2.0L EcoBoost w 8-spd automatic
 • **DRIVETRAIN:** FWD or Intelligent AWD



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noted any downsides to its unibody build versus cab-and-bed-on-frame, even on the roughest stuff.

Steering is an electronic unit, as is common, but has been engineered for a particularly solid and connected feel. Suspension (the AWD build includes advanced independent multi-link rear, and the FX4 package upgrades this additionally) is top-notch both on the trail and in town. Even the harshest parking lot speedbumps were smooth sailing.

The bed is four and a half feet long, almost exactly as wide, though three and a half between wheelwells. It includes recesses to use 2x4s to cleverly achieve a four-foot-wide flat load above the wheelwells. The tailgate (which locks) lowers and raises manually, and it's fairly substantial in heft. A number of other tricks and accessories augment load capabilities, from eight-foot building materials to outdoor gear, whether big and cumbersome or loose and plentiful, as well as those Home Depot runs for anything and everything—all while keeping dirt, mud and splinters outdoors, as only a pickup can.

The interior is equal parts stylish and utilitarian, with door liners kept simple and clean, following the contours of the doors' outer shell. Also novel here are the door grabs, more of a canti-

levered stub, stylish but not exactly ergonomic.

If there's one thing we would change inside, it's the screen tilt—it seems perfectly vertical, even forward-leaning, though it actually does lean back just three degrees. It makes for an uncomfortable glance, with head height almost inevitably well above the screen. There seems to be nothing that would keep it from being more like a 10-degree angle, as every monitor we measured in our office turned out to be, plus or minus one degree or less.

One tradeoff between engines is fuel mileage. The FWD hybrid is rated 42 mpg city, 33 highway, 37 combined, while the EcoBoost is 23/30/26 with FWD or 22/29/25 with AWD. Our readout stayed around 24 mpg through our highway-speed drive through I-17's elevation changes and our off-pavement session, right in range. If you're mostly doing city driving, the hybrid is rated notably higher (42 vs 22/23). For highway driving, the difference seems negligible (33 vs 30/29). For those aiming for that \$20 grand price position, along with ongoing fuel savings, the hybrid is a win-win. If performance and features are priorities, then the EcoBoost and upper trims are a win-win. The lineup's formula is right on target throughout.

Rear legroom is pretty tight, which is just one

factor that led to our thinking that it would be great to see a single-cab version of the Maverick. There are a number of small hints in the wider full-size pickup market that this, with an eight-foot bed, might be a very welcome return as one build option. A single cab, with a six-foot bed, could be great here, too. Everything's a tradeoff, but with that, building materials would not exceed the tailgate, and you could sleep in a closed bed (perhaps with camper shell to fend off the grizzlies).

It's clear that Ford wanted to establish the Maverick's affordability, above all, and they have succeeded. The product planners will keep a close eye on where most buying decisions fall, as always, but we wonder whether—especially if higher trims and options sell well—there will be Platinum, Limited, even King Ranch versions in the future. If the \$19,995 models sells best, perhaps not. But every other trend in the pickup market suggests yes.

One interesting perception we had in the Maverick was that it does not generate any particular envy for the bigger trucks, nor disdain from them—you can share the roads with no shame about your small size. It's tough and strong and powerful (as equipped), and it serves its own purposes. And it is most decidedly trucklike. ■



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MOTORSPORTS : PHOENIX RACEWAY MARCH NASCAR WEEKEND 2022

SPRINGTIME AT PHOENIX RACEWAY!

NASCAR WEEKEND RETURNS MARCH 11-13

Phoenix Raceway's one-mile oval is fired up and ready to go this spring, as March race weekend kicks off with the third race of NASCAR's 2022 season, here. Grandstand, suite, club and hill-side general admission options, RV camping, and complete event and travel packages are all available, as well as the FanShield Infield Experience Pass for unequalled access to the pit area

The first race, the ARCA Menards Series General Tire 150, is on Friday, March 11 at 5:30 pm.

Saturday, March 12, don't forget your sunglasses and tank top, as you watch up-and-coming drivers in the NASCAR Xfinity Series United Rentals

200, starting midafternoon at 2:30 pm.

And Sunday, March 13, drivers like Chase Elliott and Martin Truex Jr will take on the NASCAR Cup Series Ruoff Mortgage 500 at 12:30 pm.

Come early and stay late—there are practice and qualifying sessions, driver introductions and much more before the green flag, and there's a lot more going on after the checkered flag!

TICKETS & INFO: Check ticket availability online at PhoenixRaceway.com, or call the Phoenix Raceway ticket office at 866-408-RACE (7223).

For 2022 NASCAR Cup Series information and other tickets, visit nascar.com/tickets. ■

FRIDAY, MARCH 11 – 5:30 pm
ARCA MENARDS SERIES
GENERAL TIRE 150

SATURDAY, MARCH 12 – 2:30 pm
NASCAR XFINITY SERIES
UNITED RENTALS 200

SUNDAY, MARCH 13 – 12:30 pm
NASCAR CUP SERIES
RUOFF MORTGAGE 500

Details subject to change



Goldilocks option by Joe Sage

TRD—Toyota Racing Development—is best known for track performance builds and modifications and, especially in the case of the 4Runner and pickups, off-road performance models, to the extreme. Not unlike several other manufacturers' performance sub-badges, notably the Germans, here Toyota is applying it to more of a style and options package, though it does include mild performance upgrades. Mostly, it's an attractive new build within the reliably solid 4Runner lineup overall.

Introduced in mid-2021 as a 2022 model, the new 4Runner TRD Sport—one of four trim levels, out of eight total, available with either rear- or four-wheel drive (ours is a 4x4)—is a new combination of style and stance, with enhanced on-road suspen-

sion as found on the notably pricier Limited trim.

TRD Sport stands moderately tall atop 20-inch wheels, though it forgoes the beefy rock-absorbing sidewalls of a TRD Pro atop 17-inch wheels. Its hood scoop identifies it immediately as a member of the TRD family. Our sample, in this year's distinctive Lunar Rock paint, is all the more evocative of the off-road 4Runners. But it's more aimed at daily driving and road handling.

We did plenty of both of those during our week with the vehicle, with some decent four-wheeling thrown in for good measure.

4Runner puts a smile on our face with some of our favorite controls in any vehicle: simple, stylish, and most of all rugged knobs for the transfer case

selector, climate and various functions around the screen. They're all big enough, extend far enough, and are textured with grooves and rubberized edges—easy to operate with gloves on.

That in itself was enough to suggest a drive up to Flagstaff or maybe the Grand Canyon, with snow in the forecast along with some single-digit temperatures at the Canyon. We could also check out that road-hugging suspension on the twisties through I-17's dramatic elevation gains.

At almost 5000 pounds, with generally bricklike aerodynamics, moderate horsepower and a venerable five-speed automatic, we might not have expected a noteworthy highway cruise, but we would have been wrong. The 4Runner climbed just fine, perhaps without a lot more power to spare, but we never needed any more than we had, holding our own with the rest of the always competitive and

aggressive traffic through Black Canyon.

What we really came to appreciate was that five-speed transmission. It shifted well, right when needed, and tangibly—which got us to thinking about all the 10-speed-and-such transmissions in play now. Their job isn't to pull Black Canyon, but rather to shift more often in routine driving, to be more fuel-efficient. Those are a heck of an engineering feat, but as a driving experience, they can arguably start to feel as though they are always hunting for gears—smoother, but with sort of an uncertain undercurrent. Anybody who's been driving more than a couple of years is familiar with the active feel of fewer gears. With 4Runner's five-speed, each shift felt like just what we needed.

Skies had cleared, but we hit our first snow on the ground above 5000 feet, heavier above 6000 feet. Time to leave the pavement behind. For this type of off-roading, the tire and wheel size are not as important—those tall sidewalls on a TRD Pro are for flexing the impact from bouldering and rock

crawling. And its relatively narrow tires are a plus here—better to dig for a firm surface than to float and slide atop the snow. Ours was equipped with Yokohama Geolander All/Terrains, not the boldest off-roading tread, but a solid combination for exactly this model's mission—highway cruising and daily use, with some tough stuff mixed in.

Toward the lower end of the full lineup's price range, the TRD Sport is not super highly featured. And that's the point. With a degree of SR5 affordability, a degree of TRD off-road-worthiness and a degree of Limited road-handling, it may be none of those, but it delivers key points of all of them. 4Runner's distinctive persona seems best illuminated by the top-dollar off-road end, but many buyers (who otherwise might be looking at, say, the Highlander) want that glow—and some of that capability—in a more conventional and/or more affordable build. It's not about what it is not; it's about what it is. And this is exactly what the new 4Runner TRD Sport delivers. ■



SPECIFICATIONS (TRD SPORT)

ASSEMBLY	.....Tahara, Aichi, Japan
ENGINE	.....4.0L alum/alum EFI 24v DOHC V6
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.4:1
HP/TORQUE	.....270 hp / 278 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....5-spd ECT auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....part time 4x4
TORQUE SPLIT	.....40/60 straight line; turning (front wheel spin) 30/70; turning (rear wheel spin) 53/47
SUSPENSION	.....F: coils, indep dbl-wishbone, 1.22" stblzr bar; R: coils, 4-link rigid, 1.18" stblzr bar
STEERING	.....pwr assist var gear rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 13.3 vented; R: 12.3 vented
WHEELS	.....20x7.5
TIRES	.....Yokohama Geolander G96 P245/60R20
TRACK	.....63.2
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....190.2 / 109.8 in
HEIGHT	.....w roof rails 71.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.4 ft
APPROACH / DEPARTURE	.....33 / 26°
ROWS / SEATS	.....2-row / 5-psngr (opt 3/7)
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....39.3 / 38.6 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....41.7 / 32.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....47.2 / 89.7 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....9.6 in
WEIGHT	.....TRD Sport not stated; overall lineup (4x4) 4675-4805 lb
PAYLOAD / GVWR	.....TRD Sport not stated; overall lineup (4x4) 1495-1625 / 6300 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....5000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....87 oct unl reg / 23.0 gal
MPG	.....16/19/17 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$42,025
PREMIUM AUDIO8-in touchscreen, 8 speakers, dynamic nav (3-yr trial), safety connect (1-yr trial), wifi (up to 2GB for 3-mo trial), destination assist (1-yr trial).....1585
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ALL-WEATHER MATS/CARGO TRAY269
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DESTINATION CHARGE1215
TOTAL\$45,904

2022 TOYOTA 4RUNNER LINEUP

All have 4.0L V6 / 5-spd auto	4x2	4x4
SR5	\$37,605	\$39,480
SR5 Premium	41,015	42,890
TRD Sport	40,450	42,325
Limited	47,190	49,225
Trail Edition	41,450	
TRD Off-Road	41,435	
TRD Off-Road Premium	44,380	
TRD Pro	50,745	

Note: our sticker's base varied slightly from this.

Arizona Auction Week 2022

Things were about 80 percent back to normal for Arizona Auction Week this January, with six events taking place, most of them indistinguishable from any pre-pandemic year.

This is down from eight in 2020, the last time everything was normal, just before lockdowns began.

But it's a huge bounce-back from 2021, when only four events were held in the usual timeframe, two of which (Bonhams and RM Sotheby's) were on site in Arizona, though only one (Bonhams) in its usual location. The other two were titled as Scottsdale events but based out of town (Gooding & Company in Southern California and Worldwide Auctioneers in Auburn, Indiana). All four had limited in-person presence, with bidding and sales largely conducted online.

A fifth (Barrett-Jackson) ran in March 2021 instead, giving shifting pandemic responses a little more headroom to build up and settle down.

(Another, Mecum, also ran in March, but that is never part of the usual January lineup.)

Barrett-Jackson had also tested the operational waters in October 2020, a chance to work with WestWorld and the City of Scottsdale to develop massive air filtration improvements and such on site.

Russo and Steele, MAG Auctions and Leake Auction Co. did not run January 2021 events, though MAG has since returned to their normal multi-event annual calendar. Leake had run an impressive

first-year event in 2020, but has yet to return with a live event, though they do offer their services online, ongoing.

Despite earlier signs that reactions to the lingering pandemic could affect events everywhere, the January 2022 calendar solidified into six of the usual eight familiar events. Five returned to their usual venues, all fully live. One (Gooding & Company) remained a limited-access affair without a traditional auction block and audience, as it had in 2021, but brought viewing back to Arizona, just not in their normal venue. All events had phone and online components.

The only two missing from January Auction Week were Russo and Steele, a huge local operation with 20 years of heritage here, and Leake, the first-timer. No word from either on the future, as of now, though both offer services online. ■



Barrett-Jackson 51st Annual Scottsdale Auction: 50th Anniversary

Nine days: Saturday, January 22 - Sunday, January 30, 2022

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

BARRETT-JACKSON achieved \$203.2 million in total sales in January, making this year's Scottsdale auction the most successful event in the company's 50-year history, a great way to celebrate their birthday.

Of this total, \$195.9 million came from 1,857 vehicles sold with No Reserve, at a 100 percent sell-through rate, with over 140 world-record auction sales achieved. The average vehicle sales price reached a new high of \$105,517, while ten non-charity vehicles, the most in Barrett-Jackson history, sold for over \$1 million each.

Of the top ten non-charity vehicles sold in March 2021's auction, only three were in seven figures. This year, all ten were:

1. 2004 Porsche Carrera GT.....(Lot #1398).....\$1,980,000
2. 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing.....(Lot #1415).....\$1,870,000
3. 2015 Porsche 918 Spyder.....(Lot #1405).....\$1,815,000
4. 2014 McLaren P1.....(Lot #1413).....\$1,705,000
5. 2019 Ford GT Heritage.....(Lot #1389).....\$1,650,000
6. 2019 McLaren Senna.....(Lot #1419.1).....\$1,512,500
7. 2017 Ford GT '66 Heritage Edition.....(Lot #1417).....\$1,430,000
8. 2020 Ford GT Carbon Series.....(Lot #1399).....\$1,375,000
9. 2014 Mercedes Benz G63 AMG 6x6.....(Lot #1413.1).....\$1,210,000
10. 1967 Shelby Cobra 427 CSX 3356.....(Lot #1397).....\$1,210,000

A total of 1,153 automobilia pieces sold at No Reserve for more than \$7.3 million, a record overall, with several individual records also set. The top five include:

1. 1953 Ford Jubilee Neon Porcelain Sign.....(Lot #9491).....\$460,000 (world auction record for a neon sign)
2. 1950s to Early 1960s Disneyland Donald Duck Ride.....(Lot #9488.1).....\$172,500 (world auction record for a kiddie ride)
3. 1940s-50s Mobil Oil Neon Porcelain Sign.....(Lot #9495.2).....\$161,000
4. 1930s Kelly Tires Sign.....(Lot #9470).....\$155,250
5. 1940s Greyhound Bus Lines Tin Sign w Animated Neon.....(Lot #8492.4).....\$149,500

During the nine-day event, Barrett-Jackson raised more than \$8.8 million for charity through the sale of ten vehicles, with two charity vehicles surpassing the million-dollar mark, led by the \$3.6 million auction of the 2023 Chevrolet Corvette Z06 VIN 001 (Lot #3009). To date, Barrett-Jackson has helped raise over \$144 million for charity for organizations around the world.

On Saturday, the coveted Barrett-Jackson Cup "Ultimate Best in Show" was awarded to a 1936 Ford Roadster owned by Bob Johnson and built by Pinkee's Rod Shop, one of five finalists selected from 50 entries from across the country.

The 2022 Scottsdale Auction was broadcast live on FYI and The History Channel for 38 hours, including an unprecedented six hours of prime-time coverage on Saturday, January 29. Dozens of celebrity guests ranged from Pitbull and Bret Michaels, to Tim Allen and Renee Zellweger, to Joey Logano and Arie Luyendyk, to former VP Dan Quayle.

Next up for Barrett-Jackson is Palm Beach from April 7-9, followed by Las Vegas in June-July and Houston in October.

▼ www.barrett-jackson.com





Bonhams 11th Annual Scottsdale Auction Thursday, January 27, 2022

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

BONHAMS is a prestigious UK-based auction house in business since 1793 which, in addition to a variety of ultra-high-end automotive auctions, has a wide variety of fine art, jewelry and other specialty events on its roster.

Their Arizona event has run continuously for eleven years at the Westin Kierland Resort & Spa. Last year's event was limited by pandemic conditions to bidders only, with special provisions for pre-sale vehicle inspection. Nonetheless, Bonhams was the only one to run in its normal timeframe and at its normal location in 2021.

This year, all was essentially back to normal, with an enthusiastic crowd of spectators as well as in-person bidders, and with their usual full complement of display, tents, food and drink in place. Phone and web bidding also creates major excitement here, as (pandemic or not) Bonhams boasts the largest worldwide audience in the business.

The Bonhams auction presented 90 collectors' automobiles, spanning all eras. Nine of the top ten sellers had crossed the Atlantic, representing the greatest European and British automotive names. Bonhams had an over 95 percent sell-through rate during the event, with others going into post-sales.

Here are the top five sales during the event (prices including premium):

An impeccably restored left-hand drive 1958 AC Ace Roadster with its original aluminum bodywork and matching numbers engine, first brought to the US from France by a USAF pilot, now offered from a prominent US-based collection of show winners, was

the top lot, soaring past its top estimate of \$375,000 to sell for \$516,500.

Next highest was a very special barn find 1953 Mercedes-Benz 300S Roadster, one of only 141 produced and considered surely one of the last unrestored examples, selling for \$472,500. After many decades off the road, it presents a rare opportunity to restore one of the finest post-war high performance luxury cars to its former glory.

Right on its heels was a 1997 Porsche 911 Type 993 Turbo S Coupé, with just 14,000 miles on it since new, selling for \$467,000. And a few dollars below that was a 1989 Lamborghini Countach 25th Anniversary, Design by Bertone, which had been driven fewer than 11,000 km (6835 miles), also surpassing its estimate to achieve \$445,000.

The Stars and Stripes were represented by the crowd-pleasing *Rain Man* 1949 Buick Roadmaster Convertible, the "third character" in the multi-award-winning 1988 motion picture, offered direct from actor Dustin Hoffman. Following spirited bidding among rivals online and at the Arizona event, the car sold for \$335,000 to a telephone bidder, setting a new world record for a Roadmaster convertible.

Other highlights included a matching-numbers left-hand-drive 1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series II Sports Saloon, Coachwork by Touring, selling above estimate for \$381,750; a highly collectible matching-numbers 1961 Porsche 356B 1600 Super T5 Cabriolet, in the desirable Reutter T5 body style and subject of a concours-winning restoration, sold for \$226,240; and a 6-speed manual 1995 Ferrari F355 Spider, a Pininfarina-designed convertible with less than 900 miles from new, selling for \$224,000.

Bonhams, headquartered in London, hosts a wide variety of auctions of many types worldwide throughout the year, with their Motor Car department working "from Goodwood to Geneva, Monterey to Monaco." Bonhams followed Arizona this year with Paris on February 3, with Amelia Island next, in early March.

▼ www.bonhams.com



Gooding & Company 15th Annual Scottsdale Edition Monday-Friday, January 24-28, 2022

Scottsdale Hangar One, 15220 N 78th Way, Scottsdale AZ 85251

GOODING & COMPANY was the only auction house this January with alternative operations in place. The event was much like last year, when it was online-only—with a new identity, branded as Geared Online—but then run from their Southern California headquarters, where registered bidders could also arrange in-person inspections. This year, they moved the same type of operation to Scottsdale—not to their usual venue by Fashion Square, but to a facility in the Airpark—all the better to gather more prospects already in town for the other auctions. Viewing and bidding ran all week, closing starting on Friday.

Gooding reported total sales total of \$6,962,450 for the week, with an 88 percent sell-through rate from 50 of 57 lots sold. The average price was \$139,249 per lot sold.

The top five sales were:

1. 1961 Maserati 5000 GT Coupe.....\$924,000
2. 2005 Ford GT.....\$423,500
3. 1974 Ferrari Dino 246 GTS.....\$374,000
4. 2008 Porsche 997 GT2.....\$357,500
5. 1963 Chevrolet Corvette 327/340 Split-Window Coupe.....\$335,500

The star car was as expected, the rare Touring-bodied 1961 Maserati 5000 GT Coupe (above photo, front and center), selling for \$924,000. This was followed with a black-on-black 2005 Ford GT offered from single ownership, which achieved a selling price of \$423,500. A late-production 1974 Ferrari Dino 246 GTS in Rosso Chiaro over black

leather took the third top slot, at \$374,000. The fourth highest sale was of a pristine, powerful 2008 Porsche 997 GT2 at \$357,500. An exceptional, unrestored 1963 Chevrolet Corvette 327/340-hp Split-Window Coupe brought \$335,500, the second highest price ever paid for this model at auction.

A highly desirable, very early production 1972 Mercedes-Benz 350 SL set a new world auction record at \$108,900, far surpassing its high estimate. Also exceeding its high estimate was a 2005 Porsche 996 Turbo S Cabriolet, offered from single ownership with limited use, selling for \$126,500.

Gooding sold 100 percent of lots offered from The Richard Donner Collection, ten classics from the late Hollywood filmmaker's personal stable. Mr. Donner's preferred classic to drive, the 1957 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Convertible, performed exceptionally well through an arduous bidding war, selling well above its high estimate for \$121,000.

"Our second consecutive Geared Online Scottsdale Edition sets a strong precedent for the capabilities of our online-only auctions against the backdrop of live and digital events in the industry," said Gooding & Company president and founder David Gooding. "This online auction, coupled with our viewing in Scottsdale, allowed us to maintain a physical presence for our loyal and dedicated clientele who have supported our Arizona sales year after year, while also confirming our strength as an auction house in both the traditional setting and the booming digital space."

Gooding & Company moves next to Amelia Island in early March, where highlights include an exceptional 1959 Porsche 718 RSK (estimate: \$2,500,000-3,500,000) from long-term family ownership. This is followed by a Geared Online Spring Automobilia event in late March/early April; the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance in August, where they are the official auction house; and their London Auction in early September.

▼ www.goodingco.com





MAG Auctions
January 2022 Collector Car Auction
 Friday-Sunday, January 28-30, 2022

We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort, Fort McDowell AZ 85264 (AZ 87 NE of Fountain Hills)

MAG AUCTIONS—the Motorsport Auction Group, LLC—is the direct successor to the Arizona events formerly run for many years by Silver Auctions out of the Pacific Northwest. Based in Sparks, Nevada, MAG is also the auction house for the Reno area's famous Hot August Nights event week.

MAG has retained the flavor of Silver, which has always stood out as a place where real vehicles can be bought and sold by real people at real prices—some may not be museum-perfect, but basically all can be bought and driven away on the spot. More than any, in many ways, this is where collector cars are still a hobby, not an industry. That was the case once again this year, although with a bit of a twist at the upper end. As supply chain and in particular computer chip shortages have impacted the new car market, in turn driving prices sky high in the used car market, that effect can be seen in the sale prices at the upper end of MAG Auctions this January, though unlike the other auctions—where top sellers routinely bring seven figures, occasionally even eight—just the top two sellers here were in six figures, and not by all that much.

That top list was full of both obvious and less obvious vehicles, though, topped off by a 2020 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van, a heavy duty 3500 model fully upfitted as a deluxe motorhome, selling at \$151,200. In second place was another you don't see cross the collector block every day, a 2002 Peterbilt 300, a brilliant red unit with a variety of light custom modifications and many special features, selling for \$102,600.

From here, the vehicles become more typical of the auction scene, though still commanding very solid prices. In third place was a vehicle that seemed like a dime a dozen (though not literally) 15 to 20 years ago around here—a 2003 Hummer H2, this one an SMA of Scottsdale custom that won a SEMA Best SUV Award in late 2002 (and in fact graced our third-ever cover in March-April 2003). It didn't look a day older and almost brought six figures itself, selling for \$98,280.

In fourth place was a car you would expect to find at any high-end auction, a shiny black 1956 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Convertible—a solid year and rare model, plus with a droptop, as well as era-perfect wide whitewalls—selling at \$95,040.

Next, riding the wave of enthusiasm for all Ford Broncos new and old (and the angst of limited availability for new ones, as they fill lots in Michigan by the thousands while waiting for chipsets), was a classic gen-one 1976 Ford bronco at a very healthy \$94,000.

At number six, plugging right in to the booming pickup craze new and old, was a 1971 Chevy C10 pickup, also in shiny black paint, lowered and modernized atop modern custom wheels, selling at \$84,000 and ready for regular drives to the show circuit.

After running the event at Peoria Sports Complex (MLB Spring Training home to the San Diego Padres and Seattle Mariners) in 2019 and 2020, MAG was scheduled to return to its familiar location at We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort on the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in 2021, but the event was postponed. This year, all was back to normal. First scheduled for three days, then changed to two as pandemic rules shifted around, it was changed back to three, as enthusiasm and participation showed considerable strength. Held outdoors (with tents) as always, the event was complete with vendor booths, food options and plenty of sunny outdoor seating for tirekickers, spectators and buyers-sellers alike.

MAG Auctions is next running a similar event at the same location, April 29-30.

▼ www.motorsportauctiongroup.com



RM Sotheby's
23rd Annual Automobiles of Arizona
 Thursday, January 27, 2022

Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa, 2400 E Missouri Ave, Phoenix AZ 85016

RM SOTHEBY'S kicked off its 2022 live auction calendar with their 23rd annual Arizona event, back at their longstanding Arizona Biltmore venue in Phoenix, a one-day auction totaling \$43.3 million in sales, with a 95 percent sell-through rate to registered bidders from thirty different countries. Continued growth of the industry was demonstrated by 24 percent of all registered bidders being first-time clients.

Top sale was a 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Alloy Gullwing at \$6.8 million, a new record price at public auction. With exceptional provenance and ultimate specification, this example is one of very few to retain its numbers-matching 3.0-liter NSL engine and original alloy body, and is one of the most desirable road-going models of the marque.

A 1931 Duesenberg Model J Tourster, one of the most high profile of all American cars of its era and boasting magnificent original coachwork, sold for \$3.4 million, surpassing its pre-sale estimate. This CCCA Full Classic had received a meticulous restoration by RM Auto Restoration and retained all its original components.

Third-highest proceeds came from a 300 SL Roadster, one of just three sold in 1964 and the third-to-last 300 SL ever produced. Outfitted with the rarest specifications, such as an alloy block and disc brakes, and in single ownership from 1971 to 2013 with a full cosmetic restoration in 2014, it sold for \$2.3 million.

Breaking new ground in the collector car market was a world-famous supercar sold alongside a unique NFT package, owned and created by Oscar-winning music legend and

the "Father of Disco," Giorgio Moroder. And among the top ten, a 1988 Cizeta-Moroder V16T, the original Cizeta-Moroder prototype and the most famous example of the model, drew onlookers all week, then selling for \$1.3 million alongside the first of its kind NFT.

Additional top sale highlights included two impressive collections. The Tenenbaum Collection featured a selection of European sports and supercars with desirable specifications, low production numbers, originality and unique color combinations, including a 2015 Porsche 918 Spyder selling for \$1.6 million. The collection in its entirety raised \$7.5 million, well above estimates. The Dr. Terry Maxon Collection, a variety of classic Ferraris, including a stunning 1967 Ferrari 330 GTS selling for \$1.9 million.

The ten highest grossing vehicles in the sale:

1. 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Alloy Gullwing.....Lot #159\$6,825,000
2. 1931 Duesenberg Model J Tourster by Derham.....Lot #152\$3,415,000
3. 1964 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL RoadsterLot #115\$2,315,000
4. 1967 Ferrari 330 GTS by PininfarinaLot #135\$1,957,500
5. 1965 Ferrari 275 GTB by ScagliettiLot #134\$1,875,000
6. 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL GullwingLot #129\$1,710,000
7. 2015 Porsche 918 SpyderLot #148\$1,600,000
8. 1987 Porsche 959 'Komfort'Lot #149\$1,600,000
9. 2005 Porsche Carrera GTLot #143\$1,545,000
10. 1988 Cizeta-Moroder V16T.....Lot #168\$1,363,500

RM Sotheby's was off to Amelia Island next, for a March 5 event at the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, where they have been the official auction house for over 20 years. Following a special online event in late March, they'll head to Ft Lauderdale March 25-26, Monaco in May, then the big Monterey event week with their sale on August 19-20.

▼ www.rmsothebys.com



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**Worldwide Auctioneers
6th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Wednesday, January 26, 2022**

Singh Meadows, 1490 E Weber Drive, Tempe AZ 85281

WORLDWIDE AUCTIONEERS returned to its location just south of the Scottsdale line in Tempe, with a diverse offering of spectacular pre-war automobiles, sports cars, classics, customs and select American muscle cars—and some heavyweight results. A total of 82 automotive lots crossed the block over the course of the evening, along with a select offering of memorabilia, delivering an overall sale of \$10.5 million at a healthy 91 percent sell-through rate.

High sale went to the mighty 1929 Duesenberg Model J Berline, a Pebble Beach award-winner and one of the first Duesenberg Model Js delivered when new, which brought \$2.26 million.

A 1935 Delahaye 135M Competition Drophead Coupe, one of only four Delahayes built by Figoni in 1935 and the last known survivor, sold for \$1.43 million. No less significant was an impeccably documented historic 1932 Chrysler CH Imperial Cabriolet, the very first car crafted by famed European coachbuilders Bohman & Schwartz, selling at \$940,000. An authentic Duesenberg Model J Engine, the perfect marriage of art and function, fully restored by Brian Joseph's Classic & Exotic Service, went to a new home for \$775,000, to much applause.

Other notable sales included an expertly restored factory black, shaker hood 1970 Dodge Hemi Challenger R/T at \$329,000, and an exceptionally original 1991 Lamborghini Diablo at \$302,000, while a celebrated one-of-a-kind 1961 Chevrolet Impala "Dou-

ble Bubble" Custom realized \$252,000.

Full results can be found online at worldwideauctioneers.com, and those who missed the sale can watch the whole replay on Worldwide TV, which streamed live throughout the event with celebrity guests, consignors, auctioneers and industry experts all weighing in.

"It was great to kick off the year and auction week here in Arizona with a full auction room and outstanding results across the board," said Rod Egan, principal and auctioneer. "Our hallmark at Worldwide is always variety; we set out to curate a lineup that reflects our shared passion for great cars of every genre and put forward a genuine representation of the very best of what the real classic world is all about, whether that be a two-million-dollar Duesenberg or an outstanding everyday classic like a 1932 V8 Ford. Thanks to everyone who joined us in person or virtually for a very successful and enjoyable event. The results speak for themselves."

Worldwide Auctioneers is a boutique catalog auction company based in Auburn, Indiana, standing alone as having principals who are owner-auctioneers, wholly invested in seamlessly delivering the optimal result for every client. In addition to the acquisition and sale of classic automobiles at auction, they offer an extensive range of personalized services including appraisal, collection direction and consultancy, estate planning and asset management. The company's private sales division incorporates The Salon, a 200,000-sq.ft. climate-controlled, purpose-built showroom at its Auburn headquarters, along with a dedicated memorabilia division.

On deck for Worldwide Auctioneers are their Enthusiast Auction on April 22-23, starting with an Enthusiast Tour April 19-21, then an expanded three-day 15th Annual Auburn Auction leading into Labor Day Weekend, September 1-3, all held in Auburn, Indiana.

▼ www.worldwideauctioneers.com



Winning ways

NEW LUCRETIA TORVA MURAL CELEBRATES NASCAR, PHOENIX RACEWAY AND THE CITY OF AVONDALE

Lucretia Torva of Phoenix is a highly trained, educated, experienced and talented artist, a master of surfaces, hyperrealist portraiture and surrealism, with a special interest in automotive subjects.

Fluent in many media, but with a particular penchant for murals over the past several years, she has just had her latest major effort unveiled—and just in time for NASCAR Spring Race Weekend.

Winning, a new mural for Phoenix Raceway and NASCAR, was recently installed in the City of Avondale's new Visitor and Conference Center. Painted on three birch panels, it is approximately 8x11 feet.

Torva says, "I was thrilled to be chosen to design and paint a mural honoring Phoenix Raceway, NASCAR and the City of Avondale, Arizona. The premise of the design is to express the history of NASCAR by depicting an exciting, iconic point in the history of Phoenix Raceway.

"Chase Elliot winning the Cup Series in 2020 is the perfect moment. Chase's winning smile while he holds the shining trophy aloft encapsulates the exhilaration of NASCAR racing with the enthusiastic participation of Phoenix Raceway and the City of Avondale.

"I chose to show day and night because

there are plenty of activities for racing fans at all times in the area. Racing weekends are also a time for enthusiasts to connect with their friends and family from all over the country.

"The Day side has a view of the beautiful Estrella Mountains as you can see them from 'Rattlesnake Hill.' The center has a piece of the unique race track wall with the 'dogleg' sign. The blue color is the official Track Wall Blue used by Phoenix Raceway! Below the track wall is Chase doing a burnout in his winning car. The burnout smoke not only helps make the transition from Day to Night, it also offers the backdrop for a portrait of Chase and the trophy.

"The backdrop for the Night side is a colorful sunset behind the Estrella Mountains, featuring the unique lighted cactus sign from Phoenix Raceway. To round out the Night side, I placed a lighted Avondale billboard and a view of the public sculpture *Al Querido*.

"This was a fun project. And I always love me some shiny stuff!"

You find Lucretia Torva's work and bio online at torvafineart.com; follow her latest gallery and event information on Facebook @TorvaFineArt; or get in touch via email at torvafineart@gmail.com. ■



Lucretia Torva photo by Jessica Abril



Left: Phoenix Raceway president Julie Geise at the City of Avondale unveiling.

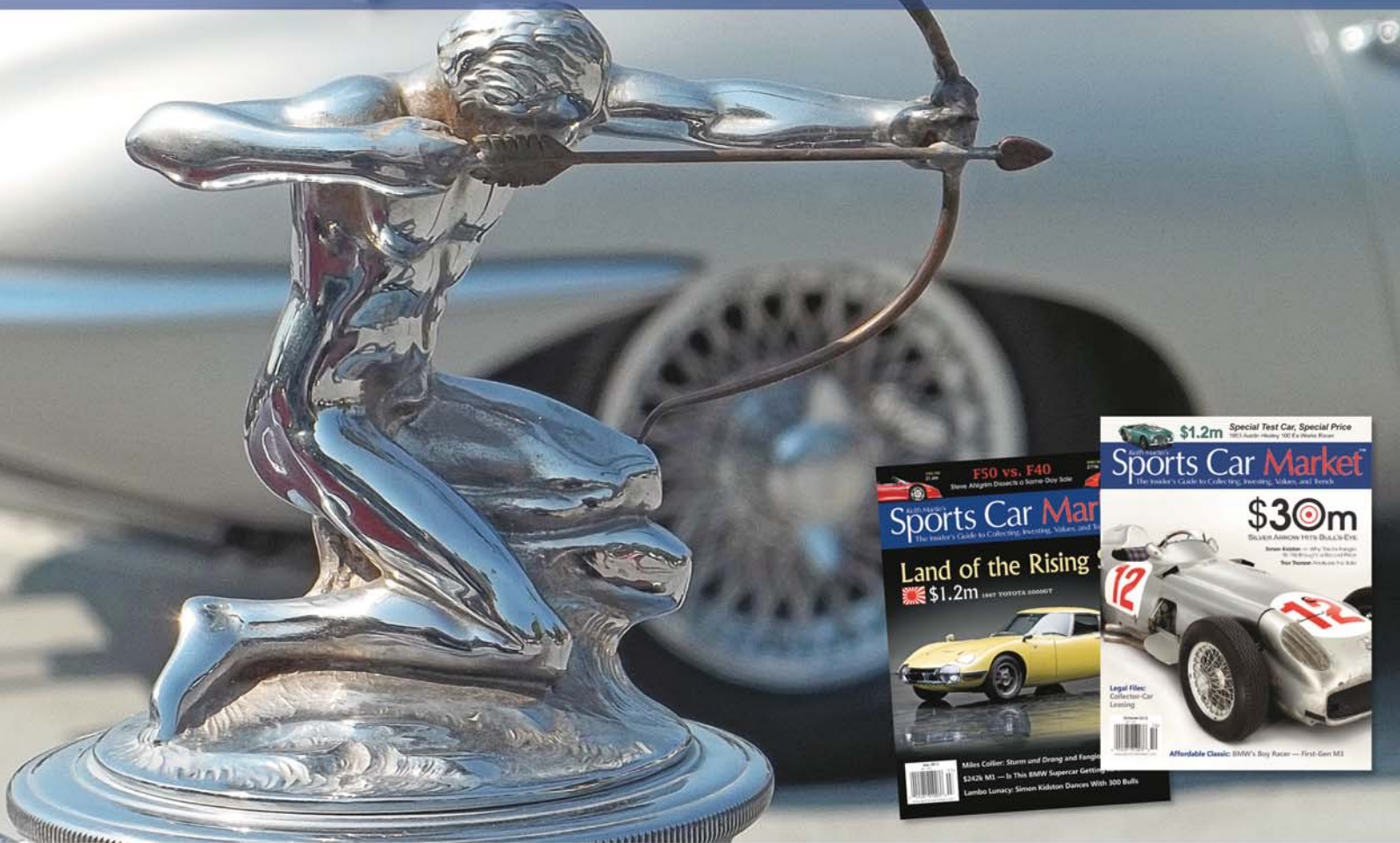


Right: Anniversary Cobra, 18x24, oil on canvas; Lucretia Torva with her Home of the LS7 Fraternal Twins mural.



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8th straight year of record charity fundraising by Concours in the Hills

Over \$430,000 raised for Phoenix Children's Hospital

Photos by Rob Mains / www.robmainphotography.com

The eighth annual Concours in the Hills car show on Saturday, February 12, continued its unbroken tradition of record setting. Almost 1,200 vehicles and some 40-50,000 spectators completely filled 35-acre Fountain Park in Fountain Hills, to raise over \$430,000 for Phoenix Children's Hospital.

Mother Nature again cooperated with clear, sunny skies and temperatures in the low 80s. The show was declared open by former race drivers Arie Luyendyk, Harley Cluxton, Derek Daly and Lyn St James announcing, "Drivers, Start Your Engines."

The show is arranged by sections for Domestic, European, Asian, Race Cars, Motorcycles, Military and Off-Road vehicles. A new section for this year, Limited Edition Exotics, included such exceptionally rare cars as a \$20 million McLaren F1, Hennessey Venom F5, LaFerrari, McLaren Elva, Aston Martin One-77 and a vintage Ferrari 500 Superfast.

The Race Car Section featured about forty cars from Indy, Le Mans, Can-Am and other race series, including Mario Andretti's Lotus 38, which revolutionized Indy by moving its engine to the rear, as well as a Ford GT Mk IV, McLaren Mk 8E, Toyota GTP, Lola T70 and T160, Genie Mk 10, Surtees TS-8, Maserati Birdcage, and Mirage M1 and M12.

Six helicopters flew in and joined the displays, including a USMC AH-1Z Cobra, around which cars from the local Cobra club were displayed.

A special interactive feature was the Discount

Tire Pit Stop Competition, where the public were able to test their skill at a timed wheel change, as in NASCAR.

Awards were given for:

- BEST DOMESTIC**Terry Rials
1959 Chevrolet Impala
- BEST IMPORT (tie)**.....John Breslow
1955 Jaguar D-Type and 1957 Jaguar XKSS
- BEST RACE CAR**Bill Pope
1960 Maserati Birdcage
- BEST 4X4 / OFF ROAD**Ruben Reyes
1948 Chevrolet B300
- BEST CAR CLUB DISPLAY**.....Fountain Hills Auto Club
- BEST OF SHOW**James Kramer
2011 Aston Martin One-77
- PEOPLE'S CHOICE**.....Michael Odierna
2021 IsoRivolta Zagato GT

Peter Volny, show founder and lead organizer, stated, "I'm amazed every year at how this show just grows and grows. I'm so appreciative of the many volunteers from both the car community and PCH who help make it all happen."

The show had over 100 sponsors, including title sponsor Gila River Resorts & Casinos, and encompassing most facets of the car business. Private car owners pay just \$60 to participate, and spectators are admitted for free. The magnitude of this show is a testament to the enormity and diversity of the car scene in Arizona. ■



Surf'n'turf

by Joe Sage

This is a time of great change and advancement in the booming pickup market, as new generations of compacts, unibodies, EVs and other entries join the ever-expanding existing pickup options from work truck to luxury showpiece.

Things are also booming in the SUV-crossover market, too, of course, by far the largest-selling category these days, by just about any measure.

Into the fray comes the Hyundai Santa Cruz, a vehicle we've followed closely for years, since its first big show concept reveal in 2015 (to which the final product remains blessedly very true).

Whether it's because both these segments are so hot, or because the definitions are becoming so complex and fluid, Hyundai has taken an either-neither-both approach to Santa Cruz pickuphood, crossoverhood or otherwise, by placing the Santa

Cruz in a new category unto its own—the Sport Adventure Vehicle.

In terms of pickups, Hyundai Santa Cruz could be grouped with the longstanding Honda Ridgeline or the brand new Ford Maverick, both of which are unibodies (vs traditional pickups' separate cab and bed on frame). This layout also harkens to the past, with the gap-bridging (or bridge-creating) Chevy Avalanche, or even farther back to the El Camino half a century ago. Yet it differs from all of these.

In terms of crossovers and SUVs, if you ignore Santa Cruz's bed (or visualize it enclosed by an extended cabin), the connection is obvious (Santa Cruz is in fact a very close cousin to the newest-generation Hyundai Tucson).

So take your pick—that's what Hyundai themselves have had to do when forced to categorize.

For example, last fall in a Pacific Northwest compare event we attend (the NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year Awards commonly known as Mudfest), though crossover categories were available, they entered the Santa Cruz as a pickup—and it promptly won this category. But the next month, at the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo, where pickup categories were also available, they entered it as a compact SUV—and it promptly won that category.

We've owned big V8 4x4 heavy duty pickups for years, for towing, off-roading, deep snow and river fording (and general use). We've also owned little Japanese rear-drive pickups, for high-mileage touring of most of North America (and even light construction). None of that mattered when we met the Santa Cruz. You could say it is what it is, and it's not what it's not—except to the degrees that, even then, it still is. Within its designed, engineered and specified capabilities, it just may be all things to all people, at least a lot of the time.

The model range—varying by engine and drivetrain as well as trim and features (see lower right)—is both tight (four levels) and extensive (running from a bit over \$20 grand to just under \$40 grand). Everything was included on ours (the only option was a \$195 set of carpeted floor mats).

In line with the pickup portion of its personality, our Santa Cruz is built in the US, at Hyundai's Montgomery, Alabama plant, with a US-built engine and transmission. The two lower models have a 191-hp 2.5L engine. The upper two trims move to a 281-hp 2.5L turbo. (Note that pricing materials show AWD-only for the upper two, though specification materials show FWD availability for all.)

Many attributes of the Santa Cruz are paradoxically positive. It's equal parts big and small—a compact, it still offers a generous cabin with plenty of headroom and legroom front and rear, equaling or exceeding a comparable SUV, while still adding a bed out back. On the road, it's equal parts beefy and sporty. While its suspension is the same on paper as the Hyundai Tucson crossover (which we put through quite an off-pavement workout in the mountains north of Tucson during its launch

drive a year ago), there is an emotional layer that comes with its body format—it somehow feels more trucklike with that bed out back. Yet it is sporty and nimble in urban traffic.

Power is good right from the line. Best of all, it holds that power through a righthand surface street turn—hard to say why that is so rare, but it's a delight at every turn in this rig. A subtle but sturdy growl enhances the truckline experience. Suspension is impressive—firm and smooth (we actually welcomed speed bumps, for another sample of its smooth sailing). The transmission is a dual-clutch unit, solid and certain through its eight speeds.

With the turbo engine and AWD, the Santa Cruz can tow 5,000 lb if equipped with trailer brakes (ours was not); the non-turbo can tow 3,500 lb with brakes. Any can tow 1,650 lb without brakes.

The interior is a beauty, too. The center stack bears a gloss black surround, which curves down and out of sight at the bottom, also curving at the top to encompass the vents. Generally concealed vents continue full-width, defined by handsome brushed metal bars above and below. (Many control switches are simply defined by a word against

(cont'd)

Santa Cruz has snagged many awards, some of which confirm its flexible categorization. Notable trophies to date include:

- Finalist: Truck of the Year** - North American Car, Truck and Utility of the Year Awards
- Pickup Truck of the Year** - NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year Awards
- Compact SUV of the Year** - TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo
- Best Performing Truck** - The Fast Lane Truck (TFL Truck)
- Best New Product** - Sobre Ruedas Awards
- Best of What's New Award** - Popular Science
- Centaur of the Year Award** - Forbes



SPECIFICATIONS: LIMITED MODEL

ASSEMBLY	.....Montgomery, Alabama
PARTS CONTENT	.....53% US/Canada, 35% Korea
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	.....USA/USA
ENGINE	.....2.5L 4-cyl 16v turbo, alum/alum, GDI + MPI DOHC
HP/TORQUE	.....(turbo) 281 hp / 311 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.5
TRANSMISSION	.....8-spd wet dual clutch, paddle shifters
DRIVETRAIN	.....HTRAC active on-demand AWD
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut w coils, gas-pressured shocks; R: multi-link, gas shocks, self-leveling
STEERING	.....col-mtd MDPS rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 12.8" vented; R: 12.8" solid
WHEELS	.....20x7.5J alloys
TIRES	.....245/50R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....195.7 / 118.3 in
WIDTH / HEIGHT	.....75.0 / w roof rails 66.7 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....8.6 in
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKOV	.....17.5 / 23.2 / 18.6°
TURNING CIRCLE	.....39.6 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....40.7 / 40.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....41.4 / 36.5 in
BED LENGTH	.....upper/lower 48.4 / 52.1 in tailgate open 74.8 in
BED FLOOR GROUND CLEARANCE	.....31.6 in
WEIGHT	.....(2.5T Limited AWD) 4123 lb
PAYLOAD	.....(2.5T AWD) 1609 lb
MAX VEHICLE LOAD	.....1411 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....w/o trailer brakes) 1650 lb (AWD w trailer brakes) 5000 lb
	INCLUDED: trailer prep/pre-wiring, sway control, self-leveling suspension, HD transmission oil cooler;
	NOT INCL: brake controller not pre-wired
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....reg unl / 17.7 gal
MPG	.....19/27/22 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE\$39,720

LIMITED INCLUDES: 2.5L turbo engine, 5,000-lb tow capacity, dark chrome grille & tailgate handle trim, 20" alloy wheels, LED headlights, digital key, dual auto HVAC w auto defogger, rear AC vents, paddle shift, body-color door handles, leather wheel & shift knob, leather seats, heated-vented front seats, heated steering wheel, 10.25" wide nav display, Bose premium audio, dynamic voice recognition, auto-dim mirror w Home-Link, surround view monitors, dual rear USB ports, ambient lighting, rain-sensing wipers, Smart Cruise w stop/start, Highway Driving Assist, Intelligent Speed Limit Assist

CARPETED FLOOR MATS195

DESTINATION CHARGE1225

TOTAL\$41,140

2022 SANTA CRUZ LINEUP

2.5L 4-cyl: 191 hp, 181 lb-ft	.....FWD	.....AWD
SE	.....\$24,140	.....\$25,640
SEL	.....27,340	.....28,840
2.5T 4-cyl turbo: 281 hp, 311 lb-ft	.....AWD	
SEL Premium35,830	
Limited39,870	

Note: our sticker's base varied slightly from this.



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that smooth black surface, a handsome presentation, but one that may require taking your eyes off the road to implement key functions.) Extremely useful contextual side cameras pop up in the binacle when signaling a lane change.

Try as we might, we were unable to locate and disarm frequent chirps, flashing lights, voice warnings and such triggered by such mundane occurrences as an already clearly visible traffic light or a vehicle fully in a left turn lane ahead, clear of our path. Besides being annoying, these nanny touches seem out of character for sport and adventure.

With the persona of a great beach or surfboard rig around town, we figured the Santa Cruz would also welcome some time in the dirt—even with this top trim's larger wheels and tubeless all-season tires—so off we went to the desert. As with the Tucson, the Santa Cruz proved ready for anything. We drove it hard on a particularly gravelly, twisty, rutted, gutted and gullied dirt road well out of town... and at a pretty good clip. Handling like a dream, it was rock solid while also comfortable on the rough surfaces, and stayed solidly planted on turns and climbs. The product planners, engineers and stylists were totally in sync developing this.

We walked up first to check our wisdom on a steep and precipitous dirt high spot. Good to go! Without even trying its alternate drive modes, nor front/rear locking differential, we climbed right up it with a minimum of skittering. (And just imagine this with some serious off-road tires!) We gave it a second run with traction features optimized, but while great to have, they really weren't necessary.

The bed, too, is a solid execution, with a tough surface, just four feet, though its power tailgate extends this by about two feet when down. A sliding cover disappears completely behind the cab with one easy push and returns just as easily.

Longer beds have become rare even on full-size pickups, hand-in-hand with the popularity of multi-row, multi-door cabs. Shorter beds, five or six feet instead of the classic eight, generally have a similarly finished tailgate these days, implying that a six-foot bed can have the utility of an eight-foot. Thus in this case, you could say the four-foot bed is as good as a six. But that forgoes the trick by which a six is as good as an eight.

It's all beside the point here. You will find this a great format for so many things—stuff that's awkward to load or unload through an SUV's doors, stuff that might be dirty or wet—great for everything from gardening to camping to fishing (just no nine-foot sharks, unless carried on the roof).

We put quite a few miles and a great variety of service on our Santa Cruz, and while we almost never log specific fuel mileage (unless it's a core attribute), we did notice the gauge dropping pretty fast. Stated fuel mileage of 19/27/22 (city/hwy/comb) seems less than we might expect from a four-cylinder turbo compact, though it does weigh in at just over two tons with our top trim and maximum drivetrain. Note that the lesser engine's numbers are near-identical, some a point higher and some a point lower. So if budget allows, we would go for the considerably higher road power, torque and load capability of the turbo.

You can parse the nature of the Hyundai Santa Cruz all you want—whether it's a truck or an SUV or something completely different. You can compare it with the sudden flood of other small pickups in particular. There are already enough SUVs to compare anything with to choke a horse. But none of that matters. It just falls together perfectly as exactly what it is. And if it's a one-of-a-kind, all the better. No competition.

Santa Cruz will show a lot of SUV and crossover fans why people like pickups. A specialized pickup like this gives a lot of the basic SUV experience, with an interior that's not that different. Even if it's the same, it feels stronger and more powerful, and you have that useful space in the back—which you may or may not use (any more often than you may or may not use the trunk of a sedan or the rear cargo hold of an SUV, for that matter). But it has a different air and a different flair.

Correlated to a comparable SUV, the adaptation of this chassis and powertrain to pickup body form has not only lost nothing, it might even be a more perfect union. At a minimum, it gives you choices.

In our diverse and busy week with it, the Hyundai Santa Cruz proved to be tough, smooth, potent, fun and useful.

Is it, as the saying goes, an answer to a question nobody asked? We're thinking it's more like the original Steve Jobs product philosophy—show people what they want before they even realized they wanted it. And if you do it right, the world will beat a path to your door. Hyundai may very well have hit the jackpot with this one. ■



**APRIL 30 - MAY 6, 2022 : THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY
KYLE PETTY CHARITY RIDE
ACROSS AMERICA**

As with so many events, the 26th Anniversary Kyle Petty Charity Ride Across America was postponed, first from May 2020 to May 2021, then to this year. Things are now ready to roll again, as from April 30 through May 6, former NASCAR driver and NBC Sports racing analyst Kyle Petty will take 125 motorcyclists on a Southwestern adventure through Arizona and southern Utah, one of the most scenic routes in the event's history.



COX AUTOMOTIVE
2022

Starting and ending in Phoenix—the first time ever that the Ride has started and ended in the same city—Petty and the group will cover over 1,500 miles on a seven-day trek. Highlights on the route will include lapping the track at Phoenix Raceway, riding historic Route 66, visiting Grand Canyon National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park and Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, seeing the Grand Staircase and Humphreys Peak—and more.

Considered one of the most successful

and popular charity rides in the country, the Ride raises funds and awareness for Victory Junction, a year-round camp dedicated to providing life-changing camping experiences—exciting, fun and empowering—to enrich the lives of children (ages six to 16) with serious medical illnesses.

It costs more than \$2,500 for one child to attend the camp for a week, but no child or family incurs this cost, thanks to the generosity of corporations, organizations and individuals. Victory Junction has served as the Ride's primary beneficiary since its establishment in 2004 by Petty and his family, in honor of his late son, Adam. Thanks to the Kyle Petty Charity Ride, more than 8,210 children have attended Victory Junction at no cost to their families.

Joining Petty for the Ride are a few famous friends: NASCAR Hall of Famer and seven-time champion Richard Petty; NASCAR legends Harry Gant, Hershel McGriff, Donnie Allison and Ken Schrader; former Formula 1, Champ Car and NASCAR driver Max Papis; and NBC Sports NASCAR personality Rick Allen.

At the Ride's overnights, as well as at two or three daily pit stops, fans can show up to greet the riders, meet celebrities, purchase memorabilia and make

Prior event photos:
Kevin Kane Photography

donations to the Ride's "Small Change. Big Impact." program. Cash or checks are accepted at all the local stops.

A complete Fan Event Schedule will be posted to the Ride's website by the end of March with exact timing, locations and pertinent details for all pit stops and overnights.

The route schedule is as follows:

DAY 1 : SATURDAY, APRIL 30

Phoenix to Lake Havasu City

DAY 2 : SUNDAY, MAY 1

Lake Havasu City to Flagstaff

DAY 3 : MONDAY, MAY 2

Flagstaff to Bryce Canyon City, Utah

DAY 4 : TUESDAY, MAY 3

~ free day ~

DAY 5 : WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

Bryce Canyon to Monument Valley

DAY 6 : THURSDAY, MAY 5

Monument Valley to Sedona

DAY 7 : FRIDAY, MAY 6

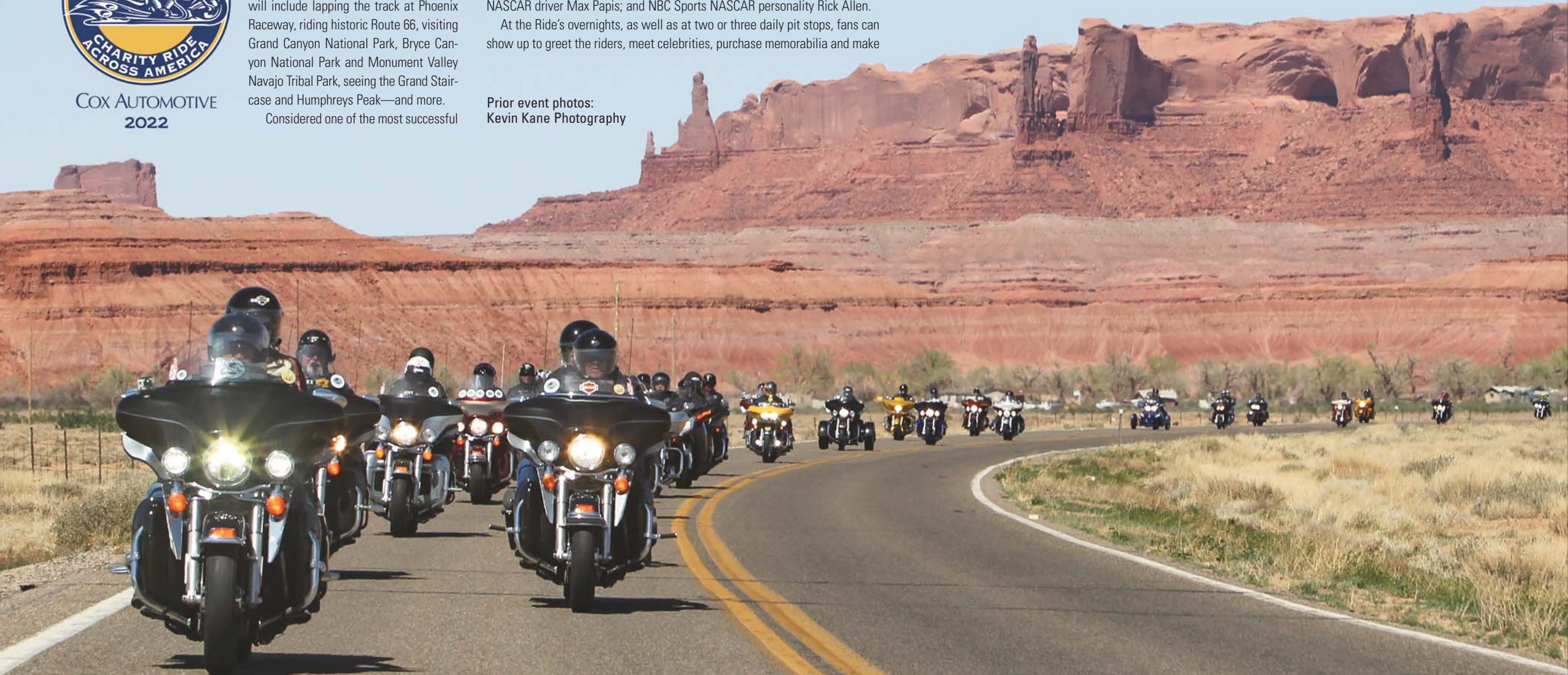
Sedona to Phoenix

The routes for the next Ride are revealed on social media each fall. Joining the Ride is an application-based process. Applications are emailed in January to those who have requested one, and the event typically reaches its 125-motorcycle capacity within a week, first come, first served (the 2022 Ride is completely full at this point). Any type of motorcycle is allowed (but no Slingshots), with a minimum five-gallon tank required (you must be able to go at least 165 miles on a tank). First-time participants complete a safety program the day before the Ride begins. The email contact to receive an application is info@kylepettycharityride.com

The event website, with up-to-date pit stop and overnight details, is kylepettycharityride.com.

You can also donate to the Kyle Petty Charity Ride Across America via the website or by calling 704-714-4545. Or you can mail a check to:

Kyle Petty Charity Ride, Inc.
125 Floyd Smith Drive, Suite 45
Charlotte NC 28262. ■



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ADOT : SR 79 GILA RIVER BRIDGE PROJECT

Preliminary work begins on SR 79 Gila River Bridge replacement project

Crews are beginning preliminary work for the Gila River Bridge replacement project on State Route 79 on the north side of Florence. You may notice survey work, sign installation and other activity over the next few weeks. The overall reconstruction project is expected to take up to 18 months to complete. Only minor delays and lane restrictions are planned for the majority of the project duration.

The new bridge will still be two lanes, with a single lane and 8-foot shoulders in each direction, and a protected pedestrian walkway on the west side.

The rebuild will be done using an Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) technique to minimize traffic impacts on the heavily-used SR 79 corridor. Under this approach, new bridge piers will be built under the existing bridge while it remains in use, set wider than the existing or final new bridge. The upper portion of the new bridge structure and surface will be built in two halves, outside the width of the existing bridge. Traffic will switch to the new bridge halves in two phases, while the existing bridge is removed from between them. The bridge halves will be slid into their permanent position over two weekends.

Traffic will be maintained in each direction except during the weekends the bridge slides take place. During the sliding of each half of the bridge, SR 79 will be reduced to a single lane with a temporary signal allowing traffic to flow one direction at a time. This technique means SR 79 will remain open to nearly all vehicles, though oversized vehicles may need to use an alternate route. Delays should be expected during the slide phases. Additional notice will be provided in advance of the weekend slide phases.



North Approach Looking NE
Existing SR 79 - Gila River Bridge



North Approach Looking NE
Proposed SR 79 - Gila River Bridge

PHASES:

- Preliminary: Build construction access roads.
- Phase 1: Construct new piers and superstructure next to existing bridge. Shift traffic to new bridge.
- Phase 2: Remove existing bridge and finish new bridge abutments. Shift traffic to the east side.*
- Phase 3: Slide west half of bridge and construct approach roadway. Traffic open for one lane in each direction. Shift traffic to the west side.*
- Phase 4: Slide east half of bridge and construct approach roadway. Traffic open for one lane in each direction.
- Phase 5: Finish Closure Pour and Approach roadway work.
- Phase 6: Construct pedestrian barrier; remove extra pier cap; remove construction access roads.

**Traffic will be a single lane controlled by stop-light, on weekends only, for the bridge slides.*

A clarifying Vimeo animation of the clever sequencing can be found online via azdot.gov/node/17323.

Schedules are subject to change based on weather and other unforeseen factors.

For more information about the project or to subscribe to email updates, visit the site at azdot.gov/sr79gilariverbridge.

You can also call the ADOT Bilingual Project Information Line, 855-712-8530, or submit a question or comment by email.

And as always, you can find real-time highway conditions statewide at ADOT's Traveler Information Site, www.az511.gov; on Twitter (@ArizonaDOT); or by calling 511 (except of course not while driving). ■



Buttoned down and fired up

BY JOE SAGE

The Cadillac CT4 is one of many highly significant vehicles with the misfortune of coming to life during the last couple of years' lockdowns and auto show cancellations—introduced in 2019 as a 2020 model (thus our sample here being its third year). CT4 replaced the ATS, itself introduced seven years prior, as a smaller alternative to the CTS, introduced ten years prior to that (and replaced by the CT5 on the same cycle as CT4).

While all of the above have been aimed at the most popular European sports sedans, they have run a bit larger in size, welcome by some but not

others—hence the addition of the smaller ATS and then CT4, respectively.

In line with their Euro-competitive strategy, these models have been built on rear-drive architecture, with all-wheel-drive availability, and have often offered that most elusive enthusiast feature, the manual transmission.

All that is great, but it gets greater. The standard CT4 bears either a 237-hp 2.0L four-cylinder twin-scroll turbo and 8-speed or 310-hp 2.7L turbo-four and 10-speed automatic. But wait. There is then the CT4 V-Series (or CT4-V), with the 2.7L

bumped up to 325 hp. Not enough? That brings us to this version: the CT4 V-Series Blackwing, with a 472-hp 3.6L twin-turbo V6—and the aforementioned manual transmission, a 6-speed Tremec unit with LUK twin-disc clutch, standard (with a 10-speed GM Hydra-Matic automatic available).

Pricing is simple enough: low-mid \$30s for the CT4 (add \$4k for the bigger engine), mid-\$40s for the CT4-V, and way-upper \$50s (and sure to pass \$60k) for the CT4-V Blackwing. Any and all prices compare favorably against their Euro competitors.

Though considered a compact, and while recognizing that size categories are becoming ever fuzzier, the CT4 feels tidily spacious inside. The interior is especially nice, with selectively quilted, vented black leather. There is piping on the seats, an off-white grey (as it follows the seat's curves and contours, if we had our smartphone cable sprawl-

ing from console to phone on the other seat, the piping and cable look surprisingly related).

It wasn't until we saw it from the second floor of our office building, joined by a Toyota Camry, that we realized it is indeed smaller on the outside—though only slightly smaller than the Camry, which is a midsize. Inside it's a tad more generous in the front seats, a bit less so in the rear.

The advantageous differences of a performance build are clear at higher speeds and during aggressive cornering. When such a car is a daily driver, you'll also notice how it performs at low speed. The CT4-V's steering and performance suspension are supremely solid and buttoned down at high speeds. At parking lot speeds or just starting out, you may notice some rocky behavior, as well as on uneven pavement (though it's surprisingly smooth on speedbumps). At speed, grounded in almost two tons of heft, it is rock solid.

The clutch and brakes are equally tight and solid, all for the better. The Tremec 6-speed man-

ual is a fine unit, delivering precise shifts through smooth gates, with all gear positions accurate and well spaced. We used the range exactly as we would expect to, which may sound like a given, but often is not, in others.

Discreetly badged and with style points only mildly modified, the CT4-V is a pretty good sleeper—only the cognoscenti would occasionally roar up next to us in hopes of a challenge. If we wanted to, we could give any of them quite a surprise. This thing is a rocket on any freeway ramp.

Our time behind the wheel was a bit more limited than we would have wished, but have no fear—while wishing we had more, and while having talked about the CT4's size, we learned that we will have a CT5 in just a few weeks—in fact, another V-Series. In fact, another Blackwing with 6-speed manual. It will even be blue, though not the same blue. It will also cost almost \$30 grand more. Stay tuned, as that car, in turn, will shed more light on this car. Can't wait! ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Lansing, Michigan
CONTENT	.....46% US/Canada, 21% Mexico
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	.....Austria / US
ENGINE	.....3.6L DOHC twin-turbo 24v V6, DOHC, dir inj w electronic throttle control, contin VVT, cast alum / cast alum, titanium rods (w manual), oil-spray piston cooling
HP/TORQUE	.....472 hp / 445 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.2:1
TRANSMISSION	.....Tremec 6-spd manual w LuK twin-disc clutch; (opt 10-spd auto)
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
0-TO-60 MPH	.....(manual trans) 4.1 sec
TOP SPEED	.....189 mph
LATERAL ACCELERATION	.....1.04g
HOT LAP	.....(VIR Grand Course) 2:52.5 min
REAR DIFFERENTIAL	.....electronic limited-slip w aluminum housing, high-perf cooler
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson type w cross-axis dual lower ball joints, ZF MVS passive dampers & direct-acting hollow stblzr bar, Magnetic Ride Control 4.0; R: five-link indep, coils w ZF MVS passive dampers & hollow stblzr bar, MRC 4.0
STEERING	.....rack-mounted elec var pwr-asst
BRAKES	.....staggered Brembo 4-whl disc, high-performance copper-free linings, F: 6-piston, R: 4-piston rear
WHEELS	.....forged alum: F: 18x9; R: 18x9.5
TIRES	.....Michelin Pilot Sport 4S sum perf F: P255/35ZR18 / R: P275/35ZR18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....187.6 / 109.3 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....na
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.85 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....38.3 / 36.5 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....42.4 / 33.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....10.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....(manual trans) 3860 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....prem / 17.4 gal
MPG	.....15/23/18 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....	\$58,995
WAVE METALLIC PAINT	.....	625
JET BLACK: w Jet Black accents, leather seat surfaces, high performance steering wheel, sueded microfiber wrapped trim pkg	.....	4900
PERFORMANCE DATA/VIDEO RECORDER	.....	1600
TECH PKG: air ionizer, heads-up display	.....	725
CLIMATE PKG: both front seats power lumbar massage; both front seats ventilated	.....	600
BRAKE CALIPERS, BLUE	.....	595
FRONT LICENSE PLATE BRACKET	.....	15
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....	995
TOTAL	.....	\$69,050

CADILLAC CT4 LINEUP

2021 pricing	.....RWD	.....AWD
Luxury		
2.0L turbo-4, 237 hp	.....\$33,395	.....\$35,395
Premium Luxury		
2.0L turbo-4, 237 hp	.....37,595	.....39,595
2.7L DV turbo-4, 310 hp	.....41,495	.....44,670
Sport		
2.0L turbo-4, 237 hp	.....38,695	.....40,695
2022 pricing	.....RWD	.....AWD
V-Series		
2.7L DV turbo-4, 310 hp	.....46,095	.....48,095
V-Series Blackwing		
3.6L twin turbo V6, 472 hp		
6-spd manual▼ 58,995	
10-spd automatic62,170	
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Rolex Reunion Showcases International Entries

For car lovers, the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion is a paradise with a collection of automobiles that's rarely seen anywhere else in North America.

This has always been the case when the world's best descend on Monterey each August, but the 2022 version of the award-winning event is taking everything to a new level.

An expansive range of motorsport history will be showcased at the 2022 Rolex Reunion, Wednesday through Saturday, August 17-20, with the excitement of historic race cars revving up on the track and in the open spectator-accessed race paddock. From the mighty "ground effect" prototypes to the 10,000-rpm screaming Williams Formula One cars, nearly every race car make in the alphabet will be represented for guests' enjoyment at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, which hosts the annual international gathering.

Complementing entries from 31 states across America are applications received from owners in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Despite last year's reduced international contingent due to travel restrictions, the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion was named a finalist as Motorsport Event

of the Year in the Historic Motoring Awards for its commitment to accepting only authentic and period-correct cars.

Adding to the international spectacle is this year's featured celebration—the 24 Hours of Le Mans—which is the kick-off to a yearlong 100th anniversary celebration that culminates at the renowned French Classic in June 2023. Known worldwide as a catalyst for developing technologies among the automakers, the most famous endurance race in the world attracts the best of the best. And in Monterey, the century of development of these magnificent cars will be center stage.

Of the 12 race groups, four Le Mans-specific groupings will be on track each day, with races Friday and Saturday. They are divided by eras and begin with the 1923-1955 class and extend through the blindingly fast 1981-2005 purpose-built prototypes. The Monterey Motorsports Reunion Advisory Council is considering cars for these groups with Le Mans race history or eligibility in period.

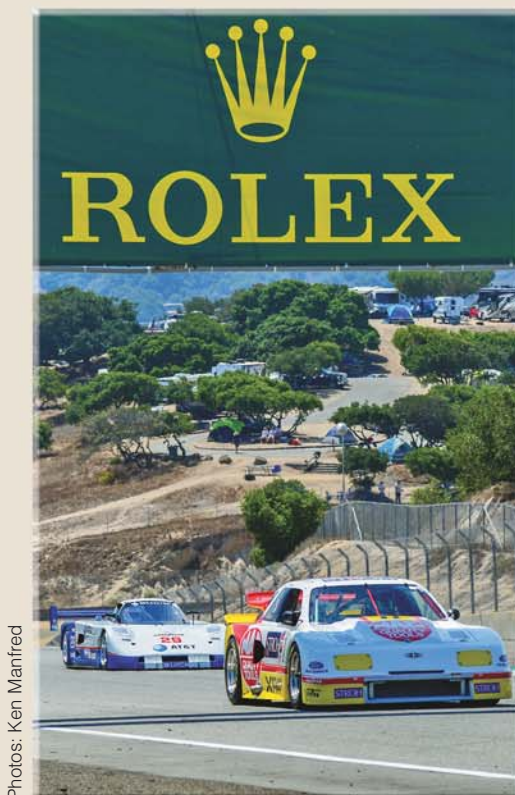
Raising the overall experience to a new level is a special collection of the rarest and seldom seen cars being curated for the Le Mans Legends Display. Motul, which has a long history at Le Mans, is the presenting sponsor of this once in a lifetime

gathering. This special collection will be front and center in an incredible display in the race paddock and is already comprised of 16 overall winners and 12 class winners. Many of these cars are no longer raced at vintage events, but the owners will share them on track in daily exhibitions.

This year, the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion will be so much more than a race gathering. Non-race guests will enjoy the bustling paddock and seeing a museum throttle to life, but also the rejuvenated Hagerty Marketplace. New attractions include more locally-sourced food merchants, go-karts, expanded kids zone, and for adults, an El Jefe Tequila-themed lounge, and Monterey County wine court that features favorites from the acclaimed Carmel Valley and Salinas wine-growing corridors.

"Together with our experienced volunteers, Advisory Council members and professional staff, we are elevating the experience for all guests who enter the Laguna Seca Recreation Area," explains John Narigi, president and general manager of Laguna Seca Recreation Area.

"We have wide open spaces and every level of VIP packages to satisfy the discerning guests' needs to make this year's Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion the most enjoyable and best yet. I encourage our neighbors to join us in experiencing everything our park has to offer during the exciting Monterey Car Week." ■



Photos: Ken Manfired



CIVICS LESSON

THE HIGHLY ADAPTABLE TOP SELLER COMES IN NEW FLAVORS BY JOE SAGE

The fading of sedans in the face of the crossover craze has been widely reported, statistically confirmed by sales numbers and/or reinforced by a number of manufacturers reducing or even dropping their sedan lineups, in a combined chicken-and-egg market response or supply dictate. Those manufacturers who keep sedans in their lineup are poised to benefit from the reduced competition, while identifying real strength in certain market segments.

Honda is one of these—bringing us a brand new Civic and identifying their prime market as Millennials, Gen Z, first-time buyers and multicultural buyers. We work in an area with a great many young tech workers and such, and anecdotally this is backed up by a notable popularity of small sedans. And Honda's numbers are not just for any ol' sedans. Civic already rates number one in sales with each of these demographics. It's also, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the third-most-Instagrammed vehicle in the world.

Civic is even king of Honda's own realm, with

25 percent of their own website visits and a third of all online Honda searches specific to the model. This is all significant, as three out of every four Civic buyers come back to purchase another Honda. And it may be another Civic—they've sold over 12 million in the US since 1973, making it one of the top three passenger cars in America over these 49 years running.

Honda has an all-new generation—eleven Civic for 2022, replacing gen ten, which was launched in 2015. Styling is new inside and out, body and structure are strengthened, its new 1.5-liter turbo is both more powerful and more fuel efficient, suspension and steering are updated, and of course there are a new range of tech and safety features galore.

To say it has been well received is an understatement—the new Civic has just taken home the prestigious North American Car of the Year Award.

It all starts with the Civic Sedan, but with perhaps equal parts thirst for new ideas and the opportunity to expand and strengthen a segment they are committed to, Honda has introduced two variations—a new take on the Hatchback and the return of the Si. We just spent a week each with them, back to back.

The Hatchback is available with two different engines—a 158-hp 2.0L normally aspirated four and a 180-hp 1.5L turbo as on our top trim Sport Touring (and the upper-mid EX-L), with a choice of 6-speed manual or CVT (at no price

difference) on all but the base model (the LX is CVT only). The mildly performance-oriented Si is available with a 1.5L turbo only, though for this model it's juiced up to 200 hp. And the Si comes with a 6-speed manual only.

The Hatchback is an interesting take on hatches, which our market is used to being a two-box squareback format. This one is more of a Kammback or Grand Touring style, more sedanlike, with an elongated roof and continuity of interior space from the cargo area into the cabin. Even with the rear seats up, this almost doubles cargo space; with the rear seats down, it multiplies this sizably, though that specification is not yet available.

The first Honda we ever drove was also the first front-wheel-drive car we ever drove, and thus our first experience with torque steer, a tendency for the force of wheel rotation to translate to unwanted redirection of the front wheels, which are also the drive wheels. That was years ago, but we still watch for it, and in the new Hatchback, we found it completely conquered—accelerating through tight S-maneuvers in town with no repercussions.

All in all, the Civic Hatchback experience is the same as the Sedan, cargo considerations aside. The Hatch does weigh about 25 pounds more (top trim to top trim) and shifts one percent of its weight distribution to the front (ditto on trim), thanks to the open compartment structure in the rear, though its added cargo volume will shift things rearward according to load.

CVTs have detractors and they have people who are unaware of them, but we've yet to meet an actual fan. Accelerating up a freeway ramp, the car has

(cont'd)

SPECIFICATIONS Hatchback Sport Touring Si 6MT (summer tires)

ASSEMBLY	Greensburg, Indiana	Alliston, Ontario, Canada
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION/US-CDN%	USA/USA/60%	USA/India/60%
ENGINE	1.5L turbo four 16v DOHC i-VTEC dir inj	(same / enhanced)
HP/TORQUE	180 hp / 177 lb-ft	200 hp / 192 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.3:1	(same)
TRANSMISSION	LL-CVT, dual-mode paddles	6-spd manual, rev-match
DRIVETRAIN	FWD	FWD
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut; R: multi-link indep;	(same)
	stblz bars: F: 26.5mm tubular, R: 17.5mm solid	F: 27mm tub, R: 18mm solid
STEERING	variable ratio rack & pinion EPS	similar but dual-pinion
BRAKES	F: 11.1 vented; R: 10.2 solid	F: 12.3 vented; R: 11.1 solid
WHEELS	18-in alloys	18-in matte black alloy
TIRES	235/40R18 91W	235/40R18 95Y hi-perf
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	179.0 / 107.7 in	184.0 / 107.7 in
TURNING CIRCLE	38.1 ft	(same)
HEADROOM (F/R)	37.6 / 37.1 in	(same)
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.3 / 37.4 in	(same)
CARGO CAPACITY	24.5 / (seat down tbd) cu.ft	14.1 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	na	na
WEIGHT / DISTRIBUTION F/R	3102 lb / 60.2/39.8%	2961 lb / 60.6/39.4%
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 12.39 gal	reg (prem rec) unl / 12.39 gal
MPG	(CVT) 30/37/33 (city/hwy/comb)	27/37/31 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$29,400	\$27,500
PAINT: Blazing Orange paint (on Si)		395
DESTINATION CHARGE	1015	1015
TOTAL	\$30,415	\$28,910

2022 HONDA CIVIC LINEUP HATCHBACK Si 6MT

LX	2.0L / 158 hp	CVT	\$22,900
Sport	"	6MT	24,100
"	"	CVT	24,100
EX-L	1.5L Turbo / 180 hp	CVT	26,600
Sport Touring	"	6MT	29,400
"	"	CVT	29,400
Si	1.5L Turbo / 200 hp	6MT	27,300
" w summer tires	"	"	27,500



2022 CAR OF THE YEAR™



(Left) 2022 Honda Civic 1.5T Hatchback Sport Touring (Right) 2022 Honda Civic Si 6MT 4-Door Hardtop (Summer Tires)

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plenty of power, although if you are in tune with the idiosyncrasies of CVT behavior, it's very apparent in this one—just roaring up that ramp waiting for something to shift that never does. It doesn't affect your speed; it just deviates from what people are used to, unless of course they are getting used to ever-more-common fuel-saving CVTs.

As the week went on, we found ourselves thinking the Civic Hatch was a blast, a fun little car. Perceptions may have been augmented by its Rallye Red paint. Now imagine the same thing with a little more horsepower, a manual transmission, and just a bit beefier suspension, steering and brakes. We wouldn't have to imagine for long, as our Hatchback's departure was hand-in-glove with the arrival of an even sportier Blazing Orange Pearl 200-hp manual trans Si.

Does that sound like a step up? It's actually \$2100 less expensive—or \$1900 less if you opt for Summer Tires (they actually treat "Si (Summer Tires)" as another model, with different specs, not just a set of tires). If you like performance and you like some cash still in your pocket, the Si is a win-win.

Not overly showy, the Si is recognizable by its rear wing, exhaust tips, discreet badging and black alloy wheels. The interior is laid out pretty flawlessly, taking advantage of every surface and opportunity with purpose, but without clutter. It's full of style points that don't run the cost up but add a lot of character, such as a honeycomb pattern across the instrument panel, concealing the vents and contributing a look and feel on a par with, say, high-dollar carbon fiber. It's a whole separate feeling, cleverly achieved. There are also sport seats, and of course three pedals.

The steering wheel and shifter are leather-wrapped, while the seats are non-leather, a combination of fabric and an unidentified material for bolsters and surrounds. Of note: in our dry climate, these generate considerable static electricity. We learned the hard way that you should check for bed-head between parking and your next meeting.

The engine is strong, and the shifts are strong. The enhanced VTEC turbo delivers torque 300 rpm earlier, for performance from the line and in cornering, and it holds almost all peak power from 6000 rpm to redline at 6500. The trans-

mission includes a rev-matching system from the Type R, applied for the first time in the Civic Si. If you like enhanced exhaust system sound effects, the new Si has 'em. The system also generates downshift blips on its own. The most aggressive version, in Sport mode, is not for everybody—amped up considerably, but also dropping out at every shift, which will delight some drivers and disturb others, as just a bit too boy-racerish. Normal mode is about the same at aggressive lower RPMs, while Touring mode tames the whole curve. Then again, during an open highway run on AZ 87, we punched it back into Sport, gave it some gas, and it sounded great. Possibly Touring mode should simply be renamed Neighbors mode or police-in-the-next-lane mode, for town.

The transmission itself—manufactured in India—is brilliant, a gem, delivering very tight, smooth, precise short-throw shifts exactly as intended, with the possible exception of a slight drop in power through second gear.

Surprising to us, after a week of noting the absence of front-drive torque steer in the Hatchback, was the presence of it in the Si—basically just between shifts, that brief instant during which power is not applied to the wheels. Once realized, this is pretty easily conquered and controlled.

We had a big box to transport and were pleasantly surprised to find that, even following the Hatchback, the trunk is sizable for a compact, basically as wide as the Hatch, just not as deep, i.e. just as useful most of the time.

Honda makes vehicle shopping and purchase simple, via a straightforward system of models, each with their particular inclusions, one price and done, rather than the more common option process that almost always changes your price considerably once you're final. Even as such, it's impressive how much versatility they can get out of one model. With just the Hatchback, you have four trim levels, two engines and two transmissions. With the Si, there is only one flavor—well, plus the Summer Tires version (great for here, by the way).

For the price, both the Civic Hatchback and Civic Si are knockouts.

But wait—while we were driving these, Honda was semi-revealing a new gen-eleven Civic Type R, still in camouflage, in Tokyo. The prior Type R was just over 300 hp and close to \$40 grand. We look forward to this full reveal. ■



THREE-ROW KING

BY JOE SAGE

We've reported on Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer through concepts, then online reveals and presentations during the lockdown era.

We were among the first to see them in the flesh, at the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo in October 2020, but that was just a walkaround, no drive time.

They were then entered in two of our regular drive comparos in fall 2021—the NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year Awards (a.k.a. Mudfest, in Washington State in September), where the Wagoneer won Best Full-Size Luxury Utility; and at the Texas Truck Rodeo in October, where the Grand Wagoneer won Best Full-Size Luxury SUV plus the coveted overall Title Award, 2022 SUV of Texas.

Drive time at these is brief and in specially engineered conditions. You get to test the general feel and specific capabilities, but you don't spend

much time with features and settings.

Our first chance to really engage with the new family came in February 2022, during a week with this second-level-up-out-of-four (Series II) model of the upper-of-the-two families (Grand Wagoneer vs Wagoneer). And this time, we spent plenty of time with settings and interfaces. An unusual amount of time, actually, as we'll visit in a minute.

The first item of note—and some mystery—is that Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer are brought to market with a clear announcement that they are “not a Jeep.” They do not include the “J” word anywhere on their badging. They are their own division. Or brand. Or sub-brand. *Forbes* call it a chance to “not only move Jeep upmarket, but also provide the *foundation* for an entirely new sub-brand.” Manufacturer materials provided with our

vehicle call it “a premium extension of the Jeep brand.” Yet all other OEM materials are organized as separately as, say, Dodge and Chrysler.

But then there's that seven-slot grille. Bear in mind, Ram trucks carried vestigial Dodge crosshair grilles for years, but that was evolutionary, not decided at a new birth. The vehicle's sticker does not include Jeep in the title. But then it is named, about an inch below, at the top of the specs.

It's enough to make you think this has not been completely thought through—or maybe that's intentional, so they can read the public's reaction to this and proceed based on popular usage.

Timing is everything, and the Wagoneer pair may confuse a few people by having come out at about the same time as a new generation-five Jeep Grand Cherokee (in fact, the new three-row Grand Cherokee L came out first, then the Wagoneers, then the usual two-row Grand Cherokee). Our chart shows how the Jeep has grown, with its

	JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE		
	GEN 4	GEN 5	GEN 5 L
LENGTH / WHEELBASE ..(in).....	189.8 / 114.7.....	193.5 / 116.7.....	204.9 / 121.7.....
TURNING CIRCLE ..(ft).....	37.1-38.0.....	38.0.....	38.3.....
GROUND CLEARANCE ..(in).....	8.6-10.8.....	8.4-11.3.....	8.5-10.9.....
HEADROOM (F/2/3).....(in).....	39.9 / 39.2.....	39.9 / 39.4.....	39.8 / 39.9 / 37.3.....
LEGROOM (F/2/3).....(in).....	40.3 / 38.6.....	41.3 / 38.2.....	41.3 / 39.4 / 30.3.....
CARGO CAPACITY ..(cu.ft).....	36.3-68.3.....	37.7-70.8.....	17.2-84.6.....
WEIGHT.....(lb).....	4513-5356.....	4238-5045.....	4524-5279.....
TOW CAPACITY ..(lb).....	6200-7400.....	6000-7200.....	6200-7200.....

three-row in particular bridging the gap to the size of the Wagoneer. But they are quite different in build, the Jeeps being unibody SUVs, while the Wagoneers are built body-on-frame on the Ram 1500 platform. Everything's bigger, and a practical consideration is the notably higher tow capacity of the Wagoneers (only the bigger V8, as on ours, falls slightly below 10,000 pounds).

Feature interfaces and settings are always an adventure when we have something for just a few days. Size is one way to distinguish the Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer lineup. Finishes are another. And features are another, on which this one generated a massive amount of notes, summed up by saying that far too many specifics seem to have

been made overly clever, to the point of serious distraction and inconvenience. All are interface design judgment calls, though telegraphing high value for a high price seems to be the familiar goal. On a practical level, if we could change one thing overnight, it would be to change the screens from gloss to matte—these are used outdoors. On an interface level, we would change many specifics.

The Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer family inhabits an extremely valuable yet surprisingly narrow category ruled by GM's Suburban family. Ford had attempted to conquer this with the Excursion. Wagoneer is a well-grounded badge return, strong in heritage, mission and execution. This one has the goods and may well pull it off. ■

WAGONEER AND GRAND WAGONEER	
.....	214.7 / 123.0.....
.....	38.0.....
.....	8.3-10.0.....
.....	6.4L HEMI® V8.....
.....	240 amp.....
.....	471 hp / 455 lb-ft.....
.....	10.9:1.....
.....	8-spd auto 8HP75 w ERS.....
.....	4x4, opt 2-spd on-demand.....
.....	5960-6420.....
.....	9850-10,000.....

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLYWarren Truck Plant, Michigan
 ENGINE / TRANSSaultillo, Mexico / US
 BUILD / ROWSbody on steel frame / three
 ENGINE6.4L HEMI® V8
 ALTERNATOR240 amp
 HP/TORQUE471 hp / 455 lb-ft
 COMPRESSION RATIO10.9:1
 TRANSMISSION8-spd auto 8HP75 w ERS
 DRIVETRAIN4x4, opt 2-spd on-demand
 transfer case, Selec-Terrain, Selec-Speed
 DIFFERENTIAL.....electronic limited-slip
 RING GEAR DIAMETER.....10.2 in
 AXLE RATIOS.....(w 6.4L HEMI) 3.92:1
 SUSPENSION ..F/R: Quadra-Lift air suspension
 w semi-active damping, stblzr bar;
 +R: cast alum links (tension, compression,
 camber, toe), high strength steel spring link
 STEERING.....elec rack & pinion
 BRAKESelectronic pwr: F: 14.8x1.18
 vented; 2-piston pin-slider caliper;
 R: 14.76x0.87 solid; single-piston w EPB
 WHEELS22x9 polished alum / grey pockets
 TIRES285/45R 22X: Goodyear Eagle
 Touring All-Season/Performance
 LENGTH / WHEELBASE214.7 / 123.0 in
 GROUND CLEARANCE(air: Pos#2) 10.0 in
 APPR / BRKVR / DEPART ..(air) 25.0 / 22.0 / 24.0°
 TURNING CIRCLE38.0 ft
 HEADROOM (F/2/3).....41.3 / 40.0 / 39.0 in
 LEGROOM (F/2/3).....40.9 / 42.7 / 36.6 in
 CARGO CAPACITY27.4 / 70.9 / 94.2 cu.ft
 WEIGHT / DISTRIBUTION6400 lb / 51/49%
 GVWR / PAYLOAD7700 / 1380 lb
 TOW CAPACITY(w bigger engine) 9850 lb
 FUEL / CAPACITYprem 91 octane / 26.5 gal
 MPG13/18/15 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$93,995
PAINT: Velvet Red Pearl-Coat, black roof.....	595
CUSTOMER PREF PKG: interior protection pkg by Mopar®, cargo tray, all-season mats.....	395
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	2000
TOTAL	\$96,985

2022 WAGONEER / GRAND WAGONEER LINEUP

WAGONEER	4x2.....	4x4.....
5.7L HEMI V8 w eTorque Hybrid Assist (392 hp)		
Series I	\$57,995	
Series II	67,995	\$70,995
Series III	72,995	75,995
GRAND WAGONEER		4x4.....
6.4L HEMI V8 (471 hp).....		
Series I	\$86,995	
Series II	93,995	
Obsidian.....	98,995	
Series III		103,995



Eye-opener BY JOE SAGE

Relating any given Lexus or Toyota to its corporate cousin is easy on some, trickier on others (there are more Toyota cars and SUVs, both). The sedans are straightforward—IS to Corolla, ES to Camry, LS to Avalon (okay, IS-Corolla can still surprise many). With utilities, though, not so much.

Toyota's ten SUVs and crossovers (or seven when you reduce to root models) cover a wide range, in many cases distinguished by size or powertrain, but also by other attributes. Some have dead serious off-road capabilities, and among these, several builds of the Toyota 4Runner stand out.

Lexus has nine utilities (or just five root models), which is where the correlations can confound. But styling is what really throws you. The Lexus GX, at a glance, may seem like a bit smaller (and more affordable) alternative to the big LX, thus perhaps like Highlander to Toyota's Sequoia. But no, it's the coupe-profiled RX that aligns with Highlander. Due to styling, GX's pairing is perhaps more surprising.

We had the totally trail-tough Toyota 4Runner TRD Pro a few months ago. When the Lexus GX was scheduled for a week, particularly this Black Line Special Edition, it sounded like a nightclub-at-midnight model. But as we spent a week with it—and started to tune in to its larger, tougher sidewalls, serious approach-departure-breakover specs, overall stance, and even part-style-part-function details like its roof rack—it became clear that this Lexus is indeed a 4Runner cousin in a luxury suit, and one of the off-roadier 4Runners, at that.

The relativity became even clearer as we also drove the more pavement-oriented 4Runner TRD Sport (also in this issue) the week after this GX.

A buyer's migratory path to a final choice can head in many directions, often as a study in relativity. While the less-off-roadier 4Runner TRD Sport might appeal to someone wanting the look and feel of a 4Runner, but with some personality from the more townish models (say Highlander), another path could be from the more-off-roadier 4Runners toward something more townish, also more premium-finished, a tad more powerful (though not as

much so as its V8 might suggest) and a tad pricier—but with the off-roadiness largely intact. That would be this one—the Lexus GX 460.

Though not as hands-on simple as the 4Runner, the controls and interfaces in the GX continue to improve. As Lexus takes years to ease away from the wiggly joystick of yore, the often jumpy console touchpad replacing it is now easy to avoid via screen and other controls. While not the biggest SUV from Lexus, the GX is quite spacious (in fact, though we're tall, the pedals were notably distant). Mirrors can dip when in reverse, selectively by left or right, but you had best know your future needs, as these positions need to be preset.

Variety can make decisions equal parts harder and easier, and Lexus offers considerable variety. Easy or hard, having choices is always better. Add in corporate cousin Toyota, and the choices Lexus provides offer even more variety, better still. A luxury off-roader is going to check off a lot of boxes for a great many Arizona buyers. Now you may just have to ask yourself whether you'd risk rock chips and cactus scratches on this beauty. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Tahara, Aichi, Japan
BUILD	steel body on steel perimeter frame
ROWS / SEATS	three / seven
ENGINE	4.6L V8, cast alum/alum 32v
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.2:1
HP/TORQUE	301 hp / 329 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	6-spd sequential shift ECT auto
DRIVETRAIN	full-time 4WD
ZERO-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	7.8 sec / 110 mph
SUSPENSION	F: dbl wishbone, coils, stblzr bar; R: 4-link rigid axle, coils, stblzr bar
STEERING	engine speed-sensing pwr asst rack & pinion w variable gear ratio
BRAKES	F: 13.3-in vented; R: 12.3-in solid
WHEELS	18x7.5-in alum alloy
TIRES	265/60R18 M/S (full size alloy spare)
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	192.1 / 109.8 in
TURNING CIRCLE	41.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	38.0 / 40.2-40.4 / 35.2 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.7 / 34.1 / 29.3 in
CARGO CAPACITY	max 64.7 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.1 in
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKOVER	.21 / 23 / 21°
WEIGHT / GVWR	base 5130 / 6600 lb
TOW CAPACITY	6500 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.91 oct prem unl / 23.0 gal
MPG	15/19/16 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$55,425
BLACK LINE SPECIAL EDITION: 18" split-six-spoke alloys w gloss black finish, open-pore black trim, black NuLuxe w grey bolster inserts and grey stitching, black window trim, black roof rails, scarlet taillamps	3835
BLACK LINE CROSS BARS	405
HEADLAMP WASHERS	100
GLASS BREAKAGE SENSOR	335
EXHAUST TIP	130
DESTINATION CHARGE	1075
TOTAL	\$61,305

2022 LEXUS GX 460 LINEUP

(base)	\$56,970
Luxury	66,480
Black Line Special Edition	▼ 60,480

Note: our sticker's base varied slightly from this.

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Equation

Southwest towns have lent their names to quite a few vehicles, the latest being VW's Taos, named in honor of John Muir, author of an indispensable service guide for early VWs, popularly known as "The Idiot Guide." (Muir lived in Santa Fe, but there has been some historical revisionism.)

VW Taos was first introduced in China in 2018, then revealed for the US in 2020 as a 2022 model—thus making our sample still all-new today.

Taos fits into the VW lineup two ways—it's a smaller alternative to the compact Tiguan, and it's widely stated to replace the VW Golf hatch in these SUV-crazed days, though the Golf R and GTI linger.

Among the broader Volkswagen Group family, at least in the US, arguably no two brands are more similar than Volkswagen itself and upscale Audi. Positioning the two against each other by brand

and content is a conundrum faced by many auto-makers with a similar standard-premium pairing, compounded by relatively similar styling across much of these two lineups.

With build quality, style and content high in both, it seems VW, the less expensive, works extra hard to draw a distinction. And that's where VW never lets us down, delivering a vehicle about on a par with an Audi of 'X' years earlier, at today's Volkswagen price, a great value formula.

Our sample here is a mid-level-of-three SE trim, also forgoing available all-wheel drive, in a wide range of models with a pleasing range of prices.

Styling is attractive, fuel mileage is stellar for a utility, ground clearance beats a hatch, and storage, leg- and headroom are ample (though we always hit our knee on the steering column upon entry).

A modest build has benefits. The screen, augmented by two knobs and subtle keyword buttons,

is above average for simplicity (though sometimes short on function). Climate controls follow suit.

Things we didn't like so well included seats we never got adjusted well for comfort (our time is limited, of course); jerky steering (at least in this front-drive version); and a turn signal enunciator that is so loud you'll have to hear it for yourself to see why it's worth a mention. Some of these you may get used to, or not.

The numbers tell the story on power—not a lot of horses, but then also not a lot of weight.

All in all, the new VW Taos is a handsome little guy with high utility—simple, neat and clean, not a luxury vehicle, but certainly not low end. ■

2022 VW TAOS LINEUP

S	FWD	\$22,995	AWD	\$25,040
SE	FWD	27,245	AWD	28,695
SEL	FWD	31,490	AWD	33,045

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE/TRANSMISSION BUILD	Mexico / Japan
ENGINE	1.5L turbo/intercooled 16v DOHC 4-cyl TSI, alum alloy block/head, cast iron 5-main bearing crank
HP/TORQUE	158 hp / 184 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	11.5:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd automatic
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
SUSPENSION	F: strut-type w lower control arms, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar; R: torsion beam w coils, telescopic dampers
STEERING	rack & pinion, elec pwr assist
BRAKES	F: 12.3x1.0 vented; R: 10.7x0.4 solid
WHEELS / TIRES	7Jx18 alum-alloy / 215/5R18 a/s
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	175.8 / 105.9 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.6 ft
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKOVER	17.3 / 24.8 / 18.0°
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.4 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.7 / 39.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.1 / 37.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	27.9 / 65.9 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3175 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 13.2 gal
MPG	28/36/31 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$27,245
DESTINATION CHARGE	1,195
TOTAL	\$28,440



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ElectraMeccanica moves from development to build stage

Electric vehicle builder ElectraMeccanica Vehicles Corp., headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia and with an engineering and manufacturing plant under construction in Mesa, Arizona, has issued a letter to shareholders from CEO Kevin Pavlov, stating that they have “transitioned from a development stage company to a well-capitalized, high-quality automotive OEM,” having begun the first commercial deliveries of their flagship single-seat EV, the SOLO, to retail and fleet customers, aimed at “thought leaders, fun-seekers, city planners and environmentally conscious consumers around the world.”

Last year’s focus was on developing a retail footprint across the US, expanding in Arizona, Colorado, California, Oregon and Washington, while breaking ground on the 235,000-sq-ft. Mesa assembly plant and technical center in August. Their goal is to rapidly scale production, with an initial capacity to produce 20,000 SOLOs per year in Arizona once the plant is completed this summer. This plant will produce in tandem with strategic manu-

facturing partner Zongshen, in China, for a combined capacity of up to 40,000.

Test drive and showcase events last year included the LA Auto Show, the Advanced Clean Transportation (ACT) Expo in Long Beach, and the huge SEMA Show (the Specialty Equipment Market Association) in Las Vegas, where they introduced concept convertible and performance variants, potential future customized options, and the SOLO Cargo with an expanded cargo box.

They also signed a strategic agreement with global industrial technology firm Bosch to establish the Bosch Car Service Network, a pilot service and maintenance network of approved independent automobile repair shops throughout the western US, which will eventually expand nationwide.

Their biggest landmark came in October, when they delivered the first commercial SOLOs at an invite-only unveiling event in Los Angeles for early reservation holders and fleet operators. Capped off by 19 SOLO EVs during December, a total of 61 SOLOs were delivered for 2021. They say the initial

customer response to the quality and experience of the SOLO has been exceptional.

With \$228 million on their balance sheet, they expect production to ramp significantly in 2022, now that they have the necessary sales, marketing, logistics and service networks in place.

The company’s flagship vehicle is the three-wheeled SOLO single-seat EV, an urban vehicle designed to revolutionize commuting, delivery and shared mobility. SOLO has a range of 100 miles, a top speed of 80 mph, front and rear crumple zones, side impact protection, a roll bar and torque-limiting control, making it safe for highways. The vehicle also has power steering, power brakes, air conditioning, Bluetooth and an XM entertainment system for a pleasant commute. All this starts at a price point of \$18,500 (available for pre-order).

As of January 31, the company had delivered a total of 20 SOLO EVs to kick off 2022, focusing on fleet and commercial customers. Companies with the SOLO already in operation include Skechers USA, Faction Technology, Cyber Yogurt, Ruby’s Diner, Which Wich, UC Berkeley, the City of Mesa, Ross Painting, Maria Villareal Real Estate, Medcenta Pharmacy and Vortex Mental Health.

UC Berkeley fleet supervisor Michael Fujita

notes, “Using the SOLO instead of a full-size pickup truck will not only be more ‘Green,’ but also easier to navigate throughout the campus.”

President and executive director Nancy Hormann of the Downtown Mesa Association says, “Having the very first SOLO in Arizona delivered to Downtown Mesa has been a great experience. Using the car as our parking compliance vehicle has been met with great enthusiasm. The compact design of the car is great for helping our compliance officer navigate tight spaces in the garages as well as cutting patrol time in half. The curiosity demonstrated by our downtown patrons has made the car a great conversation starter. The technology we were able to easily install in the SOLO is the perfect complement to our ‘Smart City’ designation.”

Expected to boost commercial interest even more is the roll-out of the SOLO Cargo EV.

The new Cargo EV variant (below) was developed based on direct input from prospective buyers, modified with an expanded cargo box to accommodate a wide variety of fleet and commercial applications. Basic specifications and safety features are the same as for the standard SOLO EV, while its cargo space has been expanded to a total of 11.8 cubic feet, compared to 5 cubic feet in the standard SOLO EV. The Cargo version contains a variety of features for commercial applications including a bulkhead to separate the driver



from the cargo contents, an adjustable folding interior floor panel, cargo netting, lighting in the rear cargo space and a telematics enabled device. For added safety, the roof is reinforced with a Kevlar band. SOLO Cargo starts at \$24,500.

Demand is already rolling in for the SOLO Cargo EV, with deliveries expected to be early in the third quarter of this year. In February, Pelican Food Concepts of Arizona, a franchisee of Mountain Mike’s Pizza (a 40-year-old regional chain with restaurants across Arizona and other Western states) signed on as a SOLO Cargo EV initial test, reference and market validation account for Electra-

Meccanica, provided the vehicles meet its pizza delivery specifications for cost and performance in initial trials. The vehicles, with space for about 15 standard pizza boxes in their 11.8 cubic feet trunk, operate at an average cost of \$.30 per mile (roughly five times the savings of existing third-party deliveries, optimizing a transition to in-house deliveries or equally good for individuals looking for a low-cost alternative to drive for third-party delivery apps, all while reducing their carbon footprint). An order for 20 vehicles or so is expected by both parties. Once final engineering is complete and production of the vehicles begins. This comes on top of five existing fleet customers for ElectraMeccanica in the food delivery space. ■

The SOLO Cargo, with its eye on commercial sales, strikes us as a genius move—not only because the market itself should be strong, but let’s not forget that the whole personal pickup craze began because people saw commercial vehicles and said, hey, I’d like to have one of those for myself!



ElectraMeccanica’s 235,000-sq-ft assembly plant and technical engineering center under construction in Mesa (above) is due for completion this summer.



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- Fortifies Against Oxidation and Thermal Breakdown ■ Lubricates with Diamond Nano-Particles
- Reduces Friction, Heat and Wear ■ No Melting Point due to the Diamond Nano-Lubricating Particles
- Race Proven Under Extreme Conditions ■ Improves Fuel Economy and Performance
- Extreme Pressure Lubricant ■ Suitable for Race and Daily Drivers
- No Shipping Restrictions and Can Be Shipped Worldwide



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DRIVING INNOVATION

ENGINE TREATMENT

With NANO Diamond Technology

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Do not handle until all safety precautions and instructions on back panel have been read and understood. NET 12 FL. OZ. @ 355 mL

Net 12 fl.oz. (355 mL).....\$18.95
 4-pack\$ 56.99
 Case (24)\$422.76

Also available in gallon jug, 5-gal pail and 55-gal drum

Check out our Fuel Treatment, Power Booster Combustion Modifier, Water Wetter Cooling System Cooler, Transmission Treatment, No-Skweek Penetrant Lubricant, True Ceramic Coating Kit, kits, packages, accessories and more!



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MOTORSPORTS : DRIVING 101'S NASCAR RACING EXPERIENCE

TRACK TIME!

DRIVING 101'S NASCAR RACING EXPERIENCE PUTS YOU BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A REAL NASCAR RACE CAR—ALL BY YOURSELF!

Motorsports' leading fan driving experience partners—Driving 101, which operates NASCAR Racing Experience, Richard Petty Driving Experience and Mario Andretti Racing Experience—have announced their schedule of event dates at major speedways across the nation, including Phoenix Raceway.

Their program lets race fans drive the same tracks as their favorite drivers—including Phoenix Raceway, as well as Atlanta Motor Speedway, Auto Club Speedway, Charlotte Motor Speedway, Daytona International Speedway, Dover International Speedway, Homestead Miami Speedway, Kansas Motor Speedway, Kentucky Motor Speed-

way, Homestead Miami Speedway, Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Michigan International Raceway, Nashville Superspeedway, New Hampshire Motor Speedway, Richmond Raceway, Talladega Superspeedway and Texas Motor Speedway.

It's as real as it gets. You can drive a real NASCAR Race Car by yourself! After meeting with crew chief, training and instruction, you get behind the wheel and drive a NASCAR Race Car for timed racing sessions. There's no lead car to follow, and no instructor rides with you, as you drive five to 48 minutes of Track Time. Get one-on-one instruction from a spotter over two-way in-car radio. In between ev-

ery eight minutes of track time, you get a brief pit stop, then head back out to work on driving faster speeds. And YES, passing is allowed!

Prices for the NASCAR Racing Experience start at \$249.99 to drive a NASCAR race car, or \$129.99 for NASCAR Ride Alongs. Advance reservations are encouraged as track times fill up quickly. Driving 101 and its three trusted racing brands now runs at 16 nationwide speedways for NASCAR Racing Experience and 14 nationwide speedways for Mario Andretti Racing Experience.

The event comes to Phoenix several times during 2022. You can check dates and book reservations by calling 704-886-2400, or online at: www.NASCARRacingExperience.com.



Partnership perks and progress BY JOE SAGE

Though Renault has not had a market presence in the US in over 30 years, they have been partnered with Nissan since 1999 via stock acquisition, and 2002 via formal agreement (not a merger), adding Mitsubishi in 2016-2017 per the same pattern, creating the Nissan-Renault-Mitsubishi Alliance.

Though one of Japan's biggest conglomerates overall, Mitsubishi has been quite small in the US automotive segment. Now, with the energy of an upstart newcomer to this group and the nimbleness its small size allows, they are evolving.

Looking at relativity among their three US brands—Nissan itself, premium-luxe Infiniti and now Mitsubishi—the flagship gen-four Mitsubishi Outlander, new from the ground up, costs little more than half what a flagship Nissan Armada costs, or little more than a third the Infiniti QX80. The comparison is not this simple, however, as the top-model Outlander has more in common—notably its Nissan-Renault platform—with Nissan Rogue, which sits farther down that brand's lineup and is more similarly priced. Either way, it adds up

to a top model at a mid-model price. Keeping the affordable partner affordable, with today's universally high build quality and feature inclusions, while protecting the higher value of the premium brand, is tricky, with benefits to the buyer. Mitsubishi styling has been evolving rapidly, now possibly the most attractive of the three, certainly worthy of a most-improved award—with advanced sheet metal and lighting treatments outside, and on ours a handsome stitched and quilted leather interior. The user interface is simplified but

complete, and there are a variety of power outlets (though none out of sight in the console bin). The Bose audio is a fairly mainstream unit.

One place the value end is locked in is the vehicle's 181-hp four-cylinder engine, not a lot for a three-row SUV, though our top model with all options and all-wheel drive weighs just 3803 pounds. It can be a little slow on the uptake in aggressive Valley traffic, though it's fine once in motion.

Special modes tackle slippery, rocky, snowy and muddy conditions. With our sample's low-hanging bejeweled lights, deluxe big wheels and shallow sidewall tires, we passed on any serious off-road-

ing, though it was great on routine dirt roads. Outlander has a CVT, which confirmed CVT-dislikers will notice, but transmission agnostics probably won't, with similar awareness levels likely for its front-wheel-drive bias, electric steering and suspension. On the plus side, the Outlander has a particularly tight turning circle, all the moreso for a three-row. One thing that did bother us consistently were harsh speedbumps—avoid those (or live with 'em) and all else emerges as just fine.

You will get more than your money's worth with Outlander, even in this top model, and it seems so right on down the line. Mitsubishi is clearly reinforcing its own spot among the now-three alliance brands in the US, not as a redundant third wheel, but as an equal and solid value option. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Okazaki, Japan
ENG/TRANS	Japan / Japan
ENGINE	2.5L MIVEC DOHC 4-cyl DI alum/alum
COMPRESSION RATIO	12.0:1
HP/TORQUE	181 hp / 181 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	CVT
DRIVETRAIN	(opt) S-AWC (Super All-Wheel Control)
SUSPENSION.....	F: MacPherson strut, stblzr bar; R: multi-link, stblzr bar
STEERING.....	electric pwr steering
BRAKES	F: 13.8-in vented; R: 13.0-in vented
WHEELS	20x8J alum alloy / P255/45 R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	185.4 / 106.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....	36.1 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3) (w snrf)	38.8 / 37.4 / 34.5 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3).....	41.7 / 39.9 / 18.7 in
CARGO CAPACITY.....	11.7 / 33.5 / 78.3 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.4 in
WEIGHT / DISTRIBUTION	3803 lb / 57/43%
TOW CAPACITY	2000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 14.5 gal
MPG	24/30/26 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$33,745
WHITE DIAMOND PAINT.....	595
SEL TOURING PKG: heated steering wheel, synthetic leather door inserts/quilted (black/saddle tan), semi-aniline leather seats, 10.8" HUD, Bose premium 10-sprkr audio, power pano roof, rear door pull-up sunshades.....	2700
TONNEAU COVER	195
WELCOME PKG: carpeted floor mats & portfolio, touchup paint pen, center console tray mat	160
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	1195
TOTAL	\$38,590

2022 OUTLANDER LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
ES	\$25,795	\$27,595
w ES Convce Pkg.....	26,795	28,595
SE	28,845	30,645
w SE Tech Pkg.....	31,145	32,945
SE Launch Ed	30,990	32,790
SEL	31,945	33,745
w SEL Touring Pkg.....	34,645	36,445
SEL Launch Ed	---	36,340

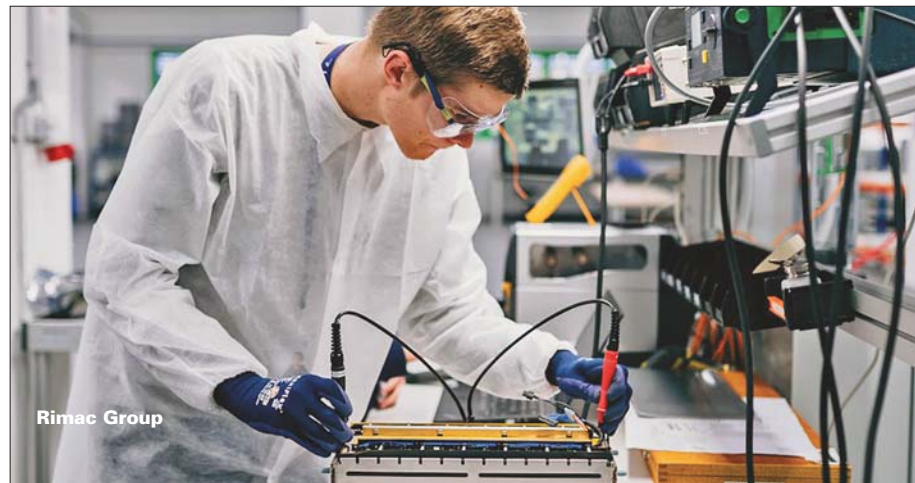
THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Volkswagen ID.4 EV
USA tour vehicle

▼ The **Volkswagen ID.4 EV** USA tour vehicle has been added to the electric vehicle exhibit—“Building an Electric Future,” the feature installation under the “Driving Toward Tomorrow” series of exhibits—at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. The two-person team of long-distance driver Rainer Zietlow and photographer Derek Collins began their journey in July 2021 and traveled more than 35,000 miles over about three months, visiting 628 VW dealerships across 48 states en route to their final stop at Volkswagen Group of America headquarters in Herndon, VA—setting a record for the longest journey by an EV in a single country. The exhibit consists of five rooms showcasing how Volkswagen’s modular electric drive matrix, or MEB platform, was engineered, the variety of models being planned, the uniquely flexible nature of the platform and how the vehicles will be assembled. Multimedia features in each room give visitors a variety of ways to visualize new challenges faced by modern automakers and explore what driving will look like in the future. The final room of the exhibit will now include the Volkswagen ID.4 EV USA tour vehicle, with an inside look at the company’s first all-electric SUV. The exhibit series, which debuted in November 2019, addresses the automobile industry’s current work on the future of transportation design and displays actual concept vehicles being developed globally. To learn more about the Petersen Automotive Museum, visit www.petersen.org.

▼ The **Rimac Group**, fully operational since January 1, is an umbrella company incorporating **Bugatti Rimac** (active from November 2021) and a new standalone Rimac Technology business. Rimac Group is majority shareholder in Bugatti Rimac with a 55 percent stake, with **Porsche** owning the remaining 45 percent. Rimac Technology (sister company to the previously known Rimac Automobili) is set to



Rimac Group

become a completely independent company, 100 percent owned by Rimac Group. It will continue and expand its activities in engineering, development, production and supply of high-performance battery systems, electric drive units, electronic systems and user interface components that Rimac is known for. Rimac Technology works with major automotive manufacturers across Europe, using engineering

expertise from developing the Nevera next-generation all-electric hypercar from the ground up to offer a range of products that take their customers through the entire product creation process, from concept to large-scale production. Rimac Technology is known to have worked with Porsche, Hyundai, Kia, Automobili Pininfarina, Koenigsegg and Aston Martin, while there are many additional projects which are still unknown to the public. Having delivered components for several niche volume projects in the past years, Rimac Technology is ramping up its production capacity and will be manufacturing tens of thousands of high-performance systems per year by 2024, further ramping up to volumes of hundreds of thousands with products ranging from small hybrid battery systems to full rolling chassis. Rimac Technology today is a 1,000-person company based on the outskirts of Zagreb, Croatia. From 2023, The Rimac Group, including Rimac Technology, will be headquartered at a new 200,000 square-meter Rimac Campus on the outskirts of Zagreb. Large enough to accom-

modate over 2,500 people, the Campus incorporates every aspect of The Rimac Group business, including production of the Nevera and high-volume production of components for other OEMs.

▼ Tire abrasion occurs during transmission of power at the contact patch between the tire and road surface. Any dirt lying on the road surface (including sand, water,

wind-borne soil from farmland, plant residues and more) means that abrasion particles do not consist of pure tire wear but are a conglomerate of substances, bearing the technical term TRWP (Tire and Road



Bollinger Motors commercial platform

Wear Particles). Europe’s largest motoring association, Germany’s ADAC, has conducted an independent study of the most popular tire brands and models in Europe, using data from 15,000 km (about 9,000 miles) of real-life driving on a mixture of urban, country and highway roads to calculate the life of the tire (mileage to the wear limit). Combining the abrasion rate, tread depth when new and the amount of material shed by a tire over its life generates an accurate comparative evaluation. Performance characteristics were also assessed for a clear understanding of any compromises choosing a more environmentally-friendly tire might present. Analysis of almost 100 summer and winter tires, in typical sizes across a variety of tread patterns, showed that in almost every tire size and pattern, the **Michelin** brand stood out in generating very low levels of tire particulates, as well as strong performance in safety tests. Among 15 tire brands tested, Michelin—with an average tire abrasion of just 90g/1000km—offered the lowest abrasion rate of any tire tested, at 58g/1000km with their 185/65R15 Michelin Cross Climate+. Michelin tires also performed consistently well in wet and dry-road performance and in snowy conditions. Michelin states that they develop their tires to offer optimal performance for the entire life of the tires, right down to the legal tread depth. They estimate this could save 6.6 million tons of CO2 annually if all cars in Europe were on tires of the same build quality.

▼ **Bollinger Motors**, headquartered in Oak Park, Michigan, is postponing production of their all-electric B1 and B2 consumer pickup and SUV, to focus efforts on

commercial business. “We started Bollinger Motors in 2015 with a dream and a desire to make the best trucks on the planet,” said CEO Robert Bollinger. “We’ve put countless hours of hard work and passion into making something we are all very proud of. The off-road capable, all-wheel-drive B1 and B2 are powerful, innovative and distinct. However, today we’re postponing their development and shifting our focus to commercial trucks and fleets.



Local Motors
Olli shuttle

This is a vitally important move for us, because it enables us to continue the development of our technology, and to make a real impact in the green future of automotive. I am so grateful for all the support and dedication from everyone who follows us on social media, has signed up for our newsletter, and has reserved a truck. You’ve watched us in the Catskills and Detroit as we engineered

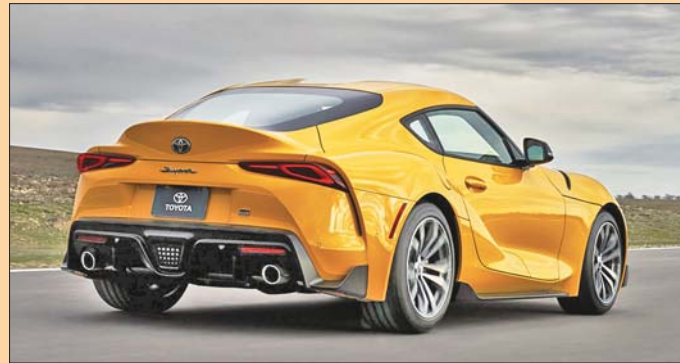
and built the trucks from the ground up and tested them across America. We’re taking that knowledge and experience as we move into commercial development, making innovative trucks for Classes 3 through 6.” For now, they are refunding all deposits to B1 and B2 reservation holders.

▼ **Local Motors**, headquartered in Chandler, discontinued operations in mid-January. The company was founded by CEO John Rogers in summer 2007, originally showcasing the manufacture of 3D-printed parts, then focusing on complete 3D-printed vehicles. Known since 2009 for its *Mad Max*-worthy Rally Fighter off-road coupe, Local Motors had more recently refocused on producing the Olli, a self-driving shuttle accessible for people with disabilities. Rogers departed the company last August, with his role filled by Cummins executive Vikrant Aggarwal by September. Local Motors low-speed autonomous shuttles were used in pilot programs around the world, but during the pandemic crisis of the past two years, as riders abandoned multi-occupant public transit modes, many increasingly cash-strapped government agencies stopped funding such prototype mobility projects. In another blow, Local Motors suffered a setback in December, when one of its Olli

shuttles crashed into a tree in a suburban Toronto deployment zone, with an operational attendant on board critically injured. The Local Motors shutdown was joined in January by the discontinuation of commercial activities by another industry player, Optimus Ride, which reportedly sold its intellectual property and sent over 100 of its Boston-based engineers to Magna International Inc. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

Toyota GR Supra 3.0



Ford F-150 Raptor



Jeep Wrangler Rubicon



Cadillac CT5-V Blackwing



Hyundai IONIQ 5 eCUV



TAWA Texas Auto Roundup : Texas Motor Speedway



Kevin McCauley for TAWA

NWAPA "Mudfest" Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the year



Automotive artist John Priddy



Doug Berger for NWAPA

THE BUSTED KNUCKLE GARAGE AN AUTOMOTIVE GIFT SHOP



Commercial Strength Shop Stools

Heavy duty garage counter shop stool with full swivel seat & great vintage look! Built in the USA, this shop stool is an industrial/restaurant grade counter stool built for long lasting durability, comfort and strength. Available in 36 designs!

- 30" standard counter height to seat • Vinyl covered seat is 14" wide
- Full 360 degree swivel seat • Industrial strength chrome plated legs
- 1600 lb weight capacity (vs imports rated at 300 lb) • Backrest option available • Built to order, allow 10-15 work days for delivery
- Minor assembly required • Tables to match—please inquire

Miracle Car Repair Shop Stool / SKU: 09-BKG-MCR

Gas, Oil & Toil Shop Stool / SKU: 09-BKG-TOIL

~~Were \$179.95~~ Now \$159.95 each

Free ground shipping in the lower 48 states!



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USA Made Neon Automotive Garage Clocks with old school vintage car guy looks for your man cave. No disappointments. Highest Quality & Reliability available.

- Features a spun aluminum black case, glass face and a separate on/off switch for the white neon lamp. (100,000 hours of neon, that's 11 years continuous running!)
- Measures a large 20" in diameter and 5" deep • 8' Power Cord, Chain Pull for Lamp • Limited warranty against defects in material and workmanship; runs on 110 Volt AC • Several Car Guy Styles to Choose From...Check 'Em All Out! • We've been selling these clocks for over 15 years; Never a Return, Never a Complaint, you have our word on it • Looking for something smaller? Check out our BKG-76600 for a 12" alternative

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

~~Were \$399~~ Now \$349 / Free shipping on this item!



All-Steel Toolboxes

The Greasemonkeys have the feeling their full line of durable all-steel portable toolboxes with lift-out tray and a variety of the most cool car guy graphics (five styles now and more coming!) just may be too good to stash tools in—we may have to call them "deco-boxes"!

- Rugged all steel end cap construction • Powder coated, rust resistant • Heavy-duty stainless steel handle • Nickel-plated steel latch and hinge for added security • Full length lift-out tote tray
- Cool car guy quality color graphics • 6 lbs • 16" x 7" x 7.5"

Wrench-In-Hand Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-WCL

Vintage Pickup Truck Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-VT

\$49 each / Eligible for free shipping!

♥ Not only are your products awesome, but the service and the people are too! I very much intend to pass the word along about how great it is to do business with the Busted Knuckle Garage.
— Many thanks! Jackie B.

♥ I just had the most wonderful buying experience! I only hope my father asks for something from The Busted Knuckle Garage for Christmas so I can do business with such a wonderful company once more.
— Cheers! Michelle

♥ My husband just loves everything, especially me for getting him such cool stuff. I'd have to say we will be lifetime customers, oh ya!! Thank you, Greasemonkeys.
— Sincerely, Pam

♥ First, let me be the one thanking you! I honestly cannot remember such extraordinary customer service.
— Thanks again, "JR" Jean



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