

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 6  
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2022

**MERCEDES-EQ  
BRONCO RAPTOR  
NEW NISSAN Z**  
**OFF-ROAD COMPAROS  
ROUTE 66 WEEKEND  
NASCAR - AUCTIONS  
AND MUCH MORE!**

**OUR 20<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY**



Mercedes-EQ EQS Sedan

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





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

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

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

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**Genau Autowerks** (San Francisco) raised **over \$11,000** by inviting friends and customers to a fun rally that culminated with lunch at a car lovers' dream destination. With a few sponsors to cover most costs, almost every penny of the registration fees supported our mission for Parkinson's!



The **Peachstate Region** (Atlanta) of the **Porsche Club of America** raised **over \$5,300** simply by taking an off-season Club Tour 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.

Supporting Parkinson's Disease through beneficiaries including:

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## news & features

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**COVER:** The fast-developing Mercedes-EQ lineup of full-electric sedans and SUVs applies a Digital Deep Dive Design philosophy to technology, design, functionality and connectivity. Shown on the cover is the EQS Sedan. We travel to Colorado in this issue to drive the EQS SUV, AMG EQS Sedan, EQE Sedan and EQB SUV, plus get an in-depth first look at the EQE SUV and AMG EQE SUV.



Tyson Hugie

Kevin McCauley

**START YOUR ENGINES : FROM THE PUBLISHER**

**T**wenty years. From where we sit, it feels like just one little bubble of time. Then we look at the Ford Bronco and Nissan Z in this issue, both so new and hot 50 years ago, and our 20 years, as 40 percent of that, seems an eon. It's a little of both.

Our first cover, in November-December 2002, featured the new gen-three Dodge Viper, a high-horsepower road monster. Yet we'd look at emerging trends of the time and try to visualize whether it was really fathomable that our roads would be taken over by ever more fuel-sipping compacts and subcompacts in the coming years. Flash forward, and it has been a little of both. Road monsters (and off-roaders) have more horsepower than ever, lightyears more, and yet are more fuel-frugal than ever, thanks to massive advances in both powertrains and lightweighting body, frame and chassis materials.

Yet while larger vehicles are still with us, there is no question that there has been massive growth at the smaller end of the scale. Countering that has been massive growth in the size of those small vehicles—larger than they may have otherwise been, thanks to the ever increasing dominance of smaller SUVs and crossovers. And adding balance or rebalancing to all of the above is the current trend toward electric vehicles (and the relabeling of hybrids and plug-in hybrids as their “electrified” kin).

We might have put the new Bronco or the new Z on this issue's cover, but the Bronco was already on our January-February cover, and we have rules about such things. And the six-speed manual gracing our September-October issue is pretty close to the Z. Calling up heritage via either of those could form a nice bookend to the Viper of 20 years ago. Or we could highlight the passage of time and the evolution of the automotive world. That's not how our Mercedes-EQ tech cover was chosen—our cover-variety balancing act aside, it emerged through the lineup's own merits. But it does make an interesting counterpoint, and it gives a solid look into the crystal ball that's already sitting right in front of us all.

Enjoy the ride!

**Joe Sage** - Publisher/ Executive Editor

**ARIZONA DRIVER**

MAGAZINE



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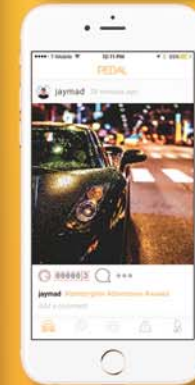
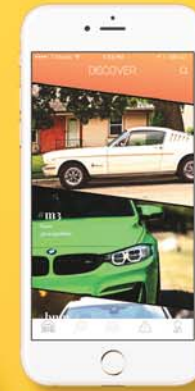
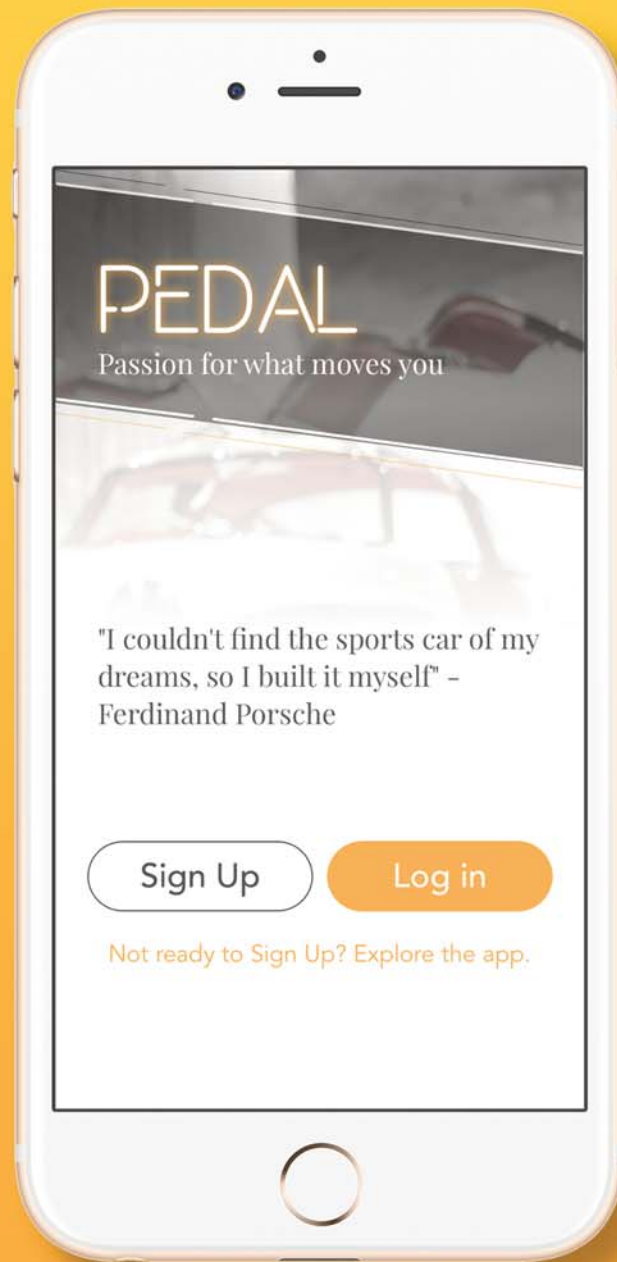
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Ferrari Purosangue

▼ **Ferrari** does not consider the Purosangue, its first four-door vehicle, an SUV or a crossover, despite its raised stance and all-wheel drive. Instead, CEO Benedetto Vigna calls it “a sports car, unique and distinctive, uncompromised on design and engineering.” At 390,000 euros base price in Italy (about \$383,000 at press time), the V12 Purosangue—Italian for “thorobred”—is now the second-most expensive production Ferrari, below the SF90 (limited production Ferrari models run more than 1 million euros, with the latest Daytona SP3 at 2 million euros). Deliveries are planned in the second quarter of 2023 in Europe, third quarter in the US and by year’s end in other markets. Ferrari will cap Purosangue output at 20 percent of production. Capacity is about 15,000 units, for a potential annual output of about 3,000 Purosangue units. (Pre-orders have been so strong, Ferrari could soon close the order book.) Ferrari has considered a four-door, four-seat model for over 40 years, but concluded that the additional weight did not allow Ferrari-worthy performance. But in early 2018, they decided their experience in torque vectoring and active suspension could deliver supercar performance with four doors. Purosangue has a carbon-fiber roof for lower center of gravity and dry weight of about 4,410 pounds. A new bodyshell designed from scratch includes rear-hinged rear doors, keeping the size more compact. With chassis, engine and gearbox also from scratch, a new 6.5-liter V12

produces 715 hp at 7,750 rpm, with 80 percent of its 528 lb-ft of torque available from 2,100 rpm. The all-wheel-drive chassis is a further development of the FF four-seater from 2011 (now the GTC4Lusso), with the engine mounted behind the front axle and its eight-speed dual-clutch transmission behind the rear axle as a transaxle, for 49/51 percent front/rear weight distribution. A simplified second two-speed gearbox (or power transfer unit) in front of the



2024 Ford Mustang

engine adds front-wheel drive at speeds up to 124 mph. In addition to active suspension developed in-house with Canadian supplier Multimatic, the Purosangue has four-wheel-steering to improve maneuverability and handling at high speeds. Top speed is over 193 mph, hitting zero-to-62 mph in 3.3 seconds.

▼ **Ford** revealed the generation-seven

2024 Mustang at a scaled-down North American International Auto Show in Detroit, in September. Engines will include their most powerful ever 5.0L V8 and the 2.3L EcoBoost. Showoff tricks include remote rev via the key fob. The new model is forgoing the longstanding double-hump instrument panel for an “immersive digital cockpit.” Going into the show, some were saying this is to be the final gasoline Mustang, while Ford CEO Jim Farley shortly after the show said Ford will not be going all-EV, although he said nothing Mustang-specific. Stay tuned. Ford also introduced Dark Horse, the first new Mustang performance series in 21 years. Described as “sinister yet premium,” it is aiming for the best performance ever from its new 5.0L V8, projecting 500 hp, while Mustang Dark Horse with Handling Package will be the most track-capable 5.0L V8 street-legal Mustang ever (and has an available six-speed manual). Mustang Dark Horse S and Dark Horse R track-only models are part of six new racing Mustangs coming soon, including the Mustang GT3, also unveiled in Detroit, which will

officially debut in the Rolex 24 at Daytona in 2024 in a two-car factory effort operated by Multimatic, with customer cars available for other championships where FIA-GT3 cars are eligible to compete, such as Fanatec GT World Challenge, the FIA World Endurance Championship in 2024, and the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Also shown was its GT4 sibling, which will race in 2023 (specifications not released).

▼ **Bollinger Motors** recently became a majority-owned EV truck company of Mullen Automotive, Inc., propelling Mullen into medium-duty truck classes 3-6, along



Bollinger B4

with Bollinger’s B1 and B2 sport utility trucks. Now, Bollinger has teamed up with Wabash, a leading truck body and trailer manufacturer, to develop a stronger, lighter refrigerated truck body on an electric chassis. Wabash has developed a lightweight EcoNex composite technology for use in truck bodies and trailers, which will seamlessly integrate with the Bollinger B4 Class 4 electric chassis cab. EcoNex composite material is said to be more durable, lighter and more thermally efficient than other commercial products, in turn allowing both cost savings and increased total payload capacity due to lower overall truck weight. Bollinger Motors is led by founder and CEO Robert Bollinger, out of their Oak Park, Michigan headquarters.

▼ **Volta Trucks** of Sweden recently completed a rigorous program of hot weather testing of its full-electric 16-ton Volta Zero, over six weeks at the purpose-built Nardo Technical Center in southern Italy. The development team completed over 2,500 km of customer-focused driving cycles at highway, town and city speeds in temperatures up to 102 degrees F (39 Celsius) during the day and 82 degrees F (28 Celsius) at night, with the air conditioning system, thermal management of the battery and the powertrain pushed to these extremes. Testing was also performed on coarse dustier surfaces. In addition to driving and engineering performance, dust accumulation was studied for cabin and load box ingress, as well as how it sits on com-

ponents such as lights, wipers and panels. In late 2021, Volta Trucks announced Europe’s largest purchase of full-EV trucks with DB Schenker’s order of 1,470 vehicles, following Petit Forestier’s order of

1,000 Volta Zeros. Volta Trucks now has a total order bank of around 6,500 vehicles, at a value of about four billion Euros.

▼ **Dodge** has crowned their fifth “Last Call” special edition model, the 2023 Dodge Charger King Daytona, which traces its heritage to the 1960s and ’70s West Coast drag-racing scene. The King Daytona bumps a Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye Widebody to 807 horsepower.



2023 Dodge Charger King Daytona “Last Call” special edition

Only 300 will be produced. Charger King Daytona pairs Go Mango paint with an orange interior appearance. The exterior has satin black King Daytona rear fender graphics, satin carbon warp speed wheels, satin chrome badging and more. Black Nappa/alcantara “Daytona” seats have orange stitching, the instrument panel bears a King Daytona orange badge, and orange stitching accents the instrument

panel, console, steering wheel and door trim. // The sixth “Last Call” special edition was revealed a week later—the 2023 Dodge Challenger Black Ghost, a modern manifestation of the original that roamed Woodward Avenue in the 1970s, matching the original in all respects, including black “gator skin” roof vinyl graphics, Challenger script badges and a white tail graphics. Black Ghost similarly bumps a Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye Widebody to 807 horsepower, and only 300 will be produced. // The seventh and final 2023 special-edition model, the very last of its kind, will be revealed at the 2022 SEMA Show in Las Vegas, during the first week of November. The 2023 Dodge Charger King Daytona and Challenger Black Ghost will carry a commemorative “Last Call” underhood plaque.

▼ The global market for **motorcycles, scooters and mopeds**, estimated at 48.7 million units in 2022, is projected to reach 61.6 million by 2026, a compound annual growth rate of 4.7 percent over the period. Small-displacement, full-size motorcycle models have been witnessing increasing consumer acceptance in the US and other countries since pre-pandemic, gaining considerable traction among both experienced and new riders, as motorcycles in

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styled approachable 125cc models, with their better gas mileage, ABS brakes and fuel injection systems shifting consumer attention away from larger or older machines. Modern 125cc models such as the



**Hennessey VelociRaptor 6x6**

retro-cool Honda Monkey and Kawasaki Z125 can hit 50 mph, adequate for city streets and adding a fun element. The trend is prompting more companies to come up with new models to tap the opportunity. The US market, estimated at 430,000 units in 2022, accounts for a 0.9 percent share in the global market. China is forecast to reach 9.7 million units by 2026, short of the average forecast growth rate, though the Asia-Pacific region is expected to maintain its strong position overall. Various global governments are offering incentives to promote electric models, while the latest high-performance internal combustion models are also expected to create new demand and drive revenue growth.

▼ Texas-based hypercar manufacturer and high-performance vehicle creator **Hennessey** has transformed the latest third-generation Ford F-150 Raptor into an immensely capable six-wheel-drive pickup, the Hennessey VelociRaptor 6x6. Modifications and enhancements go far beyond simply adding a third pair of wheels, as engineers equipped the new truck with sophisticated Fox suspension and dual locking rear axles, adding 50 percent more tractive grip for dominance on- and off-road. The truck's grunt matches its size, with its uprated, turbocharged powertrain producing 558 hp and 672 lb-ft of torque, with Ford's twin-turbocharged 3.5-liter V6 boosted via enhanced air induction, a high-capacity intercooler with blow-off

valve and an upgraded engine-management system. With an 8-foot bed, the truck is significantly longer than the stock Raptor (with 45 percent more volume than a stock 5.5-footer). Height is increased

several inches through a combination of a three-inch lift, upgraded Hennessey 20-inch wheels and 37-inch off-road tires. Hennessey is the world's largest producer of modified Ford F-150 Raptors, having built thousands of its high-performance VelociRaptor trucks for customers around the globe. Taking the F-150 Raptor to the 6x6 stage was second nature to their engineers, whose enormous, exclusive and highly capable 6x6 trucks over the years



**Subaru Leone 4WD Estate Van (Japan, 1972)**

have also included the Mammoth 6x6 TRX and Goliath 6x6 Silverado. Priced from \$399,950 (inclusive of the base Ford F-150 Raptor) the VelociRaptor 6x6 also features new front and rear bumpers and LED lights. The VelociRaptor 6x6 has a comprehensive 3-year/36,000-mile warranty and can be ordered through Ford retailers or directly from Hennessey. It is also available for international shipping.

▼ **Subaru** Corporation is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the debut of its all-wheel-drive (AWD) system this year. The company has produced about 21 million AWD vehicles since the introduction of the Subaru Leone 4WD Estate Van, Japan's first mass-produced AWD passenger car, in September 1972. All-wheel-drive models currently account for 98 percent of Subaru's global sales, with all featuring the Subaru Symmetrical AWD system fitted with a horizontally-opposed Boxer engine. The most distinctive feature of Subaru's Symmetrical AWD is a symmetrically-laid-out drivetrain paired with a longitudinally-mounted Boxer engine positioned in line with it. The combination of low center of gravity from the Boxer engine and superior weight balance of the symmetrical drivetrain maximizes stability and traction intrinsic to all-wheel drive, for superb performance in a variety of weather and road conditions. In addition to these advantages, Subaru has been continuously honing its AWD capability, now evolving in electrified vehicles as well. In e-Boxer-equipped models sold in Japan and other regions around the world, a highly-responsive motor allows more precise control of AWD, which offers a greater sense of security on slippery road surfaces, as well as

enhanced capability on rough roads. A dual-motor AWD system in the all-new Solterra electric SUV has been developed with expertise gained from a motor AWD R&D initiative launched in 2005.

▼ Born in 1968 and relaunched by Renault Group across Europe and the Mediterranean in 2004, Romanian automaker **Dacia** has always aimed for high value by rede-

fining the essentials in simple, reliable, multi-purpose vehicles in tune with customers' lifestyles. The Dacia Manifesto Concept aims to embody those values—essential but cool, robust and built for outdoor



**Dacia Manifesto Concept**

activities, and efficient from an economic and environmental standpoint. Not an upcoming model as of now, Manifesto is a lab for ideas, with innovative features making their way to future vehicles in the Dacia lineup. Manifesto has no barriers between the passengers and the environment—no doors, no windows, no windshield—fully immersing the driver and passenger in the outdoors. Instead of a tailgate, there's a hard-wearing work surface suitable for a variety of purposes as you prepare for your open-air activities. While close to nature, occupants can remain connected, via a simple, economical Bring-Your-Own-Device approach to fully integrate a smartphone into the instrument panel and on-board computer (already available on several of the brand's current models and evolving in others). A simple system to secure a variety of modular accessories in the concept will be built into future Dacia models. A single headlamp can be detached to be used as a powerful torchlight. Manifesto Concept is geared toward off-roading, with 4-wheel drive, generous ride height, large wheels and a body built to withstand the toughest terrain. You can clean out the waterproof interior with a jet washer, and removable seat coverings can become sleeping bags in seconds. A roof rack can carry all sorts of loads via configurable carrier bars, following up on modular roof bars already available on the Dacia Sandero Stepway and Jogger, and coming soon to Duster. A removable battery supplies power through

a household outlet, as an energy source for any outdoor activities. Compact, lightweight and consuming less energy, the vehicle claims a minimal environmental footprint. Its efficiency carries over from

the seven-seat Dacia Jogger, 300kg (661 lb) lighter than its rivals. Manifesto Concept's main plastic body parts, made of Starkle processed polypropylene with a flecked effect, contain a significant portion of recycled material. Natural materials inside include a cork dashboard (and an absence of chrome plating). Concept airless tires aim for environmental friendliness as well as savings—puncture-proof and expected to last as long as the vehicle.



**Bugatti Centodieci**

Dacia models include Sandero, the best-selling retail car in Europe each year since 2017; Duster, the best-selling retail SUV in Europe since 2018; and Jogger, a versatile C-segment family car. Present in 44 countries, Dacia has sold more than 7.5 million vehicles since 2004.

▼ The "few-off" **Bugatti** Centodieci is conceived as a design evolution from the

legendary EB110 Supersport, with the design team using inspiration from that classic in the creation of this new coach-built hyper sports car. Designed and produced during Bugatti's Romano Artioli era of the 1980s and '90s, EB110 Supersport was a lighter, more powerful iteration of the EB110 GT, with new styling cues, a fixed rear wing for additional downforce and five instantly recognizable cooling holes in the B-pillar, feeding air to its 3.5-liter quad-turbocharged V12 engine. That air washes through a glass-covered engine bay and exits via ten slots in the rear. These elements are reinterpreted in the Centodieci, with five cooling ports in the side C-line, over a W16 engine with a glass cover, and out through the rear, including between a new light signature that mimics the vents on the EB110 Supersport. An enlarged rear diffuser houses vertically stacked quad exhausts, an homage to EB110 Supersport's twin pipes. Beautiful in design, Centodieci is also able to deliver levels of performance even the revolutionary EB110 Supersport can not match. The 1577-hp Centodieci hits 62 mph in 2.4 seconds, 124 in 6.1 and 186 mph in 13.1 seconds. Top speed is 380 km/h (236 mph). The classic's forward-leaping silhouette is reinterpreted in a new profile with a much lower front and higher rear. A visor-inspired glasshouse

sweeps around the body, while the front reflects EB110's understated Bugatti horseshoe grille. Slab-shaped EB110 headlights evolve into bespoke slimline LED headlights on the Centodieci. A "few-off," just ten examples of the Bugatti Centodieci will be hand-built in the Molsheim Atelier and delivered to customers until the end of the year, with each already sold at a unit price of eight million euros. ■

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## SPECIAL EVENTS: JANUARY AUCTIONS

	SAT 21	SUN 22	MON 23	TUE 24	WED 25	THU 26	FRI 27	SAT 28	SUN 29
PREVIEWS									
AUCTIONS									
TBD									
<b>Barrett-Jackson</b>	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Bonhams</b>				■	■	■			
<b>Gooding &amp; Company [ unknown ]</b>				■	■	■	■	■	
<b>MAG Auctions</b>				■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>RM Sotheby's</b>					■	■	■		
<b>Worldwide Auctioneers</b>				■	■	■			



# Arizona Auction Week 2023

**Barrett-Jackson**  
 52nd Annual Scottsdale Auction  
 Nine days: Sat Jan 21 - Sun Jan 29, 2023  
 WestWorld of Scottsdale (AZ Loop 101 & FLWright Blvd)  
 16601 N Pima Road,  
 Scottsdale AZ 85260

**Bonhams**  
 12th Annual Scottsdale Auction  
 Thursday, January 26, 2023  
 (viewing Tuesday-Thursday, Jan 24-26)  
 Westin Kierland Resort & Spa  
 6902 E Greenway Pkwy,  
 Scottsdale AZ 85254

**Gooding & Company**  
 Over the past couple of pandemic years, Gooding & Company ran versions of Geared Online auctions for Scottsdale, one year with most activity at their Southern California headquarters, the next at a private location in Scottsdale. Both hosted sellers and bidders only, no public viewing. There is no information yet for Auction Week 2023. It could be one of those again, could return to normal, or may not be happening at all. Stay tuned.

**MAG Auctions**  
 January 2023 Collector Car Auction  
 Friday-Saturday, January 27-28, 2023  
 Vehicle check-in, bidder registration Jan 23-26  
 We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort,  
 Fort McDowell AZ 85264  
 (Arizona 87 Beeline Highway northeast of Fountain Hills)

**RM Sotheby's**  
 24th Annual Automobiles of Arizona  
 Thursday, January 26, 2023  
 (preview Wednesday, Jan 25)  
 Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa  
 2400 E Missouri Ave,  
 Phoenix AZ 85016

**Worldwide Auctioneers**  
 7th Annual Arizona January Auction  
 Wednesday, Jan 25, 2023  
 (preview Monday-Wednesday, Jan 23-25)  
 Singh Meadows,  
 1490 E Weber Drive,  
 Tempe AZ 85281  
 (southwest of Hayden/McClintock and McKellips)

**B**ronco fans have been waiting for this one, and they didn't have to wait long.

A dune-running craft may sound highly specialized, and at its core it is. But here in Arizona, we have plenty of dusty dirt and gravel roads state-wide, and—even more on target—the Glamis Dunes right at our border, running from just west of Yuma, north-northwest to not far outside Blythe and Quartzsite. This makes for plenty of opportunities for a day

trip or intense weekend in the dunes with such a vehicle. Not surprisingly, the Ford F-150 Raptor has been a huge success here—a truck that can not only handle all that expertly, but get you there and back, with no need to trailer a specialty vehicle.

These trucks have sold like hotcakes, even to people who may not get to the dunes often, if at all. And they have proven themselves as great, proud and ubiquitous daily drivers. They have also spawned factory variants, from the F-250 Tremor to the F-150 Raptor With 37-inch Performance Package. All have been immediate successes.

Dreamed of and wishfully anticipated since the new Bronco's launch just over two years ago, we now witness the arrival of the Bronco Raptor.

The fundamentals that make an F-150 a Raptor remain the same for Bronco—stance, clearance, suspension, underside protection and power.

Creating a Bronco Raptor of course presented its own engineering challenges, as everything does—in this case, applying all that power and dune-leaping ability atop a vehicle about as tall as the pickup, but with a much smaller footprint.

The team at Ford Performance gave this new rig its own twin-turbo 3.0-liter EcoBoost, reportedly with 418 hp, along with the fundamentals you would expect—FOX-based HOSS 4.0 race-ready suspension, a fully-boxed, high-strength steel frame, heavy-duty driveline bash and skid plates from front bumper to the back of the transfer case, Ford Performance axles (from the Bronco DR race truck), and standard 37-inch all-terrain tires. Clutch and transfer case are both upgraded. And while

the Bronco Raptor has a high-riding ground clearance of 13.1 inches minimum—4.8 inches more than a base four-door—it's also 9.8 inches wider.

G.O.A.T. Modes are increased to seven, including a specially tuned Baja Mode calibrated for anti-turbo-lag on high-speed desert runs. And tow capacity is upped by 1,000 pounds, to 4,500.

The first impression approaching this Bronco is that it's big, simply a factor of the tires, wide fender lips and beefed-up suspension, all key to its stance and enhanced capabilities. In the cabin, it feels perfectly manageable—and it is. In motion, any effects of its big ride are minimal. (If this were a custom build, you could likely expect the modifications to dominate your experience.) All it takes

(cont'd)

*You can spot the Bronco Raptor by the big "FORD" stamped into its grille—following suit to the F-150 Raptor—instead of "BRONCO" as on most, along with Raptor's three clearance lights (required for width over 80 inches, but a great detail).*

# Happy anywhere

by Joe Sage



## BRONCO RAPTOR 4-DOOR SPECS

ASSEMBLY	.....Michigan Assembly, Wayne MI
ENGINE BUILD	.....Lima Engine Plant, Ohio
BODY	.....removable: four frameless doors, roof panels (carbonized gray molded-in-color top), front fenders, rear quarters, front bumper end caps, rock rail running boards; heavy-duty full-vehicle steel bash plates, HD Ford Performance modular bumper w Rigid fog lamp, two hooks 2 front 2 rear, washout vinyl flooring w plugs
ENGINE	.....3.0L twin-turbo EcoBoost V6, 24v, dir inj, DOHC, roller finger followover, hydraulic compensate lash adj, twin indep var cam timing, cast alum pistons, forged steel rods & crank, composite shell welded intake manifold w runner pack, exhaust manifold w integrated into alum head
HP/TORQUE	.....published goal: over 400 hp; reported as 418 hp / 440 lb-ft as stated by Ford CEO Jim Farley on Twitter
ALTERNATOR	.....single 240A
BATTERY GROUP	.....H7 AGM 80 AH 800 CCA
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.5:1
TRANSMISSION	.....10-spd SelectShift auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....4x4
TRANSFER CASE	.....2-spd torque-on-demand 4H-4L-4A on-demand w mechanical lock
DIFFERENTIALS	.....R: electronic locking rear diff w 4.70 rear axle
CRAWL RATIO	.....max 67.88:1
CHASSIS	.....Body-on-frame, fully boxed high strength steel frame w 7 cross members
SUSPENSION	.....Raptor HOSS 4.0 (High-performance Off-road Stability Susp) system w FOX Live Valve tech w position-sensing damping & FOX 3.1 internal bypass semi-active dampers specially tuned front/rear, integrated reservoirs front, remove reservoirs rear; F: low-mass indep front susp; R: five-link solid axle w Panhard rod & outboard coilover springs;
AXLES	.....F: Dana 44 AdvanTEK M210 indep susp w Spicer Performa-TraK electronic locker (4.70); R: solid five-link rear axle w coil-overs;
SUSPENSION TRAVEL (F/R)	.....13 / 14 in
STEERING	.....3-mode rack-and-pinion w comfort & sport modes, controlled via Terrain Mgmt System w G.O.A.T. Modes
BRAKES	.....four-wheel disc; F: 350x34mm vented, dual-piston, 2x51mm sliding caliper; R: 336x20mm vented, single-piston, 1x54mm sliding caliper
WHEELS	.....std 17-in black high-gloss painted alum alloy
TIRES	.....37x12.5R17 All-Terrain
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....191.0 / 116.5 in
HEIGHT / WIDTH (W MIRRORS)	.....77.8 / 86.9 in
TRACK (F/R)	.....73.2 / 73.6 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....13.1 in
OVERHANG (F/R)	.....32.0 / 42.4 in
APPR / BRKVR / DEPART	.....47.2 / 30.8 / 40.5°
MAX WATER FORDING	.....37.0 in
WEIGHT	.....5733 lb
CARGO CAPACITY	.....33.4 / 73.0 cu.ft
PAYLOAD / TOW CAPACITY	.....1100 / 4500 lb
GVWR / MAX GCWR	.....6850 / 10,650 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....87 reg unl / 21.2 gal
MPG	.....15/16/15 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$68,500
KEYLESS ENTRY KEYPAD	.....110
INTERIOR CARBON FIBER PACK	.....1725
LEATHER-TRIM/SUEDE SEATS	.....2495
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1595
TOTAL	.....\$74,425



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is a couple of blocks, a couple of turns, and a pull into a parking space or two—all impressively tight and accurate—to appreciate the engineering. It may look like its going to be a handful, but it turns out to be extremely manageable.

Its horses and gears are aimed toward power and performance, not so much acceleration and raw speed. You can capably grab another lane on the freeway, but roaring forth from the light is not the same as in a sports car or even some big V8 pickups. That's not what this is for, or then again is it? When you talk dune running, you do talk speed, and it has what it needs for this. You've seen the sand-leaping, air-catching videos to back that up.

On the boulevards in town, it pretty well fills a lane—fun to sneak a glance at both mirrors and see how close the dotted lines are—but it tracks as true as can be, smooth, straight and accurate, easy to point and very easy to hold. The Bronco Raptor also handles boulevard U-turns easily. We marveled at the extreme duty this rig is really made for, as it is a champ in town.

Both tough and handsome, it could easily be your only ride and daily driver—far beyond what

we might have expected around town, which is part of what they've worked so hard to develop. And with its bold looks, you could show up in this at the fanciest of affairs and be belle of the ball.

We took it out for an extended romp on gravel roads, reducing to dirt tracks, reducing to minimal trails, and could do that all day every day, as well.

Our next delight was when we got back to pavement—extremely narrow and twisty for quite a few miles. Granted, after rock crawling, any pavement may feel sporty, but we'd been on this particular road many times, and the Bronco Raptor once again showed off its amazing handling skills.

Interestingly, we never used manumatic or drive modes for anything—paved, urban, sand-gravel-rock, wilds—but they are all there and then some. It's just that the core engineering is so perfect.

If you want more speed, you know what you're wishing for next, and you're not alone. Ford went through this, of course, with the F-150 Raptor, and after several years of successive explanations, denials, rumors and promises, this summer they introduced the F-150 Raptor R, the V8 version many were clamoring for. Will there be a V8 option in

### 2023 FORD BRONCO LINEUP

(Note: 2022 model year is no longer available to order. Limited inventory may be available at dealers. The 2022 base 2-door was \$29,300 at launch, \$31,300 now; 2023 prices are as of fall 2022 and all up approximately \$2200 to \$5000 or more.)

	2-DOOR	4-DOOR
Base .....	\$32,295	\$36,445
Big Bend .....	36,285	38,275
Black Diamond .....	38,950	40,940
Outer Banks .....	41,855	44,445
Heritage Edition .....	44,305	46,295
Badlands .....	45,095	47,385
Everglades .....	---	53,895
Wildtrak .....	52,780	54,320
Heritage Limited Edition .....	66,895	69,185
Raptor .....	---	73,780

(Note: our 2022 Raptor had a base price of \$68,500.)

SASQUATCH PACKAGE AVAILABLE IN 2022 ON:  
 2-door: base, Big Bend, Black Diamond, Badlands  
 4-door: Big Bend, Black Diamond, Badlands

the future, a Bronco Raptor R? Irresistible to many customers, the very idea surely appeals as well to the Ford Performance engineers. It does, of course, have a shorter wheelbase and different stance, but that's what engineers are for—if they move forward with this at some point, those are all the things they'll happily tackle and conquer. ■





# Pureblood

by Joe Sage

The Z-car has been through considerable evolution during its more than half century of existence, yet all generations have borne the unmistakable core identity of this living legend. But while styling and numbers have changed over the years, there remains something magical about that first Datsun 240Z that has always suggested its purest form.

The first image of the new seventh generation Z (no numbers) was so clean and simple, it looked much like an early sketch rendering—a compliment as much as anything, as realities usually take a lot of fun out of concepts

on their way to production. Reality in this case did not lose its compass, as the new car holds true

to the concept's intentions and origins.

The grille, which seemed large in its first sketches, looks completely different in final form, with split upper and lower treatments. In fact—as promptly noted by an enthusiastic six-Z owner who pulled in to join us in a parking lot—visualizing a gen-one 240Z with its simple chrome bumper removed unlocks the whole secret, and the rest of the car's simplicity follows suit. Some have called the new Z retro. To us, it feels fully contemporary, simply delivering the pure spirit of the car's soul.

The 2023 Nissan Z is offered in Sport and

Performance trims (our pre-production prototype is the latter), plus a Proto Spec edition in its first year, limited to 240 units (a 240Z nod).

All have a 400-hp 3.0-liter V6 twin turbo engine—an upgrade from the 370Z's 332-hp 3.7-liter V6—and choice of 6-speed manual transmission with motorsports-based EXEDY high-performance clutch, or a 9-speed automatic (replacing the 370's 7-speed auto) with paddle shift (either transmission at the same price).

The Performance trim is quickly recognizable by its side sill, front chin and rear spoilers. Paints include three with the roof the same color and six two-tones (none repeating from the monotones) with a black roof.

The drivetrain is all intensely performance-oriented (see specs in sidebar), and the line-

up offers 18- or 19-inch wheels, in both cases staggered fitments (wider in the rear).

The two-seater's cockpit bears an atmosphere evoking the original 240Z, driver-centric, with an analog triple-pod cluster atop the dash (turbo boost, turbine speed, voltmeter), a racing-inspired 12.3-inch customizable TFT meter display and a standard 8-inch touchscreen (with 6-speaker audio) or optional 9-inch (with 8-speaker Bose audio) on the Performance trim. Black cloth seats with synthetic suede inserts are standard, with heated leather sport seats available on Performance, as are other performance and tech upgrades.

It should take little time to decide whether to opt for the base Sport trim or spend exactly 10 grand more for Performance, each with its own irresistible formula.

As a prototype, we had this car for just two full drive days. It arrived with several hours'



worth of fresh detailing and polishing, but these quickly turned into a couple of the stormiest days of this or any year.

You might expect a small 400-hp two-seat sports coupe—just 3536 pounds, thanks to a high-strength steel offset by aluminum hood, doors and hatchback—to feel like a skateboard with a rocket engine. But the new Z feels far more substantial than its forebear of

(cont'd)

## SPECIFICATIONS

(Note: prototype vehicle.)

ASSEMBLY	.....Kaminokawa, Tochigi, Japan
BUILD	.....unibody; corrosion-resistant high-strength steel, alum hood-doors-hatch
ENGINE	.....3.0L twin-turbo V6 24v DOHC longitudinal, CVTCS, alum/alum
HP/TORQUE	.....400 hp / 350 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.3:1
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd manual close-ratio, synchro rev-match, high-performance clutch
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD, carbon fiber composite driveshaft (6MT only), mechanical clutch-type limited-slip diff (6MT only)
SUSPENSION	.....F: dbl wishbone alum, high vacuum diecast alum alloy subframe, monotube shocks, stblzr bar; R: indep multi-link alum, steel subframe, monotube shocks, stblzr bar
STEERING	.....elec (rack) power steering
BRAKES	.....F: 14.0 x 1.26 vented, floating 4-piston alum; R: 13.8 x 0.79 vented disc, 2-piston alum; red calipers
WHEELS	.....RAYS® super lightweight forged alum alloy; F: 19x9.5; R: 19x10
TIRES	.....Bridgestone Potenza S007 high-perf; F: P255/40R19; R: P275/35R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....172.4 / 100.4 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....4.8 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....na
HEADROOM	.....38.2 in
LEGROOM	.....42.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....na
WEIGHT	.....3536 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....prem unl / na gal
MPG	.....18/24/20 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$49,990
PREMIUM TWO-TONE PAINT:	
Seiran Blue Metallic / Super Black	.....1295
ILLUMINATED KICK PLATES	.....500
FLOOR MATS	.....400
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1025
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>.....\$53,210</b>

## 2023 NISSAN Z LINEUP

Z Sport	.....9-spd auto	.....\$39,990
	6-spd manual	.....39,990
Z Performance	.....9-spd auto	.....49,990
	6-spd manual	.....▼ 49,990
Z Proto Spec	.....9-spd auto	.....52,990
	6-spd manual	.....52,990



50 years prior. And it is a hoot to drive, from the very first block. Highly connected to the road beneath its feet, the Z's handling is very precise. Acceleration and steering can solve any traffic knot. Its tight but unspecified turning circle was equally impressive.

Cruising Carefree Highway when the weather took its turn for the worse, we opted to zig and zag back into the grid via far less trafficked secondary streets—a plus for solitude, though visibility was dropping toward zero, with few clues from the lights of others. To crank the heat, there's a simple dial control. Perfect. We were happier still to have heated seats, something you didn't have in a '69 240Z.

The second day's weather brought a great mix of calm and adventure—heavy rain, temperatures of every sort, and with numerous sprawling sand washes, not always where you would expect them. Much as we appreciate the pure feel of the original car, we were definitely glad to have such modern touches as traction control through those loose spots.

While we often give a tightly patterned 6-speed manual an instinctive doublecheck as

we shift, the new Z shows the next selected gear in the binnacle readout before you've let out the clutch and engaged. It's split-second stuff, not strictly necessary, but useful.

As outfitted, our manual transmission included blip-shifting and accompanying sound effects—shift down, and the revs goose up, increasing the odds of proper engagement, enhanced to show off a bit, mostly intended to ease the learning curve for new manual drivers, itself is a noble purpose indeed. But we prefer mastering the manual mechanicals and would recommend the same to anyone.

We had noticed the binnacle gear readout always had an "S" next to the number. Turns out it was in SynchroRev Match S-Mode, a long and formal name for that rev-matching blip-shifting. (Rev-matching is a common but debatable term, as it really spins things into a wider range than a "match," for higher odds of engagement than a non-blipped single rev rate). There's a small button to the right of the shift lever, that turns this off. (It's easy to miss; we first took it as a celebratory badge with a 6-speed pattern, but it's a control. It does say

S-Mode on it, but it's so shiny, we were unable to read that until we knew it was there.) This is a manual feature only. The automatic instead offers standard and sports drive modes, the latter modifying acceleration, steering and drive dynamics and adding, yes, "active sound enhancement." There's something to be said for most of sports mode's features, other than our general dislike for artificial sound effects (which also draw undue attention from law enforcement, sleeping neighbors or others).

On ours, we turned S-Mode off as soon as we knew we could, immediately transforming our drive into pure manual shift heavenliness.

On our last morning, we gave the car one more good run, to confirm our feelings on this, on lightly-traveled local surface streets, first with S-Mode on, then off. Sue enough, with S-Mode on, we would get up to 3rd gear, gear down to 2nd, and "BLEWWWWWWppp," that rev-matching blip-shifting would kick in. Not our favorite.

To us, the sudden rotational surge of blipping, an automated overlay to a manual sys-

tem, basically interrupts your power curve. And any mainstream manual transmission already has synchro—spinning the gears compatibly, mechanically, before they mesh.

Turning it off turned the Z, for us, into a whole new car, smooth as silk, with no blip—though we are sure that some owners will think blip-shifting is the coolest thing ever—and it's always great to have choices.

We continued our run without S-Mode... 3rd gear...2nd gear...back to 3rd. Roundabout, let's downshift to 2nd...done roundabout, let's go back to 3rd...minivan in front is a little slow, let's go back to 2nd. We preferred this performance, all without a sound effects spectacle for the outside world.

Whoever you are—second-nature shifter or novice, clever mechanical tech enthusiast, electronic-interventionist fan or both—you will love this car inside and out.

They say first impressions are lasting, but we generally notice our last impressions, too. And our final take on the new Nissan Z as we bade it farewell was summed up as we wiped it down, saying, "Well, that was fun!" ■



■ (Below) The weather added major thrills to our adventures, from blinding rain, to reports of near-tornados, to heavy loose sand when the rain let up.

■ (Above) Whatever your manual shift skills or preferences, this shiny little SynchroRev Match S-Mode button is the gateway.



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## NASCAR CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND: NOVEMBER 4-6, 2022

**T**he 2022 NASCAR Championship Weekend at Phoenix Raceway has four major races—ARCA Menards Series West Championship Desert Diamond Casino West Valley 100, NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Lucas Oil 150, NASCAR Xfinity Series Championship and the season-capping NASCAR Cup Series Championship Race.

**NOVEMBER TICKETS & INFORMATION:** Only a limited number of tickets remain for the 2022 NASCAR Cup Series Championship Weekend, including infield standing-room-only for Sunday.

Visit phoenixraceway.com to secure remaining tickets before they are gone, as well as for information on additional experiences and entertainment, or call the Phoenix Raceway ticket office at 866-408-RACE (7223).

Fans looking to buy or resell reserved seats for November 2022 can also visit SeatGeek.com.

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3 (free admission)

NASCAR Camping World Truck Series practice...5:05 pm  
 ARCA Menards Series West practice/qualify.....6:30 pm

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4

**ARCA MENARDS SERIES WEST CHAMPIONSHIP DESERT DIAMOND CASINO WEST VALLEY 100** .....11:30 am  
 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series qualify....3:00 pm  
 NASCAR Xfinity Series practice.....4:05 pm  
 NASCAR Cup Series practice.....5:05 pm  
**NASCAR CAMPING WORLD TRUCK SERIES LUCAS OIL 150**.....7:00 pm

**SPRING WEEKEND 2023:** NASCAR Spring Weekend returns March 11-13, 2023, with the ARCA Menards Series General Tire 150, NASCAR Xfinity Series United Rentals 200 and NASCAR Cup Series Ruoff Mortgage 500. Tickets are now on sale, as are 2023 Season Tickets: phoenixraceway.com.

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5

NASCAR Xfinity Series qualifying.....12:00 noon  
**BUSCH LIGHT POLE AWARD**  
 NASCAR Cup Series qualifying.....1:00 pm  
**NASCAR XFINITY SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP** .....3:00 pm

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6**  
**NASCAR CUP SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP RACE**...1:00 pm

Schedule and details subject to change

**FALL CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND 2023:** NASCAR returns for Championship Weekend November 3-5, 2023, with the ARCA Menards Series West, NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, NASCAR Xfinity Series and NASCAR Cup Series Championships. Tickets go on sale at a later date. ■



# Your heart's content

by Joe Sage

We had a base trim, rear-drive Mercedes-Benz C-Class in the prior issue. With the A-Class departing the lineup after this year, that and this S-Class—an S580, with the bigger engine, 4MATIC and penultimate AMG Line trim—pretty much bookend the entire sedan range.

In the broader S world, there are also the Mercedes-EQ EQS Sedans, full-electric offerings (we drove one example in an earlier issue this year), which run very similarly in pricing. And in a separate high orbit, there are the Mercedes-Maybach S580 and S680 ultra-luxe sedans, \$184,900 for the lesser and the price as yet unstated for the upper.

There is no full-AMG S-Class this year, though there is an AMG EQS electric.

For most driver-buyers, our 500+ hp gasoline-

powered, 48-volt EQ Boosted S580 4MATIC AMG Line example here is tops. The slightly pricier Executive Line (just \$7,100 more) adds its goodies in the rear compartment—think chauffeur-driven.

Our notes for the week said “needless to say” more than once—“it’s a beauty, needless to say”; “needless to say, this is quite a luxury yacht.” Based on that thinking, we could stop right here. But there are always a few more details of note. Hop in.

Even in an era with no shortage of quilted and bolstered leather, the S580’s interior is a standout—gorgeous, comfortable and commanding. It is also very accommodating—as we entered (on a still-triple-digit fall day), we heard the AC running ever so slightly, putting our hand to a vent to confirm. Nice. If you don’t already feel more than wel-

come, there are also advanced, highly effective massaging seats, left and right, with many options, each a delight. It takes a couple of screen steps to make your pick, but it’s well worth it.

(Of note, our magnificent interior was not even fully as good as it gets—due to ongoing global supply chain issues, the full Nappa version, photos at right, was credited back on our sample.)

Although this cabin is clearly inviting enough to make you want to settle in and drive to, say, New England for a lobster roll lunch and back nonstop, we spent our time around metro Phoenix. Our commendations came quickly and continued all week.

The power speaks for itself—over 500 horses and 700 lb-ft of torque with a nudge from EQ Boost, which also delivers 25 MPG highway from its big 4.0-liter biturbo V8 and mild hybrid system, even at the car’s weight of almost 5000 pounds.

The 9G-TRONIC nine-speed transmission, wide-



ly used throughout the Mercedes-Benz lineup, is flawlessly matched with the S580’s powertrain—delivering consistent full power and commanding steering through stops and turns, with no drop or dip, just smooth control. We noted this performance was “so quick on the rebound, it’s almost anticipatory,” and it turns out that’s fact-based. Its behavior reflects pure mechanical engineering, but can also benefit from the car’s route-based speed adaptation, able to reference map data to reduce speed in anticipation of curves, intersections, junc-

tions, roundabouts, freeway exits and such.

Speaking of its precise steering, this 17-plus-footer turns in just about 38 feet, thanks to optional 4.5-degree rear axle steering. (There is also a 10-degree option, for about a 36-foot turn.)

It’s not just that the S-Class is the biggest, poshest and priciest Mercedes-Benz sedan, tops in size, materials and finishes. It’s that it delivers a basically flawless execution of power and performance, all in a limo-caliber experience, which you can push as hard as you want, as well. ■



## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Sindelfingen, Germany
ENGINE/TRANSMISSION	.....Germany/Germany
CONTENT	.....0% US-Can / 80% Germany
PASSENGERS	.....five
ENGINE	.....4.0L V8 biturbo w EQ Boost
	alum alloy, 32v DOHC, EQ Boost (integrated starter-generator) and auxiliary compressor; 48V mild hybrid system
HP/TORQUE	.....496 hp / 516 lb-ft
+ EQ BOOST	.....up to 21 hp / 184 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.5:1
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	.....4.4 sec / 130 mph (lim)
TRANSMISSION	.....9G-TRONIC 9-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....4MATIC AWD
SUSPENSION	.....F/R: indep multi-link w air spring, Adaptive Damping System (ADS+) and torsion bar
STEERING	.....speed-dependent electromech rack & pinion pwr assist
BRAKES	.....F: 14.5, R: 14.1
WHEELS	.....(std) 8.5x19 cast; (opt) 21-in AMG V-multispoke w black inlays
TIRES	.....(std) 255/45 R19; (opt) 255/35 R21 98Y
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....208.2 / 126.6 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....5.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....(std) 41.9 ft; w opt 4.5° rear-axle steering ±38 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....42.1 / 39.4 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....41.7 / 43.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....12.9 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4775 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....premium unl / 22.1 gal
MPG	.....16/25/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$117,700
PAINT: Manufaktur Diamond White	.....1750
AMG LINE	.....n/c
(CREDIT): missing 871 hands-free trunk	.....(100)
(CREDIT): missing Nappa Leather	.....(2290)
WHEELS: 21-in AMG V-multispoke w black inlays	.....1950
REAR AXLE STEERING, 4.5 DEGREES	.....1300
WHEEL LOCKING BOLTS	.....150
REAR SPOILER, BODY COLOR	.....500
COMFORT BOX	.....350
FIRST AID KIT	.....35
CENTER CONSOLE in black dotted lines	.....300
ACTIVE AMBIENT LIGHTING	.....790
NIGHT PKG: front splitter, fins in air intakes, side sill panels w insert, trim on rear apron, all in high-gloss black	.....400
WARMTH & COMFORT LITE PKG: heated steering wheel, heated & active ventilated power outboard rear seats w memory, heated front & rear center armrests, heated door armrests	.....3600
AMG LINE: AMG wheels, sport bodystyling (front & rear bumpers; side skirts), stainless steel sport pedals w rubber studs, AMG floor mats	.....4300
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1050
TOTAL	.....\$131,785

## 2022 S-CLASS SEDAN LINEUP

S500 4MATIC	.....Luxury Line	.....\$111,100
	.....AMG Line	.....115,400
S580 4MATIC	.....Luxury Line	.....117,700
	.....AMG Line	.....122,000
	.....Executive Line	.....129,100

# REDEFINED

BY JOE SAGE

Mazda's lineup has long been easy to follow. For SUVs, there have been the CX-5 since 2013 and the larger CX-9 since 2007 (as well as a CX-7 from 2007 to 2013). With the smaller CX-3 arriving a couple of years later, for 2016, we now had a CX-3, -5 and -9 (with a hole where -7 used to be), at this point a pretty clear small, medium and large, though each with its own nature.

That sets the stage for a new round of evolution and potential confusion. In 2020, CX-single-digit alphanumerics made room for a CX-30, initially said to "fall between" CX-3 and CX-5. Its lower profile makes it more hatch-like, while a beefy lower half still says SUV. That fall-between idea did not last long, though, as 2021 brought the last CX-3, with the CX-30 now said to be replacing it.

This year, a new shoe has dropped, with the arrival of the Mazda3-based CX-50—also long, low and wide, also beefy below, and currently said to

fall between the CX-5 and the CX-9.

MX-30 arrived at about the same time, available as a full EV, but also as a plug-in hybrid.

MX aside, things now stood as CX-30, -5, -50 and -9. Might it stay this way? Or will the CX-5 follow the dead end of CX-3 and the CX-9 make way for a CX-90, creating an all-two-digit lineup?

Manufacturers don't like to "discuss future product," and it has become more fun to just speculate and watch it unfold, anyway.

Regardless, each one of them is a standout machine holding a valuable place in the realm.

Parked near more traditional SUVs, CX-50 makes some suddenly look positively whale-like. Inspired by its long, low, road-hugging look, we ran a great many charts and calculations, expecting to find a dramatic new height vs stance ratio, but the math turns out to be not that dramatic, its totally updated character being more visual.

In the CX-30, the new look is achieved more via a lower roofline, while in the CX-50 it's achieved more with a visually lower beltline (itself a significant design evolution after a couple of decades of rising beltlines from adding more side impact, air-bag and rollover protections industrywide).

CX-50 is immediately recognizable as a Mazda SUV, while less obviously a brother—or possible successor—to the highly familiar CX-5. CX-50's presence is strong both inside and outside. Mazda has worked hard to position itself as being a cut above. And this new entry is a cut above that.

Features are solid, from their typically smaller and simpler screen up top, with exceptional camera views, to auto-dip mirrors in reverse (which we wish everyone had), to digital instrumentation that looks analog (which works so well) but with clever innovations like the posted speed limit being translated to a shifting visual zone on your speedometer. (The radio preset interface can be frustrating, though we've heard it may become more useful,

given more time.) The cabin cools quickly in triple-digit heat, and our trim includes cooled seats.

Power is ample, and in an uncommon specification, variable, depending upon grade of gasoline—256 hp with 93 octane gas, 227 with 87 octane, while 91 octane is the standard recommendation but with no power spec given (see sidebar). Weighing in at just under two tons in our top grade, the CX-50 tows almost its own weight, 3500 pounds.

A healthy 8.6-inch ground clearance suggests off-road time, but our top trim's handsome 20-inch wheels and low-profile all-seasons discouraged us from pushing it. (A new Meridian Edition with 18-inchers is expected to aim more directly for this niche.) We did give it a few miles' run on an unpaved road with ruts, swales and loose gravel. Its performance tempted us to push it harder, but we contained ourselves. However, it turns out the CX-50 was entered in both our Texas off-road comparos the very next week, where all capabilities were pushed hard (see elsewhere in this issue).

On our off-pavement run here, we gave off-road mode a try, and back on the rural highways, we tried sport mode. Both were fine, but not earth-

shakingly different, which is fine—philosophically, we'd be happy if vehicles didn't need modes at all and were just totally multi-capable, always. The ability to change around can be equal parts feature and nuisance, so we appreciate it when it's useful and enjoyable, but not essential.

Elsewhere in this issue, we suggest that a \$25k crossover may be all you need—unless your aspirations run higher, as most people's do. The CX-50 starts at just above \$25k for the base model in its 187-hp non-turbo sub-lineup. We haven't driven that yet, but the turbo is a natural—either 21 or 37 percent more powerful (depending upon gasoline grade, a solid vote for 93-octane right there), while about 14 percent pricier comparing equivalent upper trims, or 35 percent pricier comparing base trims, financially useful but more of an apples and oranges affair in terms of features.

The redesign earns an A-plus. Though a smaller-volume manufacturer, Mazda is often a style and technology leader. The new double-digit CX-50 not only looms large in their evolution, but may influence the entire segment—beyond being in step with the times, it may redefine the times. ■

**WINNER: TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo: Compact SUV of the Year**  
**WINNER: TxMPA Off-Road Invitational: Compact SUV of the Year**



## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY .....	Madison, Alabama
ENGINE / TRANSMISSION .....	Japan / Japan
PARTS CONTENT .....	50% US-Canada, 25% Mexico, 20% Japan
ENGINE .....	SKYACTIV-G® 2.5L w twin scroll turbocharger, alum alloy block/head
HP/TORQUE .....	(87 octane) 227 hp / 310 lb-ft (93 octane) 256 hp / 320 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO .....	10.5:1
TRANSMISSION .....	SKYACTIV-Drive 6-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN .....	i-ACTIV AWD
MODES .....	Mi-Drive sport/off-road/tow
SUSPENSION .....	F: MacPherson strut; R: torsion beam
STEERING .....	elec pwr rack & pinion
BRAKES .....	F: 12.8 vented; R: 12.8 solid disc
WHEELS .....	20 x 8J alum alloy, black metallic finish w machining cut
TIRES .....	P245/45 R20 all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE .....	185.8 / 110.8 in
GROUND CLEARANCE .....	8.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE .....	39.0 ft
HEADROOM (F/R) .....	38.6 / 37.5 in
LEGROOM (F/R) .....	41.7 / 39.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY .....	31.4 / 56.3 cu.ft
CURB WEIGHT .....	3907 lb
GVWR .....	4945 lb
TOW CAPACITY .....	3500 lb
FUEL .....	87 reg or 93 prem unl / 91 oct recmd
FUEL CAPACITY .....	15.0 gal
MPG .....	23/29/25 (city/hwy/comb)
<b>BASE PRICE .....</b>	<b>\$41,550</b>
<b>TURBO PREMIUM PLUS PKG:</b> heated rear seats, 360° monitor, frameless auto dim rear mirror w Homelink, wireless phone charger, auto dim driver side mirror, Mazda nav system, active driving display, traffic sign recog, traffic jam asst, front/rear park sensors, rear smart brake, blind spot prevention .....	incl
<b>PAINT:</b> Polymetal Gray Metallic .....	395
<b>DESTINATION CHARGE .....</b>	<b>1225</b>
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$43,170</b>

(Note: price has increased; see chart below.)

## 2023 MAZDA CX-50 LINEUP

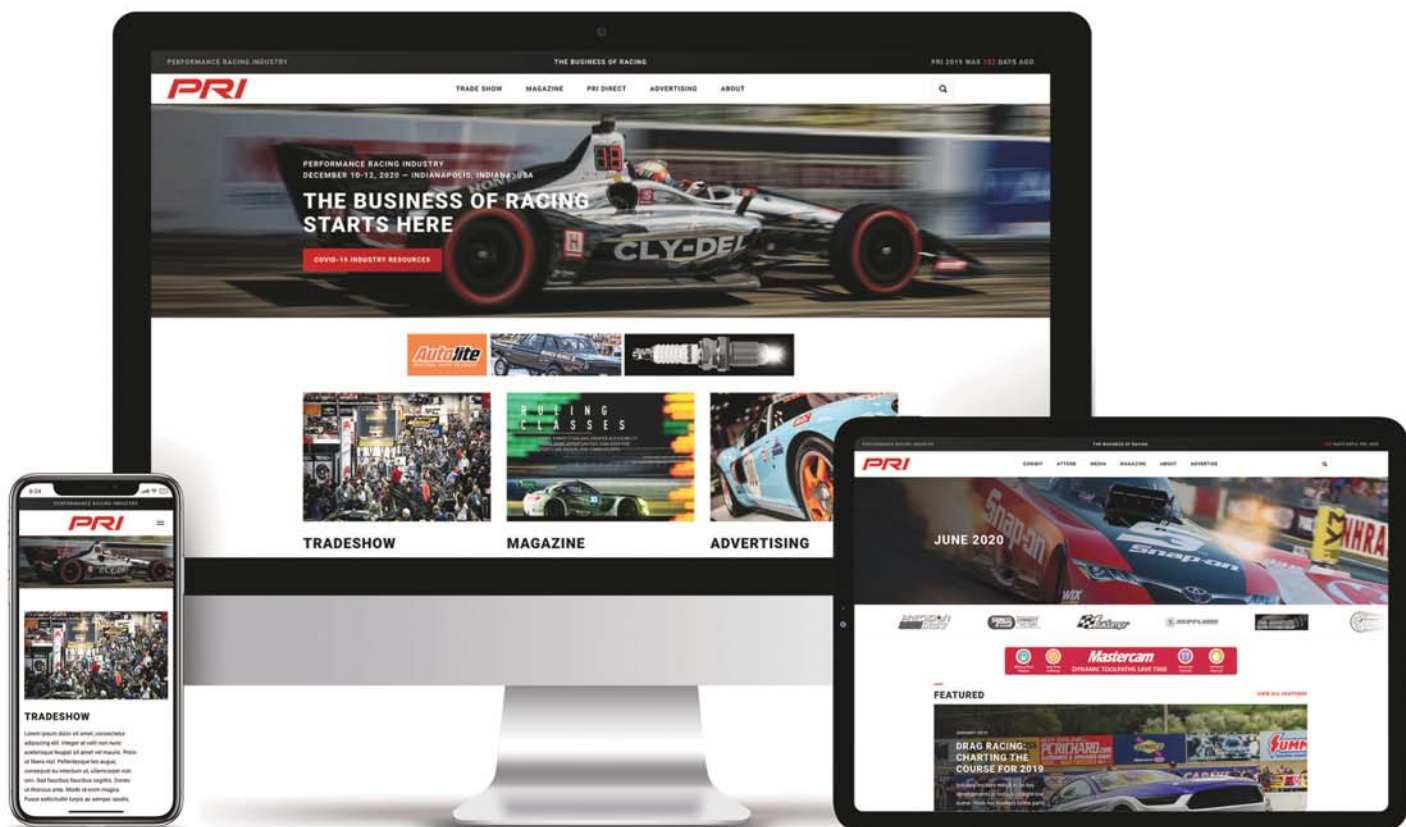
SKYACTIV-G® 2.5L 4-cyl, 187 hp, 186 lb-ft, AWD Tow capacity 2000 lb	
<b>2.5 S .....</b>	<b>\$27,550</b>
<b>2.5 S Select .....</b>	<b>28,950</b>
<b>2.5 S Preferred .....</b>	<b>30,250</b>
<b>2.5 S Preferred Plus .....</b>	<b>32,690</b>
<b>2.5 S Premium .....</b>	<b>35,150</b>
<b>2.5 S Premium Plus .....</b>	<b>37,150</b>
SKYACTIVE-G® 2.5L w twin scroll turbo, AWD (w 87 oct reg gas): 227 hp, 310 lb-ft (w 93 oct prem gas): 256 hp, 320 lb-ft Tow capacity 3500 lb	
<b>2.5 Turbo .....</b>	<b>\$37,150</b>
<b>2.5 Turbo Meridian Edition .....</b>	<b>39,950</b>
<b>2.5 Turbo Premium Package .....</b>	<b>40,300</b>
<b>2.5 Turbo Premium Plus Package .....</b>	<b>42,300</b>

(Destination charge now \$1275.)



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## SPECIAL EVENT : BARRETT-JACKSON TAKES ON FUTURE COLLECTOR CAR SHOW 2023



## The future is bright

Barrett-Jackson acquires long-running event - will join January Auction Week 2023 festivities

Barrett-Jackson has announced that the Future Collector Car Show (FCCS) will be a part of their flagship Scottsdale Auction at WestWorld of Scottsdale for the first time on January 22, 2023. A one-day event, held on the Polo Field at WestWorld, this becomes a component of Barrett-Jackson's busy nine-day overall event, January. A family-friendly, concours-style event FCCS features vehicles that best represent the future of the collector car hobby, with the goal of celebrating the cars we love today and the future collectibles of tomorrow.

Hundreds of future collector vehicles at FCCS range from highly modified custom builds to original and perfectly preserved rides, combining to creating common ground for generations of collector vehicle owners and enthusiasts.

The target year range for featured vehicles at FCCS is 1980 to present-day, with exceptions for vehicles that have seen recent increases in collectibility. Prior to event day, concours-level judges will hand-pick the top cars for each category, from applications submitted. The team will be looking for quality vehicles, highly modified enthusiast builds, rare or low-production number cars, and unique or uncommon vehicles. Every vehicle entered in the show

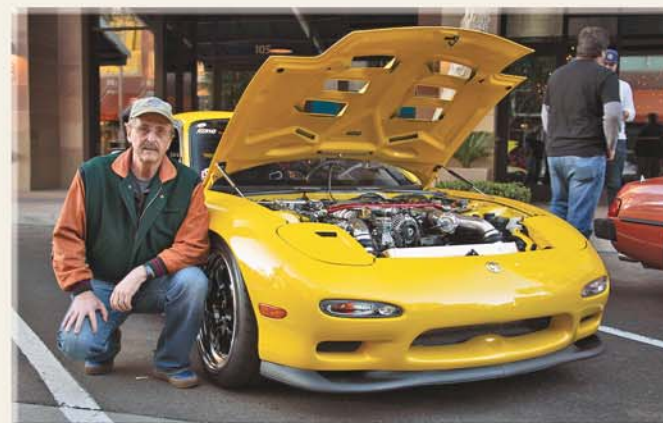
qualifies for the coveted Best of Show trophy. Best of Show winners in prior years have included a 1993 Mazda RX-7, a modified 2004 Subaru WRX STi and a 1998 Toyota Supra.

The entire selection of awards include Best of Show, Best Preserved, Best Restored, Best Period-Correct Modifications, Best Purpose-Build Performance, Visionary Award, Elegance of Heritage, Best Electro-Mod, Rookie of the Year, and a People's Choice award selected by spectators on-site.

Participation to display a vehicle at FCCS is by application only, with the deadline to apply December 12, 2022. Admission to FCCS will provide access to the entire Barrett-Jackson event on Sunday, January 22, including to auction cars on display, the vast Exhibitor Marketplace, sponsor displays, and Hot Laps and Thrill Rides on the Barrett-Jackson Performance Track.

FCCS at Barrett-Jackson will also feature an immersive and competitive fashion show produced by Luxe & City, awarding a cash prize to the winning stylist. Additional elements will include exhibitor displays and VIP offerings.

For details on entries, tickets and more, visit [FCCS.Barrett-Jackson.com](https://FCCS.Barrett-Jackson.com). ■



The number of vehicles available in the US market has grown from about 350 to about 450 in recent years, and Mercedes-Benz has done their part, as growing stables of AMG, GT and Maybach models joined in with the natural growth of SUVs and crossovers to create one of the most diverse lineups in the biz. Now, with the emergence of a Mercedes-EQ family of pure electric vehicles, that number may head toward 500.

Names follow a recent trend—Mercedes-Benz, Mercedes-AMG, Mercedes-Maybach—with the full-EV family launching as Mercedes-EQ (except for AMG models, which are Mercedes-AMG EQ). EQ derives from EQ Boost electrified gasoline vehicles of the past few years, for which EQ was a play on IQ and stands for “electrical intelligence.”

We flew to Denver and the Colorado Foothills for a multifaceted, multi-vehicle event, equal parts breakthrough and update—both a deep dive and a 30,000-foot overview of the lineup so far. Included were drives of two SUVs and two sedans (one an

AMG), as well as a top secret (till now) static presentation of another SUV (and its AMG offshoot).

Of the six vehicles, two are 2022 models, three are 2023s and one is a 2024. (Anything wrapping up production by year’s end is a 2022, if just entering production and crossing over January 1 into the new year is a 2023, and if not starting production until after the first of the year is a 2024.)

One of the 2022s (the EQB SUV) is built on an earlier platform, while all the rest are on brand new EV-specific architecture, the EVA platform.

Two AMG models (one driven, one a prototype) are highly up-featured and performance-oriented, though familiar major distinctions such as an AMG-hand-crafted internal combustion engine are inherently set aside for EVs.

You’ll be noticing this wave of new vehicles as it happens, in two ways—both one-by-one, model-by-model; and as a phenomenon en masse, as this fast-moving transformation throughout a long-familiar industry continues to take hold.

**S** 2023 Mercedes-EQ EQS SUV The EQS SUV looms large among this group—we drove it the most, it’s the first new-platform EQ SUV to market, and, as an S-Class and an SUV, it actually is the largest. With the 2022 EQS Sedan already in existence (we drove it last winter; see our JanFeb 2022 issue), the EQS SUV can be seen as both evolutionary and revolutionary—a cross-pollination of GLS gasoline SUVs and the EQS Sedan—while as transformed as the EQS Sedan.

Introduced in the EQS Sedan, carried through with the EQS SUV, and benchmarks for all those quickly following are a fusing of technology, design, functionality and connectivity.

Innovations include enhanced aerodynamics, a range of artificial intelligence (AI) implementations, advanced cabin luxuries including soothing Energizing Comfort sound effects, elaborate HEPA air filtration, the latest MBUX Hyperscreen (filling the entire instrument panel with features for both driver and passenger), haptic-touch feedback, and

new styling cues from tip to tail.

Personalized suggestions are available within the driver interface, intended to simplify operation with less driver distraction.

Our first drive session in the EQS SUV was a challenging loop through the Foothills outside Golden, Colorado, a comprehensive route comprising twisty mountain two-lanes, maximum-grade Interstate, urban expressways and a return through the downtown Denver maze of one-way streets. This could be run in either direction, both an adventure.

Especially fun is the road over Lookout Mountain between Golden and I-70 near the Genesee exits. This road is as narrow as they come, includes successive hairpin turns all the way up and down, and adds the challenge of numerous cyclists, punctuated by the occasional TikTokker aiming for a land speed record on a skateboard. Steering, brakes and situational awareness are all essential. The EQS SUV was tops in its role, while we put ourselves in charge of the alertness factor.

The new EQ vehicles are enhanced by a standard feature—rear-axle steering (varying as standard or optional, as well as by steering angle, in



different models), fantastic through the switchbacks (and for tight downtown parking garages). We would put this feature to a supreme test on our second drive of the EQS SUV, the next day.

On day two, we headed back up I-70, this time for an astounding session off-road, outside Idaho Springs. And (cont’d)

**W**e’ve been driving off-pavement and way off-road for years throughout the mountain and desert West and Northwest (as far as Alaska and Canada’s northern territories), including regularly in off-roading comparo events throughout these regions, as well as participating in many new 4x4 launch drives with off-road components. Some of these have included particularly tight spots—whether planned, unplanned, or planned by others and unknown to us till we got to them, and therefore sometimes quite a surprise, the kind of thing you question the wisdom of even trying to tackle.

But it’s fair to say we’ve never driven an off-road course as tight and challenging as the one they happily ran us through in the EQS SUV—demanding for anything, even a dirt bike—and this is a 201.8-inch-long vehicle with a 126.4-inch wheelbase, 67.6 inches high and 84.9 inches wide including mirrors (or 77.1 without). What a way to show off its nimble rear axle steering, and show it off it did—jaw-droppingly impressive.

**SPECIFICATIONS (EQS SUV)**

ELECTRIC MOTOR(S)	.....permanently excited synchronous motors, varying by model: 265 kW rear axle only; 265 kW combined dual axles; 400 kW combined dual axles
HP/TORQUE	.....355-536 hp / 419-633 lb-ft
BATTERY PACK	.....Lithium ion
RANGE	.....(var. by model) 285 to 305 miles
CHARGING TIME	.....(all models) 240V/32A wallbox (10-100%) 11.25 hrs
	110kW DC Fast Charging (10-80%) 31 min
0-TO 60 MPH	.....(var. by model) 6.5 to 4.5 sec
TOP SPEED	.....(all models) 130 mph
DRIVETRAIN	.....(var. by model) RWD; or fully-variable 4MATIC AWD w Torque Shift
STEERING	.....10° rear-axle steering standard
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....201.8 / 126.4 in
WEIGHT	.....TBA
FUEL ECONOMY	.....TBA

**2023 EQS SUV (base prices)**

EQS 450+ SUV	.....\$104,400
EQS 450 4MATIC SUV	.....\$107,400
EQS 580 4MATIC SUV	.....\$125,950

# Attitude at altitude

BY JOE SAGE



if we thought rear-axle steering was handy on paved roads, we would now have our socks knocked off. We've off-road four-wheeled many times on the tightest courses anyone could find, engineer or imagine, or so it seemed, until we arrived on this one—and this time in an almost 17-foot-long full-size luxury SUV.

We would be thinking we were absolutely pushing the envelope, navigating maximum boulders, forests and cliffs, when our host in the right seat—and here, we had two of the best—says, “turn here!” “Here?!?” Some spots look so impossible, you never would have considered them to even be in play, but you're already in motion and being directed by someone who knows it will work. For reassurance and amazement, rear-axle angles and trajectories are shown in the central display—and the standard 10-degree rear-axle steering in the EQS SUV (and Sedan) enables a turning circle of less than 36 feet, even tighter than many models in the compact class.

Pricing for the Mercedes-EQ EQS SUV will be announced any time now, as it arrives very soon.

## **E** 2023 Mercedes-EQ EQE SUV 2024 Mercedes-AMG EQE SUV

Our drive sequence was not the same as the new Mercedes-EQ product release sequence. The EQS Sedan was the first new-platform model, the EQE Sedan the second, and the EQS SUV the third. In between, we met what will be the fourth. Prior to its televised world premiere, we had an unveiling of prototype versions of the EQE SUV and AMG EQE SUV—both of which we could sit in and investigate thoroughly, but which did not leave our top secret show space and we did not drive.

The Mercedes-EQ EQE SUV will arrive by year's end, in time to be a 2023 model, while the AMG version will deliver after January 1, thus a 2024.

The EQE SUV receives its cues from the long-standing GLE gasoline lineup, as well as from the bit-larger EQS SUV we'd just driven, and in this case also from its EQE Sedan sibling, which—as in the case of the EQS SUV following the EQS Sedan—has already entered the market.

A bit smaller than the EQS SUV—ten inches shorter on a wheelbase 7.1 inches shorter—the

EQE SUV is also differentiated by lower power output in the base model, though matching the EQS in higher trims. The EQE SUV is also shorter than the EQE Sedan, notably in its overhangs, bearing almost a coupelike stance. Styling aims to be “younger and more progressive,” a subtle refocus from a luxury emphasis on the bigger EQS SUV.

Zero-to-60 acceleration for the EQE SUV is two tenths of a second quicker than the EQS SUV, base-model-to-base model, though one tenth slower in the top model. Early indications suggest that estimated range may be more for the EQE SUV, also (based for now on comparing the top end of EQE SUV European ratings with EQS SUV full-range US ratings).

Prices are yet to be announced, to more fully measure value benefits between the two, though those key comparisons seem pretty clear. Another variable is that 10-degree rear axle steering is standard across the EQS SUV lineup, while on the EQE SUV lineup, it's standard only in the top trim, optional on the others. Again, the significance of this, if any, will be clear with pricing.

As on the EQS, the EQE SUV has AIRMATIC air suspension with continuously adjustable damping, offering a modest boost in ground clearance.

Color & Trim Design chief Occa Büchner was on hand for our reveal, appropriate because many details and features within her realm were particularly of note. The EQE SUV was stunning from our first sight of the prototype, in the same rich Velvet Brown Metallic paint shown below (a “desaturated” look, important to its progressive character, per Büchner). A comprehensive tour of the interior followed suit, with an atmosphere combining “avant garde and tradition,” using both velvet and high-tech materials—Nubuck leather and high-tech neoprene—with contrasting warm tones like Sable Brown against cooler tech tones including Neva Grey and Biscaya blue/black, while Rose Gold as a contrasting color evokes the electric coil at the heart of the vehicle's powertrain engineering.

Preceded by the AMG EQS Sedan, the AMG EQE SUV is the first all-electric performance SUV from Mercedes-AMG. The AMG exceeds the fundamentals of the non-AMG EQE SUV, with a dual-



motor system delivering 677 hp, AMG Performance 4MATIC+ drivetrain, rear-axle steering standard, and AMG-specific roll stabilization. The enticing AMG version's slightly later arrival may drive some buyers' decisions, while waiting for the AMG may also become clearer as final pricing is released.

(cont'd)

### Top Mercedes-EQ personnel on hand for our reveal and presentation included:

- Christoph Starzynski, Christoph, Vice President of Electric Vehicle Architecture and Head of Mercedes-EQ
- Rahman Tasdemir, Produktmanagement EQS & EQE
- Daniel Nolte, Produktmanagement
- Occa Büchner, Color & Trim Design
- Holger Enzmann, Development Overall Vehicle, Electric Vehicle Architecture
- Michael Brunnquell, Development Overall Vehicle, Mercedes-AMG EQE SUV
- Michael Kofler, Product Management, Mercedes-AMG EQE SUV

### SPECIFICATIONS (EQE SUV)

ELECTRIC MOTOR(S).....	permanently excited synchronous motors, varying by model: 215 kW rear axle only; 215 kW combined dual axles; 300 kW combined dual axles
HP/TORQUE .....	288-536 hp / 417-633 lb-ft
BATTERY PACK.....	Lithium ion
RANGE .....	up to 342 miles Euro; USA TBA
CHARGING TIME .....	(all models) 240V/32A wallbox (10-100%) 9.5 hrs
	110kW DC Fast Charging (10-80%) 32 min
0-TO 60 MPH .....	(var. by model) 6.3 to 4.6 sec
TOP SPEED .....	(all models) 130 mph
DRIVETRAIN .....	(var. by model) RWD; or fully-variable 4MATIC AWD w Torque Shift
STEERING .....	10° rear-axle steering: standard on 500 4M, optional on others
LENGTH / WHEELBASE .....	191.5 / 119.3 in
WEIGHT .....	TBA
FUEL ECONOMY .....	TBA

### 2023 EQE SUV (base prices)

EQE 350+ SUV .....	TBA
EQE 350 4MATIC SUV .....	TBA
EQE 500 4MATIC SUV .....	TBA

### 2024 AMG EQE SUV (base prices)

AMG EQE SUV .....	TBA
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## **E** 2023 Mercedes-EQ EQE Sedan

There are two obvious points of reference for the EQE Sedan. One is the long lineage of Mercedes-Benz (and AMG) E-Class Sedans—as this is readily considered the new EV version of that. The other is the brand new EVA-platform-based EQS Sedan—as the EQE Sedan is just the second to market, following suit technologically.

We took this on a loop similar to the EQS SUV, over the hairpin climbs of Lookout Mountain, as well as on an extended route slightly to the south through Red Rocks and Morrison. To paraphrase boxing great Muhammad Ali, the EQE Sedan floats like a butterfly—its nimble handling of the curves was sportscar-like, atop its 21-inch wheels (19 are standard) and again benefitting from optional rear-axle steering—while the tanklike strength of its substantial body shell was striking when settled

comfortably inside its fully luxury-outfitted cabin.

The EQE Sedan offers a percentage-basis of the EQS Sedan experience. Its wheelbase is just 3.5 inches shorter (roughly comparable to the gasoline CLS, which falls between E and S in size in that lineup), while its price is roughly just 75 percent that of the EQS Sedan. The base EQE Sedan's horsepower and torque are 288 and 391, to the base EQS Sedan's 329 and 417—about 86 and 94 percent—giving more bang for the buck (though of course less bang is still less bang, if price is no object). Both of course have more models above base, giving you many ways to dovetail various comparisons. The interior is larger all around than the gasoline E-Class—wider and longer, and with a seating position 2.5 inches higher, which even starts to bring an SUV comparison into play for some. It's an intriguing and compelling model.

## **S** 2022 Mercedes-AMG EQS Sedan

Thanks to our 90-minute flight to Denver instead taking about six hours, we did not get to drive the AMG EQS Sedan, which had departed early for a dealer presentation. We do drive the non-EV Mercedes-Benz S580 elsewhere in this issue. And we did drive the (non-AMG) EQS Sedan earlier this year (see our JanFeb 2022 issue), which we praised as a magnificent experience, sure to shake up the luxury EV segment. (We may have the AMG EQS Sedan in our rotation here soon, too.)

The first AMG EQ to market, the AMG EQS Sedan is described by the company as a “proof point,” a chance to see where the AMG and EQ subbrands are headed together. At its performance-oriented core are two powerful motors, front and rear, with fully-variable AMG Performance 4MATIC+ all-wheel drive. Output jumps from 516 hp and 631 lb-ft of torque in the regular EQS to 649 and 700 in the AMG—or to 751 hp and 752 lb-ft when using the boost function of Race Start, part of a standard AMG Dynamic Plus package in this build.

Gone are the “AMG hand-crafted” V8 and V12 gasoline engines we've known and loved, but the AMG EQ brand delivers plenty that's special.

## **B** 2022 Mercedes-EQ EQB SUV

The first shall be last, and the last shall be first. The EQB SUV was not Mercedes-EQ's first EV globally, but it was the first in the US, though others have followed quickly. At the same time, it was the last one based on the gasoline model's architecture, before adoption of their new dedicated all-electric EVA platform, first in the EQS Sedan.

This was also the last vehicle we drove at this event—grabbing an hour or less within Denver. It was a solid drive in a nicely featured smaller SUV—quick and precise—though it was readily apparent (after just having driven all the others) that this model presents prior styling, engineering and features inside and out. That in itself, however, makes it a contender in its own way, as the prices we know so far for the new dedicated vehicles suggest the EQB SUV—bearing in mind various apples and oranges of size, content, and SUV vs sedan—is a bit of a bargain in the new lineup.

Early everyday EVs were on the small and simple side, cheaper, limiting and uninspiring to many. Then startup brands brought a new image to the genre, with slicker tech, quicker speeds and



higher prices. Without familiar luxury materials or build quality, analysts tortured themselves to call these luxury brands, by price (and novelty) alone.

Mercedes-EQ brings an era with all that technology and then some, as well as the real luxury driving experience and atmosphere—stunningly new, while reassuringly familiar. Real luxury EV competition is here now, and it's here in force. ■

### 2023 EQE Sedan (base prices)

EQE 350+ Sedan	.....\$74,900
EQE 350 4MATIC Sedan	.....77,900
EQE 500 4MATIC Sedan	.....85,900
AMG EQE Sedan	.....TBA

### 2022 EQS Sedan (base prices)

EQS 450+ Sedan	.....\$104,400
EQS 450 4MATIC Sedan	.....107,400
EQS 580 4MATIC Sedan	.....125,950
AMG EQS Sedan	.....147,500

### 2022 EQB SUV (base prices)

EQB 250+ SUV	.....\$52,400
EQB 300 4MATIC SUV	.....55,750
EQB 350 4MATIC SUV	.....59,300



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SPECIAL EVENT : ARIZONA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE 2023

## ARIZONA CONCOURS 2023 VEHICLE ENTRY AND SPECTATOR TICKETS

**T**he Arizona Concours d'Elegance is seeking spectacular automobiles for the much-admired show and competition.

About 100 select automobiles will be accepted for the signature event that highlights January in Arizona. Such famed classic brands as Bugatti, Duesenberg and Pierce-Arrow will be joined by vehicles ranging from early 20th Century horseless carriages to the latest in exotic supercars.

The Concours will be one of the first major events held at the renovated Civic Center, bordered by Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts and Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. The Concours was previously held at the Arizona Biltmore Resort in Phoenix, where it received much acclaim for the annual display of rare and beautiful vehicles.

The theme of the 2023 Concours is *The Art of*

*Aerodynamics*, including cars from the beginnings of streamlined vehicles, featuring early race cars, up to and including today's most-advanced supercars. About 50 professional concours judges from around the country will determine the winners in a number of classes, as well as choosing the coveted Best of Show.

The Concours is partnering with Scottsdale Arts, one of Arizona's largest arts nonprofits, to present the event, which blends history, design and technology. Proceeds from the Concours will benefit local artists and art programs.

**SUBMITTING FOR ENTRY:** Potential entrants are encouraged to visit the Concours website and click on Vehicle Submission to call up the form for entering vehicles for consideration. See the list of judged classes on the site for where your special vehicle would fit in.



**SPECTATOR TICKETS:** Advance tickets for the Concours are available on the website, and at the Scottsdale Arts box office and website (with some differences between the two; check both). Standard General Admission is \$75, Priority Early Admission \$100 and Platinum VIP Admission \$185 through January 12. Same Day Standard General Admission is \$100 at the gate on January 22. Tickets are limited, so make plans early.

**ARIZONA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE**  
[www.arizonaconcours.com](http://www.arizonaconcours.com)

**SCOTTSDALE ARTS:**  
[www.scottsdalearts.org/events](http://www.scottsdalearts.org/events)



# Acura NSX "victory lap"

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TYSON HUGIE

A huge ingredient of the joy in being a collector car owner is connecting with members of the community who drive the same model. Since the late 1990s, the Acura NSX Club of America (NSXCA) has come together each year for an annual meet called "NSXPO." This year, Arizona played host to the convention and in so doing attracted upwards of \$8-10 million in cars to the region.

The flagship mid-engined NSX supercar first debuted in Japan under the Honda nameplate in 1990 and was introduced to the Acura lineup in North America the following year. Its first generation, ranging from model year 1991 through 2005, sold about 9,000 units over the 15-year span. The NSX managed to deliver a reliable ownership experience combined with both exotic styling and excellent balance. Even though its horsepower output in stock form was rated at lower than 300 ponies, its all-aluminum chassis made it a lightweight and nimble machine suited for canyon carving.

After a hiatus, the second generation NSX

came to market in 2017 with a very different type of recipe for performance driving: this time, it came as a twin-turbocharged hybrid V6 connected to three electric motors. As the brand's halo car, it sold relatively few units but offered undisputed sports car expertise, including setting a production car lap record at the Long Beach Grand Prix. Acura elected to discontinue the car after 2022, but in so doing, ramped up its horsepower to an even 600 with a Type S variant for the final year. Production for that model was limited to just 350 units for North America.

NSXPO 2022 festivities kicked off with a two-day track event at the newly-constructed Podium Club facility about an hour from Phoenix, where drivers put cars through their paces. A larger group began to assemble in Scottsdale two days later for the social component of the event. Playing host to the roughly 250 participants and 120 vehicles in attendance was the Talking Stick Resort & Casino in Scottsdale. A number of sponsors contributed to the success of the program, including Acura itself as one of the top-tier

contributors.

The schedule was action-packed, with a variety of attractions for the group. The 140-acre Desert Botanical Garden at Papago Park provided a vivid dusk setting for an opening reception, after attendees picked up their credentials and goodie bags, where a mariachi band spiced things up.

On Friday, a 200-mile drive loop introduced NSXCA members to some of the scenery and attractions of the Mogollon Rim near Payson. The Chaparral Pines Golf Club welcomed the group for a flow-through lunch, and an excursion to Tonto Natural Bridge offered a glimpse of the world's largest travertine arch.

After a group photo that night, dinner was hosted by The Vault, an exclusive vehicle storage and maintenance facility just a few minutes from the host hotel. A charity program held for Baller Dream Foundation, an organization benefitting young individuals who are battling cancer, raised over \$6,000 thanks to generosity of club members.

Saturday's key events began with a vendor showcase by ScienceofSpeed, a Chandler-based specialty facility that for 20 years has pioneered performance parts and services for the Acura NSX and Honda S2000 models.

Author Tyson Hugie and his Formula Red 1992 Acura NSX, along with his mom Tia Astle and his brother Bentley Hugie with his 130R White 2017 NSX, at Chaparral Pines Golf Club in Payson.



Judging was held there for awards to be distributed later that evening.

Adding to the adventure was an isolated and unexpected thunderstorm that created drama for the many folks who rarely take their NSXs out in inclement weather. Luckily, the weather passed without incident, and there were plenty of microfibre towels to go around afterward.

Finally, NSXPO 2022 capped off back at the Talking Stick Resort with a cocktail hour and closing banquet dinner. On display inside the ballroom were a rare one-of-50 1999 NSX Alex Zanardi Edition and a 2022 NSX Type S. The program consisted of sponsor recognition, a tribute to club members who had passed away, an auction and awards. NSXCA member Ken Sax from Chicago was recognized for his perfect attendance record at every NSXPO since 1997. The long-distance award went to Ole Sorenson, who drove his Nord Gray Metallic NSX over 2,800 miles from Sarasota, Florida to Scottsdale. Nine other awards were handed over in a variety of categories to proud owners.

What's next for the NSX family? The show will go on! An announcement was made about the chosen location for next year's event: NSXPO 2023 will head east to Atlanta, with a targeted event timeframe of October.

As the NSX model ends production with the Type S model this year, Acura considers this the car's "victory lap." It remains to be seen if or when Acura will bring the model



back for a third generation in the future. Perhaps by that time, it will rely upon a fully electrified powertrain.

Without a doubt, the NSX Club of America and its devout members will be there to welcome it.

For complete information about NSXCA benefits, regions, events, membership and more, visit the organization online at [nsxca.org](http://nsxca.org).



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## SS-90, FIRST JAGUAR SPORTS CAR, TO STAR AT ARIZONA CONCOURS

The British automaker that would become Jaguar took a bold step in 1935 with the SS-90, a prototype of its first sports car. With its gleaming chrome grille, sweeping fenders and distinctively sloping rear deck, the roadster was greeted with excitement by the motoring press and public.

The SS-90 set the stage for all Jaguar sports cars to come, also launching the marque's legendary reign in motorsports, with the prototype serving as the factory's first competition car.

The SS-90 prototype, arguably the most historic of all pre-war Jaguar models, is owned by Terry and Darlene Larson of Mesa. Larson, a famed Jaguar restorer, collector and historian, completed restoration of the SS-90 in 1998 for a Swiss collector, who went on to amass international awards for the car. Larson was able to obtain the SS-90 and bring it back to Mesa in 2019.

The roadster has a colorful early history, purchased from the factory in 1937 by Royal Air Force Wing Commander Hugh Kennard, a decorated

fighter pilot who flew the first Spitfire for the RAF. Kennard would drive the prototype regularly, parking at the airfield when he went on missions including the heroic Battle of Britain. He was shot down over the English Channel but survived.

Kennard sold the SS-90 in 1944, and it changed hands several times in the 1950s as a cheap used car. In 1962, an enthusiast purchased it with the intention of restoration, but it sat essentially untouched for 30 years in a garage in Norfolk, England. It was bought in 1996 by the Swiss collector, who shipped it to Larson for its restoration.

Although 22 more SS-90s were eventually produced, the prototype is unique for its dramatic rear styling. Behind the cockpit, the sculpted body slopes down between the fenders with a large spare tire inset at the center affixed with leather straps. While the rear styling was beautifully rendered, it was considered impractical for private owners and too expensive for the factory to produce in series. Subsequent SS-90s and the follow-



ing SS-100 models had more-traditional upright fuel tanks and space for folding fabric tops.

The SS-90 will be on display, competing in the class for Aerodynamic Pre-War Sports and Race Cars, at this year's Arizona Concours.

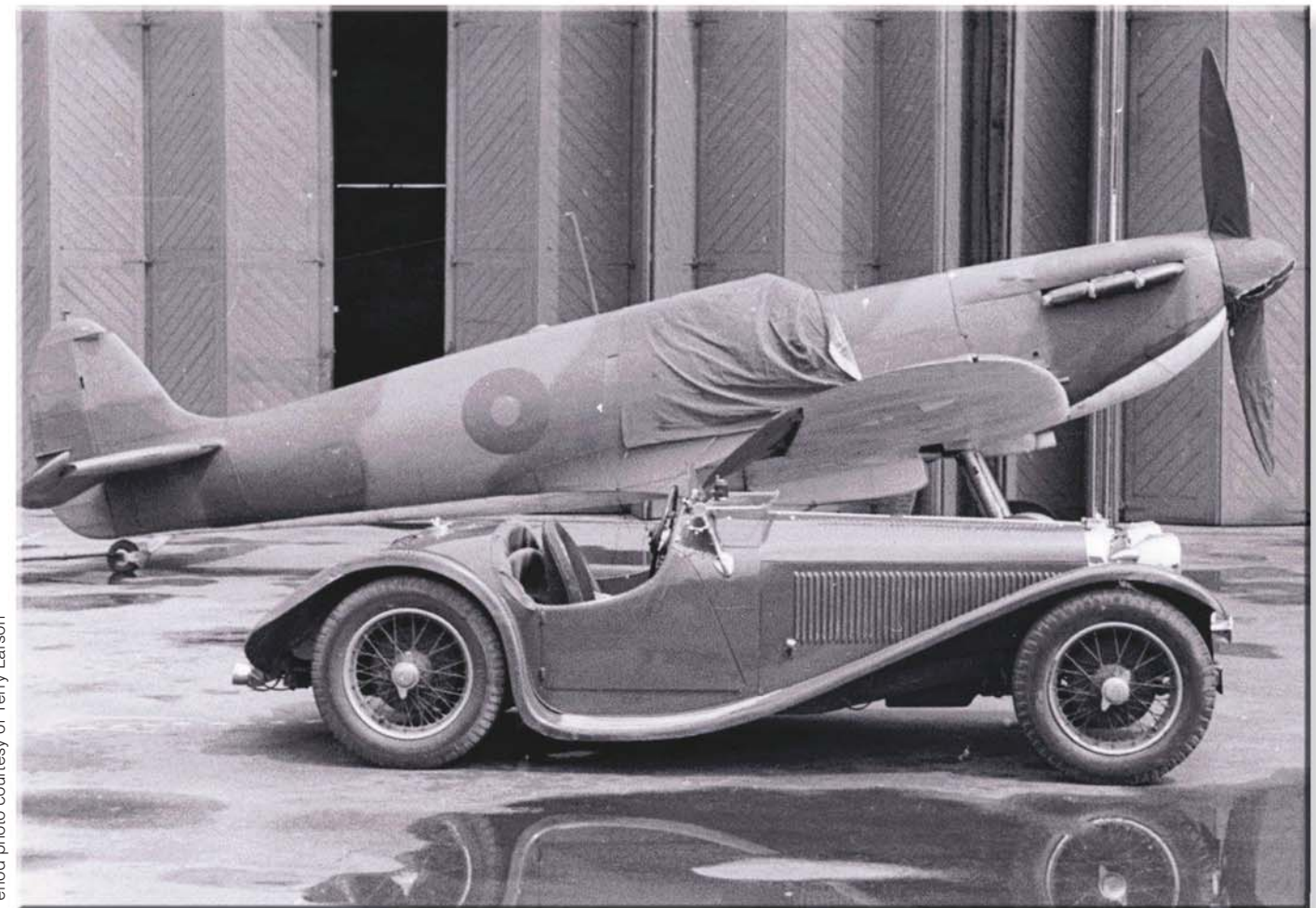
The 2023 Arizona Concours d'Elegance takes place Sunday, January 22, in its new location at the Scottsdale Civic Center. See further information elsewhere in this issue, or visit:

**ARIZONA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE**

[www.arizonaconcours.com](http://www.arizonaconcours.com)

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Period photo courtesy of Terry Larson

# Sizable achievement

BY JOE SAGE

The first Kia Sportage—in 1993 globally, 1995 here, the brand's longest-running model—had a wheelbase just about a foot and a half longer than a Smart car. Today's new fifth generation (since 2021) has a wheelbase another foot and a half longer than that. Thirty years ago, the early Sportage seemed tiny, though looking back today, it seems less so, as sizes have migrated industrywide. What that first little Sportage did have was a tall and spacious cabin for such a petite thing. And a generous

cabin is the very first thing that struck us as soon as we got inside the 2023 Sportage.

Larger in every key dimension than the gen-four Sportage, the interior benefits noticeably, bringing best-in-class claims for both passenger volume (at 168 cu.ft) and cargo volume (39.5)—also surpassing interior capacities for some vehicles in larger nominal categories. For families or adults, the new Sportage's 41.3-inch rear legroom is a standout.

The lineup is complex (see chart, lower right), with fully a dozen models, including first-ever Sportage X-Line and AWD X-Pro Series. Hybrid (HEV) and plug-in hybrid (PHEV) are also both new to Sportage. Of the twelve, three are hybrids and two are plug-in hybrids, one of which is also an X-Line.

All are available with AWD, with a few lower-to-mid trims also available as FWD. PHEVs—with extended EV, full gasoline or combined capabilities—are by far the priciest, putting the HEVs in a favorable range by comparison, given their high fuel economy. While ours is a lower-middle trim HEV with a 177-hp engine, the top turbo-hybrid HEV delivers 227 hp and 258 lb-ft of torque.

All-wheel-drive models ride an inch higher, with 8.3-inch ground clearance, have a locking center differential and torque vectoring, and include snow mode and downhill descent control. At an \$1800 differential against FWD where offered, that to us is the easiest decision point of all.

Sportage has maintained its identity through wild changes in size, features and styling. The new sheet metal is a significant change from the

bugeye headlights atop the hood on the prior one, though that generation had grown on us, too.

We had minor adventures with drive modes, accessible via a knob just below its rotary shift knob. By tweaking the dial, you can change modes without looking—eco-sport-smart-snow—though you may always be itching to steal a glance to confirm (and it always reverts to eco between uses). We loved sport mode on a freeway on-ramp, but also found that when we didn't think about it, and it just stayed in eco—for example on a long curvy, climb or descent on the Beeline Highway—it still delivered plenty satisfying power and shifts.

Steering is a standout, tracking with sports car accuracy, not wiggly or darty, outstanding for an electric unit in a front-drive-based vehicle.

We had our Sportage during a triple digit heat wave and found it took quite some time for the cabin to cool off, presumably an offshoot of the pure electric range of its hybrid system. Brakes were a little weaker than expected (oddly enough they give no specifications for these, other than boost).

Our midlevel trim, in Vesta Blue and with stylish 18-inch machined wheels (same on top trim), almost looked too elegant to take off pavement, but the sidewalls of its all-weather Goodyears are pretty healthy, and their promotional materials indicate a reasonable amount of off-pavement in pursuit of adventure spots, if not rock-crawling, is their intent. We took it on several miles of gravel road at a decent clip. None of its four modes seemed to describe such a drive, so we let the system decide. We did apply its center diff lock for some of the run, though in these conditions, it didn't make a noticeable difference. The takeaway is that it's basically ready for pretty much anything, without a lot of muss, fuss or consideration.

Some fifteen years ago, Kia's consumer build site included a "kiamatch.com" feature, a match-making quiz we ran through many possibilities at the time. One set of options—for a vehicle that's hardworking, dedicated to making you a success, full of adventure and style, and ready for any occasion—matched us with the Kia Sportage back then. It seems it easily still would today. ■

- Kia was ranked number one, for the second consecutive year, in the JD Power Vehicle Dependability Study measuring quality issues over the course of three years of ownership
- Kia Sportage has been recognized for the best new vehicle quality among Compact SUVs in the JD Power Initial Quality Study
- Still bearing hints of long-running Kia Tiger Nose front styling, the evolving design language direction is known as "Opposites United"



## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	.....Gwangju, South Korea
ENGINE / TRANSMISSION	.....Korea / Korea
PARTS CONTENT	.....90% S Korea / 1% US
GASOLINE ENGINE	.....1.6L turbo-4 16v DOHC CVVT GDI (dir.inj), alum/alum
HP/TORQUE	.....177 hp / 195 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....10.5:1
ELECTRIC MOTOR	.....perm magnet synch
HP/TORQUE	.....59.3 hp / 195 lb-ft
HYBRID STARTER/GEN	.....perm magnet synch
HP/TORQUE	.....17.4 hp / 31.9 lb-ft
HYBRID SYSTEM COMB.	.....transmission-mt ED
HP/TORQUE	.....227 hp / 258 lb-ft
HYB BATTERY SYSTEM	.....270V Li-Ion (pouch), 5.5Ah, 1.49kWh, 64.0kWh
WEIGHT	.....82.7 lb
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd auto, multi-plate wet friction clutch
DRIVETRAIN	.....AWD
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut; R: multi-link; gas shocks
STEERING	.....column-type motor driven
BRAKES	.....na
WHEELS / TIRES	.....7.5Jx18 alloy / 235/60R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....183.5 / 108.5 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....8.3 in
APPRCH / DEPART / RAMP	.....19.9 / 26.6 / 19.3°
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.6 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....(w/sunrf) 37.8 / 37.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....41.4 / 41.3 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....34.5-39.5 / 65.4-73.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3732-3896 lb
GVWR	.....4949 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....1653 / w tr brakes 2000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....regular / 13.7 gal
MPG	.....38/38/38 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	.....\$30,990
EX PREMIUM PKG	.....pano sunroof w power shade, LED interior lighting, smart hands-free power liftgate, dual illum vanity mirrors.....1500
CARPETED FLOOR MATS	.....155
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1215
TOTAL	.....\$33,860

## 2023 KIA SPORTAGE LINEUP

		FWD	AWD
Sportage	LX	\$25,990	\$27,790
	EX	27,990	29,790
	X-Line	30,790	
	SX	31,490	33,290
	SX Prestige	33,490	35,290
	X-Pro		34,990
	X-Pro Prestige		36,790
Sportage HEV	LX	27,290	29,090
	EX		30,990
	SX-Prestige		36,190
Sportage PHEV	X-Line		38,490
	X-Line Prestige		42,990

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- 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

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- 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.

♥ 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



♥ 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

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

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## TAKE THE WHEEL!

CARDS, D'BACKS AND MMA JUST DID IT. NOW YOU CAN, TOO, WITH NASCAR RACING EXPERIENCE AT PHOENIX RACEWAY

The NASCAR Racing Experience program lets race fans drive the same tracks as their favorite drivers, at tracks coast to coast—Atlanta, Charlotte, Daytona, Dover, Homestead Miami, Las Vegas, Nashville, Talladega and many more, including right here at Phoenix Raceway.

And we're not talking your regular daily driving, but on a track. This is as real as it gets—you, driving 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 every 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.

Some familiar faces to local sports fans tackled the track, driving NASCAR race cars around Phoenix Raceway, in late October, as members of the Arizona Cardinals, Arizona Diamondbacks, MMA fighters and social media influencers drove NASCAR Racing Experience cars around the championship 1-mile oval.

Sports heroes included Victor Dimukeje, Jesse Luketa and Cameron Thomas of the Arizona Cardinals; Stone Garrett and Josh Rojas of the Arizona Diamondbacks; Sullivan Cauley and AJ McKee of Bellator MMA; and retired NFL Pro Bowler Shaun Phillips.

After their driving sessions, NASCAR Hall of Famer Dale Jarrett put them in the right seat of his race car and showed them how a three-time DAYTONA 500 champion navigates the challenging Phoenix Raceway doglegged track.

NASCAR fans can experience the same thrill at Phoenix Raceway bracketing NASCAR Championship Weekend, as NASCAR Racing Experience will have sessions each day Tuesday through Thursday, November 1-3, and again on Monday, November 7, the day after the races complete.

Prices for the NASCAR Racing Experience start at \$249.99 to drive a NASCAR race car, or \$129.99 for NASCAR Ride Alongs. Track times fill up quickly. Reserve online at [nascarracingexperience.com](http://nascarracingexperience.com).

For race tickets, visit [phoenixraceway.com](http://phoenixraceway.com).



Arizona Cardinals linebacker Jesse Luketa (Photo by Chris Coduto/Getty Images)



# Special blend by Joe Sage

The nexus of product planning and pricing can hold great fascination, and Stellantis has always been a great example, each brand offering a staggering range of models from proud starter to over-the-top performer and everything in between, yet each one a notable value, none stepping on the next one's toes, making it always clear when it's time to step up a notch in pursuit of your goals and desires, and tending to avoid overlap.

A seven-model lineup (if you count Tradesman and Tradesman HFE as one, and Big Horn and Lone Star twins as one), from \$36,500 to TRX at \$78,890, is what makes this Ram build so intriguing.

Big Horn and Lone Star are the second-most-affordable models (above only the Tradesmen). The new BackCountry Edition (created via a \$2695 package) adds a variety of factory off-road and style features. A standard 4x4 Off-Road Group includes

tow hooks; skid plates for front suspension, transfer case, power steering and fuel tank; rear electronic locking axle; off-road calibrated shocks; hill descent control; and all-terrain tires. A Bed Utility Group, also included, adds adjustable tie downs, bed extender (with RamBox only) deployable bed step, bed lighting and spray-in bed liner. Visuals include two-tone black paint and black badging; black 18-inch wheels; black headlamp bezels, mirrors, running boards and exhaust tips; and a body-color grille surround and tonneau cover. The interior has black cloth/vinyl bucket seats, a BackCountry badge in the glovebox area, and Mopar all-weather slush mats. All BackCountry builds are 4x4.

You could stop there, with much added to your

Big Horn or Lone Star and a price still well shy of the next-up Laramie. But our sample kept adding, as you can see with the option details in our sidebar (and in the long model name above). Available as Crew Cab with 5-foot-7 bed (ours) or Quad Cab with 6-foot-4 bed and with the 5.7L V8 or 5.7 V8 with eTorque mild hybrid (also on ours, at \$2295), ours also adds air suspension (\$1805).

We are delighted to have the 33-gallon tank (\$445); that's hard to find on a 1500, new or used, and costs thousands to retrofit, though it can reduce five stops to just three on many routes with widely spaced towns through the Western states.

We're now up to about the price of the Laramie, in some ways with more, but also still with that cloth/vinyl interior and no keyless entry or power-folding mirrors. Much more is added to ours from

there, the total now passing Rebel and Limited Longhorn, and this is where it's really worth pausing to compare the lesser-model-adding-more versus the greater-model-adding-less approach, neither of which is necessarily as simple as it sounds.

Some buyers actually prefer a simpler interior at any price or in any build—less to worry about with mud and dirt or rough and tumble. Features added from there can be done purely for their own sake, hang the expense. And you can still come out ahead on the balance sheet, given more self-control than on our sample. It reminds us of a few years back, when you could get a base Ram 2500 Tradesman with a Power Wagon package—saving some dough on an extra-capable build, the bonus for some being having a bit of a sleeper, as well.

No clearance specs are given for this tire size, though air suspension can eclipse all that, anyway. Approach/departure/breakover specs are given with air suspension, but again only with standard tires.

If only this one had keyless entry and power-folding mirrors. Lack of those is a constant nuisance, and we could only mutter "64 grand." Those two details and all this analysis aside, it is of course a great truck and for some an opportunity. Check it out while you can. And try your own build. ■



## 2022 RAM 1500 LINEUP

Tradesman	4x2	4x4
Tradesman HFE	\$36,500	\$40,000
Big Horn	41,815	45,315
Lone Star	41,815	45,315
Laramie	50,240	53,740
Rebel	51,385	54,885
Limited Longhorn	57,970	61,470
Limited 10th Anniv Ed	62,685	66,185
TRX		78,890

- Other builds: Lone Star BackCountry Edition, Laramie G/T, Rebel G/T, Longhorn SouthFork
- To be added for 2023: Limited Elite Edition
- Coming: RAM 1500 BEV

## SPECIFICATIONS

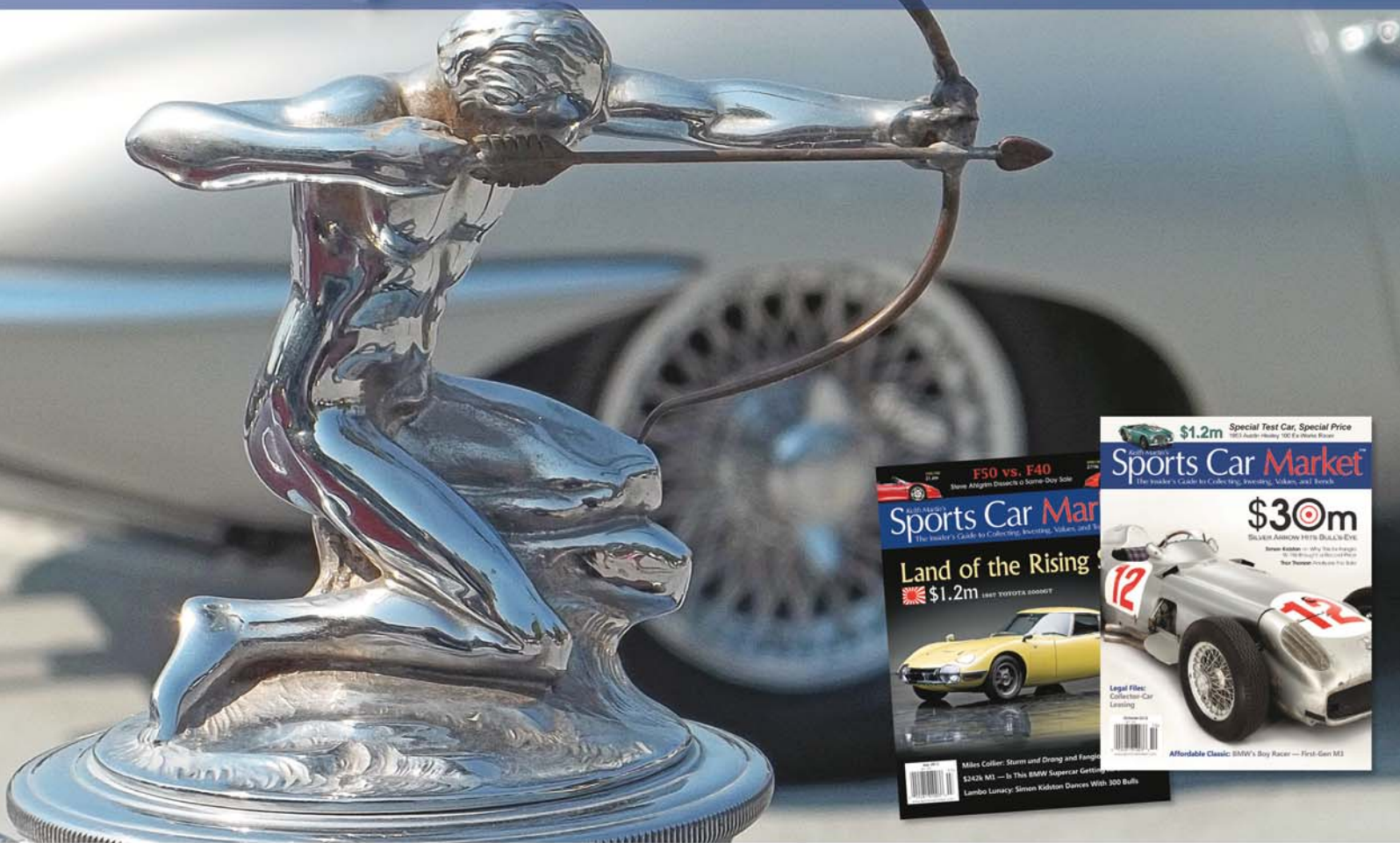
ASSEMBLY	Sterling Heights, Michigan
ENGINE / TRANSMISSION	Mexico / US
PARTS CONTENT	63% US-Can / 28% Mex
ENGINE	5.7L V8 HEMI® MDS-VVT eTorque
HYBRID BATTERY	48v 12-cell Li-Ion
HP/TORQUE	395 hp / 410 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.5:1
TRANSMISSION	3HP75 8-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN / TRANSFER CASE	4x4, BW 48-12 part-time, 2H/4H/4LO, electric shift
AXLE RATIO	3.92
SUSPENSION	F: (std) upper/lower A-arms, coils, twin-tube shocks, stblzr bar (air susp replaces shocks/coils); R: (std) five-link w track bar, coils, twin-tube shocks, stblzr bar, solid axle (air susp replaces coils)
STEERING	elect pwr
BRAKES	F: 14.9x1.2 vented w 57mm 2-piston caliper; R: 14x8x0.87 disc w 57mm 1-piston
WHEELS	18x8.0 black painted aluminum
TIRES	LT275/65R18C OWL on/off-road
BOX SIZE (NOMINAL)	5 ft 7 in
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	232.9 / 144.6 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(w skid plates) 8.2 in
APPR/DEP/BRKVR	w air suspension and skid plates, std tires: 23.3/27.2/21.0° max
TURNING CIRCLE	46.2 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.9 / 39.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.9 / 45.2 in
WEIGHT	5246 lb
GVWR	7100 lb
TOW CAPACITY	11,270 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	recmd 89 oct unl / 33 gal
MPG	18/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$44,900
PAINT: Billet Silver Metallic Clearcoat	200
5.7L V8 HEMI® MDS VVT ETORQUE	2295
3.92 REAR AXLE RATIO	95
33-GAL FUEL TANK	445
4-CORNER AIR SUSPENSION	1805
TECH GROUP: HUD, dig mirror, LED chmsl	1095
PREMIUM LIGHTING GROUP	995
TRAILER-TOW GRP: light check, reverse steering control, tpms, brake-controller	995
LEVEL 1 SAFETY GRP: pedestrian emerg braking, adv brake assist, full-speed fwd-collision warning-plus, lane keep assist	595
BACKCOUNTRY PKG: raised ride ht, 18x8.0 black paint alum wheels, LT275/65R18C OWL on/off road tires, black headlamp bezels, Mopar black side steps, Mopar deployable bed-step, Mopar adj cargo tie-downs, spray-in bedliner, tri-fold tonneau, lower two-tone, electronic lock rear axle, f/r Mopar rubber mats, skid plates (front suspension, fuel tank, steering, transfer case), body-color grille surround, painted f/r bumpers, tow hooks, cloth/vinyl buckets, BackCountry IP badge, off-road pages, hill descent control	2695
BIG HORN LEVEL 2 EQUIP GRP: remote start, heated front seats & st wheel, 8-way pwr driver seat w 2-way pwr lumbar, pwr adjust pedals, 2nd row in-floor storage, rear pwr slide window, media hub w charge ports, class IV receiver, 4G hot spot, 2 115V outlets, dual zone climate, Apple/Android, front/rear park assist w stop	2500
REAR UNDER-SEAT STORAGE	125
TRAILER TOW MIRRORS: pwr/manual fold	245
REAR WHEELHOUSE LINERS	195
ENGINE BLOCK HEATER	95
9 AMPLIFIED SPKRS W SUBWOOFER	695
UCONNECT®5 W 12-IN DISPLAY: connected travel and traffic, 4G wifi hot spot, SiriusXM w 6-mo sub, Apple/Android	1095
DESTINATION CHARGE	1695
TOTAL	\$63,760

(Note: base price has increased; see chart.)

WINNER: TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo: Title Award: Texas Truck of the Year (Ram 1500 overall)

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**Barrett-Jackson**  
**2nd Annual Houston Auction 2022**  
 Thursday-Saturday, October 20-22, 2022

NRG Center, 1 NRG Parkway, Houston TX 77054

BARRETT-JACKSON has capped off the most successful year in their 50+ year history with their 2nd Annual Houston Auction in late October. In total, 481 vehicles, all at No Reserve, sold for over \$30.6 million, with 269 pieces of automobilia selling for another \$809,000, bringing total auction sales to over \$31.4 million—with a 100-percent sell-through rate and more than 30 world-record auction sales achieved.

Two vehicles crossed the auction block for charitable causes in Houston, with 100 percent of their hammer prices benefiting two beneficiaries. On Saturday, American businessman and philanthropist George Shinn donated a 2022 Ford Mustang Shelby GT500 Heritage Edition (Lot #3001) to support Samaritan's Purse and the Florida Disaster Relief Fund, to support those suffering in the wake of Hurricane Ian's devastation in Southwest Florida. Shawn Shelby, grandson of Carroll Shelby and an American racer and entrepreneur, drove the limited-edition Mustang onto the block, which initially hammered in at \$400,000. Immediately following the sale, an additional \$288,000 in pledged donations were made by Shinn, Michelle Mauzy, Beth and Preston Ingram, Kathie Lee Gifford and Rick Hendrick. The car was then donated back by the winning bidder and hammered a second time for \$300,000, for a total of \$988,000. Additional cash donations were collected from generous guests in attendance, till the entire amount raised for hurricane relief efforts surpassed \$1 million.

On Friday afternoon, a 2010 Chevrolet Camaro SS Callaway/Hendrick Edition (Lot #3000) donated by Michelle Mauzy sold for \$250,000, benefiting Operation Homefront.

The top 10 non-charity vehicles sold included (with one tie, thus totaling eleven):

1. 2019 Ford GT .....(Lot #749).....\$1,028,500
2. 2019 Ford GT .....(Lot #757).....990,000
3. 2006 Ford GT .....(Lot #766).....429,000
4. 1967 Chevrolet Corvette Custom Convertible.....(Lot #737).....379,500
5. 2003 Hummer H1 Predator Custom SUV.....(Lot #726).....323,400
6. 2008 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren Roadster.....(Lot #745).....302,500
7. 2016 Porsche GT3 RS.....(Lot #746).....280,500
8. 1968 Ford Mustang Eleanor Tribute Edition.....(Lot #728).....275,000
9. 2005 Ford GT .....(Lot #735).....275,000
10. 2022 GMC Hummer EV Edition 1 VIN 005.....(Lot #442.1).....225,500
11. 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle SS LS6 .....(Lot #750).....225,500

“This year has been an incredible milestone for us in so many ways,” said Barrett-Jackson chairman and CEO Craig Jackson. “Houston was a great bookend to a historic year with unprecedented sales that marked our most successful year in history.”

“It’s also a place where we open our hearts and our wallets to help those in need,” adds Barrett-Jackson president Steve Davis. I’m so proud to have raised more than \$1.25 million for charity during our Houston Auction, bringing this year’s total dollars raised for charity to more than \$14.5 million.”

Next for Barrett-Jackson is their flagship Scottsdale Auction, January 21-29, 2023, with consignments already being accepted and tickets and VIP packages now available.

▼ [www.barrett-jackson.com](http://www.barrett-jackson.com)

Vehicle photos [2]: Barrett-Jackson Auctions





# Route 66 refresher

Not enough of us get back on the Mother Road as often as we've been meaning to

Story and photos by Tyson Hugie

While seated in downtown Kingman, having dinner along the streetside, we saw a DMC DeLorean drive past. "Oh, check that out," my travel partner Jason said, in between bites of pizza, pointing as it whizzed by.

The symbolism stuck with me, because just hours before, I had mused that it felt like we had taken a time machine that day—*Back to the Future* style—to the late 1800s, while visiting the old mining boomtown of Oatman.

The Route 66 "Mother Road"—or at least what remains of it—has beckoned to road trippers for nearly 60 years. We are fortunate to have strong Route 66 culture in Arizona, right here in our backyard.

We had decided to saddle up our cars and take a weekend adventure to resurrect old memories and make new ones. Our round-trip drive, a clock-

wise loop that started and ended in central Phoenix, came in at just about 485 miles and 8.5 hours of drive time, split over two days. I was excited to visit Oatman since it had been 15 years since my last visit in 2007. I'm happy to report that—perhaps, not surprisingly—it looked about the same!

## Route 66 roots

What was once a 2,448-mile artery between Chicago and Santa Monica has of course largely been overtaken or bypassed by larger, more efficient Interstate highways.

A few surviving stretches of the road offer a glimpse into the past. Many of the buildings and bridges along the way—over 200, in fact—have earned their place on historical registries. The Art Deco style of architecture is evident in many of the smaller towns.

Route 66 got its start in late 1926 but was not completely paved until 1938. The ensuing decades brought occasional changes to the alignments, in the interest of safety and efficiency.

The route was officially removed from the United States Highway System in 1985. Some of its stretches remained in service as business loops for the Interstates, while others were abandoned completely. Today, it's impossible to drive uninterrupted for the entire length, but Arizona offers a few very original stretches.

## Oatman rides again

In Arizona, Route 66 originally covered 401 miles across the northern part of the state, running east and west. One town that remains on the map, despite being bypassed by Interstate 40 in 1953, is Oatman. In the 1960s, Oatman was nearly en-

tirely abandoned, but since the late 1980s it has been revitalized to some extent thanks to Route 66 tourism.

We paused briefly for fuel in Needles, California, then began working our way toward this quaint destination. The road looks and feels old, with little attempt to modernize it with wide shoulders, bike lanes or crisp striping like we are used to seeing in the city. That's part of the allure.

Nestled in the Black Mountains, Oatman was first settled in the 1860s, when gold was discovered there. The site grew into a boomtown between 1915 and 1917. Many of Oatman's buildings succumbed to a fire in 1921, but the original 1902 hotel remains, now converted into a restaurant and museum.

The primary mine closed in 1924, so for about the last 100 years, the town has survived largely on tourism. The atmosphere feels like a step back in time, with wooden sidewalks and Wild West gunfight reenactments. We arrived just in time for one such gunfight, staged around a bank robbery, that drew a crowd along the main street.

Some of Oatman's most famous residents are the wild burros roaming the streets. We said hello to a few, including "Big Mama" who was particu-

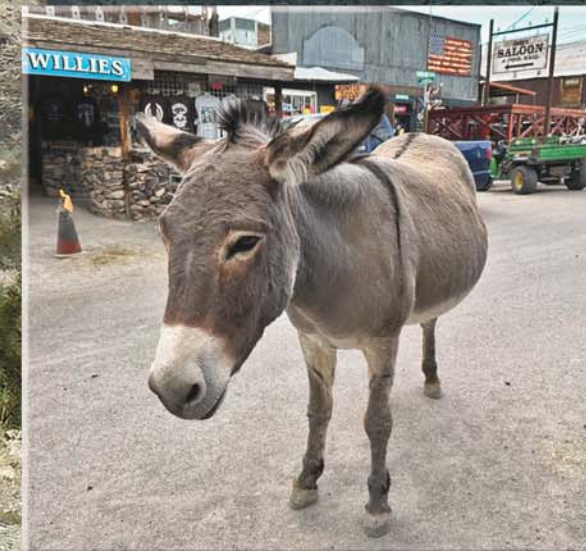


larly friendly about taking treats from people on the streetside. Jason and I each ordered a buffalo burger from the hotel restaurant and gave it two (or four) thumbs up.

## Overnight in Kingman

Our travels next took us northwest toward Kingman. The road leading in that direction was once regarded as one of the most dangerous on Route 66 because of its narrow width, steep grades,

(cont'd)





hairpin curves and a lack of guardrails. Sitgreaves Pass, at 3,550 feet, reportedly used to have a service where cars could be towed to the summit if they couldn't make it on their own. Our 2004 Mazda6 and 2004 Honda S2000 didn't seem to have any problems, and we took advantage of the panorama to snag a few photos along the way.

The original main thoroughfare in Kingman, now called Andy Devine Avenue, is home to a variety of motels and other buildings that retain retro Route 66 aesthetics. One of those motels was our resting place for the night: El Trovatore. This motel and its neon sign boast the "World's Longest Route 66 Map"—in fact a mural painted

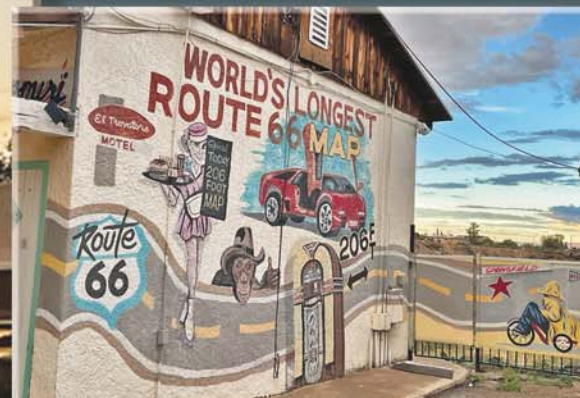
across the face of the buildings.

Sam, the owner, greeted us at the front desk and proceeded to tell the tale of Kingman and its history. His knowledge was vast and his humor was evident; he wouldn't give me the key to my room until I could tell him how to say the word "key" in a language other than English. Luckily, I remembered a few things from middle school Spanish class! Our room was themed in Marilyn Monroe photography and provided a cozy place for the night.

Afternoon rainstorms had left a fresh scent and a cool breeze in the evening air, so we put the top down on my S2000 and made our way to dinner in the historic business district. The wood-fired pizza hit the spot, and the DeLorean sighting was the perfect capstone to a day-trip that took us back in time. Now if only we could have had lunch



with Marty McFly and Doc Brown, the day would have been perfect. ■



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# Concours in the Hills 2023

Concours in the Hills will be held one week earlier than usual—on Saturday February 4, 2023—to avoid competing with the Superbowl and Phoenix Open Golf Tournament. The event will be in its regular location at Fountain Park in Fountain Hills.

Having set multiple records for the number of cars on display, number of spectators and sponsors, and funds raised for Phoenix Children's Hospital each year since inception in 2014, the show has become recognized as a premier event in Arizona for high-performance, exotic and collector cars.

The show is organized by sections for Domestic, Imports, Race Cars, Limited-Edition Exotics, Off-Road and Motorcycles. A helicopter display includes military attack helicopters.

The 2022 show had some 1,200 vehicles, an estimated 50,000 people and over 100 sponsor displays, and raised \$460,000 for Phoenix Children's Hospital Cardiac Department.

The show is heavily supported by leading car clubs and dealers including Ferrari, Lamborghini, McLaren, Porsche, Corvette, Mustang, Aston Martin, Bentley, Rolls-Royce, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Audi and others. The value of vehicles is many hundreds of millions, with several individual cars worth over \$10 million.

The show officially opens at 10am but starts getting busy from 7am when cars start roaring in. Admission is free for spectators, and entry for private exhibitors is just \$75 per car or truck and \$40 per motorcycle, although many donate more. All funds go to Phoenix Children's Hospital, and the organizers are all dedicated volunteers.

**WHEN:**  
Saturday February 4, 2023  
10am - 3pm

**WHERE:**  
Fountain Park, Fountain Hills  
12925 N Saguardo Blvd  
Fountain Hills AZ 85268

**FURTHER EVENT INFORMATION:**  
www.concoursinthehills.org

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For more information about the hospital, visit phoenixchildrens.org. ■

Photo by Rob Mains  
www.robmainphotography.com



# Duel in the dirt

By Joe Sage / Photos: Kevin McCauley, capturingthemachine

Pickup and SUV tastes and purposes in Texas are very similar to ours in Arizona, making the annual Texas Autowriters' Association (TAWA) Texas Truck Rodeo an always useful barometer.

The event moved this year to Eagles Canyon Raceway, a private, FIA-spec 2.7-mile paved road course in the wide open spaces of North Texas near Decatur (northwest of Fort Worth), with 15 total turns, over 200 feet of elevation change and a 2200-foot-long back straight. The venue, site of TAWA's spring Texas Auto Roundup a few times, has more recently roughly doubled in size, adding comprehensive, adaptable off-road terrain.

Texas means trucks, making TAWA Truck Rodeo trophies brag-worthy on a national and even global scale, for manufacturers who win here.

Which manufacturers participate and what they choose to enter always offer insights, much like studying how they focus their marketing. These past couple of pandemic years impacted events of all sorts, of course, from travel and group issues, to manufacturers' own challenges with plant closings or supply chain constraints affecting new model releases and model years. These logjams are easing, but still a bit disrupted. Given all that, manufacturer participation was healthy, but still a little light, especially on the pickup side of the event.

The event is broadly divided into SUVs and pickups, each further categorized by size (by standard definitions) or other attributes (luxury, off-road, green, all more subjective and up to the manufacturers whether they choose to enter). Some enter multiples of the same vehicle—different trims or powertrains, or just duplicates to help the pace.

The goal is to have all next year's models, which is never 100 percent the case. This year hit about 50-50 (model years are indicated throughout).

Shipping vehicles and key personnel to such an event is a considerable mobilization effort for the manufacturers, and decisions are surely always difficult. Plentiful entries from any one manufacturer may seem bound to skew award results, or perhaps not. In some cases, this splits votes against themselves. One-off entries still often win.

Vehicle category wins are determined through a complex formula of individual attributes, as well as an overall score, with room for subjective judgment, as well. The final results are always interesting and reveal new insights.

## SUVs

This event was once all about pickup trucks, with SUVs added over the years. The intent had been to urge more crossover-like utilities into spring's Auto Roundup event, leaving pure SUVs in Truck Rodeo. But definitions are difficult, flexible or debatable, and the past few disruptive pandemic years disrupted any focused, smooth shift, anyway. Thus the utilities lean a bit more away from crossovers, but remain open to some degree of interpretation.

Note: prices were estimated for some (shown as ±) or not provided for some (shown as -na-). Base and as-entered price averages are calculated by what is available and are noted by "±" or an asterisk in those cases.

### COMPACT SUV

**HP RANGE**...158 Honda - 270 Jeep (avg 216.5)  
**BASE \$** .....\$23,650 Honda - \$34,370 Jeep (avg \$29.6k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$30,590 Honda - \$44,465 Jeep (avg \$37.9k)

**Honda** HR-V EX-L AWD (2023)  
 158 hp / 30 mpg hwy .....\$23,650 / \$30,590  
**Jeep** Compass Trailhawk (2023)  
 270 hp / -na- mpg hwy .....\$34,370 / \$44,465

**Mazda** CX-50 2.5 Turbo Premium Plus AWD (2023)  
 256 hp / 29 mpg hwy .....\$26,800 / \$43,170

**Subaru** Forester Wilderness (2022)  
 182 hp / 28 mpg hwy .....\$33,520 / \$33,520  
**★ WINNER : Mazda CX-50**

### MIDSIZE SUV

**HP RANGE**...184 VW - 295 Nissan (avg 260)  
**BASE \$** .....\$25,995 VW - \$52,920 4Runner (avg \$39.6k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$32,585 VW - \$55,440 4Runner (avg \$44k\*)

**Hyundai** Palisade XRT (2023)  
 291 hp / 25 mpg hwy .....\$35,250 / \$43,960

**Nissan** Pathfinder Rock Creek Edition (2022)  
 295 hp / -na- mpg hwy .....\$44,115 / ---na---\*

**Toyota** 4Runner TRD Pro (2022)  
 270 hp / 19 mpg hwy .....\$52,920 / \$55,440

**Volkswagen** Tiguan 2.0T SE 4MOTION (2022)  
 184 hp / 29 mpg hwy .....\$25,995 / \$32,585  
**★ WINNER : Nissan Pathfinder**

### FULL-SIZE SUV

**HP RANGE**...276 VW - 437 Toyota (avg 378)  
**BASE \$** .....\$50,645 VW - \$76,900 Toyota (avg ±\$65.2k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$50,645 VW - ±\$80,000 Wag (avg ±\$65.9k\*)

**Toyota** Sequoia TRD Pro (2023)  
 437 hp / 24 mpg hwy .....\$76,900 / ---na---\*

**Toyota** Sequoia Capstone i-FORCE MAX (2023)  
 437 hp / 24 mpg hwy .....\$75,300 / ---na---\*

**Volkswagen** Atlas V6 SEL R-Line 4MOTION (2022)  
 276 hp / 23 mpg hwy .....\$50,645 / \$51,840

**Wagoneer** 4x4 Series II (2023)  
 420 hp / -na- mpg hwy .....±\$68,000 / ±\$80,000  
**★ WINNER : Toyota Sequoia**

### LUXURY SUV

**HP RANGE**...355 Acura - 510 Grand Wagoneer (avg 426)  
**BASE \$** .....\$49,050 Acura - \$102,345 Lexus (avg ±\$79.3k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$68,985 Gen - ±\$109,000 GW (avg ±\$89.5k)

**Acura** MDX Type S w/ Advance (2022)  
 355 hp / 21 mpg hwy .....\$49,050 / \$73,595

**Genesis** GV60 Performance EV (2023)  
 429 hp / 97 mpg hwy .....\$67,890 / \$68,985

**Grand Wagoneer** L Obsidian (2023)  
 510 hp / 19 mpg hwy .....±\$98,000 / ±\$109,000

**Lexus** LX 600 F SPORT (2022)  
 409 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$102,345 / \$106,305  
**★ WINNER : Genesis GV60**

### OFF-ROAD SUV

**HP RANGE**...270 Jeep - 437 Toyota (avg 333)  
**BASE \$** .....\$58,595 Jeep - \$76,900 Toyota (avg \$68,438)  
**ENTERED \$** ..±\$67,000 Jeep - na Toyota (avg na\*)

**Jeep** Wrangler 4xe Rubicon (2023)  
 270 hp / 49 MPGe hwy .....\$58,595 / ±\$67,000

**Toyota** Sequoia TRD Pro (2023)  
 437 hp / 24 mpg hwy .....\$76,900 / ---na---\*

**Jeep** Grand Cherokee 4xe Summit Reserve (2022)  
 293 hp / 56 mpg MPGe .....\$69,820 / ±\$79,000  
**★ WINNER : Toyota Sequoia**

### GREEN VEHICLE

**HP RANGE**...293 Jeep - 429 Genesis (avg 361)  
**BASE \$** .....\$67,890 Genesis - \$69,820 Jeep (avg \$68.9k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$68,985 Gen - ±\$79,000 Jeep (avg ±\$74k)

**Genesis** GV60 Performance EV (2023)  
 429 hp / 97 mpg hwy .....\$67,890 / \$68,985

**Jeep** Grand Cherokee 4xe Summit Reserve (2022)  
 293 hp / 56 mpg MPGe .....\$69,820 / ±\$79,000  
**★ WINNER : Genesis GV60**

## TITLE AWARD: 2023 SUV OF TEXAS ★

This had a healthy and meaningful set of contenders, including many giants of the segment, as well as a number of hot new entries everybody has been itching to know more about.

Numerical scoring by a variety of attributes—from power and performance, to comfort and features, to price and value—form the basis for logical conclusions. Logic, of course, can still be driven by any of these interwoven attributes, so we always dig into the results to see whether a particular group seemed to have its win triggered by horsepower against price, pure gotta-have-it enticement, or what. Any such results always vary—they certainly do here—with plenty of room to speculate about reasoning in various cases, and more importantly to ponder what it means to you as a potential buyer.

Whether by logic or happenstance, it turns out the big trophy here goes to the most expensive and most powerful entry, which is also one of the biggest.

**★ WINNER : Toyota Sequoia**

(cont'd)

COMPACT: MAZDA CX-50



MIDSIZE: NISSAN PATHFINDER



FULL-SIZE: TOYOTA SEQUOIA



LUXURY: GENESIS GV60



OFF-ROAD: TOYOTA SEQUOIA



GREEN: GENESIS GV60



TAWA SUV OF TEXAS: TOYOTA SEQUOIA



## Pickups

Once the heart of this event, pickups were more lightly represented this year. There were no entries in the newest hot category, compacts. The popular midsize segment had two Japanese entries only, but these two define one of the hottest contests of the moment, as Nissan's totally transformed Frontier is less expensive but more powerful, first to break the 300-hp threshold. The core full-size category and its subsets were a two-brand faceoff, vitally useful to some buyers, an FYI to others.

Note: as-entered prices were not provided for some (shown as -na-). Again, averages are calculated by what is available, where possible, and noted by an asterisk.

### MIDSIZE PICKUP

**HP RANGE**...278 Toyota - 310 Nissan (avg 294)  
**BASE \$** .....\$37,240 Nissan - \$46,585 Toy (avg \$41.9k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$46,570 Nissan - \$50,802 Toy (avg \$48.7k)

**Nissan** Frontier PRO-4X Crew Cab (2022)  
 310 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$37,240 / \$46,570  
**Toyota** Tacoma TRD Pro Double Cab (2022)  
 278 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$46,585 / \$50,802

★ **WINNER: Nissan Frontier**

### FULL-SIZE PICKUP

**HP RANGE**...395 Ram - 437 Toyota (avg 415)  
**BASE \$** .....\$62,460 Ram - \$73,530 Toyota (avg \$67.1k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$69,315-\$77,339 both Tundra (avg \$73.7k\*)

**Ram** 1500 Limited (2002) (two entered)  
 395 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$65,985 / \$75,710  
 395 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$62,460 / \$72,420

**Ram** 2500 Heavy Duty Rebel (2023)  
 410 hp / -na- mpg hwy .....\$67,045 / ---na---\*  
**Toyota** Tundra Capstone i-FORCE MAX (2022)  
 437 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$73,530 / \$77,339

**Toyota** Tundra TRD Pro CrewMax (2022)  
 437 hp / 20 mpg hwy .....\$66,805 / \$69,315

★ **WINNER: Ram 1500**

### HEAVY DUTY PICKUP

(This category was uncontested.)

**Ram** 2500 Heavy Duty Rebel (2023)  
 410 hp / -na- mpg hwy .....\$67,045 / ---na---  
 (winner by default)

### LUXURY PICKUP

**HP RANGE**...395 Ram - 437 Toyota (avg 417)  
**BASE \$** .....\$73,530 Toyota - \$75,710 Ram (avg \$74.6k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$77,339 Toyota - na Ram (avg na\*)

**Ram** 1500 Limited 10th Anniv Ed (2002) (two entered)  
 395 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$75,710 / ---na---\*

**Toyota** Tundra Capstone i-FORCE MAX (2022)  
 437 hp / 22 mpg hwy .....\$73,530 / \$77,339

★ **WINNER: Ram 1500**

### OFF-ROAD PICKUP

**HP RANGE**...437 Toyota - 702 Ram (avg 569.5)  
**BASE \$** .....\$66,805 Toyota - \$78,790 Ram (avg \$72.8k)  
**ENTERED \$** ..\$69,315 Toyota - \$98,780 Ram (avg \$84.0k)

**Ram** 1500 TRX (2002) (two entered)  
 702 hp / 14 mpg hwy .....\$78,790 / \$98,780

**Toyota** Tundra TRD Pro CrewMax (2022)  
 437 hp / 20 mpg hwy .....\$66,805 / \$69,315

★ **WINNER: Toyota Tundra**

## TITLE AWARD: 2023 TRUCK OF TEXAS ★

Given the dominance of just two brands in this whole competition, it's refreshing to see the new Nissan Frontier take the Midsize category. This truck (featured in our previous issue) has much to brag about, notably having the only 300-plus-horse powertrain at all, for now, and remaining so through the entire lineup next year, even as at least one other offers a competitive option. The Frontier lineup also offers cab and bed combinations hard to find elsewhere. On the rest, it was all Ram and Tundra, head to head—except in Heavy Duties, where Toyota does not have an offering (perhaps someday they will?), which likely swayed the total numbers for the title award.

★ **WINNER: Ram 1500**

## Calculated awards

These attributes are judged by all drivers on all vehicles and are a key part of the evaluation process for vehicle categories. Here, they are split out from those more complex and sometimes subjective tallies and revisited purely mathematically. All vehicles are in play here. Where various multiple versions of a vehicle were entered, these awards are calculated by combining them.

**Best Interior:** WINNER: Grand Wagoneer

**Best Exterior:** WINNER: Toyota Sequoia

**Best Value:** WINNER: Genesis GV60

**Best Performance:** WINNER: Ram 1500

**Best Personal Appeal:** WINNER: Ram 1500

## Feature award

Manufacturers choose whether to showcase individual technologies and features for additional awards. Two solid new technologies were entered, with the most votes going to this internal combustion powertrain.

**Best New Feature:**

WINNER: Hurricane Twin Turbo, Wagoneer

There are always insights, even as a narrow breadth of entries suggest that some categories' results be taken with a grain of salt. Notably absent are two of the Big Detroit Three, as well as Europeans other than VW. Asia was well represented, though Honda, Mitsubishi and Kia stand out by their absence. Also missing are EV-only brands, including Tesla or major startups like Rivian.

Surprises? Always a few. It's interesting that Toyota dominated the SUVs, where there were so many choices. And yet, the all-new Tundra, which has done well in other competitions, had just one top score among pickup categories. As noted in that section, though—especially with most contests just a one-on-one—their lack of a heavy duty could be a key reason why. No way to be sure.

So much has to do with who showed up to compete. We're looking forward to more familiar faces—and some new ones—next year. ■

MIDSIZE: NISSAN FRONTIER



FULL-SIZE: RAM 1500



HEAVY DUTY: RAM 2500 REBEL



LUXURY: RAM 1500 LIMITED



OFF-ROAD: TOYOTA TUNDRA



TAWA TRUCK OF TEXAS: RAM 1500



(cont'd)

# Multiple personalities

(all good) - by Joe Sage

Fancier cousin of the Toyota Land Cruiser (with us since 1951 and itself increasingly fancy), the Lexus LX has been with us since model year 1996.

A durable concept, the LX entered just its fourth generation in 2021. Available in five trims, three of which have base prices in six digits, ours is the top Ultra-Luxury model. Our sample's Nori Green Pearl paint sets the stage for the look and feel of this glorious beast, a sort of army green metallic that's equal parts extreme duty and country club.

That paint, the bold grille, its 22-inch forged alloy wheels (the largest Lexus offers) and its roof rail cross bars add up to a powerful stance in any

setting. Prominent metallic finishes for the grille, wheels and roof bars contrast particularly well with our sample's darker paint. The grille generated comments online, some thinking it's overdone, others thinking it suits the model perfectly. Next year's Lexus RX takes an evolutionary approach here, replacing the upper region of the longstanding "spindle" with sheet metal (bearing a subtly stamped grille-mimicking pattern). We're curious whether this will be a new direction for all models, though the new LX grille's boldness is offset by frameless "floating" bars, while its pattern is engineered to provide high-level cooling for its 409-hp twin-turbo V6. No matter how you slice it, the more you engage with the LX, the more you appreciate the unified strength and presence of its styling.

While completely new, gen-four is immediately recognizable as an LX. It retains its body-on-frame

traditional SUV build, atop a 20 percent more rigid GA-F platform, while weight is reduced by 441 pounds from gen-three. Advanced suspension underpins both off-road and on-road supremacy. Its smaller yet more powerful engine's high torque is on tap in lower ranges, helpful for both off-roading and acceleration in town. A 10-speed close ratio direct-shift torque converter transmission delivers unusually smooth power throughout, along with higher fuel economy on the open road.

Adjustable ride height quickly changes among normal and two high-profile modes—adaptable by modes, a multi-terrain feature, and readings of vehicle speed, posture and handling—with a low setting for easy access when parked.

Dual displays, 12.3-inch upper and 7-inch lower, are a Lexus first. This finally means goodbye to a finicky touchpad that had replaced an extremely

finicky joystick. Ultra Luxury trim (a two-row, four-person setup, while other trims offer two/five or three/seven layouts) goes all out for second row occupants, with exclusive headrests, reading lights, rear displays and overhead AC vents.

You can feel the vehicle's almost-three-ton heft during aggressive freeway ramp acceleration, yet the LX 600's power is immediately apparent, as is the smoothness of its shifts. Drive modes range from eco to sport-plus (and custom). We were especially hooked on sport mode's response.

On a drive out Highway 74 to Lake Pleasant and up Castle Hot Springs Road a bit, we debated whether to photograph it in the dirt, to show just how good it is at this? Or back at an executive club or resort, to show just how good it is at that? You can make a watertight case for either in this vehicle, but we ended up bringing it back to town, figuring classiness is its defining visual starting point, off-roading its special ingredient.

Also now available as an F SPORT for the first



time, the LX 600 is a fine rig, standing tall and proud in any environment. Pricy it is, but its well-developed dual personalities give you a full-blown luxury machine and a highly capable off-roader all in just one garage bay. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ROWS/SEATS	Ultra-Lux 2/4 / (others 2/5, 3/7)
BUILD	body-on-frame
ASSEMBLY	Toyota, Aichi, Japan
ENGINE	3.5L V6 turbo intercooled
24v DOHC chain drive, LEV8I SULEV30 S&S	
HP/TORQUE	409 hp / 479 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.3:1
TRANSMISSION	direct shift 10-spd auto, manual-trans-like direct acceleration
DRIVETRAIN	4WD transfer case, Multi-Terrain Select modes (4LO and 4HI)
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	6.9 sec / 130 mph
SUSPENSION	F: high-mount dbl wishbone, optimized coils, long rebound; R: four-link axle-type, rear lateral control arms, shocks outside lower control arms
STEERING	elec pwr steering
BRAKES	F: 13.94 x 1.26 vented disc; R: 13.19 x 0.79 vented disc
WHEELS	22 x 8J forged alloy wheels
TIRES	Dunlop Grandtrek PT5A 265/50R22 112V summer tires (OEM)
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	200.59 / 112.2 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	8.27 in
APPR / DEPARTURE	25.9-27.4 / 24.9-26.3°
TURNING CIRCLE	39.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	37.8 / 38.78 / 35.24 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.14 / 33.86 / 31.1 in
CARGO CAPACITY	41 / 71 cu.ft
CURB WEIGHT	5665-5945 lb
GVWR	7230 lb
TOW CAPACITY	8000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.95+ oct prem unl / 21.14 gal
MPG	17/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$126,000
ROOF RAIL CROSS BARS	450
CARPETED CARGO MAT	140
WHEEL LOCKS	95
DESTINATION CHARGE	1345

TOTAL \$128,030

(Note: prices have increased; see below.)

## 2022 LEXUS LX 600 LINEUP

Base	\$88,245
Premium	96,345
F Sport	102,345
Luxury	104,345
Ultra-Luxury	127,345





Texas Motor Press Association (TxMPA) Off-Road Invitational category winners—as well as an overall Off-Road Truck of the Year and Off-Road SUV of the Year—are as follows:

**TRUCK OF THE YEAR**

- FULL-SIZE PICKUP:**  
RAM 1500 Limited
- MIDSIZE PICKUP:**  
Nissan Frontier PRO-4X

**OVERALL  
TxMPA OFF-ROAD TRUCK OF THE YEAR:**  
★ Toyota Tundra TRD Pro



**SUV OF THE YEAR**

- FULL-SIZE**.....Nissan Pathfinder Rock Creek Ed
- MIDSIZE**.....Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4xe
- COMPACT**.....Mazda CX-50 AWD

**OVERALL  
TxMPA OFF-ROAD SUV OF THE YEAR:**  
★ Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4xe

**UTV / MOTORCYCLE / E-ATV**

- OFF-ROAD UTV**.....Polaris RZR R4
- OFF-ROAD MOTORCYCLE**.....Zero FX
- DUAL SPORT MOTORCYCLE**...Zero DSR/X
- OFF-ROAD E-ATV**...Rungu Dualie XR Rubicon Trail Ed



# Texas trucks second sampler

By Joe Sage  
Photos: Lucas Kepner @LucasKPhoto

Texas, which shares so much with Arizona when it comes to trucks—whether for work, recreation, show or daily glory—has spawned a second automotive press association over the past few years. The newer Texas Motor Press Association (TxMPA) has its own event for this niche, the Texas Off-Road Invitational, held at a new location this year, Brazos Valley Off-Road Ranch, a 300-acre off-road event space near Bryan in East Texas.

Pandemic lockdowns and their aftermath made the past couple of years a challenge for launching this new endeavor, from travel and event restrictions to manufacturers' own home-office-based logistical limitations. Yet the event did come to life.

This year's event combined a growing number of pickup and SUV entries with a sampling of off-road UTVs, E-ATVs and motorcycles.

The event opened with a campfire reception in downtown Bryan, followed by one full day plus another half-day of driving on a variety of challenging courses, with lunches on site and, at the end of the first drive day, gourmet pizza and a movie at the historic Queen Theater in Bryan.

Voting was performed on-site at the end of driving, based on overall performance and value, with awards announced midafternoon. Overall participation did not represent the entire industry, with some categories fairly small, so final results may or may not influence your buying decisions. The winners, individually, were all strong.

"Being able to expand this year's entries meant our members had a chance to experience many vehicles for the first time ever, including off-road EVs, plug-in hybrids, and Baja ready UTVs," said TxMPA President Michael Satterfield. "All of our members appreciate the opportunity to test these vehicles in unique off-road conditions, allowing us to make better recommendations." ■

The Texas Motor Press Association was founded with the goal of bringing together automotive and powersports professionals in Texas and surrounding states to provide educational, professional and networking opportunities within the industry. Members include a range of media and content creators, vetted by the board of directors.

## THE BUSTED KNUCKLE GARAGE AN AUTOMOTIVE GIFT SHOP

### Garage Comfort Mats

Our Garage Comfort Mats all have a 3/4" Energy-Return foam core. Standing or kneeling on them reduces all discomfort and fatigue. Whether you're an automotive do-it-yourselfer or seasoned professional, you're bound to deal with foot, leg, knee or lower back fatigue. It comes with the territory but don't let it rob you of your joy in the shop.

- 20" x 32"
- Slip-Resistant Bottom Surface
- Stain Resistant, Waterproof Top Surface
- Beveled, Curl-Free Edges Reduce Tripping
- Won't Bottom Out or Lose Their Bounce Over Time
- Reduces Discomfort Brought On by Standing On Hard Surfaces
- And They Just Feel & Look Great!
- Must Have for Every Garage!



**Lost 10mm Anti-Fatigue Garage Comfort Mat (shown) / SKU: 10-BKG-GBSK**  
Found it! Your 10mm socket is right on the corner of this mat. Ask your friend to pick it up and hand it to you. The background is a well used concrete that will probably blend right into your own garage floor.

**Repeating Wrench Anti-Fatigue Garage Comfort Mat / SKU: 10-BKG-GPWR**  
Show you've paid your dues by sporting the Busted Knuckle Garage logo front and center! A subtle repeating wrench pattern wallpapers the background.

**\$49.95 each**



**Furnishings | Clothing | Signs | Barware | And More!**  
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Need a volume discount for your shop or business? Call us: 928-708-0987



# Simplicity

by Joe Sage

The name says it all, or at least sets the stage—the new Toyota Corolla Cross picks up the aura of the immensely popular Corolla compact sedan, while Cross suggests a crossover, though officially categorized as a Small SUV (a category invented up a few years ago along with urban, adventure and other new classifications, as vehicles started popping up below, near or overlapping sub-compact crossovers). SUV and crossover terms have blended so much by now, Cross works.

The compact Corolla sedan is a close second to the top-selling midsize Camry among seven Toyota cars in the US. With nine models (already almost 30 percent more by pure head count), their SUV and crossover sales total about 50 percent more than cars. The hot new RAV4—which sells some 40 or 50 percent more than either Corolla or Camry (or the popular Tacoma midsize pickup)—is top seller for the entire brand.

Put that all together, and a compact crossover

version of the Corolla is a formula that seems destined for immediate success.

Corolla Cross is built on the same high-strength TNGA-C global platform (as are a half-dozen or so, with some 16 variants, including Toyota C-HR and Lexus UX crossovers). But there's no mistaking its commonality with Corolla—powertrains are the same, and the platform is adjusted only minimally, with wheelbase about two and a half inches shorter and total length about six and a half inches shorter on the Corolla Cross than the Corolla.

Our calendar brought us the Corolla Cross (its top trim in top all-wheel-drive fitment) immediately following a super luxury vehicle at about six times the cost. That sounds like a recipe for a shock, but our first words upon entering the Toyota were, "this is a perfectly fine little unit." We noted its power seats and mirrors, and we appreciated its smaller and relatively simply screen, as well as tangible, quickly grabbable knobs for everything

from climate to audio, all refreshingly user-friendly and reliable in these days of screen-dependent distraction. (We did find the radio preset arrangement a bit limited.)

The relatively large and stylish wheels are one of the main things that make this vehicle look like more than it might otherwise and thus such a value. Nice move. Yet they aren't so big that you have expensive and vulnerable low-profile tires. Nice fitment.

Our reverie continued during a predawn run to the post office and airport, then was interrupted as a six-figure luxury performance coupe promptly blew our doors off, crossing multiple lanes, making multiple turns and blowing through the ramp-metering red light without signaling or stopping. This type of, uh, competitive behavior is common in these parts, so if gets the best of you, this little SUV's 169 horses may not be enough. But in other areas, where the culture is different, and/or where its 8.1 inches of ground clearance, all-wheel drive and presumably its (as yet unspecified) cargo volume are more important, it will turn many heads.

While there are a lot of people who profess to dislike CVTs across the board, we tend to think most users will find them transparent in most situations. This one, however, did make itself pretty known to us, settling in on the freeway at about 10 mph less than the rest of the traffic and pushing to keep up. In some parts of the country that would be no problem, but around here it is noticeable.

Power is a little weak from the line, though fine once in motion. In a righthand turn after a full stop, it could pause mid-turn, a common behavior in a great many automatics. We might expect smoother continuity from a CVT, but that's what we got.

We hesitate to call anything a starter car, though that's a great term for something that may not be everything you dream of, but is everything you need and then some, and you can aspire from there. We avoid "starter car" because this may be exactly what you need not just for a first car, but at any point in your lifetime or vehicle history. The clean and simple Corolla Cross easily fills the need parameters, if not the "starter" term, from a purely positive point of view.

This affordable utility is rock solid, nicely equipped and a good handler. Though not super powerful or dressed in exotic hides and timbers,



it's spacious, capable and really lacking nothing. And of course it's notably economical both in purchase and operation.

Many times during our week, the Corolla Cross brought to mind that top-selling RAV4, in general personality. We nicknamed it the RAV3.

If your aspirations run higher, the RAV4 starts for \$4500 more. But if the Corolla Cross is ringing your bell and you can't aspire further till later, this vehicle is a great place to dive in right now. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY .....	Huntsville, Alabama
EPA CLASS .....	small SUV
ROWS / SEATS .....	two / five
ENGINE .....	2.0L Dynamic Force 4-cyl DOHC, 16v w Dual VVT-i, alum alloy block/head
HP/TORQUE .....	169 hp / 150 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO .....	13.0:1
TRANSMISSION .....	Direct Shift-CVT (gear ratios 1st - 3.377, final 4.014)
DRIVETRAIN .....	AWD / Dynamic Torque Control
SUSPENSION .....	F: indep MacPherson strut, 25mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link, 21mm stblzr bar
STEERING .....	elec pwr-assist rack & pinion
BRAKES .....	F: 12.0 vented; R: 11.1 solid disc
WHEELS / TIRES .....	18-in alloy / 225/55R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE .....	175.6 / 103.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE .....	8.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE .....	35.4 ft
HEADROOM (F/R) .....	39.5 / 39.1 in
LEGROOM (F/R) .....	42.9 / 32.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY .....	24.3 / TBD cu.ft
WEIGHT .....	3325 lb
PAYLOAD / GVWR .....	1130 / 4455 lb
TOW CAPACITY .....	1500 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY .....	reg unl or higher / 13.2 gal
MPG .....	29/32/30 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE .....	<b>\$27,625</b>
AUDIO PLUS: 8-in touchscreen, 9 JBL speakers incl subwoofer & amp, Android/Apple/Alexa, SiriusXM w 3 mos, security alarm .....	1465
MOONROOF / BACK DOOR: tilt & slide moonroof, power back door .....	1250
FRONT LIGHTING: auto-leveling adaptive .....	615
MATS: carpet floor mat, cargo mat .....	249
MIRROR: frameless, HomeLink .....	175
ACTIVITY MOUNT .....	399
DESTINATION CHARGE .....	1215
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$32,993</b>

(Note: prices have increased; see below.)

## 2022 COROLLA CROSS LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
L .....	\$22,445	\$23,745
LE .....	24,795	26,095
XLE .....	26,575	27,875





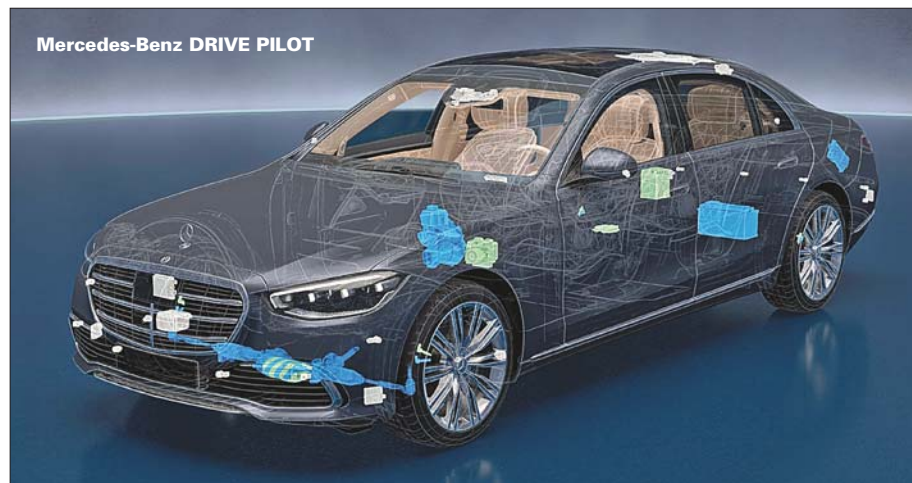
## THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Global Air Cylinder Wheels

▼ **Global Air Cylinder Wheels** of Phoenix is developing next-generation wheel technology, said to be stronger, safer, more eco-friendly, and up to 60 percent more economical over a wheel's lifetime than rubber tires. Mostly steel, their Air Suspension Wheel (ASW) combines an inner steel hub with an outer steel drum, connected by eight or twelve nitrogen-filled air cylinders and up to six oil-filled dampers. Bolt-on steel or polyurethane treads are fitted on the outside drum and can be replaced without removing the wheel (which can take up to eight hours with OTR rubber tires). The design can be adjusted to payload, speed, sload, size, weight and other requirements. They do not suffer overheating and can't explode. Waste is reduced, as only the wear surfaces need replacing. Materials themselves are more sustainable, and while tire wear creates problematic fine dust, the treads of the ASW can be made with biodegradable materials. Lower rolling resistance leads to less fuel consumption, in turn reducing toxic emission gases or extending battery range for EVs. Braking energy gets stored in the cylinders and returned to kinetic energy. The wheels are expected to last about 10 to 15 years and then are 100 percent recyclable. ASW technology has eight patents granted, with 52 more patents pending. The company has received multiple initial purchase orders and expects to be fully commercialized within two years, with rapid adoption into mining fleets.

▼ **Shell** has selected the EV charging and smart energy management platform of Tel Aviv, Israel-based **Driivz** to help accelerate build-out of new charging locations in more than 10 European countries, as Shell aims to operate over 500,000 charge points globally by 2025 and 2,500,000 by 2030. Shell will deploy Driivz's EV charge point operations management software as the framework for new installations in



Mercedes-Benz DRIVE PILOT

Austria and France, then leverage platform scalability to expand to other European markets. The Driivz platform provides real-time monitoring of charger status and boasts remote self-healing capabilities to resolve up to 80 percent of charger issues. Hardware-agnostic, the Driivz platform supports many standards and charger types, promising Shell a future-ready, backward-compatible solution for all OCPP proto-

cols, capable of roaming with other EV charging networks, and will integrate with Shell's driver-facing Shell Recharge app. Driivz's smart energy management software and proprietary interface for EV fleet management complement Shell's support for commercial customers decarbonizing and electrifying their fleets.

▼ **Mercedes-Benz** SAE Level 3 conditionally automated driving DRIVE PILOT is based on system architecture that enables safe control of all situations they see as potentially arising. The world's first internationally certified system, DRIVE PILOT has been available as an option for S-Class and EQS in Germany since May of this year. Core elements are designed with physical and functional redundancy, duplicating environment recognition, handling, battery, steering motor, wheel speed sensors and algorithms used for data calculation. Some aspects are functionally redundant by making their different physical concepts mutually corroborative—mainly radar, cameras and LiDAR, as well as ultrasound, moisture sensor and microphone

data. More than 30 sensors overall control speed and distance, and keep the vehicle in its own lane. Under certain conditions and on suitable sections of German autobahn, customers can hand driving over to the system in heavy traffic or traffic jams at speeds of up to 60 kph (about 36 mph). DRIVE PILOT is able to recognize a failure in a primary system and facilitate a safe handover to return control to the driver. If

the driver is unable to comply, e.g. due to a medical emergency, a safe emergency stop maneuver is implemented.

▼ The **GMC HUMMER EV** first took the



GMC HUMMER EV in Call of Duty®

world by storm in 2020 and is now entering the global gaming world in a big way. For the first time ever, the world's first all-electric supertruck will be a part of Activision's critically acclaimed Call of Duty® video game franchise. With up to an estimated 1,000 hp, 11,500 lb-ft of torque, a zero-to-60 mph time of about 3-seconds, and 13 inches of suspension travel, this first all-electric vehicle in Call of Duty will be a playable vehicle within the highly anticipated *Call of Duty: Warzone 2.0*, also making an appearance in the action-packed *Modern Warfare II* single-player campaign. The HUMMER EV Pickup was chosen for being able to tackle any terrain or map—the trails of Moab in real life, or taking players' teams across the massive play space of *Warzone 2.0*. The new collaboration was scheduled to debut in late October. Follow GMC on social media to stay up to date on the latest news.

▼ **Stanadyne**—designer, manufacturer and remanufacturer of fuel delivery systems and components for low-carbon alternative fuels, as well as gasoline and diesel engines—has unveiled a new alternative fuel injector for medium- and heavy-duty commercial vehicle powertrains, a multipurpose low-pressure port injector with improved materials for delivering hydrogen, compressed natural gas and dimethyl ether (DME) fuels, capable of high flow rates, with flexible packaging for a variety of port fuel injection applications. Its higher flow capacity and fuel-air

mixing features permit energy density fuel delivery equivalent to traditional hydrocarbon fuels. Natural gas, diesel and gasoline internal combustion is expected to remain the dominant medium- and heavy-duty

commercial vehicle powertrain through at least 2040; renewable fuels offer an effective way to reduce their carbon footprints.

▼ Founded in September 2021 by KTM, Honda, Piaggio and Yamaha, the **Swappable Batteries Motorcycle Consortium (SBMC)** has grown quickly, now with 21 members and counting. Their mission is to accelerate deployment of global, open standard, swappable battery systems with



MAHLE Powertrain, Plymouth, Michigan

full interoperability. In July, 40 representatives convened in Austria, agreeing on a set of relevant technical specifications and prototyping workstreams. Current members include Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Piaggio, Polaris, Roki, Samsung, Sumitomo Electric, Suzuki, Yamaha and many more.

▼ **MAHLE Powertrain** is investing \$4 million in a new dynamometer facility in

Plymouth, Michigan, aimed at accelerating vehicle development as manufacturers shift toward electrified vehicles. Capable of supporting full powertrain development—from testing and calibration of individual components to complex complete driveline systems—the new facility is unique in North America in handling the demands of even the highest performance light- and heavy-duty hybrid and electric vehicles. Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS) assessments (including LiDAR and RADAR sensor packs), US and European emissions testing capability and drivability development can all be done on the same testbed. Located at MAHLE's engineering center, the new facility will work alongside the existing chassis dynamometer. Enabling early assessment of various powertrain layouts and conducting testing before a completed chassis is available, the facility will help manufacturers significantly shorten overall development cycles. The facility will also enable calibration of transmissions, hybrid and battery-electric powertrain configurations, Real Driving Emissions (RDE) measurements and electric vehicle range determination. The testbed will also feature climatic conditioning from -10 to +40°C (+14 to 104°F). The facility exceeds specifications of the highest performance EVs on the market, able

to handle up to 7,000Nm (5,163 lb-ft) of instantaneous torque per wheel, with an average torque response time of 0.5ms. The dynos are supported by a 623kW battery emulator with future expansion capacity to more than 1MW. These features, coupled with a maximum wheelbase of 4.5m (177.2 inches), make the facility unique in accommodating even the highest output pickups and cargo vans. ■

# UPCOMING FEATURES

Ford F-150 Lightning



Dodge Charger Scat Pack Widebody HEMI Orange



Bentley Scottsdale Polo Championships



Arizona Auction Week



Mercedes-EQ EQS SUV



Cadillac XT5



Los Angeles Auto Show



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