

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 3
MAY-JUNE 2010

EVENTS...

GOODGUYS SPRING NATIONALS
AZ-SCCA VINTAGE RACING AT PIR
FLORIDA AUCTION RESULTS

TRAVEL...

TUCSON ACTIVITIES
UPCOMING SHOWS-AUCTIONS-RACES
PINK JEEP TOURS 50TH ANNIVERSARY
US 89 APPRECIATION SOCIETY

CARS...

JAGUAR XK CONVERTIBLE
CADILLAC CTS-V SEDAN
DODGE CHALLENGER SE
RAPIER SUPERLIGHT
McLAREN MP4-12C

TRUCKS...

TOYOTA TUNDRA TRD SUPERCHARGED
RAM POWER WAGON CREW CAB 4X4

SUVS...

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COVER: The Cadillac CTS-V features four-wheel Brembo disc brakes with four-channel ABS, hydraulic brake assist and dynamic rear brake proportioning, 15x1.26 vented co-cast front, 14.7x1.1 vented rear; 19x9 front and 19x9.5 rear aluminum wheels; and P255/40R19 front/P285/35R19 rear Y-rated performance tires. **Photo: GM.**



Photo: Randall Bohl

Photo: Randall Bohl



Events, vehicles and travel. Those are the heart of our subject matter and the heart of our lives. This issue brings you the first-ever Goodguys Spring Nationals, rounding out their perennial end-of-season in Scottsdale with a season launch here, too. **Larry Edsall** picked out a favorite and gives us its story, with photos by **Randall Bohl**. Randall also joined us at Phoenix International Raceway, where the Arizona chapter of SCCA wrapped up a vintage race season. These were sponsored by Russo and Steele Auctions, and Russo's own Drew Alcazar showed up to run two classic Mustangs—one with quite a lineage. In between all that, we drove quite a series of vehicles, bringing you a cross sample of big and/or fast pickups, crossovers and SUVs, and cars: sedans, coupes, convertibles. Among this group are several new favorites for us. And in between all that, we flew to Knoxville TN, where we drove the new Mercedes-Benz E-Class Cabriolet into North Carolina's Smoky Mountains on its national media launch, flew to Detroit for RM Auctions' event in Novi, plus **Kevin Wilson's** graduation from EMU after, um, a few years' delay on the final few credits. As you read this during May, we're headed to Monterey for a top-secret Goodyear product launch on Highway One toward Big Sur, Louisville KY for the Infiniti QX press launch, Dearborn for a comprehensive tour of Ford's Virtual Reality Lab, test track and more. And as you read this during June, we're joining Mercedes-Benz again, for the launch of the new R-Class in New York's Hudson River Valley, followed by something nobody ever really does: driving in Manhattan, in the new electric smart fortwo. The transmission has kept the smart from being the favorite we'd anticipated, so we look forward to seeing whether the electric does the trick. Also in June, we plan to attend the RM Auctions Muscle and Performance event in San Diego and the inaugural Barrett-Jackson auction in Orange County. You should, too. We'll report back in July/August.



Enjoy the ride.

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

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1933 AUBURN SALON V-12 BOATTAIL

For the 1933 New York Auto Show, Auburn introduced its new top-of-the-line 'Salon' models in eight and twelve cylinder form. The further-prestigious V-12 powered Auburns were made available in five different configurations, the most exclusive of these being the Auburn 12-165 Salon Twelve Speedster. An Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Club Certified example, this 1933 twelve-cylinder Auburn Boattail Speedster is believed to be one of only six known to exist and represents perhaps the finest example of its type anywhere in the world.

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TUCSON: WINE, MUSIC, HISTORY, ROCKET SCIENCE



STARGAZING AND ROCK HOUNDING. One of Southern Arizona's most treasured science-education attractions has reopened with new exhibits and an expanded schedule. Flandrau Planetarium, on the University of Arizona campus, is now open seven days a week, offering scheduled planetarium shows, science demonstrations, hands-on exhibits, telescope viewing in the observatory, an extensive mineral collection, and storytelling exhibits from the Miners' Story Project as well as the Treasures of the Queen Bisbee minerals exhibit. A Tucson tradition since 1972, Flandrau reopened under the

vated missile is the focus of the Beyond the Blast Door tour, available on the first and third Saturday of every month. Visitors wear hard hats to explore underground corridors featuring three-ton blast doors and eight-foot concrete walls. The tour includes the crew's quarters and the control center, where visitors stand directly beneath the missile and watch a simulated launch. A video chronicles the missile's history. Tour participants must be at least eight years old. www.titanmissilemuseum.org.

WYATT EARP DAYS IN TOMBSTONE. Pull on some boots or grab a parasol and head out to Tombstone for Wyatt Earp Days, May 29-31. The annual Memorial Day weekend celebration in "The Town Too Tough to Die" is much like stepping back in time. Men, women and children dress in 1880s Old West styles to celebrate the life and times of the town's most-famous lawman. Enjoy a chili cook-off, stagecoach rides, a fashion show, and mock gun-fights in the dusty streets. Tombstone is about 70 miles southeast of Tucson. www.tombstone.org.

WINE COUNTRY FESTIVALS. Southern Arizona's warm summer days, cool nights, mineral-rich soils, and elevations reaching over 4,000 feet are perfect for producing grapes of distinct quality and character in the rich grasslands and fertile farming country south of Tucson. Sample three new-release Arizona wines and enjoy live local music at the Kief-Joshua Vineyards' New Arizona Release and Music Festival, May 1-2 (kj-vineyards.com). Enjoy up to 10 Arizona Wine Growers Association member wines, with food and live music, at the Willcox Wine Country Spring Festival, May 15-16, in Willcox's Historic Railroad Park (azwinefestival.com). Spend Father's Day sipping wine, savoring local treats, and meeting the winemakers at the Mountain Empire's 2nd Annual Wine, Dine and Unwind Festival, June 19-20 (mountainempire-wineanddine.com). Don't miss the winery tours, tastings

and food pairings, and local music at Sonoita Vineyard's HarvestFest, July 31-August 1 (sonoitavineyards.com); explore the area on horseback with Arizona Horseback Experience (horsebackexperience.com).

ROCKET SCIENCE FOR KIDS. Space Day events around the world on May 7 are designed to nurture enthusiasm for the wonders of the universe for young explorers. At the Pima Air & Space Museum, they can make paper airplanes and gliders, watch seltzer rocket launches, and sample astronaut food, 1-4pm, all free with museum admission. If you miss Space Day, you'll find plenty at the Pima Air & Space Museum year-round. Look inside a training version of the Apollo space capsule, see a moon rock, and learn about the Phoenix Mars Mission. The museum houses more than 300 aircraft and spacecraft, many of which are historically significant and technically advanced. www.pimaair.org.

BODIES EXHIBITION IN TUCSON. Nearly 15 million visitors worldwide have viewed the collection of real, whole and partial body specimens featured in Bodies...The Exhibition. Tucson visitors now have the opportunity to experience this exhibit, which celebrates the wonder of the human form. More than 160 body specimens, meticulously dissected and preserved, provide an up-close look inside the skeletal, muscular, reproductive, respiratory, circulatory and other systems of the human body. A limited engagement at The Rialto Building in downtown Tucson begins May 15. Tickets are available online, starting at \$15. www.bodiestucson.com.

MUSIC ON MT. LEMMON. Bring a sweater if you plan on attending any of the 15 concerts presented in Tucson this summer by LAVA Music (Live Acoustic Venue Association). Although Tucson's summertime temperatures are famously too warm for wool, these concerts take place 30 miles north of Tucson, in the Village of Summerhaven, a small town near the 9,157-foot top of Mt. Lemmon, with pine trees, grassy meadow, craggy rocks, and endless vistas. Concerts take place Sundays, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., May 30 through Sept. 5. The family-friendly lineup leans toward acoustic bands playing bluegrass, country, blues, rockabilly, and folk rock, with some Cajun and R&B thrown in for balance. Admission is free. Bring a lawn chair. www.lavamusic.org. ■



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BEYOND THE BLAST DOOR. One hundred feet below ground, a National Historic Landmark offers insight into Cold War politics. The Titan Missile Museum, 15 miles south of Tucson, was once a top-secret missile silo, on alert 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Now its deacti-

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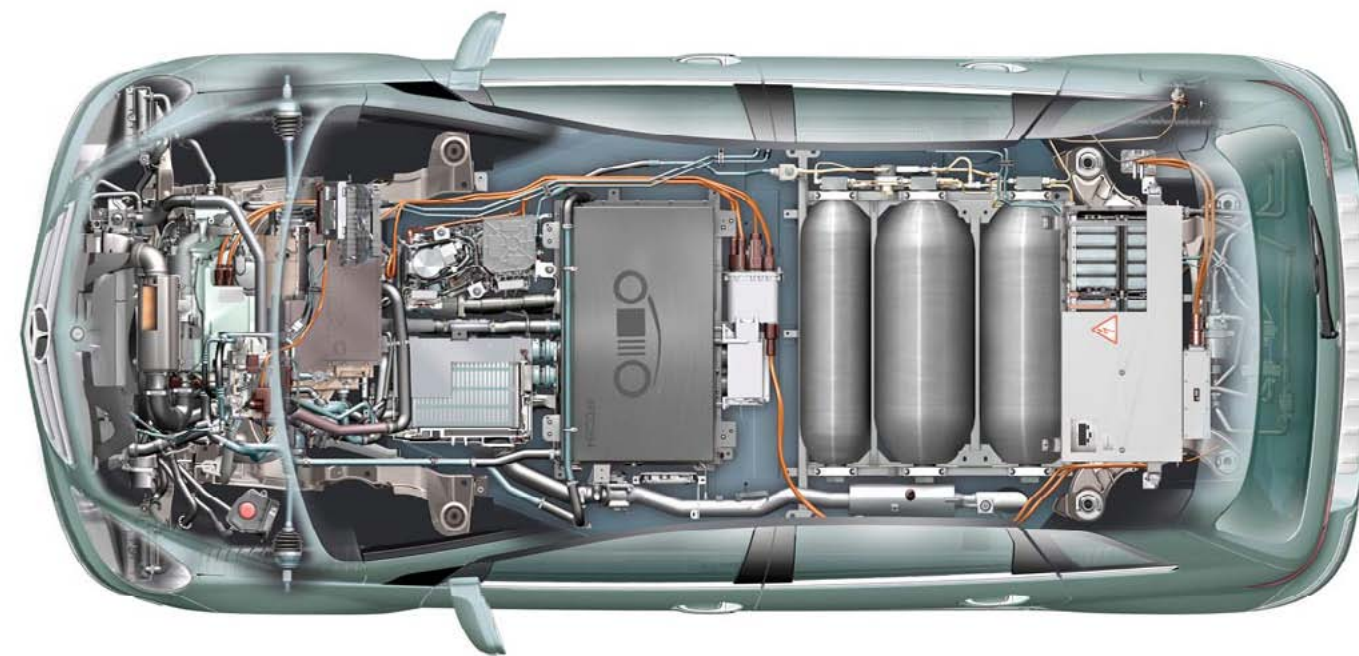
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FORD PLANS FOR 3-CYLINDER ECOBOOST

Watch for a three-cylinder EcoBoost engine in the upcoming Ford Fiesta. Plans call for 0.9- and 1.2-liter three-cylinder engines, with the 1.2-liter producing about 135 horsepower. The engines should arrive in about three years when the Fiesta gets a mid-cycle facelift. The three-cylinder engines might not make the US Focus, at least initially, but will replace the current 1.6- and 1.8-liter four-cylinder gas engines currently in the European Focus. The EcoBoost system combines dual variable valve timing, direct injection and turbocharging to create greater efficiency and performance in gasoline engines. ▼



2011 Ford Fiesta



2011 Mercedes-Benz F-Cell

MERCEDES-BENZ B-CLASS F-CELL

▲ Mercedes-Benz is building 200 B-Class fuel cell-powered cars for the 2011 model year. About half the production is slated for the United States, mostly in Southern California where there are some hydrogen filling stations. The Mercedes B-Class, which is about the same size as a Volkswagen Golf, is powered by 135-hp electric motor with power coming from a hydrogen-powered fuel cell and lithium-ion battery. The car carries eight-pounds of hydrogen gas in three carbon-fiber tanks compressed at 10,500 psi. This gives the car a range of approximately 280 miles. The fuel cell, storage tanks, electronics and battery are located in the frame, which is sandwiched between the cabin floor and bottom of the unibody. This leaves comfortable seating for four adults and cargo space behind the rear seat. The cars will be available to lease in May in a system similar to the program Honda used for the FCX Clarity fuel-cell sedan when it was "sold" in the US.

CADILLAC CTS COUPE GETS A "V" TOO

General Motors pulled the wraps off the final version of the upcoming Cadillac CTS coupe at the Los Angeles Auto Show and then gave it a "V" for the Detroit show a few weeks later. The CTS-V coupe, like the sedan, is powered by a 556-hp

supercharged 6.2-liter V8 engine with a choice of a six-speed manual or six-speed automatic transmission. The sexy-looking performance coupe gets the works, with Brembo brakes and adjustable suspension system. The net result of all the power is a 0-to-60 mph time of 3.9 seconds. The CTS-V coupe is expected to be priced just over \$60,000.

FORD CHANGING NEARLY ALL ENGINES

Ford has plans to introduce nine totally new or re-engineered engines for North American vehicles in 2010 along with adding six new transmissions. The move is part of a five-year effort to boost fuel economy and cut emissions. Barbara Samardzich, Ford vice president of powertrain engineering, says, "By the end of 2010, nearly all of Ford's North American Engines will have been upgraded or replaced since 2008." CO₂ emissions for the 2009 fleet have already been cut by about nine percent from 2008 levels.

NEXT-GEN CHEVY AVEO: BIG CHANGES

Shown at the Detroit auto show, the Chevrolet Aveo concept is stretched longer and wider with more interior space than the current Aveo. Displaying protruding headlights and taillights, the Aveo appears inspired by motorcycle design. The concept features 19-inch

wheels to make it more dramatic, the interior is tailored with blue stitching and blue backlit electronic displays highlight the dash. Rear door handles are hidden in the rear pillar giving it a cleaner appearance. A 138-hp turbocharged, 1.4-liter four-cylinder engine with six-speed manual transmission are under the hood. The current Aveo is built in South Korea, but the next generation is being built in the US as part of an agreement with the United Auto Workers.

2012 MERCEDES-BENZ CLS WAGON?

With the second generation of the Mercedes-Benz CLS due soon, it appears the company wants to get more mileage out of the stylish body and successful platform. Look for a CLS wagon to compete with the BMW 5 Series GT and the upcoming Audi A7. Based on the 2008 Mercedes-Benz Concept Fascination, the two-door shooting brake (wagon) is likely to be produced as early as 2012. If produced, the CLS wagon will get the usual range of V6 and V8 engines, which are expected to get about 25 percent better fuel economy in their next iteration thanks to direct injection and turbocharging. The 4Matic all-wheel drive system from the E-Class is also a likely option.

KEEP RIGHT >>



Cadillac XTS concept

CADILLAC'S NEXT FLAGSHIP CONCEPT

▲ With Cadillac DTS and STS sedans scheduled to disappear and allegedly to be replaced by one car, the Cadillac XTS Platinum shown at the recent Detroit show becomes the apparent successor. The XTS opens up a new direction for the brand with the newest evolution of the striking Art and Science execution philosophy, powered by a state of the art plug-in hybrid drivetrain and all-wheel drive. The full-size luxury sedan concept displayed the fine high-end finishing on the interior and the latest in-car electronic technologies with a move toward the minimization of traditional buttons and switches. The instrument panel is invisible until the car is started and the control screens illuminate. Taking off in an equally innovative direction the drivetrain encompasses a 3.6-liter direct injection gasoline V6 and the latest plug-in technology. This allows the car to motor on electric power in urban settings making major improvements in fuel economy and reducing emissions. Although no production plans have been announced, the XTS is likely to be a 2012 model, arriving late in 2011.

HYUNDAI ON A ROLL: 7 NEW MODELS

After ending with one of the best industry sales performances in 2009, (ending up 8

percent from 2008), Hyundai has big plans for continued growth for the next two years. Plans call for seven new models in two years starting with the new Tucson crossover, which went on sale in December 2009 and the midsize Sonata that arrived at dealerships in February 2010. Other products announced so far include the new generation Santa Fe crossover that went on sale in January, a hybrid Sonata (fourth quarter this year) and the \$50,000 plus Equus luxury sedan (second half of 2010).

EXIT ACURA V8, ENTER HYBRID

For years, dealers and automotive enthusiasts encouraged Honda's premium brand, Acura, to build a V8 engine for the flagship RL model, but the company resisted. Acura was the only luxury brand not offering a V8 engine and rear wheel drive. Finally, a V8 and RWD appeared to be in the works, but the program was dropped recently after the economic crisis began. Now, the company plans to offer a hybrid version of the TSX sedan in 2011 and two other hybrid models should follow soon after. The information came from an unidentified Acura dealer. American Honda Executive Vice President Jon Mendel confirmed a hybrid had been in the works for some time, but would not discuss the models.

TOYOTA SET TO EXPAND PRIUS LINE

Toyota plans to expand the Prius hybrid popularity into a family of cars rather than just a model in the company's portfolio. The first addition to the Prius family will be a gas-electric compact based on the FT-CH concept car that was unveiled at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit recently. Created at Toyota's French design studio in Nice, the FT-CH is smaller (22 inches shorter) and lighter than the Prius. Toyota Motors president of sales, Jim Lentz, said, "I think in the future, the No. 1 nameplate in the US will be the Prius, not Camry." The Prius brand, will not become a separate model like the Lexus or the Scion, rather it will be part of the Toyota product group.

FERRARI WORLD

If travel plans call for a stop in Abu Dhabi, there is now one more outrageous architectural and entertainment venue. Opening this year, Ferrari World boasts the world's largest indoor theme park. Built as partnership between Ferrari and Aldar Properties PJSC, Abu Dhabi's leading property development, management and investment company, the park sits under a roof designed in the style of the classic double-curve body shell of the Ferrari GT.

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OWN A CARROLL SHELBY-DRIVEN CAR

▲ Shelby American of Las Vegas announced they are producing a 45th-anniversary version of Shelby GT350. Purchasing one of these special edition cars requires a two-step process. First, order a new white Mustang 5.0-liter GT coupe, with the 412-hp V8 engine. Then you have the car shipped to Shelby in Las Vegas, and for an additional \$33,995, they will transform your Mustang into a 2011 GT350. The final product will have blue racing stripes, new front and rear fascias, hood and rocker panels with functional air scoops. The engine will get a Ford Racing supercharger putting out about 500 horsepower and the suspension will get a racing makeover along with Baer brakes and 19-inch Cragar wheels with Goodyear tires. To cap it all off there are a plethora of Shelby badges and then it will be test driven and signed off by Carroll Shelby himself. It could be a collector's item.

LIKE TIVO FOR CAR RADIOS

A built-in feature of the high-end radio/navigation systems in the new Chevrolet Equinox, Buick LaCrosse, GMC Terrain, Cadillac SRX and Cadillac CTS is an audio recording device. If listening to an interview on a public radio station or a football game when arriving at a destination, for example, simply hit the pause button on the radio, shut off the vehicle and leave. When returning, simply push the radio play button and resume listening to the interview or game. It works great when you want to capture a website address from a commercial, too. The system will record up to 20 minutes on the system hard drive for later playback. Listeners can fast-forward and reverse as desired.

CHEVY BRINGS CRUZE TO US

After more than 4 million miles of real world testing in Europe, Chevrolet is readying the 2011 Cruze for the US market. First shown at the 2009 Los Angeles Auto Show, the Cruze is expected to bring a new refinement to Chevrolet small cars and segment-leading fuel economy. "Cruze is already a hit across Europe and Asia and now, it's coming to America to challenge the status quo," said Jim Campbell, general manager, Chevrolet. "Along with the Volt electric vehicle, Cruze is the latest tangible example of how

Chevrolet is working to bring new products to market that range from gas-friendly to gas-free." Cruze has more spacious interior and cargo room than both the Honda Civic and Toyota Corolla. Available front-wheel drive powertrains include a choice of a 1.4-liter turbo or 1.8-liter four-cylinder with a six-speed manual or automatic transmissions. With available features like 10 standard airbags, stability control with rollover sensing, Bluetooth, XM radio, leather seating, navigation and OnStar the Cruze offers a new level of premium features and quality materials. Built in GM's Lordstown, Ohio plant, the four-door compact goes on sale during the third quarter of this year.

VOLT OWNERS' SMART-PHONE APPS

General Motors telematics division OnStar has created a smart-phone app that will allow future Chevrolet Volt owners the ability to monitor and control certain functions of their vehicle remotely. The application will remotely start the vehicle to warm or cool the interior, determine if the vehicle is plugged in and start the battery charging. It also provides the status of the charge, remaining vehicle range, receive reminders or notifications of charge disruptions and determine the location of the

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1967 Chevrolet Corvette Coupe 427/400 HP w/Air, Original and Unrestored



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Kia Ray concept

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KIA RAY HYBRID CONCEPT

▲ The Kia Ray plug-in hybrid concept was one of the highlights of the recent Chicago auto show. Developed from the Kia Forte chassis, the Ray is the first of a sub-brand Kia calls EcoDynamics. A 153-hp, 1.4-liter four-cylinder engine and 78-kilowatt electric motor using lithium-ion polymer batteries and a continuously variable transmission power Kia's hybrid vision. Kia claims the car has a range of 746 miles including up to 50 miles on electric power alone. The car has a striking aerodynamic four-door design with rear-hinged doors that looks like a real car not something too farfetched. In keeping with the environmental theme, the concept has solar panels on the roof and energy-efficient sound system. No production plans were announced.

NEW AUDI A8 TARGETS COMPETITION

Due in the third quarter of 2010, the third generation Audi A8 plans to close the gap on rivals like Mercedes-Benz S-Class and BMW 7 Series. The new Audi flagship sedan will have an extensive menu of new high tech features including LED lighting, standard all-wheel drive and new navigation system controlled by a touch

pad that can read characters and numbers written by your finger. About six-months after the debut, the navigation system will include Google maps, weather information and streaming news. Audi firsts slated for the option column include a steering wheel that vibrates when the car starts to leave the lane, night vision, shift-by-wire gearshift and a brake guard that warns and reduces the speed when the vehicle in front is too close. The only engine available in US models is the 4.2-liter direct-injection V8 driving a new eight-speed automatic transmission.

FINALLY AN EFFICIENT ETHANOL ENGINE

Ethanol may be cleaner and less expensive, but fuel economy is often as much as 30 percent less than conventional petroleum-based fuels. However, two companies think they have a solution that improves fuel economy without a loss of power. British-based automotive-power-train development company Ricardo and US ethanol support group Growth Energy have recently demonstrated a solution using Ricardo's ethanol-boosted direct-injection (EBDI) technology. Using turbochargers and direct injection, they have been able to boost the power of engines running on E85 or a blend of E85 and gasoline. The demonstration engine was a 3.2-liter V6, which running on E85 pro-

duced 660 lb.ft of torque and 20 mpg. The engine, mounted in a GMC Sierra 3500 Heavy Duty pickup, cost about half the extra cost of a diesel engine. They expect to have the engine on the market by 2015.

MERCEDES-BENZ SAFETY VEHICLE

Mercedes-Benz was shinning the spotlight on the future of automotive safety at the recent Washington (DC) Auto Show with its S-Class-based EPS. The demonstration car highlighted the following five new safety technologies: (1) Pre-Safe inflatable metal structures that inflate inside the doors to increase side impact protection. (2) a pre-safe pulse that reduces lateral force impact by nudging occupants toward the center of vehicle using seat-mounted air chambers. (3) a braking airbag that deploys from under the vehicle, before a crash, to stabilize and slow the car. (4) an interseat protection system with a lattice-like airbag that deploys between the front seats to keep the driver and passenger apart. (5) a seatbelt airbag that doubles the width of the seatbelt in a fraction of a second to spread pressure over a larger area to reduce injury. (The seatbelt airbag is similar to a system proposed by Ford recently). ■

Auto News Update is compiled from a variety of industry sources for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

Russian Roulette.



When is a cell phone a weapon? Whenever you drive a car and use one. It's that simple. And that deadly. Last year, nearly 6,000 fatalities and over half a million injuries were caused by distracted drivers. In fact, texting behind the wheel is so dangerous that it can impair a driver's response time by 18% - or the seconds it takes to miss a stop sign, run an intersection and broadside a family.

Whatever you have to say can wait. Unless it's goodbye.™



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RM Auctions

12th Annual Automobiles of Amelia Island

Saturday, March 13, 2010 - (Concours d'Elegance Sunday March 14)
Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Amelia Island, Florida



Photos courtesy RM Auctions

RM AUCTIONS POSTS OVER \$19 MILLION SALES, 88% SOLD

- Top-seller: 1930 Duesenberg Model J Sport Berline by Murphy brings \$1,705,000
- Four cars sell for more than \$1 million each; historic Ferraris dominate list

RM AUCTIONS, the official auction house of—and the official prelude to—the world-famous Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance on Sunday, posted over \$19 million in sales with an impressive 88% sell-through at its 12th annual Automobiles of Amelia Island event. Held at the prestigious Ritz-Carlton Hotel, the single-day sale saw 112 cars cross the block before a packed house, with four breaking the magic million-dollar mark and 15 exceeding pre-sale estimates. RM President and COO Ian Kelleher again served as a concours judge, and RM presented two awards: The RM Restorations Award for the Best Unrestored Car, and The RM Auctions Trophy for the Best Open Car.

The top seller was a supremely elegant 1930 Duesenberg Model J Sport Berline (shown above), part of an initial 54-piece group from the estate of noted American collector John O'Quinn—exceeding its pre-sale estimate to sell for \$1,705,000. A 1932 Model J Duesenberg Convertible Coupe from the collection brought \$825,000. Other highlights from the O'Quinn Collection included a stunning grey-over-red-leather 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing Coupe at \$687,500, and a handsome 1935 Auburn 851SC Speedster for \$418,000. A 1964 Pontiac Bonneville promotional "Hank Williams Jr." Custom Convertible by Nudie Cohn attracted spirited bidding to sell for \$225,500. Another 138 O'Quinn Collection cars were slated for RM's Fort Lauderdale auction.

Beyond the O'Quinn Collection, RM's Amelia Island top-sellers list was dominated by historic Ferraris. A multi-award-winning Fly Yellow 1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 Berlinetta (above), recently featured in *Forza Magazine*, well exceeded its pre-sale estimate at \$1,650,000, while a superb alloy-bodied 1967 Four-Cam, finished in Nocciola and offered for the first time in 30 years, brought \$1,265,000. Rounding out the million-dollar-plus sales, a 1971 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona Spyder, certified by Ferrari Classiche and formerly owned by Edsel B. Ford II, brought \$1,017,500.

RM also auctioned items to benefit the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance Foundation: a 1961 Austin-Healey "Sebring Sprite" Vintage Racing Car, donated to the by long-term supporter and collector Peter McLaughlin, which brought \$44,000; and a VIP Weekend at the 2010 Santander British Grand Prix, graciously donated by Daytona 24 Hour winner and GP Driver, Jackie Oliver, which sold for \$6,000. ■

Gooding & Company

Inaugural Amelia Island Auction

Friday, March 12, 2010
Amelia Island Plantation, Amelia Island, Florida



Photos by Pawel Litwinski © 2009 Courtesy Gooding & Company

GOODING & COMPANY \$16.1 MILLION DEBUT, 82% SOLD

- World record for the weekend's top-selling \$2.75 million 1931 Voisin
- World record for the \$1.705 million 1961 Porsche RS61

GOODING & COMPANY (the official auction house of the Pebble Beach Concours in Monterey in August) held their first Amelia Island event this year, at the Amelia Island Plantation, in the same vicinity and general timeframe as the Concours and related events. The debut Gooding auction garnered over \$16.1 million in sales, with a total of 58 out of 71 (82%) lots sold.

The auction's top seller was the star 1931 Voisin Mylord Demi-Berline (shown above), which sold for \$2,750,000, representing a world record for last year's Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance 2009 Best of Show winner.

Two other cars sold for more than \$1 million during the Friday evening event. The Bob Holbert, Thomas Payne and Millard Ripley 1961 Porsche RS61 with coachwork by Wendler—the 1962 Watkins Glen SCCA National winner and one of only 14 RS61s built (above)—sold for \$1,705,000. And an extremely rare short-chassis 1932 Bugatti Type 50 Drop Head Coupe with a 4972cc DOHC inline 8-cylinder engine—the first Bugatti to feature a twin OHC—sold for \$1,100,000.

"I am very pleased with the results from our debut Amelia Island Auction," says David Gooding, president and founder of Gooding & Company. Gooding's last two auctions—Pebble Beach 2009 and Scottsdale 2010— together garnered \$85 million for 243 cars.

Gooding & Company's Top 10 Amelia Island Auction sales were:

- 1931 Voisin C20 Mylord Demi-Berline \$ 2,759,000
- 1961 Porsche RS61 Spyder \$ 1,705,000
- 1932 Bugatti Type 50 Drop Head Coupe \$ 1,100,000
- 1928 Bugatti Type 35C Grand Prix \$ 900,000
- 1965 Ferrari 500 Superfast \$ 814,000
- 1939 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 SS Berlinetta Aerodinamica \$ 748,000
- 1959 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Roadster \$ 671,000
- 1968 Ferrari 330 GTS \$ 627,000
- 1931 Bentley 8-Litre Tourer \$ 605,000
- 1933 Cadillac V-8 355-C Dual-Cowl Phaeton \$ 385,000

Gooding is widely anticipated to continue this new event next year. ■

RM Auctions

Annual Collector Cars of Fort Lauderdale

Friday-Saturday, March 26-27, 2010 - (Preview Thursday)
Broward County Convention Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Photos courtesy RM Auctions

RM AUCTIONS POSTS \$16 MILLION IN SALES, 79% SOLD

- Motor cars from the estate of Mr. John O'Quinn bring a collective \$7 million
- Top seller: 1935 Auburn 851 SC Convertible Sedan achieves \$211,750

RM AUCTIONS had two auctions in the Sunshine State in March, following its mid-month sale at Amelia Island in northern Florida with a late-month auction in southern Florida, the Collector Cars of Fort Lauderdale event. In all, 365 cars sold achieving \$16 million in total sales and a solid 79% percent sell through rate.

Following the 54 cars presented at Amelia, 138 more cars from the John M. O'Quinn estate crossed the block in Fort Lauderdale, all offered without reserve and generating \$6,843,000 million in sales. The top seller of the weekend was a well-documented restored 1935 Auburn 851 SC Convertible Sedan from the O'Quinn estate (shown above), which brought \$211,750. Other high sales include: a dashing 1931 Cadillac Model 370-A V12 Convertible Coupe, which sold for \$209,000; a 2008 Lamborghini Murcielago LP640, also selling for \$209,000; a perfectly restored 1954 Buick Skylark Convertible at \$187,000; a majestic 1935 Packard Twelve Convertible Sedan from the O'Quinn estate, at \$165,000; and a high-quality 1969 Ford Boss 429 Mustang from the O'Quinn estate (above), selling for \$151,250.

RM Auctions keeps a very busy schedule, with a number of annual events and many specialty sales. As we went to press, up next on the RM calendar of events was the Classic Car Auction of Michigan, April 24-25 at the Rock Financial Showplace in Novi—the Midwest's largest indoor auction, presenting 300-plus motor cars, many offered without reserve. The Michigan auction is followed closely by the inaugural Sporting Classics of Monaco May 1 at the Grimaldi Forum and held during the same weekend as the 7th Grand Prix Historique de Monaco. An additional 12 automobiles from the O'Quinn estate were headed to Monaco.

RM is also set to drop the hammer on an outstanding private collection of high-powered muscle cars in San Diego on June 19 (see page 26). Billed as Classic Muscle & Modern Performance, the event presents over 80 magnificent examples from a prominent Southern California collector, all offered without reserve. From GTOs to Corvettes, Chevilles and Mustangs, the offering spans a variety of iconic Detroit muscle and represents the owner's lifelong passion for high-performance vehicles. Find information and track results at www.rmauctions.com and on Facebook. ■

Barrett-Jackson

8th Annual Collector Car Auction Palm Beach

Thursday-Saturday, April 1-3, 2010
Americraft Expo Center, South Florida Fairgrounds, West Palm Beach, Florida



Photos courtesy Barrett-Jackson Auction Company

BARRETT-JACKSON: \$20 MILLION SALES, \$600,000+ CHARITY

- 2011 Corvette Z06 Carbon Special Edition sold for \$297,000
- Over 460 collector cars including three current model collector cars at No Reserve

BARRETT-JACKSON AUCTION COMPANY reported more than \$20 million in total sales during its dynamic 8th Annual Barrett-Jackson Palm Beach Collector Car Auction, April 1-3. The all No Reserve auction had bidders vying for more than 400 cars on a docket that included the 2011 Corvette Z06 Carbon Special Edition (above) that sold for \$297,000, the Shadrach "Platt & Payne Signature Edition" Mustang that fetched \$190,000—with all proceeds benefitting the Darrell Gwynn Foundation—and the only 1965 Boyd Coddington roadster ever built, which went to the winning bidder for \$184,800. More than 55,000 people attended the three-day auction. The 2010 Palm Beach event was dedicated to the memory of Nellie Jackson, the auction company's matriarch who passed away in February at age 90.

"The average hammer price per car was up over last year, and we're thrilled to have helped raise \$60,000 for the Darrell Gwynn Foundation during our opening night party, as well as over \$560,000 for other deserving charities during our auction," said Craig Jackson, Chairman/CEO of Barrett-Jackson.

In addition to the Platt & Payne Mustang, this year's docket included a host of charity cars including the Budweiser Ford Thunderbird #11—which benefited the Stocks for Tots Foundation—and the 2007 Ford Shelby GT Coupe Show car, which featured a custom Las Vegas paint scheme and benefited the Carroll Shelby Foundation.

Other special cars offered during the auction included the limited edition high-performance Barrett-Jackson ROUSH Mustang concept vehicle (above), in the Planet Color Barrett-Jackson Collector Color Series paints, with a base of metallic "Back in Black" with "Red Hot Chili Pepper" stripes on the front. The car fetched \$110,000.

The action in the main auction arena was so intense on Saturday evening that SPEED extended its scheduled live coverage by an hour, bringing the total to 23.5 hours.

County Commissioner Burt Aaronson declared March 27-April 3 Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction Week, with a Road Rally of some 75 vehicles, the 3rd annual Cruise-In at Wayne Akers Ford with over 150 collector and custom cars, a Barrett-Jackson exhibit at City Place, and a pre-auction charity reception for the Darrell Gwynn Foundation hosted by John and Jeanette Staluppi at their Cars of Dreams museum. ■

Very inviting...

Wicked cool coupes can make great convertibles, although something is generally lost in the style when the top comes off. Examples include Aston Martin, BMW 6 Series, Audi A5/S5, Porsche 911... and the Jaguar XK. The XK coupe is one great-looking machine. Fortunately, so is the convertible, and sometimes you just really need to let the sun shine in.

The Jaguar XK was launched in 1996, when Ford owned Jaguar, Land Rover and Aston Martin. The early Jaguars and Astons in that era were very close cousins, from which Jaguar probably benefited more than Aston, although it gave Aston Martin a production scale they'd not had before. (This is also a debatable benefit, as

decades of just a handful of handbuilt cars became a thing of the past.) Ford has been busy divesting itself of the Premier Auto Group for the past few years, and Jaguar Land Rover have gone to new ownership under Tata Motors of India. The cars are still built in Coventry, England. However, and they are once again free to follow their own path (as is Aston Martin).

The XK series were the first ever produced by Jaguar with V8 engines, and as such, originally this was the XK8. A supercharged version, the XKR, has been available throughout the run, also. The V8 is no longer news, we guess, so the name is now simply XK (and XKR).

When we heard the XK would be com-

ing to our fleet, we had high expectations, as we had thoroughly enjoyed the XF sedan (see January/February 2010). And of course we wished for an XKR.

The XKR has a 5.0-liter supercharged 32-valve V8 generating 510 hp, accelerating 0-to-60 mph in 4.6 seconds with an electronically limited top speed of 155 mph, while getting 15/22 mpg EPA estimated city/highway mileage. The XKR convertible's base price is \$102,000 (the coupe is \$96,000). The XK's normally aspirated 5.0-liter V8 has 385 hp, 0-to-60 time of 5.3 seconds (5.2 for the coupe), the same top speed and 16/22 EPA ratings. The XK convertible's current base price is \$89,000 (and the coupe \$83,000).

The 5.0-liter V8 is n all-new AJ-V8 Gen III direct-injection engine promising significant improvements in power and torque, with no compromise in fuel economy or emissions. All four models (XK/XKR coupe/convertible) have a 6-speed automatic; sadly, no stick. The supercharged XKR has a 9.5:1 compression ratio, while the XK is 11.5:1. They all weigh in at over two tons, ranging from 4575 lbs for the XK coupe to 4817 for the XKR convertible; the convertible adds about 100 pounds, and the supercharger about 150.

Our test XK convertible arrived with a prior sticker base of \$88,150, and the only add-ons were a burl walnut veneer at no charge, an HD radio at \$300, and destination charges of \$850, for a total of \$89,300. (With the new base price, that would now just top \$90k.)

So we were about to drive the car that has 75% the horsepower of an XKR, though is 87% as quick to 60 mph, yet is 87% the cost of an XKR. Might we be, er, disappointed?

KEEP RIGHT >>



XK CONVERTIBLE LOGBOOK

- First day noted "unless this is the R and we don't know it, we're inclined to say this is all you need, not the R." Just saved \$13k.
- Suspension is very firm in the delivered setting, revealing bumps that aren't even there. Turns out we had Adaptive Dynamics off. On is much better. This system replaces a two-setting system (softer or firmer), automatically adapting to the road and driving habits. Its continuously variable damping benefits comfort, control, handling and grip. And it works great. The seats could use more bolstering, though. That's probably a point for the XKR.
- A bit of a lurch in the gears, at first drive, but again we'll check the various settings.
- As with the XF, we like the steering: does what we want it to, no electronic oddness.
- Shifting from P to R on a very slight driveway incline produces a noticeable "chunk" that's a little disquieting. We don't seem to get it on a dead-flat surface.
- The nose overhangs sufficiently to require plenty of extra driveway curb caution. Suspension easing off the driveway curb is very well done. But watch that nose.
- After just 3-4 miles in the XK, with the top down, on a beautiful spring night, we don't want to stop till we hit Santa Barbara.
- What can you say: we drive all the time, we drive nice cars all the time, but this is the kind of car that makes you not mind that

Logbook (cont'd) >>

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOE SAGE

(CONT'D) XK LOGBOOK

you got almost all the way to the PO without your mail and had to go back for it.

- On the 51 freeway, predictably enough, the Lancers and Neons want to race, or show off. Dream on.
- In downtown Phoenix, we get panhandled at corners and get hostility in traffic.
- It has an average fuel economy range meter, just a visual, which we immediately realize we prefer to specific (and often unreliable) numbers, though it has those, too.
- Cornering lights apparently are not dependent on the turn signal, so around the neighborhood they could be annoying if you light up a strolling neighbor, but for the driveway they're nice.
- Top operation was really simple, was in the quick start guide, switch is right overhead, works real easily. Time needed to put the top up: 26 sec beep to beep, waiting for windows to come up; about 16 sec for the top itself, then the windows start. Could save a lot of time if the windows started later finished their last inch or so. About 17.5 sec down, complete, much better.
- Putting the top up a second time, we put the windows up first, and it completes its operation in 20 sec, but ended with the windows down, quicker but defying logic. We entertain ourselves several more times with alternative sequences and times.
- Considering you have to keep your finger on the button for a good 25-30 seconds to raise the top, you have a tendency to put your fingers on the upper windshield frame. Don't do that. You'll get 'em mashed.
- Audio is very good, even with the top down and at highway speed.
- We adjust our freeway style after realizing the cruise control is a speed limiter, not a fixed speed. We're sure it must work both ways but never do succeed it setting both.
- Our other beef besides cruise control is with the radio, which occasionally but not always resets itself to having no preset stations or other settings.
- With the top up and windows open, at about 45 mph, incredible wind noise from the right window.
- Seats are heated and cooled. Would like to try the cooling in August... top-up.
- Turns out the A-pillar and windshield frame lean back far enough that you can hit your head on the way in, with the top down.
- We entertain ourselves no end trying to reconcile the fuel gauge, actual miles driven, visual fuel economy graph and fuel readout. The needle was down to 3/4 tank after 17.3 miles, range dropped from 278 to 260 in 4 miles. But it claims average fuel economy of 16.5. After 212.8 miles, we'd actually averaged 15.7 mpg per refill.



Within four minutes of turning the key, we'd noted that it has "power aplenty, straight away" and "a nice low-key V8 rumble, well executed."

The XK has an entire body shell (internal chassis structure and external body panels) constructed from a combination of pressed, cast and extruded aluminum alloy components. These are riveted and bonded together using techniques originally developed in the aerospace industry and adapted for automotive use by Jaguar. The result is a body shell with the highest structural integrity which is also the lightest shell in its class, by a significant margin, and the most torsionally stiff. This combination of strength, rigidity and lightness underpin the XK's fuel-efficient performance, safety, durability and precise chassis dynamics.

Mike Cross, Vehicle Integrity Chief Engineer, explains, "Lightness benefits agility, and agility with high performance defines the exhilarating yet refined nature of the Jaguar XK. It accelerates harder, stops more quickly and handles with true precision."

All this go-power has to be met with stopping power, and we found the brakes to be stellar, nothing they are so good, they're even a *little* bit grabby at times, but we're not complaining.

Ultimately, for \$90 grand, the Jaguar XK convertible is a gotta-have-it car. However, for that price, you could also take a look at a year-or-two-old Aston Martin, you could look at a Porsche Boxster for less money, or if you have to have its alleged back seat, the 911. But you wouldn't have Jaguar exclusivity, nor would you have the V8 roar. Whether a buyer is considering style, form, function, budget or social pecking order, the Jaguar delivers.

We drive cars we don't mind turning back in, cars we could keep indefinitely with a shrug, and occasionally cars we would love to keep. The XK is a keeper. We haven't driven the XKR yet and assume we'd love it, but with an XK in your hands, you won't really even feel the need. ■

SONOMA HISTORIC MOTORSPORTS FESTIVAL

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Photo: Brad Fox

Ready to rock

STORY AND PHOTOS: JOE SAGE



This is no ordinary Tundra. Toyota built it at a dealership, special. And special it is. With the help of Toyota Racing Development (TRD) parts, you can build yourself the same thing.

TRD is Toyota's performance arm, providing specialty factory vehicles, dealer option packages, and aftermarket parts. (TRD is often compared to everything from Audi quattro S/RS, BMW M and Mercedes-AMG, to Ford SHO and Nissan Nismo, to the third-party wonders developed and shown every year at SEMA.)

This Tundra TRD Supercharged pickup was built upon a 2008 single-cab short-box Tundra using TRD aftermarket components.



You won't be able to put this truck together at the toyota.com build-your-own site, but you can check the fundamentals. A single or Regular Cab truck like this, in two-wheel drive, starts at \$23,455, the extended or Double Cab at \$25,795 and the full four-door CrewMax at \$28,765. As with their American truck cousins, the options and prices are all over the charts from there.

In a world full of extended, double and crew cab pickups, this single was refreshing. More than refreshing, we found it highly desirable for, well, driving. Extended cabs have become so popular, we've noted that single-cab style and layout aren't all that well executed in many of the brands. And that's too bad, as it's really the fundamental pickup layout, plus it just might fit in your garage. So what do you lose by not having a larger cab? In this case, nothing, if you don't really need a back seat (or a half-baked hint of a back seat). The space behind the driver/passenger's seat is enormous. Since pickups often turn out to be paradoxically impractical for actually carrying much, other than items that really require an open bed, this space proves very appealing. Very large doors give ample access to that space. And although the doors are that wide, even if you don't need that storage access, you'll find they are very inviting simply for opening and entering. And that puts you in the driver's seat, where you'll enjoy side windows that give us the spacious feeling of an oceanfront picture window. We were at home in this cab from the start.

But that's ultimately all about a truck you can buy off the lot today. Let's take a better look at what makes this one so different.

At the core is a supercharger (\$5875 at build time), which boosts horsepower from a stock 381 at 5600 rpm, to a whopping 504 hp at 5500 rpm. Torque, already substantial at 401 lb-ft (3600 rpm) is now 550 (at 4000 rpm). The engine runs on 91 octane premium gasoline.

The add-ons are big, the add-ons are bold, and they do carry some costs but earn their keep. Compare the cost of this build-out with that of several extreme performance third-party custom Mustangs or Corvettes. You do find you've about doubled the cost of the base truck, but your untouchable TRD quasi-custom still sets you back no more than a factory-floor pickup with a larger cab and the typical list of options that end up on most



TUNDRA TRD LOGBOOK

- We really like the slim, trim form of the single cab. And it has tons of room behind the seats. You wouldn't need any more cab than this. The door's a little big when you go to close it for the first time; feels like it's back there a ways. But the side window is like a picture window on the Pacific Ocean (without the ocean)... nice. And we grew to like the big door more and more.
- Love the deep gauges on the instrument panel, love the simplicity of it all. Glad to see it minimal on the electronics and controls... real straightforward. Purpose-built.
- Glovebox paperwork shows it's been in for a recall with an accelerator plate put in.
- Minor odd design: 4 dials for HVAC, 3 in a row on the center stack, the 4th dealt with completely differently (to left of stack), and it's the fan... an odd design decision.
- Great view from the cab, looking out over the hood: a depression in the center and two bulges to the sides, rather than a bulge in the middle, good muscle look and feel.
- Console storage compartment is so big, we put a whole camera bag in it, with room for plenty of other stuff. 24-pack size?
- Started up in a neighborhood figuring we'd stay in first gear, real slow since this thing's so potent, yet going 15 mph it shifted into third gear in no time. Geared for fuel economy over torque, to a degree? Good decision: it has tons of torque, anyway.
- At the top of a freeway on-ramp, we punched it a little (not tire-smoking punch it, just normal)... transmission felt a hair sluggish in D, tried S next (and +/-). On the freeway, 65 mph or 70, we found D fine.
- There's a noticeable rumble under our butts, going 1800 rpm in D. Knocked it over to S, went to about 3000 rpm at the same speed. The higher RPMs of course produce a higher whine, and you can feel a difference, but again with 550 lb-ft of torque it may be superfluous. We noted several times that, despite the wonders of S and a manumatic, there is so much torque that sticking with more economical D is fine.
- Another freeway ramp, red light for left turn, outer lane or two. Inner lane: Tahoe, which easily had the power and pole position. We decided to nail it and holycow does it go... we were up that ramp like a bullet; the Tahoe wasn't even a factor.
- Tried a U-turn on a relatively wide but just two-lane road. Gave ourselves the latitude of a driveway on one side and probably JUST used a hair that... really nice turning circle. Liking the single cab.
- Noted "the only weak point" remains when you launch it, just normally from a red light or a stop sign, there's just a bit of lag in the transmission.

KEEP RIGHT >>

of them. And this is a very cool upgrade.

The TRD Supercharged pickup is 50-state emission-legal, by way of a California Air Resources Board (CARB) Executive Order, which qualifies this (in fact mandates it) as an aftermarket-level emission certification. This means the supercharger may not be installed on a new vehicle prior to sale, nor by prior arrangement at the time of sale, and it cannot be financed together with the new vehicle. No matter how much you may have pre-meditated this move, you will have to treat it as though it's your next great idea after purchase. The warranty on the supercharger is the same as the Toyota Powertrain Warranty on the truck: up to 5 years or 60,000 miles, or the remainder of the Powertrain Warranty at the time of installation when installed by a Toyota dealer.

While most of our test vehicles carry this or the next model year's date, we were surprised to receive a nominal 2008 in 2010. We checked with the Toyota fleet staff who delivered the truck to us, and they checked farther afield, but the exact build date was hard to pin down. But we do know what was put on the truck and the costs at that point in time. Head down to your Toyota dealer, and with their list of TRD aftermarket options and build-ons at hand, you'll be ready to create your own Tundra TRD Supercharged pickup. At the time this 4x2 Regular Cab truck with the 5.7-liter V8 was built, its base price was \$24,380 (it is now \$25,655). This specific truck added the following:

STOCK 2008 TUNDRA 4X2 REGULAR CAB 5.7-L V8	
MSRP	\$ 24,380
FACTORY OPTIONS	
50 states emissions	\$ 0
Cloth bucket seats, tilt/telescoping wheel, center console	\$ 45
Cold kit: HD battery, starter and front and rear mud guards	\$ 130
Power heated outside mirror	\$ 160
SR5 package: chrome bumper grille, power windows/door locks, cruise, remote keyless entry, engine skid plate, variable intermittent wipers, carpet flooring, SR5 fabric and badging	\$ 1,390
Front and rear clearance sonar	\$ 500
Front license plate bracket	\$ 13
Bed mat	\$ 127
Alarm	\$ 299
Factory Options Total	\$ 2,664
TRD GOODIES	
TRD dual exhaust	\$ 1,065
TRD super charger	\$ 5,875
TRD big brake kit	\$ 2,795
TRD lowering suspension	\$ 1,699
TRD rear anti-sway bar	\$ 299
Tonneau cover*	\$ 1,495
TRD 22" tires and wheels	\$ 4,699
TRD Goodies Total	\$ 17,927
<i>* Tonneau cover is not TRD, but was installed in that phase</i>	
MODIFIED 2008 TUNDRA TRD SUPERCHARGED	
Stock Truck Base MSRP	\$ 24,380
Factory Options Total	\$ 2,664
TRD Goodies Total	\$ 17,927
Deal Prep & Handling	\$ 685
TOTAL	\$ 45,656

We had a blast with this truck and would have been just as happy to have it never leave. Despite being a full-size pickup, it feels compact, light and quick. Its high driver position and ample power provide all the reserve (or active) dominance you could ever want in a street-legal daily-driving truck. And the red paint didn't hurt.

We found out quickly that this truck seems to attract other cool trucks. Quite a few times when we parked, despite parking in farther, more isolate spots, to protect that red paint, we would return to find another cooler than average truck—power jobs, suspension jobs—parked respectfully a few spaces away. There were many smiles and stares, and a dash down the freeway brought us a thumbs-up from the driver of an older (original "3/4-size") Tundra TRD. Despite this truck actually being Toyota's, after just our first 10-15 miles, we had noted in the logbook that we were already thinking: "our truck" is the coolest truck. We were bonding.

The logbook noted only two subjective downsides. We thought the transmission's shift points and shift action, especially in the first couple of gears, seemed a little awkward. Of course, this truck's strong point was never intended to be first and second gear. And the acoustics of its overall rumble could wear on us after awhile at constant speeds, though that's definitely part of the show. In other words, the only two downsides are both mitigated by the very nature of the beast.

We've often given ourselves a note of caution that using a voice recorder to make logbook memos tends to make you note a lot of things with irony, or negatives—we feel like Andy Rooney and try to balance them out. Given that, though, we notice we made very few notes at all about this Toyota TRD Supercharged pickup. From this, we conclude that it is just plain "good as is." ■

ROLEX MONTEREY MOTORSPORTS REUNION

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**JUNE 5-6
Sonoma Historics**



Photo: Dennis Gray

Sonoma Historic Motorsports Festival
Infiniteon Raceway, Sears Point, Sonoma CA

The Sonoma Historic Motorsports Festival, June 5-6 at Infiniteon Raceway's 12-turn, 2.52-mile road course in Sonoma CA, builds on the popular Wine Country Classic event General Racing Ltd. has produced in Sonoma for 23 years, and on the Monterey Historics. Steve Earle of General Racing Ltd. is credited with originating the Monterey Historic Automobile Races and shaping that event into a standard for US historic racing. After over three decades in Monterey, Earle has moved the energy and focus of that event to Sonoma, and he is "gratified" by the quality and quantity of the entry applications.

The event includes two days of racing, as well as the Wine Country Pavilion where Napa and Sonoma wineries and restaurants will participate in events for the pleasure of car owners and spectators alike.

375 cars have been chosen from a pool of over 500 applicants. Entries run the gamut from a 1914 Ford to a 1991 Roush Mustang. Registration and Tech Inspection are on Thursday. Cars are divided by age and engine size into 13 individual groups. All groups practice on Friday, with seven "A" Groups taking to the course on Saturday and six "B" Groups on Sunday.

Race participants may also bring their period cars, to drive to and from the track, adding another dimension to their weekend while giving passersby the pleasure of rare vehicles on the scenic roads of Wine Country.

On Saturday evening, 30 select race cars parade from the track to Sonoma Plaza, a National Historic Landmark, for a Vintage Race Car Festival. The event, which benefits Speedway Children's Charities, combines viewing the cars with wine and food tasting.

"The cars are the stars," said Earle, a traditionalist when it comes to putting the participant experience first among priorities, "and when they aren't racing they are easily accessible in this area for the fans that come for that up close and personal experience of inspecting engines, talking with owners or otherwise learning more about the sport and the restoration and maintenance of vintage cars."

For event information, visit www.generalaracing.com or check General Racing on Facebook. For tickets, visit www.infiniteonraceway.com. ■

**JUNE 19
RM Auctions San Diego**



Photos: Darin Schnabel © 2010 courtesy of RM Auctions

Classic Muscle and Modern Performance
Town and Country Resort & Convention Center

RM Auctions will drop the hammer on an outstanding private collection of high-powered muscle cars in San Diego on June 19. The single-day Classic Muscle & Modern Performance event will sell over 30,000 horsepower, collectively, all to be offered without reserve.

The auction will present over 80 magnificent examples from one prominent Southern California collector. From GTOs to Corvettes, Chevilles and Mustangs, the offering spans a variety of iconic Detroit muscle and represents the owner's lifelong passion for high-performance vehicles.

In addition, the sale will feature a diverse range of low-mileage, as-new late-model BMWs and Mercedes-Benz automobiles from the same collection, including M-powered and AMG machines.

Headlining the line-up is a super-rare, tire-shredding 1969 Chevrolet Corvette L88, fully documented with low mileage. Powered by a 430-horsepower 427-cubic inch engine, the L88 is one of 18 different Corvettes slated for the auction block during the event.

Another star attraction for the sale is an all-powerful, superbly restored 1970 Chevelle LS6 Convertible, considered one of the most desirable of the genre. Equipped with a massive, pavement-scorching 450-horsepower 454-cubic inch V8, one of the most legendary engines in muscle car history, the Chevelle LS6 is one of only 18 in existence and believed to be the only LS6 Convertible with the attractive red / black color combination. It is one of five Chevilles from the collection consigned to the June sale.

The auction line-up also reflects the owner's enthusiasm for GTOs—a lifelong passion that can be traced back to his childhood growing up in Detroit and a superb 1965 Tiger Gold Pontiac GTO driven by his parents during his youth. On offer at the June sale are some 20 pristine examples, headlined by an unmistakable 1969 Pontiac GTO "The Judge", restored by marque specialist Scott Tiemann of Supercar Specialties.

Other notable highlights include: a 1970 Ford Mustang Boss 429, one of just 498 examples produced that year, and two 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Z28s.

Full details are at www.rmauctions.com. ■

**JUNE 25-27
Barrett-Jackson OC**



Photo: Arizona Driver Magazine

Inaugural Orange County CA Auction
Orange County Fair & Event Center, Costa Mesa

Barrett-Jackson Auction Company LLC, host of "The World's Greatest Collector Car Auctions™" in Scottsdale, Palm Beach FL and Las Vegas, has added a fourth event to their auction lineup, June 25-27 at the OC Fair & Event Center in Costa Mesa CA.

The event will cover the OC Fair & Event Center grounds and include the collector car auction, sponsor promotions and displays, vendors, exhibitors, interactive demonstrations, galas and other festivities. For enthusiasts worldwide who are unable to attend the auction, there will be live online bidding.

"The West Coast is packed with auto enthusiasts who follow Barrett-Jackson and are valuable and committed constituents of the collector car hobby," noted Craig Jackson, Chairman and CEO of Barrett-Jackson.

"We envision the Orange County event to be similar in size to our Las Vegas and Palm Beach auctions, with roughly 400 cars crossing the block," added Steve Davis, president of Barrett-Jackson. "Car collecting is alive and well and we look forward to even more growth down the road."

Through its relationship with SPEED, Barrett-Jackson auctions are the subject of highly rated television programs that are telecast to a national audience with over 70 hours of live television and hundreds of hours of replays throughout the year.

For the 12 month period ending June 2009, over 300,000 attendees came to the Barrett-Jackson auctions. During that same period, Barrett-Jackson sold 2,126 vehicles for more than \$112 million, including over \$6.5 million for various charities.

"Barrett-Jackson is the gold standard of collector car auctions," said Steve Beazley, CEO, OC Fair & Event Center. "In addition to being a signature event, we anticipate the auction having a positive impact on our local economy and tourism and great national visibility for OCFEC, Costa Mesa, and Orange County."

For more information about the auction, visit www.barrett-jackson.com or call 480-421-6694.

The OC Fair & Event Center is conveniently located off the 405 and 55 freeways at 88 Fair Drive in Costa Mesa. For more information, visit www.ocfair.com. ■

**AUGUST 11-15
Monterey Auto Week**



Photo: Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance

Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance
Russo and Steele Auction
RM Auctions
Gooding & Company Auction
Mecum Auctions
Concorso Italiano
Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion
Monterey, Pebble Beach, Salinas, Laguna Seca

We could write a book describing the events that take place this week. Suffice it to say [a] there's nothing quite like it, whether you pick and choose or do the whole smörgasbord, [b] the Monterey Peninsula is a perfect alternative to an August week in Phoenix, and [c] you would be well advised to secure lodging asap.

The elegant, VIP-laden Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance is known worldwide. New car reveals, manufacturers' displays, art shows, fashion and galas and more round out this event. At the core: a waterfront golf course concours second to none.

We catch these four auctions: Russo and Steele, the Arizona-based auction house; RM and Gooding, both of whom are here in January (and Gooding is the official auction house of the Pebble Beach Concours); and Mecum, who did their first Monterey event last year, including the famous Bob Bondurant Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe they had brought to the track here first.

Concorso Italiano is held on another golf course between Monterey and Salinas. After a relocation two years ago, and dueling events last year, this event has prevailed. Keith Martin announces.

After more than 30 years, the Rolex Monterey Historic Races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca are no more, per se. We have the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion, updated with the same excitement and a bit more emphasis on amenities and attractions for the spectators, as well as the race participants.

Dates vary and overlap, and there are many spin-offs: www.pebblebeachconcours.net
www.russoandsteele.com
www.rmauctions.com
www.goodingco.com
www.mecum.com
www.concorsoitaliano.com
www.mazdaraceway.com ■

**AUGUST 21
Red Bull Flugtag**



Photo: © Jeremy Bernard/Red Bull Photofiles

Four cities including Long Beach
Rainbow Harbor, Long Beach CA, August 21

We first plugged into the fun and excitement of Red Bull events a few years ago, when an Arizona team led by John Swauger entered the Red Bull Soap Box Derby in Seattle. Swauger had also created clever craft for Tempe Town Lake festivities, from which we quickly discovered the Red Bull Flugtag, which is much along the same lines. While learning more about the Flugtag, we were exposed to the Red Bull Air Race, which we've attended and covered on its San Diego leg the last two years, as Arizona pilot Kirby Chambliss defended his multiple past World Championships. This year, the Red Bull Air Race is not in our area—the US event is in New York City (and there is an event in Windsor, Ontario, sharing its cross-border river course with Detroit).

But have no fear: this year, the Red Bull Flugtag will be nearby, at Rainbow Harbor in Long Beach, a great getaway on a hot August weekend. Fun to enter or fun to watch, you'll want to check this out in detail.

Red Bull Flugtag challenges teams of everyday people to build their cleverest or wildest homemade, human-powered flying machines and pilot them off a 30-foot-high deck in hopes of achieving flight. Or at least on that premise. Flugtag may mean "flying day" in German, but all these craft ultimately splash into the water below. They are judged not only on their flight's distance, but creativity and showmanship as well.

With tongue mostly in cheek, Red Bull sees a clear evolution of humanity to this point, outlining a path from Leonardo da Vinci's drawings in the 1480s, the first real study of flight, through George Cayley's glider designs from 1799 through the 1850s, to German engineer Otto Lilienthal, who survived 2500 early glider flights before succumbing to gravity, on through the Wright Brothers, to jet transport and moon landings... to the first Red Bull Flugtag, held in Vienna in 1991. Since then, over 35 Flugtags have been held around the world, attracting some 300,000 spectators.

The longest flight was 195 feet in 2000; the longest in the US was 155 feet at Nashville in 2007. But go to YouTube, search Red Bull Flugtag, and you'll soon see flight duration is much beside the point. Tons of fun.

For more info, visit www.redbullflugtagusa.com. ■

**SEPTEMBER 1-5
Great American Run**



Photo: Cannonball Run World Events, Ltd.

Live life to the fullest: one week, no limits
Secret route starts in the Los Angeles area

There are a number of regional and cross-country road rally events held every year. Vintage events such as Arizona's Copperstate 1000 or the Colorado Grand are one thing. But in 1971, when Brock Yates launched the first Cannonball Run (the inspiration for the *Smokey and the Bandit* films), things got a little wilder. That event lives on with Brock Yates Jr.'s One Lap of America, though the highest speeds are now taken to a series of racetracks.

On a parallel path, Cannonball Run World Events Ltd., based in the UK, runs high-panache multi-day road rallies in the US, Europe, the Middle East and beyond. This September, they bring us The Great American Run.

On September 1, entrants will take their place on the starting line at Laguna Beach CA. Approximately 1850 miles in total, the route will cover scenic but sometimes very challenging driving. The route is chosen and pre-driven by Tim Porter, also chief of UBB Mustang, and will test ability and stamina to the fullest. Broken down into checkpoint stages, the route remains a closely guarded secret and will only be revealed at the opening checkpoint each morning, though we do know that the event will start and finish around the Los Angeles area.

Also avoiding any serious clashes with Smokey, they cleverly base the rally's winner on who can come closest to an average 61 mph speed through the duration of the event. The route navigates through a series of checkpoints, with a target time set for each stage. The victorious team will take the title at the Final Night Gala Dinner on Saturday. Things wrap up with a farewell breakfast the morning of the 5th.

The Great American Run is limited to 50 entries. Entry is \$7995 for one car and two drivers, and includes luxury hotels (twin/double rooms) with a welcome drink at each, secure overnight parking, breakfasts, evening meals, VIP entrance to parties, route maps, official car decals, Final Night Gala and Awards Ceremony at a prestigious venue ... and a shot at the title.

If this event sounds great to you, you probably have a perfect car for it. However, at press time, the eventors were offering a free rental car (e.g. Camaro or others) for early entrants, perfect if flying to participate. For full event details, visit www.thegreatamericanrun.com. ■

SOME THINGS NEVER GET OLD

By Joe Sage
Photos by Randall Bohl
www.randallbohl.com



SCCA VINTAGE RACE AT PIR BENEFITS PHOENIX CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
RUSSO AND STEELE TEAM SHAKES DOWN ITS TRANS AM RACER

The Arizona Region SCCA winter season included seven events for regional racers, in the Saguaro Series, and three events for the Vintage Class, in the Desert Vintage Series, held at Phoenix International Raceway in December, February and March. March 20-21 marked the AZ-SCCA's 10th annual charity race for Phoenix Children's Hospital. The Desert Vintage Series was presented by Russo and Steele Collector Automobile Auctions—specialists in European sports, American muscle, hot rods and customs, a perfect fit.

Russo and Steele co-owner Drew Alcazar brought two race-ready Mustangs to the event. One, a 1969 Boss 302 Mustang, has powerful provenance and powerful track presence. The other, a 1965 Mustang fastback, is more conventionally-bred but just as fun. They are known to the Russo and Steele race team as Big Red and Little Blue. We catch up with Drew in the paddock, for some background on the cars and the event.

Drew has been heavily involved in the vintage automobile hobby and collector auction business for years, but he's relatively new to racing. He first became involved through the Shelby American Club. "The hot shoes at Laguna, Sonoma and the other big tracks are 2-4 seconds faster than anybody else," he says. "So you go to those big events, and it can be pretty overwhelming. The best place to get your feet wet is with marquee club events. Go out with the Porsche Club, go out with the Shelby Club." Nonetheless, before he even went, Drew bought his Trans Am car, the Boss 302.

Alcazar has found some vintage races too crowded, citing the long-running Monterey Historic Races as having had too many classes overall. He's headed to the Sonoma Historics in June, which has a Trans Am Class.

Drew finds any West Coast vintage racing to be the best. "These cars are really authentic. With Big Red or Little Blue, we have to go back to narrower tires and all the rest. You'll find no 700-800-hp big beasts, just period stickers. We're not even allowed to have a Russo and Steele license plate," he says. "That's the biggest difference with West Coast guys, because West Coast cars are correct and pretty simple: if the car's not period, you're not allowed to run." For example, there are no multi-carbs allowed for a '70, but he gets away with two duals on his because it's a '69, so it's in period.

"But you'll have no Jericho trans or anything like that in there," he continues. "East Coast vintage race cars aren't vintage... they're NASCAR cars they make look like old cars, with wrappers. West Coast guys have 150-250 less horsepower than they do, and get the crap kicked out of them if they compete." That's why he thinks "West Coast events are so cool and everybody's so good: they are really, really authentic. In the Trans Am Class, all cars have the same rim size. B Production, 7" rims. On the East Coast, you need 8.5" rims or you're in the back spectating."

And that brings us back to Big Red. "It's a '69 Boss 302, built for the '69 Trans Am season," Drew says. "It was originally campaigned by Warren Tope. His father, Donald Tope, was head of Transmission and Drivetrain at Ford Motor Company, so this was an intracompany car that was actually delivered from the assembly line

Russo and Steele auction co-owner Drew Alcazar gives Big Red—his high-pedigree 1969 Boss 302—a morning run during practice laps (left). He races this Trans Am car and a '65 Mustang fastback, Little Blue.

The Townsend Typhoon Mk 2 (top right), dubbed by many as the "Purple People Eater," had a successful racing career throughout the Southwest. Then it was sold, forgotten, and languished in a field in southern Arizona for 40 years. Owen Gibson spotted it and spent five years restoring it. It now runs a vintage 425-hp Olds Golden Rocket export engine with magnesium rockers and 6-deuce carbs.

Husband and wife team Jim Malone and Delaney Sturgeon race his Triumph TR6 and her Porsche 944 (five pix, right) regularly. Malone is on the board of directors for the Arizona Region SCCA.

directly over to Transmission and Drivetrain. So it's been a race car its whole life. With Donald's connections, it went down to Kar Kraft and was built right alongside Bud Moore cars for Parnelli Jones and George Follmer. So all of the Kar Kraft Bud Moore stuff that got done basically got done out the back door at midnight, on this car as well, for Donald's son Warren.

"The fun thing about the build sheet," Drew continues, "is it actually says 'sold to Ford Motor Company, Transmission and Drivetrain Division.' So you can tell from the build sheet that it actually went directly from the assembly line over to Transmission and Drivetrain with Warren's dad, Donald. The interesting thing is that all the early Trans Am cars started off as 351 Mach Is. This is a Boss 302, but they all started off as 351 cars.

"So if you look at the car, a lot of the ways, how the exhaust system is routed, a lot of the way the suspension sets are done, all of the experimental stuff, the dual 4-barrel Dominator intake manifold, the carburetors, the offset distributor, all of those experimental bits and pieces are on this car. So, although it was an independent car, it was sort of the 'ghost rider factory team car,' kind of out the back door to help Ford put another car on the Trans Am circuit, in addition to the Parnelli Jones and George Follmer cars.

"Warren Tope won the SCCA Championship in this car. He was actually racing George Follmer's car, but that car went out and he had to bring in this car as a backup, and he actually won the Championship in '71 in this car. It has a lot of fun history," says Alcazar.

Drew's history with the Tope car is more recent. "I've had the car for about two years. John McClintock out of Washington was the owner of the car for a long time, and he was the one who sort of oversaw the final stages of the restoration and race prep. So I was very fortunate: I was able to buy a front-running car, that was already race-prepped, and now I'm a back marker driver, so I'm hoping to catch up with the car someday."

This is not the only Mustang the Russo and Steele team has brought today. Meet Little Blue. "Little Blue's not much of a story," says Alcazar. "It's just a fun little Mustang, it's a go-find-the-line car, hang out and have some fun type thing. So on a track like this, the little '65 Mustang—we've nicknamed them Little Blue and Big Red—is probably a little more suited. The Trans Am car

KEEP RIGHT >>

AZ-SCCA DESERT VINTAGE SERIES AT PIR





Drew Alcazar (near left) warms up Big Red, his 1969 Boss 302 Mustang Trans Am car, while his tech, Nick Schrage of The Mustang Shop, warms up Little Blue (far left). The cars are further prepped in the Russo and Steele paddock area, then hit the track. The Russo and Steele Auction is known for its hospitality and cuisine, and co-owner Josephine Alcazar brought that to the race participants.

Tom Surrency owns the Morgan at upper right, while the other Morgan is owned by Rob Uhl, who has had it since 1964. During college, he headed to San Francisco for the '67 Summer of Love. He parked the car and spent the summer there on foot. Come fall, he'd forgotten where he parked. ("If you remember the '60s....") Ultimately, they found the car exactly where he had parked it three months prior. Untouched. Covered with dirt, but untouched.

is a little big for this track, even with its big outside loop. Each has a niche and a personality, and Drew races them both. "I'm going to practice in Big Red. You know, we've got the season just starting for Trans Am. Our first event's going to be Wine Country at Sears Point (see page 26). So I've got a lot of practice during May, getting ready for that. That's the first weekend of June. So we're going to get a little seat time in her."

Drew says the event at PIR was an "absolutely epic weekend. This was Phoenix, Arizona, at prime time."

He's looking forward to the Sonoma Historics in early June with a large dose of humility. "They say they can teach you to do this," he says, "but God knows I'm still learning. All seat time is good time for us, the back markers. I'm trying to do a reasonable job of not being a moving chicane for everybody else." This is a man who knows his stuff. We think he'll do just fine. ■

AZ-SCCA DESERT VINTAGE SERIES AT PHOENIX INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY



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Guitars and Cadillacs



Cadillac shows its rock'n'roll soul



CADILLAC CTS-V LOGBOOK

- The CTS-V comes standard with a 6-speed manual transmission, which would suit us fine. This test car came with the optional (at no cost) 6-speed automatic. We noted that it seemed to shift five full gears in half a block of a local two-lane and that the third shift felt like a shift down, almost. We called it uneven, with a big gap between some shifts, yet also noted its smooth operation. We were pretty sure we'd enjoy all this horsepower even more with a manual transmission. We noted specific instances where it "launched like a rocket, but with a delay." Using the manumatic more often might mitigate some of our transmission issues, so we played with that with decent results. The automatic gets to 6th gear pretty quickly ... by just 1100 rpm against a redline of 6000. And downshifting gives it a healthy burst before choosing a lower gear, rather than the drag-chute downshift we may have expected.

- Turning from a surface street onto a freeway ramp produced nice, balanced handling around the corner, through acceleration and up to speed, with smooth shifts under load. Performs best when pushed.

- We missed some lush luxury touches, but concluded the tradeoffs for a performance feel overall were part of the point. For example, we've become accustomed to key-in-pocket touch-sensitive entry and lock, plus pushbutton start, but it's not part of this package. On the plus side, the base vehicle is highly equipped and package options, often confounding, are minimal on this.

- It took us awhile to get the seat adjustments where we liked them, but then they were superb. This car had the high performance Recaro seat (and metal pedals) option, \$3400. Just the ticket for this power. For aggressive driving, which is the car's prime directive, we'd go with these, though Barbara and Bill preferred the stock seats.

- Touchscreen and other controls for audio are awkward at many points; we assume they'll be far more familiar when it's your own car (a common issue). Typical with Cadillac, there are a great many settings that turn out to be set-'em-once-and-leave-'em, with the interfaces in unobtrusive places e.g. a little patch of switches to the left of the steering wheel.

- The algorithms for locks and lights bring us to the personal settings a few times, but once they're set, you're good indefinitely.

- The Bose audio quality is really quite good, adding a solid rock and roll founda-

BY BARBARA & BILL SCHAFFER

Last year, we drove more than 150 different cars in the course of our two weekly evaluations and reports from manufacturer introductions. We are often asked which of the cars is our favorite.

Not only is the Cadillac CTS one of the best looking cars we've driven, but with a new opulence and more attention to detail, the midsize sedan shows that American-made cars can match the best European models when they keep their eye on the target. The CTS model lineup has expanded with the addition of the beautiful new Sport Wagon and coupe. And then there's the CTS-V.

When the accelerator slams to the floor, the CTS-V explodes from a complete stop to 60 mph in just 3.9 seconds. On a track, or a salt flat, it has a top speed of 176 mph (191 mph with the six-speed manual transmission). It broke the record for production sedans at the famous German Nürburgring, completing one lap of the 12.9-mile long race circuit in 7:59:32 minutes.

This is the Cadillac CTS-V, and it is one of the fastest production sedans in the world, if not the fastest.

What is amazing about these figures is that this car, with a six-speed automatic transmission, has a base price of \$60,720, or \$64,145 with destination charge and the mandatory \$2,600 Gas Guzzler tax. Normally, performance numbers like that come attached to cars with six-figure price tags.

Our test car did have three options: Recaro high performance seats and metal pedals

(\$3,400), Midnight Sapele wood trim package (\$600) and V Specific suede steering wheel and shift knob (\$300). Navigation, an option last year, is now standard, along with a potent Bose 5.1 Surround 10-speaker system.

The optional Recaro seats provide excellent support and multiple adjustments; however, they are very firm. We prefer the more comfortable and good-looking standard seats.

The heart of the CTS-V is a 556-hp, supercharged 6.2-liter V-8 engine. A 6-speed manual driving the rear wheels is standard, but our test car was backed up by the optional quick-shifting six-speed automatic transmission. To make the CTS-V worthy of such power, it is fitted with a four-wheel independent suspension with Magnetic Ride Control (MRC) with two suspension settings: Tour and Sport. The MRC is the world's fastest-reacting suspension technology, using electromagnets to adjust dampening almost instantly. The massive Brembo brakes were developed for racing. The 19-inch Michelin Pilot Sport2 tires are rated for speeds in excess of 186 mph. However, one downside for the high performance tires is excessive road noise.

It would be easy for a manufacturer to assemble all this equipment and get a very good handling car, but Cadillac engineers spent untold hours testing, tweaking and perfecting the CTS-V into one of the best handling sedans in the world. What is even more amazing is how comfortable and easy it is to drive.

Aside from boosting the car's horsepower by 156 from the previous generation and

KEEP RIGHT >>

Logbook (cont'd) >>

(CONT'D) CTS-V LOGBOOK

tion to a powerful ride. We do wish we could control radio stations better and get in and out of audio settings more readily, but when it's working right it's top tier.

- You don't always realize how many of a given vehicle there are on the road till you're driving one. The CTS has lots of company in our neck of the woods (though appropriately not too many V models).

- The instrument panel has some of the same chrome details we don't care for on the SRX (also in this issue), but its other finishes are black (no brushed aluminum), so it all works together much better. Finishes include optional Midnight Sapele wood trim on the IP, center console and door trim. Microfiber accents are available for the steering wheel and shift knob.

- The combination of analog speedometer and big digital readout may seem redundant, and there is also a redundant red LED sweep following the needles of the speedo and tach, but redundant or not, these are very cool. We like 'em.

- The 19" performance tires are perfect on the road, but a little clunky on a tight back-up and turn over a driveway curb. Again, calibrated for the car's primary mission. Similarly, we felt some rocking in the suspension cornering at slow speeds, but not under aggressive driving. The ride is then very impressive and solid.

- EPA fuel mileage ratings are 12/18 city/highway. Within one day of relatively minor driving, we were down to 5/8 tank, per the gauge. But we quickly determined it's partly just the gauge: a day later, after heavier driving, it was still at the exact same spot.

- It took us a day or two to fall for the car, especially following the SRX, but the more we drove the CTS-V, the more we started to feel right at home in the brand. Early in the test week, we noted "it's still just a GM sedan," but the car won us over totally, and its all-American nature is a big factor. The logbook declares that the CTS-V has soul.

- We repeatedly note that we get the best performance and best feel when we accelerate aggressively, especially (we suspect) when equipped with this automatic transmission. We repeatedly wish for the stick.

- 556 horsepower may sound like more than you need every day, but it's plenty tame for normal driving and provides prodigious power in reserve. When we find a sudden challenge in merging, for example, we can goose it and accomplish any mission. In a pinch, we'd still rather have a stick, or consistently use the paddle shifters for their control, but it's a perfect poster boy for the fact that power can equal confidence which can equal safety. —JS



making all the other performance enhancements, designers have given the CTS-V a new dimension of style and luxury. The previous version was nice, but it didn't look like it belonged in a car priced over \$50,000. Product planners listened and did a thorough redesign. We were split on our opinion of the center stack filled with large buttons, dials and analog clock all backed with a new Obsidian material. Barb thought it looked too busy, while Bill likes the organization and ease of use.

An eight-inch screen rises from the top of center stack to display information for the navigation system, XM real time traffic, weather reports and audio settings for the Bose stereo and 40-gigabyte hard drive system. When it's not in use, the screen retracts so that just the top inch or so of the screen is visible, and that becomes the audio display.

A rich-looking hand-stitched instrument panel, center console and door trim enhance the contemporary interior design.

Frankly, we didn't expect the test car we were driving to be such a head turner, but with the chrome chainlink grilles with imbedded Cadillac crest, headlights that shined like a trophy wife's ring and sharp character lines, it turned a lot of heads. The deep muscular exhaust note coming through large dual exhaust outlets seemed to make men smile with desire. The Cadillac CTS-V rides like a luxury sedan, handles like a sports car, goes like a bat out of hell and is priced like none of the above. ■

PEBBLE BEACH AUCTIONS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

PEBBLE BEACH, CALIFORNIA



The Bob Holbert, Thomas Payne and Millard Ripley
1962 Watkins Glen SCCA National Winning

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STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOE SAGE



There are three models in the Dodge Challenger lineup, and it seems we've been working our way down the line (though up in terms of seat time—and fuel mileage). We started with the SRT8 as a sight-unseen teaser feature before its release, moved to the R/T at a local media launch event, which we drove a few miles around downtown and south Phoenix, and now have driven the V6-powered base-model SE for a full week.



Comparisons—or requests for comparisons—are inevitable and constant with the Challenger. First, there are the three Challenger models: SE, R/T and SRT8. Second, there are the Mustang and Camaro, each with its own wide range of trim and performance levels, especially the Mustang. And third, there are comparisons between the 21st century models and those from the '60s and '70s. To do a complete comparison with all those variables would require a five-dimensional holographic chart that could fill a three-car garage.

But here are some fundamentals on the Challenger:

CHALLENGER	ENGINE	HP	EPA	\$ W/DEST
SE	(5-auto) 3.5L V6	250	17/25	\$23,460
R/T	(5-auto) 5.7L HEMI V8	372	16/25	\$31,585
R/T	(6-man) 5.7L HEMI V8	376	16/25	\$32,580
SRT8	(5-auto) 6.1L HEMI V8	425	13/19	\$43,655
SRT8	(6-man) 6.1L HEMI V8	425	14/22	\$44,350

Other variables grow from there. Brake size and power increase along with horsepower. Suspension is essentially the same on all, other than the available R/T Super Track Pack, which adds gas-shock enhancements. The SE Rallye package dresses up the base model a bit, from graphics to wheel size, and the R/T Classic package does similarly for the midrange model. Press materials show the manual transmission at a lower price than the automatic for the SRT8 (with no mention for the R/T). But current consumer info online shows the manual at a premium. (They apparently noticed that people who want a manual *really* want a manual.) They all share the same classic Challenger stance and general road presence, horsepower and performance aside.

Our test Challenger SE added an amp-and-speakers Sound Group (\$645), Leather Interior Group with heated leather-trimmed buckets (\$885), the slam-dunk Rallye Group with 18" aluminum wheels, bright fuel filler door, dual stripes, instrument panel mini-carbon bezel and body-color rear spoiler (a \$750 makeover), power sunroof (\$950) and a Media Center with CD/DVD/HDD, radio, GPS navigation, one year of Sirius Traffic included, auto-dimming rearview mirror with microphone for Uconnect Phone with Voice Command, steering-wheel-mounted audio controls and an iPod interface (\$1775), for a total of \$31,175 with destination charge. All the add-ons bring it right up to the cost of the V8-powered R/T, but then it would have its add-ons, too. Or would



CHALLENGER SE LOGBOOK

FEATURES

- All the basic functions and controls are very straightforward, simple, easy—the shifter, lights, wipers, ceiling lights, interior lights, gas cap, hood, trunk.
- We love the simplicity but miss having a rear camera, as visibility is slightly limited.
- Seat adjustment has tons of range. Came to us really low and far back; even though we're tall, we moved it forward and up a little. Gives the option of a low-slung cruiser feeling or a more sedan-like posture.
- Turn signal lever is really low.
- Side view mirrors are very small.
- Big trunk, a '60s feature we like on this.
- Sequence of using the radio interface was frustrating.

PERFORMANCE

- We wish it were a stick, but basically it's as fun to drive as its '60s/'70s origins, maybe moreso as it's locked down so tight.
- Early on, we note that it corners great, and it's only the SE. Later, we wish for wider rubber, just for normal cornering. Feel it sort of wallowing in the rear.
- Automatic shifter feels kind of light... works fine but slides through the gates.
- Of course we spend some time wishing we were at least trying the SRT8.
- We noted at one point that the brakes had no bottom. We tried to kind of stand on them in case we were to get rear-ended at a semi-blind red light, and we just push until they mush, they're at the floor, and they could mush some more.
- Nice tight turning circle.

STYLE

- Size is fine. You might think this is going to be a really large car, and we suppose of course it's bigger than some pony or muscle cars, but it doesn't seem that big sitting in it, same as our prior R/T experience.
- This car is WIDE by today's standards.
- The hooded headlights are very cool.
- Basically this SE is somewhat of a strip-pper, not a "horsepower model."
- There is quite a bit of form over function in the Challenger. But form is what it's all about, or you'd stick with the Charger. The trunk for example is a little tricky to open and close, because its shape has little to do with having a grip to pull down. Driver's 3/4 rear view is pretty bad, on either side, especially the driver's side. But that's exactly what you'd expect... and that's not why you bought it, you bought it to perform and to look cool, which it does.
- We note that *AutoWeek* is comparing the Hyundai Genesis Coupe to the Mustang and the Nissan 370Z. You're unlikely to find the Challenger compared thus.
- Bodywork rules; great sheet metal job.

KEEP RIGHT >>



it? It'd be hard to resist the step up, and since fundamental simplicity is part of the car's appeal, it actually wouldn't be that hard to forego many of the options.

So how does the Challenger compare with Mustang and Camaro? Some more fundamentals:

BASE MODELS	ENGINE	HP	EPA	W/DEST
Challenger SE	3.5L V6	250	17/25	\$23,460
Mustang V6	3.7L V6	305	19/31	\$22,995
Camaro LS	3.6L V6	304	17/29	\$23,530
MID MODELS	ENGINE	HP	EPA	W/DEST
Challenger R/T	5.7L H V8	372	16/25	\$31,585
Mustang GT	5.0L V8	412	17/26	\$30,495
Camaro 2LT	3.7L V6	304	17/29	\$27,725
TOP MODELS	ENGINE	HP	EPA	W/DEST
Challenger SRT8	6.1L H V8	425	13/19	\$43,655
Shelby GT500	5.4L sc V8	540	15/23	\$49,495
Camaro 2SS	6.2L V8	426	16/24	\$34,795

Unlike the Challenger, the Mustangs are also available as convertibles (for about \$5000 additional) and the Camaro will be very soon. The Mustang's manual transmission models are more affordable than automatics, the kind of win-win we would favor. Both Mustang and Camaro, especially Mustang, also have a wide range of third-party modified models extending the performance level (and cost) up considerably. Roush, Saleen, UBB and others offer Mustangs up into the 500-to-1000-hp range, some running over \$100,000.

On the basics in our chart, the Mustang knocks down the Challenger in horsepower, fuel mileage and price in the base and mid models. At the top, the Shelby commands a price for its 500-plus-horsepower performance, in a league of its own among these nine, and it still delivers considerably better fuel mileage than the Challenger. The Mustang also edges out the Camaro in base trim, but only just. In the middle range, Camaro suffers the comparison by virtue of retaining its V6. In the top performance models, ignoring the superlative Shelby GT500, Camaro beats Challenger by a wide margin on price and fuel mileage, while basically matching power.

So how does one decide? Despite all these statistics and specifics, this segment remains a very emotional one. Most buyers will know exactly which car rings their bell. The best that most people will get from the comparatives will be debating points after their purchase.

In some ways, the subjective comparatives directly relate to the relationship of current models with their legendary forebears. Mustang is generally considered to benefit from its non-stop continuity, from 1964-1/2 until present day. On the other hand, Camaro's deep breath and rebirth has allowed longing and anticipation to build for a reasonable number of years among basically its same audience, while the Challenger's reappearance after decades speaks much more to a heritage model.

The Mustang's continuity brought us a few forgettable models through intervening years, but the last generation's restyling, also a heritage move, gave the line-up an enormous dose of adrenaline. The current model, less so, in our opinion, becoming smaller and with much less distinctive rear sheet metal. But the full lineup still does what Mustang has always done best: it offers something for everyone, each with its own sufficient panache. Then again, there are an awful lot on the road.

Camaro is just getting started in that same game, or restarted. Its evolution from the '60s till it was suspend-

ed after 2002 brought it to a completely different point. But the new Camaro has achieved a very successful balance between its roots and the modern era. Being such a recently introduced new-again vehicle, honed during different times and a gas-price crunch, GM's decision to go with a solid V6 in most models, reserving the V8 for just the SS, is arguably sound—as long as they did indeed provide the V8 model, ultimately. New Camaros are sprouting up like wildfire, though they so far still succeed in turning heads.

Challenger, though, does the best job of recreating its original magic. Whether that's desirable or not—more of a flashback than a reinvention—is a subjective point, but we very much like what they've achieved. We'd love to spend more time with the R/T, and we'd welcome the SRT8 into the test fleet most of all, but we were quite happy driving the SE for a week. It looks about the same, it feels and drives about the same, and barring any major challenges on the mean streets of metro Phoenix, it handles its mission very well. And the relative rarity of any Challenger over the ubiquitous Mustangs and growing legion of Camaros is surely an advantage.

Every Dodge Challenger is a driver's car. With its style, stance and commanding driving position, you have a strong feeling of control over your steed and surroundings. The Challenger has a full-size American cockpit, straightforward instrument panel and controls, and full-size windows including a nice big windshield (its rear window is probably as big as the Camaro's windshield). The Challenger is considerably wider than the others, has a great big trunk, and feels almost like a classic full-size Dodge or Chevy when seated behind the wheel. Nonetheless, it appeals to the same buyers as Mustang and Camaro, but it's really not quite the same type of car. The Challenger has the *cojones* it was born with.

On the other hand, no sooner did we formulate these thoughts than a black Camaro with red stripes zoomed by on the freeway looking very cool indeed. Then again, if our Challenger were black with red stripes, it would look just as cool, we remind ourselves. No sooner do we say that than a very hot Shelby Mustang (of the immediately prior generation we prefer) came zooming down the road, silver-blue with black stripes. The brands all have their contenders.

So, indeed, everybody wants to know how the Challenger compares with the Camaro (mostly, as both are new), which of course always brings up the Mustang. We soon realize you don't find people looking at a Mustang or Camaro and asking how it compares with the Challenger. And we take that as a victory for the Challenger. It's a little more off the radar, quite a bit less common, and therefore quite a bit more special.

Driving the Challenger SE with no major face-offs against the more powerful models, we felt that the six was okay. But since there is also the Dodge Charger (and everything else with a six), we couldn't help thinking the Challenger is really a tribute car, evoking the best of its '70s predecessors, and as such would be best with a V8 throughout the lineup. But to look at it another way, perhaps the six can be considered a tribute to that.

You'll have conversations in a Mustang, you'll start conversations in a Camaro (for awhile yet), but with a Dodge Challenger, you'll likely dominate conversations, if for no other reason than its relative rarity. ■



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Photography by Jackie Alpers

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AMERICAN-BUILT SUPERCAR MAKES ITS DEBUT



Rapier Automotive wants its new supercar to capture the essence of its namesake—the thin, light, fast and well-balanced thrusting implements of swordplay. Based in Boston, the company has been preparing its mid-engine supercar for five years and is now taking orders. Billed as “the most exclusive hand-built supercar on the planet,” the Rapier Superlight Coupe, SL-C for short, offers a wide range of engineering specifications, power-plant options, exterior colors, interior finishes and other fully customizable options.

The car utilizes an all-aluminum, tig welded monocoque chassis/spaceframe hybrid structure and is finished with high-quality composite body panels. The finished package is intended to evoke a Le Mans racecar.

The Superlight offers three Chevrolet V8 engine choices, any of which can be installed beneath the clamshell hood behind the passenger compartment: the base 6.2-liter 480-hp LS376, the 7.0-liter 505-hp LS7, or the 6.2-liter supercharged 638-hp LS9. The monstrous power created by each of these engines is transmitted to the rear wheels through a six-speed Ricardo manual transmission. With a curb weight of only 2,375 lbs.—nearly 1,000 pounds less than the Corvette ZR1—acceleration is quick. With the 505-hp LS7, zero-to-60 mph takes 3.2 seconds, the quarter mile will pass in 10.6 seconds and the top speed is a staggering 222 mph. To bring the car to a stop (or slow it back to legal speeds), the SL-C uses 13-inch rotors in the front and 11.8-inch rotors in the back, all of which are grabbed by six-piston calipers.



The majority of each Rapier Superlight is hand-built around the physical dimensions of its buyer. Floor level, headroom clearance, steering and pedal position, even the seat size... the entire car is built to the owner's unique specifications. Many components start as a bare block of aluminum and spend their first 50-60 hours coming to life on a CNC machine. The suspension is by Indy-style pushrod-actuated coil-over shock units; the rears are arranged longitudinally.

Besides the fourteen exterior colors and hand-stitched leather and optional carbon fiber inserts for the interior, the Rapier offers multiple sound system interfaces and wheel options in chrome, gloss, satin black or painted to match the rest of the car. A DigiDash display puts all pertinent information in the driver's direct line of sight and keeps track of vital statistics and analytics, allowing the

owner to do everything from optimizing the engine tuning to simply keeping track of his or her lap times.

Rapier has incorporated carefully-sourced components from around the globe to finish off the Superlight: a complete Aeromotive Fuel System, QA1 Aluminum Double Adjustable Shocks, CCW Wheels and Alpine, Pioneer, & Beltronics entertainment electronics.

A test drive can be arranged out of Boston with one of two shows cars, Chassis Number One and Chassis Number Two. If after the test drive a buyer wishes to place a 50 percent deposit toward the purchase of an SL-C—prices start at \$179,000—Rapier will pay for the Boston trip. Rapier Automotive offers a competitive payment plan that will allow its customers to have the car completely paid off by the time the car is ready for delivery, approximately nine months later. ■

A NEW MCLAREN COMPANY BUILDS A NEW CAR



Mclaren has its roots in Formula One racing, but has also built supercars—or “hypercars”—for public consumption, most notably the McLaren F1, a \$1,000,000-plus 3-seat coupe with the driver in the middle, designed by Gordon Murray and put into production in 1992. Much has transpired since then, both in F1 racing and in the McLaren companies (both motorsports and manufacturing). Long story short, McLaren Automotive is a new company, spun off the rest, and they've been busy. Up first: the new MP4-12C. That doesn't roll off the tongue like “F1,” but the good news is it'll sell for about \$230,000.

Only 100 F1s were ever built, and of those 64 reportedly are street cars, with the rest in professional racing. The company says the MP4-12C will launch an entire new range of premium high-performance sports cars, with a new manufacturing facility and a dedicated global retail and service network.

The rear-wheel-drive MP4-12C will be powered by a mid-mounted bespoke McLaren M838T 3.8-litre V8 twin-turbo engine and will have a revolutionary “Carbon MonoCell” carbon fibre chassis. The car features F1-inspired brake steer, which brakes the inside rear wheel during fast cornering to reduce understeer, and a seven-speed Seamless Shift dual-clutch gearbox (SSG) with Pre-Cog technology: half-pull the paddle shifter to get the transmission ready for an instantaneous upshift once the paddle is fully pulled.

McLaren pioneered a carbon composite monocoque, or chassis, bringing it from the



aerospace industry to Formula 1 in the 1981 McLaren MP4/1. Its impact in racing was absolute, and McLaren's carbon technology was even recycled back into aerospace. Aerospace engineers were astounded with the MP4/1's crash performance in the 1981 Italian Grand Prix when John Watson's car ran off-road and was sliced in two. The carbon monocoque structure remained intact, even as the engine and transmission were torn off, and Watson walked away unscathed from a 140 mph impact. Britain's Civil Aviation Authority technical officers subsequently studied data from the incident.

The M838T engine is light and compact, just 3.8 litres. Cylinder block and heads are made from aluminum alloy, while the entire intake manifold and cam covers are constructed of high-performance lightweight plastics. This is a low-weight alternative to

the larger capacity engines that power all other cars in the MP4-12C's market segment.

Power and driveable torque are the requirements in motorsport but for road use there is a requirement for greater flexibility with less focus on absolute output. Yet, in the 12C, the M838T still aims to marry a huge output for this size of engine—over 440 lb-ft—spread over a wide rev range. The wide, flat torque curve is achieved courtesy of twin turbochargers, a form of forced induction that reigned in Formula 1 between 1983 and 1988. It is notable that in three of these years McLaren won the Formula 1 Constructors' Championship.

The MP4-12C is set to launch in 2011 and is aimed at Ferrari and Lamborghini. McLaren is also reportedly developing a new hypercar, the p12 project, to sell at around \$930,000, expected in 2011 or 2012. ■



HOW DUTCH DARRIN BEAT THE CHEVY CORVETTE

Story by Larry Edsall
Photos by Randall Bohl



The Chevrolet Corvette certainly is America's most popular fiberglass-bodied sports car, but it wasn't the first. The Kaiser Darrin beat it to the street by one month.

For one model year only—1954—Kaiser built 435 fiberglass-bodied Darrin sports cars in its warehouse turned assembly plant in Jackson, Mich. The car was designed by and named for Howard "Dutch" Darrin, a famed automobile stylist who had conceived of the car's most unique feature—pocket doors that slid forward into the front fenders—nearly two decades earlier.

The Darrin also featured a three-position convertible top that could be opened, closed or erected landau style over the rear section of the passenger compartment.

Lee Abrahams of Tucson has owned two of those 435 Darrins, and he and his brother, Gary, brought one of them to the Goodguys Rod & Custom Association's inaugural Spring Nationals show at the WestWorld show grounds in mid-March.

The Spring Nationals was the Goodguys second visit to Scottsdale within just four months. For the last dozen years, the world's largest hot rod and custom car club has concluded its 20-some event, coast-to-coast car show season with the Southwest Nationals at WestWorld. The event has been so popular—with some 3000 classic cars, their owners and admirers turning out—that it only made good sense to start the year here as well.

The inaugural Spring Nationals included two special features: an autocross to prove that hot rods and classic cars are meant for go as well as for show, and the unveiling of a brand new and one-of-a-kind vintage-looking Ford Mustang that someone will win when the Goodguys return in November for the 13th Southwest Nationals (see sidebar, following page).

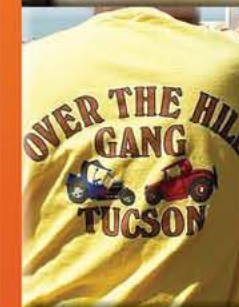


The Abrahams' bright red Kaiser Darrin has been in the family since 1965. Their brothers' sister drove it for several years while she attended San Diego State University. Afterward, the brothers thought about restoring the car, but with growing young families, they opted to put the Darrin in storage and spend their money instead on a boat so all family members could share in an activity.

Families grown, the brothers took the Darrin out of storage 8 ½ years ago and began not just to restore the car but to give it a hot-rodded powertrain transplant

KEEP RIGHT >>

ENTHUSIASTS SHOW THEIR COLORS, ON COTTON AND STEEL



BOSS SNAKE GOODGUYS GIVEAWAY CAR



In the 1960s, Ford Motor Co. commissioned a pair of what were known as the "QuarterHorse" Mustangs. Built by Kar Kraft, Ford's skunkworks race shop, the cars were conceived as a possible replacement for the Boss 429 and the Shelby Mustangs.

Now there's a third such car, though this one is called the Boss Snake and while you can't buy it, you can win it.

The Boss Snake was commissioned not by Ford but by the Goodguys Rod & Custom Association, the world's largest hot rod and custom car club. The Boss Snake was unveiled at the Spring Nationals held March 12-14 at WestWorld and will be displayed at each Goodguys gathering this year. Spectators at the various events can register to win the car at a drawing to be held when the 2010 season ends back in Scottsdale in November at the club's 13th Southwest Nationals.

The original QuarterHorse Mustangs both still exist and are owned by classic car collectors. Both were based on 1970 Boss 429 Mustangs, but with the front clip from Carroll Shelby's version of the car, though without the hood scoop Shelby added. The original cars also had dashboards taken from the Mercury Cougar.

The first car was painted Grabber Blue. Its engine was switched out for a 429 SC motor and was sent to Hollywood where it starred with Burt Reynolds in the television series Dan August.

The second car was Candy apple Red and also was powered by the SCJ engine.

The new car was built by the RPM hot rod shop in Warrendale, Pa. The Goodguys sent the shop a brand new but 1969 Mustang fastback-style sheetmetal body by Dynacorn. The package also includes a Jon Kaase-built, 520-cubic-inch, 770-horsepower Boss V8. Other components include Ride Tech suspension with Chris Alston components, one-off Intro wheels, Baer six-piston brakes with 14-inch rotors, Classic Instruments gauges, a custom exhaust that RPM built with Stainless Works and Flowmaster parts, a Tremec Magnum six-speed gearbox, and an RPM custom interior.

Suppliers for the project include Kicker, Ring Brothers, Flaming River, Ricks Stainless Tanks, Holley, Drivelines Inc., Chassisworks, PRC, Painless wiring, PPG, Optima batteries, BFGoodrich, Peak Antifreeze, Herculiner, Meguiars and Vintage Air.

According to RPM's website, "We had to remove the stock firewall and move it back and raise the transmission tunnel to fit the massive engine in there."

"In the rear, we removed the stock wheel tubs and fabricated our own so we could fit in a nice wide tire under the car. We then stretched the rear wheel opening out .75 inch to help get the tire tucked up tight under the body and give the car an aggressive appearance."

Instead of using the full Dynacorn sheetmetal, the front end is a "fiberglass Shelby-style clip," says RPM, which also installed a Shelby taillight panel, rear deck lid and spoiler. "With all of this custom work on the outside, we just couldn't leave the inside of the car alone," RPM continues. "We constructed a complete custom dash and fabricated all of the interior panels."

For more information on the contest, visit www.good-guys.com.

To see photos of the car's build at RMP, visit its website, www.rpm-hotrods.com.

— Larry Edsall



while bringing its visual appearance back to original condition.

With the hood closed, the car looks like any brand-new 1954 Darrin. But open the hood and there's a 502-cubic-inch Chevrolet Ram Jet V8 linked to a 700R4 automatic transmission and a nine-inch Ford rear end.

"We probably pulled the [one-piece fiberglass] body off thirty or forty times [during their seven-year restoration effort]," Lee Abrahams said.

The Darrin was produced with an in-line six-cylinder Willys engine. Fortunately, Lee said, he was able to find a plastic version of the Ram Jet engine block that he easily manipulate as he fashioned new mounts and repositioned things such as the radiator so he could insert the big V8 to the Darrin's small chassis. The car is built on a modified version of the Kaiser Henry J frame.

The biggest challenge, Abrahams said, was making sure there was enough clearance between the car's hood and the engine's injection system, that and fitting the exhaust headers and pipes beneath the fiberglass bodywork so the car still looks box stock.

To keep the car looking stock, the Abrahams left in the original clutch pedal, even though they installed an automatic transmission.

Another big issue was finding parts they needed, especially those made from rubber, which had deteriorated after years of storage in Arizona's desert heat.

"You can't go to the local auto parts store and say 'I need parts for a Kaiser Darrin'," Lee said.

He found many parts he and his brother needed through the Kaiser Fraser Owners Club. But when no one had the rubber grommet he needed to go around the gas filler pipe, Lee Abrahams started contacting rubber parts manufacturers.

"I sent drawings to 15 rubber companies," he said.

Two that responded wanted to know how many thousand he would be ordering.

"I was thinking 10," he said, adding that was 10 units, not 10 thousand.

Finally, one company agreed to produce a couple hundred of the grommets, which Abrahams now sells to others through the Kaiser Fraser owners club.

Two months ago at these same WestWorld grounds, two Darrins sold at the Barrett-Jackson collector car auction. One went for \$101,200. The other, which was equipped with a supercharged six-cylinder engine—which Darrin himself added to several cars after Kaiser ended sales with 50 cars yet to find owners—brought \$220,000. Vintage car pricing guides list Darrins between \$40,000 and \$140,000, depending on condition. Brand new, the factory price on a 1954 Darrin was \$5,655.

As I wrote earlier, this bright red Darrin was Lee Abrahams' second. He bought his first when he was a 15-year-old high school student back in his native Cleveland. His family moved to Tucson two years later, in 1963. The family owned and operated a gas station and car wash in Tucson for many years.

Lee Abrahams souped-up that first Darrin as well. He installed a fuel-injected big block V8 and turned it into a drag racing special. Competing at Tucson and Phoenix, the powerful but lightweight fiberglass-bodied sports car and its young

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SO MANY MORE GOOD STORIES TO TELL...

Photo: Larry Edsall



1948 Diamond T belonging to Mike Kane of Carefree (above). 1929 Mercury-based hot rod belonging to Rick Nantais of Dream Field Toy Factory in Apache Junction (below).

Photos: Joe Sage (2)



Photos: Randall Bohl (4)



This 1936 Dodge Coupe in Exotic Light Orange Pearl (above) belongs to Jim and Bonnie Ford of Lake Havasu City and is powered by a 1958 392 Hemi, with a Dodge Dakota front end and 9" Ford rear. All work was done by the owners at their home. The beautiful bare metal 1965 Shelby Cobra 427 5-speed (below) belongs to Wes Henderson of Phoenix.

Photo: Randall Bohl



driver turned the quarter-mile in 9.5 seconds at a top speed of 150 miles per hour.

With family life approaching, "I sold the car 30 years ago," Abrahams said.

But, family now grown, he found his original Darrin through Kaiser Fraser club members. The car was in Florida. Abrahams has reacquired it and plans to restore it to racing condition in time for the 2011 Kaiser Fraser club convention.

Let's hope he finishes in time for the 2nd annual Goodguys' Spring Nationals next March at WestWorld.

(Writer's note: I focus in this article on the Abrahams brothers, but could just as well have written about how Mike Kane, who restores vintage motorcycles in Carefree, needed a truck to haul those bikes and went onto the Internet, found a 1948 Diamond T in Texas, brought it to Arizona and has turned it into a customized dazzler, or how Rick Nantais, who remembers it being 50 degrees below zero when he was running a car dealership in Sudbury, Ontario—some 300 miles north of Toronto—moved 25 years ago to Apache Junction, where his Dream Field Toy Factory does hot rod and custom cars, including the stunning 1929 Mercury-based hot rod that he finished just the day before the Spring Nationals began. That's the thing about such classic car shows—every car and every car owner has a story, and often a wonderfully heartwarming story, to tell.) ■

After working as a sports editor for daily newspapers in Michigan, **LARRY EDSALL** was on staff for 12 years at *AutoWeek*, most of it as managing editor. He has driven more than half a million miles testing cars on four continents. He helped launch www.izoom.com and also helped found PAPA, the Phoenix Automotive Press Association. His books include *Masters of Car Design (Genius)*, *Miata 20 Years* and his eleventh, *Camaro: A Legend Reborn*, all available at amazon.com.

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RED LIGHT CAMERA AND SPEED CAMERA WARNING SYSTEM NEW CORDLESS GPS ANGEL V4 WITH RECHARGEABLE BATTERY PROTECTS DRIVERS FROM DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS AND COSTLY TRAFFIC TICKETS

The new V4 Red Light Camera and Speed Camera warning system from GPS Angel is a compact, cordless device with an integrated rechargeable lithium ion battery option, using advanced SiRF Star III GPS satellite technology to map your vehicle's current position against an onboard database of over 6,000 known red light camera and speed camera locations. When approaching one of these high risk intersections, GPS Angel will automatically alert the driver through a series of visual and audible alerts. It comes ready to use straight out of the box, with no installation required, and its cordless design integrates seamlessly with your dashboard.

Unlike some products that charge monthly fees, GPS Angel offers unlimited free access to the database. Plug the device into your desktop computer via USB and download their online updates. (You can search and browse this extensive list of camera locations online at www.gpsangel.com.) In addition to the database, you can set up your own Personal Location Alerts to avoid speeding in areas such as school zones, playgrounds, parks or any other predetermined locations. The company says that unlike radar detectors, the GPS Angel is 100% legal throughout North America.

"Red light cameras are strategically placed in high-risk accident areas" said Bryn Jenkins, COO for GPS Angel. "GPS Angel uses cutting-edge GPS satellite technology to alert users when approaching these intersections to encourage them to exercise extreme caution. Not only will the GPS Angel help you be a better driver, but it will also help consumers avoid expensive traffic fines and protect their license."

The GPS Angel V4 with rechargeable battery is available now for an MSRP of \$129 through Amazon, Fry's, JC Whitney, and other select retailers. For a full list or to buy direct, visit www.gpsangel.com. ■



PINK JEEP TOURS TURNS 50

THE FIRST JEEP TOUR OPERATOR IN THE UNITED STATES CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY IN SEDONA

The first Jeep tour operator in the US—and one of the oldest businesses in Sedona—Pink Jeep Tours is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2010. Pink Jeep Tours is known for its "must do" tours in Sedona and Las Vegas.

When local businessman Don Pratt took potential clients by Jeep to see back country real estate in the Sedona area, he had no idea that he was laying the foundation for what would turn into a multi-million-dollar industry throughout the country.

The iconic pink Jeeps were inspired when Pratt visited the Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki Beach, where everything was pink: vehicles, buildings and uniforms. The man who owned the hotel also built Willys Jeep vehicles, and Pratt put the two together. Shawn Wendell purchased the business in 1988 and expanded the company to Las Vegas in 2001.

Pink Jeep Tours' commitment to preserving the timeless beauty of Sedona has earned the company environmental preservation awards such as the Keep Sedona Beautiful Award of Excellence and the Governor's Tourism Award on Arizona Preservation.

"We are celebrating throughout the year" said Mike Hermen, Director of Marketing. "We are running specials through Twitter, Facebook, and our website and monthly newsletter. Fifty years is a significant milestone for any business, and we are proud of our outstanding reputation of providing excitement and education to Sedona and Las Vegas visitors."

Whether visitors are seeking rugged adventure, Native American history and culture, nature, geology, or panoramic vistas, Pink Jeep Tours has a tour.

Pink Jeep Tours' corporate headquarters are in Sedona. The company serves visitors from around the world with a corporate fleet of 85 vehicles and is the only Jeep tour company with guides and guide trainers certified by the National Association for Interpretation on its staff. For more info, call or visit 800-8-SEDONA, 888-900-4480 or www.pinkjeep.com. ■



Photo: © 2007 James Cowlin

US ROUTE 89 APPRECIATION SOCIETY

LIFE IS FINE ON "THE WEST'S MOST WESTERN HIGHWAY" SPONSOR A BORDER-TO-BORDER TRIP OR TRY IT YOURSELF

What makes life so fine on Route 89? James and Barbara Cowlin, a photographer and artist team with a passion for traveling on America's slow roads, will answer that question by driving from Mexico to Canada and back in 30 days, beginning on May 17, 2010. (You can join this adventure by sponsoring them; see below.)

You can also explore the West yourself this summer, with a driving vacation on US 89. The Cowlins founded the US Route 89 Appreciation Society to encourage tourists to try a different way of travel. Along its nearly 2000-mile length between Mexico and Canada, US 89 passes through or near 20 National Parks and Monuments, including seven premier western National Parks—Saguaro, Grand Canyon, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Grand Teton, Yellowstone and Glacier—as well as numerous national forests, wilderness areas, state parks and historic sites. You'll experience the full variety of western landscape: desert mountains and valleys in southern Arizona, canyons and rocky plateaus in northern Arizona and Utah, and majestic mountains in Wyoming and Montana.

The Society website is a place to plan a road trip and share the experience. A *Road Trip Map Book* is available as an instantly downloadable e-book or a soft cover book which can be ordered online. While large cities and national parks along US 89 always attract tourists, the Society encourages you to visit the places in between. The *Road Trip Guides* detail all the towns, cities, public lands and historic sites with maps, driving directions and photographs. Registered users can contribute their own stories and pictures to the website, adding their favorite places or unique experiences to the appropriate *Road Trip Guide*.

The Cowlins are inviting the public to sponsor a section of their one-month trip. Select from a list of road guides, one of the National Parks or Monuments, or pick a few miles and contribute a dollar a mile. Detailed info and signup are available at us89society.org. ■

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PORSCHE



POWER IS ITS MIDDLE NAME

STORY AND PHOTOS:
JOE SAGE

What's in a name? The Power Wagon name comes from decades of Dodge 4-wheel-drive trucks made from the early 1940s through the '80s, the earliest of which were extremely rugged and military in nature. In 2005, Dodge introduced a modern Power Wagon, an off-road-focused version of the Dodge Ram 2500 pickup. Back for 2010, it joins the other Dodge, er, Ram pickups in dropping Dodge from its name. Mostly, the Dodge name persists in the manufacturer's media materials and on the truck itself. We'd say just as well, considering we have trouble visualizing classic feed store favorite-truck debates changing their lingo because corporate did.

The Ram 2500/3500 Heavy Duty lineup includes five distinct trim models—ST, SLT, TRX, Power Wagon and Laramie. Our test 2010 Ram Power Wagon Crew Cab 4x4 came equipped with a 5.7-liter (345 cu.in.) HEMI® engine, as well as production off-road readiness including electric-locking front and rear differentials, electronic disconnecting sway bar, Bilstein shocks, 32-inch off-road tires, underbody skid plate protection, a 4.56 axle ratio for hill climbing, and a custom-built Warn 12,000 pound winch. The Power Wagon is rated to tow 10,300 lbs. and comes standard with a class 4 trailer hitch. The truck features a new award-winning interior and exterior Power Wagon and 4x4 Off-Road graphics, plus a lower two-tone paint scheme.

Built to master the most rigorous off-road trails, the Ram Power Wagon is based on the all-new Ram 2500 Heavy Duty 4x4 Crew Cab. The Power Wagon has a 14.5-inch ground clearance, compared to 12 inches on the Ram 2500 Heavy Duty. The vehicle's approach angle is boosted to 35 degrees, departure angle is increased to 26.5 degrees and breakover angle to 25.5 degrees. This gives the Ram Power Wagon significant clearance for navigating a variety of off-road trails, with special skill at tackling severe inclines and declines.

And how do they achieve these numbers, when based on a normal 2500 truck? Mostly with the Power Wagon's BFGoodrich All-Terrain T/A 32-inch tires, which in one move increase ground clearance and all angles. Aren't there a great many trucks on the road that have upped their tire size and suspension for the same reason? Indeed there are, but of course the Ram engineers optimized this vehicle to accommodate all the changes. We did find some characteristics of braking and handling to be less than optimized (see sidebar), but it's good to know the engineering has been fully integrated from the get-go.

The Ram folks are mighty proud of their Power Wagon, calling it "the most off-road capable pickup truck on the market." Fred Diaz, President and CEO of Ram Truck Brand, Chrysler Group LLC, goes on to say, "No off-road truck on the market can touch the Ram Power Wagon. It dominates the competition. It's a vehicle born from the minds of off-road enthusiasts and goes way beyond anything ever created by an automaker." But what about the Ford SVT Raptor? Off-road specialization is its game, too (particularly desert off-road), and it boasts 29.8-degree approach, 22.85-degree departure and 11.3-degree breakover angles, with 24.2" door sill depth and 12" breakover height, riding on 35"

tires, as well as having an amazing 15" front and 18" rear wheel travel. The Ford is lower on power and torque (310 hp and 365 lb-ft versus 383/400 for the Ram), but offers controlled descent between 2 and 20 mph. The Raptor holds less fuel (26 gallons versus 34) but achieves 14/18 mpg EPA, while the Ram is not rated. The Super Cab Raptor has a turning circle of 44.6 feet, while the Crew Cab Ram turns in 47.55 feet. The Ford is built in Dearborn and the Ram in Mexico.

The Power Wagon is big, and its cab is spacious, moreso in both cases than you might even expect. You correspondent is about 6'2" but could park his chin on the hood. We've never been big fans of step-ups into the cab, figuring they just get in the way and that a slip on ice or mud could tangle an ankle or bark a shin. But this truck could almost use one. We got our first big surprise, though, stepping out. You are up there.

The crew cab is of course large, but even from the driver's seat, alone, you are welcomed by a wide and deep expanse, sizable instruments and control stack that still have plenty of their own elbow room, and storage capacity galore. Our test Power Wagon included a Luxury Group—a bargain at just \$345—with leather-wrapped steering wheel, wheel-mounted audio controls, overhead console with garage door opener (just in case the truck fits in your garage), and various additional lamps and mirrors. We also had a Technology Group, \$495 for rear park-assist and upgraded audio, a backup camera (\$200), and a \$1265 Media Center with nav and much more. But the core add-on is Customer Preferred Package 26P, which adds 24 mostly Power Wagon-specific elements, from a 180-amp alternator, to skid plates, tow hooks, those big tires, and much, much more—at \$8350. Put it all together, and a base Ram 2500 SLT Crew Cab 4x4 with a base price of \$38,480 becomes the Power Wagon, now \$51,140 including destination charge of \$950. The key package may sound pricey, but itemized it is very reasonable, and the transformation achieved for about 12 grand is surely worth more than the sum of its parts.

The feature and performance details of this truck could fill a book; we encourage you to investigate further at www.ramtrucks.com. We drove the truck on surface streets and freeway, and though we didn't do serious off-roading, we did some miles on barely-roads. No question the Power Wagon is up to the job. And when encountering your fellow truckers, you'll find it is fun to share the road, because every other truck looks like a lesser truck, and we mean just about every other one.

Ram pickups, including the Power Wagon, have earned many accolades for the 2010 model year. The full Ram 2500/3500 Heavy Duty pickup lineup was named *Motor Trend's* 2010 "Truck of the Year," after beating the competition in a series of rigorous tests. The Rocky Mountain Automotive Press association (RMAP) named the Ram 3500 Heavy Duty pickup its "2010 Outstanding Truck," the second consecutive RMAP truck-of-the-year title for Ram following a 2009 win for the Ram 1500. And *Four Wheeler* magazine named the 2010 Ram 2500 Power Wagon "2010 Pickup Truck of the Year," after a series of in-depth on- and off-road tests.

In short, it's a great truck. If you actually need it, all the greater. We do with its paved-street handling and braking were stronger. And we know we'd appreciate the cab even more if we were Randy Johnson. ■



2010 Ram 2500 Laramie Crew Cab



POWER WAGON LOGBOOK

- This thing is a beast, but we mean that in a good way. The hood is expansive, almost seeming to run uphill. The mirrors are BIG.
- We stash our gear in the middle console, which is very spacious. Then we rotate that up because we prefer elbow room to elbow rest (and all spills inside). This is the first vehicle we've driven in a long time with a window at good elbow height. The truck offers a very commanding view of the road.
- It's very powerful, accelerates well and cruises very comfortably right at 65. Basic daily handling is good. Pulled out of a parking lot space with a darn tight left turn to clear a curb and exit with no trouble.
- The automatic column shifter's long arm feels flimsy, traveling somewhat to front and rear as well as up and down.
- There are 12v power ports all over this thing, in the console, the center stack, surely more in the back. There's a 115v 150w outlet. You can definitely do your work in here. We like the idea of bringing your own gear and plugging it in, rather than a fully integrated manufacturer interface. 12v ports are identified with either a key or battery icon, so you know where you can get a charge while parked and off.
- We had several negative notes on suspension, from the first driveway curb seeming soft and floaty for a big, tough truck, same in the first two blocks, to "bounce bounce bounce" on a freeway ramp. Coming to a stop from 5 mph, it sways fore and aft like a big '60s sedan. Soft in some ways, it's stiff enough that we can hardly change the radio on the touchscreen.
- We also had numerous negatives on the brakes. At our first local turn, going 25 mph if that, brakes felt notably insufficient. Ditto in a small traffic circle. We called them scary. As we got used to them they weren't AS bad, but after just about anything else they felt inadequate. Noted as "the mushiest brakes we've felt in a long time, like three stages of mush to try to stop."
- Axle settings: front-rear-lock, rear lock, axle unlock. It arrived in front-rear lock, normally for ice or off-road where there is drivetrain slippage. Unlock gave us considerable axle hop. So we put it back in front-rear lock. Turning, it skittered like mad. Transfer case shifter on the floor does not match the manual. Tough to budge, we finally ensure it's in 2-HI. Seems primitive.
- We heard this was a long-term test vehicle, so perhaps it's seen heavy action, although it has lower than 8000 miles on it.
- We wonder if there is a combination of settings for suspension, 4wd and axles just the way we want things, but wish there were a better ride right out of the box.

THE ALL-NEW SRX: BRAND EMPHASIS IN A SMALLER PACKAGE



BY JOE SAGE WITH BARBARA AND BILL SCHAFER

We recently drove the new SRX Turbo for a week, while our colleagues Barbara and Bill Schaffer had driven the regular V6 model shortly before. Bill and Barbara loved their SRX.

"Cadillac's second generation SRX has it all," they noted. "This new smaller crossover is a major head turner with a striking adaption of the signature Cadillac design language, and that's just the start." Barbara and Bill gave the Cadillac SRX high marks across the board. "The SRX is truly luxurious and unique for a midsize crossover," they continue. "What we appreciate is the effort Cadillac engineers have put into making these cars perform and handle so well."

We received the top-of-the-line SRX Turbo in Premium trim level, with high expectations. Our take was mixed.

The SRX came to market in 2004 as one of the first vehicles to wear Cadillac's distinctive Art and Science design threads. But unique styling with good performance and handling were not enough, as sales figures for this early crossover were modest. For 2010, the SRX is all new and smaller than the original, but with more dramatic styling atop a new platform and drivetrain.

We could suggest that the DNA of the prior SRX has split into two: the new SRX and the CTS wagon.

The previous-generation SRX was rear-wheel drive, using the same platform as the CTS. The new SRX platform has a front-wheel-drive basis, four-wheel independent suspension with a continuously variable real-time damping system, StabiliTrak electronic stability control, and optional all-wheel drive on most models. It shares its platform and some elements with the Chevrolet Equinox and GMC Terrain, but there is no confusing the three. The SRX has a dramatic wedge shape accented by its vertical headlights and almost fin-like taillights that pay homage to Cadillac heritage. Exterior design elements include a slim spoiler on the rear deck, the vent on the front fenders and a sweptback roofline.

The SRX comes in four trim levels, with a Turbo option on the top two. Most versions are available in both front-wheel and all-wheel drive, with the base model in FWD only and the Turbo in AWD only. The basic version, FWD-only, starts at \$34,655. AWD versions of the other trim levels start at \$39,905 for the Luxury Collection, \$45,495 for Performance and \$48,040 for Premium (FWD versions are about \$2400-\$3600 less). The Turbo Performance model (AWD only) stickers at \$49,315, while the Turbo Premium model (AWD) stickers at \$51,860. Our test Turbo AWD Premium showed a slightly lower base, added a \$1295 rear-seat entertainment system, and with delivery stickered at \$53,480.

Standard power for all but the Turbo SRX is a 265-hp, direct injection DOHC 3.0-liter V6 (a smaller version of the award-winning 3.6-liter used in the CTS) with a six-speed automatic transmission. "While we were a bit disappointed by the acceleration of the standard V6 SRX, it was by no means slow," noted Barbara and Bill. Enter the optional 2.8-liter V6 Turbo. Horsepower increases to 300, and torque takes a bigger jump, from 223 to 295 lb-ft.

EPA fuel economy ratings for the standard 3.0-liter engine are 18/25 mpg city/highway (FWD) and 17/23 (AWD). The Turbo AWD rates 15/23 mpg city/highway.

The interior's horizontal lines are punctuated by a



badge-like center stack trimmed in brushed aluminum. Elegant Sapele wood trim graces the steering wheel and upper doors. French stitching accents the dash, door panels and seats of the hand-cut-and-sewn interior. The seats, with available heat and ventilation, are firm, comfortable and supportive during spirited driving. Luxury touches can include leather seating, tilt and telescoping steering wheel, XM radio and navigation with voice recognition and eight-inch touch screen, rear-view camera, 20-inch wheels, sunroof, Bluetooth, adaptive remote start and Adaptive Forward Lighting that turns with steering. The top entertainment system has a 40-gig hard drive that integrates with the navigation system to provide real-time traffic and weather data.

While Bill and Barbara's impressions of the non-turbo SRX were all tops, we found ourselves on more of a rollercoaster relationship with the SRX Turbo.

We had started out asking ourselves, what makes this a Cadillac? It does have decent fitments, and we have a Cadillac crest staring at us, but are form and function much different in a Kia Sorento, at less than half the price? Conversely, if you want Cadillac luxury, the Escalade starts at \$63,445 versus \$34,655 for the SRX, but our deluxe SRX was \$53,480. Then again, when gas hits \$4 again, the SRX gains advantage.

We also found ourselves at first thinking the old SRX may have been preferable, a little larger and with rear-wheel drive. But that didn't last long. Each time we saw one drive by, we reminded ourselves of one thing GM's pretty good at: when they update styling, e.g. when they've completely redone the Suburban, in no time at all you realize they've hit the nail on the head, and the past model quickly shows its age. The more we compared, the more we acknowledged that with the new SRX, they've definitely made a big improvement.

Parked next to a 15-year-old Jeep Grand Cherokee, the SRX was a study in evolution. Its size is visually comparable while its style is lightyears advanced. From a 3/4 rear view, if it didn't have a spoiler, it would be close to the form-function of the BMW X6 and Acura ZDX.

Ultimately, we did discover the new SRX's charm. \$53,000 is a lot to spend, and it's not hard to work up to that price. Conversely, there are lots of SRX models at considerably less cost. But if you want the Cadillac of midsize crossovers, with the new SRX, you will get it. Even if some of it amounts to badging, brand image is important, and you will appreciate your Cadillac. ■

SRX TURBO LOGBOOK

STYLE

- We started out thinking that without its badges the SRX might be equivalent to a Kia Sorento, and we started out thinking the old SRX was more of a Cadillac. We ended up, however, thinking the old SRX was notably dated, the new size will prove more and more desirable, and the badging does represent something. Final logbook entry calls the SRX "a nicely-carved little nugget."

- There seem to be too many teams working on too many interior details: the integration of materials and finishes is lacking.

PERFORMANCE

- Six-speed automatic shifts incessantly; seemed uneven at low speeds, straining through the first couple of gears; then it passed through four gears in a block.

- Front-drive feel dominated. We often had a tough time putting this car where we pointed it. On corners, it wanted another lane several times.

- Shifter repeatedly seems to only go to neutral, when we're sure we'd gone two clicks from reverse to drive. We conclude it takes an unrefined, extra heavy touch.

FEATURES

- Closed the shield on the glass roof. Still only 70° out, but glad of that option for summer. But it makes the interior more claustrophobic, which is probably why it's there.

- Rearview mirror's image area is so small but its OnStar frame is so big, it blocks significant upper front view.

- Backup camera slow to rise to upright position; likely you'll proceed without it.

- Audio: too few radio presets; requires a teeny thumb for buttons at edge of screen, takes attention off the road; the interface is a circle with many labeled buttons all around, so you have to read it to work it; sound quality not too great, no comparison with rockin' CTS-V also in this issue.

- HVAC: hard to get comfortable, needed it at 64° (in 70s weather). Turn it up a degree or two and it shuts off. Couldn't find temp/airflow comfort during our week. Needed to turn it on manually to 'auto' every time.

- Headlight switch is a cheezy little rubbery knob; on auto, to turn it off, you swing it all the way then it bounces back.

- Keyless lock upon entering takes a double yank, unlike most one-touch keyless handles; exiting always left us uncertain.

- Something makes a racket over a speed bump, like the back seat isn't secured.

- Parked briefly with foot on the brake and vehicle in D produces a strange noise like slipping bands in an old automatic.

- Some issues with locks, shifter and A/C were noted as inconsistent, a half-plus, but making things harder to resolve. —JS



Q5 ÷ Q7 = 71.43%

SMALLER AUDI SUV SCORES BIG IN SEVERAL CATEGORIES

By Joe Sage



Audi became the first car company in the US to sell 100% of its gasoline engines with FSI direct injection technology beginning with its 2010 models. Audi FSI direct injection technology was introduced in 2000 at Le Mans and the American Le Mans Series with the R8 FSI prototype race car. It first came to US consumers in late 2004 in the 2005 Audi A6 3.2 FSI, and the list continued to grow. The Audi Q5's 270-hp 3.2 V6 FSI direct injection engine, quattro all-wheel drive and six-speed Tiptronic transmission deliver 243 lb-ft of torque at 3000 rpm; 0-to-60 acceleration time is 6.7 seconds.

Much ink and breath has been devoted to whether some vehicles are small SUVs or crossovers; Audi uses both terms. The Audi Q5 belongs to the IHG (Import High Group) Small SUV segment, which has been forecast to grow dramatically over the next few years as more buyers choose luxury crossovers over luxury sedans.

When the Audi Q7—a stunning combination of power, performance, style and form, which we drove at launch—was introduced, it was a late foray into the SUV market for the Ingolstadt automaker, who had counted on quattro AWD in general and their Audi all-road wagon in particular to fill the gap. By that time, the small SUV market had grown substantially, and the crossover category was coming online. Even at that point, we pressed Audi engineers about a possible Q5, but they were mum. Introduced in 2009, here it is.

Having been thoroughly impressed with the Q7, we were sorry not to be blown away by the Q5, since a smaller size was, in many ways, the one thing the Q7 was lacking for many buyers. We found the body style to be truncated, compared with the Q7's impressive stem-to-stern sweep. That perception probably contributed to what turned out to be our erroneous impression of a short wheelbase while assessing the Q5's handling. It



turns out the Q5 in fact brags about its long wheelbase (and wide body) compared to others in its category—best in class, in fact. Short front and rear overhangs are a key factor in this perceived paradox. What seems stubby from some angles seems a “sporty and muscular stance” from others, to use Audi's own words.

The overall exterior experience is certainly not lacking, with standard 18-inch wheels sporting 235/60 all-season tires, full body monochromatic paint (note the door handles), LED taillights, and aluminum exterior trim.

Competitive Audi bragging points include EPA fuel economy ratings of 18 mpg city / 23 city / 20 combined, a best-in-class 4,400-pound towing capacity (others tow 3,500 lbs or less) and that long wheelbase.

The third generation MMI (multi-media interface), a widely recognize better implementation of the madness that began with BMW's original iDrive) further evolves

AUDI Q5 LOGBOOK NOTES

- Solid Audi look and feel in a very convenient size and package. We still love the Q7.
- Tracking felt a little squirrely for a quattro, perhaps from wide tires and short wheelbase? We change engine/gearbox settings from comfort to dynamic, and steering/suspension from dynamic to comfort. Better immediately, to our taste, and very peppy.
- Backup camera, already about the best in the industry, has a cool new 'ghost' top view of the vehicle that shows what it's beeping about (e.g. the vehicle in the next parking spot), reducing anxiety about the unknown.
- Large glass roof and minimal screen suggest a ceramic tint for any Arizonan.

3D navigation with joystick control, updated graphic clarity, SIRIUS artist/title preview, SIRIUS traffic-based navigation, voice-based input for everything from destination to whether you're hungry, need coffee or need cash, based on which it will point to the nearest options.

Audi Drive Select helps the driver customize engine/throttle mapping, transmission shift characteristics, steering, and suspension (see logbook notes). Four operating modes—Comfort, Automatic, Dynamic and Individual—allow a custom response. The quattro AWD implementation is rear-biased, 40/60. An ESP system even recognizes when the roof rail crossbars are in place and adjusts accordingly handling accordingly.

Interior amenities include 3-zone climate control, a high degree of refinement you're lucky to find in a full-size 7-seater. Seats are leather throughout, the front seats have standard 12-way power, and the rear seats (40/60 split, with a large center pass-through) recline and slide for a host of layouts. The attention to interior storage extends to 1-liter bottle holders in each door.

Blending four cars into one, Audi drive select adapts the dynamics of the Audi Q5 to suit the desired driving experience. The system controls the adaptive suspension, the dynamic steering, the transmission shift characteristics, and the engine response.

The Audi Q5 was named a 2009 Top Safety Pick by Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) and earned the highest US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) grades for both front and side impact crash testing, five-star ratings for driver and passenger protection in frontal crash tests, and five-star ratings for front and rear protection in side impact crash tests.

Awards for the Audi Q5 extend beyond safety.

In November, over 100,000 readers of German motor magazine *Auto Zeitung* voted on 370 models in 27 categories, crowning the Audi Q5 first place in off-road vehicles. (The Europe-only A5 Sportback and R8 Spyder won their categories, as well, and the A3 Cabriolet, Audi S5, Audi R8 and Audi A5 Cabriolet were each runners-up in their categories, with the Audi A6 and A3 garnering third place wins.) Overall, the Audi brand also won the poll's Image Report award, for the sixth time in a row.

In January the "Best Cars of 2010" readers' poll conducted by the *Auto Motor und Sport (ams)* magazine named the Audi Q5 first place in its category. (The Audi A4 and R8 Spyder also took firsts, and the Audi A3, A6 and R8 coupe took seconds in their categories.) This was the 34th time that the magazine had conducted this poll, with almost 100,000 readers casting their votes for 326 models in 10 different categories.

Some 25,000 readers of *Off-Road Magazine* cast their votes for favorites, selecting from 97 models in eight categories. In February, they chose the Q5 as the off-road vehicle of the year in the SUV category. (The Audi Q7 took third place in the luxury SUV category.)

The Audi Q5 is available in three packages: Premium, Premium Plus and Prestige. The base price for the Premium Q5 3.2 quattro is \$37,350. Our test Q5 added the Prestige package for \$11,500 (including panorama sunroof, xenon lights, power features galore, upgraded audio, 19" wheels, advanced key, backup camera, navigation, side assist and more), Audi Drive Select for \$2,950 and the S-line package for \$2,150. With \$825 destination charge, the total came to \$54,775. ■

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THE SUM OF ITS PARTS?



BMW X6 xDRIVE 35i by Barbara and Bill Schaffer

Embarking on a five-day road trip with a 14-year-old and a 16-year-old, it became necessary for us to find a vehicle capable of carrying us all comfortably for a week on the road. Checking the lists of available vehicles in the northwest press fleets, we decided on the BMW X6 xDrive 35i Sport Activity Coupe™.

We wanted to make sure we were well entertained with a fun-to-drive vehicle that could also comfortably carry the four of us and our luggage. With its four-place seating, 25.6 cubic feet of cargo and the 300-hp twin-turbo in-line six-cylinder engine under the hood, the X6 seemed best for the task.

The stylish coupe-like roofline of the X6 and command seating position was great for the first days of our trip. We know we turned some heads as we rumbled into parking lots with the distinctive X6.

SUVs often require climbing up and into for a shorter person, while low-riding cars are harder to get up out of, but the X6's higher seat made getting in and out of the vehicle much easier for Barbara.

The X6 gave a confident and comfortable feeling driving on the narrow winding mountain roads. Our only complaints were that the navigation system could not be programmed while driving, even by the passenger. And the steering, although precise, was heavy and required more effort than we normally like. We did appreciate the excellent backup camera system and Park Distance Control, because the sloping roofline, while good-looking, provides poor rear visibility.

The X6 is the first BMW to get Dynamic Performance Control (DPC), which channels power to an individual rear wheel when more traction is needed, rather than to both wheels as on many other four-wheel drive vehicles. DPC improves steering response, stability and agility.

The X6 comes with a choice of twin-turbo engines. The top model, the xDrive 50i is an awesome, 4.4-liter, 400-hp V-8 (see logbook sidebar). This test vehicle, the xDrive 35i, had the ultra smooth 300-hp in-line, 3.0-liter six-cylinder engine. Even driving all four wheels and nearly 5,000 pounds, the six-cylinder engine accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in just 6.5 seconds and has a top speed of 130 mph. While performance was far better than we needed for the teen tour, it provided that extra kick (and safety) for passing slow-moving vehicles on two-lane roads. Both engines are attached to a six-speed automatic transmission and BMW's unique shifter with wheel-mounted shift paddles.

EPA fuel economy estimates for the 35i are 15 mpg city and 20 mpg highway. We actually averaged 19.7 mpg for the 700 miles of the first half of our trip, and that's probably because Barbara was driving the first few days on local excursions.

The X6 is a beautiful road vehicle, cornering flat, stopping quickly when critters attempted suicide in front of us, riding comfortably and quietly on a variety of road surfaces.

The BMW X6 falls solidly into the premium vehicle

KEEP RIGHT >>

X6 xDRIVE 50i LOGBOOK

PERFORMANCE

- The X6 50i runs up through its gears very fast, hitting five or so in no time at all on a surface street, a very short 2nd but a very long 3rd. Net effect is extremely smooth.
- Power from the 50i's 400 horses is solid from the get-go. But at slower speeds and in turns, it's a little uneven, even lurches.
- We note early that steering seems a lot more solid and sure than most anything else we've driven lately. We later note it does not always track well in its freeway lane, concluding its power and its performance tires work best when used aggressively.
- We continue to love the power when we have the room to use it, very smooth, very nice. But we continue to note an uncomfortable burst in neighborhoods or in tight traffic. It needs a gentle touch at times.
- Dash readout states 17.5 mpg against EPA estimated 12/18 while running around town where we'd expect low efficiency.
- We note the suspension is smooth on speed bumps, even at 25 mph. Usually.

FEATURES

- We like the "joystick" shifter, liked it in the X5 too, but with a hand on it lightly, just waiting to proceed, a little unintended

Logbook (cont'd) >>

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category, with prices starting at \$56,725, including destination charge, for the xDrive35i. It's well equipped with a high level of features including leather seating and all the power equipment we expect to find on a premium luxury brand. Our test vehicle added more than \$12,000 in options including a premium audio system, keyless entry and start, and DVD-based voice-activated navigation system. With all the available options, the XDrive 35i tops out at over \$83,000. The xDrive 50i has a base price of \$67,475 and peaks at over \$91,000. A 555-hp X6 M version debuted at the recent New York International Auto Show and should reach US dealers this fall.

There's a lot to like about the X6, but it did have a couple of things that took a little getting used to. For example, the automatic rear liftgate only opens partially, which Bill's head discovered on two occasions. We assume this is to protect it from lifting up and hitting a garage door. We had to learn to push up the door, to avoid the bump.

The X6 still uses the previous generation iDrive to control various vehicle functions including audio, navigation and climate. This system sometimes requires multiple menu choices to achieve the desired result. The new generation recently installed in the new 7 Series sedan is much more intuitive and efficient.

We like the styling, comfortable interior and drivability of the X6. The price is steep, but it's a vehicle that you won't see in every parking lot.

It served us beautifully on our tour.

The X6 offers a fresh and sexy coupe-like styling that sets it apart from almost everything except for the Infiniti FX models. It's well styled and extremely well built, but after a week in the X6, we found our own tastes leaning toward the slightly smaller, but just as roomy, BMW X3 Sport Activity Vehicle. ■

(CONT'D) X6 50i LOGBOOK

pressure can shift it from D to N.

- We find humor in the fact that with an included nav system, the set of printed manuals includes a road atlas.
- The TV screen in back makes our elbow keep thinking the console is open.
- Too many steps at shutdown: foot on the brake, put it in P by squeezing the button on the side and pressing the button on the top, turn radio off, pull up the e-parking brake. Startup is much the same. The backup camera is slow: put it in reverse, generally give up waiting for the screen and just go.

STYLE

- The X6 was greeted by many a critic as the answer to a question nobody asked. We find it hard to shake the thought. Nonetheless, Acura ZDX and others follow suit.
- From 3/4 left rear, with the level-line of the wheel arches and the rising beltline, it has cooler dynamics than overall. They may have missed the styling by just a hair.
- We question the point of having an SUV, which normally has a good practical height but on this has us really duck our neck to just step into, like a low-slung coupe. Once inside, we ask why you want to carry all this hulk and bulk around when you have this relatively tiny greenhouse?
- Passed a Pontiac Aztek. Hmm.
- Behind a tall Lexus GX, we think there may indeed be something about the SUV format from some angles that just begs to have the back lopped off like the X6. —JS

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THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



MINI will build a crossover, called the Countryman. What is different about this MINI, however, is that it is based on the all-wheel drive version of the BMW 1 Series platform. That theoretically means it could handle engines up to the V8 from the BMW M3, but more likely it will get the turbocharged four-cylinder engine BMW is working on. Evidently, BMW and the aftermarket MINI experts at John Cooper works are planning to help a private team campaign the car in the World Rally Championship.

Buick has been seen testing a new smaller sedan based on the upcoming Chevrolet Cruze platform. The Buick will have its own unique sheet metal and a longer body. Yet unnamed, in public, the little Buick is expected to go on sale in 2011 as a 2012 model.

The next-gen (2011) **Infiniti** QX56 full-size SUV is on a new body-on-frame chassis derived from the original QX chassis and shared with the Nissan Patrol, the company's global SUV. Carlos Tavares, Nissan's chairman of the Americas, said the company plans to phase out the full-size Nissan Armada SUV. The Armada shares mechanicals with the QX56. Nissan said they recognize that this full-size segment is very small, but still very much necessary for owners who pull a trailer, haul large loads or have large families.

Nvidia Corp., of Santa Clara CA has developed a navigation system that displays Google Earth images so realistic it appears as though the vehicle is driving through a photograph of the neighborhood. The system, developed in conjunction with Audi, will debut in the upcoming A8 Audi flagship sedan. Audi has not decided if the US models will get the new technology, however.

Mercedes-Benz plans to move production of all C-Class sedans for North American sales to their plant in Vance, Alabama, where they expect to produce about 80,000 a year. In addition to being built closer to the buyers, Ernst Lieb, CEO of Mercedes-Benz USA, said it will help protect the company from fluctuations in currency exchange rates. The plant, near Tuscaloosa, currently builds Mercedes crossovers and SUVs: M-Class, R-Class and GL-Class.



Watch for massive changes in the **Chrysler** lineup when new models start rolling into showrooms. "We've rolled up our sleeves and have torn apart that architecture," Fiat Chief Executive Sergio Marchionne told the Detroit Free Press. "You'll see a completely different animal. We're having a discussion about what name this animal should have. The jury is still out." He indicated that familiar nameplates like the Chrysler Sebring and Dodge Avenger will likely disappear as the Fiat and Chrysler brands are merged.

BMW is bringing a six-cylinder engine back to the 740i sedan for 2011. A six-cylinder version was offered when the 7 Series was first introduced and was last offered in the 1992 model year. The new



six, is a 315-hp, twin turbocharged 3.0-liter in-line six-cylinder engine with a six-speed automatic transmission. The new engine powers both the new 740i and longer wheelbase 740Li.

Drivers of 2011 **Ford**, **Lincoln** and **Mercury** vehicles equipped with voice-activated navigation will now be able to route into nearly 2,500 miles of highway and interstate diamond or HOV (high occupancy vehicle) lanes by using the nav system's new lane routing preference features.



Based on the Granite concept rolled out at the North American International Auto show in Detroit in January, it appears **GMC** may be getting ready to take on the Kia Soul, Scion xB and Nissan Cube. Defined as an urban utility vehicle, the Granite has something of an industrial and boxy look. It is powered by a turbocharged 1.4-liter four-cylinder engine with a six-speed transmission. The four doors open out like a set of French doors on each side, with no center pillar. There are no hints about production at this time.

Two **Mercury** dealers who talked to an *Automotive News* reporter after the Ford meeting at the recent NADA (National Automobile Dealers Association) convention, said Mercury will get a redesigned version of the upcoming Ford Focus and it will be called the Tracer. They say the car will reach showrooms by 2011. The Tracer was previously sold by Mercury from 1987 through 1999.

The steering column in the new **Ferrari** 458 Italia has no stalks. Instead, all the important functions are buttons on the face of the three-spoke steering wheel. Even the turn signals are on the wheel, mounted easily accessible on the front of the two upper spokes where they can be easily activated by the driver's thumbs. Other controls on the steering wheel face include the engine start button, headlamps, wipers, suspension settings, and Ferrari's signature Manettino "little hand" that changes the vehicle dynamics.

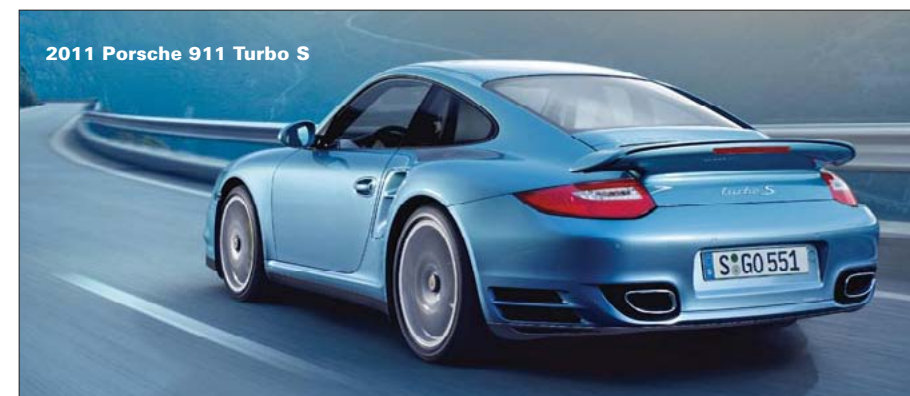
Indian automaker **Tata** (who also owns Jaguar and Land Rover) announced they will be bringing the Tata Nano to the US in 2012. The Nano is now the world's cheapest car, selling in India from as low as \$2,200 to a typical "loaded" price

of \$3,300. It is difficult to determine a price for the US model due to the US requirements and tastes, but speculation has a base price in the \$4,000 to \$5,000 range. A European model will go on sale in 2011.

Cadillac will offer rear-wheel-drive hybrids in the future by using the next-gen-



eration Two Mode Hybrid powertrain. Developed originally for GM trucks and SUVs, the next Two Mode is expected to be 25 percent smaller, 20 percent more powerful, lighter and more affordable. According to Tom Stephens, GM vice chairman of



global product operations, the new system will likely be expanded from trucks to the next generation Cadillac CTS and to the smaller planned ATS.

A new lineup of heavy-duty **General Motors** vehicles will have the capability to use B20 diesel fuel. The B20 is a blend of 20-percent biodiesel and 80-percent conventional diesel fuel that helps lower carbon dioxide emissions and lessens dependence on petroleum. The new 6.6-liter Duramax turbo diesel has been substantially revised to use the blended fuel. The new engine is an option in the 2011 heavy duty Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra pickups and the Chevrolet Express and GMC Savana full-size vans.

Porsche is expanding the Panamera lineup with the addition of a V6 powered version in October. The new engine is a 300-hp, 3.6-liter with Direct Fuel Injection driving the rear-wheels through Porsche's PDK seven-speed double-clutch gearbox, as standard equipment. The V6 is priced at \$75,375, including destination charge. That is \$15,400 less than the V8-powered Panamera S.

The latest iteration of the **Porsche** 911 Turbo S is another exercise in extreme performance. For 2011, the 3.8-liter boxer engine gets another power boost, up to 530 hp and 516 lb.ft. of torque. Available now with Porsche's super fast shifting PDK seven-speed double clutch transmission, Porsche estimates a 0-to-62 mph acceleration time of 3.3 seconds and fuel economy of 24 mpg highway. When the coupe and convertible versions arrive in the US this May, expect the base prices to be \$160,050 and \$171,150 respectively. ■

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

UPCOMING FEATURES

2011 Mercedes-Benz E-Class Cabriolet launch



Ford Virtual Reality laboratories, Dearborn



2010 MINI John Cooper Works Convertible



Sunday Night Euro Meet on Mill by Tuning Gruppe



Photo: Randall Bohi

2011 Volvo C70 hardtop convertible



The Great American Run



Photo: Cannonball Run World Events



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