

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 1  
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2018

**AUCTION WEEK  
NASCAR / INDYCAR  
LA AUTO SHOW  
NEW JEEP WRANGLER  
NEW KIA STINGER  
LYN ST JAMES AT THE  
BONNEVILLE SALT FLATS  
NEW MEXICO ROAD TRIP  
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**COVER:** This 1955 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible was sold with no reserve at RM Sotheby's in Arizona last January at \$88,000. Recipient of a full nut-and-bolt restoration in the late 1990s, the car featured a 250-hp 331 cu.in. OHV V8, four-speed Hydra-Matic, coil spring independent front suspension, live rear axle with semi-elliptical leaf springs and four-wheel power hydraulic drum brakes. A dramatic Eldorado convertible may have been the 1955 Cadillac most people lusted after, but this basic Series 62 was the convertible that more of them bought. At nearly 8,150 units, though, it was still rare compared to the sedans and Coupe de Ville hardtops. Photo: Joe Sage



Randall Bohl

Welcome to January in Arizona, when car collectors and high rollers from all over the world, along with thousands of other motorheads, descend upon the Valley for what has become a collection of seven auctions selling many hundreds of cars (and automobilia) during a nine-day period (or more if you're consigning)—to see, bid on and, in some cases, drive home in their dreams. The experience ranges from the huge "county fair" atmosphere of Barrett-Jackson, to the accessible vehicles of Silver Auctions (now under new ownership), to five others that are sure to set many a new global record for price, rarity and bidding battles. With their placement at the turn of the calendar, these auctions set trends for the year. Check our overview for schedules and locations.

New vehicle launches and drives in this issue include two that have been among the most highly anticipated: the Kia Stinger, a performance four-door GT taking this brand in yet another new and powerful direction; and the latest Jeep Wrangler, all new from top to bottom while meeting the challenge of preserving its distinctive character and capabilities. **Dave Stall** takes us for a spin in the segment-busting Polaris Slingshot. And if you need just a few more cars, check out our highlights from the LA Auto Show.

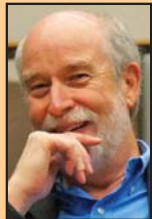
When it's midwinter in Arizona, spring and summer can't be far behind. We bring you several motorsports features, but not all about racing. There's big news at Arizona's biggest track, some about races (a fall NASCAR recap, plus spring NASCAR and the IndyCar Phoenix Grand Prix both coming up), a look at their \$178 million redevelopment progress, and a spotlight on their new name: ISM Raceway. Plus, **Lyn St James** takes us to the Bonneville Salt Flats for a speed record attempt—but time at the Salt Flats is always about much more than just that.

We also take a road trip with **Tyson Hugie** to southwest New Mexico's Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument near Silver City.

Enjoy the ride.

**Joe Sage** - Publisher/ Executive Editor

Photo: Brenda Priddy



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Laguna Seca Raceway ribbon-cutting 1957

▼ On November 9, 1957, the ribbon was cut at **Laguna Seca Raceway** at the start of its inaugural event, the eighth annual Pebble Beach Road Races, held November 9-10. Sixty years later, the iconic road course (now Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca) celebrated its diamond anniversary. The inaugural event was a continuation of racing through the forest at nearby Pebble Beach that had begun in 1950 and ended six years later, after the event took a tragic turn. The need for a safer course, combined with the popularity of the races and their financial benefit to the community, had impressed military authorities at Fort Ord. Enter a group of civic minded businessmen willing to donate time and money, and in mid-1957 the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP) was formed. With the Monterey Chamber of Commerce, they negotiated a five-year deal for a \$3,000 payment to the Army for use of land connected to Fort Ord. On August 7, 1957, a lease was signed. SCRAMP began fundraising and collected \$125,000 for track construction that began the first week of September. Amazingly, just 60 days after starting, the track was completed in time to host the first race in November, where 100 entries were received and 35,000 spectators attended. In the 60 years that followed, the track has undergone changes and improvements to expand to an 11-turn, 2.238-mile circuit known for its famous Corkscrew—a hard-left, hard-right turn with a five-and-a-half story drop in eleva-

tion. The facility has hosted Can Am, Trans Am, Indy Car, and 500cc Motorcycle Grands Prix during the height of their popularities. The annual Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion in August is the largest vintage racing event of its kind in North America and was runnerup (to UK's Goodwood) for Motorsport Event of the Year honors at the 2017 Octane Awards.

▼ Joining the DB11 Coupe launched last



Aston Martin DB11 Volante

year (see our May/June 2017 issue), the new **Aston Martin** DB11 Volante—billed as “the ultimate convertible Sports GT”—is powered by a new 4.0-liter twin-turbo V8 and has extensive interior personalization options. The DB11 Volante is built around the all-new bonded aluminum structure first seen in the DB11 Coupe. Lighter and more rigid than the model it replaces, the DB11 Volante has been engi-

neered to deliver greater levels of performance and handling, along with the increased refinement, comfort and interior space of a grand tourer. The Volante's three-stage powertrain and chassis modes work with an 8-speed paddle-shift automatic, electric power steering and limited-slip differential with dynamic torque vectoring to configure the car's responses and behavior for road, weather conditions or the driver's mood. Creature comforts such as a heated steering wheel encourage all-season open-air motoring, while a fabric convertible top with enhanced acoustic and insulation materials stands ready to protect you from extremes of weather or wind noise. The top takes just 14 seconds to lower, 16 to raise and can be operated remotely or at speeds of up to 31 mph with a 31-mph headwind, all while delivering a 20 per cent increase in trunk volume compared to the outgoing DB9 Volante. Max Szwaj, Aston Martin Chief Technical Officer, says, “The challenge of creating a convertible car is retaining structural and dynamic integrity. To protect the former you need strength and

rigidity, but to preserve the latter you need to keep weight to a minimum. With the DB11 Volante we have maximized the advantages of the DB11's all-new bonded structure to underpin our new Volante with a structure that's 26 kg lighter and 5 per cent stiffer than its predecessor.” Orders are now being taken for delivery this spring. Recommended retail price in the US is \$216,495.

▼ The new 2018 **Buick** LaCrosse Avenir—the latest in the upscale Avenir sub-brand comparable to GMC's Denali—follows the introduction of the 2018 Enclave Avenir



2018 Buick LaCrosse Avenir

last fall. Avenir has its own styling cues, extensive standard features and premium materials exclusive to the trim level. “Nine out of ten LaCrosse buyers are choosing one of the top two trim levels...signaling they want more from Buick,” said Duncan Aldred, VP of Global Buick and GMC. “With even more content and an elegant look, Avenir adds a unique name and appearance for those who want the best of our attainable luxury.” LaCrosse Avenir's design details create a commanding road presence, with details channeled from award-winning Buick concept cars—an upper and lower 3D mesh grille with chrome wings, Avenir script badging on front doors, and exclusive 19-inch pearl nickel or available 20-inch midnight silver wheels. Details inside include a chestnut color theme, embroidered front headrests and Avenir-scripted sills. Options for other LaCrosse models are standard on Avenir: a 310-hp V6, nine-speed automatic, navigation, premium Bose Centerpoint Surround Sound audio and a panoramic moonroof. Options include an ebony interior, intelligent twin-clutch AWD and a Dynamic Drive Package with continuous real-time dampening and a suite of advanced safety features. LaCrosse Avenir arrives in early 2018.

▼ **Buick** is adding eAssist light electrification to the 2018 LaCrosse. The combination of an electric motor with Buick's latest 2.5L four-cylinder engine promises quiet, refined, efficient but spirited performance. The new eAssist system provides

a 19 percent increase in city fuel economy compared to LaCrosse's V6, and its compact lithium-ion battery pack has benefits of fully electric vehicles, such as torque-assisted launch, energy-saving regenera-

tive braking and exceptionally smooth stop/start. It is now the standard LaCrosse powertrain, with starting price lowered to \$30,490. The 3.6L V6 is available on select trims. Other updates on the 2018 Buick LaCrosse include expanded availability of AWD and an all-new nine-speed automatic transmission for V6 models.

▼ **Shelby American** has announced the return of its legendary Shelby 1000. Based



Shelby 1000 track car

on the 2015 and newer Ford Mustang GT, the 1,000-hp track car was unveiled at the company's Las Vegas facility during SEMA week. The transformation begins with a replacement 5.2L supercharged V8 with traditional 90-degree crank, modified GT350 cylinder heads and a 4.5L Whipple supercharger. Equipment specific to the thousand ponies includes a new high flow fuel system, intercooler, transmission,

ECU and tuning. The Shelby 1000 has its own front fascia, hood, front fenders, rockers, quarter-panels, rear diffuser and exhaust. The car's front and rear track are widened, then a fully adjustable coil-over suspension and huge Brembo braking system are added, along with stronger spindles and hubs, hardened wheel studs, and wider wheels and tires. It has been a complex project, due to Mustang's new independent suspension front and rear, as well as its completely new chassis. While the previous generation Shelby 1000 was offered in both street and off-road configuration, a decision was made not to pursue emissions compliance on the new model: the newest generation car is purely a track star. While the debut car is based on a 2018 Mustang, the package is available for any V8 Ford Mustang since 2015. Only 50 per model year will be built, beginning in the first quarter of this year. Each car will be documented in the official Shelby Registry. Starting price for the package is \$169,995.00, not including your donor Ford Mustang GT.

▼ Scottsdale-based **Discount Tire** is expanding a decade-long relationship with **Team Penske**, upping their NASCAR sponsorship for 2018 and beyond as a primary sponsor of Brad Keselowski's No.2 Ford in

the Cup Series. Discount Tire had previously been an XFINITY Series sponsor for Penske. Under the new multiyear agreement, Discount will provide primary partnership bookends to the 2018 MENCSS season, beginning with the Daytona 500 in February and concluding with Ford Championship Weekend at Homestead-Miami

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Speedway in November. Discount will be primary sponsor of the No.2 Ford for ten races, while also continuing as a primary sponsor of the No.22 Ford Mustang in the NASCAR XFINITY Series (NXS) for multi-



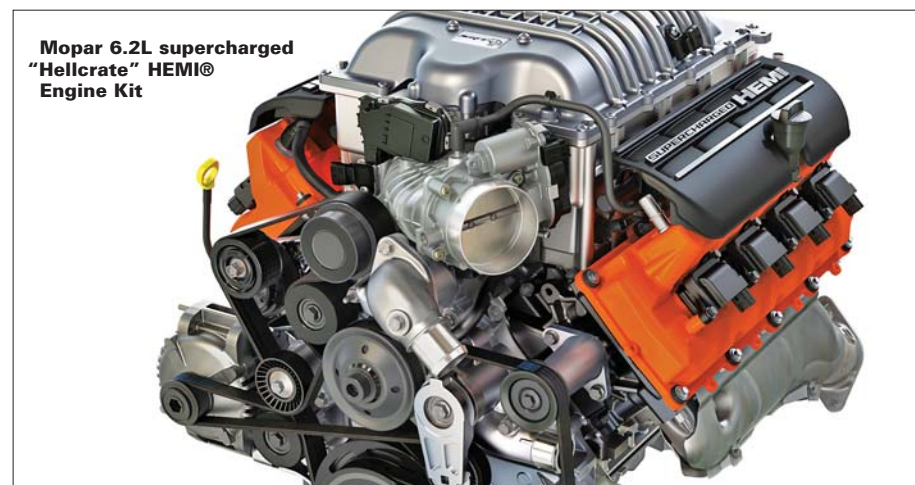
ple races in 2018 and beyond. The partnership between Discount and Team Penske began in 2010 with the No.22 NXS team that won six races and established a series record with 26 top-five finishes on its way to Keselowski's championship. In all, five Team Penske drivers have won 33 NXS races in a Discount Tire-sponsored entry, Keselowski leading the way with 23 wins. Since 2010, Discount Tire has expanded into 13 new states with 175 new stores. Team Penske drivers visit Discount Tire stores to interact with customers and staff, and participate in tire safety campaigns.

▼ Since **Bollinger Motors** revealed their electric B1 Sport Utility Truck last July, they have done off-road testing in New York's Catskill Mountains, dyno testing to validate work and acquire data, visited the Texas Truck Rodeo (the only all-electric truck in attendance), tested in the Colorado Rockies and tackled the red rocks of Moab. Next, they hit the SEMA Show in Las Vegas and the Los Angeles Auto Show. Bollinger revealed renderings of a 4-door version of the B1 (in orange, which will be available at launch). "It's got great proportions and kept its amazing off-road capabilities," said CEO Robert Bollinger, its designer, "since we only had to stretch the chassis by nine inches." Adding two doors creates a new overall length of 159 inches and new wheelbase of 114 inches. The truck will have the same class-leading ground clearance (15.5 in), adjustable wheel travel, approach and departure an-

gles, but a new breakover angle of 31 degrees. The 4-door vehicle adds 6 cu.ft of cargo volume for a total of 101 cu.ft. Both the 2- and 4-door variants will have the same battery options: 60 kWh or 100 kWh.

Engineering of the B1 toward production is underway, and additional specifications and information will be available soon.

▼ Responding to enthusiast demand, FCA's **Mopar** brand has a new 6.2-liter supercharged Crate HEMI® Engine Kit—nicknamed the "Hellcrate"—so custom builders and modifiers can now put 707 horsepower and 650 lb-ft of torque under the hood. The Mopar "Hellcrate" HEMI En-



gine Kit, the first-ever factory-backed supercharged 707-hp crate engine kit, was debuted at the SEMA Show. The kit includes a powertrain control module (PCM), power distribution center, engine wiring harness, chassis harness, accelerator pedal, ground jumper, oxygen sensors, charge air temperature sensors and fuel pump control module. The PCM is unlocked and set to the factory 707-hp cali-

bration. The kit is optimized for use with manual transmissions, such as the Tremec Magnum transmission kit.

▼ Ineffective feature training sessions—rushed during the shopping or purchase process, while a customer is distracted—are one reason 20 percent of vehicle technologies never get used, according to JD Power (and if you're a millennial, the rate is even higher). You don't really have time to learn everything your new car has to offer while sitting at the dealership. However, not knowing how to use the tech in your car could mean you're missing out on some great features. To provide effective tech training and be considerate of their customers' time, **Don Sanderson Ford** of Phoenix is putting a new spin on an old convenience: offering on-demand house calls aimed at providing comfortable, convenient technology training for new customers. The Don Sanderson Start Team has four members dedicated to delivering a comprehensive introduction to all of the tech features a new car has to offer, whenever and wherever a customer's schedule permits. Demand for the service grows in the weeks and months after purchase—data shows if a customer doesn't learn to use a technology within the first 30 days of having their new vehicle, odds are that

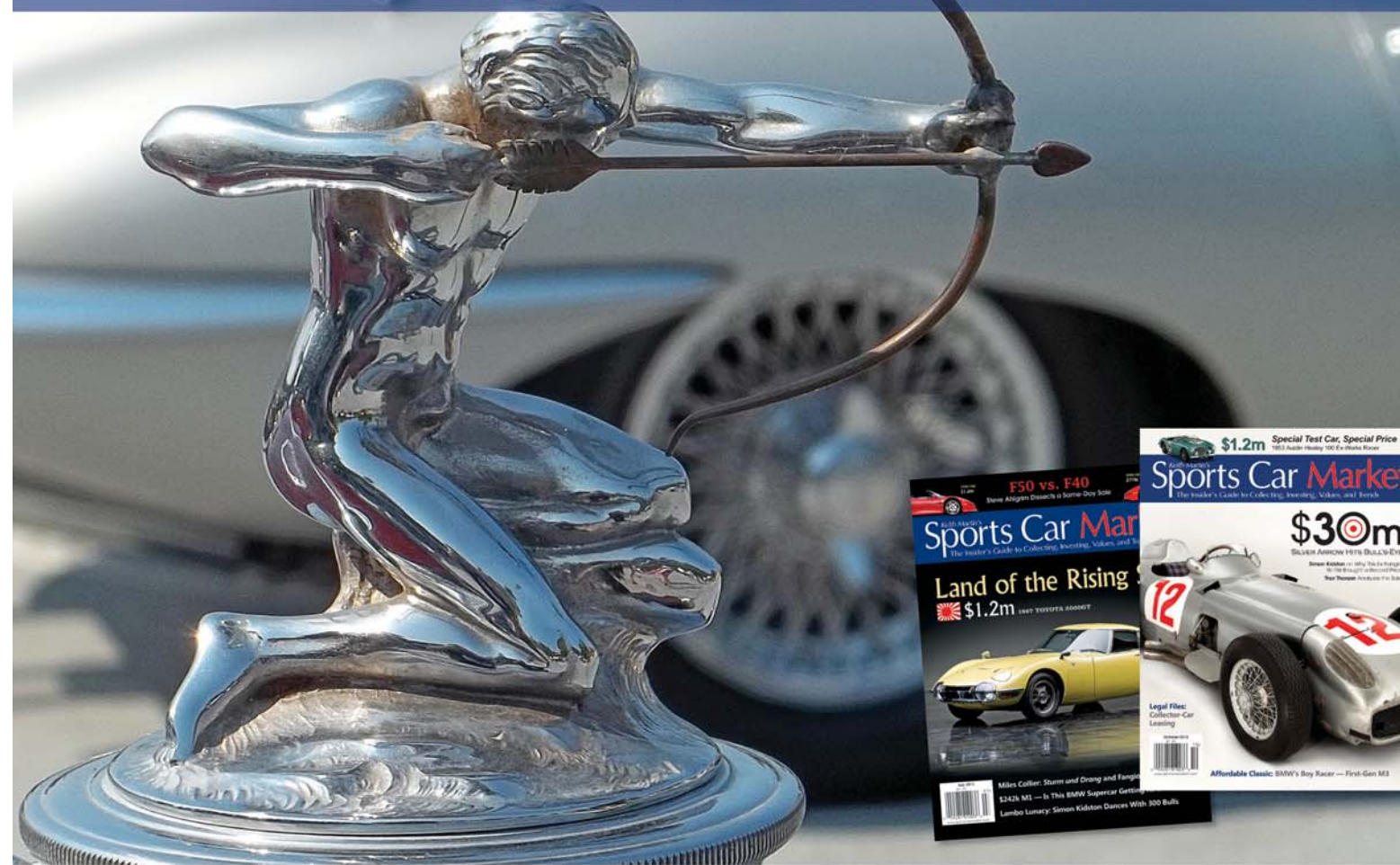
technology will go unused. "If our customers are willing to drive to us to purchase a new Ford," says Sanderson marketing director Max Sirstins, "we'll drive to them to help them enjoy it more." The Start Team at Sanderson ensures there is always at least one member in the office or in the field to meet customer demand, and members even travel statewide to provide at-home, hands-on training. ■

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# ALL OF THE ABOVE

PART MOTORCYCLE, PART CAR, PART ATV, ALL FUN - BY DAVE STALL

I have been riding motorcycles my entire life, starting when I was five years old, doing crazy moves in a dirt lot behind my house, and continuing to this day, although these days I try to ride inside the lines. As a bike enthusiast, I am always open to trying all forms of motorcycling, but back when a group of three-wheeled motorcycles came to the market, I was not a fan. It was more than just being a two-wheel purist.

Riding the three-wheel Can Am Spyder was frightening when they first came out and I was provided with a tester.

(Can Am has made huge strides, and their rides are much improved today.) Not to be outdone, Polaris came out with the Slingshot, which appeared to be a half-car-half-motorcycle love child.

I rode up from San Diego to Los Angeles on my Harley-Davidson Electra Glide Classic to pick up our tester, a Polaris Slingshot SLR. The press guy from Polaris had said I needed to wear a DOT approved helmet on the Slingshot, and riding my hog up allowed me to have a nice long ride with my helmet on. Once in LA, I received the Slingshot, got a quick walkaround and rode back to San

Diego. There, I went straight to the California Highway Patrol office to confirm that I really, really had to wear a helmet. The officer said he was not sure—they were still discussing it. I took this to mean helmet optional, of course.

Cool! So off came the helmet. I stored it in the lockable storage bin behind the driver's seat (there's another storage box behind the passenger seat, as well) and hit the road. Four miles later, I was pulled over by a Highway Patrol officer, who of course asked me where my helmet was. I said that I had just been told at the CHP office that I didn't have to wear a helmet. He then pointed out the sticker on the Slingshot that

read this vehicle is licensed as a motorcycle and you must wear a helmet. Should have listened to the press guy. (Note: In Arizona, the Slingshot is registered as an autocycle, just requires a driver's license, and we don't have that helmet law. But bear it all in mind if you drive yours to California.)

The officer let me go after I put the helmet back on. A few miles later, I found the silver lining. Without the helmet, you can't hear your passenger or the radio, but with it on, you can hear the passenger and radio clearly.

The 2017 Polaris Slingshot comes in three models: S, SL, SLR. My choice for a test ride was the top of the line SLR. (New for 2018 is an SLR LE.)

The engine comes from Chevrolet—an Ecotec 2.4-liter dual overhead camshaft four-cylinder producing 173 horsepower at 6200 rpm. It comes in at 166 pounds foot of torque. Since the Slingshot weighs in at 1749 pounds, this is a nice setup with no lack of strength when you want it. The fuel requirement is 91 octane, manufacturer recommended for maximum fuel economy and performance.

The transmission is a very efficient five-speed manual with a dry single plate clutch disc operated by hydraulics. The tuned suspension feels great on this model, as does the steering, which is rack and pinion with assist from Polaris's EPAS speed sensitive steering. The system stiffens steering input as the Slingshot gains speed, a nice improvement over the old three-wheelers. Coupled with traction control, which an experienced rider (not me) may elect to disable, the Slingshot is nothing but a fun ride, with no control or stability issues to get in the way of enjoyment.

Tires on the SLR are two different sizes. The fronts are Kenda SS-799 225/45R18s and the rear

is a Kenda SS-799 305/30R20; all three are mounted on alloy wheels, on all Slingshot models.

The Slingshot's interior has been upgraded considerably since it first came to the US. Seats have great bolstering and are easy to adjust, and dash operations are simple and easy.

Safety features include ABS (Anti-Lock Brakes) ESC (Electronic Stability Control) and Traction Control. Adequate LED lighting assists the driver during nighttime driving. These are the same kinds of safety features you would find in a car.

Is a Slingshot for you? Only one way to find out, and you don't even have to get a motorcycle license to try a Slingshot. So stop by your Slingshot dealer and take one out for a spin. Try to get up on the freeway, and remember: the longer you ride/drive it, the better you will feel getting around in an open air vehicle with almost 200 horsepower and weighing less than 2,000 pounds. If you must have a roof, Sling Mods makes a pretty cool aftermarket roof system for the Slingshot. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS: SLINGSHOT SLR

ENGINE.....	GM Ecotec 2.4L 4-cyl GDI
DRIVE BELT.....	rear carbon fiber reinforced
HP/TORQUE.....	173 hp / 166 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....	5-speed synchro/reverse
STEERING.....	speed sensitive rack & pinion
DRIVER AIDS.....	ABS, ESC, traction control
BRAKES.....	298mm vented, cast iron, alum hub
WHEELS / TIRES.....	forged aluminum
	F: 18x7.5 / 225/45R18, R: 20x11 / 305/30R20
LENGTH / WIDTH / WB.....	149.6 / 77.9 / 105.0 in
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	5.0 in
WEIGHT.....	1749 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	91 octane / 9.77 gal
MPG.....	not stated

BASE PRICE.....	S.....	\$19,999
	SL.....	25,499
	SLR.....	28,999
	SLR LE.....	30,999



(Below, left to right) The Polaris Slingshot Ride Command infotainment system (included on SL, SLR and SLR LE, optional on S trim) features a seven-inch touchscreen, phone integration, Bluetooth/USB, customizable vehicle information screens, and turn-by-turn nav (included on SLR and SLR LE; optional on S and SL). Optional black quilted comfort seats have additional cushioning, softer surfaces and distinctive stitching (\$799). Rear fenders come in two sizes, depending upon model (\$699-799). Marine compliant 200-watt RMS premium audio runs \$799.



# SPECIAL EVENTS: JANUARY AUCTIONS



## Barrett-Jackson

47th Annual Collector Car Auction Event

Nine days: Saturday, January 13 - Sunday, January 21, 2018

WestWorld, 16601 N Pima Road, Scottsdale AZ 85260 (AZ Loop 101 & FLWright Blvd)

▼ Sales of \$102.4 million at last winter's Barrett-Jackson Auction, at a 99.5-percent sell-through rate, included 40 world records from among a record 1,719 vehicles consigned. Top ten sales ran the gamut, led by a 1964 Aston Martin DB5 at \$1,485,000 and a 1960 Chevrolet Engineering Research Vehicle (CERV) 1 at \$1,320,000. The 146-vehicle Charlie Thomas Collection brought over \$1.7 million. Over 1,800 automobilia items brought over \$2.5 million. Many celebrities were among 320,000 attending. \$2.2 million was raised for charity (to date, Barrett-Jackson has raised over \$93 million). ▼ Barrett-Jackson auctions include Scottsdale, Palm Beach, Northeast at Mohegan Sun and Las Vegas. [www.barrett-jackson.com](http://www.barrett-jackson.com)



## Bonhams

7th Annual Scottsdale Auction

Thursday, Jan 18, 2018 (viewing Tuesday-Thursday, Jan 16-18)

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

▼ Bonhams' Scottsdale sale last winter, with top results from historic race cars and rare coachbuilt cars, had three of the top four sales of the week and an 82 percent sell-through rate. An Australian GT Championship-winning 1963 Jaguar E-Type Lightweight Competition set both E-Type and post-1960 Jaguar records (\$7,370,000). World records were also set by a Scuderia Ferrari 1952 Ferrari 340 America Vignale Spider competition car (\$6,380,000), a Pebble Beach multiple prize-winning 1928 Mercedes-Benz Type S 26/120/180 Supercharged Sports Tourer (\$4,812,500), a 1964 Porsche 904 GTS (\$2,310,000) and more. Ferraris continued to do well. ▼ Bonhams—since 1793—hosts a wide variety of auctions of many types worldwide all year. [www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

## Arizona January Auction Week 2018 Schedule

PREVIEW  
AUCTION

	13 Sat	14 Sun	15 Mon	16 Tues	17 Weds	18 Thurs	19 Fri	20 Sat	21 Sun
Barrett-Jackson									
Bonhams									
Gooding & Company									
RM Sotheby's									
Russo and Steele									
Silver Auctions									
Worldwide Auctioneers									



## RM Sotheby's

18th Annual Automobiles of Arizona

Thursday-Friday, Jan 18-19, 2018 (preview Weds-Fri, Jan 18-20)

Arizona Biltmore, 2400 E Missouri Ave, Phoenix AZ 85016 (24th and Camelback)

▼ A 1939 Mercedes-Benz 540 K Special Roadster (\$6,600,000) led \$53.8 million in sales at an 89 percent sell-through rate at RM Sotheby's last year. The next six sellers were all Ferrari, followed by Bugatti, Tucker and Lamborghini. Records were set by a rare Ferrari 365 GTS (\$3,602,500) and one of just two black Ferrari F50s in the US (\$3,135,000). Close behind were a Ferrari 400 Superamerica SWB Coupe Aerodinamico (\$3,080,000), a 218-mile-a-hour 2003 Ferrari Enzo hypercar (\$2,695,000), a 2013 Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Super Sport 300 (\$2,090,000) and a rare 1948 Tucker 48 (\$1,347,500). In all, 15 cars hit seven figures. ▼ RM Auctions is the official auction of Amelia Island Concours and hosts auctions in Monterey and worldwide. [www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com)



## Silver Auctions

21st Arizona January Auction

Thurs-Sunday, Jan 18-21, 2018 (check-in from Tues Jan 16) - not confirmed

We-Ko-Pa Resort & Conference Center - (AZ 87 Beeline Hwy, north of Fountain Hills)

▼ The display lot at Silver Auctions feels like the coolest random used car lot in the world. Want a '40s Jeep? Rolls-Royce? '70s 4x4 pickup? '30s sedan? Mopar, Riviera or '57 Chevy? Silver has it all, and more—with plenty of time to really check out your favorites. Last January, 241 vehicles sold at Silver, for a total of \$3,343,913—less than \$15,000 each, average. Sales ranged from a 1952 Nash Healey Pininfarina roadster (\$65,000) to a 2001 Audi A4 (just \$450). Fully 125 vehicles sold under \$10,000. ▼ Now with new owners, Silver Auctions is the only event running more than once here, in fact three times—in January, March and November. Other events are held in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming and the Dakotas. [www.silverauctions.com](http://www.silverauctions.com)



## Gooding & Company

11th Annual Scottsdale Auction

Friday-Saturday, Jan 19-20, 2018 (viewing Weds-Sat, Jan 17-20)

Fashion Square, 4700 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale AZ 85251 (Goldwater & E Highland Ave)

▼ Gooding & Company totaled \$33.4 million here last winter, with nine world records (Ferrari, Bugatti, Porsche, AMC) and an 84 percent sell-through rate on 126 lots. Average price was \$315,327 per car. Tops were a 1925 Bugatti Type 35 Grand Prix (\$3,300,000) and a 1965 Ferrari 500 Superfast (\$2,915,000). Prewar classics were strong, topped by a 1932 Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Series V Grand Sport (\$1,595,000). A new record was set with a 1920 Stutz Series H Bearcat (\$451,000). Postwar sports cars records included a 1969 AMC AMX/3 (\$891,000) and a 2011 Ferrari 599 SA Aperta (\$1,485,000). ▼ Gooding & Company is the official auction of the Pebble Beach Concours in August and has an auction at Amelia Island in March. [www.goodingco.com](http://www.goodingco.com)



## Russo and Steele

18th Annual Sports & Muscle in Scottsdale

Wednesday-Sunday, January 17-21, 2018 (preview same, not confirmed)

Salt River Fields, 7555 N Pima Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85258 (Indian Bend Road at AZ Loop 101)

▼ Russo and Steele ran a four-day-and-night auction event last winter and indicates this will be five for 2018. Sales were reserve or not, at seller's discretion, with Sunday all No Reserve. Russo moved to a new location last year: Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, next to the Arizona Diamondbacks' spring training ballpark, with more vendor booths. With 606 of 780 lots sold, a 78 percent sell-through rate, Russo had \$22.1 million in sales. Tops were a 1954 Mercedes-Benz 300 S Cabriolet A (\$423,500), 1973 Ferrari Dino 246 GTS Spyder (\$379,500), 1969 Ford Mustang Boss 429 (\$335,500), 2006 Ford GT (\$261,750) and a 2006 Mercedes-Benz McLaren SLR (\$253,000). ▼ Russo and Steele has events in Scottsdale, Newport Beach and Monterey. [www.russoandsteele.com](http://www.russoandsteele.com)



## Worldwide Auctioneers

2nd Annual Arizona January Auction

Wednesday, Jan 17, 2018 (preview Sunday-Wednesday, Jan 14-17)

6460 E McDowell Road, Scottsdale AZ 85257 (McDowell Rd & 64th St/Galvin Pkwy)

▼ A seventh auction arrived here last year—Worldwide Auctioneers, from the automotive heartland of Auburn, Indiana—with a one-night auction on Wednesday (first on the calendar except nine-day Barrett-Jackson). They concentrate on a low volume, high quality and diversity; all last year were at no reserve. Sixty-four vehicles brought \$11.4 million, an average \$178,171 per car. Top two sales were a 1967 Chevrolet Corvette L-88 Roadster (\$1,980,000) and a 1955 Lancia Aurelia GT B24S Spider America (\$1,100,000). Least expensive on four wheels was a 1931 Pierce-Arrow 8-43 Club Sedan (\$19,800). Don't miss year two. ▼ Worldwide also has auctions in Texas, California and Indiana, and performs auctions of private collections. [www.worldwide-auctioneers.com](http://www.worldwide-auctioneers.com)



# ROCK SOLID AND PURE OF HEART

EVERYTHING A JEEP HAS EVER BEEN, IMPROVED IN EVERY WAY. BY JOE SAGE



The term "icon" may be a cliché. It not only fits, however, but has been earned in the case of Jeep Wrangler, the tough do-everything vehicle that sits at the core of the brand's seven-slat identity.

When a vehicle was born perfect, you improve it carefully, and incrementally. Perfection is always subject to context. Whereas the first military Jeep came just 14 years after the last Model T Ford, today's buyer expects not only the same indomitable duty, but also a higher level of technology and creature comforts, improvements in ride and handling, and competitive everyday fuel economy. And in

the usual bold Jeep way, it has to be stylish.

The 2018 Jeep Wrangler is everything a Jeep has ever been, improved in ways both incremental and dramatic—but the magic is that even its most dramatic changes seem incremental, as the total package remains all Jeep and instantly recognizable.

Jeep's history has taken many twists and turns. Its image and purpose survived as the CJ (civilian Jeep) from 1944, through years of ownership by Willys-Overland, Kaiser-Jeep and American Motors Corporation, until AMC passed the baton of the first Jeep Wrangler model to Chrysler in 1986.

Modern Fiat Chrysler Automobiles takes the preservation and protection of this huge heritage very seriously—which may not be as hard as it sounds, as the team consistently displays their love of and commitment to the purity and possibilities of this unique (another overused, but here earned word) vehicle.

Developing a new Wrangler is as daunting

(and potentially fulfilling) a challenge as any vehicle design team could face. Some fans might have been happy had the original 1941 Army Jeep just continued as was for the duration. But change is good, as they say, and Jeep is here to prove it.

Changes are implemented throughout—from body materials, to form, to drivetrains, to creature comforts and tech features.

The new Jeep Wrangler went through 3.9 million miles of development. But don't visualize Interstate highway mile markers—think Moab, Rubicon Trail, and Michigan and Arizona Proving Grounds. Think Arizona again, along with Alaska, for extreme climate testing. It's more than ready for anything.

To illustrate the Jeep's unmatched heritage and simultaneously show its significant evolution, samples of every generation were brought to the launch of this new Wrangler, held in the mountains outside Tucson.



2018 Jeep Wrangler  
4-Door Sahara

Top off, windshield down and headed up our challenging off-road course. Having a second to grab a photo means this was one of the easier stretches.

**MODELS:** Two-doors (or none) may be at the heart of Jeep's roots, but as tastes have evolved and sales have skyrocketed for the brand overall, four-door Jeep Wrangler models now account for 75 to 80 percent of all Wrangler sales. And why not? It's a rare combination: a five-seat SUV with presence equally suited to Rubicon Trail, country club, business meeting or soccer practice duty. And it offers a manual transmission. (Note that the Unlimited name is now dropped from four-doors.)

Trims include Sport, Sport S (with added convenience features and upgraded wheels), Sahara (four-door only) and Rubicon. Sport has been the biggest seller, Rubicon remains top dog off-road, while Sahara presents top creature features with less extreme off-roading capability than Rubicon.

**POWERTRAINS:** There are two engines—a 3.6L Pentastar V6 and a new 2.0L turbo four. The V6 (now with auto stop-start) has a six-speed manual standard, with eight-speed auto option, while the 2.0L is automatic-only. (A 3.0L EcoDiesel will join the lineup in 2019, as of now to be auto-only.)

The 2.0L turbo has a suite of eTorque technologies: a 48-volt battery, a belt-to-crank system with no alternator. Benefits include auto stop-start, electric power assist, shift management, intelligent battery charging, regenerative braking and extended fuel shutoff during stops, coasting or deceleration, delivering higher fuel economy, better launch performance and smoother auto stop-starts.

Four-wheel-drive systems vary by model (see sidebar), with exceptionally low crawl ratios—up to 84.2:1 in a manual-shift Rubicon.

**TOPS:** There are three distinct tops for the new Wrangler (four if you count hardtops two ways)—



but it seems like many more. Newest is the Sky One-Touch power top—a hardtop with fabric power sunroof, for those who like a hard-sealed cabin and open air, both. Hard Freedom Tops—in three modular pieces, with rear wiper-washer-defroster and full-frame doors—are standard in black for all, with body-color available on Sahara and Rubicon.

Completely reengineered soft tops have two additional bows and position detents, allowing you to raise the front about 45 degrees (even solo), pause and let go to refresh or reposition before continuing. You can drive with the front half open, or do the final full roof drop also with just one hand. Rear windows are no longer a cumbersome zipper affair: three panels (sides include hard rear corners) now slide easily in and out in grooved channels. With windows removed (and doors, if you like, also more easily than ever), but the full-length fabric top up, you have a safari style Jeep—a distinctive look very popular during our launch drive and sure to be widely so in

KEEP RIGHT >>



2018 Jeep Wrangler  
2-Door Rubicon

## SPECIFICATIONS

**LAYOUT** .....Longitudinal front engine, 4WD  
**CONSTRUCTION** .....Ladder frame, open body (steel and aluminum)  
**ASSEMBLY** .....Toledo, Ohio

**ENGINE (V6)** .....3.6L Pentastar V6 chain-driven DOHC, 24v, hydraulic end-pivot roller rockers  
**HP/TORQUE** .....285 hp (6400 rpm) / 260 lb-ft (4800 rpm)

**COMPRESSION RATIO** .....11.3:1  
**FUEL** .....87 octane regular unleaded  
**OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY** .....5 qt / 10 qt  
**TRANSMISSION** .....standard: 6-spd manual/OD optional: 8-spd auto/OD  
**MPG** .....V6 AUTO 18/23/20 (city/hwy/comb) V6 MAN 17/23/19 (city/hwy/comb)  
**ENGINE BUILD** .....Saltillo, Mexico

**ENGINE (2.0L)** .....2.0L 16v DI inline-4 turbo chain-driven DOHC, 16v, with eTorque tech  
**HP/TORQUE** .....270 hp (5250 rpm) / 295 lb-ft (3000 rpm)

**COMPRESSION RATIO** .....10.0:1  
**FUEL** .....87 reg unl / 91 prem unl recmd  
**OIL / COOLANT CAPACITY** .....5 qt / 9.9 qt  
**TRANSMISSION** .....8-spd auto/OD  
**MPG** .....AUTO 2-DR TBD (city/hwy/comb) AUTO 4-DR TBD (city/hwy/comb)  
**ENGINE BUILD** .....Termoli, Italy / Trenton, Mich

**ALTERNATOR / BATTERY** .....160 amp / 600 CCA

**TRANSFER CASE: SPORT / SAHARA (STANDARD)**  
NV241 Command-Trac part-time 4WD  
2WD high / 4WD high / neutral 4WD low  
Low range .....2.72:1

**TRANSFER CASE: RUBICON (STANDARD)**  
NV241OR Rock-Trac part-time 4WD  
2WD high / 4WD high / neutral 4WD low  
Low range .....4.0:1

**TRANSFER CASE: SAHARA (OPTIONAL)**  
MP3022 Selc-Trac full-time  
2WD high / 4WD high / neutral 4WD low  
Low range .....4.0:1

**AXLE/FRONT** .....Dana 30 / Dana 44 (Rubicon)  
Ratios .....3.45, 3.73, 4.10

**AXLE/REAR** .....Dana 35 / Dana 44 (Rubicon)  
Differential: open (Sport/Sahara) w avail Trac-Lok anti-spin, Tru-Lok electronic locking (Rubicon)  
Ratios .....3.45, 3.73, 4.10

**STEERING** .....electro-hydraulic power  
**TURNING CIRCLE** .....2-door: 34.5 ft 4-door: 40.8 ft

**SUSPENSION/FRONT:** Solid axle, link coil, leading arms, track bar, coils, stblzr bar (Rubicon: electronic sway-bar disconnect).

**SUSPENSION/REAR:** Solid axle, link coil, trailing arms, track bar, coils, stabilizer bar.

**SHOCKS (Sport):** gas charged twin tube w full displacement Multi-Tuned Valve tech; (Sahara): high-pressure gas charged monotube w MTV tech; (Rubicon): high-pressure gas monotube w MTV tech and hydraulic rebound stop.

**BRAKES** ...F: 12.9 vented, twin-piston floating R: 12.9 or 13.4 solid, single-piston floating  
**WHEELS** .....17x7.5, 18x7.5, vary by model  
**TIRES** .....Sport: .....P245/75R17 Sahara: .....P255/70R18 Rubicon: .....LT285/70R17C Addtl tire options available

**APPROACH** .....41.4-41.8° / Rubicon 43.9-44°

**BREAKOVER** .....20.3-25° / Rubicon 22.6-27.8°

**DEPARTURE** .....35.9-36.1° / Rubicon 37°

**GRND CLEARANCE** .....9.7-10 in / Rubicon 10.8 in

SPECIFICATIONS: CONT'D >>





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CST# 2019108-10

This Mojito! green four-door Wrangler is outfitted with ever-expanding genuine Jeep accessories, no aftermarket. Total add-ons here: about \$10,000.

Arizona, where shade is often very welcome.

**WINDSHIELD:** For the full bugs-in-your-teeth feeling, dropping the windshield—formerly a task that took 28 bolts and maybe an hour and a half—has been massively simplified to just four bolts and a few minutes. A full roll cage is left intact.

**INTERIOR:** As always, with doors removable, the new interior concentrates features and controls in the console, center stack and instrument panel (itself a rugged modernized echo of the original). You'll find more refined build and finishes than ever, integrated with strong nods to heritage styling and tough functionality (materials range from fabric to leather). Weatherproofed pushbutton start is now standard. Touchscreens are at top center (5-inch base, or gen-four Uconnect, either 7- or 8.4-inch), with volume and climate knobs(!), USB and other ports just below. The driver gets either a 3.5-inch or configurable 7-inch display and a full array of wheel controls. Storage includes door-length mesh pockets, many places for a phone, out-of-sight subfloor storage behind rear seats, and lockable glove box and console. An available new Trail Rail cargo system allows easy access and organization for additional gear in the back. The rear seat is at a more comfortable angle. Carpet is removable, and new studs make it easy to put back in.

**TECH:** The new Wrangler has more than 75 available active and passive safety and security features. Four standard air bags include new front seat-side. Blind-spot monitor, rear cross path alert, backup camera with dynamic lines, and ESC with electronic roll mitigation are available.

**OUR ON-ROAD DRIVE:** We drove surface streets and freeways near Tucson, and curvy, hilly two-lanes through the countryside—half the day in a Sahara four-door with V6 and automatic, the other half in the same but with 2.0L turbo.

With 15 percent more torque (earlier and across a much wider band) and only a 5 percent dip in horsepower, the 2.0L turbo has an overall advantage. Fuel economy has not been released yet, but is expected to reinforce the 2.0's edge. The two-liter turbo's automatic-only drivetrain, though, will drive devoted manual fans straight to the V6.

The on-road experience (wheel-and-tire-dependent by model) is improved across the board.

Windshield rake is increased, optimized for reduced wind noise, contributing to the new Wrangler's nine percent improvement in aerodynamics. As a styling change, it's either imperceptible or cool, reflected in the angle of the upper grille area.

**OUR OFF-ROAD DRIVE:** The event team had prepped an exceptional course for our drive—the kind only the most experienced off-roader would



even think drivable, the very definition of bouldering. We used the Rubicon here, with transmission and transfer case in the lowest of lows. Though the two-door seemed to occupy every cubic inch of space in our carefully prepared course, the longer four-door (not surprisingly) did every bit as well.

For anyone with any trepidation that a new Wrangler may have been lessened in a reengineering, fear not: this newest Jeep is simply the best yet. Despite having grown ever so slightly in size, it's as nimble as always, and the turning circle is in fact now actually a foot tighter.

Production has already started on the new 2018 Jeep Wrangler, and you will surely start seeing them right away. Spotter's guide: up front, look for the slight slant up the upper grille and the inset of the headlights into its outer slats. In the rear, various top configurations may give it away, but look for the black bulges on the sides of the taillights (part of the backup and rear cross-traffic systems).

The prior model will still be built for awhile, also, as a 2018 Wrangler JK, until all production lines are all fully converted to the new model. ■



### SPECIFICATIONS: CONT'D

LENGTH / WHEELBASE...	2DR: 166.8 / 96.8 in
	4DR: 188.4 / 118.4 in
WEIGHT: 2-DR 3.6L V6 .....	3,955-4,145 lb
2-DR 2.0L Turbo .....	4,010-4,175 lb
4-DR 3.6L V6 .....	4,200-4,455 lb
4-DR 2.0L Turbo .....	4,320-4,485 lb
TOP OPTION .....	2-dr 2000 lb / 4-dr 3500 lb
FUEL CAPACITY .....	2-dr: 18.5 / 4-dr 21.5 gal

**MODELS:** 2-DR: Sport, Sport S, Rubicon  
 4-DR: Sport, Sport S, Sahara, Rubicon  
**TOPS:** • Sunrider folding soft top w sunroof feature standard on all.  
 • Premium Sunrider soft top avail on 2-dr Rubicon and all 4-drs.  
 • Freedom Top 3-piece hard top avail on all.  
 • Body-color hard top avail on Rubicon 2-dr, all 4-drs.  
 • Powertop avail on 4-dr Sahara and Rubicon.  
 • Dual Top Group avail on all 4-drs except Sport.  
**PAINTS:** Black, Bright White, Firecracker Red, Granite Crystal Metallic, Hella Yella, Ocean Blue Metallic, Punk 'n Metallic, Sting-Gray, Mojito!, Billet Silver Metallic.  
**UCONNECT:** Choice of 5.0-, 7.0- or 8.4-inch touchscreens with pinch-and-zoom, Apple/Android.  
**AUDIO:** 8-speaker or optional premium 552-watt 9-spr/all-weather-subwoofer Alpine Audio.

**BASE PRICES:**

2-DR SPORT .....	\$26,995
RUBICON .....	36,995
4-DR SPORT .....	\$30,495
SAHARA .....	37,345
RUBICON .....	40,495
DESTINATION CHARGE .....	1195



## Exploring ancient civilization

The Mogollon community long ago was perhaps more developed than the hills of southwest New Mexico are today—pretty much a win-win for a weekend road trip. **STORY AND PHOTOS BY TYSON HUGIE**

Imagine how simple life must have been 700 years ago. I recently walked in the literal footsteps of the Mogollon (moga-yon) people—a band of indigenous tribes who lived off the land through subsistence farming during that era and who left behind a glimpse of what their lives consisted of. Being without cell signal for five hours gave but a very small taste of what it would have been like to be more in tune with nature. And I liked it.

The southwestern US is home to some of the best-preserved historic ruins, thanks to predictable weather patterns and remote geography. Almost exactly 110 years ago, President Theodore Roosevelt set aside about 530 acres in southwest New Mexico as part of a National Monument that today sits about 40 miles north of the town of Silver City. For us Arizonans, that makes it a pretty accessible overnight road trip destination. And recently, per suggestion of (and in partnership with) *Driven for Drives'* Jason Pawela, I checked it off my list.

I broke free from the Phoenix urban grid a little after 3pm on Friday to make my eastward trip toward the New Mexico state line. As was to be

expected, I had to fight my way out on I-10 in commuter traffic but eventually was able to set the cruise on my 1992 Acura Integra GS-R (in Aztec Green, appropriately for an indigenous civilizations tour) at 75 miles per hour. I made just one stop, at Love's in Benson, for fuel and a stretch of the legs. The final 50 or so miles from I-10 at Lordsburg into Silver City were lonely and even a little creepy. My "Christmas tree" of dash lights (ABS, check engine, high beams, and cruise) were the only lights I saw, aside from vivid constellations under the night sky—highly visible thanks to the area's lack of light pollution.

Saturday morning brought us crisp 45 degree temperatures and blue skies. I met up with Jason, James L, and James Z for a hearty Comfort Inn breakfast (complete with green chile on the side—totally a New Mexico thing!), and then we rallied our vehicles for the weekend's drive: a 2018 Alfa Romeo Stelvio, a 2004 Mazda 6 and the Integra.

It took only a few minutes to lose cell service as we headed north on twisty Highway 15. For only a 2-liter motor, the Alfa's 280-horsepower 4-cylinder



develops oodles of power, and James was right on my tail. I swapped keys with Jason for a few miles and was impressed at how smoothly his ("new") Mazda 6 handles, given its 180k+ miles.

It's a good thing I was a driver, because I wouldn't have lasted five minutes as a passenger with these curves. For about half that stretch, the road is narrow, with blind corners and no painted centerline. NMDOT basically says "Good luck!" and to allow for plenty of travel time (they said two hours) between Silver City and the ruins.

After a brief intro at the Visitor Center, which probably looks today about the same as it did in the 1960s, we headed to a parking lot and trail-head two miles up the road. The dwellings in the area were believed to have been occupied around the year 1275 and are still remarkably well preserved. The Gila River running nearby was the Mogollon peoples' source of life. By 1874, when explorer Henry Weatherbee Henshaw discovered

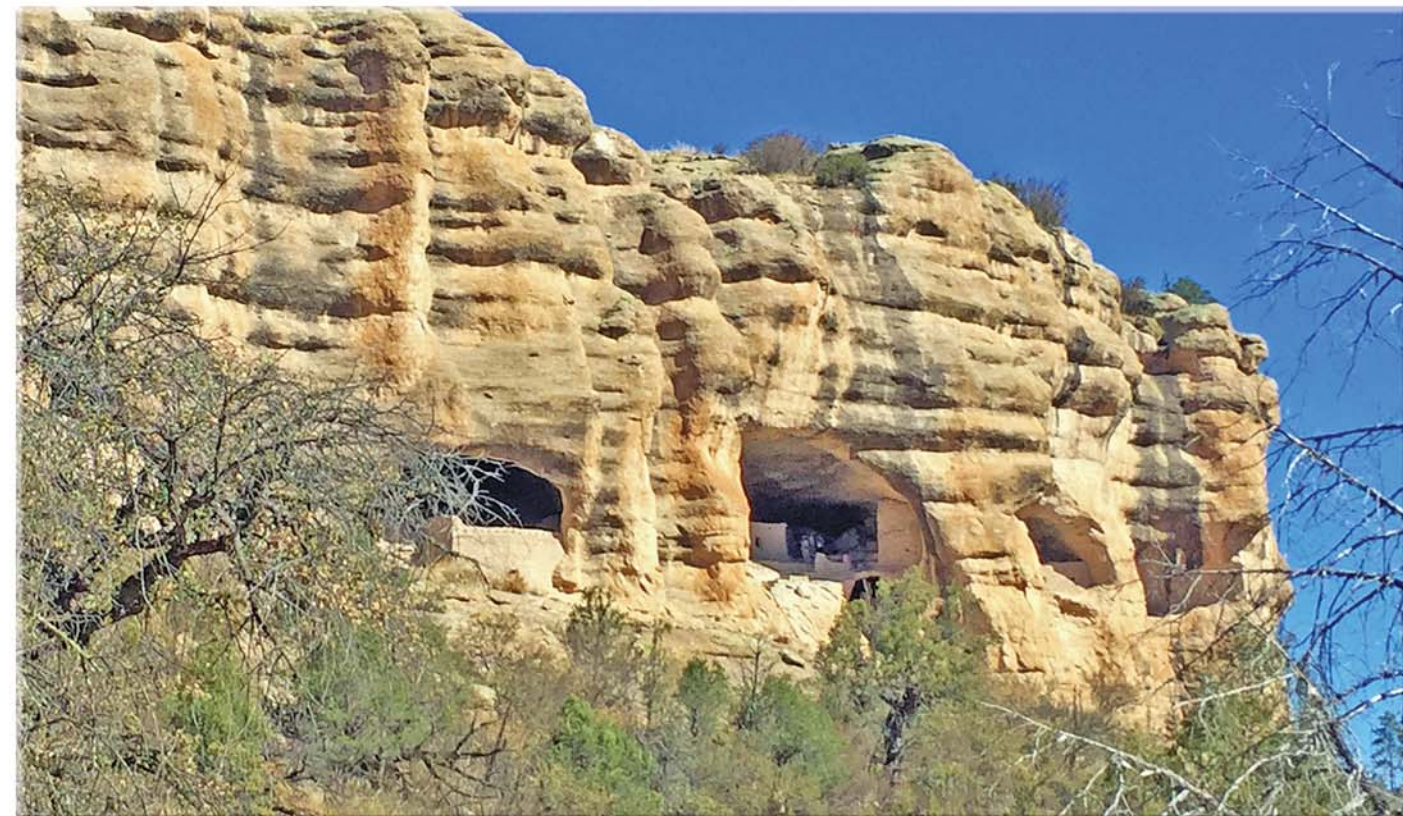
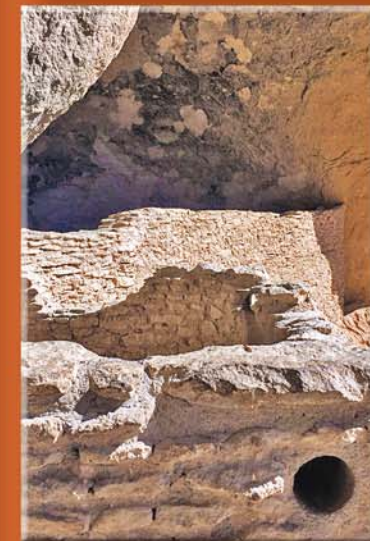
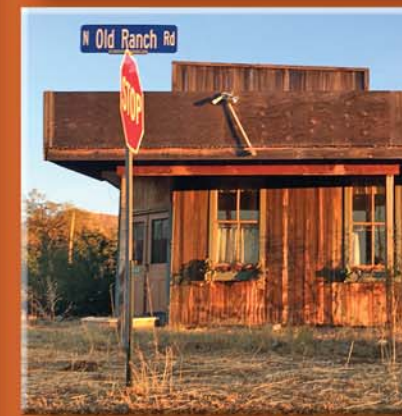
The crew's 2004 Mazda 6, 2018 Alfa Romeo Stelvio and 1992 Acura Integra GS-R at an overlook along narrow and twisty, but smooth and scenic Highway 15 north of Silver City, New Mexico. // (Still) standing on a corner in Dragoon, Arizona. // Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument Visitor Center. // The crew reaches their destination. // Maximum fall colors had passed, but a few patches were still vivid. // Enduring round holes in cliff dwelling walls once supported vigas, big logs that in turn supported the roofs. // Rattlesnakes are protected in Dragoon (not sure about dragons). // Lunch at Nancy's Silver Café in Silver City, NM. // Dragoon Road, I-10 Exit 318, is a classic blue highway leading into Dragoon.

and wrote about the ruins, some parts had been damaged. But ever since President Roosevelt's decision to make it a National Monument, preservation has been vigilant—we weren't even allowed to take liquids other than water on the hike, and we were asked not to touch any of the walls with our hands.

To access the site, we had to hike a one-mile loop which crosses several footbridges. There was a small brook running underneath them, and the sound of waterfalls made it a therapeutic experience. A steep incline further down the trail took us up the cliffside, then we walked through a series of five different "rooms," each one laid out with a unique floor plan. What struck me was the savvy use of space and the distinct feeling of temperature and brightness in each room. The south-facing openings were optimal because they would allow sunshine to enter and heat up the rooms in the winter time, but kept them shaded during the summer when the sun is higher in the sky.

Much of the Mogollon peoples' lives remains a mystery, and part of our tour consisted of a Q&A session with ranger Connie, who took the time to point out a few key features and ask us what we thought they were. They included a grinding stone, pictograph images painted on the walls, and architectural features of the caves. Today, there are wooden stepladders leading to the various rooms, but some of the original infrastructure—including rooftops over some of the rooms—are now gone. It took us about an hour to hike the circle.

The return drive to Silver City was again spirited in nature, and we made good time thanks to being a little more familiar with the terrain by now. Lunch was at Nancy's Silver Café in historic downtown, where the three-taco plate was just what the doctor ordered to satisfy those hunger cravings. We parted ways by midafternoon, and I sailed off into the sunset—literally, squinting at it the whole way—returning to Phoenix. I did make one stop along the way, in a town called Dragoon, perhaps in hopes that was misspelled and I'd see a fire-breathing dragon. I did see a sign welcoming rattlesnakes, so maybe there was a Gila monster in town. But no dragon. ■



# Kia hits the accelerator pedal

**Kia continually expands and recalibrates, periodically introducing a complete game changer. The new Stinger—a reinvention of the classic Grand Tourer—marks their move into performance.** BY JOE SAGE

Ernest Hemingway was reportedly asked how he had managed to lose all his fortune. “Two ways,” he responded. “Gradually. And suddenly.”

Kia has become a giant of the automotive landscape in much the same two ways. With an eye on continuous improvement and a finger on the pulse of the huge American market, the company has consistently upped its quality, style and content—to the point that it has become Number One in the prestigious JD Power Initial Quality Study for all brands the past two years and number one among non-premium brands for three (yet still gives you the same 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain they introduced in long-ago confidence-building years).

They have also made the occasional quantum leap. One milestone was the big boost the brand received after inventing the Kia Soul from a blank sheet of paper in 2009 (creating a wave of success they still refer to internally as “After Soul”). So successful has this vehicle been—aimed at a particular niche, but conquering any number of categories

that recognized the breadth, spunk and utility Soul offers—that it gave the company a new position in the automotive marketplace not just as a mainstream player, but one with particular appeal as a styling and engineering innovator.

And now—enter the Kia Stinger. Having conquered value, quality, style and content, Kia evokes the classic Grand Tourers of the 1970s—famous for glamorous and potent cruises from across Europe to the Mediterranean coast—delivering a distinctly performance-oriented four-door sport coupe, five-door hatchback, high-horsepower, low-silhouette, luggage-gobbling canyon carver and distance cruiser, all in one.

Styling is perfect for the mission. Content is perfect for the mission. And the ratio of performance to value will knock most anyone’s socks off.

It’s not as though they whipped up this car out of thin air, overnight. The Kia Stinger is the result of six years’ diligent and highly inspired work, spinning off the GT Concept shown at Frankfurt in 2011, a car that generated a chorus of, “Ya gotta build it!” says Orth Hedrick, Kia’s VP of product planning.

It’s universal for the developers of a new model to have specific goals and benchmarks. The most daring machines can have challenging, impressive, even startling, benchmarks.

Six years ago, would you have expected Kia to be benchmarking the Porsche Panamera for their next vehicle, in everything but price? How about the Audi A5, S5 and A7 Sportbacks, BMW 4 Series and 6 Series Gran Coupes, Infiniti Q50, Lexus GS, and the Mercedes-Benz CLS Class? The Stinger team set out to approach, meet and beat a range of specifications and intangibles in each of the above.

As the phrase goes, mission accomplished. Kia Stinger beats all in horsepower and torque, all but one in zero-to-60 acceleration (and is only two-tenths of a second off that one), and all at top speed. It beats all in rear legroom, all but one in front legroom and all but one in cargo volume.

And it beats them all in price. By a lot. (By up to 54 percent in the case of the Panamera.)

All while getting up to 25 mpg highway in either rear- or all-wheel-drive (this is Kia’s only rear-drive vehicle in the US other than the low-volume K900).

There are two engines available (a four and a six)—either engine with either drivetrain. All have

an eight-speed automatic transmission (geared a bit lower in the twin-turbo V6) with multiple drive modes including Custom, Eco, Sport, Comfort and Smart (Smart applies attributes of Eco, Sport and Comfort suited to your driving style, while Custom lets you create your own combination).

We joined Kia in North Hollywood, California to give the car a good workout. We flew from Phoenix to Bob Hope Airport, Burbank (one of five major metro LA airports)—our first time doing so, and we’re hooked. An unassuming airport built in the 1930s, it features a dramatic descent along the Santa Monica Mountains on the back side of the Hollywood Hills and still boasts stairs instead of jetways. The airport was renamed in honor of beloved local resident and entertainment great Bob Hope in 2003, the year he passed away at age 100 (also the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brothers’ first flight in 1903, the year Hope was born).

In line with the ‘70s classic Grand Tourer theme, Kia located a North Hollywood facility for our presentations, complete with its own movie theater—with ‘70s classics from *Star Wars* to Monty Python available in our off-hours—and arcade games such as Centipede. We’ve noted before that a ‘70s game machine put as much technology as the entire Apollo moon mission at your fingertips for 25 cents. Similarly, the 2018 Kia Stinger puts as much technology as an upcoming Mars mission at your fingertips from the lower \$30s to the upper \$40s.

Included on all models are a color touchscreen,

Android/Apple connectivity, rear camera, Bluetooth, SiriusXM, keyless entry and start, dual zone auto climate, second row vents, auto-dim mirror, front and rear parking sensors, electronic stability control and traction control. Additional features are added with each step up the model lineup (see sidebar). Even the advanced driver assistance system (ADAS) package included on the top of the line GT2—with blind spot detection, rain sensing wipers, forward collision avoidance and warning, lane keep assist, lane departure warning, driver attention warning and high beam assist—is available for just \$2000 on any other model.

Kia Stinger develops a lot of power against relatively light weight and derives its downforce from its elegant and sporty body form—no need for tacking on a mechanical spoiler as many others do.

Stinger 2.0T four-cylinder turbo models are outfitted with 18-inch all-season performance tires, and 3.3T twin-turbo V6 models come with long-life 19-inch Michelin Pilot Sport 4 ultra-high-performance tires, engineered specifically for the Stinger GT and staggered for more meat in the rear.

“On paper, this car has the chops,” says Hedrick. “When you get on the road, you’ll see it delivers.”

We had V6 (Stinger GT) models in both RWD and AWD for the day. From North Hollywood, we were out of town and into the hills very quickly.

The Angeles Crest Highway—California Hwy 2

KEEP RIGHT >>



## SPECIFICATIONS

### STINGER 2.0T, 2.0T PREMIUM

ENGINE .....2.0L twin scroll turbo 16v 4-cyl  
 HP/TORQUE .....255 hp / 260 lb-ft  
 DRIVETRAIN .....RWD, AWD  
 TRANSMISSION .....8-speed automatic  
 STEERING .....rack & pinion / elec / constant  
 SUSPENSION .....F: MacPherson,  
 R: Multi Link; gas shocks;  
 BRAKES .....F: 12.6 single-piston vented disc,  
 R: 12.4 single-piston solid disc;  
 WHEELS .....F/R: 8.0Jx18 alloy  
 TIRES .....F/R: P225/45R18  
 WEIGHT .....RWD 3611 lb; AWD 3792 lb  
 ACCEL 0-TO-60 .....5.9 sec  
 FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY .....prem rec / 15.9 gal  
 MPG .....RWD 22/29/25 (city/hwy/comb)  
 AWD 21/29/24 (city/hwy/comb)

### 3.3T GT, 3.3T GT1, 3.3T GT2

ENGINE .....3.3L twin turbo 24v V6  
 HP/TORQUE .....365 hp / 376 lb-ft  
 DRIVETRAIN .....RWD, AWD  
 TRANSMISSION .....8-speed automatic  
 STEERING .....rack & pinion / elec / variable  
 SUSPENSION .....F: MacPherson,  
 R: Multi Link; gas or electric shocks  
 BRAKES ..F: Brembo 4-piston 13.8 vented disc,  
 R: Brembo 2-piston 13.4 vented disc  
 WHEELS .....F: 8.0Jx19; R: 8.5Jx19  
 TIRES .....F: P225/40R19; R: P255/35R19  
 (optional for AWD: 8.0Jx18, P225/45R18)  
 WEIGHT .....RWD 3829 lb; AWD 4023 lb  
 ACCEL 0-TO-60 .....4.7 sec  
 FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY .....prem rec / 15.9 gal  
 MPG .....RWD 19/25/21 (city/hwy/comb)  
 AWD 19/25/21 (city/hwy/comb)

LENGTH / WHEELBASE .....190.2 / 114.4 in  
 CARGO CAPACITY .....23.3 cu.ft / 40.9 cu.ft

BASE PRICES:  
 STINGER 2.0T RWD .....\$31,900  
 STINGER 2.0T PREMIUM RWD .....37,100  
 STINGER GT 3.3T RWD .....38,350  
 STINGER GT1 3.3T RWD .....43,250  
 STINGER GT2 3.3T RWD (W/ADAS) .....49,200  
 + AWD (ANY MODEL) .....+2,200

STINGER 2.0T INCLUDES: Drive Mode Select, leather trim interior, 60/40-split rear seats, heated front seats, leather-wrapped wheel, 8-way pwr driver seat, 6-way pwr psngr seat, 7-in color touchscreen, Android/Apple, rear camera, Bluetooth, SiriusXM, auto-dim rear mirror, smart key w pushbutton start, dual zone auto climate w 2nd row vents, front/rear parking sensors, ESC & traction control, acoustic laminated glass, temp spare, mech parking brake (electronic opt), floor mats.

STINGER GT 3.3T INCLUDES: Same as 2.0T plus Brembo hi-po brakes, flat-bottom leather-wrapped wheel, Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tires, aluminum interior trim, LED headlights, electronic parking brake standard.

2.0T PREMIUM or GT1 3.3T ADDS: sunroof, 8-in touchscreen w/nav, Harman Kardon 720-watt 15-speaker premium audio; 7-in LCD instrument cluster, driver’s seat memory, power tilt/telescope wheel, garage door opener.

GT2 3.3T ADDS: dynamic bending headlights, limited slip differential, paddle shifters; shift-by-wire, Nappa leather trim, power driver seat thigh support, power driver seat air cell lumbar support w/power side bolsters, power passenger lumbar support, heads-up display, smart power trunk, ADAS package (see below).

ADAS PACKAGE: Included on GT2; optional on others. Includes blind spot detection, rain sensing wipers, forward collision avoidance & warning, lane keep assist, lane departure warning, driver attention warning, high beam assist .....2000

DESTINATION: (estimated) .....900

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—is a two-lane twister from the edge of greater LA to the edge of the Mojave Desert, hitting almost 8000 feet in altitude, with nonstop curves, climbs, even a few hairpins. It's a road only the most confident would choose to show off a new performance machine, and Kia chose well for the Stinger.

We had dry conditions, and both the all-wheel and rear-drive Stingers powered through the turns and devoured every mile with aggressive confidence. With the driver assistance technologies, either drivetrain can handle the wet or snow, though regular winter drivers will surely appreciate the AWD version (\$2200 more on any model).

Our autocross was set up in parking lots at Six Flags Magic Mountain amusement park, which by its proximity to Hollywood has been used in dozens of movies and TV shows—famously as Wallyworld in *National Lampoon's Vacation*. (It was closed for our day—"moose out front shoulda told you!")

Autocross gave us a chance to really nail the powertrain, handling and braking of both the rear- and all-wheel-drive Stinger—and a chance to run the same course in the competition. On hand were the reference machines from Audi, BMW, Infiniti, Lexus, Mercedes-Benz and Porsche, so we could hammer them all and compare—such is Kia's confidence in their build. We had our antennae out a mile, to try to quantify meaningful differences. Did a double-price car have an edge? If so, could it be just a couple of pounds' tire pressure variance during an aggressive session on a warm day? We had

to laugh as we realized how close they were and how deep we were digging. Kia themselves say, "we don't realistically expect a Porsche guy to come in and say, 'oh, here's a great alternative'" (although we suspect some might). Realistically? Performance in the Kia Stinger is top-notch.

The Stinger interior is also inspired by premium Euro-cruising Grand Touring classics, but with modern quality, materials and engineering. Leather is included on every Stinger—Nappa leather with contrast piping on higher models. Instrumentation and creature comforts are clean and purposeful. The overall instrument panel form evokes an aircraft wing, appropriate to the fighter jet jock experience behind the wheel.

A telltale element of a truly successful game-changer is that you may immediately forget the game was changed—perceptions adapt quickly. Kia Stinger fits its development goals like a glove, and from birth, it fits the Kia brand. One taste and you'll know Kia does performance and soon think they always have. Kia engineers and product planners have a great deal to be proud of, all the more so as achieved within a Kia value structure. "Some dreams really do come true," says Hedrick. And remember: this is just their first performance car.

Do we like the Kia Stinger? It has become kind of a rhetorical cottage industry among our staff to see whether anyone anywhere does not. We doubt it.

And the name: Stinger! How was this even still available?! It's perfect. ■

### KIA STINGER AT SEMA

#### DRIFTING AND HIGH PERFORMANCE

Kia turned a Las Vegas Convention Center parking lot into a performance center during the SEMA Show: a drifting course where showgoers could ride along with professional Formula Drift drivers as they slid special



Stinger GTs effortlessly through the corners at up to 50 mph—even two-time Formula One and Indianapolis 500 champion Emerson Fittipaldi enjoyed his first drifting experience here—and a high performance test track, where they could launch a Stinger GT from 0 to 60 mph, rush to a full stop with its high performance Brembo brakes, then push it through a challenging autocross.

#### SPECIAL KIA STINGER GT WIDE BODY

West Coast Customs built a custom Stinger GT Wide Body for SEMA, in pearl blue metallic paint. Inspired by racing GT cars of the 1970s, it has wide fenders, 21-inch Keen forged wheels, high-performance tires, lowered suspension, a carbon fiber aero kit, rear diffuser and quadport exhaust. Inside are leather seats with custom blue piping, handstitched gray leather dash, gloss black console trim and alcantara-wrapped wheel.



#### STINGER GT FEDERATION

In custom creamy orange paint, the Stinger GT Federation is modified with parts and accessories from leading aftermarket suppliers, available for purchase with the vehicle launch—body accent kit by Air Design USA with rear spoiler, rear diffuser and redesigned hood vents; K&N cold air intake and low restriction quad-tipped Borla exhaust for an additional 15 hp (380); Eibach springs; thicker anti-roll bars; reduced ride height; staggered 20-inch TSW wheels and Falken tires. ■



# PIR FALL RACE WEEKEND

MONSTER ENERGY NASCAR CUP SERIES SEMIFINAL / PHOTOS BY RANDALL BOHL

Phoenix Raceway once again hosted three NASCAR races in November, with practices, qualifying and one major race per day for three days. The Can-Am 500 was again the semifinal race in the 2017 Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series season—the last of the Playoffs, determining the final four contenders for the season championship race to be held the following weekend at Homestead-Miami.

## FRIDAY NOV 10: LUCAS OIL 150 JOHNNY SAUTER TOPS WILD RACE

2016 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series defending champion Johnny Sauter set the stage at Phoenix for the championship finale at Homestead-Miami. Sauter, driver of the No.21 ISM Connect Chevrolet Silverado for GMS Racing, didn't need to win at Phoenix to advance to the championship finale, but he still made a statement to his fellow Championship 4 competitors by taking home the victory in the Lucas Oil 150 (150 laps, 150 miles). This was Sauter's first career victory at Phoenix in nine starts. He had five top fives and seven top 10s, but his previous best finish was second in the prior year's Lucas Oil 150.

The championship picture was drastically changed on lap 129, when contact between the No.19 Ford of Austin Cindric and No.27 Toyota of Ben Rhodes sent Rhodes and his ThorSport teammate, Matt Crafton, to the garage. Crafton had already clinched his spot in the Championship 4 on points, but Rhodes was unable to advance after the incident. Cindric claimed the final Championship 4 slot by 12 points.

The race had appeared to be a two-man battle between Kyle Busch Motorsports teammates No.4 Christopher Bell and No.18 Noah Gragson. The pair led a dominant 145 of 150 laps, and were battling side-by-side for the lead in the closing laps. But on lap 142, Gragson got loose under Bell and spun out, collecting Justin Haley. Gragson and Haley did not finish the race, and Bell had to pit due to damage, taking both trucks out of contention. While the 22-year-old Bell did miss out on the win, he had already locked himself into the Championship 4 by the end of Stage 1 by points, the second driver to clinch. Crafton guaranteed his place by the end of Stage 2, and Cindric earned the final spot. John Hunter Nemechek, needing a win to advance to the Championship 4, finished second.

Rounding out the top five were Cody Coughlin, Chase Briscoe and Kaz Grala.

The first two stages were relatively calm, with only one non-stage-end caution on lap 76, when Grant Enfinger lost a tire and hit the wall in Turn 1. But the last 30 laps featured four cautions and three red flags.

## SATURDAY NOV 11: TICKET GALAXY 200 BYRON WINS WITH SUBSTITUTE CREW

Phoenix has not been kind to William Byron, driver of the No.9 Liberty University Chevrolet for JR Motorsports, but he conquered the one-mile oval by winning Saturday's Ticket Galaxy 200 (200 laps, 200 miles), despite having a substitute pit crew.

Byron and his JR Motorsports teammates, No.7 Justin Allgaier and No.1 Elliott Sadler, maintained a comfortable points cushion over fifth place to advance to the Championship 4 at Homestead, despite all three pit crews not making it to Phoenix in time for the race, due to a flight delay.

The closest battle all race was between Daniel Hemric's No.21 Smokey Mountain Snuff Chevrolet and the No.00 Ford of Cole Custer for the final Championship 4 spot. There were only five points separating the two coming into Phoenix. They ran near each other for most of the race; in the closing laps, they battled side-by-side and made contact. Hemric prevailed, taking fifth, while Custer fin-

ished seventh, missing the finals by four points.

At the start of Saturday, the No.48 DC Solar Chevrolet of Brennan Poole was in the Championship 4 with a five-point lead. But his hopes were dashed on lap 22, when contact with the lapped car of Caesar Bacarella cut a right front tire, sending Poole into the outside wall. The team tried to repair the damage, but he was unable to continue. Poole finished 38th, out of points contention.

Blaney was dominant for a race-high 147 laps, but a caution on lap 180 led to a round of pit stops, and he came out in fourth when the top three cars took two tires. He battled back to second, but was unable to catch Byron. Erik Jones finished third, followed by Christopher Bell and Hemric.

Byron had finished fourth in a NASCAR XFINITY Series start at Phoenix, but had had heartbreak here in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series. In his first start, he exited after a wreck on lap 7. In 2016, he had the dominant truck, leading for 112 laps, but a blown engine with eight laps to go took him out of contention for the win or championship. 2017 was his first career NASCAR win here.

## SUNDAY NOV 12: CAN-AM 500 KENSETH CLOSES CAREER WITH BIG WIN

In what could be his final Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race at Phoenix Raceway, Matt Kenseth, driver of the No.20 Circle K Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing, passed a desperate Chase Elliott in the closing laps to win Sunday's Can-Am 500 (500 km, 312 laps, 312 miles) in front of a sellout crowd.

This was Kenseth's second Monster Energy Series win at Phoenix; his first was in 2002. In 30 starts, he has seven top fives and 12 top 10s. He also has one NASCAR XFINITY Series win in the Valley of the Sun in 2006.

Elliott was also a part of the reason for a caution on lap 281, as contact with No.11 Denny Hamlin led to Hamlin losing a tire and hitting the wall (the two drivers had a run-in two weeks prior in Martinsville). After a lap-283 restart, it looked

It was a thrilling and emotional weekend for Dale Earnhardt Jr and his fans, as this was his final race at PIR and next-to-last career race. He is also known for his philanthropic efforts through the Dale Jr. Foundation, which works to improve the lives of underprivileged children. In honor of his immeasurable contributions to NASCAR and its community, Phoenix Raceway Charities partnered with Okland Construction and ISM Connect to make a \$100,000 gift to the Childhelp Children's Advocacy Center in Phoenix. // Martin Truex Jr and Kyle Busch had already clinched Championship slots before the Can-Am 500, going on to win and place at Homestead Miami the next weekend. // Multiplatinum rock band Sugar Ray performed a morning concert in the DC Solar Power Pavilion before the Can-Am 500. // And that's a wrap for 2017—and for the Phoenix Raceway name. But the future's so bright, you're gonna need shades. ■

as though the win would be by Chase Elliott for about 20 laps, as he passed Kenseth, but his car faded as the laps went on. Kenseth caught up and quickly passed him with 10 laps remaining. Elliott finished second, but came up short in advancing to Homestead-Miami Speedway.

Brad Keselowski, who started 16th in the No.2 Miller Lite Ford, struggled from the beginning of the race. After Hamlin's wreck, he had a comfortable points cushion, though contact on the last restart made the situation a little more worrisome. Keselowski finished 16th and did earn the last Championship 4 slot.

Coming into Phoenix, three of the four spots had already been clinched by Kyle Busch (won at Martinsville), Kevin Harvick (won at Texas) and Martin Truex Jr. (clinched on points). Truex and Harvick finished third and fifth at Phoenix, respectively, while Busch finished seventh.

## HOMESTEAD-MIAMI CHAMPIONSHIP

Martin Truex Jr. was third in the CanAm 500 at Phoenix, but had already clinched on points—all he needed to go on to win the Ford EcoBoost 400 Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series at Homestead-Miami Speedway on November 19, after taking the lead in lap 216 out of 267, also scoring his first overall points Championship. Kyle Busch was second by just .681 seconds in a real nail-biter, and Kyle Larson took third. For Truex, it capped a season with seven prior wins backed by a large number of stage win bonus points. ■



## LAST RACE AT "PHOENIX RACEWAY"

Since 1964, Phoenix Raceway has been the Southwest's premier motorsports venue—the only track in the West to feature two Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series weekends a year: Spring Race Weekend in March and the NASCAR Playoffs semifinal Can-Am 500 Race Weekend in November.

Founded as an open-wheel venue, Phoenix Raceway is proud to also host the Phoenix Grand Prix Verizon IndyCar Series race under the lights in April.

November 2017 was Dale Earnhardt Jr's last race at Phoenix Raceway. It was also Can-Am 500 winner Matt Kenseth's last race at PIR. In fact, as the track noted on Twitter that afternoon:

"FUN FACT: This is EVERYONE'S last race at Phoenix International Raceway." As part of its \$178 million redevelopment, the modernized facility has become ISM Raceway in 2018. ■



Can-Am 500 winner  
Matt Kenseth



# A YEAR OF BIG CHANGES

## A NEW FACILITY, A NEW NAME AND A NEW EXPERIENCE

### WELCOME TO ISM RACEWAY

The race facility known since 1964 as Phoenix International Raceway has a new name for 2018: ISM Raceway, as part of a multi-year partnership between the track and smart venue tech pioneer ISM Connect that includes a groundbreaking new “digital fan engagement experience.”

The new ISM 360° Connect network adds advanced technology and data capabilities to interconnect fans, partners and the venue itself with digital display screens, interactive experiences, social media integration and a mobile app providing schedules, maps or other content.

Experiences will include the new infield Fan Zone, new pedestrian tunnel connecting the infield to the expanded grandstands and ISM Canyon (one of two new Canyon interactive entrances, with over 20,000 square feet of fan engagement and brand activation).

The partnership further reinforces a significant ISM Connect presence in motorsports, as the company has brought ISM Vision Powered by BoldVu®, the World’s Largest 360° Digital Engagement Venue Network, to the NASCAR experience across the country.



**ISM RACEWAY**  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA



### \$178 MILLION REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The track announced its \$178 million ISM Raceway Project Powered by DC Solar modernization in January 2017 (Phoenix Raceway at the time), with DC Solar as title sponsor and multi-year sponsor of a redesigned Midway.

The existing Allison grandstand is roughly doubled, with the new section curving to the south at the west end, providing excellent shade for both portions. There will be two Canyon entry towers with four new escalators and five new elevators. The existing Bobby Allison Grandstand will be extensively upgraded, and both sections will have individual seats with cupholders and free in-seat WiFi. The start/finish line will move to old Turn 2, just before the well-known dog leg, in front of the expanded grandstands—and shaking up competition considerably, launching into one of the most challenging areas of the track. Fans will have a great view of both pre-race and Gatorade Victory Lane, now centrally located in front of the new grandstand.

Concessions, merchandise stands, guest services and medical center will all be new or completely renovated. New suites in a variety of sizes for groups of 18 and up get new seating for easier mingling between outside and in. A new pedestrian tunnel will access a completely redesigned infield from the new DC Solar Power Pavilion to a Fan Zone featuring a first-of-its-kind Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Garage, placing fans face-to-face with the superstars of the sport, over a waist-high fence right into the garages, as their favorite teams prepare for the races. There will also be glassed-in garage hospitality suites.

**SO FAR THROUGH 2017:** Concrete elevator towers were standing by IndyCar in late April; the first piece of steel was installed by late May (nearly 2,000 tons are used in the rebuild); in June, crews began excavation of a new pedestrian-only tunnel near current Turn 2; the entire structure for the new grandstand and Canyon towers was built; and the new Curve Fan Hospitality Club was finished and open. As soon as NASCAR Weekend wrapped up in November, crews started dismantling one section of the old north grandstands.

**BY SPRING 2018:** Visitors last year have already seen the new grandstand. When you arrive in March/April this year, the new Canyon 1 escalators will be finished, and the new Bar & Grill will be open for business. You’ll also find the Petty grandstand gone, with Bryan, Foyt and existing Bobby Allison grandstands still in use and the start-finish line still in its familiar place.

**NOVEMBER 2018 GRAND OPENING:** Next fall’s NASCAR Weekend marks the Grand Opening, with all the north grandstands down, RV camping in their place, the entire new grandstand and Canyons open, the start-finish line moved, the new infield Fan Zone and Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Garage open, and the ISM 360° Connect digital fan experience fully implemented.

Watch it all unfold, and don’t miss this! ■

## NASCAR SPRING RACE WEEKEND

### MARCH 9-11, 2018

**FRIDAY: GATORADE POLE DAY**  
NASCAR Spring Race Weekend kicks off on Friday with Gatorade Pole Day. Don’t miss practice sessions for both the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR XFINITY Series before the starting line-up is set for Sunday. Take off Friday and start your track party weekend early! Time TBA.

**SATURDAY: DC SOLAR 200**  
Bring your tank top and sunglasses to ISM Raceway to watch up and coming drivers in NASCAR in the DC Solar 200, NASCAR XFINITY Series Race. Time TBA.

**SUNDAY: MONSTER ENERGY NASCAR CUP SERIES 500**  
Experience NASCAR Goes West with champions Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch taking on young guns like Kyle Larson and Chase Elliott on the track. Race at 12:30 pm.



## PHOENIX GRAND PRIX



## PHOENIX GRAND PRIX WEEKEND

### APRIL 6-7, 2018

ISM Raceway will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Mario Andretti’s final career win with a special reunion weekend for the Verizon IndyCar Series Phoenix Grand Prix—the second race of the season. The weekend will be filled with events celebrating Andretti as one of racing’s most renowned legends, as well as Phoenix’s rich open-wheel history (the 1.022-mile oval here has hosted 63 Indy cars races dating back to 1964).

During a reunion of drivers from the 1993 IndyCar race at Phoenix—Andretti’s last open-wheel victory—fans can interact with icons Bobby Rahal, Lyn St. James and Arie Luyendyk Sr. in a panel discussion and autograph session. In that race, for legendary Newman/Haas Racing, Andretti became the oldest recorded IndyCar winner on a traditional race course (at 53 years, one month and seven days old), as well as the first driver to win IndyCar in four different decades and the only driver to win races in five consecutive decades.

Andretti still holds IndyCar records for most starts (407), most pole positions earned (67), most laps led (7,595) and most career top-three finishes (144). ISM Raceway will celebrate his remarkable accomplishments through special merchandise, trading cards, a tribute panel and special commemorative items for fans.

### FRIDAY: VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES QUALIFYING

Watch Verizon IndyCar Series teams adjust their cars during practice as they prepare to take on ISM Raceway for the Phoenix Grand Prix. Action ends at night, when Verizon IndyCar Series drivers set the field during qualifying. Time TBA.

### SATURDAY: PHOENIX GRAND PRIX

Catch IndyCar’s brightest stars under the lights during the high-speed action and excitement of the 250-mile Verizon IndyCar Series Phoenix Grand Prix at ISM Raceway on April 7. The 2018 season features a highly anticipated introduction of universal aero kits to be used by all teams, making the cars sleeker, bolder and reminiscent of favorite Indy cars of the past. The aerodynamics involved are expected to make the already intense competition even stronger by allowing cars to run closer together and provide more passing opportunities. Time TBA.

### ALSO: QUARTER MIDGET SERIES

The USAC .25 Midget Series Phoenix Mini Copper Cup has the stars of tomorrow—16 classes of young racers, ages 5 to 16—in heat and feature races on a special 1/20th-mile track on the DC Solar Power Pavilion (the Midway) behind the straightaway grandstands. Chris Eggleston and Tucson native Alex Bowman got their starts in Quarter Midgets at Phoenix. AJ Foyt, Jeff Gordon, Sarah Fisher, Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano also started in Quarter Midgets. Time TBA.

### USAC SILVER CROWN CHAMP CAR SERIES

The USAC Silver Crown Championship 100-lap (102.2-mile) Phoenix Copper Cup returns to Phoenix after racing here last year for the first time since 2009. Some of PIR’s most legendary drivers got their start in the Series, including Tony Stewart, Jeff Gordon and AJ Foyt, winner of the first-ever Phoenix race in 1964. Time TBA.

### VINTAGE DESERT CLASSIC

The *Classic Racing Times* Vintage Desert Classic returns to Phoenix for its second year, with legendary vintage cars including cars from the 1993 IndyCar field on track, along with many others with significant ties to Phoenix—a chance for fans to enjoy the unique style and design of the IndyCar chassis during the 1990s, some of the sleekest and fastest ever produced. Time TBA.

### HISTORIC CAR CORRAL

In recognition of a long racing and automotive tradition in Arizona, a car corral on the DC Solar Power Pavilion will have legendary open-wheel racecars on display, with Phoenix local race legends also on hand for a fan autograph session.

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125 S Avondale Blvd, Suite 200, Avondale AZ 85323. ■

# Accent on content and form

Econo? Yes. Car? Of course. Econocar? No, it's much more. BY JOE SAGE

There was a time when a small car meant, to not mince words, a cheap car. With the Hyundai Accent, those days are long gone. Still small, still inexpensive, the all-new Accent is anything but "cheap." Features and inclusions on even the base model are extensive.

Creating the smallest car in a lineup is full of challenges: cost must be kept down, but can only go so low, especially as competitive technologies and features are folded in; and a full range of trims has to offer a distinctive stairstep of price and features, while still leaving headroom for the next model up (in this case, the Hyundai Elantra).

An entry point vehicle—generally the smallest in the lineup—also has to be better than what a buyer might find in the used or certified preowned market in the same price range, a huge challenge in a commodity well known for fast depreciation.

Standard categorizations by size—subcompact, compact, midsize, full-size—have become quite fuzzy over the past several years. Vehicles grow bulkier for airbags, side beams, rollover protection and impact protection, yet simultaneously slimmer to keep fuel-gobbling weight down, yet more spacious inside, to attract American consumers in particular. Much of this has been accomplished with tremendous advances in strong, lightweight steel components. (One highly valid bragging point from Hyundai is that they are the only leading manufacturer with their own steel

foundry, giving them the opportunity to not only create tailor-made lightweight parts, but to keep their costs down while doing so.)

Today, you can get more than you pay for, especially in smaller models. The Hyundai Sonata is clearly a midsize sedan, while the compact Elantra (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) brings you pretty much a midsize cabin at compact prices. The new subcompact Accent, in turn, now brings you pretty much a compact cabin at subcompact prices. There are many reasons this new sedan is a breakthrough.

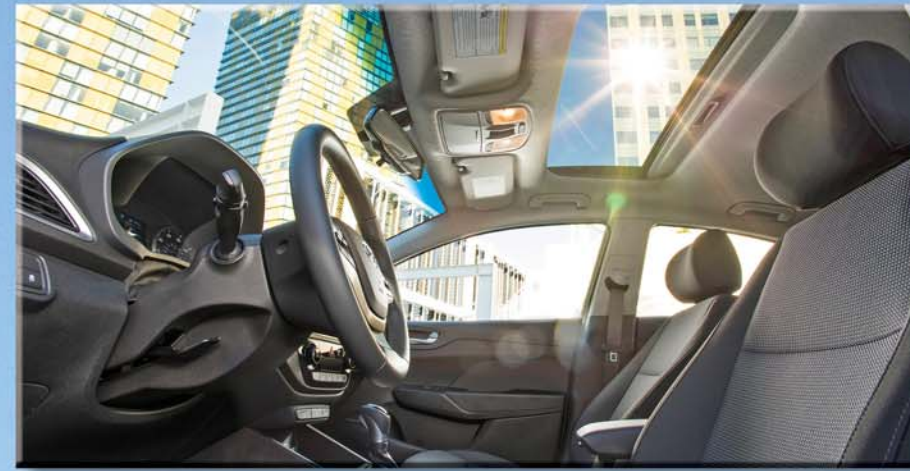
The main design challenge around creating a small car is not necessarily all its inclusions—those are competitive elements, subjectively included in planning and the final product. The objective challenge is that people are the same size, no matter what car they get in. Simply size down the wheels, engine compartment and trunk, and you will get a car with a "bubbly" look. Hyundai tackled this challenge head-on with the new Accent, and the results are plain to see—the bubble is nowhere to be seen—while the techniques to achieve this are more subtle. The "daylight opening" (or DLO—the side window profile, most of all) benefits from a win-win aerodynamically sloping windshield and rear glass, accentuated by a chrome beltline molding that extends from a blacked-out extension of the A-pillar to another blacked-out extension behind the C-pillar.

But it's more than an optical illusion. They have created a spatial miracle. The balance achieved is

perfect: a longer, larger cabin—with volume above its statutory size—that makes the car look longer, lower and more cohesive, not smaller or shorter. The car actually is larger, but only by a hair—0.6" longer on a wheelbase 0.4" longer, and 1.2" wider. Well-planted 17-inch alloy wheels (on top Limited trim) top off this study in scale and balance.

We met up with Hyundai in Las Vegas to get behind the wheel of the all-new fifth-generation 2018 Hyundai Accent. We worked our way quickly out of the city and headed north on I-15—urban freeway followed by several dozen open Interstate miles that would lead us to the righteous two-lane desert twisties in Valley of Fire State Park. From there, it was cross-country to drive across Hoover Dam into Arizona (then walk across and back).

The Accent held three of us comfortably—three guys over six feet tall each, in fact. And within our first dozen miles or so, we agreed this car was comfortable, well equipped, straight and smooth handling, and spacious enough to just keep cruising all the way to Salt Lake City, if we felt like it. Within a dozen more miles, we agreed it would be fine to cruise all the way to the northmost point on I-15—Sweet Grass, Montana. A few more miles and—you guessed it—we were ready to continue on up into Alberta, as far as Calgary or Edmonton, easy. Well, two of us were, anyway. The rear seat occupant said he was indeed comfortable, but did have his knees touching the front seatbacks. That's not surprising, in the smallest of Hyundai's sedan lineup—which climbs from Accent up to Elantra (an EPA-ranked compact with a midsize cabin) and



Sonata (a midsize with a full-size cabin). But move him to the front with his wife and load the kids into the back? Yep, they could drive all day, all the way.

Exuberant performance through two-lanes with significant hills and curves makes us surprised this 38-mpg fuel-sipper has just 130 hp—but the car weighs just 2500 pounds or so, pro-rata equivalent to over 200 hp in a 4000-pound sedan. Accent also has highly reengineered suspension, with new, near-vertically-mounted twin-tube rear shocks and coils, introduced earlier on pricier models, as well as a quieter cabin via stiffened subframe, much more NVH blocking and better wind seals.

Inclusions are plentiful (see sidebar). Features included on even the base trim, if priced as options on many other brands, could easily add up to more than the entire price of the Hyundai Accent. Class-above features include highly useful (and accurate) dynamic guidelines on the rear camera, keyless entry, power mirrors and windows, a wide range of

handling electronics, wheel-mounted cruise and Bluetooth hands-free phone, 60/40 folding rear seats and much more. For relatively small steps up in price (they still have to cap out below Elantra), you can get just about any feature you seek, short of a full leather interior. Top-trim Limited even has such premium features as BlueLink connected car services and a hands-free smart trunk.

The only real tradeoff we noted across the three-trim lineup is that a manual transmission is available only on base SE trim, which is also the only trim level with rear drum brakes. We tend to think of a manual as a more sporting choice, the kind that would go best with disc brakes all around, but Hyundai knows their customer well. The buyer of a base trim Accent is interested in one thing: the lowest possible price. And the stick-shift-and-drum combo delivers this.

Hyundai Accent has proven itself to be more than an entry-level vehicle, as demonstrated by its many repeat customers. Having driven the new Accent extensively, we easily understand this. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	1.6L DOHC 16v GDI 4-cyl
HP/TORQUE	130 hp / 119 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	6-spd man (base SE only)
	6-speed auto (SEL, Limited; opt SE)
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
BRAKES	F: 11-in vented disc
	R: (SE) drum; (SEL, Limited) disc
STEERING	rack & pinion pwr, motor driven
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut, coils,
	twin-tube gas shocks, 22.2mm stblzr bar
	R: coupled torsion axle, coils,
	twin-tube shocks
WHEELS/TIRES	SE: steel 5.5J15 / 185/65R15
	SEL: alloy 5.5x15 / 185/65R15
	Limited: alloy 6.5x17 / 205/45R17
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	172.6 in / 101.6 in
WIDTH / HEIGHT	68.1 in / 57.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	33.46 ft
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.1 in / 33.5 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	38.9 in / 37.3 in
SHOULDER ROOM (F/R)	54.2 in / 53.7 in
HIP ROOM (F/R)	51.7 in / 50.8 in
CARGO VOLUME	13.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	2502-2679 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	11.9 gal
MPG...Limited auto 28/38/32 (city/hwy/comb)	

## BASE PRICES:

SE	manual	\$14,995
	automatic	\$15,995
SEL	automatic	\$17,295
Limited	automatic	\$18,895

**INCLUDED ON ALL:** Rear camera w dynamic guidelines, vehicle stability mgmt, ESC, traction control, 4-wheel 4-channel ABS w EBD & BA, remote keyless entry w alarm, dual power manual fold side mirrors, AC, power windows and locks, one-touch triple turn signal, 6-way adjustable driver's seat incl height, passenger seatback pocket, front/rear door map pockets, 60/40 fold-down rear seatback, cloth seating & door inserts, center stack 12v outlet, tilt steering wheel, trip computer, Bluetooth hands-free phone, steering wheel cruise controls, wheel-mounted audio & Bluetooth controls, smartphone/USB/aux inputs, 5-in color touchscreen, 4.0B audio w AM/FM/CD/MP3, 4 speakers.

**ADDED ON SE AUTOMATIC:** Hillstart assist control.

**ADDED ON SEL & LIMITED:** Driver's blind spot mirror, heated side mirrors, auto headlight control, driver's auto-up window, sliding center armrest w storage bin, chrome inside door handles, tilt/telescope wheel, exterior temp display, Bluetooth hands-free phone w voice recognition, dual USB charging, 7-in touchscreen, AM/FM/Sirius w Android/Apple, 6 speakers.

**ADDED ON LIMITED:** Automatic emergency braking, side mirror turn signal indicators, chrome highlighted grille slats, chrome beltline molding, chrome door handles, projector headlights w LED DRLs, LED taillights, fog lights, hands-free smart trunk, power glass one-touch tilt/slide sunroof, heated front seats, proximity key w pushbutton start, auto climate w auto defog, leather wheel & shift knob.



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## Value and elegance. by Joe Sage

Hyundai has a new Accent sedan for 2018 (see also in this issue), while their Elantra sedan was new for 2017. A new Elantra GT 5-door hatchback arrived a few months later, but as a 2018 model, since model-year-deciding January 1 of 2017 had already come and gone. Accent was long considered a sub-compact but is now EPA-classified as a compact, while Elantra remains a compact, though it has an EPA-classified midsize cabin. Sonata is of course Hyundai's midsize sedan.

While you can think of a million reasons to look at Sonata, the same is true for Elantra: it starts at \$13,450 to Sonata's \$20,050 and gets 40 mpg highway to Sonata's 36, both with 200-plus maximum horsepower (201 Elantra, 245 Sonata). Elantra's wheelbase is four inches shorter, overall length 11 inches shorter and its turning circle a foot tighter, while its front legroom is 3.3 inches less than Sonata's, but the rear actually has a tenth of an inch more.

If in fact, the smaller Elantra's specs seem more like an advantage to you than a tradeoff—cash saved at purchase, cash saved at the pump, easier to park and, well, try it on for size—then you have a million and one reasons to take a look at Hyundai Elantra.

If the \$13,450 model sounds too spartan for you, though, here's Hyundai's answer: the

Value Edition, introduced during the 2017 model year (as driven here). For 2018, it's even a little less expensive: last year, its price was \$21,465 less a \$1,215 discount, or \$20,250. For 2018, the price is \$19,850. Destination charge is up by \$50 (and our optional cargo tray goes up five bucks), but the total is still \$345 lower for this same vehicle in the new year.

There are a few other lineup changes for 2018: a Limited With Tech package is folded into the Limited trim, and SE is joined by SEL.

With rear disc brakes for 2018 (the starting model in 2017 was a base SE with rear drums), Value Edition's comparison is now less with the base model and more with the top-trim Limited. Value Edition has smaller wheels and some different trim elements (a bit less chrome, which, again, some buyers may prefer), though Limited has a number of driver assist technologies available as options not available on Value Edition.

At \$2250 less than top-trim Elantra Limited, Elantra Value Edition has great appeal for any buyer who knows what inclusions they want and need, if these are those. If you like Elantra's size, Value Edition is also \$2200 less than a base midsize Sonata, or \$12,600 less than a top trim Sonata. For some buyers, this could add up to about a quadruple win. ■

### SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	Nu 2.0L DOHC Atkinson Cycle 4-cyl
DRIVETRAIN	FWD, normal/sport/eco modes
HP/TORQUE	147 hp / 132 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	6-speed auto w SHIFTRONIC
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson, coils, hydraulic twin-tube gas shocks, 22mm stblzr bar R: coupled torsion beam axle, gas-filled hydraulic monotube shocks, coils
STEERING	rack & pinion power assist motor driven
BRAKES	F: 11.0" vented / R: 10.3" solid discs
WHEELS/TIRES	16-in alloy / P205/55 R16
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR	179.9 / 106.3 / 5.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	34.78 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	38.8 / 37.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.4 / 35.7 in
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	14.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT	2811-2976 lb
FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY	87 oct regular / 14.0 gal
MPG	28/37/32 (city/hwy/comb)

<b>BASE PRICE</b>	<b>\$19,850</b>
<b>INCLUDED, ALL ELANTRAS:</b> Bluetooth, cruise control, wheel-mounted phone and audio controls.	
<b>INCLUSIONS, VALUE EDITION:</b> Blind spot detection, rear cross traffic alert, lane change assist, LED daytime running lamps, hands-free smart trunk release, power glass tilt/slide safety one-touch sunroof, heated front seats, 7" display, Android/Apple, power driver's seat w lumbar, dual climate control w clean air ionizer & auto defogger, proximity key, push button start, autodim rear mirror w Homelink & compass, leather shift knob, leather-wrapped wheel, rear disc brakes.	
<b>OPTIONS:</b> Carpeted floor mats (125), cargo net (50), cargo tray (105)	280
<b>DESTINATION CHARGE</b>	885
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,015</b>





# Finally on the Flats

**AFTER CONQUERING THE HEIGHTS OF MOTORSPORTS FOR DECADES, LYN ST. JAMES FINALLY ACHIEVES A MAJOR BUCKET LIST ITEM: UTAH'S BONNEVILLE SALT FLATS**

Commentary by Lyn St James

What is Bonneville Salt Flats Racing? Why is there such a mystique about it? And why does just about every racer want to go there? I was fortunate to finally get the opportunity to run on the salt at the Utah Salt Flats Racing Association (USFRA) 31st Annual World of Speed event. After wanting to run on the salt for many decades, it finally happened, and I'm starting to understand it.

Bonneville Salt Flats Racing is the ultimate mechanical challenge. It combines creativity, design, and the engineering ingenuity to build something to a diverse set of rules, that will go fast on an unknown surface. The only area where there's no compromise is in safety—the tech inspectors take no prisoners when it comes to this. Everything is thoroughly checked (even all the drivers' gear, in-

cluding underwear) to the highest degree of FIA safety specs. There's a huge diversity in the types of vehicles that show up to run on the salt: production cars, custom built race cars, modified street machines, motorcycles, trucks, two wheels, three wheels, four wheels, wings, no wings, hot rods, just about anything and everything the mechanical mind can imagine. And the unknown surface—well, that means every time there's a meet on the salt, no one knows what condition the salt surface will be in until the day(s) of the meet. It varies based on the weather over the last season, the current weather conditions and the constant deterioration of the salt. It takes place on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), so authorization has to come from the BLM to schedule the race meets. Many variables, many unknowns—yet people spend all year (or years) to build/prepare a vehicle to run on the salt, and of-

ten an event will get canceled either prior to the scheduled dates, or even while on site.

Literally and visually, the Salt Flats are a phenomenon. The area is a remnant of the Pleistocene Lake Bonneville and is the largest (46 sq.mi.) of many salt flats located west of the Great Salt Lake. Speed runs have taken place here since 1914. But I think there's a mystique when one looks out over this massive white surface, surrounded by mountains, and often you see a mirage that looks like the surface is actually water. Depending on the clouds and sun, everything set against this white surface takes on such artistic forms. Jaw dropping.

The salt is very coarse, in some places really hard, in other places quite mushy (like slush), quite crusty, and there are ruts and potholes. It's never really smooth. And it sticks to everything!

Just about every racer wants to go there. It's the combination of history, engineering ingenuity, limited access (at best three to four times a year), the

wide range of types of vehicles and, of course—the SPEED!

I've wanted to run on the salt since the 1980s, and over time quite a few people knew about it. At Amelia Island last March, Bill Warner had a special display of land speed record cars, and while I was drooling and taking photos of the cars, I ran into Ted Wenz of Savannah Race Engineering, who knew about my desire to run on the salt. He asked me if I was still interested in doing it, and of course I said, "YES."

He connected me with John Goodman of Wichita, Kansas, who was building a Lakester to take to Bonneville, hopefully later in the year. John and I started emailing back and forth, and the wheels were now in motion. I joined the USFRA and got the rulebook, so I could learn what a Lakester was and what I needed to get or do as a driver.

A Lakester is a streamliner with four exposed wheels, and there are many difference classes based on engine size. John's has a 2.0 Cosworth BDG engine, so the category is G/GL for engine size, Gas Fueled Lakester. The current record in that class is 211.463 mph.

I had to upgrade my nomex, which was fine except for the race suit (they are so expensive and this would likely be a one-time use), so I was hoping to figure out how I could borrow a suit. I ran into Yves Morizot, founder of Stand 21, at the Rolex Reunion at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, and Stand 21 came to the rescue. They had one suit (FIA 20 grade) that just might fit me. Voilà! Thank you, Stand 21! So I was ready (at least for the things I needed to do).

**DAY 1:** I decided to rent a car and drive from Phoenix, which would give me flexibility in my traveling days. I left Phoenix on Tuesday, September 12, expecting to arrive in Wendover, Utah that night. I almost made it, but had a tire blow out on my rental car just past Ely, Nevada—so I ended up spending the night in Ely and had to wait for a replacement rental car the next day (crazy car had no spare tire, just one of those stupid pumps).

**DAY 2:** As I drove into Wendover, the marvel of the Salt Flats appeared off to my right, and I just had to stop and take a photo. I arrived Wednesday afternoon and immediately went to the Bonneville Salt Flats. Everyone was just starting to set up; the folks at registration recognized me and gave me my car and pit pass, but I couldn't officially register until the car arrived and passed tech. After I checked into the hotel, I got a call from John saying they had arrived. (They had three flat tires on the drive from Kansas.) It rained during the night, at least at the hotel, which was only about ten miles from the Salt Flats.

**DAY 3:** We agreed to meet at the course at 9am, where I met John for the first time, along with his crew: Izzy, Glen, Bones, Wayne and, a little later, Stainless. The sky was dark, ominous and looked threatening for the entire day, but the only place it rains is in Wendover, not on the course.

The first order of business is to take the car through tech. This was a newly built car, so tech inspection seems to be more critical than usual. If you've seen the movie, *The World's Fastest Indian*, that's what it was like going through tech. John Goodman is an experienced record holder on the Salt Flats, but hadn't been there since 1999, so he was a bit nervous.

And then there's me, a Salt Flats rookie but somewhat "known entity," so there's quite a bit of attention being paid by everyone. Almost two hours later and after much discussion, we left the tech area with a list of things that needed to be changed or the car cannot run. Stainless (a true legend/veteran Salt Flats record holder) has arrived on the scene, and the consensus is they'll be able to fix things, so let's work on fitting me and John in the car so we can do our "Bail Out" tests (after being tightly strapped into the car, the driver has to release everything and be able to get out of the car unassisted in less than 30 seconds). Love the optimism in all racers!

While I make a lunch run to town (drenched in rain), they fit John in the car and he passes his Bail Out. Then they start fitting me in the car (not an easy task). Most critical is being able to see and reach everything in the cockpit. About three hours later, the tech inspectors show up to observe my Bail Out. The canopy weighs about 20 pounds, isn't hinged and the latches are hard to reach. But I get it done (in 21 seconds). As I look up at the sky, there's a rainbow!

We leave the track and decide to meet for dinner at the Copper Kettle Diner (not many options in Wendover—other than the casinos in West Wendover, Nevada). A good day!

**DAY 4:** The driver's meeting is scheduled for 8am, with another rookie driver's meeting at 9am. Everyone is able to take their personal/tow vehicles down both the long course (7 miles) and short course (5 miles) to observe where the mile markers are, lines marking the course, and other important landmarks.

It's incredibly windy and hazy, so it's pretty difficult to see much of anything. I'm in information overload at this point. "Floating Mountain" and other references are discussed. I'm used to finding braking zones, turn-in points and apexes, but they're right in front of me. Now I'm having to look

KEEP RIGHT >>



*What is Bonneville Salt Flats Racing? Why is there such a mystique about it? And why does just about every racer want to go there?*



at quarter-mile posts, mile markers and having a difficult time seeing them at 20 mph. Relax! Patience is required.

One high point of the day was the arrival of 14 school buses full of high school students from the area. How cool to see so many kids excited to be around these vehicles, asking questions and taking photos. They stay for a couple of hours. I find out later that some of the buses got a chance to drive down the course, since it was closed due to the winds. What a great experience for the kids!

The wind never lets up: gusts over 20 mph, so the track continues to be on hold. But our crew is now more focused on fixing the things that need changing from tech inspection. This mostly has to do with how the fuel lines are run—and isolating the driver compartment from potential flow if the fuel line were to leak or break. A solution is dis-

cussed, and before work is started they discuss the solution with the tech inspectors, who seem to agree. Work begins. About 4pm, work is completed and tech inspectors come back for final sign off. YES! We can now officially register and be ready to run tomorrow.

Let's start the motor and do a systems check. Grind/grind/grind—the car won't start. At this point, I determine there's absolutely nothing I can offer, and I'm completely windblown from the elements, so I decide to go back to the hotel.

**DAY 5:** I arrive at the track about 8am, and the crew are making last minute adjustments to the car to get it ready to move over to the short course. Perfect conditions! Cool (low 50s), sunny, no wind. About 8:30, one of the fastest streamliners—the record holder Vesco Terminator II—makes a pass

and everyone stops for a few minutes to listen to what the speeds are (they announce this on AM radio 1610 and CB radio): 315.664 mph at the quarter mile, 338 mph at the 1-mile, 395 at the 2-mile, 420.499 at the 3-mile, final trap speed 430.524. Not a record run, but really fast!

About 10am, they get the car loaded onto the trailer to get in line on the short course and load the van with as much support equipment as they think they will need. It's like the paddock is transported to the line (which is now the pits). And the line is long: 38 cars ahead of us. This reminds me of my early drag racing days; hurry up and wait in line to make a pass that will only last a few seconds/minutes. There are three lines on the short course: one for the 130 mph club cars, one for 150 mph club cars, and one for Land Speed Record cars (which is the one we are in—the longest line).

There is very little activity—time to wander around, but not much to see. Things get really quiet, and we realize the course is shut down. A communication glitch with the officials threatens safety, so the delay is over one hour.

When we're about third in line, John gets suited up and warms up the engine. At about 3:45 (five hours after we put the car in line), the starter waves John to "go." I'm in the van, the push vehicle. We push John at the starting line, and off he goes. Since this is his first pass, he's not to exceed 150 mph, and even though he only has to go to the 3-mile marker, he seems to disappear into the horizon. It's a successful run (clocked 138 mph between the 2- and 3-mile markers), but he's not happy. The car is unstable, but he needs to get back in line for his second run (between 150-175mph). They inspect the car and begin making suspension adjustments while it's in line.

There continue to be delays, some vehicles take runs and darkness begins to threaten. Though scheduled to stop at 5pm, they run until a little after 6pm, when one car seems to go off course immediately after leaving the start line. End of day!

We keep the car in line so it will be able to go out early the next morning, and after that it will be ready for me to run the salt. But we're done for today. I've been here for four days, but still don't know what it's like to drive fast on the salt.

**DAY 6:** I arrive at the track at 7am. There's cloud cover on the horizon, but you can see the sun peeking out as it comes up. Weather is perfect—cool and soon to be partly sunny. John goes out about 9:15am and gets a good run—174 mph.

While walking around the pits, I look over and see someone I recognize, but didn't expect to see here—Ray Evernham, who tells me he's doing a documentary on the Bonneville Salt Flats. He said Erin told him I was going to be here and said let's



do an interview. I get suited up and we do that.

Now that John has his first two licensing runs done, it's time to get the car ready for me to run. This involves installing the seat insert, pads and additional seat belts (cheek belts). At about 12:15 I get my first run down the salt!

You've heard the saying "flying blind." Well, my first runs down the salt were literally driving blind. I've never done anything in racing quite like this—no real seat of the pants feel, and can't see much at all. Between the vibrations, distortion in the canopy, the bright white salt, the wide space between two blue lines marking the edges of the track (done with environmentally safe fluid) and looking for the mile markers at both edges of the track, you really have no idea where you're going!

I also can't read the GPS gauge on the steering column that indicates speed. And that's the ONLY indicator to give you any idea of how fast you're going (no tach, no temperature gauges, no gear indicator), so I just shift by the sound of the engine. They give me "speed goals" for each gear, but since I can't read the speed, it really doesn't matter. I know the goal is to stay between 125-150mph to get my "D" license. Luckily, I achieve that with a 142.40744 mph.

When they check over the car, they realize the battery is down, so they put a battery charger on it and work on the GPS speed gauge. I abort my next run after the 1-mile because the inertia switch tripped and shut the car off (we didn't realize what it was until John got to the car and saw it had

tripped). At 3:30 I get back in and do a second run, but I can't shift into 4th gear, so I top out in 3rd gear at about 157 mph, which at least earns me my "C" license (150-174 mph). We get back in line, and at 5:40 I get in my third run, but still couldn't get it into 4th gear. I'm getting really frustrated. Long lines, so much work and time spent taking any part of the body off the car to work on it, it's like time stands still. And then when I *do* finally get on the course, something (or maybe me) isn't working.

We call it a day and decide to go to the Salt Flats Café for Mexican dinner. Good call! Time to gather the troops—but my throat is sore and I feel a bad cold coming. The weather is predicted to be windy tomorrow (Monday), which means the course may not even be open. I mention to John that if the track is open, it might be good for him to run the car and check out what's happening with 4th gear. It was left that we'd just see what the weather would be, and they'll check the car out in the morning. I go back to my hotel feeling under the weather (literally) and thinking my getting any more time on the salt is becoming unlikely.

**DAY 7:** I got a good night's rest and slept in a little, since I figured I wouldn't be running. My cold wasn't any worse, so I figured I'd get some cold medicine, stop at the course to see everyone, go to impound to get my license, and get ready for the drive back to Phoenix. As I'm checking out of the

KEEP RIGHT >>

**LYN ST. JAMES**—speaker, coach, mentor, ambassador, broadcast personality and race car driver—is president of Lyn St. James Enterprises of Phoenix, comprising the Women in the Winner's Circle Foundation, the Complete Driver Academy for women, Project Podium grants for women and other programs. She is the first woman to win a North American professional road race solo (Watkins Glen, 1985), competed in the Indianapolis 500 seven times and is the first woman named Indy 500 Rookie of the Year (1992). After two decades of wins, world records, crashes and failures, she realized her accomplishments provided an outline for others to follow. One of the 100 Leading Women in the North American Auto Industry (*Automotive News*), she has been an on-air race commentator for ABC and ESPN and is author of *Ride of Your Life, Only This Morning You're All Grown Up, The Lyn St. James Car Owner's Manual for Women and An Incredible Journey* (sold at Amazon and lynstjames.com). The late Walter Cronkite praised her work, saying, "This is the stuff of high adventure, but only part of the tale, as St. James also gives us the fascinating inside story of her assault on the male bastion that was Indy. It's a can't-put-it-down book." ■

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hotel, my phone rings and it's Gary from the team, who says, "get suited up—they found the problem with the shift linkage and we're getting ready to run with you in it," so I hustle over to the course. I arrive about 9:30, and the crew are working on the car. Conditions are perfect—no wind, cool (60s), partly cloudy. We load the car on the trailer and transport it to the pits. There are only a few cars around, which is great—NO LINES! There's excitement in the air, and I hear John say "I have a good feeling about this." YES!

I'm going down the course, and the car shuts off two times, so I push the inertia button down twice and keep running (got into 4th easily), but when it happens the third time, I know we aren't going any faster, so I abort the run and go down the turn out area. Bummer!

John and Stainless decide how to fix it so it won't happen again, and we take it back to the start line.

I noticed on my last run how much my situational awareness had improved. Even though I couldn't see any better, it just seemed easier to see what I needed to see. And things now felt like they were happening almost in slow motion rather than fast forward motion. As I looked down the course, I felt the left side of the course looked a bit smoother (plus that line was used for the slower cars the last few days and probably had gotten beaten up less), so I talked with Stainless and told him I'd try to stay closer to the left side.

I learned later I was right, because the workers had "dragged" the left side of the course up to the 2-mile marker that morning (they drag wooden pallets behind trucks to pack down and smooth out the ruts in the salt).

My confidence level had also improved, so as they pushed me from the start line and I dropped the clutch at 30 mph in 1st gear, I was "ON IT" full throttle—and went through the gears aggressively—yes, I'm going for it. All my shifts were by sound (still can't read that damned GPS gauge, and when I do see a number, I don't like it—it's too slow). Sailed into 4th gear—throttle down, just past the 2-mile marker, when the front of the car takes flight and turns toward the right! I go into a couple of spins—pull the parachute lever (which, because I was going backwards, didn't deploy) and land, dug deep into the salt headed up course. I "Bailed Out" (fortunately had practiced that earlier in the week), and by the time the course workers were there, I was out of the car.

I was fine—and amazingly the car wasn't too bad. Fortunately it stayed upright, the nose box was somewhere down course, and the undertray was all torn up, but the cockpit, engine bay and rear body work were all attached and, other than being covered in white salt, were all good.



This was not how it was supposed to go. I knew I didn't do anything wrong; in fact, I felt pretty good about how I handled it.

Then one of the course workers came up and told us my speeds: 177mph at the Quarter (2-1/2) marker (which would earn me my "B" license), and between the 2-3 mile markers (which I was traveling airborne) the speed recorded was 273.63078 mph. How could that be?! The only thing we could determine was I tripped the timing line.

It's hard to put into words how blessed and grateful I am for the opportunities I've had in racing. Running on the salt has been a goal for decades, and to finally get the chance to do it was amazing. I've been asked, "is it what you expected?" and my reply is, "I had no idea what to expect, and kept an open mind." I'm glad I did. In my opinion it is the ultimate challenge and test of courage, commitment, and determination. The patience required, the problem solving, the ability to brave the elements and the determination to keep coming back (whether it's to go for another run or get ready for another year) is beyond anything else I've done in racing.

I've raced SCCA (amateur and pro), IMSA, IndyCar, off road, go karts, FIA, vintage, but nothing compares to running on the salt. Yes, there are rules, but there are so many ways to do it which can be successful or get you in trouble.

To some degree I think it's a throwback to what racing used to be like (race what you bring to the track), but don't be fooled: it's not crazy nor easy.

I want to thank Ted Wenz for introducing me to John Goodman, and thank John and the entire Kansas Twisters for giving me this opportunity and giving it everything they had to give.

And thank you to the Utah Salt Flats Racing Association (USFRA) for continuing the legacy and passion of Salt Flats racing—safe is FAST!!

I want to go back! I want to earn my 200 mph Club Membership! ■

## Lyn St. James time sheet breakdowns on the short course (averages):

SUNDAY	1st Run
130 Club (1 mile) .....	115.15096
1-2 Mile .....	131.05611
Quarter (2-1/2 Mile) .....	134.43843
2-3 Mile .....	142.40744
2nd Run	
130 Club (1 mile) .....	137.35503
1-2 Mile .....	149.86149
Quarter (2-1/2 Mile) .....	157.42704
2-3 Mile .....	157.44307
3rd Run	
130 Club (1 mile) .....	132.86531
1-2 Mile .....	148.56701
Quarter (2-1/2 Mile) .....	153.60874
2-3 Mile .....	158.42839
MONDAY	
.....aborted	
4th Run	
.....aborted	
5th Run	
130 Club (1 mile) .....	151.70051
1-2 Mile .....	166.04504
Quarter (2-1/2 Mile) .....	177.99668
2-3 Mile .....	spin/crash

# Double Eclipse

A partially familiar name, new blood and a hint of broader changes coming. By Joe Sage

The Mitsubishi lineup in the US was whittling down to two related crossovers (the 7-seat Outlander and smaller 5-seat Outlander Sport) and the little Mirage econocar (hatch or sedan). The Lancer compact sedan was discontinued in mid-2017 (though they will still sell you one and in fact will also still sell you a new 2015 Lancer Evolution, their discontinued legendary rally competitor).

When we first got wind of a new vehicle with Eclipse in its name, we envisioned the popular compact sport coupe discontinued after 2012—welcome back! But wait. This is not that. This is the Eclipse Cross, a new vehicle of a considerably different sort, but partly co-opting that name.

The Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross gets its name half from aiming to be a lively and sporty driver, serving somewhat the same customers as the sport coupe had, and half from being another crossover. Fair enough; the Lancer cancellation came with word that they would now concentrate on utilities.

The automotive landscape is in a period of size overlap right now: EPA categorizes vehicles by cabin volume and tests fuel economy by footprint, bringing us many a vehicle with, for example, a

midsize cabin in a subcompact category. By some ratings, even the three-row Outlander is a compact; but with seven seats, it competes in the full-size segment for most buyers.

Several brands have utilities with a sizing and naming pattern of two models in sequence, the smaller called Sport, then a third even smaller model with a different name: Hyundai Santa Fe, Santa Fe Sport and Tucson; Nissan Rogue, Rogue Sport and Kicks; Range Rover, Range Rover Sport and Evoque. Thus Mitsubishi may throw a few people off, as the new Eclipse Cross fits *between* Outlander and Outlander Sport, by every measure (features, specifications and pricing).

Mitsubishi—relatively small in North America, but huge globally—is having its footprint augmented by a recently announced partnership with already-partnered Nissan and Renault. The dividends of the new relationship include rapid expansions in product portfolio, engineering and technology. The Eclipse Cross may be seen as less a crowding of their crossover lineup than an overlay—the first fruits of a new family to arrive, while the existing models are nowhere near ready to go.



Mitsubishi utilities have been hot, bringing the brand to more than double its 2012 sales and on track to rise by 50 percent from 2016 to 2019. By market share, their biggest opening is in the smaller sizes, all the more so if they combine value pricing with sportiness (as others in the crowded segment lean heavily toward luxury and family duty).

Much about the Eclipse Cross is transformative, while much else is evolutionary. The brand's "Dynamic Shield" front styling is more integrated, wrapping aerodynamically toward the sides, sweeping through a more athletic profile to a completely different twist in the rear, combining handy utility and sporty fastback elements. Lighting accents abound, from LEDs to crystal foglights. The handsome cabin has the most refined materials and finishes ever in a Mitsubishi, with gloss surfaces, silver accents and "carbon graining." Prices from model to model (see sidebar) step up very reasonably, successively adding advanced tech-



nology and features for this class—an advanced interface with high-mounted screen and console touchpad, Android/Apple links, heads-up display, panoramic sunroof, 710-watt Rockford Fosgate audio and more. Parental controls are also available: geofencing, speed alert and curfew alert.

The vehicle's underpinnings are equally distinctive. Eclipse Cross has a fuel-efficient new 1.5-liter turbo that beats the power and torque of a base Outlander Sport's 2.0L, approaches the power and exceeds the torque of the 2.4L and even has 85.5 percent the torque of Outlander's 3.0L V6. Significantly, the new engine's high torque kicks in low—2,000 rpm—and is sustained through a wide band.

An eight-step CVT with Sport Mode feeds another Eclipse Cross advantage—Mitsubishi's sophisticated S-AWC (Super All-Wheel Control), as available on the pricier Outlander but surpassing the simpler AWC of Outlander Sport. Torque vectoring both front-rear and left-right enhances traction and handling on all surfaces in all weather.

Our spirited launch drive through the twists and turns of the Santa Monica Mountains was in the top-trim SEL S-AWC Touring.

Aimed toward young professionals with active, sporty weekend leanings—especially those who may be new to the brand—the new Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross arrives by early March and is backed by a 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty and includes five years of roadside assistance. ■



## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>ENGINE</b> .....	new 1.5L MIVEC direct-injection turbo
<b>DRIVETRAIN</b> .....	S-AWC Super All-Wheel Control AWD (or front-wheel-drive optional on ES model)
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	152 hp / 184 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	CVT w 8-spd steps and Sport Mode (plus paddle shifters on SEL)
<b>SUSPENSION</b> .....	F: MacPherson strut, stblzr bar; R: multi-link w stblzr bar
<b>STEERING</b> .....	electric power steering
<b>BRAKES</b> .....	ABS w EBD and brake assist
<b>WHEELS</b> .....	(LE,SE,SEL) 18x7 alum alloy / (ES) 16x6.5 aa
<b>TIRES</b> .....	(LE,SE,SEL) P225/55 R18 / (ES) P215/70 R16
<b>LENGTH / WB / TURN CIRC.</b> .....	175.5 / 106.4 in / 34.8 ft
<b>LEGROOM (F/R)</b> .....	40.9 / 35.3 in
<b>WEIGHT / TOW CAPACITY</b> .....	3307 lb / 1500 lb
<b>FUEL / FUEL CAPACITY</b> .....	regular unleaded / 15.8 gal
<b>MPG</b> .....	.....tbd

**BASE PRICE: ES 2wd**.....**\$23,295**

**ALL INCLUDE:** heated power side mirrors, roof spoiler, color multi-info display, high-contrast meters, Bluetooth, steering wheel audio & phone controls, rear camera, cruise, auto climate, power locks & windows, anti-theft alarm.

**ES S-AWC:** lowest 4WD upgrade in segment.....**\$23,895**

**LE S-AWC adds:** black 18-in alloys, black exterior accents, 7-in thin display audio w Apple/Android.....**\$24,895**

**SE S-AWC adds:** blind spot warning, rear cross traffic alert, lane change assist, heated front seats, keyless entry & start, electronic parking brake w/auto hold, Mitsubishi Connect w 2-year safeguard & remote services trial, 18-in two-tone alloy wheels, and silver, chrome, and gloss black exterior styling accents, hill hold .....**\$26,395**

**SEL S-AWC adds:** leather seats, heads-up display, multi-view camera system, LED headlights.....**\$27,895**

**SEL S-AWC TOURING adds:** dual-pane power sliding panoramic sunroof, 710w Rockford-Fosgate premium audio, advanced safety tech (forward collision mitigation, lane departure warning, adaptive cruise, auto high beams), heated steering wheel, heated rear seats .....**\$30,395**

*New Red Diamond Premium Metallic paint is the first using a newly developed process creating high degrees of intensity, depth, richness and brightness.*



## MITSUBISHI CONNECT

Mitsubishi Connect—included in the Eclipse Cross SE and SEL—made its global debut at the LA Auto Show. During our launch drive two days later, we toured its features with product strategy senior manager Bryan Arnett. The system brings a suite of safeguard and remote services via subscription (2-year trial included), accessed through an Android or Apple app, online through a vehicle owners' portal, or from inside the vehicle.

The factory-installed Mitsubishi Connect system comprises an embedded telematics control unit with 4G LTE cellular modem and GPS capability via cellular.

The Safeguard services package within Mitsubishi Connect includes Automatic Collision Notification, SOS Emergency Assistance, Information Assistance, Roadside Assistance, Stolen Vehicle Assistance, Alarm Notification and Mileage Tracker.

A Remote services package adds Remote Climate Control, Remote Door Lock/Unlock, Remote Horn, Remote Lights, Car Finder, Vehicle Settings and Parental Controls (Geo Fence, Speed Alert and Curfew Alert).

Two in-vehicle buttons connect the vehicle to a call center for SOS Emergency Assistance, and Info/Roadside Assistance. ■

## OUTLANDER PLUG-IN HYBRID



Mitsubishi is bringing the Outlander PHEV (Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle)—which has already been the best-selling plug-in hybrid in Europe and Car of the Year in Japan over the past four years—to North America. The vehicle was on static display at our mid-day break during the Eclipse Cross launch drive (also providing on-board 120-volt output for our Mitsubishi Connect demonstration, above). The electrified SUV has a 2.0L gasoline engine, 12 kWh Li-Ion battery, and high-torque 60kW electric motors both front and rear, a high-efficiency layout combined with S-AWC all-wheel-drive to make it the only AWD plug-in hybrid in its class (and the only PHEV with DC fast charging, able to charge completely in 3.5 hours or to 80 percent in just 25 minutes. These numbers allow most commuters to run in pure electric all week, then tackle the great outdoors or the long haul on the weekend. Outlander PHEV started arriving here in December and has a starting price of \$34,595. ■

# LA AUTO SHOW

NOVEMBER 2017

The Los Angeles Auto Show is the first of the major international shows on the calendar and the handiest to Arizona, a 45-minute flight or six-hour drive away.

LA Auto Show Press and Trade Days officially merged with a Connected Car Expo last year, under a new title of AutoMobility LA, as the show's hosts blend consumer electronics, the automotive industry and urban planning. Automotive manufacturers still bring their first wave of new production model reveals, concepts and technological advances. Here are some highlights (alphabetically).

The all-new **2019 Audi A8**, its fourth generation, continues their reliably slow-but-sure evolution from a wider and more vertical "Singleframe" grille, to more slope at the rear of its stronger and stiffer 58-percent aluminum plus CFRP body, with strong wheel arches to accentuate its quattro AWD. Innovative new lighting tech is featured front to rear, while rear seat passengers receive features on a par with many limousines.

• A new **BMW i8 Roadster** joins the existing "sports car of the future" 2+2 BMW i8 Coupe this spring. In both plug-in hybrids, BMW eDrive technology promises longer range and more time in pure-electric mode. The new i8 Roadster is based on the same LifeDrive vehicle architecture of aluminum chassis and carbon-fiber-reinforced plastic (CFRP) passenger cell, and it still has the Coupe's scissor doors—but with more headroom.

• The **2019 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 convertible** is the first since the original in 1970. Starting at \$123,995 (the ZR1 coupe at \$119,995), it has a 755-hp LT5 6.2L supercharged V8 and 7-speed manual or 8-speed paddle-shift auto. Zero-to-60 time is under 3 seconds, top speed over 200 mph. An adjustable High Wing comes in the \$2,995 ZTK Performance Package with special tires, chassis and Magnetic Ride Control tuning. The top can be operated remotely or at speeds up to 30 mph.

• The new **2018 Hyundai Kona** is the brand's



• 2019 Audi A8



• New BMW i8 Roadster



• 2019 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 convertible



• 2018 Hyundai Kona



• Jaguar XE SV Project 8



• 2018 Jeep® Wrangler

first B-segment CUV for the US, with "urban smart armor" styling and 2.0L Atkinson Cycle 4-cylinder, expanding the current Tucson, Santa Fe and Santa Fe Sport lineup at the subcompact end, arriving in first quarter 2018. Hyundai also announced a partnership with Smartcar to deliver connected services such as car wash, groceries, on-demand fueling, remote lock/unlock, remote startup and more.

• The 592-hp **Jaguar XE SV Project 8** is the world's fastest four-door sedan of production-intent spec, with a record lap of the 12.9-mile Nürburgring Nordschleife, the famed "Green Hell," in just 7 minutes 21.23 seconds. Designed, engineered and hand built by Jaguar Land Rover's Special Vehicle Operations (SVO) division, the car was 11 seconds quicker than the previous record, faster than many two-door coupes and exotics.

• The **2018 Jeep Wrangler (JL)** comes in four trim levels, 2-door and 4-door models with multiple roof options, multiple 4x4 systems (with a first-ever 2-speed full-time 4WD transfer case available on Sahara 4-door). A 3.6L Pentastar V6 is joined by an all-new 2.0L turbo four with 48-volt battery. (A 3.0L EcoDiesel V6 comes later.) Every Wrangler model receives a Trail Rated badge. See our launch drive feature elsewhere in this issue.

• The **2018 Kia Niro Plug-in Hybrid (PHEV)** brings a new trick to an already clever new model. Kia's third plug-in model, the Niro PHEV adds about 26 miles of EV range and has a 105 MPGe rating, for a total driving range up to ±560 miles—great for pure EV daily driving plus the ability to take long road trips. The Niro PHEV has the same six-speed dual-clutch automatic (DCT) as the Niro, for engaging driving. A full charge takes about 2.5 hours at 240V (Level 2).

• Say hello to the **2019 Lincoln Nautilus**—which replaces the prior MKX—as we say hooray for Lincoln finally replacing one of their barely distinguishable and easily forgettable MK-whatever



• 2018 Kia Niro Plug-in Hybrid

model names. The vehicle picks up styling cues from the Lincoln Continental and includes a new lane-centering feature (which may make more sense than lane-keeping, when you think about it), while engines include 245-hp and 335-hp options.

• Mazda makes its promised move to premium positioning (an unusually high percentage of Mazda buyers buy top trim models already) with a new **2018 Mazda6** sedan. Fit and feel cues include increased sound insulation, Nappa leather, aged woods, a chassis engineered for more comfort and better driving dynamics, both. Mazda maintains its zoom-zoom aura, as well, with a new SKYACTIV-G 2.5T engine delivering the power of a 4-liter V8.

• The new **Mercedes-Benz CLS**, arriving in fall, shows a new brand design direction of clear contours, reduced lines, a forward-slanting grille that widens towards the base, low and wide headlights, and two-section taillamps. The four-door coupe has a new inline-six engine, is the first Mercedes-Benz with 48-volt technology with ISG (integrated starter-generator) for increased efficiency and comfort, and seats five for the first time.

• A MINI E revealed at the LA Show in 2008 was the basis for 600 electric test vehicles that led to development of the BMW i3. This year, they have revealed the **MINI Electric concept** ahead of a full model release in 2019. Known for go-kart-like handling, the MINI brand should take this to new heights with an EV. The Electric concept was shown along with the MINI Cooper S E Countryman ALL4, the brand's first Plug-in-Hybrid model.

• Showing the fruits of their new Nissan-Renault partnership, Mitsubishi revealed two new vehicles: the **2018 Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross**, an all-new CUV slotting between Outlander and Outlander Sport; and a new **Outlander Plug-in Hybrid PHEV** to affordably handle your commute in pure electric



• 2019 Lincoln Nautilus



• 2018 Mazda6



• 2019 Mercedes-Benz CLS-Class



• MINI Electric concept



• 2018 Nissan Rogue X-Wing with BB-8

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• 2018 Porsche 911 Carrera T



• Saleen S1



• Sondors EV

and active distance weekends in AWD conditions.

- The all-new **2019 Nissan Kicks** CUV effectively takes the discontinued Juke's spot in the lineup, as an affordable urban front-drive CUV with 1.6L 4-cylinder, slotting in smaller than the Rogue Sport. Nissan's stage was dominated, though, by another round of *Star Wars*-themed concepts, from TIE fighters to X-wings, with a Star Trooper squadron doing a star turn, coordinated with December's release of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*.

- **Porsche** had four North American reveals at LA: the 680-hp 2018 Panamera Turbo S E-Hybrid Sport Turismo with 550-hp 4.0L twin-turbo V8 and 136-hp electric motor (0-to-60 in 3.2 seconds, \$188,400); the 2018 718 Boxster GTS (\$81,900) and 718 Cayman GTS (\$79,800) with new intake plenum and optimized turbo (more hp and 6-speed manual standard); and the lightweight 2018 Porsche 911 Carrera T (Touring) with 6-speed manual and other sport engineering (\$102,100).

- From a company well known for high-performance adaptations of muscle cars, pickups, even electric sedans—as well as its Saleen 7 (or S7) supercar, way ahead of its time at the turn of the millennium—comes the new **Saleen S1** (or Saleen 1), a small, mid-engine, carbon fiber supercar developed 100 percent in-house, with a 450-hp 2.5L turbo four, standard manual standard, auto available, aiming for 60 mph in about 3.5 seconds.

- **Sondors** Electric Car Company of Malibu debuted a three-seat, three-wheel EV. This prototype was equity crowdfunded in 2017 and completed in seven months. Their aim is simplicity and affordability, with two front seats, one rear, three Li-Ion battery options for 75, 150 or 200-mile range, 110 or 240v charging and a 0-to-60 time of 5.8 seconds. The car will be ordered online and delivered direct to customers. Target price is just \$10,000.

- The **2019 Subaru Ascent** marks a big new

direction for the automaker long known for small vehicles—a full-size 8-passenger SUV, their first big three-row utility since the Tribeca petered out in 2014—while its 2.4L Boxer® engine shows it is all Subaru. The vehicle, arriving this summer, has a continuously variable transmission (CVT), is of course AWD, can tow 5,000 lb and has a full suite of EyeSight® driver assist technologies.

- The **Toyota FT-AC** (Future Toyota Adventure Concept) may replace the FJ Cruiser (dropped in the US in 2014, but still sold globally), a reasonably affordable yet tough active lifestyle machine—an entry-level off-roader, with tow hooks, skid plates, short overhangs, roof cargo system, fog lights that can be taken from their pods and used as portable lights, e.g. on a mountain bike for night rides, plus WiFi hot spot with cloud storage.

- The **Volkswagen I.D. Crozz** electric compact SUV coupe joins earlier I.D. and I.D. Buzz microbus concepts, with word it will be their first next-gen EV on US roads, in 2020 (followed by the bus in 2022, with an overall goal of 15 VW EVs globally by 2025). In concept form, the vehicle boasts 302 hp (101 front, 202 rear), AWD, and a range of up to 300 miles. The four-door coupe SUV is about the size of a Tiguan and has voice-activated doors.

- The new compact **2019 Volvo XC40** SUV joins the midsize XC60 and big XC90 utilities this spring, coming at first with a Volvo T5 four-cylinder, AWD, and base price of \$35,200. A front-drive T4 model arrives later this year (\$33,200), with a pure electric and other models following. You can buy, lease or (for the first time) subscribe for two years, much as with a cellphone, but including insurance, maintenance, tire protection, roadside assistance, and an option to trade up at 12 months.

Next up domestically are the Detroit auto show (the North American International Auto Show) in January, the Chicago Auto Show in February and the New York International Auto Show in April. ■



• 2019 Subaru Ascent



• Toyota FT-AC concept



• Volkswagen I.D. Crozz concept



• 2019 Volvo XC40 T5 AWD

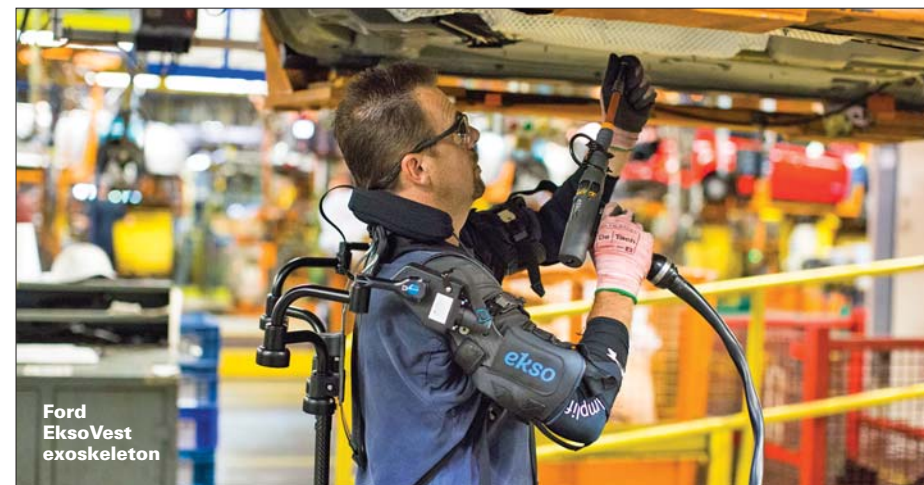
# THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



▼ Traffic in China differs from Europe or the US in many ways, which is why China requires foreign drivers to have a Chinese driving license. Autonomous vehicles also have to prove their fitness for this market in advance. **Mercedes-Benz** started an “Intelligent World Drive”—covering five continents in five months, aiming to adapt highly automated driving functions to various national user and traffic practices—in Germany (at the Frankfurt International Motor Show) in September 2017, using a test vehicle based on the new production S Class Sedan. The second leg was in October in China, in the heavy traffic and peculiar features of the Shanghai megapopolis. High density of cars, two-wheelers, three-wheelers and pedestrians—and the associated traffic behavior in Chinese cities—pose different requirements on automated driving functions than in Europe or the US. There are also road signs with Chinese characters and lane markings, which can have different or even multiple meanings. Short white lines, in many countries known as pedestrian crossings, are found on Chinese motorways, but here indicate the minimum distance between vehicles, so sensors must be able to recognize and correctly interpret such cues by locale. Speed limits can differ from one lane to another in China, and parking spaces come in many different shapes (and are frequently full of obstacles that are hard for sensors to detect). Shanghai was followed by Australia in November, with particular focus on validation of the latest dig-

ital map data of **HERE** (owned by Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Intel, Nokia and others) and South Africa in December, where pedestrian detection in many new situations played a major role. January brings the program to Los Angeles—evaluating driving in heavy urban US traffic, traffic jams, and highway traffic overtaking on the right—then to CES in Las Vegas.

▼ **Ford** assembly line workers are testing



a new upper body exoskeletal technology to reduce fatigue or chance of injury while performing overhead tasks. EksoVest—a wearable technology developed through a partnership between Ford and California-based **Ekso Bionics**—elevates and supports a worker’s arms while performing such tasks. Putting dishes on a high shelf or changing an overhead lightbulb might not be difficult, but imagine performing

those tasks 4,600 times per day or a million times a year—these are the approximate number of times some Ford assembly line workers lift their arms during overhead work tasks, a rate at which the possibility of fatigue or injury increases significantly. EksoVest can be fitted to support workers from 5 feet tall to 6-foot-4 and provides adjustable lift assistance from five pounds to 15 pounds per arm. Designed and built for dynamic environments like factories, construction sites and distribution centers, the non-powered vest reduces stress and strain of high-frequency, long-duration activities that can take a toll on a worker over time. EksoVest is comfortable, lightweight, not bulky and allows workers to move their arms freely. It’s the latest example of advanced technology Ford is using to reduce the physical toll on employees during vehicle assembly. Incidents in Ford’s North American facilities that resulted in time away from the job have fallen by 83 percent since 2005; the 2016 rate was the lowest ever.

▼ The **McLaren P1™** has been consider-

ably downsized in a new iteration that embraces an entirely new alternative powertrain for the model: foot power. In a continuation of McLaren P1 fifth anniversary celebrations, McLaren Automotive has announced a version powered purely by feet attached to a human motor aged less than three years old. At least that’s the manufacturer’s recommendation. The “foot-to-floor” edition, which can be purchased

online for £35.99 (about \$47.50), is the latest addition to a wide range of licensed models and products available long after all 375 full-size examples of the McLaren P1 were sold. The McLaren P1 toy car col-



lection also includes a McLaren P1 electric Ride-On and a McLaren P1 Tecnomodel collectible, the latter likely to appeal to buyers older than the three-year-old target group of the “foot-to-floor” model. Other licensed McLaren P1 products include die-cast models from AutoArt, TSM, Kyosho, Motormax, Kinsmart and Hot Wheels; resin models from Amalgam, TSM and Tecnomodel; and Scalextric slot cars. An Airfix “Quick Build” model is also available, as are radio-controlled models from New Bright, Rastar and Maisto. The original plug-in hybrid 903-combined-hp McLaren P1 accelerates from 0-to-62 mph in 2.8 seconds. The foot-powered McLaren P1’s estimated 0-200 meters-per-hour acceleration time is, as they would say in the Mother Country, entirely biscuit-dependent.

▼ The **2018 Green Car Awards™**, honoring environmental leadership in the automotive field and presented by *Green Car Journal* at the San Antonio Auto & Truck Show, recognized the **Chevrolet** Colorado as Green Truck of the Year, the **Ford** Police Responder Hybrid as Commercial Green Car of the Year, and **Mazda** MX-5 Miata as the first-ever Performance Green Car of the Year. “Environmental achievement by commercial vehicles, trucks and performance cars—vehicles that have rarely been “green” by nature—is increasingly important,” said Ron Cogan, editor and publisher of *Green Car Journal* and GreenCarJournal.com. “For years, automakers have focused on...sedans, hatchbacks and even

crossover vehicles...(An) expanding focus on workhorses...and now even performance cars, means buyers in these segments also have an opportunity to drive ‘green.’” The midsize Chevrolet Colorado

was chosen for its more compact form (easier to maneuver and park in the city), while its available Duramax Turbodiesel delivers up to 30 mpg, the best in the segment. The first pursuit-rated hybrid police car, Ford’s Police Responder Hybrid promises significantly greater fuel efficiency and environmental performance for police department fleets. Based on the Ford Fusion Hybrid, the Police Responder Hybrid is expected to deliver 38 mpg com-



bined mpg plus a few miles of “stealth” driving on batteries. When parked, the battery pack allows the engine to shut off for brief periods while keeping the car’s electronics running, saving fuel and decreasing emissions. Mazda’s extensively redesigned gen-four lightweight, two-seat MX-5 Miata is powered by a 2.0-liter SKY-ACTIV engine with 6-speed manual transmission or 6-speed Sport automatic, with

155 horsepower and up to 35 highway mpg. Long a favorite of sports car enthusiasts, the Miata has also been popular in amateur spec racing.

▼ The Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) in Hsinchu, Taiwan, has introduced **ChemSEI-Linker**, a composite material applied to lithium battery electrodes, extending battery life by up to 70 percent, increasing discharge/charge cycles and making lithium batteries easier to recycle. ChemSEI-Linker is an artificial nanoscale solid electrolyte coating of unique composition and structure that stabilizes lithium battery electrodes and protects them from a solid electrolyte interface (SEI) layer that forms in the discharge/charge process. Modifying this destructive layer eliminates battery degradation it has caused, increasing battery life, and providing high energy and faster charging at low cost. Applications include lithium batteries for wearable and mobile devices, electric vehicles, robots and energy storage systems.

▼ The new **ROTWILD** R.S2 Limited-Edition “Beast of the Green Hell” boasts the best of the four-wheel racing world on two wheels: driving dynamics, lightweight construction, design and comfort. The special model is limited to 50 bikes, marking

AMG’s company 50th anniversary in 2017. The hand-built racing bike is an homage to the Mercedes-AMG GT R and is available for order exclusively from ROTWILD sales for 7109 euros (about \$8300)—commemorating the GT R’s lap time on the legendary Nordschleife circuit of the Nürburgring, where the street-legal sports car completed the 14.17 miles of the “Green Hell” in a time of 7.10.9 minutes. ■

# UPCOMING FEATURES

Arizona Auction Week results and highlights



Lyn St James Talladega 30th Anniversary



ISM Raceway NASCAR and IndyCar info



Detroit: North American International Auto Show



Ford Driving Skills For Life teen program



Bogi's all-female '57 Chevy Montage SEMA build



Arizona to Pacific Northwest RV tour



Wide Open Baja



Stephanie Jarnagan



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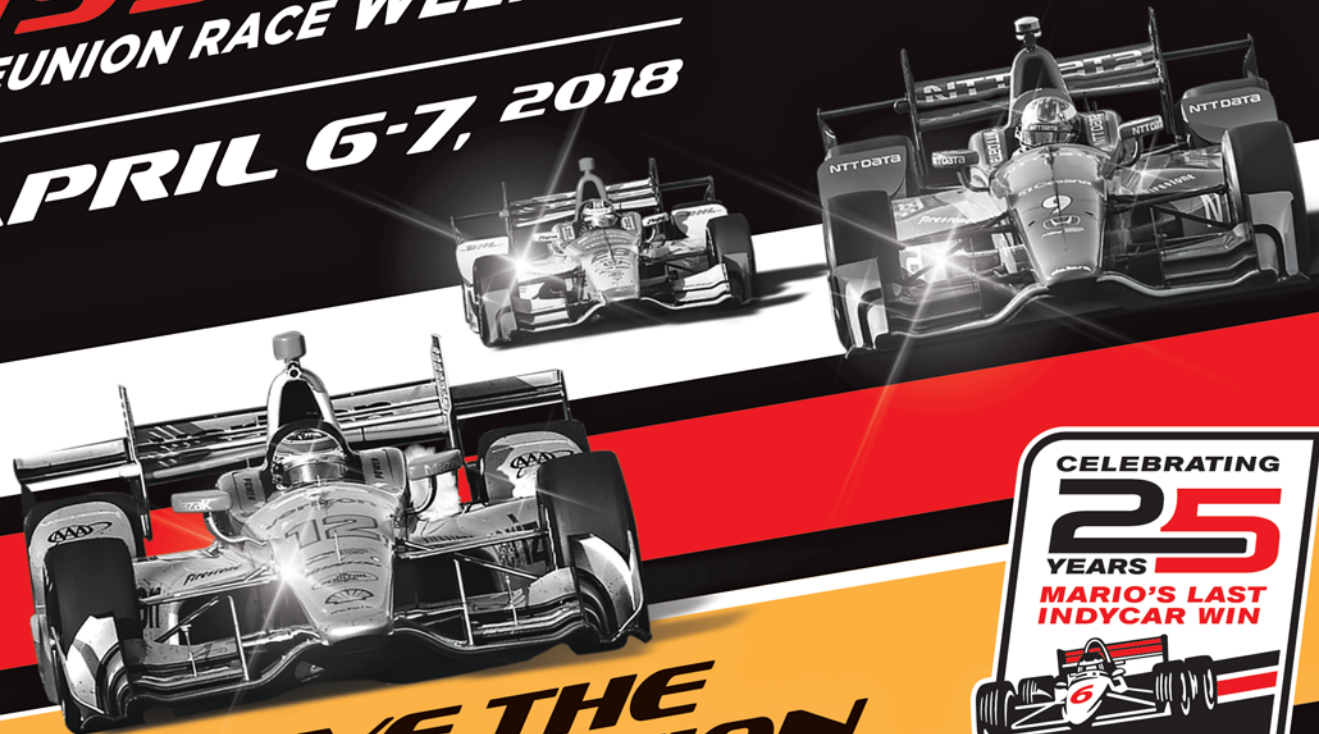
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