

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 6
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2020

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THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

news & features November-December 2020

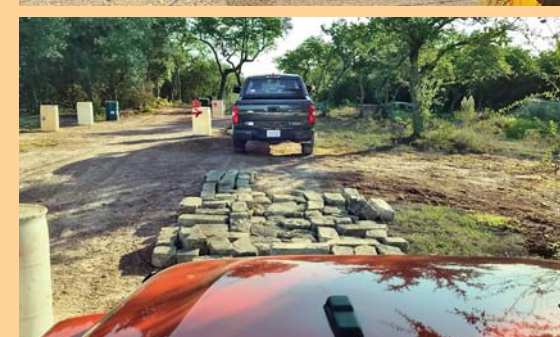
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COVER: Maserati brings back the supercar, with the 2022 MC20. With only three prototypes in the world, they brought one to Phoenix for us to see. Production is set to begin in 2021, in Modena, Italy.



START YOUR ENGINES : FROM THE PUBLISHER

Life behind the wheel can offer both social and solitary times. We don't regularly mention the pandemic—just when pertinent or explanatory to a situation at hand. This locked-down year has brought a whole lot of solo wheel time our way—from the inability to have anyone ride along in our highly sanitized weeklies, to the lack of travel to join friends and colleagues for new vehicle launch drives, to the lack of club shows and rallies, to the cancellation of big collector auctions and international auto shows.

Our last business travel was for the Chicago Auto Show, in the first week of February. We had a couple of Arizona events over the subsequent few weeks—NASCAR and a tag-along with a club drive—and almost one last vehicle launch drive trip to California. But then, of course, everything successively stopped as the world shut down and masked up.

We've found plenty of other subject matter for you over these months, but now it has proven pertinent and explanatory to mention the pandemic and lockdowns.

There have been signs of life again in recent weeks, finally bringing the first major drive event since last winter—the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo—complete with its social dimensions, while our decision to get to that event by driving—2500 miles round trip, solo—provided that most sublime experience, the long distance road drive, with our own timing and our own soundtrack. It's a reminder that the open road, across the Great American West and beyond, is all at our fingertips when we take hold of the wheel.

Other drive events have been coming together, and we're ready to get to as many of them as we can, including by air. (We've had big plans this year to attend a number of events we haven't always been able to make it to in busier years.) But as we go to press, there are murmurs that things may start to lock down again, so we'll see.

Whichever way the winds shift next, rest assured we'll always find plenty to keep you informed and entertained.

Enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE



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PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY ADZONE ARIZONA LLC

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AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE



McLaren Senna GTR

▼ Five special **McLaren** Senna GTRs, each customer-commissioned, celebrate the five McLaren F1 GTRs that finished 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and 13th in the 1995 running of the world's toughest endurance race, the 24 Hours of Le Mans—an unforgettable achievement given that this was the first time McLaren had raced at Le Mans, and coming only three years since its first production road car, the McLaren F1. Each is finished in unique hand-painted livery taking over 800 hours of painstaking craftsmanship. The cars are born from the track-only McLaren Senna GTR, itself the fastest-lapping car McLaren has ever made outside of Formula 1. The cars' uprated powertrain develops 845PS (833 hp) and 800Nm (590 lb-ft) from a recalibrated 4.0-liter twin-turbocharged V8, 20 hp more than the regular McLaren Senna GTR. Many details distinguish these special editions. A bespoke LM steering wheel features anodized gold gear shift paddles and control buttons; foot pedals are made from titanium nitride; a GTR LM logo is embroidered on the cars' six-point racing harness pads and on the headrests; and a "1 of 1" dedication plaque features the VIN number along with provenance details of its 1995 Le Mans F1 GTR "twin." Outside, the cars have distinctive five-spoke OZ Racing wheels and gold-colored brake calipers and suspension wishbones, reminiscent of the original F1 GTR. Purchase of the special editions also grants all five owners the opportunity to participate in an unprecedented Le Mans circuit driv-

ing experience at the race weekend scheduled for 2021, after this year's event was affected by coronavirus restrictions.

▼ **Ford** in the United Kingdom is introducing a long-wheelbase Transit Custom Nugget Camper with expanded interior space and new hygiene facilities. The rig features a unique-in-class L-shaped layout to separate living, sleeping, kitchen and bathroom zones. The extended wheelbase



Ford Transit Custom Nugget Long Wheelbase Camper (UK)

takes advantage of its extra length to provide a built-in toilet and foldaway wash basin area with retractable privacy screen, as well as additional interior storage. Fresh and waste water utilize two onboard tanks, each 11 gallons. Based on Ford's market-leading Transit Custom van, the Transit Custom Nugget has been developed in partnership with camper specialists Westfalia and offers a fully-fitted

camping interior with high-quality conversion work, advanced driver assistance and connectivity features, and a powerful, refined and fuel-efficient Ford 2.0-liter EcoBlue diesel engine. A tilt roof permits easier access to multi-story parking garages or height-restricted rest areas and helps in areas with overhanging trees or low bridges. The roof expands to provide a sleeping area with a comfortable double bed. The roof is light enough for simple manual operation, while a self-folding system automatically tensions the weather-resistant sides when raised and gathers slack when lowering, for smooth operation and secure storage on the go. It can also accommodate a roof rack to carry outdoor equipment. When raised, the tilt roof creates almost eight feet of interior headroom. A large rear window and two side windows bring light into the cabin, with shades for privacy or to keep out early morning sun. The upper level sleeping area contains side vents and LED reading lights as standard, and the double bed can also fold away for more interior space during the day. High-speed internet is

standard via a FordPass Connect modem, creating a wifi hotspot for up to 10 devices with connectivity to about 50 feet from the vehicle. The 2.0L EcoBlue diesel has 130PS and 185PS versions, rated at up to 52.3mpg, each with six-speed manual or SelectShift six-speed automatic. The vehicle is available to order directly through Ford UK dealerships starting in November, with delivery in the first quarter of 2021.

▼ **Fusion Motor Company** breathes additional life into the Lamborghini Huracán with a menacing carbon fiber body kit ready to hit the streets, including car-



Fusion Motor Company Lamborghini Huracán carbon fiber body kit

bon fiber front and rear bumpers, rocker panels, hood, fenders, rear diffuser and wing. The design emphasizes aggressive body lines across the front lip, side air intakes, dramatic rear diffuser and rear wing. Fusion's design utilizes all OEM mounting locations to ensure excellent fitment. Fusion president Yoel Wazana says, "This radical effort in design and carbon fiber manufacturing requires extensive resources, all of which Fusion Motor Company houses under one roof. Our carbon fiber team utilizes the appropriate weave to match the aesthetics of the OEM, while delivering motorsport composite weight savings to this road-going supercar." Construction features vacuum-infused lamination for maximum weight savings, with an epoxy resin system and 8-hour oven cure for maximum strength and minimal volumetric shrinkage. The kits are available in matte or gloss finishes, and a UV resistant clear coat is applied to mitigate fading or yellowing. The kits are manufactured without any fiberglass fillers and can be ordered as a whole or in separate pieces to accent the vehicle. The body kit is available online at fusionmotorco.com. Deeply rooted in the car culture of Los Angeles, Fusion, builder and independent dealer of vehicles known for expertise, craftsmanship and trailblazing design, is best known for the officially licensed "Eleanor" Mustang. They also restore custom V8 Defenders and offer white-glove indoor car storage.

▼ **Volkswagen** is celebrating 65 years of the Karmann Ghia, their sleek sportster introduced in the 1950s to move the brand upmarket, slotted above the Beetle, and

broaden the lineup overall. The first prototype was shown internally during the 1953 Paris Motor Show, and the Karmann Ghia went into full production in 1955. Today, the one-off prototype is one of the stars of the Volkswagen Osnabrück Automobile Collection. The car's genesis came from Wilhelm Karmann, who hired Luigi Segre of Carrozzeria Ghia in Turin to transform his idea into reality in early 1953, at first without even consulting Volkswagen. Though



Volkswagen Karmann Ghia prototype

originally envisioned as a convertible, the prototype was actually a coupe. In October 1953, the car was taken to a small garage in Paris and shown by Ghia to Karmann, who had traveled to the city for the show. Karmann was thrilled, and in November of that year, he showed the attractive small car to normally conservative VW managing director Heinrich Nordhoff. Karmann was able to do this because a

close relationship already existed between the two Wolfsburg companies—Karmann had been building the VW Beetle Cabriolet since 1949. The prototype won over the boss, and once costing was worked out, a decision was soon made to go into full production. The time between decision and production allowed for some body detail changes and interior refinements to be made, although the basic form remained as Ghia had designed it. Beetle running gear underpinned all 450,000 Karmann Ghias—known internally as the type 14—made between 1955 and 1974. Ultimately, Wilhelm Karmann's dream of a convertible version also became reality: at another internal presentation in Wolfsburg, the cabriolet—again designed by Luigi Segre and his team—made a big impact. Full production of the convertible version began in 1957. By the time production ended in 1974, 362,601 Karmann Ghia coupes and 80,881 cabriolets had rolled off the line. Like the Beetle itself, the "Beetle in a sports coat" was also a huge success story. The one-off coupe prototype is part of the Volkswagen Osnabrück private collection, but can be admired outside of the factory on special occasions (such as the recent 5th Schloss Bensberg Classics in September). The Karmann factory is now part of the VW Group as Volkswagen

Osnabrück GmbH and produces the Golf Cabriolet, Porsche Boxster and Cayman, and the Volkswagen XL1.

▼ **Aston Martin** celebrates the release of the 25th James Bond film, with two exclusive 007 special editions inspired by the cars featured in *No Time to Die*. This

KEEP RIGHT >>

new collaboration between Aston Martin and EON Productions, the company that produces the James Bond films with Metro Goldwyn Mayer Studios, delivers new 007 Editions of the Aston Martin Vantage and

leggera include Ceramic Grey paint with the roof, mirror caps, splitter, diffuser and rear Aeroblade IITM in black tinted carbon fiber; gloss black diamond-turned Y-Spoke 21-inch wheels; and various 007 badging

rari Portofino M retains the original Portofino's twin soul, staking a claim as the only car on the market that can rightfully be described as an authentic coupé with its top closed and a genuine spider when it is open, thanks to a retractable hard top (RHT) as on all of Ferrari's convertibles. Bearing compact dimensions, the Portofino M has a 3855cc turbo V8 related to the one voted "International Engine of the Year" four consecutive times, from 2016 through 2019. The engine puts out roughly 630 hp at 7500 rpm, 20 more horses than the prior Portofino, achieved via new cam profiles that increase valve lift and optimize combustion chamber filling. The 8-speed gearbox is a completely new unit compared to the previous 7-speed. Based on dual-clutch oil bath architecture, it differs from the SF90 Stradale's 8-speed in its longer gear ratios and the introduction of a mechanical reverse gear. The new layout and integration of its components have also optimized gearbox size and installation. The car's Side Slip Control (SSC) vehicle dynamics system algorithm delivers real-time estimates that coordinate all vehicle dynamics interventions via integrated shared data. Now in its sixth generation, SSC integrates E-Diff, F1-TCS, SCM-E Frs and Ferrari Dynamic Enhancer (FDE) control systems. FDE uses software to ad-



DBS Superleggera. *No Time To Die* will be released around the world in November 2020 and will feature no fewer than four Aston Martin sports cars: the DB5 (a cinematic icon since *Goldfinger*); the classic Aston Martin V8; the brand's latest super GT, the DBS Superleggera; and the Aston Martin Valhalla, their forthcoming mid-engined hypercar. The two 007 Editions in honor of *No Time To Die*, each offered in limited numbers, have been designed and crafted by Aston Martin's bespoke division, Q by Aston Martin. The Vantage 007 Edition is inspired by the original Aston Martin V8 which made its 007 debut in *The Living Daylights* in 1987 and also features in *No Time to Die* as Bond uncovers the car from his personal lockup in London. The car features unique exterior styling treatments led by a mesh grille with chrome bezel that references the look of the brand's classic V8 and a dashed yellow diffuser inspired by the hazard stripes on the film car's rockets. The Vantage 007 Edition can even be delivered with a set of *The Living Daylights*-inspired limited edition skis and ski rack, as on the winterized car in that film. The car comes in Cumberland Grey with an interior in obsidian black leather and dark chrome, with 007 and specific film branding in key spots. The 715-hp 5.2-liter twin-turbo V12 DBS Superleggera 007 Edition will be limited to just 25 cars worldwide. Its 900Nm (664 lb-ft) of torque is the highest for any roadgoing Aston Martin yet produced. Various 007 Edition enhancements to the DBS Super-

details. The Vantage 007 Edition runs just above \$200,000 US, and the DBS Superleggera 007 Edition above \$350,000. On sale now, deliveries begin in early 2021.

▼ The "M" in **Ferrari** Portofino M—an evolved iteration of the Ferrari Portofino 2 + GT spider—stands for "Modificata," which in Ferrari nomenclature refers to cars that have undergone an evolution that has significantly boosted their performance—in



this case most notably its redesigned powertrain, brand-new eight-speed gearbox and five-position Manettino that includes a race mode, a first for a Maranello GT spider. Sportier in character than its predecessor, the Portofino M also promises superior handling while enhancing on-board comfort via new optional features such as ADAS (advanced driver assistance system) and ventilated and heated seats. The Fer-

just hydraulic brake pressure at the callipers of all four wheels in Race mode, for more predictable lateral dynamics through and exiting corners by ensuring the steering wheel and throttle are more intuitive to the driver. The Manettino's five settings are wet, comfort, sport, race and off. Supported by the introduction of the Ferrari Dynamic Enhancer, these positions focus on maximizing driving pleasure. ■

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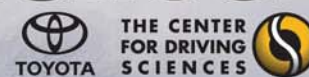
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Show plus go

by Joe Sage

Cadillac has evolved its lineup—and its nomenclature—in broadly two waves over the past two decades, first getting rid of names, other than Escalade (DeVille was the last to go, in 2005) and going to all letters (ATS, CTS, STS, DTS for sedans, others for SUVs), then to alphanumeric (CT4, CT5, CT6 for sedans, XT for SUVs, still except for Escalade). Easy to miss in this name game are evolutions in the models themselves.

This can be especially elusive for the casual observer, as an “S” and a “5” can be easily mixed up when glancing at a stylized badge.

The car driven here is the Cadillac CT5 (five), all new for 2020, along with an all-new CT4. A new CT6 is expected for 2021.

As the names’ numbers suggest, they are basically small, medium and large. Standard size categories have become a less meaningful free-for-all industrywide, with EPA-classified compacts bearing full-size cabins and many brands offering more sizes than the traditional range, all understandable, though not always helpful. The CT5 is identified by Cadillac as a compact (though many refer to it as midsize), while they don’t name a size category for either CT4 or CT6 in press materials.

Always a luxury brand, Cadillac set out about two decades ago to grow more cojones, notable at the time in their advertising, marked by a solid rockin’ Led Zeppelin soundtrack, successfully appealing to younger buyers overall.

The first V model, the CTS-V, arrived in 2005—with a high horsepower V8, sport suspension, rear-wheel drive and even an available manual transmission—emphasis on performance. Larger STS-V and smaller ATS-V models followed.

When this CT5 V-Series hit our calendar, we weren’t sure what we were getting—new to us, sounding like something other than a full V (akin to in-betweeners from the Germans). But when it showed up, the badging was simply CT5 on the left rear, with another badge on the right (and on the front flanks) that basically incorporates a V.

As fate would have it, we had a zoom conference with Ken Kornas, Cadillac CT4 and CT5 Product Manager, during the same week we had the car, an opportunity for some clarification.

Both CT4 and CT5 are rear-drivers, available with all-wheel drive (\$2000 more on CT5, \$2600 on CT4). There are inherent performance benefits just from RWD, applying weight to drive wheels

upon acceleration. It also puts more weight in the rear, enabling close to 50-50 distribution (often closer to 60-40 in front-drive-based competitors). And it allows smooth-tracking longitudinal engine placement, as well as wheels closer to the corners for its handsome road-hugging stance.

There are four CT5 trims: Luxury, Premium Luxury, Sport and V-Series, the first three with a 237-hp 2.0L four-cylinder. Premium Luxury offers a 335-hp 3.0L twin-scroll turbo V6, but while the 2.0L Sport runs \$1000 more, there is no V6 Sport. For that, you move to the CT5 V-Series, with a 360-hp high-output version of the V6. On the one hand, they divide between the first three and V-Series, or by character they divide between the two Luxury models and the Sport and V-Series.

This approach, compared to earlier-gen V models, is a response to customer feedback suggesting the full V cars were not widely enough attainable, and that more customers still seek a premium-luxury Cadillac experience over performance. Thus decent doses of both: show plus go.

If you choose the highest-performance (so far) V-Series fork in the road, you can option your way to the best of both, via luxury packages. We were disappointed our car’s \$4190 Premium Package did not have such things as folding power mirrors, but that comes with a Platinum Package at \$6290

(while several lower-dollar packages add various bundles of driver-assist technology).

For those who miss a V above the V-Series, though, take heart—coming next summer is the CT5-V Blackwing. At this point, we know this will have such features as race-inspired carbon-fiber-backed seats and new badging; what may be different in the powertrain is yet to be revealed.

As for size, compact nomenclature seems unfair, as the CT5 does not look that small nor feel that small inside—though not entirely unfair, as it’s tight getting in and out if you’re tall, with elbow likely to meet B-pillar till you get used to it.

Horsepower is strong, at 360, torque stronger still—405 lb-ft, with 90 percent of peak torque as soon as 1800 rpm. When our foot first hit the pedal, it didn’t feel as powerful as its aggressive engine-powertrain-exhaust sound effects. This was easily and effectively remedied with a dive into the drive mode interface, which bears profiles for tour, sport, snow/ice and even track, with steering, suspension, powertrain, sound and such customizable, stored in My Mode or new V-Mode, accessible via a steering wheel switch any time you want to show off. There are also valet and teen driver modes.

We were happy using performance settings for most everything, but the lowest-key stealth setting for engine sound (we like to be having more fun than the neighborhood or police may think we are). All in all, we found what we’ve found on



Cadillacs before: you may dive deeper into more plentiful options than average at first, but once set up, you’re good to go pretty much forever.

We took the CT5 V-Series out to Horseshoe Dam Road for an hour or two of beautiful hills and twisties. Here, its horsepower level is pretty perfectly balanced, and AWD grip can also prove itself, both in cornering and hitting sandy patches at speed. Out there by ourselves, we switched from our personalized profile (all performance except engine sound) to our V-Mode setup (adding back maximum engine sound), which was a nice pairing on an open road.

We’re scheduled for a week in the CT4 for the next issue, this time the Premium Luxury trim, for a timely comparison of size, powertrain and style-features approaches. Stay tuned! ■



SPECIFICATIONS

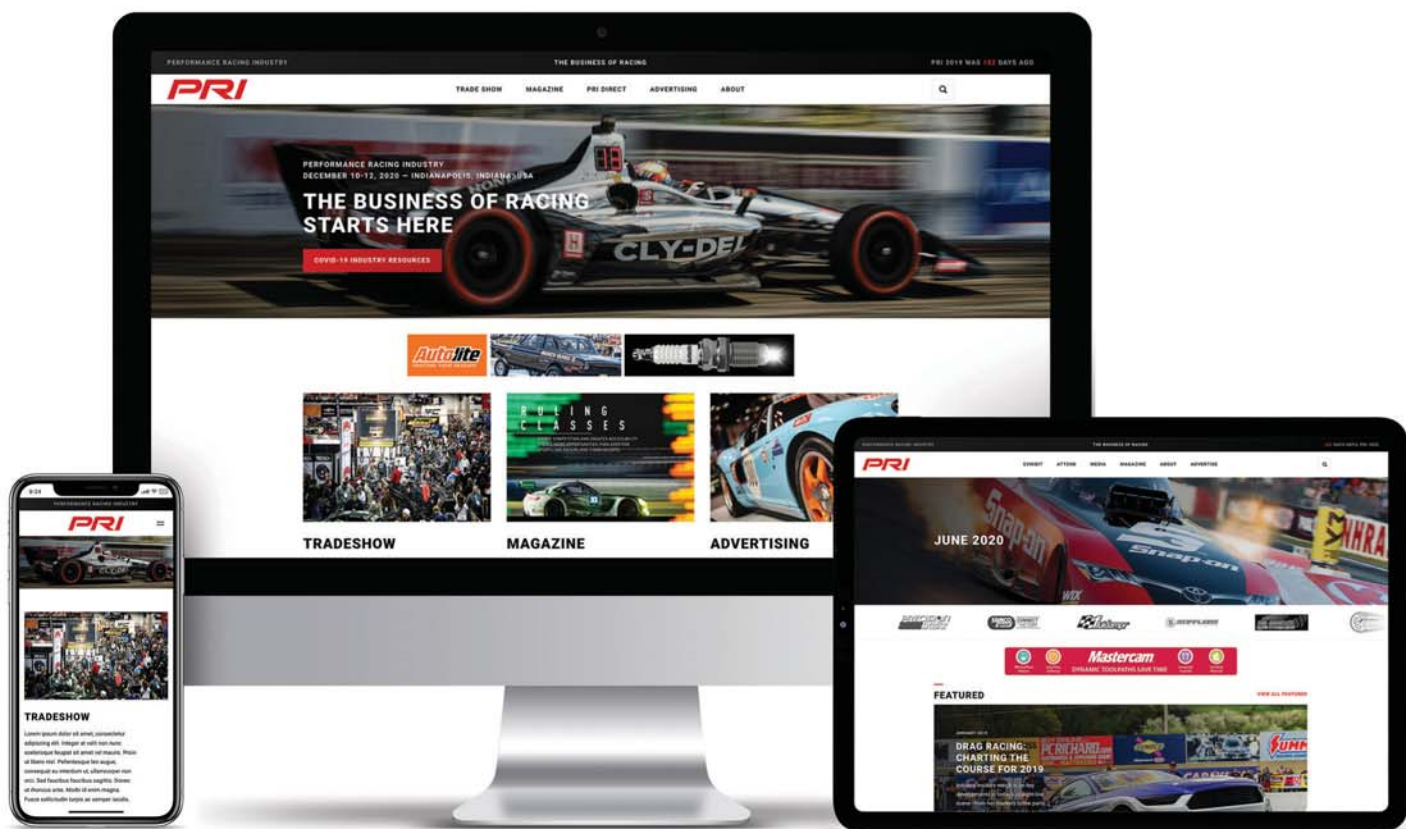
FACTORY	Lansing, Michigan
ENGINE	3.0L twin turbo V6 SIDI 24v DOHC
HP/TORQUE	360 hp / 405 lb-ft
	90% of peak torque at 1800 rpm
TRANSMISSION	10L80 10-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	AWD
ZERO-TO-60	4.6 sec
SUSPENSION	Magnetic Ride Control w V-Series calibration: F: MacPherson-type w dual lower ball joints & direct-act stblzr bar; R: five-link indep, coils, stblzr bar
STEERING	rack-mounted elec power assist, variable assist, V-Series calibration
BRAKES	four-wheel Brembo 4-piston fixed caliper vented disc: F: 13.6x1.2; R: 12.4x0.9
WHEELS	19x8.5 aluminum
TIRES	245/40R19 summer-only performance
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	193.8 / 116 in
TURNING CIRCLE	na
GROUND CLEARANCE	na
HEADROOM (F/R)	39.0 / 36.6 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.4 / 37.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	na
WEIGHT	3975 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	na
MPG	17/25/20 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$47,695
V PREMIUM PACKAGE: lighting pkg, navigation & Bose premium audio, climate pkg	4190
ALL-WHEEL DRIVE	2000
SEATS: Whisper Beige/Jet Black accents leather appointed seating	1500
DRIVER AWARENESS PLUS PACKAGE: Intelli-beam headlamps, following distance indicator, 8" color DIC gauge cluster, lane keep assist w lane departure warning, heads-up display	1300
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
TOTAL	\$57,680





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Read about speed

John Glenn, the first astronaut to orbit the Earth, used Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats as a landmark from space. Here on terra firma, amateur motorsports devotees have used the blistering hot, flat land as a speed laboratory for more than a century. Speed-hungry men during the 1930s created highboy roadsters by stripping fenders, running boards and hoods off early passenger cars, then adding magic to their engines. When a 1934 car with 4,000 horsepower posted a 304-mile-per-hour record, it was as mind-bending as telling Abe Lincoln the US would land a man on the moon.

On August 22, 1949, hot rodders joined the pageant of power with their handcrafted cars, trucks and motorcycles for a one-time event—but never stopped coming back, aiming to go faster down every run on the multi-mile course, all seeking the answer to the same question: "How fast will it go?" Those efforts have made them the fastest people on the planet, reaching speeds in excess of 500 miles per hour. On the salt, people find their limits of courage, learn what great daring is all about and realize why a Bonneville Salt Flats speed record is an internationally respected pedigree. People who race on the Salt Flats are a family bound together by speed, with all ethnic, economic, political and religious barriers erased. They are land speed racers. And this is their story.

This photo-driven book uses evocative images from the archives to entertainingly cheerlead the non-racing public into experiencing this marvelous sport of ordinary people repeatedly doing extraordinary things. It is also hoped the book will elevate public consciousness about how important it is to preserve the Salt Flats and restore Bonneville to safe conditions for racing amateurs. A nine-chapter chronology from 1914 to 2020, its 128 pages hold more than 200 images. Three specialty chapters are solely devoted to:

- Women Racers - Ladies in Nomex, Helmets and the Record Books!
- Motorcycles - Monocycle to the World Land Speed Record Holder
- Thrust Powered Speed Machines - The Fastest Hot Rods on Earth

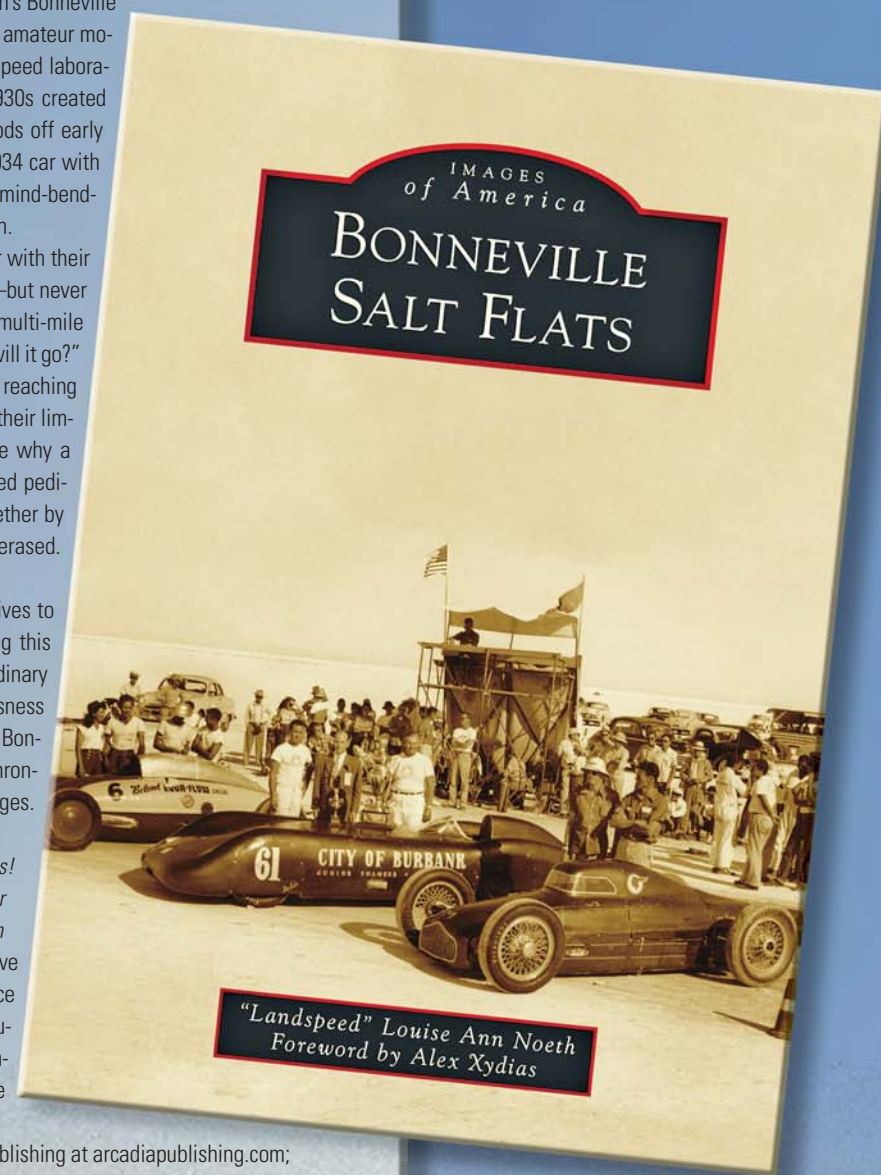
For our two decades publishing *Arizona Driver Magazine*, we've regularly depended upon the wealth of knowledge and experience embodied in LandSpeed Louise, our go-to for trustworthy, accurate clarification of anything speed record related in general, Bonneville record related specifically, or pertinent to the state of the Salt Flats themselves.

You can purchase *Bonneville Salt Flats* direct from Arcadia Publishing at arcadiapublishing.com; find it at Barnes & Noble nationwide; or order direct from the author herself—who will autograph the first 250 copies, delivered in plenty of time for holiday gift giving, at www.landspeedproductions.biz.

LandSpeed Louise Ann Noeth is a raconteur of stunning speed stories. She has raced jet dragsters, helped TEAMVesco capture the current 458-mile-per-hour world wheel-driven record, and guided the Breedlove and Fossett teams. In addition to her books, touchstones throughout motorsports are heralded in her Fuel For Thought column. She is also an extreme-speed consultant for film and television.

A foreword by Alex Xydias, an innovator who set the hot rod world afire with partner Dean Batchelor obliterating speed records in 1949, sets the stage for Noeth's pictorial romp through salty speed deeds.

For the first time in print, this book has EVERY car and motorcycle that ran at the inaugural 1914 time trial, thanks to stellar illustrator Robert "steady hand" Rampton, who spent decades unearthing every detail possible about the inaugural speed trial.



Bonneville Salt Flats

LandSpeed Louise Ann Noeth
Foreword by Alex Xydias

Series: Images in America

Arcadia Publishing

6.5 x 9.25 in - 128 pp - 212 images

\$21.99 - paperback - ISBN: 9781467105958

Published: November 9, 2020

www.arcadiapublishing.com

The state of the art at Nikola

Nikola Corporation of Arizona has issued a statement outlining their path to becoming a global leader in zero-emissions transportation.

Strategy and vision statement

Nikola is a technology disruptor and integrator, working to develop innovative energy and transportation solutions. We are pioneering a business model that will enable corporate customers to integrate next-generation truck technology, hydrogen fueling infrastructure, and maintenance. By creating this ecosystem, Nikola and its strategic business partners and suppliers can pave the way as global leaders in zero-emission transportation—and, together, leave the world a better place.

Nikola is an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) whose expertise lies in design, innovation, software and engineering. We assemble, integrate and commission our vehicles in collaboration with support from business partners and suppliers that bring decades of experience in manufacturing, and that have invested billions of dollars in industrializing and scaling production. Nikola designs and engineers its vehicles and works with business partners and suppliers to manufacture a majority of the vehicle components.

The Nikola model combines our own intellectual property and proprietary technology with that of

our strategic business partners and suppliers to design and manufacture innovative energy and transportation solutions.

This innovator/integrator business model is not uncommon in the next-generation technology space. At Nikola, we are laser-focused on pursuing the quickest, least capital-intensive path to market, in combination with our own intellectual property. If our partners have a less expensive, more efficient solution that works with and in our designs, we very intentionally want to go with that. This is in the best interest of our company and our shareholders and, simply put, is the smart business decision. In line with our strategy, Nikola will continue to partner with world-class companies that will enable us to save billions of dollars and years in development.

Units: trucks, energy, powersports

The Nikola Truck Business Unit develops environmentally friendly, cost-effective battery-electric vehicle (BEV) and fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV) Class 8 semi-trucks for the short-haul, medium-haul and long-haul trucking sectors.

The Energy Business Unit is developing and constructing a network of hydrogen fueling stations for their own FCEV customers and others, potentially also including solutions for BEV customers.

The Powersports Business Unit develops electric outdoor recreational vehicles.

Global opportunity and network

The global addressable market for Class 8 BEV and FCEV trucks is some \$600 billion. Regulators, policymakers and corporations are prioritizing sustainability, with many committed to net zero-emission targets. The EU plans to invest \$1 trillion over the next 10 years to advance the hydrogen economy.

Nikola works with strategic business partners and suppliers—including the Bosch group of companies, CNH Industrial NV, Hanwha Group and Nel Hydrogen, all with capital investments—to reduce execution risk, improve timelines and build competitive advantages. The Nikola board of directors comprises individuals from each. Bosch, an early investor, led the Series B and C private investment rounds; Nikola and Bosch have filed jointly owned patent applications related to batteries and fuel cell technologies. In 2019, CNH Industrial was lead investor in the Series D private investment round, and has been instrumental, through its IVECO and FPT Industrial business units, in accelerating the process of bringing a Class 8 BEV semi to market. Partner support lets Nikola focus on its strategic initiatives, becoming a vertically integrated zero-emissions transport solutions provider.

Nikola Commercial Truck Milestones

• Manufacturing facilities • Tre BEV • FCEV Truck • Hydrogen station
Based on management projections subject to current market conditions



Commitment to key milestones

Nikola Tre BEV prototypes: The first five prototypes of the Nikola Tre battery-electric semi should be completed at their JV facility in Ulm, Germany this fall, then bench tested and road tested in Germany, going to production in 2021, with trucks on sale by the fourth quarter.

Nikola engineers are taking the lead on vehicle controls architecture: human-machine interface, infotainment, battery pack and e-propulsion integration, vehicle thermal management, and e-axes. Bosch rotor, stator and inverter expertise and FPT Industrial's industrialization experience enable an aggressive path to bring the e-axes to market, while validated, homologated IVECO components provide cost efficiencies on the balance.

Nikola FCEV semi-trucks: Nikola expects to begin testing production-engineered prototypes of its hydrogen fuel cell electric medium- and long-haul semi-trucks by the end of 2021, then beta prototypes in early 2022. Nikola defines and engineers the architecture, technical specs, features, functions and styling. Bosch is instrumental in integrating heavy-duty fuel cell power modules. Additional strategic partners and supply chain arrangements are expected. Anheuser Busch LLC has ordered up to 800 trucks.

Hydrogen as a competitive advantage: A planned network of hydrogen fueling stations—in

support of the vehicles they sell and building collaborations for a national hydrogen fueling network—is central to Nikola's business model and to advancing FCEV transportation. Actively partnering with industry leader Nel Hydrogen, Nikola representatives have leadership positions in the International Standards Organization (Heavy Duty) and Society of Automotive Engineers as they develop fuel cell standards and protocols.

Nikola has ordered \$30 million worth of electrolyzers from Nel Hydrogen to support stations, including one at their Arizona headquarters, able to store and dispense up to 1,000 kg of hydrogen.

Nikola plans to announce a major collaboration for hydrogen production and fueling stations by the end of this year. Their hydrogen fueling network will play an instrumental role in the growth of hydrogen as a sustainable energy source for the transportation industry.

Manufacturing facility in Arizona: Construction on Nikola's one million square-foot manufacturing facility in Coolidge, Arizona, is on track for completion of Phase 1 by the end of 2021, with the project fully complete by mid-2023.

The greenfield facility, initially producing BEV trucks and subsequently FCEV trucks, will have capacity for 35,000 Class 8 commercial semi-trucks annually, running two shifts, with approximately 1,800 new full-time positions. ■

"Nikola World" event update

Due to pandemic audience size restrictions at Arizona's major venues, Nikola will reschedule their live *Nikola World 2020* event. Tickets can be refunded or held, per customer preference. They'll keep us updated on progress across their entire product portfolio. Information on *Nikola World 2021* will follow.

Decarbonization of Heavy Transport and the Role of Hydrogen

CNH Industrial NV and Nikola Corporation co-sponsored Politico's "Decarbonization of Heavy Transport and the Role of Hydrogen" event in October, bringing together senior European policymakers, industry experts and representatives from intergovernmental organizations to discuss the best path to decarbonize heavy transport and what role hydrogen can play in those efforts.

Gerrit Marx, president of commercial and specialty vehicles at CNH and Nikola board member, delivered introductory remarks: "(The transformation to zero-emission long-haul transport) has already begun, and CNH Industrial is at the forefront. We are working alongside Nikola to help complete the Tre BEV so that we can begin production at our JV manufacturing facility in Ulm, Germany, by the fourth quarter of next year."

ABOUT NIKOLA CORPORATION

Nikola Corporation (NASDAQ: NKLA) is globally transforming the transportation industry. As a designer and manufacturer of zero-emission battery-electric and hydrogen-electric vehicles, electric vehicle drivetrains, vehicle components, energy storage systems, and hydrogen station infrastructure, Nikola is driven to revolutionize the economic and environmental impact of commerce as we know it today. Founded in 2015, Nikola Corporation is headquartered in Phoenix. For more information, visit www.nikolamotor.com or Twitter @nikolamotor.



NIKOLA™



Barrett-Jackson goes live again

Barrett-Jackson ran a special Arizona Fall Auction 2020 at WestWorld of Scottsdale on October 22-24—their first live event after months of pandemic adaptation evolving from postponements to cancellations to a series of highly successful online-only auctions.

Scaled down but echoing much about their familiar January event, the fall event saw Barrett-Jackson working closely with the City of Scottsdale and officials from WestWorld. The auction was held primarily in the Equestrian Center's fixed buildings, with only bidders, consignors and invited guests in attendance, no public, special sanitizing procedures to

view cars, and seating set up in well-spaced small clusters, allowing people to sit together or isolate to whatever degree suited them. As at all their live events, online and global TV audiences also participated. Nearly 20 hours of live coverage premiered on A+E Networks across FYI and HISTORY, while Barrett-Jackson.com streamed the entire event.

Vehicles were as exceptional as always, consignments coming readily after the proven operation of all the online events. To our eye, the pandemic-friendly format worked well, in turn producing many mouthwatering sales. Attendees have praised the extraor-

inary measures taken to make them comfortable about their health and safety.

During the three-day auction, the 100 percent No Reserve docket included 349 pieces of automobilia bringing in more than \$634,000, while 442 vehicles sold for over \$23.5 million, with \$845,000 raised through the sale of three charity vehicles, bringing the total sold on the auction block to over \$24.9 million.

The event featured three private collections and set 27 world auction sales records, including the auction's top seller, a 2018 Ford GT at \$1.21 million. On Thursday, world-champion rallycross driver Ken Block was on the block to help auction his 2016 Ford Focus RS RX for \$200,000 to benefit Team Rubicon.



Photo: Joe Sage



Top sales (and Lot #s) were as follows:

1. 2018 Ford GT (#748)\$1,210,000
2. 2012 Lexus LFA (#749)\$440,000
3. 2005 Ford GT (#725)\$302,500
4. 1963 Corvette Custom (#763.1).....\$286,000
5. 2017 Dodge Viper ACR (#757)\$229,900
6. 1963 Corvette Split-Window Custom Coupe (#753)\$214,500
7. 1970 Plymouth HEMI 'Cuda (#740) ..\$209,000
8. 2016 Lamborghini Huracán GT3 Race Car (#726)\$198,000
9. 2020 Jeep Gladiator Custom Demon Rubicon (#760)\$198,000
10. 1968 Pontiac Firebird (#698)\$187,000
11. 1959 Chevrolet Corvette Custom Convertible (#771)\$187,000

Barrett-Jackson has raised over \$127 million to date for more than 170 organizations nationwide. The three charity vehicles raising \$845,000 this fall (and recipients) were:

1. Ken Block's 2016 Focus RS RX (#3000) \$200,000 for Team Rubicon
2. 2019 Ford F-350 Lariat Custom (#3001) \$275,000 for Building Homes for Heroes
3. 2020 Chevrolet Corvette (#3002) \$370,000 for Heartstrings Foundation

"We demonstrated that we could host live events and maintain the highest standards of safety," says Barrett-Jackson chairman and CEO Craig Jackson. It's good preparation for their big Scottsdale event January 16-24, 2021. Sign on to sell or to bid, or check the latest details, at www.barrett-jackson.com. ■

(At right, from top): 2018 Ford GT (#748), \$1,210,000; • 2012 Lexus LFA (#749), \$440,000; • Ken Block's Focus RS RX (#3000), \$200,000 (charity); • 2019 Ford F-350 Lariat custom (#3001), \$275,000 (charity).

Photos: Barrett-Jackson (4)



WESTWORLD SCOTTSDALE, AZ
www.BARRETT-JACKSON.COM www.barrettjackson.com
THE WORLD'S GREATEST COLLECTOR CAR AUCTIONS

Photo: Joe Sage

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SPECIAL EVENTS: JANUARY AUCTIONS

Auction Week 2021

	SAT 16	SUN 17	MON 18	TUE 19	WED 20	THU 21	FRI 22	SAT 23	SUN 24
PREVIEWS									
AUCTIONS									
Barrett-Jackson									
Bonhams									
Gooding & Company									
Leake Auction									
MAG Auctions									
RM Sotheby's									
Russo and Steele									
Worldwide Auctioneers									



Barrett-Jackson
50th Annual Collector Car Auction Event
Nine days: Sat Jan 16 - Sun Jan 24, 2021
WestWorld of Scottsdale (AZ Loop 101 & FLWright Blvd)
16601 N Pima Road, Scottsdale AZ 85260



Bonhams
10th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Thursday, January 21, 2021
(viewing Tuesday-Thursday, Jan 19-21)
Westin Kierland Resort & Spa
6902 E Greenway Pkwy, Scottsdale AZ 85254

Gooding & Company
14th Annual Scottsdale Auction
Friday-Saturday, January 22-23, 2021
(viewing Wednesday-Saturday, Jan 20-23)
Scottsdale Fashion Square (Goldwater & E Highland Ave)
4700 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale AZ 85251



Leake Auction Co.
2nd Annual Scottsdale Auction
[January event stated online, but with no dates]
[Further inquiries unanswered]
Salt River Fields at Talking Stick
7555 N Pima Rd, Scottsdale AZ 85258

MAG Auctions
(Silver Auctions AZ now dba MAG Auctions)
January 2021 Collector Car Auction
Friday-Sunday, January 22-24, 2021
We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort, Fort McDowell AZ 85264
(Arizona 87 Beeline Highway northeast of Fountain Hills)



RM Sotheby's
22nd Annual Automobiles of Arizona
Friday, January 22, 2021
(preview Weds-Fri, January 20-21)
OTTO Car Club & Storage
15550 N 78th St, Scottsdale AZ 85260

Russo and Steele
21st Annual Sports & Muscle in Scottsdale
Thursday-Sunday, January 21-24, 2021
(preview Weds Jan 20, sale starts Thurs Jan 21)
N Scottsdale Rd, east side just south of Loop 101 Fwy
Scottsdale AZ 85260

Worldwide Auctioneers
5th Annual Arizona January Auction
Wednesday, Jan 20, 2021
(preview Monday-Weds, Jan 18-20)
Singh Meadows, 1490 E Weber Drive, Tempe AZ 85281
(southwest of Hayden/McClintock and McKellips)

PAINT IT BLACK

by Joe Sage

PICKUPS are complicated to outfit from scratch, with options, packages, capabilities and variables galore. Starting points are bed length, cab size, 4x4 capability, engine size and other basics. Trim levels can help you narrow things down, and Ram 1500 offers you more trims than you can count on both hands. Then again, sometimes it's best to just see what the dealers have on hand. Planning from scratch or inventory ready to roll, a special edition is something you can easily wrap your arms around, and Ram always has several.

Arizona has dual personalities—home to some of the finest off-roading in the world, but also to showy world class resorts and country clubs. This in itself can make your pickup choice challenging, depending upon your diverse lifestyle.

The Ram 1500 we're driving here is a Crew Cab 4x4 in Limited trim, with two key specifics added: EcoDiesel and Black Edition.

The latter is achieved with a Black Appearance Package (available only on top 1500 Limited trim, though also on Ram 2500 and 3500 HD trucks). It's

saturated with visual cues inside and out: all exterior badging, grille, headlight bezels, door handles, mirrors, bumpers, exhaust tips, aluminum wheels and more are black. Diamond Black Crystal Pearl-Coat paint is automatically part of the build, but another \$100. Also included are a striking sport performance hood, tow hooks and a folding tonneau cover for the bed. The interior is black premium leather, and though color is not a factor, the package also includes an upgrade to 19-speaker Harman Kardon premium audio.

The 3.0L V6 turbo diesel (\$4995) is one of four powerplants offered on Limited (3.6L V6 eTorque is standard, with 5.7 V8 HEMI, regular or eTorque, also available). The diesel is gen-3, with updated turbo, intake ports and fuel injector nozzles.

Its off-roading is not at the extreme level of 1500 Rebel or 2500 Power Wagon, but its 4x4 bones far exceed trucks of even a few years ago, and ours adds a thorough set of skid plates front to rear for just \$395.

We first toughed out a near-hurricane force

monsoon storm in this truck, then took it to the car wash for a good cleanup—and then decided to get it dirty again. We had no plan, schedule or maps, just a highly capable truck. Heading up I-17, we didn't have six horses or a boat to tow, but the EcoDiesel's 480 lb-ft of torque plus the 8-speed automatic should do great with a load on this climb.

On a whim, we exited at Bloody Basin Road, between Sunset Point and Cordes Lakes, into Agua Fria National Monument. This road promptly turns to dirt (with a sign duly noting this is not an alternative to taking I-17 to Phoenix, though given enough time and the right equipment, it probably could be). We took a few successively rougher dirt and gravel roads from there, staying in rear-wheel drive for awhile without a care, then making a point of popping it into 4WD Auto as conditions grew more storm-rutted, hilly, curvy, gravelly and sandy—no rock crawling, just the type of drive anyone might tackle with a nice weekend wilderness picnic iced down in the optional Ram Boxes (\$995).

Two other options we'd always take are the 33-gallon tank (\$445, up from a standard 26), enough to eliminate a stop or two on a decent road trip, and



the trailer brake control (\$295), vital when needed.

We returned via a steep gravel climb into Cordes Lakes to the north, then back down I-17, reminded that this generation Ram 1500, new two years ago, has a lightweight steel and aluminum build that's the strongest ever, while its road manners are also the smoothest ever (all of which contributed to the pickups' record 18 percent sales increase from 2018 to 2019).

Black trucks are surprising popular in urban Arizona, despite the heat, as roads are kept cleaner

than most places. The Black Edition has an edge on elegance, while its off-road skills accommodate most people's usage—not the Rubicon or a Baja rally, just life in a state with a lot of dirt and gravel roads, places to go and things to see.

Special editions generally have a one-year run, though this pandemic-impacted model year cycle could bring surprises. Your best move is to check dealer stock sooner than later, if this black beauty rings your bell. ■



2020 Ram 1500 Crew Cab (and certain 2019 models) are the first full-size pickups to earn the highest Top Safety Pick+ rating by Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), in each of the six crashworthiness tests conducted by IIHS, aided by FCA's patented splayed front frame rails. Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) technology was graded "superior," benefiting from the industry's only pickup-segment application of Integrated Radar Camera Module (IRCM), one of more than 100 available safety and security features.

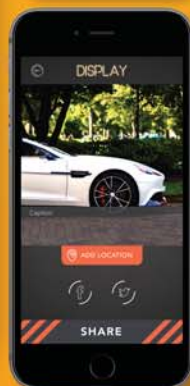
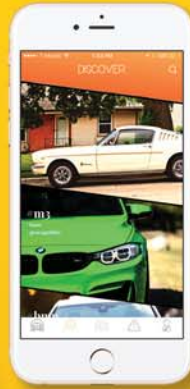
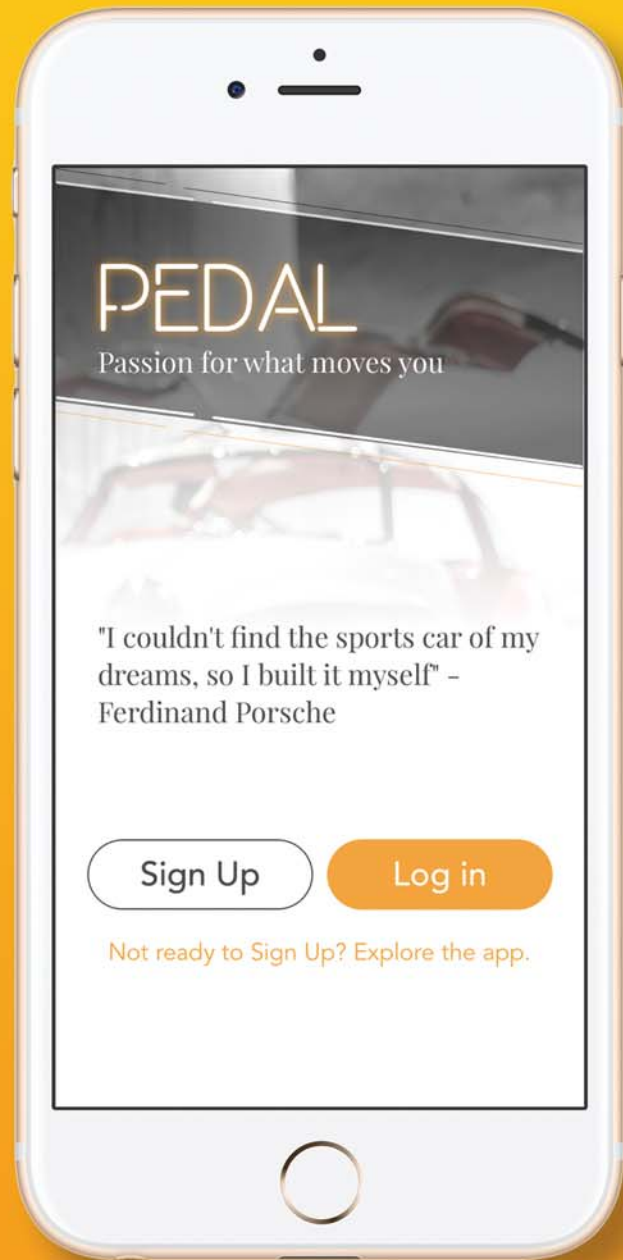


SPECIFICATIONS

BUILD	steel cab, double-wall steel box
CAB - SEATS F/R - BOX	Crew - 3/3 - 5'7"
ENGINE	3.0L V6 EcoDiesel turbo, chain-driven DOHC 24v, common rail 29,000 psi, cast-iron block, alum alloy heads
HP/TORQUE	260 hp / 480 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	16.0:1
MAX ENGINE SPEED	5800 rpm
DRIVETRAIN	4x4
TRANSMISSION	8HP75 8-spd auto
TRANSFER CASE	elec 2-spd 2HI, 4WD auto, 4HI, locked, neutral, 4LO, locked
AXLES	F: 215mm; R: 325mm standard
SUSPENSION	F: upper, lower A-arms, coils, twin-tube shocks, stblzr bar; R: five-link w track bar, solid axle, prog rate coils, twin-tube shocks, stblzr bar. (Air susp avail)
STEERING	electric power steering
BRAKES	F: 14.9x1.2 vented, 2.2" 2-piston; R: 14.8x0.87 solid, 2.2" single-piston
WHEELS	(Black Pkg) 22x9 blk alum
TIRES	(Black Pkg) 285/45R22XL A/S
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	232.9 / 144.6 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(std wheels) 8.2 / 8.7 in
APPR-DEPART-BRKVR	(std wheels but incl optional skid plates) 19.0-24.9-17.4
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.9 / 39.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.9 / 45.2 in
TOW CAPACITY	9710 lb
FUEL	ultra-low sulfur diesel
FUEL CAPACITY	(23, 26 std) optional 33 gal
MPG	21/29/24 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$56,965
3.0L V6 TURBO DIESEL GEN 3	w 800-amp battery, lower active grille shutters
	4995
3.92 REAR AXLE	95
PAINT: Diamond Black Crystal Pearl-Coat	100
PROTECTION GROUP: skid plates for front suspension, steering gear, transfer case and fuel tank	395
BLACK APPEARANCE PACKAGE: black exterior badging, black headlamp bezels, 22x9 black aluminum wheels, 285/45R22XL all-season tires, tri-fold tonneau cover, sport performance hood, tow hooks, 19-speaker Harman Kardon premium audio.....	3995
BED UTILITY GROUP: four adjustable cargo tie-down hooks.....	545
LIMITED LEVEL 1 EQUIPMENT GROUP: adaptive cruise w stop & go, advanced brake assist, full speed forward collision warn-plus, lane keep assist, parallel & perpendicular park assist w stop, ventilated rear seats, surround-view camera (not w trailering mirrors).....	2295
DUAL-PANE PANORAMIC SUNROOF	1495
MULTI-FUNCTION TAILGATE	995
33-GALLON FUEL TANK	445
RAMBOX® CARGO MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	995
TRAILER BRAKE CONTROL	295
DESTINATION CHARGE	1695
TOTAL	\$75,305



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FIRST LOOK : 2022 MASERATI MC20

Maserati reenters the supercar realm

Back in high school, half the kids would yell "Ferrari!" to be cool, the other half "Lamborghini!" We used to add "Maserati!," just to throw them off, since none of them had thought of that and may not have even known about it. But it was more than fair to add it to the club. Over the past couple of decades—as Ferrari and Lamborghini have become about as common as Porsche had long been—and as Maserati came back to our shores, but with sedans and grand tourers—it would seem there has been a Maserati supercar-sized hole in the marketplace. Not anymore.

They did dabble in this in 2004-05, with the MC12, a limited production of just 50 cars (25 per year) for the purpose of homologating it as an FIA GT Championship race car.

The MC12 is the spiritual forebear of the new Maserati MC20, though the new supercar share no bones—it's completely modernized, designed and built from scratch.

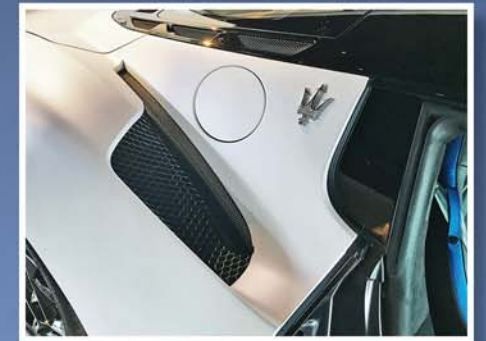
The MC20 is on course to begin production in 2021, as a 2022 model. They have, however, built just three pre-production prototypes

(typically a combination of manufacturing line trial and hand assembly)—and no sooner did they reveal it in Modena, Italy in September, than they brought one to Phoenix for us to see up close in October. They also brought one of those rare MC12 racers (shown at top right).

This sample is a stunner, in Bianco Audace (bold white) satin finish. It will also be available in Nero Enigma, Rosso Vincente, Giallo Genio, Blu Infinito or Grigio Mistero (black, red, yellow, blue or grey), for a wide range of visual personality.

The prior MC12 was powered by a 630-hp 6.0-liter 48-valve double overhead cam V12. The MC20 hits 621 supremely efficient horsepower from a lighter, more fuel-frugal 3.0-liter V6 (the car weighs in at just 3306 pounds), propelling it to 60 mph in just 2.9 seconds.

Maserati proclaims the MC20 brings elegance, sports performance and luxury comfort—targeting key historic identity points for the brand. Based on static display of the prototype, as well as the production car's specification, we'd say they've hit the mark. ■



A run to cooler, thinner air by Joe Sage

In our first foray out—and theirs—as pandemic lockdowns eased, we followed along as Air Cooled Arizona gathered the troops for a run from Fountain Hills to Payson. This is one of our favorite regional drives, up the Beeline Highway from an elevation of about 1,500 feet to 5,000 feet, running from saguaro desert to piñon pines to high country Ponderosa forests. Air-cooled vehicles are sensitive to elevation changes, benefiting from resetting their timing along the way for optimum performance, and of course their diet of engine-cooling air becomes both thinner and cooler along this route.

Air Cooled Arizona is known for their Second Sundays gathering of Volkswagen, Porsche and a

smattering of other air-cooled vehicles, owners and enthusiasts, at the Phoenix Public Market, 14 E Pierce Street, Phoenix, basically a specialized cars and coffee, as well as other occasional special gatherings and local or regional lunch drives, such as the one we joined.

Vehicles included exactly what you'd expect—plenty of bugs and buses, a good presence of Karmann Ghias and the occasional VW Thing, along with Porsche 356, 911 and 914—plus the occasional British or Italian surprise.

A significant proportion of participants bore the insignia of Original German Käfers (Beetles), an event and

cruise club of its own, smoothly folded into the Air Cooled Arizona umbrella.

Ours was just a simple distance tag-along appetizer, but we made special note of a nice variety of specific vehicles and hope to connect with a few of the owners in the future, to bring you a good look at some of our favorite special builds, from dune buggy to rat or heavy metal finishes, to immaculate camper or original Beetle restoration.

Facebook is the best place to follow information on Air Cooled Arizona's events and activities, as well as those of Original German Käfers. ■



All activity vehicle: power and grace

By Joe Sage

Mercedes-Benz SUV names correspond to the sedans: GLA, GLC, GLE, GLS as in A-, C-, E- and S-Class. There is also a GLB SUV, and there are both SUV and Coupe models of GLC and GLE.

Also in parallel to the cars, GLE is the biggest seller in their utility lineup.

Twenty-four years ago, there were first signs that SUVs were about to get a lot more exciting. One standout was the Mercedes-Benz AA Vision concept at Detroit in 1996 (AAV for All Activity Vehicle, before the SUV term took hold), with aerodynamic curves, sculpted sides, prominent wheel arches, and large tires and wheels for a bold, wide stance. Much of that did not make it into initial M-Class in 1997, though it has eased its way in more-so over its lifespan. GLE is the direct descendant of M-Class, and much of the early concept's spirit is now found in similar-but-for-size GLC and GLE. Joining GLS and G-Class, they are now well along the path to perfection. (They may be there now, shy of a couple of debatable interface details.)

The gen-four 2020 GLE was all-new, featured at launch in our Jan/Feb 2019 issue (where we also had a static peek at the AMG version to come later). Extensive new or significantly upgraded available features included all-new intelligent sus-

pension, gesture control, new engines with EQ Boost tech, elements from touchpad to shifter to panorama roof, and a new 9-speed transmission.

The wheelbase had grown by over three inches, providing for more second-row legroom and even an optional third row (suitable for anyone up to 5-foot-10, more generous than many full-size SUVs, and with easy second-row power access).

The GLE lineup starts with the GLE at \$54,750. Midyear last year, we drove the \$62,500 2020 GLE 450 4MATIC SUV for a week, the 362-hp top unit of AMG models, ours optioned up to \$96,320. AMG arrived later in the year as a 2020 GLE 53 model (\$72,350). New for 2021 are an AMG GLE 63 and the model we drive here, the 603-hp GLE 63 S.

And drive we did, taking a weekend cruise up the Beeline Highway to Bush Highway to Saguaro Lake and beyond. We had planned a much longer drive, but forest fire smoke from California largely filled the air, so such a trip would not be as photogenic as it would normally be. Even up by Saguaro Lake, local forest fires have hit much of that local landscape. But our drive itself was spectacular.

As we all know, 603 horsepower (or up to 624 as EQ Boost does it thing) and 627 lb-ft of torque (up to an incredible 811 with EQ Boost) are not for

drag racing on country highways. But on a climbing road, where cumbersome campers and struggling left-laners may box in a mere mortal, the AMG GLE 63 S has so much power on tap (and reasonable size, spacious inside, tighter outside), you can easily squirt through gaps most others cannot, and be well on your way. Its power curve is masterful.

We noted an impressively tight turning circle, one of our favorite features both in town and in tight remote spots, though a spec is not yet given for this (and sometimes we end up surprised).

Our sample had a great many options—some for looks, most for over-the-top creature comforts and features, one group for extensive drive assist technologies. There are few if any that you would not want. Some add more AMG branding (carbon fiber trim, engine cover, steering wheel, wheels, brakes), and on the one hand we philosophize that once you're already buying an AMG, you shouldn't have to buy any options that make it an AMG. On the other hand, the options and packages list on ours was remarkably extensive, yet did not really change the price that much, a tremendous amount of content for \$20,000, a 16 percent bump. (You could buy your kid a \$20,000-dollar car with that, but the typical AMG buyer can likely do both.)

In total, the Mercedes-AMG GLE 63 S is a zen experience. Whether it's a feature or power, if you think of it, you'll find it's all there. ■



Those debatable interface details? • Auto start-stop is conveniently right next to engine start-stop, a logical and welcome idea, as we have to hunt for this in most vehicles; but it's hidden behind the wheel and righthand shift stalk, all too easy to reach for at a red light, but turn the engine off. • A forward view camera (redundant to your windshield) blocks the screen at a stop, when you might be wanting to dive in for a quick change to climate, massage, heated-cooled seats or other features, though the big plus is that these features are so extensive. • Powerful 23-speaker Burmester audio is great, but equalizer, presets and other features are also arguably too deep in the system.

SPECIFICATIONS

BUILD	steel unibody, five-passenger
ENGINE	handcrafted AMG 4.0L biturbo V8 alum alloy 32v DOHC w EQ Boost
HP/TORQUE	603 hp / 627 lb-ft
EQ BOOST	up to 21 hp / 184 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	4MATIC AWD
0-TO-60 MPH	est 3.7 sec
TOP SPEED ..(elec lim, summer tires)	174 mph
TRANSMISSION	AMG SPEEDSHIFT TCT 9-spd automatic
SUSPENSION	F: indep double-wishbone; R: indep multi-link; F/R: AIRMATIC air suspension & ADS+ adaptive damping system;
STEERING	speed-dependent electro-mechanical rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 15.8; R: 14.6; (other info tba)
WHEELS	F: 10.0x21 cast R: 11.10x21 cast
TIRES	F: 275/45R21; R: 315/40R21
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	190.0 / 117.9 in
TURNING CIRCLE	tba
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.5 / 39.6 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.3 / 40.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	33.3 / 74.9 cu.ft
GROUND CLEARANCE.....(max load, min)	7.5 in
TOW CAPACITY	tba
WEIGHT	tba
FUEL CAPACITY	22.5 gal
MPG	tba

BASE PRICE	\$113,950
PAINT: designo Diamond White Metallic.....	1515
AMG CARBON FIBER TRIM	1590
CARBON FIBER ENGINE COVER	1500
STEERING WHEEL: AMG Performance steering wheel in DINAMICA.....	100
WHEELS: 22" AMG cross-spoke, gloss black.....	1750
BRAKES: AMG high performance system with red painted brake calipers.....	nc
AMG DRIVE UNIT	nc
REAR SIDE AIRBAGS	420
PANORAMA POWER TILT	1000
4-ZONE CLIMATE CONTROL	760
BLACK DINAMICA ROOF LINER	1600
INTERIOR ASSISTANT	200
BURMESTER SURROUND SOUND AUDIO	nc
HEATED REAR SEATS	580
MBUX TECH PKG: MBUX augmented video for navigation; heads-up display.....	1450
DRIVER ASSISTANCE PKG PLUS: active lane keep assist, active distance assist DISTRONIC, active blind spot assist, active stop-and-go assist, active lane change assist, active steering assist, active emergency stop assist, PRE-SAFE Impulse Side, route-based speed adaptation, active brake assist w cross-traffic function, active speed limit assist, evasive steering assist, PRE-SAFE PLUS rear end collision protection, traffic sign assist.....	1700
WARMTH & COMFORT PKG: rapid heating function, heated door center panels, heated front armrests, heated center console.....	1050
ENERGIZING COMFORT PKG PLUS: Air-Balance pkg, active multi-contour front seats w massage function.....	1650
AMG NIGHT PKG: high-gloss black trim on front splitter, A-wing, window frames, trim on rear apron, tailpipes and roof rails.....	750
ACOUSTIC COMFORT PKG: addtl cabin insulation, windshield w infrared-reflect film, side windows w acoustic infrared absorb film ...	1100
DESTINATION CHARGE	995

TOTAL.....**\$133,660**
(Early specifications, subject to change.)

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



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TEXAS SHORTCUT

BY JOE SAGE

In many ways, this may be the biggest drive event over our last cycle—tied, at least, with the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo, its purpose.

The paradox is not lost on us that we do a lot of flying, when *Driver* is our middle name. But it's the spirit of the open road that inspired all this in the first place, and as Truck Rodeo loomed—our first destination event since February—the idea of driving there took hold. We've flown the route many times, normally quick and easy, but it was proving more complicated this time (see story in this issue). Driving seemed nearly irresistible.

To be ready for our long-day drive event in the Texas Hill Country west of Austin, we had to arrive in time to get some sleep. The drive totals about 17 hours, and we'd lose two hours from Mountain Standard to Central Daylight time. Sensible solutions seemed to suggest an overnight en route.

Having not put our heads on strange pillows for the duration of the pandemic to date, we looked up motels. And on this major cross-country Interstate, there really are none from El Paso to Austin. We considered just packing a pillow and blanket and folding down our rear seats for an expanded trunk. But a nonstop seemed most likely. But this would mean leaving at 2 am to get there by 9 pm. But if we left by 4 am, got there at 11 pm and unwound by midnight, we could still sleep six hours. Heck, that'd be just 10 pm our time. Then again, it would be a wakeup call at 4 am our time.

Most weekly review vehicles have a 500-mile cap, plus would have to be back, guaranteed, in time for the next swap. Instead, we changed the



oil and checked the belts and hoses on a vehicle of our own—a first-year 2008 Audi S5 with just 35,000 miles on it, 354-hp 4.2L V8, 6-speed manual, road-hugging quattro, and a 160GB iPod Classic plugged into its fine Bang & Olufsen audio system.

The whole trip was iffy for its own reasons, and by the end of the week, we figured we'd missed it. But on the last barely possible night, we bargained that if we happened to wake up at 4 am, we could pull it off. We packed, just in case, and went to bed,

no alarm. And woke up at 4 am. And were showered, loaded and underway by 5 am.

Some official highway signs are amusingly unusual in southern New Mexico, and billboards for classic tourist stops are plentiful. I-10 turns south at Las Cruces and heads down the Rio Grande Valley to El Paso—the biggest city between Phoenix and Austin, Dallas or San Antonio, a bit bigger

KEEP RIGHT >>

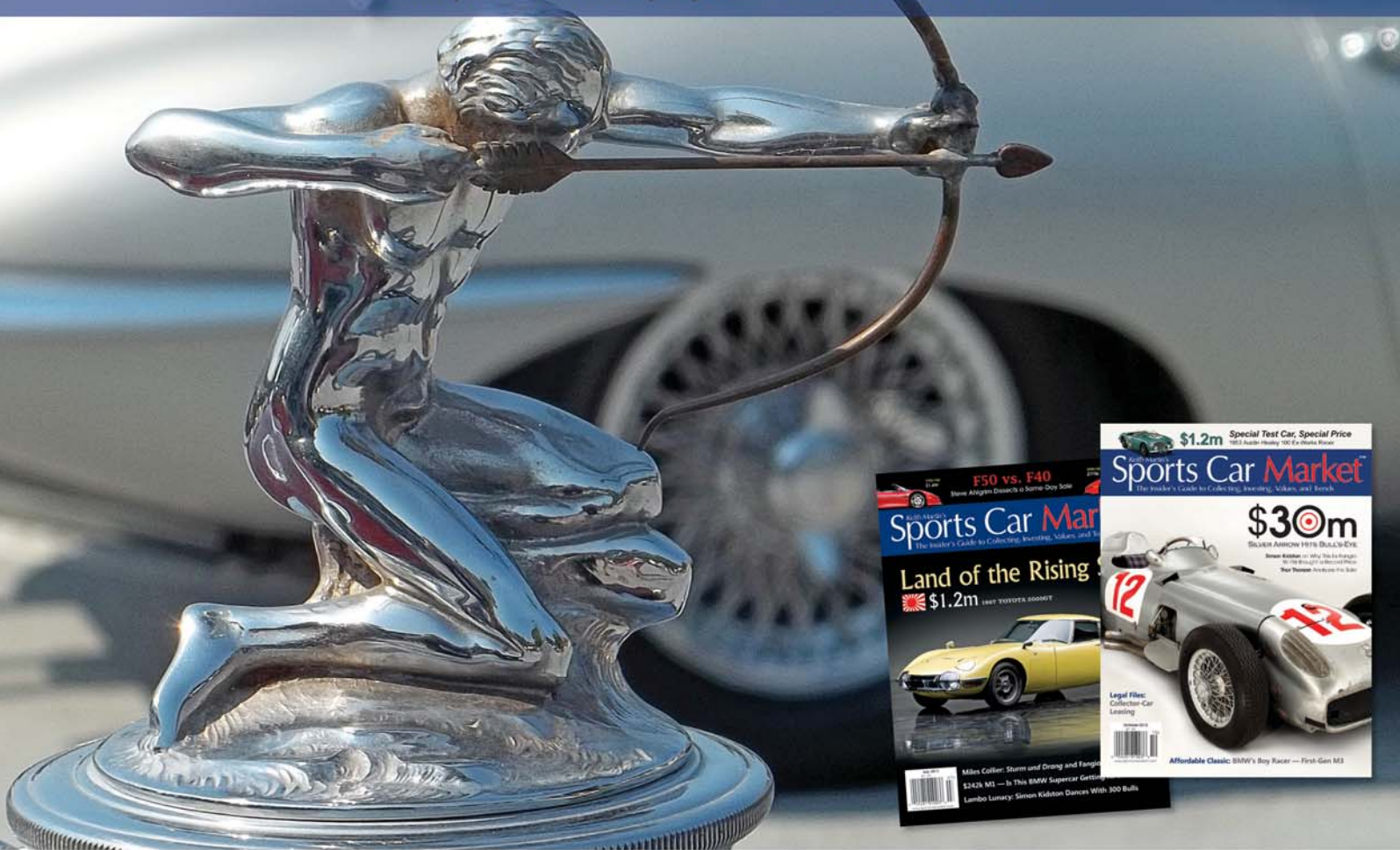


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than Tucson (700,000 vs 550,000). And it's the last reliable stop for gas or food for almost 600 miles.

With Texas extending well below New Mexico, we've long joked that you can drive from Arizona to Texas while holding your breath. The clock changes at the New Mexico line and again just a bit east of El Paso, so perhaps you can change two time zones while holding your breath, as well.

After El Paso, I-10 runs along the Chihuahua border for about 65 miles—a couple of miles separating us from the farms and mountains of Mexico across one last fertile patch of the Rio Grande.

Widely scattered towns from that point east are vestiges of once thriving US Highway communities, before the Interstates blew past them—now with a *Last Picture Show* look and feel. We pulled into several—Sierra Blanca, Van Horn, Fort Stockton, Ozona and others—for a look and to try our luck on fuel or meals. And water. Pro tip: load up your own pallets of water for this drive

You could maybe drive the whole route with your eyes closed. From Phoenix, it's I-10 east, exit at US 290 just west of Luckenbach and roll into Austin. For San Antonio, it's I-10 all the way. For Dallas, exit earlier at I-20 through Midland-Odessa.

Our plan worked. We pulled in to our hotel at exactly midnight with exactly 1100 miles on the odo.

Driving, and also taking our own vehicle, also gave us the flexibility to visit a friend or two before we headed back west. When the Truck Rodeo wrapped, we dashed north to greater Dallas-Fort Worth as the sun went down—another few hours and few hundred miles on our total tally. This also meant we'd return via Midland-Odessa, famed twin oil towns of West Texas, for our first time.

We left Dallas at 9 am (7 am Arizona time), figuring another midnight arrival back home. Central Texas greenery gives way to wide open spaces, punctuated only by the wide-ranging oil fields, concentrated development and distinctive thick,



white air of Midland-Odessa, till you rejoin I-10. From there, you feel like someone coming out West for the first time, on the best possible route—successively more open space, giving way to outcroppings and buttes, ultimately to the dramatic volcanic peaks and rock formations of Southeast Arizona. It's a dramatic evolution and different feel than, say, endless fields of wheat across Kansas till the sudden wall of Rockies in mid-Colorado.

We hit southeast Arizona about 1 am. We could

be home by 4 am or so, but that's 6 am Texas time. Plus we had become used to the idea of a strange pillow again while in Texas. We grabbed a sandwich at Willcox, checked apps and found a great room at the Arizona Sunset Inn, well off the Interstate, good to know for future runs to Chiricahua National Monument or Inde Motorsports Ranch.

In all, we were gone for five and a half days, to do an eight-hour drive event, covering 2500 miles. And it was, as always, great to be back home. ■



Catalina

The island of romance

Late last year, a group of sixty Catalina Island stakeholders gathered in an ocean view room overlooking Avalon Bay to discuss how they wanted to position themselves to the world. The consensus? Love was the key word.

There's the love people bring to the island: immortalized in a song long ago as "the island of romance," it's where many visitors had a first date, proposed or even exchanged vows. And there's the love the island brings to the world: residents noted that wherever they go, when they say they're from Catalina Island, the most common response is, "I love Catalina." A new slogan was born: Love Catalina Island.

The Catalina Island Tourism Authority made preparations to launch this image on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2020. Then along came a global pandemic.

By March 20, the island was fully closed to non-essential travelers. Hundreds of jobs were lost, and a number of businesses ultimately closed permanently. By mid-June, things were opening up again—restaurants and stores could offer in-person dining and shopping, hotels could begin booking leisure travel, and tour and activity companies could resume operations, all within California state guidelines.

Without the original full February fanfare, the island did get their new slogan back on track with an online "Summer of Love" virtual concert series, while the Catalina Island Museum now has a full program of virtual events.

A visit to their website will give you the latest information on what's available in person, along with special offers from lodging, activities, dining, shopping and other tourism partners.

You'll find you can dine al fresco at the beach, enjoy beach and undersea activities, parasailing, hiking, bison tours, falconry, Hummer tours, ziplining

and more.

Catalina Island is also a compelling place for the remote work and distance learning so many of us now have as a way of life.

And yes, love is alive on Catalina, where you can currently book an Island Romance Package including round-trip transit, Avalon sightseeing, a 15-minute helicopter tour, a bottle of wine and a box of chocolates.

Find details on what's open and the latest Catalina Island packages at LoveCatalina.com, where you can also get your hands on their free 80-page *Catalina Island Visitors Guide*, either by direct download or by mail, with detailed descriptions of accommodations, restaurants, shops, services and activities.

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NASCAR CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND RETURNS TO PHOENIX IN 2021

THREE DAYS: NOVEMBER 5-6-7, 2021

The Valley of the Sun will again play host to NASCAR Championship Weekend in 2021. Phoenix Raceway, host of the championship for the first time in November 2020, will host for the second consecutive year, November 5-7, 2021.

The 2021 NASCAR Championship Weekend will again feature four championship races over three days. Champions will be crowned in the Cup Series, NASCAR Xfinity Series on November 6 and NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, as well as the ARCA Menards Series West.

The NASCAR Cup Series also returns to Phoenix for its annual spring event on Sunday, March 14.

"It's an honor to once again be the host track for the most important weekend in our sport, and it's an opportunity all of us at Phoenix Raceway are extremely excited about," said Phoenix Raceway president Julie Giese. "With the return of the NASCAR Championship Weekend, coupled with

an action-packed spring event weekend, the 2021 schedule at Phoenix Raceway is set to be another memorable year for our fans, our local communities and the entire state of Arizona."

Tickets for the annual Spring NASCAR Event Weekend and Xfinity Series race on March 13 are on sale now and available for purchase by visiting PhoenixRaceway.com, or by calling the Phoenix Raceway ticket office at 866-408-RACE (7223). Fans looking to secure their spot at the 2021 NASCAR Championship Weekend as early as possible may do so now by locking in their 2021 season tickets at Phoenix Raceway. Fans can view the full 2021 NASCAR Cup Series schedule and purchase tickets at nascar.com/tickets.

The 2021 schedule for the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, as well as start times, will be announced at a later date, as will television networks and broadcast times. ■

ABOUT PHOENIX RACEWAY

The premier motorsports venue in the Southwest since 1964, Phoenix Raceway hosts two NASCAR race weekends each year. In 2020, the FanShield 500 Speed Fest Weekend, March 6-8, kicked off the season, featuring the NASCAR Cup Series, NASCAR Xfinity Series and the new addition of the ARCA Menards Series. For the first time in history, Phoenix Raceway was chosen to host the NASCAR Championship Weekend, November 6-8, a three-day event with champions crowned in the NASCAR Cup Series, NASCAR Xfinity Series, NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series and the ARCA Menards Series West. Phoenix Raceway also hosts events throughout the year, including corporate meetings and conferences, charity events, holiday events, sport and endurance competitions, driving schools and Segway tours. For information, visit www.PhoenixRaceway.com.



Wicked sweet & elegant

By Joe Sage

The Mercedes-AMG GT family has had explosive growth in just a few years' time, contributing to an ever deeper and broader AMG family overall, and in turn the greater Mercedes lineup. (Word has it that some thinning is coming soon.)

Growing from the AMG GT Coupes and parallel Roadsters, a new fork in the road added the AMG GT Four-door Coupe group about two years ago.

GT 43 and GT 53 have variations of a 3.0L turbo V6; GT 63 and GT 63 S have two versions of a 4.0L biturbo V8. The GT 43 is intended as an entry level model—at \$89,000 the least expensive in both the GT Four-door subset and the full GT lineup.

At just 12.3 percent higher cost than the GT 43, the GT 53 delivers 18.5 percent more horsepower via AMG enhancements and an electric auxiliary compressor—429 hp versus the base model's 362. Both bear benefits of Mercedes' clever EQ Boost technology—a complex yet elegantly simple ring-shaped armature system that efficiently boosts output by up to 21 hp throughout the power curve.

It's a bigger price jump to the two V8s (comparative specs and prices at right), with intriguing

comparisons between GT 63 and 63 S, as well.

The comparatives add up to good news for the AMG GT 53: at just under \$100 grand, tradeoffs are in your favor—about 70 percent the cost of a GT 63, with almost 80 percent the horses. If frugality plays into your formula, you'll save on gas, too, by virtue of smaller displacement, of course, and also the turbo-compressor-EQ Boost tech factors.

The cars are built not on the GT coupe and roadster's foundations, but rather the executive size (or midsize) E-Class and CLS-Class platform. Whatever its nominal classification, the interior is spacious, with ample visibility all around.

The GT 53 cabin bears Mercedes' familiar twin 12.3-inch screens, in a crisp and sporty instrument panel with switch, vent and control cues from the coupes and roadsters. Notable is the shifter, not the usual steering wheel righthand stalk found on most Mercedes models, but a grab handle unit in a more conventional console position, where an active performance driver would expect to find it. It's surrounded by a brushed metal surround, trackpad, and control buttons under black glass—from auto start-stop, to modes, to trunk release—classy, though subject to reflection that can reduce readability vital to this variety of functions.

A wealth of controls and settings remain in the center touchscreen, including such extras as more

variations of massage than most masseuses can offer. Some settings, as is typical, require more layers of deep dive than we might wish, but no doubt become more familiar during ownership.

Our drive time was split between suburban grid and a two-lane excursion out into the countryside—Bartlett Lake Road—the first showcasing the powertrain's quick and potent response to traffic gap opportunities easily missed in a more ordinary machine; the latter (in Sport-Plus mode) a high-power, precision-control grand touring romp.

Here you'll forget any bugaboos of electronics or interface, as you find the car's soul, confirming that from a power and mechanical standpoint, this is a showpiece of this golden age of quality build and performance. The epiphany of this GT's larger size, compared with its two-door brethren, is that it's so quick, nimble and sure-footed, you almost can't believe its generous packaging—the size of the cabin, the size of the engine, even the size of the trunk. It handled our cuts and curves, over hill and dale, like a tight and trim sports car—a GT.

Whenever we see any Mercedes-AMG GT coming up on our schedule—be it a Roadster, Coupe or Four-door—our heart surely beats a little faster, as any will be one of those special cars that warrant extra anticipation. We have a hunch it will make your heart beat faster as well. ■

MERCEDES-AMG GT FAMILY

AMG GT COUPE

Mercedes-AMG GT Coupe	\$115,900
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 469 hp / 465 lbft / 0-60 3.9 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT C Coupe	\$150,900
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 550 hp / 502 lbft / 0-60 3.6 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT R Coupe	\$162,900
Mercedes-AMG GT R Pro Coupe	(tbd)
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 577 hp / 516 lbft / 0-60 3.5 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series	(tbd)
Modified 4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 720 hp / 590 lbft / 0-60 3.1 sec	

AMG GT ROADSTER

Mercedes-AMG GT Roadster	\$127,900
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 469 hp / 465 lbft / 0-60 3.9 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT C Roadster	\$162,400
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 550 hp / 502 lbft / 0-60 3.6 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT R Roadster	\$189,750
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 577 hp / 516 lbft / 0-60 3.5 sec	

AMG GT 4-DOOR COUPE

Mercedes-AMG GT 43 4-door Coupe	\$89,000
3.0L inline-6 turbo w EQ Boost 362 +21 EQ hp / 369 lbft / 0-60 4.8 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT 53 4-door Coupe	\$99,950
AMG-enhanced 3.0L inline-6 turbo w EQ Boost, electric auxiliary compressor 429 +21 EQ hp / 384 lbft / 0-60 4.4 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT 63 4-door Coupe	\$140,600
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 577 hp / 590 lbft / 0-60 3.3 sec	
Mercedes-AMG GT 63 S 4-door Coupe	\$161,900
4.0L handcrafted AMG V8 biturbo 630 hp / 664 lbft / 0-60 3.1 sec	



SPECIFICATIONS

DOORS/SEATS.....	four / four
BUILD.....	steel unibody, alum+steel sheet metal
ENGINE.....	AMG-enhanced 3.0L inline-6 turbo alum/alum, 24v, w EQ Boost and electric auxiliary compressor
COMPRESSION RATIO.....	10.5:1
HP/TORQUE.....	429 hp / 384 lb-ft +EQ Boost up to 21 hp
DRIVETRAIN.....	4MATIC AWD
TRANSMISSION.....	AMG Speedshift TCT 9-spd
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED.....	4.4 sec / 174 mph (lim)
SUSPENSION.....	F: indep multi-link w coil spring, single-tube shock w continuously adjusting damping & solid torsion bar; R: indep multi-link w coil spring, single-tube shock w continuously adjusting damping & tubular torsion bar;
STEERING.....	speed-dependent electro-mechanical rack & pinion
BRAKES.....	F: 14.2x1.4; R: 14.2x1.0
WHEELS.....	(std) F: 9.5x19; R: 11.0x19
TIRES.....	(std) F: 255/45R19; R: 285/40R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....	199.2 / 116.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....	41.3 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	tba
HEADROOM (F/R).....	tba
LEGROOM (F/R).....	tba
CARGO CAPACITY.....	tba
WEIGHT.....	tba
FUEL CAPACITY.....	17.4 gal
MPG.....	19/24/21 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE.....	\$99,950
PAINT: Brilliant Blue Metallic.....	720
INTERIOR: Magma Grey / Black Nappa leather (w natural grain grey ash wood, n/c).....	2990
WHEELS: AMG 20" twin 5-spoke w accents.....	750
AMG PERFORMANCE EXHAUST.....	1850
AMG DRIVE UNIT STRG WHEEL BUTTONS.....	400
SILVER SEATBELTS.....	500
HEATED/VENTILATED FRONT SEATS.....	450
SURROUND VIEW CAMERA.....	500
DESIGNO BLACK DINAMICA HEADLINER.....	1600
DRIVER ASST PKG: active assist: DISTRONIC® distance, steering, lane change, emergency stop, speed limit, brake w cross-traffic, eva- sive steering, lane keep, blind spot; Pre- Safe® Plus rear-end collision protection; route-based speed adapt.....	2250
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	995
TOTAL.....	\$112,955



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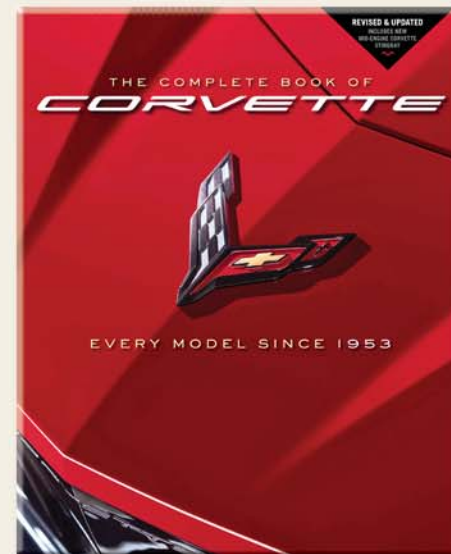
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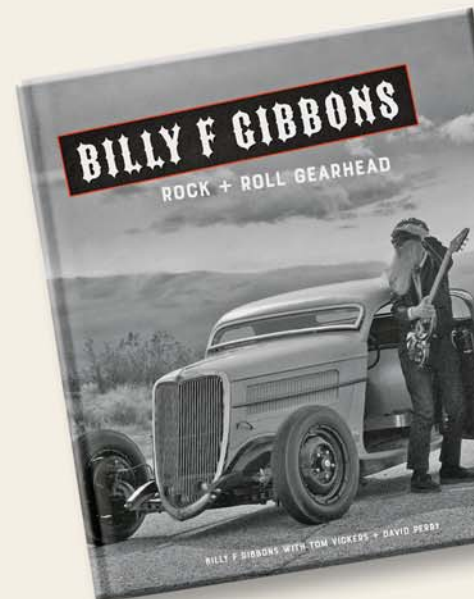
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MIKE MUELLER
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Mickey Thompson: The Lost Story of the Original Speed King in His Own Words

TOM MADIGAN / FOREWORD BY ALEX XYDIAS
Four decades after his tragic death, racer and motorsports impresario Mickey Thompson remains legendary. In the early 1970s, he and motorsports writer (and former drag racer) Tom Madigan set out to write his autobiography. After two years of extensive interviews, the near-finished manuscript was set aside for a number of reasons. Neatly stacked typewritten sheets were boxed, stored and mostly forgotten. This long-incomplete first-person telling of Thompson's high-speed life covers it all: land-speed racing at Bonneville, drag racing, off-road in Baja, NASCAR, Indianapolis—anything involving speed. Armed with a restless mind and a keen business sense, Thompson moved from success to success. This is that never-published work—an amazing biographical artifact from what many consider the golden age of automotive racing—complemented by some 100 rare images culled from family archives, the NHRA museum, and the collections of friends and fellow racers.

Billy F Gibbons: Rock + Roll Gearhead

BILLY F GIBBONS / TOM VICKERS / PHOTOS: DAVID PERRY
As with many rockers, Billy F Gibbons' jones for hot rods and customs is the stuff of legend. But beyond this bona fide bluesman's mastery of the six-string and unrepentant love for internal combustion is a noted collector whose own designs have manifested themselves in hundreds of mind-bending cars and guitars. This new edition of *Billy F Gibbons: Rock + Roll Gearhead* (first published in 2005) has been expanded for ZZ Top's 50th anniversary, throwing Gibbons' garage and studio doors wide open for an exclusive look at the exquisite vintage and way-out custom guitars and the influential hot rods and custom cars of this grade-A Texas gearhead. From his near-mythical '59 Les Paul sunburst known as "Pearly Gates" and the "Furry One" of MTV renown, to cars like the Eliminator, CadZZilla, and Kopperhead, it's all here—more than sixty guitars and fifteen astounding vehicles, all expounded upon by BFG himself and shown in commissioned photography. No less intriguing are the tales behind his incredible music career—from teenage Houston garage rocker to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, told with his own words and memorabilia from his personal archive. Photographer David Perry defined the modern hot rod pin-up; his other books include *Hot Rod Pin-Ups* and *Hot Rod Kings*. ■

Twister touches down BY JOE SAGE

Since day one, Ford Mustang has offered affordability and choice, including the different personalities that come with different choices. At face value (and setting aside Shelby and other super-performance cars), the choices seem simple: four-cylinder EcoBoost turbo or V8; automatic or manual; and pick your favorite color. But it can get more complex than that.

Trim levels include base and Premium, GT and GT Premium, and Bullitt. Our sample here is built off the base 2.3-liter EcoBoost four-cylinder model (\$26,670), pretty much a stripper, but adds a significant High Performance Package (\$4995), as well as the only extra-cost paint out of ten possibilities, Twister Orange (\$495). The performance package also adds Equipment Group 100A, for keyless start and a couple of other items (see sidebar).

We don't mind and sometimes welcome a base model in principle—a bit less weight thus a bit more power to the wheels, simple knobs for climate and audio, a tangible cable handbrake. And we are more than happy to stick with the 6-speed manual transmission (10-speed auto adds \$1595). Other things, though, we miss. Windows are power, but we would find power seats a lot more accurate to adjust just right (something we battled all week in this one). And other options we wish it had come up repeatedly during our week with the car.

The High Performance Package includes a few simple performance upgrades (splitters, upsized

sway bars), but most notably boosts engine output from 310 to 330 hp (a 6.5 percent bump).

We started out tackling what felt to us like a mismatch of clutch and powertrain, but it turns out these may simply be related to overdone engine acoustics. The 4-cylinder EcoBoost turbo's torque is much more powerful than its size might suggest, and you actively feel it with the manual transmission, but it seems to make the clutch feel touchier to engage at the low end, like that of a much bigger engine. And the aggressive engine sound might also throw you at first—in what seemed to us the opposite of an EV, where quiet running belies neck-snapping acceleration, the four-cylinder Mustang puts out aggressive sound that exceeds low range power.

It took quite a dive to locate related settings, using a base-model physical steering wheel button set (just begging for an electronic "back" click) and its base-level screen. Normal, sport and track settings, to our ear, produce effects closer to rice rocket than muscle in nature. But when set to its "quiet" engine noise setting, clutch effort and power curve relative to sound effects both fell into line. Even "normal" could wake up the neighbors, and the system returns from quiet to normal upon restart, until you discover "quiet start," which conquers loud startup, then continues in quiet mode.

The base screen is a 4.2-inch LCD unit (a hair bigger than an iPhone 5 and reminiscent of desk-

top graphics from 30 years ago), with no touch interface. Audio is six-speaker AM-FM-MP3. Even with our own audio source, sound is weak.

You can replace that cumbersome settings arrangement with a handsome, useful set of toggle switches, and replace the base unit with an 8-inch screen, adding SYNC 3 and better nine-speaker audio with SiriusXM, by replacing the included Group 100A with Group 101A (\$2000), which also includes power seats and dual-zone automatic climate control. For another \$995, you can add voice-activated touchscreen navigation.

Another add-on ours was lacking was at least a temporary spare tire (another \$405). We found this out the hard way, picking up a huge screw on a Friday evening, fortunately getting to Discount Tire just as they were lowering the doors, but they were kind enough to squeeze in one more repair.

We had thought about driving this car up into red rock Utah and western Colorado, but the flat tire was our final fatal delay (and we're glad that didn't hit us in Monument Valley with no spare). Instead, we were able to tag along with Air Cooled Arizona on a run up Arizona highway 87, the Beeline Highway, from Fountain Hills to the cooler Ponderosa forests of Payson that weekend. Here, the Mustang's attributes had a chance to shine.

This drive, one of our favorites, is full of challenging grades and curves, snaking up through the mountains from 1500 feet to 5000 feet elevation. Also challenging were a few of our fellow travelers (not the old VWs). It may be the paint, but this car attracts a great many boy racers—and not

Challengers, Camaros and 911s, but rather affordable compacts, midsize pickups and such. After their repeated efforts to struggle past us just to box us in, we had little choice but to tap the High Performance engine's extra power and leave them all behind. For this, we made a point of changing to track mode, where maximum engine and exhaust sounds were exactly what was called for.

It was a spirited drive, and we realized that not once had we found ourselves wishing it were a V8.

Lucky thing, as choosing the 460-hp V8 means choosing the GT, which runs about \$9,000 higher in base form, or \$13,000 more as a GT Premium. The EcoBoost four with High Performance Package is intended to close this gap while maintaining that longstanding Mustang goal of relative affordability throughout the lineup. \$5,000 for 20 horsepower may be tough to compare with \$9,000 for 150 hp, but other apples and oranges also kick in.

Our wish for a few more features also led us to comparing the base EcoBoost four with its Premium trim level, itself also about a \$5,000 upgrade (and without the 20-hp High Performance bump). As you might expect, there are multiple paths to somewhat turning either into the other—adding creature features to the base Hi-Po or adding the Hi-Po engine to the already creature-featured EcoBoost Premium. Either way, you can quickly end up in the upper \$30s, bringing you back into V8-powered GT territory. The biggest remaining apple-and-orange is fuel mileage, which is notably higher across the board (with either transmission, Hi-Po or not, city-highway-combined) in the EcoBoost.

Put all that together, and you see the appeal of the car driven here and of keeping its feature set to a minimum. To a point. ■



SPECIFICATIONS

FACTORY	.....Flat Rock, Michigan
ENGINE	.....2.3L High Performance EcoBoost I-4 16v DOHC, high-pressure die-cast aluminum block w high-tensile liner & high-strength cast aluminum head, upgraded piston ring pack, 9.37:1 compression
HP / TORQUE	.....330 hp / 350 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
TRANSMISSION	.....Getrag 6-speed manual
TOP SPEED	.....(High Performance Package) 145 mph
SUSPENSION	.....F: double-ball-joint independent MacPherson strut, tubular stblzr bar; R: integral-link indep w coils, solid stblzr bar, mono-tube dampers. (Optional, not on ours: MagneRide damping.)
STEERING	.....three-mode elec power-assist rack & pinion w pull-drift compensation & active nibble control; standard, comfort & sport settings
BRAKES	.....(Perf.Pkg) F: 352x32mm vented discs, four-piston; R: 320x30mm solid, single-piston.
WHEELS / TIRES	.....(opt) 19x9 alum / P255/40R19 sumr
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....188.5 / 107.1 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....(w 19" wheels) 37.8 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....37.6 / 34.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....45.1 / 29 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....13.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....3542 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	.....na
MPG	.....20/27/23 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$26,670
TWISTER ORANGE PAINT	.....495
EQUIP GROUP 100A: FordPass Connect, TrackApps, Intelligent Access w push button start, dual bright exhaust w rolled tips	.....incl
2.3L HIGH PERFORMANCE PACKAGE: 2.3L High Performance EcoBoost engine, 3.55 limited-slip rear axle, 19x9 low gloss ebony painted pocket alum wheels, P255/40R19 summer tires, active valve performance exhaust, black painted strut-tower brace, engine-spun alum instrument panel, exterior mirrors in Magnetic, gauge pack (oil pressure and boost), GT Performance Package front splitter & belly pan, metallic grey hood accent stripe, heavy-duty front springs, larger brake rotors with four-piston fixed calipers, large radiator, performance rear wing, unique chassis tuning, unique EPAS, ABS and stability control tuning, upsized rear sway bar4995
DESTINATION CHARGE1195

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(No pricing on Monroney; recreated from available info.)



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NASCAR fans in Arizona can now share their passion for motorsports every day with this new NASCAR-branded Arizona license plate. The sleek new plate, prominently displaying NASCAR's bar logo atop an all-black background, is now available from the Arizona Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Division for \$25 per year.

A portion of each plate purchase and yearly renewal will also benefit Phoenix Raceway's non-profit organization, Arizona Accelerator Charities. For each plate purchased, \$17 will go to Arizona Accelerator Charities and back into the local community through charitable investments supporting education, healthcare, families of active duty military and veterans, as well as life enrichment programs for children and families.

"I can't wait to start seeing these new license

plates on the road throughout Arizona," says Phoenix Raceway President Julie Giese. "Not only will they look really sharp on any vehicle, they also support a great cause and help give back to our local community. It's a wonderful way for our fans to come together and collectively showcase their love for motorsports on a daily basis."

Arizona residents can purchase their NASCAR license plate online at www.AZMVDNow.gov. When applying for your new plate, your vehicle registration expiration date will remain the same. The annual special plate fee of \$25 is charged at the time of each registration renewal. You can also use the NASCAR plate as the basis for your own personalized plate, at \$50 per year.

Arizona Accelerator Charities is a 501(c)(3) donor-advised fund under The NASCAR Foundation.

ABOUT PHOENIX RACEWAY

The premier motorsports venue in the Southwest since 1964, Phoenix Raceway hosts two NASCAR race weekends each year. March 6-8, 2020, the FanShield 500 Speed Fest Weekend kicked off the season with the NASCAR Cup Series, NASCAR Xfinity Series and addition of the ARCA Menards Series. And for the first time, Phoenix Raceway was hosts NASCAR Championship Weekend, November 6-8, with champions crowned in the NASCAR Cup Series, NASCAR Xfinity Series, NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series and the ARCA Menards Series West. Phoenix Raceway also hosts corporate meetings and conferences, charity events, holiday events, sport and endurance competitions, driving schools and Segway tours year-round. Visit www.PhoenixRaceway.com.



Off-road comparo during a pandemic: the first step is showing up

By Joe Sage • Photos: Kevin McCauley / capturingthemachine

We don't often mention the pandemic, just when it's pertinent or explanatory to a situation at hand. For the Texas Truck Rodeo this year—the first such event in many, many months—it was definitely a considerable factor.

We also generally avoid “inside baseball,” for its own reasons. But there is always a backstory, and this odd quarantine year has made the backstory pretty key to understanding this event.

We are members of ten regional media associations—in Arizona, in our wider region and across the US. Of special interest are the groups' multi-vehicle events (most of which bestow awards).

There are several we try to never miss, in Texas and on the West Coast. And this year, we planned to do others—with the pandemic curtailing shows and conferences large and small, drive events, road rallies and much more, these group comparos

would be a great way to interface with colleagues and automakers and to try their latest products.

But all these soon fell victim, too, to lockdowns and other restrictions. Organizations worked diligently to modify the events, postponing and re-scheduling as they went, but one by one they were all cancelled, as no matter how hard they worked, and no matter how hard the automakers also worked to bring fleet staff, executive staff and the vehicles themselves to points far and wide, there were far too many obstacles in the way.

Thus it was a big deal when the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo came together, in October. Of course we would not want to miss this!

Adaptive behavior

Putting together an event like this is intensely complex even in normal times. After months of down-

time, deciding to try to move forward with this meant gauging whether media would be ready and willing to travel, share meals and wheels, and stay overnight—participation the manufacturers need—while simultaneously seeing whether manufacturers were ready, willing, able—and had enough current and future product—to themselves travel and bring the vehicles essential to the event. Neither comes first; they are heavily interwoven.

With hard work by both sides, a plan came together. Adaptations were many. In addition to extremely vigilant sanitation and separation procedures we all know by now, the event was restructured. Usually spanning an arrival dinner and meeting, two days of driving, the second followed by awards, this year it would be a one-day event. Its dawn start made arrival the evening before essential, but with no evening programs. It would wrap

up by 5:00 pm, as soon as the last vehicle was driven. Awards would be calculated later and presented at the Houston Auto Show in late January. Head count was greatly reduced and split into two separate days, never interfacing (though automakers would interface with all).

For us, there were several practicalities to conquer. Flights are quite limited these days, and the wrap-up schedule precluded any return that same evening, meaning another hotel night—three days of travel for one drive day, okay but a little illogical (and expensive). And the awards waiting till late January would mean a story now, but with no information on who won, then a March-April follow-up, by which time it would all be pretty old news.

It would also be old news for the manufacturers by late January, almost a third of a year after the event and crossing the new year threshold of an already delayed and compacted model year cycle. By then, many of the vehicles in this event may be replaced by newer models.

With new model introductions delayed this year by everything from factory and supplier closures to lack of auto show

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reveals and launch drives, not as many 2021 models would be available as normal.

One useful lane change arrived in the form of the Houston Auto Show being cancelled. Awards would now be announced on November 5—handy for us and surely more useful to the automakers.

The more we wrestled with airline schedules, fares and multiple airports (as well as seat maps for full-boat carriers), the more we thought about just driving (a big "just," 2500 miles with mysterious motel nights en route). And drive, we did (see following story).

Truck Rodeo evolution

All those variables aside (or in mind), the Texas Truck Rodeo itself has evolved over time, as many similar events have. Starting out as a pickup truck comparo more than 25 years ago, it soon also encompassed early body-on-frame SUVs. Evolving and multiplying, spawning crossovers, 4x performance coupe utilities and all the rest, SUVs and their derivatives were redefining the ever-shifting category, and with it the Truck Rodeo. By a couple of years ago, the Truck Rodeo had entries that were as much slightly-tall wagon or coupe as they were truck, by almost any definition. A few would even be confined to pavement only.

Since these are comparative events, a decision had been made to move such vehicles to spring's (largely track-based) Texas Auto Roundup, leaving Truck Rodeo with purely pickups and rugged SUVs. (We'd been a little concerned some might not "get the memo," realizing too late they should have entered those in the spring Roundup, possibly causing the planned correction at Rodeo to erode. Good news bad news, last spring's cancellation of Auto Roundup kept that scenario from materializing; now all is focused and on track long term.)

For Truck Rodeo, this change itself had thinned the herd, which played out well against this year's tighter timeframe and smaller headcount, anyway.

Operations and preparations

The manufacturers have not been doing events, neither their new vehicle launch events (although those are starting back up as of this writing), nor the media association comparos. In fact, like most of us, few have even been working in their offices.

Nonetheless, most have been continuing to provide vehicles for weekly drives and reviews by individual media people, as you see in our pages. To accomplish this, the indispensable fleet services—various operations that receive, schedule, prep and provide these weekly vehicles—have adopted complex sanitation and no-contact procedures to keep the ball rolling. Many of these are the same

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Category Winners



Compact SUV: Toyota RAV4 TRD Off-Road



Midsize Pickup: Jeep Gladiator Mojave



Midsize SUV: Hyundai Palisade



Full-size Pickup: Ram 1500 TRX



Full-size SUV: Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat



Heavy Duty Pickup: Ram 2500 HD



Luxury SUV: Land Rover Defender 110 SE



Luxury Pickup: Ram 1500 Limited Longhorn



Off-Road SUV: Jeep Wrangler Rubicon



Off-Road Pickup: Ram 1500 TRX

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event services operations that work on site at a comparo, prepping and cleaning dozens of vehicles not just once a week for review drives, but rather every minute, all day, so comparo vehicles put their best foot forward, plus are always ready for any photography or videography, all the more challenging at an off-road event. Add those layers of deep cleaning, sterilization and separation, and theirs would be a Herculean effort.

The cast of characters

Twenty-seven media members attended, sixteen on day one and eleven on day two—about half or less the total of a normal year, as intended.

There were 36 vehicles entered, by our count, 22 SUVs and 14 pickups. Japan was represented by 12 vehicles from five brands. The two Korean brands brought four vehicles. Europe offered a rich and eclectic mix of Alfa Romeo, Land Rover and Rolls-Royce. Domestically, FCA brought 17 vehicles (plus the Alfa). Ford and GM did not participate, despite their heavy involvement in 4x4 pickups and utilities and some key new models. Needless to say, this puts some spin on awards odds.

An early list stood at close to 50-50 for model year 2020 versus 2021, the state of things in this odd pandemic year. But by event time, as factories picked up the pace and more reveals were handled via online streams, the mix rolled forward considerably, to eleven 2020 and 25 2021 models.

Vehicles were divided into pickups and SUVs, each then into five categories by size, luxury and off-road. A few categories had either just one or dueling-cousins entrants in this unavoidably restricted year. Entrants and winners are as follows.

COMPACT SUV

2020 Honda CR-V Hybrid
2021 Hyundai Kona Limited
2021 Jeep Cherokee Latitude LUX 4x4
2021 Kia Seltos EX AWD
2020 Mazda CX-30
2021 Nissan Rogue
2021 Toyota RAV4 TRD Off-Road

WINNER: 2021 Toyota RAV4 TRD Off-Road

MIDSIZE SUV

2021 Hyundai Palisade Calligraphy
2020 Jeep Wrangler EcoDiesel
2020 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Sahara 4x4
2021 Kia Telluride SX AWD
2021 Mazda CX-9
2021 Toyota 4Runner Trail
2021 Toyota 4Runner TRD Pro

WINNER: 2021 Hyundai Palisade Calligraphy

FULL-SIZE SUV

2021 Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat

WINNER: 2021 Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat

OFF-ROAD SUV

2021 Jeep Wrangler

2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon

WINNER: 2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon

LUXURY SUV

2020 Alfa Romeo Stelvio

2021 Infiniti QX80 Premium Select 4WD

2021 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit 4x4

2020 Land Rover Defender 110 SE

2020 Rolls-Royce Cullinan

WINNER: 2020 Land Rover Defender 110 SE

MIDSIZE PICKUP TRUCK

2021 Jeep Gladiator High Altitude

2021 Jeep Gladiator Mojave

2021 Toyota Tacoma Trail

WINNER: 2021 Jeep Gladiator Mojave

FULL-SIZE PICKUP TRUCK

2021 Nissan Titan 5.6L Endur V8 PRO-4X 4x4 CC

2021 Ram 1500 TRX

2021 Toyota Tundra

WINNER: 2021 Ram 1500 TRX

HEAVY DUTY PICKUP TRUCK

2020 Ram 2500 HD Laramie Night Edition

2020 Ram 3500 HD Laramie Night Edition dually

2020 Ram 3500 HD Laramie Night Edition dually

WINNER: 2020 Ram 2500 HD Laramie Night Ed

OFF-ROAD PICKUP TRUCK

2021 Jeep Gladiator Mojave

2021 Jeep Gladiator Rubicon EcoDiesel

2020 Nissan Frontier PRO-4X 4X4

2021 Ram 1500 TRX

WINNER: 2021 Ram 1500 TRX

LUXURY TRUCK

2021 Ram 1500 Limited Longhorn 10th Anniv Ed

2021 Ram 1500 Southwest Edition

WINNER: Ram 1500 Lim Longhorn 10th Anniv Ed

The TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo is also long known for its annual Truck of Texas and now also SUV of Texas awards. These are separate votes, not an aggregate of category votes. As "Texas is trucks," this honor often generates everything from billboards nationwide to Super Bowl ads. Winners hold their 2021 titles until next year's Rodeo.

TITLE AWARD ★ 2021 TRUCK OF TEXAS
2021 Ram 1500

TITLE AWARD ★ 2021 SUV OF TEXAS
2021 Dodge Durango

"This year has brought a lot of challenges to the automotive industry," said TAWA President Kristin Shaw, "and we are grateful for the partnership of our journalist and OEM members to provide an opportunity to have access to vehicles, network, and create content that is vital to our livelihoods and shared passion." Tough job, well done. ■

Title Award Winners



2021 Truck Of Texas ★ Ram 1500



2021 SUV Of Texas ★ Dodge Durango

Contact sports

BY JOE SAGE

The importance of tires, providing those four tiny patches that connect your many tons of vehicle to a variety of pavements and conditions at high speed, can never be overstated. Michelin recently presented two new designs to us, not with drive time but via zoom conference, as with many vehicles over these months of pandemic lockdown.

We like to emphasize the difference between styling and design for vehicles, as so many people tend to refer to a new car or truck's sheet metal appearance as its design, when they mean styling.

Design is the more complex synthesis of engineering, materials, purpose, manufacturing process and, yes, styling. These two new entries by Michelin are both highly innovative, one obviously so at a glance, as its design leads to quite distinctive styling, the other less obvious till second glance, as you start to learn how its design combines elements of two highly desirable, yet generally divergent, fundamental tire categories—ultra-high performance and all-season.

Both are designed to tackle weather. And where-

as Arizona is famously dry, when it rains it pours, and half the state gets very wintry conditions. On top of all that, our readers love to get behind the wheel and go anywhere and everywhere.

Michelin CrossClimate®2

IN THEIR WORDS: Michelin's most advanced, versatile passenger tire in two decades stands alone in its category, a tire with a combination of performance and safety attributes that have never been seen in a passenger or crossover tire in North America, designed to bring unmatched year-round performance in unexpected weather conditions.

Competitors in the all-season tire category typically deliver one or two performance areas well, but have to make sacrifices in other areas that are important to drivers. The CrossClimate2 delivers them all—wet stopping, longevity, dry grip and snow performance. The CrossClimate2 has a distinct V-formation tread pattern, which works together with the tire's proprietary rubber compound to redefine the all-season category for more climate conditions than any competing product.

Michelin engineers knew they needed a tire that "grips to the last stop." In dry conditions, the CrossClimate2 stops up to 16 feet shorter (a car length or more) than four leading competitors. All tires begin to wear after their first drive, and not all offer outstanding stopping power as they wear. But in wet conditions, even when worn, the CrossClimate2 stopped shorter than leading competitive tires—up to 50 feet shorter from 50 mph.

Drivers in snowy climates benefit from the tire's "three-peak mountain snowflake rating" for up to 31 percent better snow traction when worn than four leading competitive all-season worn tires.

PIANO Noise Reduction Tuning to design a tread with blocks and angles that cancel out harmonic road noise and create ideal amplitude for the contact patch, creating a quieter ride.

Road tests show the CrossClimate2 delivers more than 15,000 miles longer wear than leading competitors—up to an additional year of use.

The CrossClimate2 will be available in 56 sizes, fitting 76 percent of top-selling cars and crossovers; 25 sizes are available today, with an additional 31 sizes available arriving in early 2021.

Michelin Pilot® Sport All-Season 4

Ultra-high performance (UHP) tires typically have considerable smooth surface without detailed tread blocks (full rubber-on-surface contact) with large water evacuation grooves. All-seasons have much more detail, with various combinations of tread blocks and sipes to add grip on successively

smaller scale, in conditions with successively more detailed grip challenges. What's new and significant about the Michelin Pilot Sport All-Season 4 is that it goes farther than other before, to combine the two.

IN THEIR WORDS: The Michelin Pilot Sport All-Season 4 is designed to provide year-round performance and ultimate control in any moment, any season. Michelin's previous all-season ultra-high-performance tire broke the performance barrier between summer tires and all-season tires. The latest generation improves on that performance with 4 percent better dry braking, 5 percent better wet braking and 10 percent more snow traction.

The tire's Asymmetric Tread Pattern has more rubber on the outer shoulder for lateral dry grip. Superior wet grip comes from a race-inspired tread compound engineered with maximum levels of silica to grip slick pavement. Large rain grooves evacuate water from under the tire to prevent hydroplaning, while full-depth and interlocking 360-Degree Variable Sipe Technology provides biting edges for improved traction in rain and snow.

The Michelin Pilot Sport All-Season 4 was developed with Dynamic Response Technology to ensure forces and temperatures are distributed evenly for a longer tread wear life—up to 29 percent longer than leading competitors.

Michelin's previous-gen Pilot Sport All-Season proved all-season and ultra-high performance capabilities were possible in the same tire. In a testament to the new generation's ability to provide supercar-worthy performance, Chevrolet has made it the first all-season original equipment tire on the new Corvette C8, proven both on and off the track. The tire has a Z speed rating and fits high-performance vehicles, including Alfa Romeo Giulia; Audi Q7, A8 and S4; BMW X5; Chevrolet Corvette C8; Lexus IS; Mercedes GLC and AMG C Class; Range Rover Sport; Volvo XC90 and XC60; and VW GTI.

Michelin Pilot Sport All-Season 4 will be available in 105 sizes, with 31 new SKUs to include larger rim sizes for more coverage of the SUV/ CUV market, with 59 sizes now available and an additional 46 sizes available in July 2021.

Potential road test

Coming up, we'll be driving the new Corvette C8 2LT with the Z51 package for a week. Will it have a set of Michelin Pilot® Sport All Season 4 tires? Or something else? They can come more than one way, and early materials do not reveal this. We've always liked UHP performance tires in Southern Arizona, but would traditionally be hesitant to take them up into snow country, on a low slung performance car all the more so. Watch for an update on this in the near future. ■

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Michelin CrossClimate®2

Michelin Pilot® Sport All-Season 4



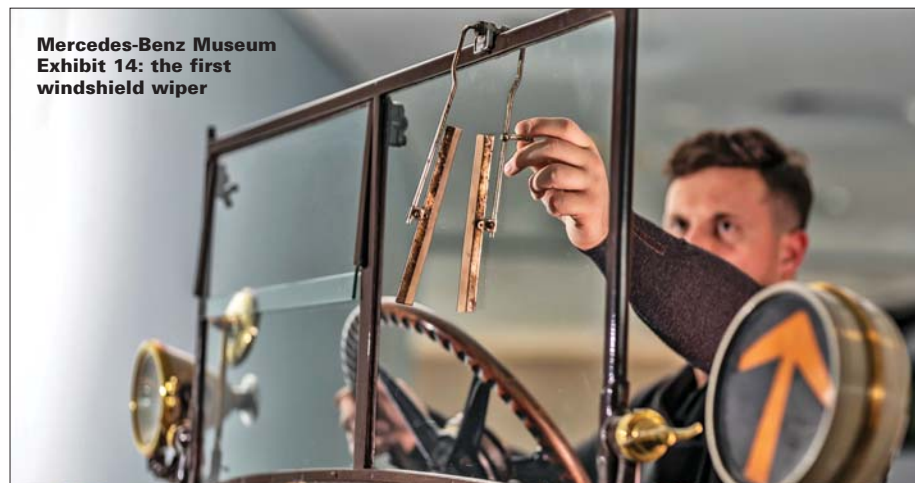


Ford Mustang Mach-E sound project

▼ The “sci-fi” acoustics of the new all-electric **Ford Mustang Mach-E** have inspired Detroit-based electronic music artist Matthew Dear to transform its sound into song. Inspired by classic ’80s sci-fi cinema, Ford sound designers had worked with Ozone Sound studio to craft electronic oscillations that emanate inside and outside the Mustang Mach-E while in motion. That piqued the interest of Dear, a founding member of world-renowned electronic music label Ghostly International, who used the synth-heavy sounds to create “New Breed,” a hypnotic electronic arrangement distinctly based on Mustang Mach-E. “The idea of remixing the sounds from the Mustang Mach-E was immediately interesting because I’ve always considered myself to be a ‘sound tinkerer,’” said Dear. “But after I got to actually hear and experience the digital propulsion sounds that Ford created, I was sold on the project. The sounds are cooler than I thought they’d be—cinematic and sci-fi—and all the noises the car makes have a sense of modern musicality. Creating ‘New Breed’ was a new experience and I think the song—like the car—takes its passengers on a voyage.” Since its debut, Mustang has been synonymous with music, inspiring songs throughout the latter half of the 20th century. With “New Breed,” Mustang Mach-E ignites a new generation of Mustang in music. DJ, dance music producer and experimental pop auteur Matthew Dear—who also maintains separate musical aliases Audion, False and Jabberjaw—

has collaborated with artists such as Tegan and Sara, and his remixes have been commissioned by the likes of The XX, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Spoon, Hot Chip, The Postal Service and The Chemical Brothers. Dear’s “New Breed” is streaming on Apple Music, Spotify, Deezer, YouTube or wherever you listen to music.

▼ There are 160 vehicles and 1,500 exhibits in the varied permanent exhibition



Mercedes-Benz Museum Exhibit 14: the first windshield wiper

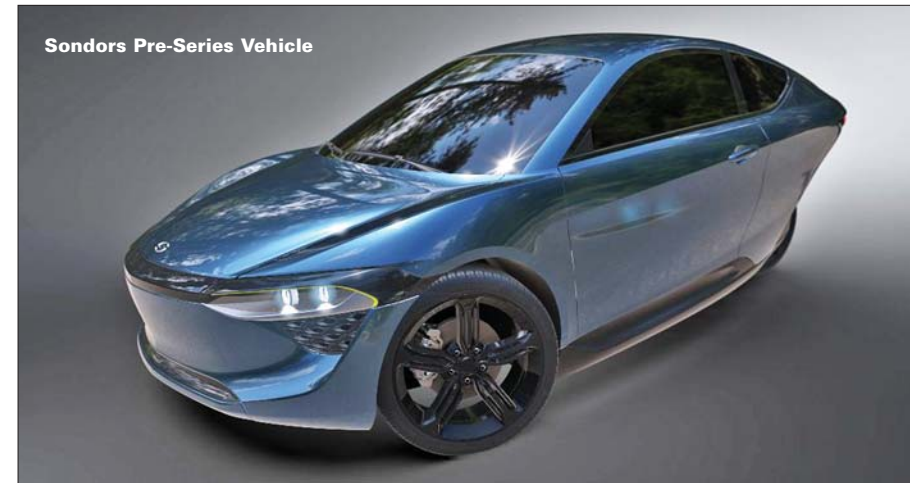
of the **Mercedes-Benz** Museum in Stuttgart, Germany. A particular highlight are the “33 Extras,” which bring the history of personal mobility and motoring culture to life using often surprising details—such as Exhibit 14, the first windshield wiper. Invented by American Mary Anderson during the Brass Era, it followed the introduction of the windshield, which itself had quickly revealed that raindrops cloud the

driver’s view. In November 1903, Anderson received US Patent No. 743.801A for her “window cleaning device.” The first windshield wiper had revolving wooden arms with rubber lips attached, triggered by a lever within the driver’s reach that pulled a spring which, when tensioned, allowed the wiper to glide across the glass pane. Anderson got the idea during a journey by tram through New York in winter. She noticed that snow on the glass prevented a direct view of the road for the driver, who had to lift up part of the pane for a clear view, letting cold and wind into the tram. Her wiper would be the solution to this problem. But she was premature—not a single vehicle manufacturer included the wiper in series vehicles. It was not until her patent protection expired that it gained acceptance, from the 1920s onwards. Over the decades, the windshield wiper has repeatedly received improvements—electric power, improved designs for higher driving speeds, electronics and sensors to control the wiping, rubber lips that no longer freeze, heated wiper fluid aimed ever more accurately—

with many coming from Mercedes-Benz. The retractable wiper for better pedestrian protection was revolutionary when invented by safety engineer Béla Barényi in 1951. In 1970, research vehicle C 111-II was the first to be given a single-arm wiper, significantly modified and used in 1982 as standard equipment in the “Baby-Benz” (model series W 201) with sophisticated kinematics bringing the arm into

the upper corners for a very large wiper area. Good vision also extends to lights, now also bearing washers and wipers.

▼ A **Sondors** Pre-Series Vehicle is now



Sondors Pre-Series Vehicle

officially in development—and it turns out it had been for quite some time. Before announcing the big news this fall, the company says they wanted to ensure they had something substantial to share, such as design progress visuals and key features. Italian masters Torino Design—who have worked with major brands such as BMW, Fiat, Suzuki and more—have been hard at work penning an updated exterior as well as an all-new interior for the next generation effort, building on what they learned from their first prototype. Their mission is to provide simple, affordable and reliable transportation “that oozes the kind of style and sophistication usually reserved for the one percent.” Key features of the new Sondors Pre-Series Vehicle include all-wheel hub-motor drive for stability and control in any condition, on any surface; a flat, floor-mounted battery, freeing up interior space and allowing for a “frunk” storage area up front; a user interface integrated with the driver’s existing phone for simple control and ease of car sharing; UV sterilization of the interior via an automated system that prepares and disinfects the vehicle when it is not occupied; and improved ergonomics for passenger entry and exit, as well as better road visibility. Expect more updates.

▼ Jason Statham has been voted the celebrity who most people would like to deliver their new car to their home in a new poll by **Motorpoint**, a leading independent car retailer in the UK, with

branches throughout England, Scotland and Wales, carried out on its website—motorpoint.co.uk—to coincide with a national “Your Car, Your Way” campaign, a key element of which is the company’s

free home delivery service. Since introducing the service during lockdown, Motorpoint has delivered thousands of low mileage, nearly new cars to every part of the UK mainland. To date, Motorpoint staff have driven some 83,000 miles, the equivalent of three times round the world, in order to bring customers’ cars and light commercial vehicles to their doors.

▼ **Aston Martin** has revealed the AMR-



Aston Martin AMR-C01 Racing Simulator

C01 Racing Simulator—the first product to be borne of a new partnership between Aston Martin and British technology company, Curv Racing Simulators—a luxury home simulator for drivers who want to compete in the virtual or the real world, the first of its kind to be offered by the British marque. Designed by Aston Martin and engineered by Curv, the AMR-C01 has a lightweight carbon fiber monocoque

and utilizes the latest technology to provide a fully immersive driving experience for the home user. The seating position mirrors that of the Aston Martin Valkyrie, adding a futuristic hypercar feel to the simulator. Hand-assembled by Curv Racing Simulators using the highest quality components and latest Assetto Corsa software, AMR-C01 is ready to transport its users into the thrilling virtual racing world. A stylish addition to any luxury games room, thanks to the work of the Aston Martin Design team based at the company’s Gaydon (UK) Headquarters, the AMR-C01 is crafted in carbon fibre, with the front of the sim’s bodywork shaped to evoke the signature Aston Martin Racing grille. The all-carbon fiber monocoque adds to the sporting look of the simulator and also provides a rigid structure. Esports racing has enjoyed exponential growth while the world’s racing calendars were put on hold in 2020 and continues to thrive as real-life racing resumes. The AMR-C01 is the perfect choice for those who enjoy the virtual world of competitive Esports and also for dedicated racing drivers who want to hone their skills before their next race. Curv Racing Simulators is led by Aston Martin works driver Darren Turner, a simulator specialist with over 20 years’ experience in cutting edge Formula 1 simulation.

“We modelled the driving position on the Aston Martin Valkyrie so users of AMR-C01 can get the full hypercar experience,” says Turner. Limited to just 150 examples, the simulator has a base recommended retail price of £57,500 (about \$75,000) plus tax. First deliveries are on schedule for Q4 2020. For further information, visit www.curvrs.com. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

Arizona Auction Week 2021



Global YouTube sensation Sarah-n-Tuned of Tucson



Specialty and personalized plates primer



K1 Speed indoor kart racing



Chevrolet Corvette Stingray Coupe (C8) 2LT w Z51



Mercedes-AMG GLE 53 Coupe



Michelin Pilot Sport All Season 4 extended drive



Big Willy Jeep mutant project



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