



MITSUBISHI DIAMANTE LS

Power comes from a new 290hp 4.0L 32-valve V-8 -- the first production V-8 for this company -- and launches XK8 to 60 mph in under seven seconds; ably assisted by a 5-speed automatic transmission and four-wheel independent suspension.

PORSCHE

Porsche doesn't miss a beat with the new BOXSTER; the company's new BMW Z3 and M-B SLK fighter. It will be priced about \$40,000; possesses a superior performance level -- at least on paper, thanks to a 201hp opposed 2.5L six-cylinder placed in the car's mid-section.

SAAB

The Saab 900, the company's staple product, goes into '97 with few changes to its sedan, coupe and convertible models. For power, you can choose between a 150hp 2.4L four; a 185hp turbocharged 2.0L four or a 170hp 2.5L V-6. In our view, the convertible with the turbo-four is the hot ticket for 'catchin' rays' while they last in the four-season regions.....9000 sedan only gets color changes, but gives you three great engine options to be had in CS, CSE and AERO models. Base motor is a 170hp 2.3L turbo-four with an optional 200/225hp version. The standard 210hp 3.0 V-6 for Aero is an option for CSE.

VOLKSWAGEN

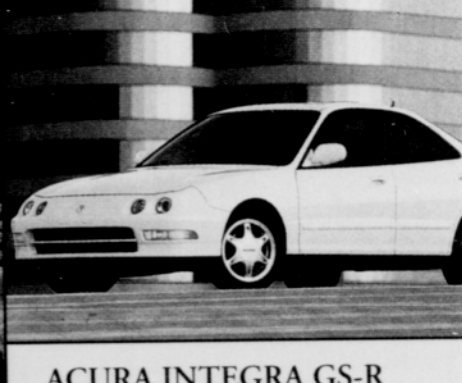
VW has come back strongly with a wide array of pleasing products, most notably "the PASSAT sedan and wagon." Whether ordered with the highly responsive 172hp 2.8L VR-6 or the incredibly fuel efficient (about 41mpg hwy) 1.9L turbo-diesel, this is a great package. If utility, economy and affordability are desirable traits for you, then GOLF works very well in these areas. For about \$14,000, you can get a five-passenger hatchback that gets a whopping 50 mpg around town when equipped with the 90hp 2.0L turbo-diesel. Standard engine is a gas powered 115hp 2.0L four.



TOYOTA CAMRY XLE V-6



INFINITI Q45



ACURA INTEGRA GS-R SPORTS SEDAN

THE ASIANS

MITSUBISHI

For 1997, the company's all-new DIAMANTE flagship sedan, features a larger V6 engine (3.5L vs 3.0L) with more power (210hp vs 200hp) than last year. Aerodynamically refined, it offers a competitive array of creature-pleasing features....Also new is MIRAGE, a snappy sub-compact that doesn't look like one in the traditional sense. Both sedan and coupe benefit from increased interior spaciousness, are a bit wider, and the sedan is taller than the '96. Power comes from a 92hp 1.5L four (DE model and a 111hp 1.8L four (LS sedan and coupe). Choose between a standard 5-spd manual transmission or an optional 4-spd automatic that actually "learns" then adapts to your driving technique, be it sedate or sporty.

TOYOTA

The popularity of Toyota products among African-American car buyers is the envy of the domestics; although GM, Ford and Chrysler seem relentless in their efforts to wrestle back market share. Toyota's most popular car in the U.S., the CAMRY sedan, is all new for '97 and gets a more Lexus-like appearance. The wheelbase is longer, it is only offered as a four-door

and its two engines, a standard 2.2L four and optional (std. on XLE model) 3.0L V-6 have their power bumped up to 133hp and 144hp respectively.....Flagship AVALON gets a freshened appearance and a power increase for its 3.0L V-6 from 192 to 200hp.

LEXUS

The news for '97 is a redesigned and refined ES300 sedan -- just in time to counter a threat from Cadillac Catera -- that is longer, roomier and more powerful. Wheelbase has been extended by two inches and horsepower from its 3.0L V-6 has increased from 188 to 200; There's even a semi-active suspension system that can near-instantaneously adjust its shock settings in response to changing road surface.....the flagship LS400 is the first Lexus to receive side airbags, but follows Volvo's leadership in terms of installing them in the seat rather than the door; which ensures that a deploying airbag will always be in the proper position, regardless of how the car's body structure deforms in a crash.

NISSAN

Other than some exterior freshenings, not much changes with the '97 Nissans. MAXIMA continues to wow us with its standard, silky smooth and powerful (190hp) 3.0L V-6. For the ultimate sporting rush, order up the SE with the 5-spd

'97 VEHICLES

LETTERS E-MAIL

Loved the latest edition of the magazine! Not being a car buff or a mechanical engineer, it contained a lot of information in language that I could understand and appreciate as a female car buyer and it was ever so entertaining to read.

I am definitely not a (car) magazine reader and have found such publications boring and much too technical for my level of interest.

I also found your general format most appealing. Your articles on our participation in the development of the automobile and in motorsports have been greatly enlightening.

I look forward to those kinds of features in every edition. Since we buy cars all the time and usually get the short end of many car deals -- because we don't stop and learn about the business, i.e. leases and financing, etc. -- your magazine is providing much needed education.

I'm trying to decide whether I want a Mercedes-Benz E50, since I'm really a sports car person, or if I should be more practical and get the E300 Diesel. But, since I'll need a few more dollars and the E50 won't be available stateside for a while, I still have some time to think about it.

Finally, the article "Waiting to Accelerate" was too precious. Can't wait for your next issue!

Congratulations on an excellent publication.

*Khadijah Pope
College Park, MD*

Your Summer '96 issue was given to me by my mother after she returned from a festival in Los Angeles. I think that this is a great publication. I wish you growth and much success.

*Marty Evans
E-Racing
Los Angeles, CA*

I am impressed with your publication and enjoy reading it. I especially appreciate learning about the benefits of leasing.

I operate a car wash in downtown Baltimore and would like to suggest an article on the benefits of car washes. This is not a plug!

Newer cars are far more susceptible to road dust, acid rain damage, bird droppings etc. than those of yesteryear. And damage to clear coats, while easy to inflict, is hard to

undo. In addition, regular washing and waxing have substantial benefits besides just making a car look better.

*Tony de Lange
WashWorks
Baltimore, MD*



BLACKS IN MOTORSPORTS

I wish to commend you for exposing motorsports as one of the most racially biased sports in the world. It is truly appalling that as we enter the 21st century, we still have no active African-American participation in motorsports' most elite forms.

I feel very strongly that the summer edition of *African Americans On Wheels*, which featured the article on blacks in motorsports, will help educate and stimulate corporate America to design programs specifically to cater to both ethnic motorsports fans and participants alike.

Kudos to your staff for a job well done!
*Chris Miles
Starting Grid, Inc.
Kissimmee, FL*

I am an Offroad race driver -- one of the most exciting sports in autoracing and will be graduating soon to the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series. So, I was happy and very proud after I received a recent copy of your magazine, to see that someone is finally giving us some much deserved recognition.

My company, NightHawk Racing, believes that we can make a positive difference in the Series and will in fact, be the first African-American team to compete in it. We are on a mission to be successful in this venture and provide our sponsors with maximum exposure.

Being the "Jackie Robinson of Offroad Racing," you can imagine the dragons I must battle as I compete. So, please continue to give us as much media attention as possible.

In closing, two friends of mine Willy T. Ribbs and C. J. Patterson (auto racer) were

on your last cover.
As for me, I hope to advance the baton first carried in the sport by Wendell Scott, by competing in the NASCAR for the first time and thus make a way for others to follow.

*Felix Giles
"NightHawk"
Anaheim, CA*

I must say, this is the first time in all of my 44 years that I've ever seen any interest in printing anything about blacks in motorsports. I don't know about you guys, but I have been a loner in this sport (both as a driver and a spectator) all of my life!!!

I am a genuine car nut and have always been one. I raced Mazda cars professionally for 10 years before I quit, and I must say, if it hadn't been for white people backing me and supporting me, I wouldn't have been able to do so.

The only black people who supported my efforts were my relatives and only a few of them at that! None of my crew was black (my wife excepted). And even in races in the South (Road Atlanta, Daytona) my crew was devoted to protecting me from the good old boys (this wasn't necessary, because the latter help me more than others and were glad to see me).

Even now, some of my best friends are my racing buddies. I still race at amateur events and serve as a volunteer driving instructor for some car clubs now and then. However, when I am around my brothers and I voice the fact that I like motorsports and not physical sports, I get labeled a weirdo.

I know we weren't in the Indy car series or F1 or NASCAR, but we always finished in the top five --- we finished third twice and were consistently the highest finishing non-factory team (I know how Mr. Ribbs feels).

In conclusion, if you are looking for African Americans to support motorsports the way other nationalities do, don't expect it in this millennium!!!

Bill Spencer a.k.a. WldWly

I read about your publication in *USA TODAY*. I also read a *New York Times* story recently relating to the surge in black vehicle purchasing over the past year, especially of cars and trucks.

Congratulations on carving a solid publishing niche.

*Trish Whitcomb
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