

# Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

## The New King of the Jungle

BY KATHLEEN CARR

Jaguar is trying to get nine lives out of its XJ series of large luxury sedans, stretching it to what it considers to be five different models, led by the high-performance version, the Jaguar XJR.

The XJR is a fascinating blend of timeless sophistication and modern technology. It gives the gracefully aging sedan spunk without destroying its core attributes.

The sporty XJR continues to stand out for its deft balance of comfort and high performance.

The XJR's 400-hp, supercharged, 4.2-liter V8 and sport-tuned suspension are the key differences between it and the non-supercharged XJ8.

Because of its sporting intentions, the Jaguar XJR comes only in the regular wheelbase. The five seconds it takes to get from standstill to 60mph is impressive. At 60 mph the XJR is just stretching its legs—0-100 mph takes around 12.5 seconds with a top-end of 150 mph. But what's really good is the terrific 6-speed ZF autobox that makes it all feel so effortless. Because the con-

stant-mesh supercharger is less fickle than a turbo, there is no sudden rush of performance: the acceleration is constant and mightily impressive.

Flick the delightfully stubby chrome-and-leather 'J-gate' selector lever across into manual mode and push the S for Sport button—we drove like this for ninety per cent of our road test and it was great fun.

Inside the handsome wood- and leather-trimmed cabin, power sport seats with perforated leather inserts are specially designed to hold the driver and front passenger firmly in place during aggressive cornering maneuvers. All seats, front and rear, plus the steering wheel are heated.

The Jaguar XJR also has radar-based adaptive cruise control that maintains both a set speed, and distance from traffic ahead; navigation; and a high-powered audio system. The few options include satellite radio and a rear-seat DVD entertainment system. These systems are very user-friendly; they would even make my grandma look



## 2007 Jaguar XJR Supercharged

Specifications: 4.2-Liter 400-hp @ 408 lb-ft torque V-8 Supercharged Intercooled Engine; 6-speed Automatic Transmission; 17-City 24-Highway MPG; \$82,850. MSRP

like she knew what she was doing.

Sitting still, there is not much to distinguish the XJR from other models in the XJ line besides bigger wheels and the body-color area surrounding the front mesh grille. Such tasteful understatement

avoids tacky exterior add-ons like scoops and spoilers that sometimes plague high-performance versions of other luxury sedans. The extensive use of aluminum in the XJR's construction, cuts weight and helps structural rigidity.

But don't think that such a light car might fall short on safety aspects. Not at all—your safety is as thoroughly taken care of as your comfort. Front-seat passengers have two airbags each and all occupants are protected by

side curtain airbags. Actively the XJR has a full complement of the latest electronic traction, stability and braking aids. In stop/start traffic the powerful brakes can be a touch 'stabby' but you quickly get used to them. Needless to say—and especially at higher speeds—once the brakes bite retardation is immediate, scrubbing off speed completely without any fuss. Try a full emergency stop from 40mph and the XJR pulls up four-square in what seems an impossibly short distance. I do mean an immediate response!

Overall the XJR is as sophisticated and smoothly capable as you could wish for and more. And while it is blatantly a Jaguar, under its subtle aluminum hood beats the heart of a lion. In the final analysis, drivers buy cars like the XJR as much for its four-door functionality and ride and refinement as they do for the massively usable supercharged performance. Add to that a fine transmission mated to an eager engine and a refreshed reputation for quality and durability and it's easy to see why the 2007 Jaguar XJR Supercharged is very quickly-5.0 seconds quick—the new "king of the jungle".

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## SPORTS

### Pro Soccer at PGE Park Homecoming for local star player

The U.S. Women's Soccer National Team will face Mexico at PGE Park on Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. following this month's 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup in China.

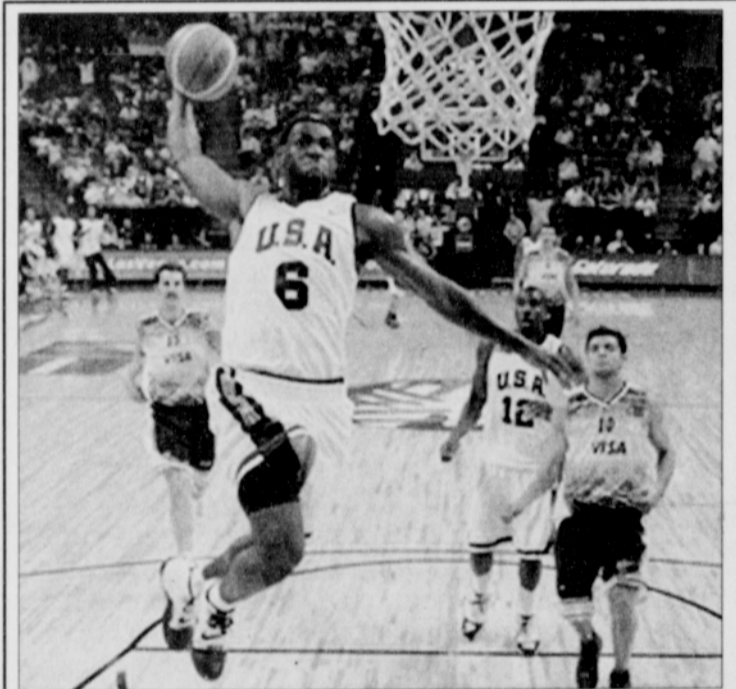
The last appearance for the U.S. in Portland was a 7-0 victory against Ukraine in 2005 at the University of Portland's Merlo Field that featured the 100th career goal from Portland legend Tiffany Milbrett.

The Portland game will be a homecoming of sorts for U.S. defender Stephanie Lopez, the youngest player on the roster. At the Univer-

sity of Portland, she helped the Pilots win the NCAA title in 2005. She will return to the Pilots after the game to finish out her senior year.

The U.S. is unbeaten since head coach Greg Ryan took over the team in March of 2005 with a 38-0-7 record, the only blemish coming when the U.S. fell in penalty kicks to Germany in the 2006 Algarve Cup final.

Tickets starting at \$20 are on sale to the general public through ussoccer.com, by phone at 503-224-4400 and at Portland-area Ticketmaster centers.



### Olympic Qualifier Record

LeBron James goes up for a dunk Sunday against Argentina during the FIBA Americas game in Las Vegas where he scored 31 points, the most by an American player in an Olympic qualifier, and the U.S. team capped its dominance by beating Argentina 118-81 to win the championship.

### Schools Kick Off Football

Prep football will begin in full this Friday, Sept. 7 with the Generals taking on Beaverton at Grant High School at 4:30 p.m.

Fans of high-school sports could then make their way to nearby match ups hosted by the Democrats, Rough Riders and Quakers. Glencoe plays at Jefferson 7 p.m., Corvallis plays at Roosevelt 7:30 p.m. and Gresham

plays at Franklin 7 p.m.

Other 7 p.m. games involving Portland teams that day include Benson at Oregon City, Cleveland at Woodburn, West Linn at Wilson, Lincoln at Tigard, Madison at The Dalles and Marshall at Liberty High School in Hillsboro.

Tickets are available at the gates for \$6, \$2 for students.

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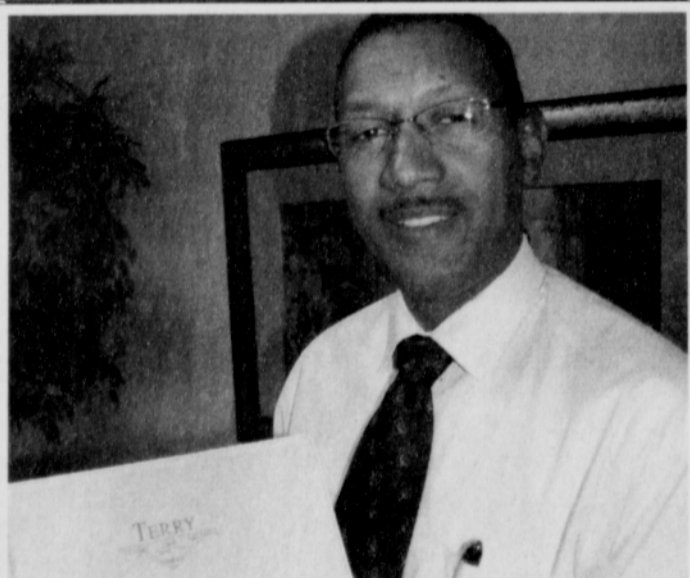
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### Racquet Center Reopens

The St. Johns Racquet Center at 7519 N. Burlington reopened for the season, now featuring three indoor tennis courts, the only two public racquetball courts in Portland and a small fitness room.

The small fitness center has been updated with free weights, an incline bench, a television and mats. Use of the fitness center is \$2 per day or \$20 for a monthly pass.

Tennis court fees are \$24 for a 75-minute period, and racquetball court fees are \$12 an hour, but monthly passes are also available that reduce these rates considerably.

Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and weekends, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., court reservations and more information are available by calling 503-823-3629 or visiting pdx10s.com.

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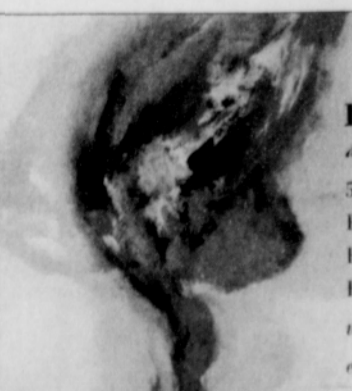
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