

# Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

## 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4 Primal Instinct

BY KATHLEEN CARR

The basic recipe has been a Chrysler cookbook favorite through several management regimes, foreign and domestic. It goes like this: Take one small basic-transportation appliance. Add boost. Cook to taste. Presto!

The folks at Chrysler's Street and Racing Technology (SRT) organization must love what they do because it shows in every one of their creations. Every SRT vehicle like the all-new 285-horsepower 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4, showcases five key attributes; exterior styling that resonates with brand image, race-inspired interior characteristics, benchmark braking and standout powertrain.

The 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4 unquestionably delivers in all five areas. This isn't merely a gussied-up, more powerful Caliber. It is obviously so much more than that.

A key ingredient in SRT's performance recipe is benchmark braking. Up front the SRT4 features 340 by 28 millimeter vented rotors with 57 millimeter twin-piston aluminum calipers. In the rear, the rotors measure 302 by 10 millimeter and the calipers feature a single 35 millimeter piston. All calipers are painted



Specifications: 2.4-liter, 4-cylinder, 16-valve, 285-hp@265 lb-ft torque, I-4 Turbo World Engine; 6-Speed Manual Transmission; 21-City 26-Highway MPG; \$24,360. MSRP

in signature Dodge SRT red and display nicely behind the alloy wheels.

Under the hood is where the real fun begins. The 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4 is powered by a 2.4-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine that produces a whopping 285-horsepower and 265 pound-feet torque. Its 0-60 mph time is just 5.9 seconds, and it tops out at 155 mph. You really need a racetrack to fully appreciate and enjoy the power of this pocket rockets American-made

signature Dodge SRT red and display nicely behind the alloy wheels.

street racing performance. Estimated fuel economy isn't bad for such a high-performance model, at 21-city and 26-highway mpg.

The 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4 has the heart and power of a V-8 except that it's a four-cylinder. That muscle is sent to the front wheels through a slick-shifting Getrag six-speed manual transaxle.

Steering is extremely quick, but rather heavy. The firm, high-performance suspension provides confident handling but causes a jumpy

ride on broken or wavy pavement. The SRT4 has definite torque steer when accelerating hard, but it's held down by the brake differential, lowered ride height, and equal-length halfshafts delivering power to the front wheels.

I also like the lower, hunkered down look. The suspension has been dropped in the front and rear. The athletic appearance is further accented by 19-inch alloy wheels wrapped in Goodyear performance tires.

The aggressively-styled hood incorporates a functional scoop that brings cooling air into the engine compartment and a pair of extractors that exhaust hot air.

The muscular-toned front fascia is unique; it needed to be modified to accommodate the turbocharged engine's intercooler. Also, the fascia includes ducts to direct air to cool the brakes.

The rear fascia continues the muscular theme and it's accented by a single, 4-inch exhaust tip that

exits from the right side. The rear spoiler, which is nearly 60 percent larger than that on the standard Dodge Caliber, is tuned for smoother air flow and increased downforce.

Unique SRT touches include sport seating with aggressive bolstering and performance fabric inserts to hold occupants during spirited driving, and a leather-wrapped steering wheel. Curtain side air bags are standard, but front side air bags are optional. Other options include navigation system and polished wheels.

Audiophiles will appreciate the available Kicker high-performance audio system with 13 speakers in seven locations, powered by a 322-watt amplifier and 200-watt subwoofer. After all when you are blazing down the road - you gotta have your tunes.

The 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4 is a high-performance hatchback designed for the high-performance lifestyles of today's families. The Caliber SRT4 has a large cargo area, especially with the rear seatbacks flipped forward, and it has a wide opening for easy access.

The all-new 2008 Dodge Caliber SRT4 is a winning recipe by the STR team with a primal instinct to hit the road hard and fast. Enthusiasts are sure to like the aggressive look and feel of the Caliber SRT4; coupled with a sticker price just under \$25K it is definitely a more-bang-for-the-buck bargain!

## Concordia University Builds Community Ties

continued from Metro

community events (e.g. Mayor Tom Potter Neighborhood Summit, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Community Lecture, Sam Johnson Scholarship Banquet); and community use of facilities (e.g. NAACP, Oregon Food Bank, Metropolitan Alliance for the Common Good, Young Leaders of Color).

"Concordia University is committed to working as a partner with the community to strengthen north and northeast Portland," said President Chuck Schlimpert. "Our outreach efforts, like this award, are grounded in Concordia's mission to prepare leaders for the transformation of society. Concordia's location, at a crossroads of communi-

ties where affluence and poverty intersect, enriches our opportunities to provide service to the community and service learning opportunities to our students."

Since 2000, enrollment at Concordia has grown over 60 percent with over 1,600 students starting classes this past fall. Over 50 percent of Concordia students are the first from their family to attend college and nearly 90 percent receive financial aid.

Concordia students represent a diversity of experiences and ethnicities; approximately 20 percent of Concordia's undergraduate students come from ethnically diverse backgrounds, among the highest percentage of any private or public university in Oregon.

The Jefferson Scholar Award is one of a number of scholarships that Concordia has established over the past several years to encourage students from the north and northeast Portland communities to attend Concordia.

Starting this past fall, through the Oregon Community Foundation, Concordia began awarding three four-year full-ride scholarships to a student from the SEI program. One award was given in fall '07; one will be awarded to a student entering in fall '08 and another entering in fall '09.

Through the OCF, Concordia also awarded \$30,000 in scholarships this past fall to five students in the nursing program. Another scholarship was established by the

Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund for a student from the local community to attend Concordia for four years and covers the full cost of attending the University; this scholarship will be awarded to one student every four years.

Finally, when President Sirleaf of Liberia visited campus last spring, Concordia created a scholarship for a Liberian student to study at the university.

Jefferson seniors who are interested in the award must meet Concordia's admissions standards. Students interested in applying for admission and the scholarship should contact Celeste Krueger in the Office of Admission at 503-493-6218 or ckrueger@cu-portland.edu.

## In Loving Memory

### Donnell "Larry" Barnum

Donnell "Larry" Barnum left this earth to cross over to Heaven on Jan. 26, 2008. He was born Sept. 7, 1983.

His family and friends are accepting contributions to pay for his memorial service. If you can make a donation of any amount, please take them to his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Mason at 5266 N.E. Rodney.

If you have questions, call Ms. Sharon Maxwell-Hendricks at 971-506-2815.



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