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WHEELS

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CHINA MARKET SLOWDOWN

Carmakers may curb expansion: General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and other automakers may have to scale back or delay expansion in China as measures to cool the economy curb demand for new vehicles, accounting firm KPMG International said in a report. General Motors and Ford, along with Toyota Motor Corp., are among those that have announced plans to increase production in China in the next few years. That's raised concerns about future overcapacity, said Thomas Stanley, a KPMG director, at a news conference in Hong Kong this week. China's auto sales have been growing at a slower pace this year after the government restricted lending for cars and as customers hold off purchases in anticipation of automakers offering bigger discounts.

NEW BOSS AT CADILLAC

Taylor ready to stay the course: Jim Taylor faces an unusual dilemma as the new boss of Cadillac -- planning a rousing encore just as he is taking center stage. He has spent the past two years in a supporting role in Cadillac's comeback story by overseeing the birth of General Motors' Sigma vehicle architecture, the foundation for Cadillac's CTS and CTS-V passenger sport sedans and SRX luxury SUV. The 1990s marked a nadir in Cadillac sales. The division's customers were aging and younger luxury buyers snapped up cars from Lexus, BMW and Mercedes. Cadillac had no choice but to take a different and daring tack to stand out. Last year, Cadillac sold 216,090 vehicles, its best year since 1990. Sales are up so far this year. Taylor is not eager to stray from what works.

INSIDE THIS SECTION

Stylish pop/jazz sensation Norah Jones brings her latest tour to KeyArena next week. Go behind the scenes in What's Happening.



Jeep's 'idiot' light is a stupid idea

TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

CAR TALK



Dear Tom and Ray: We recently bought a secondhand 2000 Jeep Wrangler with a manual transmission and four-cylinder engine. The Jeep has an "upshift" idiot light that tells you when to shift into the next gear. There is no guide about when to shift in the owner's manual. If I "follow the light," it feels as if I'm shifting much too early and lugging the engine. So I just shift when it feels right (which tends to be at 2,700-3,000 rpm). Should I follow the light, or should I ignore it? — Brit

Ray: This is a perfect application for the Car Talk "black tape" solution, Brit.

Tom: Take some black electrical tape and slap a piece over the upshift light.

Ray: And then shift when it feels right. For a novice, the light might be helpful. But really, the light is only there to encourage you to get maximum gas mileage. And there's nothing wrong with that. But it encourages you to shift at the very early end of the range. And at that end of the range, there is a danger of lugging the engine, which isn't good for it.

Tom: So instead of getting 18 miles per gallon, you'll get 17. But you won't have that stupid light driving you bonkers for the next 100,000 miles. A great trade-off, in my opinion.

Ray: On the other hand, for those of you out there who don't know how to drive a stick shift at all, you might want to use the light as signal that it's now "safe" to shift into the next gear.

Tom: Or, better yet, you might want to just buy an automatic.

Dear Tom and Ray: After listening to your radio show and reading your column for years, I have come to the conclusion that you must be two of the greatest auto experts alive. Since you can solve other people's problems without even looking at their cars, your own cars must always be in tiptop condition. I am also sure that they never break down, because you fix the problems as soon as they occur — perhaps sometimes even before they happen. Would you, therefore, mind telling me which cars you drive yourself? Because I am absolutely positive that they must be the most well-engineered, reliable, comfortable, fuel-efficient and cost-effective cars one can buy, and I would like to get one myself. — Dave

Ray: Do I detect a hint of sarcasm, Dave?

Tom: Oh, no!

Ray: Well, since you asked, Dave, I currently drive a 1997 Honda Odyssey, which was one of the "small" Odysseys, before Honda turned it into a full-blown minivan.

Tom: I used to drive a 1953 MGTD, which met every one of your criteria, except for well-engineered, reliable, comfortable, fuel-efficient and cost-effective. But I parked it at my brother-in-law's last year, and now I take the bus or green-line train everywhere. And both of those do meet every one of your criteria, Dave. And, of particular importance to me, I never have to work on either of them on the weekends!

Write to Car Talk, c/o the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, P.O. Box 1909, Seattle, 98111. "Car Talk" is heard at 9 a.m. Saturdays on KUOW radio, 94.9 FM, and at 10 a.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays on KPLU radio, 88.5 FM. The "Car Talk" Web site is www.cartalk.com

KIRKLAND CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

A stunning display of auto history

Duesenbergs, Mercedeses and Jaguars make show a success

BY EVAN McMULLEN
Special to the P-I

The storm was no Hurricane Ivan, but the organizers of this year's Kirkland Concours d'Elegance still had a weather-related decision to make.

Because they had more than \$100 million worth of automotive history in their care, the deliberations were brief: As the first raindrops dappled Carillon Point, the breathtaking array of vehicles wheeled quickly and quietly indoors.

Inside or out, the display earlier this month was probably the most impressive in Pacific Northwest car-show history — amazing, considering this was only the second year of this event.

Sponsored by the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce and Phil Smart Mercedes-Benz and staged by event Chairman Tom Armstrong and Woodmark Hotel General Manager Marc Nowak, the Kirkland Concours has risen quickly to the top of the Northwest's increasingly rich automotive events calendar, establishing a reputation as the Northwest's answer to the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance.

The event is attracting entries from some of the world's most well-known classic-car people — including Seattle's "Monterey Mob," a congregation of judges, collectors and exhibitors who tour the annual Pebble Beach and Monterey circuit each August. Like the swallows returning to Capistrano, these Northwest autostent and their prize cars now converge in Kirkland for a season-ending soiree that serves as the official homecoming and close of summer competition.

This year's Concours featured a



COURTESY KIRKLAND CONCOURS

Miles Collier's 1935 Duesenberg SSJ, which at one time was owned by actor Gary Cooper, is taken for a spin by Peter Hageman. The Kirkland Concours attracts entries from some of the world's most well-known classic-car people, including some who tour the Pebble Beach and Monterey circuit each August.

panoply of noteworthy classics and historic race cars, from the event's featured Duesenberg and Jaguar marques to an unexpectedly strong field of Mercedes-Benz 300 SL roadsters and gull-wings, Ferraris, Bugattis, Bentleys, Rolls-Royces and others.

Seattle collector Charlie Morse won "Best of Show" and "European Classics" awards with his 1938 Bugatti T-57C Atalante Coupe — additions to a pedigree that includes previous Pebble Beach awards.

Unsurprisingly, the featured marques were extremely well-represented among this year's winners, with the largest display ever of Duesenberg J's in one place (19 in all) perhaps since their manufacture in the 1930s. John Mozart's 1930 Duesenberg J Murphy Speedster won the Most Elegant (Open Competition) prize, Miles Collier's 1935 Duesenberg SSJ (formerly Gary Cooper's) took the Participants' Choice honors and the Kirkland Chamber of Commerce Award went to Arturo Keller's breathtaking 1932 Duesenberg SJ B&S Coupe. Mozart's Speedster also captured the Duesenberg category award. Mozart, Collier, and Keller are all from California.

Jaguars were everywhere on the prowl. Particularly ferocious predators included Vintage Racing Mo-

tors' winning 1956 D-Type Racer, which won the Jaguar racing category, and local franchise owner Al Monjazez's "supercar of the future" — a very rare, mint-condition XJ220, which was shown locally for the first time. The Evergreen Hospital Award went to Ken McBride's 1949 Jaguar XK 120 Roadster, proudly flanked by Doris Hart's 1938 SS100 in the Jaguar (Production) category.

The Ferrari category was topped by a 1967 Ferrari 275 Nart Spyder belonging to Jon Shirley of Seattle, and Jim Clark's 1947 Ferrari 166 Spyder Corsa won the Children's Hospital Award.

Other treats included vintage

watercraft, including four gorgeous wooden runabouts displayed by Dave Lobb of Northwest Classic Boat; vintage motorcycles; and, of course, more nifty cars — a striking assortment of Porsche 356 varieties and a selection of prewar domestics that included a 1909 Oldsmobile and a 1919 Simplex Crane, courtesy of the Harold LeMay Museum collection.

All proceeds from the Kirkland Concours benefit Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center and Evergreen Health Care.

Evan McMullen is proprietor of Cosmopolitan Motors in Seattle.



COURTESY KIRKLAND CONCOURS

Hans Wurl pilots Vintage Racing Motors' 1956 Jaguar D-Type Racer, which was voted best racing Jaguar. In the '90s, Jaguar built the XJ220, a \$300,000 supercar that can reach 220 mph.

Jaguar name grew out of prewar mistake: The SS model

The first car to bear the Jaguar name appeared in 1935. Jaguar's founder, Sir William Lyons, originally had a company named Swallow, which produced a model called the SS.

For obvious reasons, this name came into disfavor with the British public on the eve of World War II. Not wanting to be associated with the Third Reich's "elite," Lyons changed the name to Jaguar, a symbol of performance. Jaguar Cars Ltd. officially began producing cars in 1945.

Jaguar was written into the annals of history when it introduced its XK120 roadster in 1948. This revolutionary and sexy car was able to reach and sustain 120 mph. Some argue that the car was the first true sports car and that it ushered in an era of great British motoring. Using the XK's technology, Jaguar won several motor-sport races at Silverstone, Goodwood and Le Mans. The race versions of the XK series became C-types. From there the

"D" type was born, and Stirling Moss and others carried the marque to unsurpassed heights. The production E-type unveiled to the world in 1961 quickly became a household word and is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful automotive designs of all time.

Jaguar showed its racing prowess throughout the 20th century, most notably with the XJR15. In the '90s, Jaguar again proved it could be the top speed-record holder for production vehicles by building the XJ220, a \$300,000 supercar that can reach 220 mph.

The purchase of the manufacturer by Ford Motor Co. in 1989 helped develop a dependability in the marque previously missing — but make no mistake, these are still world-class luxury sports cars. Dealerships in Seattle, Bellevue and Tacoma sell and service the legendary cat.

— Evan McMullen



COURTESY KIRKLAND CONCOURS

Glenn Mounger drives John Mozart's 1930 Duesenberg J Murphy Speedster, voted Most Elegant at the Kirkland Concours d'Elegance. The last Duesenberg was manufactured in 1937.

Duesenbergs' sexy, sleek styling continues to get long looks

The lavish, elegant style of the Roaring '20s is perhaps best expressed in the sheer visual effect of Duesenberg. Sleek, sexy, always sophisticated, the cars jazzily flaunted a sense of wealth and excess well into the ensuing Depression — a peerless, lingering automotive blue note from the imaginations of car enthusiasts Fred and Augie Duesenberg.

Few realize that the Duesenberg is as much a testament to the American can-do ethic as it is to opulence and prestige.

The Duesenberg brothers didn't even start in the car business. They first began building and racing motorcycles. They quickly turned their ambitions to auto racing, where they joined with Edward Mason and built their own race cars for competition at country fairs and expositions.

Soon extended to the limit and running on fumes, the Duesenberg duo turned to Iowa state Sen. F.L. Maytag for help, and the finan-

cial repairman obliged. Infused with cash, the Duesenbergs were at last off and running. Fred became superintendent, Augie the designer. The company flourished. For the next few years, the Duesenbergs' innovative engine designs set many racing records that would stand for years.

With the growing prestige of racing, the Duesenbergs' passenger cars became highly coveted. Hollywood stars Clark Gable, Cary Grant and Gary Cooper all owned these famous cars. From world leaders to gangsters, the term "it's a Duesie" became synonymous with quality, style and performance.

The last Duesenberg was made in 1937, after Fred Duesenberg died in an accident. Last month, the "Mormon Meteor" — a famous Duesenberg race car — sold at auction. It fetched a world record \$4,455,000.

— Evan McMullen