



JAGUAR XK8 COUPE 93.3 points

AFTER SPENDING THE NIGHT AT THE beautiful Victorian Shaw House Bed & Breakfast Inn in Ferndale, we headed southwest toward Cape Mendocino on Mattole Road. The sky was gray, accompanied by morning drizzle and coastal fog, much like the weather in England. So it was fitting that I took my turn in the Jaguar XK8 for this leg of our journey.

Compared with the Lexus and the Mercedes, the Jag best defines the phrase Grand Touring—it's stylish, graceful and powerful. Tom commented that the XK8's exterior styling is "classic GT—in a modern idiom."

Everything about this car stimulates your senses; whether it's your eyes feasting on the gorgeous and flowing exterior lines, or your nose smelling and your hands feeling the rich Connolly leather coordinated with the pol-

ished burlled walnut inside, you are immersed in a tradition-inspired British Grand Touring experience. Details such as the slightly raised radio buttons in contrast to the sunken climate-control buttons, steering-wheel access to the radio, chrome-plated sill covers and plush carpeting, all build an opulent ambience. When opening the doors at night, you'll notice that Jaguar designers have put in extra lights underneath the dash to brighten the interior.

The XK8 also earned high marks for its 290-bhp engine (the first V-8 powerplant designed by Jaguar) coupled to the silky-smooth ZF 5-speed electronic automatic transmission. At cruise, this British cat purrs in the low-rpm range, with only a slight hint of engine noise filtering through the cabin. However, push a little harder and the 4.0-liter 90-degree 32-valve V-8 will roar to life, ready to pounce. So whether it's on the highway or a curvy mountain road, the car "performs so effortlessly that it

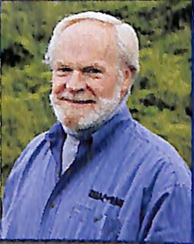
■ The XK8 looks and feels right at home on this stretch of Mattole Road. From the large oval-shaped grille to a set of uniquely designed tail-lights, every detail on this car draws your attention. And with Jaguar's own 290-bhp powerplant coupled to a very competent chassis, the XK8 truly defines the meaning and spirit of Grand Touring.



In My Opinion...

THOS L. BRYANT, Editor-In-Chief

Three excellent GT cars, one choice. For me, I throw caution and my bankbook to the winds and go right for the Jaguar XK8. Yes, I know the other two cars are less money, but over hill and dale, the substance of the Jaguar shines, shines, shines.





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Chevy S-10



LIKE A ROCK



■ The Jaguar's graceful lines can be appreciated from any angle. But to enjoy the elegance and luxury inside, you must pamper yourself with rich Connolly leather seats and be surrounded by an abundance of polished burled walnut.

will make any long-distance road trip more enjoyable," noted Steve after a few hours in the driver's seat.

For enthusiasts, it's on the twisties where you can truly appreciate the Jaguar's character. The ZF speed-sensitive steering assist is slightly overboosted, though not as much as on the SC 400. Nevertheless, it will guide you through the turns with precision. Equipped with fully independent suspension complemented by the Automatic Stability Control (ASC) or Jag's version of traction control, the XK8 is unflappable in the handling department. Helped by the aggressive Pirelli P Zero 245/50ZR-17 tires all around, the car has tremendous grip, even on damp as-

phalt. Surprisingly, the ride is not compromised by the taut suspension setup or hindered by excessive tire noise. The Jaguar is very comfortable and quiet on high-speed cruises, yet stiff enough to hold its composure through the turns. Test track performance numbers show that the Jaguar can thread through the slalom (62.1 mph) and circle the skidpad (0.86g) faster than the Lexus or the Mercedes.

While the XK8 has captured the per-

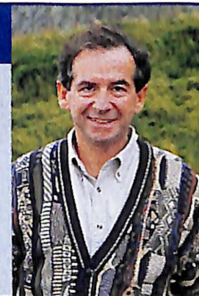


formance and the luxury of Grand Touring, it suffers a bit in interior spaciousness. The Jaguar is designed to be a 2+2 sports coupe, but I would hesitate to occupy the rear seats for any length of time. And although the cabin

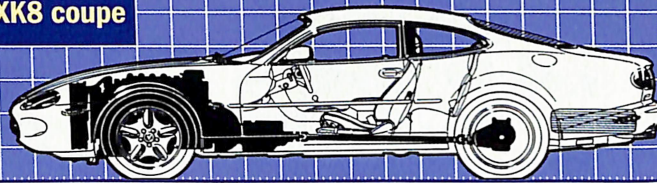
In My Opinion...

STEVE MILLEN

It takes driving on winding, twisty roads to really appreciate the tuning and development that Jaguar has incorporated into the XK8. This car operates so effortlessly. It handles and drives better than the Mercedes or Lexus, but for nearly 40 percent more money than the CLK430, I would expect it to. The Jaguar XK8 is definitely the car I would choose to drive across the U.S. and back again. Very impressive, though, is the electronic stability-control system in the Mercedes CLK—even when entering wet, tight corners too fast, the ESP system guides you safely through.



1999 Jaguar XK8 coupe

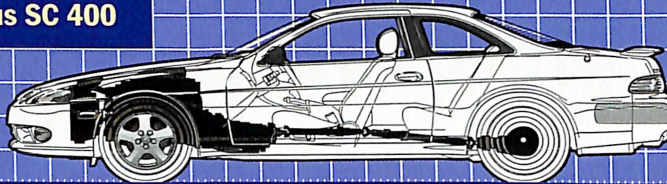


SCALE: 10 IN. (254mm) DIVISIONS
DRAWING BY BILL BOSSER

List price/Price as tested: \$65,780/\$72,422

Price as tested includes std equip. (dual airbags, ABS, auto. climate control, cruise control, leather & wood trim, AM/FM stereo/cassette, security system; pwr windows, mirrors, door locks & tilt/telescope steering column), All-Weather Package (traction control, headlamp washers, heated seats) \$2000, Harmon-Kardon premium audio system (\$2000), luxury tax (\$2062), dest charge (\$580).

1999 Lexus SC 400

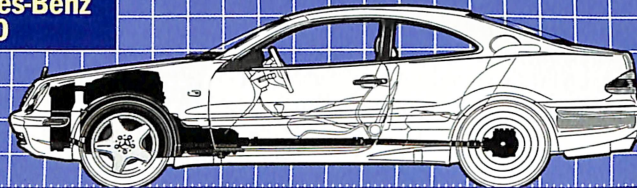


SCALE: 10 IN. (254mm) DIVISIONS
DRAWING BY TOM BARKER

List price/Price as tested: \$55,205/\$61,246

Price as tested includes std equip. (dual airbags, ABS, auto. climate control, cruise control, leather & wood trim, AM/FM stereo/cassette, security system; pwr windows, mirrors, door locks & tilt/telescope steering column), traction control (\$1240), Lexus/Nakamichi prem sound system (\$1200), sunroof (\$1130), rear spoiler (\$440), trunk mat (\$65), wheel locks (\$42), luxury tax (\$1429), dest charge (\$495).

1999 Mercedes-Benz CLK430



SCALE: 10 IN. (254mm) DIVISIONS
DRAWING BY TOM BARKER

List price/Price as tested: \$47,900/\$53,628

Price as tested includes std equip. (dual airbags, ABS, side-impact airbags, Electronic Stability Program, auto. climate control, cruise control, leather & wood trim, AM/FM stereo/cassette, security system; pwr windows, mirrors & door locks), K4 pkg (headlamp washer, xenon headlamps, heated front seats) \$1495, K3 pkg (rain sensor, glass sunroof, elect. rear-window shade) \$1290, Bordeaux Red exterior paint (\$600), CD changer (\$750), luxury tax (\$998), dest charge (\$595).

General Data

	Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Curb weight	3630 lb	3610 lb	3400 lb
Test weight	3790 lb	3730 lb	3500 lb
Weight dist (with driver), f/r, %	54/46	57/43	56/44
Wheelbase	101.9 in.	105.9 in.	105.9 in.
Track, f/r	59.2 in./59.0 in.	59.8 in./60.0 in.	59.3 in./58.0 in.
Length	187.4 in.	192.5 in.	180.2 in.
Width	72.0 in.	70.9 in.	67.8 in.
Height	50.5 in.	53.2 in.	53.0 in.

Chassis & Body

	Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Layout	front engine/rear drive	front engine/rear drive	front engine/rear drive
Body/frame	unit steel	unit steel	unit steel
Brakes, f/r	12.1-in. vented discs/ 12.1-in. vented discs; vacuum assist, ABS	11.6-in. vented discs/ 12.0-in. vented discs; vacuum assist, ABS	11.7-in. vented discs/ 11.3-in. discs; vacuum assist, ABS
Wheels	cast alloy, 17 x 8J	cast alloy, 16 x 6½JJ	forged alloy; 17 x 7½ f, 17 x 8½ r
Tires	Pirelli P Zero, 245/50ZR-17 99Y	Michelin Pilot HX, 225/55R-16 94V	Continental ContiSportContact; 225/45ZR-17 f, 245/40ZR-17 r
Steering	rack & pinion, vari power assist	rack & pinion, vari power assist	recirculating ball, power assist
Overall ratio	11.0-19.0:1	17.3:1	15.9:1
Turns, lock to lock	2.8	3.1	3.2
Suspension, f/r	unequal-length upper & lower A-arms, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar/ lower A-arms with halfshafts acting as upper links, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar	upper & lower A-arms, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar/upper & lower A-arms, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar	upper & lower A-arms, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar/5-link, coil springs, tube shocks, anti-roll bar

Accommodations

	Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Seating capacity	2+2	4	2+2
Head room, f/r	36.5 in./31.0 in.	36.0 in./35.0 in.	37.0 in./33.0 in.
Front-seat leg room	43.0 in.	43.0 in.	46.3 in.
Rear-seat knee room	16.0 in.	21.5 in.	19.5 in.
Trunk space	11.7 cu ft	13.5 cu ft	16.9 cu ft

	Engine		
	Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK 430
Type	dohc 4-valve/cyl V-8	dohc 4-valve/cyl V-8	sohc 3-valve/cyl V-8
Displacement	3996 cc	3969 cc	4266 cc
Bore x stroke	86.0 x 86.0 mm	87.5 x 82.5 mm	89.9 x 84.0 mm
Compression ratio	10.7:1	10.5:1	10.0:1
Horsepower (SAE)	290 bhp @ 6100 rpm	290 bhp @ 6000 rpm	275 bhp @ 5750 rpm
Torque	300 lb-ft @ 4250 rpm	300 lb-ft @ 4000 rpm	295 lb-ft @ 3000-4000 rpm
Maximum engine speed	6800 rpm	6200 rpm	6000 rpm
Fuel injection	elect. sequential port	elect. sequential port	elect. sequential port
Rec fuel	prem unleaded, 91 pump oct	prem unleaded, 91 pump oct	prem unleaded, 91 pump oct

	Drivetrain		
	5-speed automatic	5-speed automatic	5-speed automatic
Transmission	5-speed automatic	5-speed automatic	5-speed automatic
Gear/Ratio/Overall/(Rpm) Mph			
1st, :1.	3.57/10.92/(6700) 44	3.36/10.96/(6000) 39	3.93/11.28/(5900) 38
2nd, :1.	2.20/6.73/(6700) 72	2.18/7.12/(5900) 60	2.41/6.92/(6000) 62
3rd, :1.	1.51/4.62/(6700) 105	1.42/4.65/(5900) 92	1.49/4.28/(6000) 101
4th, :1.	1.00/3.06/est (6600) 156*	1.00/3.27/(5900) 131	1.00/2.87/est (5200) 130*
5th, :1.	0.80/2.45/est (5280) 156*	0.75/2.46/est (5130) 149*	0.83/2.38/est (4330) 130*
Final drive ratio	3.06:1	3.27:1	2.87:1
Engine rpm @ 60 mph in 5th gear	2000	2050	2000

Acceleration			
Time to speed, sec			
0-20 mph	1.3	1.4	1.4
0-40 mph	3.2	3.4	3.4
0-60 mph	6.1	6.1	6.1
0-100 mph	15.5	15.2	14.6
Time to distance:			
0-1320 ft (¼ mile)	14.6 @ 96.9 mph	14.6 @ 98.4 mph	14.5 @ 99.5 mph

Braking			
Minimum stopping distance			
From 60 mph	136 ft	127 ft	121 ft
From 80 mph	247 ft	225 ft	211 ft
Control	excellent	excellent	excellent
Brake feel	very good	very good	very good
Overall brake rating	very good	very good	excellent

Handling			
Lateral acceleration (200-ft skidpad)	0.86g	0.80g	0.84g
Balance	moderate understeer	moderate understeer	moderate understeer
Speed thru 700-ft slalom	62.1 mph	58.3 mph	61.0 mph
Balance	mild understeer	mild understeer	mild understeer

Fuel Economy			
Normal driving	20.1 mpg	17.1 mpg	17.7 mpg
EPA city/highway	17/25 mpg	18/25 mpg	18/25 mpg
Fuel capacity	19.9 gal.	20.6 gal.	16.4 gal.

Interior Noise			
Idle in neutral	49 dBA	39 dBA	44 dBA
Maximum, 1st gear	75 dBA	66 dBA	70 dBA
70 mph	71 dBA	70 dBA	71 dBA

Subjective ratings consist of excellent, very good, good, average, poor; na means information is not available.



offers adequate head room, the seats could use some improvement. As Tom commented, "The seat bottom is too small for the long haul. It needs to be longer to offer better thigh support." Also, if you're planning a weekend getaway for two, you may not want to bring both sets of golf clubs. The Jag offers the least amount of trunk space (11.7 cu. ft.) of the three cars.

At \$72,422, the Jaguar XK8 is the most expensive car in this test. But in return, you'll be able to experience sports-car performance wrapped inside an elegant and luxurious road car body—a true Grand Touring adventure.

MERCEDES-BENZ
CLK430
96.6 points

AFTER SPENDING A FEW HOURS ON Mattole Road, a 73-mile loop just south of Ferndale, we were back on Highway 101 heading south. We stopped by Calico's Cafe in Garberville for a light lunch before we drove toward Mendocino.

By the numbers, the Mercedes-Benz CLK430 is the winner of this head-to-head comparison test. It took three out of four categories in our scoring (performance, grand touring and price), and earned a second-place finish in the subjective ratings.

Compared with the CLK320, the CLK430's V-8 "completely changed the character of this car. It's now elevated from a fine 2-door luxury coupe to a select class of GTs," Tom noted after his stint in the car.

Besides using low-friction silicon-aluminum cylinder sleeves inside the 4.3-liter aluminum engine block, Mercedes engineers have also employed a twin-spark, 3-valve-per-cylinder configuration that enables this powerplant to meet the Low Emissions Vehicle (LEV) standards. And with a dual-resonance intake manifold system, the engine is capable of sustaining 295 lb.-ft. of peak torque from 3000 to 4400 rpm.

On the road, the only complaint about the powertrain package is the 5-speed electronic automatic transmission, a bit sluggish in downshifting compared with the Lexus or Jaguar. However, once in the lower gear with the throttle wide open, you'll feel a surge of power (even accelerating from 4th gear at 70 mph) that is unmatched by the other two cars. Accompanying the sudden rush of acceleration is a

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In My Opinion...

PATRICK HONG, Road Test Editor

The SC 400's engine is velvety smooth, the CLK430's muscle-car power is addicting and the Jaguar's ability to cling to the asphalt is impressive. All three have the performance of a sports car. But where the Lexus and the Mercedes fall a bit short is matching the Jaguar's elegance and grace. These are essential to a true Grand Tourer. The Jaguar embodies the luxury and styling of a classic GT. So start saving money; it's well worth it.



coastal roads, the consensus was that the CLK is more sports-carlike than the other two cars. In fact, it may be too much so for a Grand Tourer. According to Tom, "The steering effort in twisty conditions can be a bit heavy, and the ride becomes a touch jiggly over broken pavement."

Matching the superior handling dynamics of the CLK430 is the standard AMG sport package that includes the aforementioned staggered wheels/tires, side skirts, plus new front and rear aprons to give the car a more aggressive stance. Unlike the romantic flowing lines of the Jaguar, the Mercedes looks businesslike and purposeful.

Inside, the car is typically German. There's plenty of leather accented with burled walnut trim on the doors, the dashboard and the center console. All the gauges and controls are in the

throaty engine growl that makes the CLK feel like a German muscle car. I disliked the louder-than-usual engine note, even with the Mercedes just cruising in top gear, but Steve disagreed, saying, "I love to hear the V-8 rumble at any speed. It sounds so great in this car."

On Pacific Coast Highway from Ft. Bragg to Mendocino, Mercedes' famed rock-solid unit-body structure was most apparent. Coupled to a taut suspension (upper and lower A-arms up

front and multilink at the rear) and riding on a staggered wheel/tire setup (225/45ZR-17s ahead of 245/40ZR-17s), the CLK rounded each corner easily with no hint of body roll. Controlling all four of the low-profile Continental ContiSport tires' contact patches is the job of the standard Electronic Stability Program (ESP) that helps ordinary drivers like us keep up with a pro like Steve.

After everyone had driven the Mercedes both on the highway and curvy



■ On the road, Mercedes' quad oval headlamps are very distinctive. The AMG sport package gives the CLK430 a muscle-car look. Inside the cabin, there's plenty of room; it's the only car in this group that can comfortably shuttle four adults around town.

The Results...

Performance		Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
0-60 mph	40 pts.	40.0	40.0	40.0
Braking	40 pts.	35.6	38.1	40.0
Slalom	35 pts.	35.0	32.9	34.4
Skidpad	35 pts.	35.0	32.6	34.2
TOTAL	150 pts.	145.6	143.6	148.6

Performance points based on proportional scale.

Subjective Ratings		Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Engine	10 pts.	9.3	9.7	8.7
Gearbox	10 pts.	9.3	8.3	8.3
Steering	10 pts.	9.0	7.7	8.0
Brakes	10 pts.	8.0	8.3	9.3
Ride	10 pts.	9.7	8.3	8.0
Handling	10 pts.	9.3	7.7	8.7
Ergonomics	10 pts.	9.0	7.7	8.3
Build quality	10 pts.	9.0	9.0	9.3
Exterior styling	10 pts.	10.0	7.0	8.3
Interior styling	10 pts.	9.3	7.7	8.0
TOTAL	100 pts.	91.9	81.4	84.9

Subjective ratings based on points awarded in each of 10 categories, by three editors.

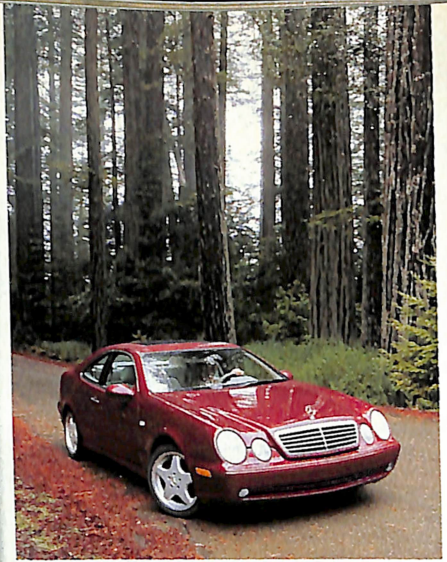
Grand Touring		Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Head room	20 pts.	19.7	19.5	20.0
Seat width	20 pts.	18.7	20.0	19.7
Leg room	20 pts.	19.0	19.0	20.0
Noise level @ 70 mph	20 pts.	19.7	20.0	19.7
Trunk space	20 pts.	13.8	16.0	20.0
TOTAL	100 pts.	90.9	94.5	99.4

Performance points based on proportional scale.

Price		Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Base price	150 pts.	138.0	145.1	150.0

Points-range for price equals average points-range of other categories, with 150 being maximum.

Results		Jaguar XK8 coupe	Lexus SC 400	Mercedes-Benz CLK430
Total points	500 pts.	466.4	464.6	482.9
(Total points ÷ 5)		93.3	92.9	96.6
STANDINGS		2	3	1



Mercedes' sports-car prowess was most apparent through the twisties inside Humboldt Redwoods State Park, thanks in part to its V-8's ability to hold 295 lb.-ft. of torque from 3000 to 4000 rpm.

right places and easy to read. The CLK has more front-seat head and leg room than the Lexus or the Jaguar, with room to spare for two average-size adults in the back. It is the only car of the trio that could actually carry the four of us to dinner. And with a generous cargo volume of 16.9 cu. ft., it shuttled all of our camera gear and some of the luggage for the entire trip.

When it comes to pricing, Mercedes-Benz cars rarely rank as the least expensive in any of our comparison tests. But with this German sports coupe coming in at \$53,628, it's more affordable (relatively speaking, of course) than the Lexus SC 400, and about \$18,800 less than the Jaguar XK8. In value, the CLK definitely wins the crown.

So it was at the MacCallum House Restaurant in Mendocino that we began to sum up our two-day Northern California adventure. Outside, the air was still cold from an on-and-off rainstorm, but inside the old Victorian restaurant, we sat in comfort with a warm fire crackling in the stone fireplace. Great food, great company and great cars; how better to cap off a great road trip with three excellent Grand Touring cars?



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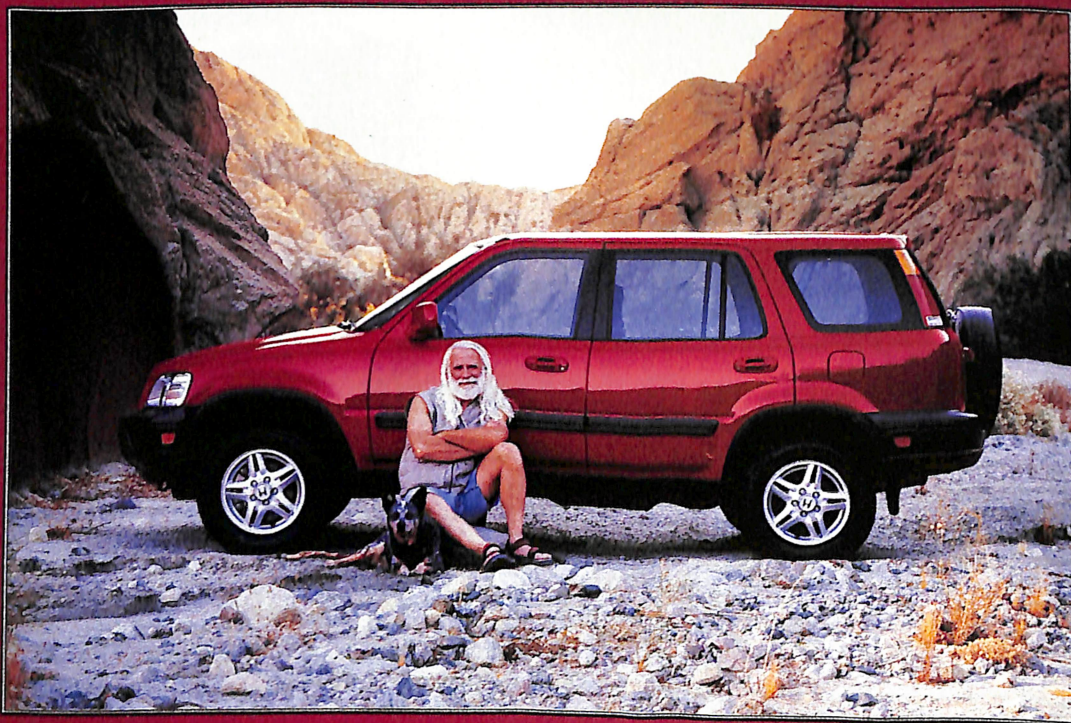


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Kirby, best-selling author of *Living Off The Land*, has written the authoritative guide to unlocking your primitive instincts. In this concise, easy-to-read work, you'll learn how to turn your modern world into a place where your wild side can roam free. Some of the subjects Jim covers in-depth include:

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4-wheel-drive CR-V may be just what you need to break out of your routine. The CR-V  HONDA

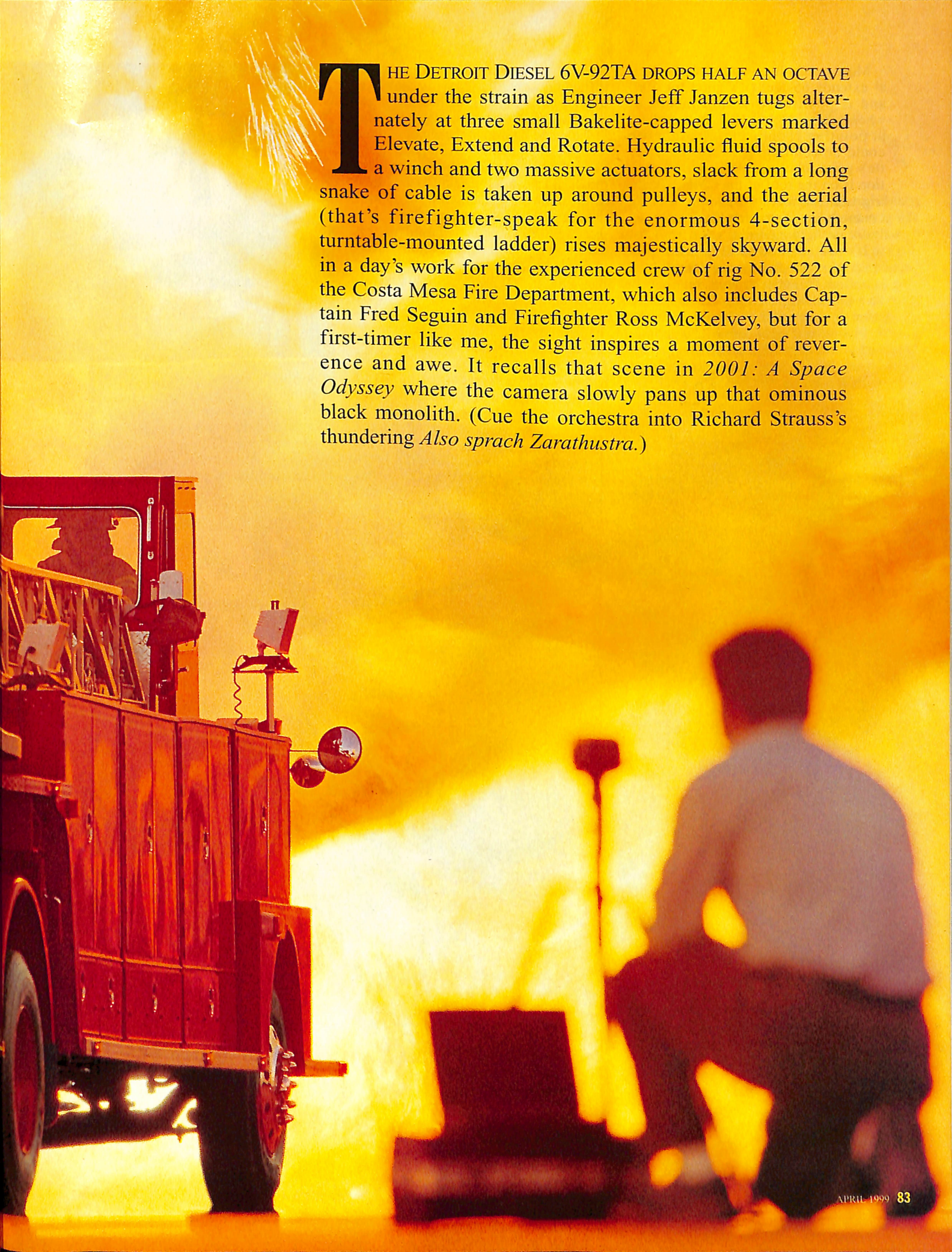


1983 • Maxim HOOK & LADDER

From hell's inferno we test the abilities of
Costa Mesa Fire Department's stairway to heaven

BY DOUGLAS KOTT
PHOTOS BY GUY SPANGENBERG



The background of the page is a large, intense fire with bright yellow and orange flames. In the lower-left foreground, the rear of a red fire truck is visible, showing its storage compartments and a ladder. A firefighter in a white shirt and dark pants is seen from behind, standing in the lower-right foreground, looking towards the fire. The overall atmosphere is one of a high-stakes emergency scene.

THE DETROIT DIESEL 6V-92TA DROPS HALF AN OCTAVE under the strain as Engineer Jeff Janzen tugs alternately at three small Bakelite-capped levers marked Elevate, Extend and Rotate. Hydraulic fluid spools to a winch and two massive actuators, slack from a long snake of cable is taken up around pulleys, and the aerial (that's firefighter-speak for the enormous 4-section, turntable-mounted ladder) rises majestically skyward. All in a day's work for the experienced crew of rig No. 522 of the Costa Mesa Fire Department, which also includes Captain Fred Seguin and Firefighter Ross McKelvey, but for a first-timer like me, the sight inspires a moment of reverence and awe. It recalls that scene in *2001: A Space Odyssey* where the camera slowly pans up that ominous black monolith. (Cue the orchestra into Richard Strauss's thundering *Also sprach Zarathustra*.)

More expert tugs, and soon the aerial extends 65 feet (it's good for 100) and is positioned within inches of where photographer Guy Spangenberg is pointing (I think Jeff's night job could be controlling the Space Shuttle's giant robotic arm). And that position is on the roof of the CMFD Training Center's 5-story building, a beige concrete-block structure built expressly for firefighting drills.

It's one of those cruel tricks of perspective where five stories doesn't look *that* high from the ground, yet appears to be cruising altitude for a DC-10 once on the roof. I back away from the knee-high wall that defines the perimeter, while Guy nonchalantly hops out on the ladder, braces against the wind with his knees and readlines his camera's motor drive as Ross

McKelvey scales the ladder in full firefighting regalia.

Now, Ross is trained for this sort of thing; Guy, well...let's just say that though he is playing with a full deck, the same cards keep coming to the top.

We made it through the shoot without any sickening thuds—and a good thing, as Guy still had some details to photograph. Back on the ground, it was time to examine this fascinating apparatus (again, fire-speak for any significant piece of firefighting hardware). This 19-ton truck represents the legacy of Middleboro, Massachusetts-based Maxim Inc., one of the grand old manufacturers of fire trucks that started making horse-drawn pumpers before the turn of the century. Old-timers might refer to this rig as a hook-and-ladder truck; the ladder part is obvious, and the hook refers to the pole-mounted hooks of varying lengths used to pull down ceilings, to access the fire from beneath. Maxim closed its doors in 1989, but not before selling the manufacturing rights and tooling for its aerials to its next-door neighbors, Middleboro Fire Appa-



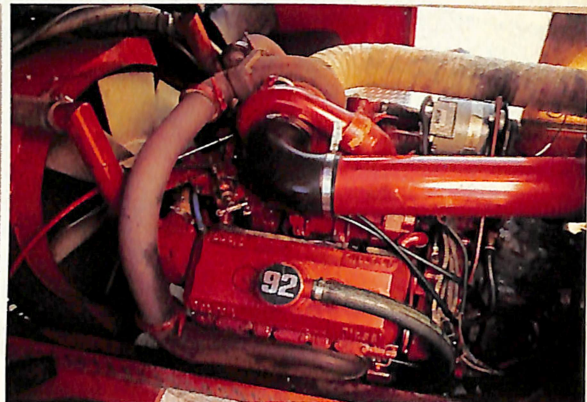
ratus (there's that word again).

So our test rig was made in the twilight years of a storied company, a crimson-and-diamond-plate final salvo before surrender. The truck itself represents a transitional time, bridging old and new worlds. For instance, its free-





■ Garbed in suitable fireproof clothing and special protective goggles ginned up by R&T skunk works, author (opposite top) carves a mean line from the tiller cab, yet flails uselessly (above) as he's put through what the crew insists is standard training procedure (heh, heh). Detroit Diesel 6V-92TA provides the go, and Bendix air brakes, the whoa, flat-spotting eight huge Goodyears to a remarkably short stop. Cabin lacks the burled walnut and Connolly hides to which we're accustomed, but geez, you can't go Code 3 in a Bentley.



standing ladders (there are eight of them, ranging from 14 to 35 ft. long, that nest in the huge compartment beneath the aerial) have rails of oak. The cab, tiller enclosure and 22 storage lockers that make up the bodywork are all steel rather than aluminum, the preferred modern material. And the aerial's stabilizing feet are deployed and retracted manually; newer rigs accomplish this with hydraulic slave cylinders and the touch of a button.

But a closer look reveals technology content far beyond what a casual glance might offer. These Maxim engineers were truly the Colin Chapmans of the external-combustion world. A

peek into the tractor's diamond-plate-aluminum doghouse reveals...a mid-mounted engine! A turbo V-6, no less, with more torque than Jean-Pierre Jabouille's Renault RS02, and half the lag. Admittedly, in the Maxim, it's not a stressed member, nor do the suspension loads feed directly into its 840-lb. Allison 4-speed automatic gearbox, but we all know this configuration's low polar moment of inertia can make the difference between a winning fire truck and an also-ran.

Technically, the Detroit Diesel engine itself is unlike any modern automotive powerplant, diesel or otherwise. If you were to remove a cylinder head, you'd

see four conventional poppet valves per cylinder. Yet peer down at one of the 4.84-in. pistons at bottom dead center, and you'd see a ring of intake ports in the cylinder wall. (Pause for contemplative chin-scratching.) That's because it's a 2-stroke, with the intake charge pressurized by a Roots-type blower (and further by the AiResearch turbo, large and heavy enough that the service manual recommends a winch to install it!), which forces the exhaust out the poppet valves. Bad for emissions (trust me, this is no ULEV), good for torque, with a power stroke for every revolution of the crank. And "stump-pulling" isn't mere hyperbole in this case, with 963 lb.-ft.



■ Around the skidpad, the Maxim's cornering attitude is pretty much whatever you want it to be (there's a joke in there somewhere about trailer-throttle oversteer). Best times were accomplished by looking rearward into a convex mirror, not for the queasy of stomach. At left, the crew of rig No. 522 (left to right): Firefighter Ross McKelvey, Engineer Jeff Janzen and Captain Fred Seguin.

available at a low 1200 rpm.

But the real mind-blower concerns the valvetrain—gear-driven cams mounted not in the vee but directly beneath each head, bumping short pushrods that in turn actuate four valves per cylinder. Hmm, this sounds suspiciously like the rule-bending pushrod CART engine, the one-race wonder that Team Penske used to win the Indy 500 in 1994. Mere coincidence that Roger Penske owns Detroit Diesel? I think not. It's a clear-cut case of technology transfer from the firefighting world to racing. Roasting improves the breed, as it were.


Passenger cars have benefited as well. Study the photographs carefully and you'll note that the rig's driver and passenger are seated *well ahead* of the front wheels. If this isn't cab-forward design, I don't know what it is, and

Chrysler has been making noises for some time that its engineers created the idea. Well, the cat is out of the bag! Come to think of it, with the tiller enclosure at the truck's extreme hiney, the Maxim lays claim to the cab-rearward patent too.

Well, it's time to get down to the serious business of instrumented road testing, and my chance to get back at Road Test Editor Patrick Hong for the time he took the long-term Jaguar and left me with the keys to a Sportage. I figure the sound readings are among the most important data, so I tell him to stand in front of the Maxim with the sound meter, while in the relative calm of the cab I go Code 3 (lights and siren) and blast the air horn. Whammo! He jumped like a startled cat! Hasn't spoken to me (or heard me, for that matter) since.

Undeniably, the most entertaining aspect of testing was putting the rear-steer tiller trailer through its paces. Unlike feeble automotive attempts at awes (all-wheel steer) such as Honda's 1988 Prelude or Nissan's Super HICAS on the Z, the Maxim's keep-it-simple approach requires an additional human (Ross) who, through sighting along reference points and glancing rearward at a strategically placed convex mirror, can maneuver the tiller trailer's enormous Goodyears to within inches of the curb and avoid mowing down bus-stop benches, crossing guards, street signage and their ilk. He's quite good at it.

I'm not. But it's great fun centrifuging around back there, grappling with a huge, near-horizontal wheel and having all that mass and bulk yaw at my command. Even with pneumatic steering assist, ten minutes of cone-slalomming is a workout; I'm sweating like Fabio at a spelling bee.

As both the Maxim and I cool down and the aroma of diesel No. 2 wafts into my nostrils while the heavily polished red bodywork glows in the late afternoon light, and I wonder what I'm going to have for dinner, there's time to reflect on the magnificence and surprising technological sophistication of rig No. 522. And, all kidding aside, on how glad I'd be to see the crew of Seguin, Janzen and McKelvey if I was the one on the 10th floor of a burning, smoke-filled building. 

1983 Maxim Tiller Fire Truck

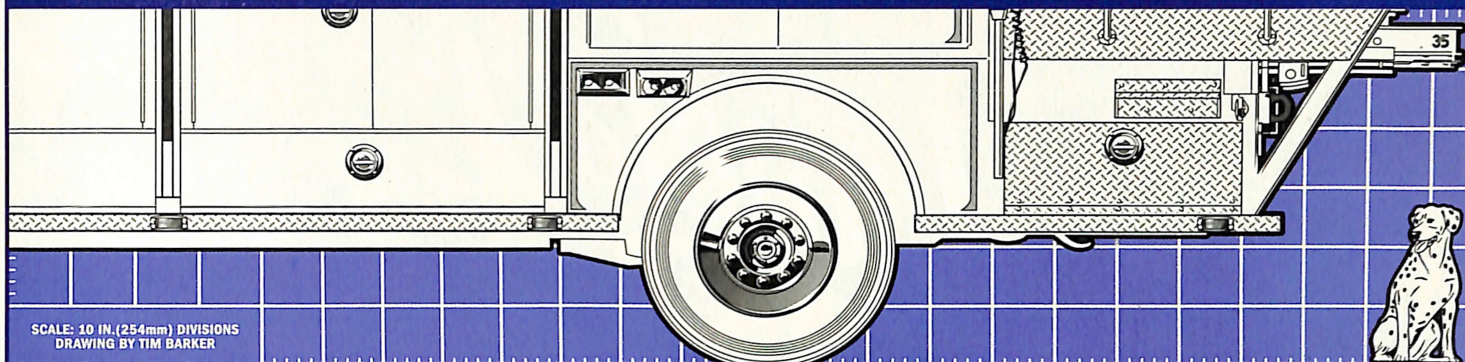
Maxim, Inc.
20 Wareham St.
Middleboro, Mass. 02346

At a Glance...

0-60 mph **77.0 sec**
0-1/4 mile **31.7 sec**
Top speed **60 mph¹**
Skidpad **0.42g-0.47g²**
Slalom **ye haw!³**
Brake rating **excellent⁴**

List Price (1983): **\$219,443**
Price as Tested: **\$428,631**

Price as tested includes std equip. (100-ft. 4-section hydraulically actuated aerial, screw-type stabilizing feet, bucket seats, sunvisor vanity mirrors), enclosed tiller cab (\$9200), four 100-ft. lengths of fire hose, free-standing ladders (two 35-footers, two 24-footers, two 16-footers and two 14-footers), misc. firefighting equip. (assorted hatchets, axes, sledgehammers, breaker bars & fire pokers/prodders, structure ventilation fan w/laminated aircraft prop, chainsaw, rotary cutter, portable generator, portable hydraulic pump for Laws of Life, 30 bottles of Gatorade, Suck-Em-Up (an oil-dry compound), Nomex turn-out coats, firefighters' helmets and boots, Kevlar spiral-wound oxygen tanks, obligatory Dalmatian pup) \$200,500, fire-sale discount (-\$500), cigarette lighter delete (-\$12).



SCALE: 10 IN. (254mm) DIVISIONS
DRAWING BY TIM BARKER

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	Drivetrain	General Data	Chassis & Body																									
<p>Manufacturer... Detroit Diesel Type... cast-iron block and heads, turbocharged 2-stroke diesel V-6 Weight... 2020 lb Valvetrain... twin gear-driven, block-mounted cams actuating 4 poppet-type overhead exhaust valves/cyl via pushrods; intake via cyl-wall ports fed by Roots-type blower Displacement... 552 cu in./9047 cc Bore x stroke... 4.84 x 5.00 in./122.9 x 127.0 mm Compression ratio... 17.0:1 Horsepower (SAE)... 330 bhp @ 2100 rpm Bhp/liter... 36.5 Torque... 963 lb-ft @ 1200 rpm Maximum engine speed... 2250 rpm Fuel... No. 2 diesel</p>	<p>Transmission: Allison HT 470D 4-speed automatic</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Gear</th> <th>Ratio</th> <th>Overall ratio</th> <th>(Rpm)</th> <th>Mph</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1st</td> <td>3.69:1</td> <td>15.17:1</td> <td>(2250)</td> <td>16.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd</td> <td>2.07:1</td> <td>8.51:1</td> <td>(2250)</td> <td>29.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd</td> <td>1.40:1</td> <td>5.75:1</td> <td>(2250)</td> <td>42.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th</td> <td>1.00:1</td> <td>4.11:1</td> <td>(2250)</td> <td>60.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Final drive ratio... 4.11:1 Engine rpm @ 60 mph in 4th... 2250</p>	Gear	Ratio	Overall ratio	(Rpm)	Mph	1st	3.69:1	15.17:1	(2250)	16.3	2nd	2.07:1	8.51:1	(2250)	29.0	3rd	1.40:1	5.75:1	(2250)	42.9	4th	1.00:1	4.11:1	(2250)	60.0	<p>Curb weight... 38,410 lb Test weight... 38,480 lb Weight dist (with driver), f/m/r, %... 27/40/33 Wheelbase... 436.0 in. Track, f/m/r... 82.0 in./86.0 in./80.5 in. Length... 636.0 in. Width... 96.0 in. Height... 132.0 in. (aerial stowed); 1272.0 in. (aerial extended vertically) Ground clearance... roughly one Dalmatian Luggage space... none, really—all space taken up by pesky firefighting gear⁶</p>	<p>Layout... mid engine/rear drive Body/frame... steel/steel ladder (not to be confused with the aerial, not a stressed member. But tillerman surely can be)⁷ Brakes, f&r... Bendix air-operated drums Assist type... pneumatic Total swept area... frickin' huge Wheels... 10-lug pressed steel w/shiny chrome covers Tires... Goodyear G159 radial, size 11R22.5, regroovable Steering, front... recirculating ball, hydraulic assist rear... rack & pinion, pneumatic assist Turns, lock to lock, f/r... 4.5/7.4 Turning circle, to right... 77.0 ft To left... 54.2 ft Suspension Front: massive cast-iron beam axle on semielliptic leaf springs, trailing arms, tube shocks Rear: behemoth live axle on semielliptic leaf springs, trailing arms, tube shocks Tiller trailer: most impressively proportioned cast-iron beam axle on semielliptic leaf springs, trailing arms, tube shocks</p>
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1st	3.69:1	15.17:1	(2250)	16.3																								
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4th	1.00:1	4.11:1	(2250)	60.0																								
Warranty	Accommodations	Instrumentation	Safety																									
<p>Basic warranty... are you good with hand tools? Rust-through... meticulously maintained and waxed; rust not a problem Burn-through... you're on your own</p>	<p>Seating capacity... 5⁶ Head room, f/r/tiller cab... 39.5/41.0/38.5 in. Front-seat leg room... 38.5 in. Jump-seat knee room... 58.0 in. Seatback adjustment... 3.5 deg Seat travel... 7.0 in.</p>	<p>80-mph speedometer, 3500-rpm tach, water temp, fuel level, oil press., amperes, engine hours, trans press., trans temp, 150-psi main air tank press., real-time air brake press., emergency brake reservoir press.</p>	<p>Isn't the whole idea of a fire truck about safety, really?</p>																									

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration	Braking	Handling	Fuel Economy
<p>Time to speed Seconds</p> <p>0-20 mph... 7.5 0-30 mph... 14.5 0-40 mph... 24.7 0-50 mph... 42.0 0-60 mph... 77.0</p> <p>Time to distance</p> <p>0-100 ft... 6.9 0-500 ft... 17.4 0-1320 ft (1/4 mile)... 31.7 sec @ 44.5 mph</p>	<p>Minimum stopping distance</p> <p>From 10 mph... 16 ft From 20 mph... 33 ft From 30 mph... 49 ft</p> <p>Control... superb Brake feel... hot and sorta scratchy—brake dust gets all over your hands Overall brake rating... excellent</p>	<p>Lateral acceleration (200-ft skidpad)... 0.42g-0.47g Balance... kinda tippy Speed through 700-ft slalom... ye haw! Balance... again, the tillerman decides Lateral seat support... excellent (for 0.4g)</p>	<p>Normal driving... 5.0 mpg⁷ Cruise range... 245 miles Fuel capacity... 50.0 gal.</p>
			Noise Levels
			<p>Idle in neutral... 65 dBA Air horn... 131 dBA Code 3 (full siren)... 136 dBA</p>

Test Notes: Depending on tillerman's caffeine intake and general mood, the Maxim's composure through the slalom can vary from neat and tidy to violent oversteer. ● Despite what the photos may lead you to believe, acceleration isn't exactly scorching.⁸ Bring a

book. ● Though weighing in at a not-so-svelte 19.2 tons (the equivalent of 15.6 Mazda Miatas), the Maxim could be called nimble relative to past subjects like the Cunard Queen Elizabeth 2 (37,218 tons) and NASA's Space Shuttle ground transporter (3000 tons).

Test Conditions:

Temperature Depends on proximity to fire	Humidity It's a dry heat	Elevation 1010 ft	Wind a firefighter's worst enemy
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¹ With lights ablaze and sirens shrieking, it seems like at least 65 mph.

² From the rear vantage point, it seems like a whole lot more.

³ Requires extreme cooperation of tillerman.

⁴ Requires extreme faith of tillerman.

⁵ Stressed.

⁶ And Dalmatian.

⁷ OPEC, rejoice! Fortunately, the fires are never far away.

⁸ Not a popular word at owner get-togethers.

Salon

Lancia Stratos

The mighty maverick from Turin

BY KARL LUDVIGSEN
PHOTOS BY ALLAN ROSENBERG
ILLUSTRATION BY BARRY ROWE





THE TWO MEN COMPARING NOTES IN the back seat of the Lancia Flavia sedan speeding east on the A21 *autostrada* carried with them much of the modern tradition of Italian motorsports. The younger man, intense, dark-curly-haired and with striking aquiline good looks, was a second-generation Lancia executive. His father, Sandro Fiorio, began competing in Lancia cars with an Ardea in 1951. Teaming with E. Christillin, Fiorio rallied successfully in the immortal Lancia B20 coupe through the Fifties.

When Lancia looked for a man to head its press office, the genial Sandro Fiorio was an obvious choice. He gave the Turin company a proud world profile out of all proportion to its modest production. He also gave his son Cesare a keen interest in cars and racing.

In 1963 Lancia introduced the V-4 Fulvia, which with its front-wheel drive showed promise for rallying. Cesare Fiorio's canny stewardship of the HF Squadra Corse led to its 1965 absorption by Lancia as its official race and rally preparation center. Lancia in turn was absorbed in 1969 by Fiat, headed by Gianni Agnelli, a school friend of Sandro Fiorio. Fiat's takeover of Lancia led to the presence in the back seat of the speeding Lancia of the other man, Dr. Ing. Pierugo Gobbato.

Pierugo was the son of Ugo Gobbato, a hugely experienced and capable engineering and production expert who had equipped and organized Fiat's Lingotto factory. After a stint in Russia, the senior Gobbato was named to head Alfa Romeo when it collapsed into state ownership in 1933. Enzo Ferrari, who ran the independent *scuderia* that raced Alfas, welcomed Gobbato's new broom at the Milan firm but saw his team brought under Alfa's umbrella as part of Gobbato's streamlining of the company.

After the war the elder Gobbato, although acquitted of collaboration with the German occupiers of Italy, was gunned down and killed on a Milan sidewalk. His son, Pierugo, also an engineer, made a career with Fiat. In 1965 Enzo Ferrari, whose company was in rough waters, asked Fiat to lend him Gobbato as managing director to help steady his ship. The tall, balding, elegant Pierugo Gobbato happily renewed his link with a brief racing career of the Thirties. In 1969, however, Fiat retrieved Gobbato. It had just bought Lancia and needed a skilled and experienced executive to run it.

Two years later, in 1971, these two men were being driven from Turin to Maranello on one of the toughest missions that they had ever attempted: to ask a favor of Enzo Ferrari. Although Ferrari's company was now under the Fiat wing as well, it was still run autonomously. Fiat people were extra-careful to avoid aggravating the "sorcerer of Modena"; he still hurled a mean lightning bolt. But Fiorio and Gobbato had no choice: Ferrari had the one, the only, engine that they had to have if they were to build a new rally-winning Lancia.



Under the direction of Cesare Fiorio, promoted to head Lancia's marketing but still looking after the Lancia Squadra Corse, Lancia plunged into rallying with its plucky Fulvia coupes in the late Sixties and found the water fine. But by early 1971 they were swimming upstream. The specialized Alpine-Renaults were getting stronger, as were the Porsches.

Against such cars, Fiorio and Pierugo Gobbato knew they'd stand no chance with a Fulvia, no matter how modified. To stay competitive they'd have to design and manufacture a completely dedicated car. Starting from scratch provided a rare opportunity, Fiorio realized. He convened a conclave of his drivers, mechanics and engineers to ask them what they personally wanted in their ideal rally car.

"First I had a meeting to introduce the idea, to ask them what they thought," he recalled. "Then we had another meeting to hear what their ideas were, to develop them further. Finally I synthesized everything in a *cahier de charge*, a document that showed what was needed. It was quite a big book, 100 and more pages." Fiorio's colleagues mentioned such points as small size, good outward vision, erect seating position and good access

to the mechanical elements for changes and repairs.

In the meantime Fiorio's men had been testing a car made by a sister Fiat firm, the Ferrari Dino 246GT with its mid-mounted transverse 2½-liter V-6 engine and 5-speed transaxle.

Cesare Fiorio set his heart on using this Dino engine in his new car. The first hurdle was the easy one: "When I proposed it to Mr. Gobbato, he immediately thought it was a good idea. But he and I were *completely alone* on this project. That was the biggest problem we had. On the Fiat side they just didn't want to know about it. Many in Fiat were *absolutely against it*. They were in motorsports too, and they feared that we might have something very good."

Arriving at Maranello, the pair hadn't to wait long in the infamous "green room" before being received by Ferrari. They set out their plans and made their request for at least 500 Ferrari-made engines that would be fitted to a non-Ferrari that didn't yet exist.

"This was the difficult part of the whole project," said Fiorio, "to convince Ferrari to give us the engine. But on the spot he agreed. Ferrari wasn't one to delay a decision like that. It was a nice day, and on the way home, com-

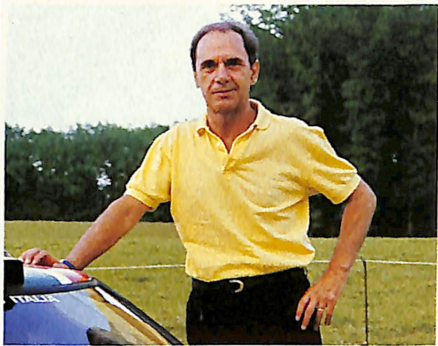
ing back with a positive answer, we really felt great. It was very important to us. Of course after that it got quite complicated!"

Now they needed a car to put the engine in. Lancia's own engineers went to work on a suitable suspension design while Cesare Fiorio turned to an old friend to get ideas for the shape of the car-to-be: Marcello Gandini. "I knew Mr. Gandini very well," said Fiorio recently. "I thought then and I think now that he is very good." Gandini was then working at Bertone, for whom he had designed the Lamborghini Miura, among other Bertone classics. "I spoke to him about it," said Fiorio, "and he prepared various designs."

Needing an outside partner to help build the car, Fiorio found Bertone keen to tackle this job. Bertone also cooperated on the design of its chassis frame. A sheet-steel frame was designed, a fully enclosed monocoque coupe from the front end back to the firewall, from which box-section beams reach back to enclose the engine and support the rear suspension.

Around the structure a body of fiberglass was fashioned. Painted a brilliant matte-finish red, the first prototype of the new car was ready for showing on the Bertone stand at Turin in late 1971.

At left, a peek at the transversely-mounted 2.4-liter Dino V-6 that gave this most-famous Lancia the snarl to match the musculature of its Bertone-penned bodywork. Owned by Guido Avandero, the Stratos is given regular workouts by legendary rally champion Sandro Munari (below and lower right).



Called officially the Stratos HF, it looked absolutely sensational.

The styling signature of the Stratos is the daring sweep of its windshield, curving into its side windows "like a jet plane" as its admiring Italian said. Made by Glaverbel of laminated safety glass, the windshield is formed on a constant radius, as part of a conical section, to avoid distortion, and in fact there is none worth mentioning.

So Fiorio had the beginnings of a car—but was it a rally winner? This was nail-biting time. Within Fiat, both Gobbato and Fiorio had bet their reputations on this car. "We had a big fight with Fiat," remembered Fiorio. "If we had not been successful in rallying with the Stratos we would both have had big problems in the company"—problems up to and including the old heave-ho. "We had a tremendous battle to get it out and not to have to stop the project halfway."

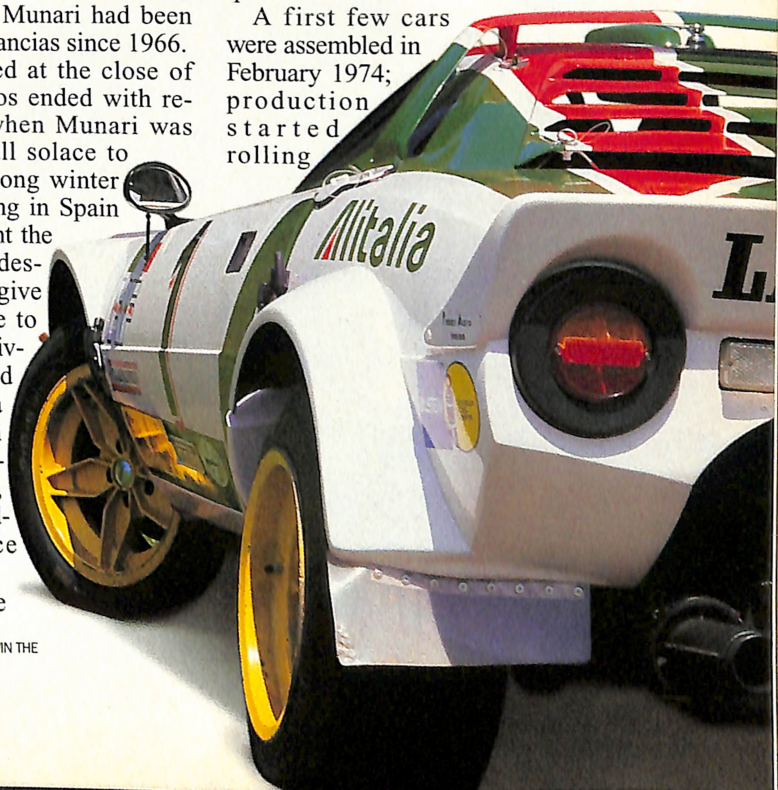
Before it was produced and homologated, the Stratos could compete in

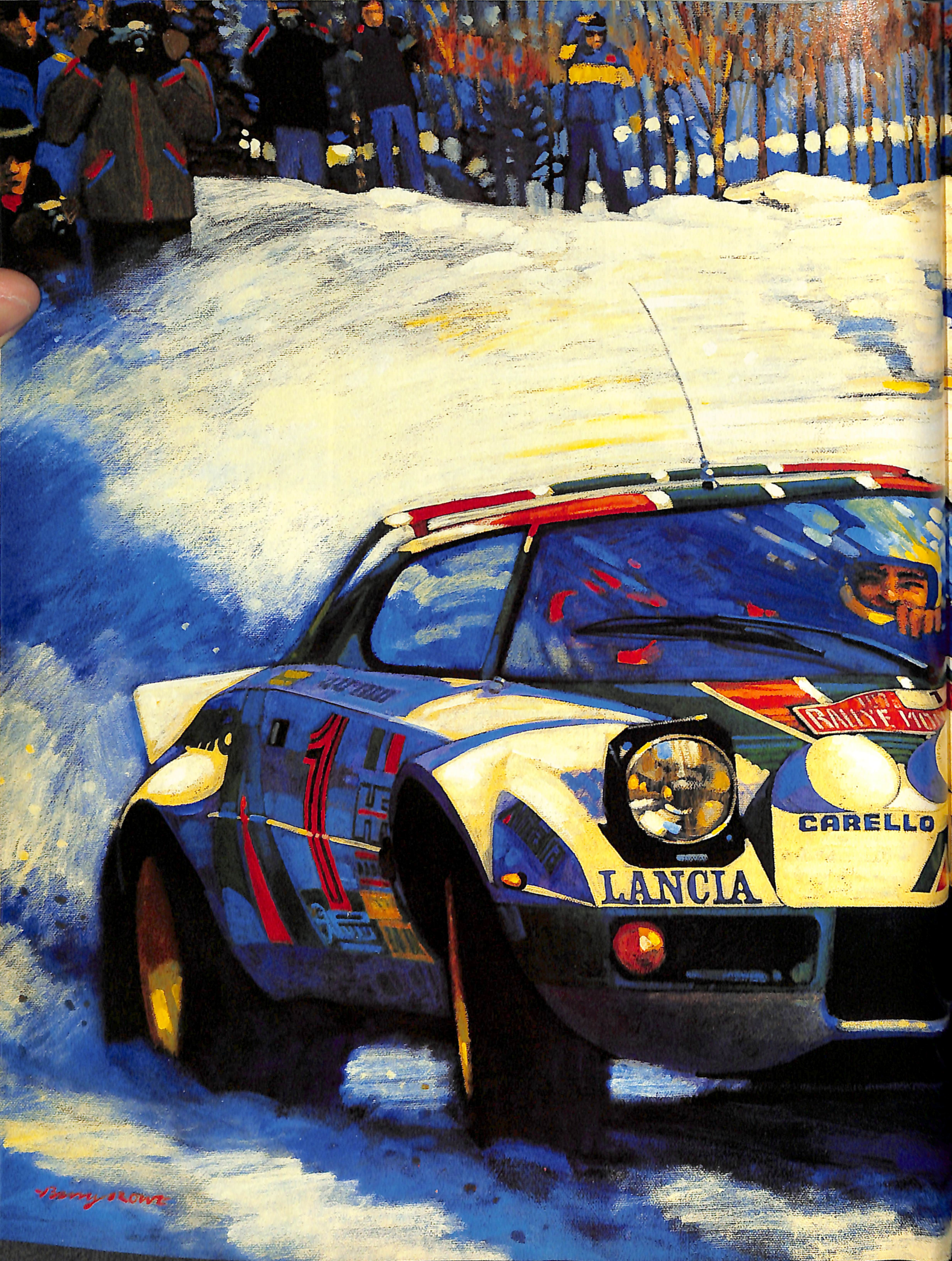
prototype form; this would give a hint of its potential. Fortunately Cesare Fiorio had at his disposal what he needed to verify that potential: a world-class rally driver. Sandro Munari had been racing and rallying Lancias since 1966.

Two rallies entered at the close of 1972 with the Stratos ended with retirements, in one when Munari was leading—some small solace to tide them over the long winter nights. Its next outing in Spain in April 1973 brought the victory that Fiorio desperately needed to give his project a chance to succeed. Marlboro-liveried Stratos placed second in the Targa Florio (May), in spite of broken driver's seat mountings, and won the demanding Tour de France in September using a prototype of the

roof-mounted boundary-layer-control device that was fitted to the production cars. The Stratos was beyond doubt a quick little car.

A first few cars were assembled in February 1974; production started rolling





Harry Low



ROAD & TRACK

in April, and by October, 502 frames had been completed by Bertone, enough to warrant the car's Group 4 homologation. Official assembly by Bertone and Lancia continued until May 1975, when 457 Stratos were on wheels. Thereafter the remaining chassis punts were still available as spares or as armatures for cars built up by the works rally team and by specialists.

In 1974 the Stratos sold in Italy at a list price of \$16,195. That was about the same as an Alfa Romeo Montreal, a Maserati Merak or a Porsche 911S in Italy. It was more than a Pantera and less, by a little, than a Ferrari Dino 308GTB or Lamborghini Urraco. It was enough, however, to discourage people from buying such an oddball auto in the depths of the first energy-crisis years.

However, the jobs of Gobbato and Fiorio were secure. The Stratos was, thank goodness, hell-for-leather on the rally circuit. The list of its first places under drivers like Munari, Bernard Darniche, Bjorn Waldegaard, Tony Carello and Markku Alen is pages long.

Joining the team in 1974, former Ferrari team driver and engineer Mike Parkes was credited with the rigorous development that brought Lancia the World Rally Championship in 1974, 1975 and 1976 and the European Championship in 1977 and 1978. Not much more could have been expected of a car whose Group 4 homologation expired after the latter year. Sandro Munari won the most prestigious event of all, Monte Carlo, three times running in 1975-76-77.

So overwhelmingly successful was the Stratos as a competition car that its assets as a road car are easily overlooked. Driving a road Stratos is a university-level refresher course in what a sports car is all about. It's easy to forget that a real sports car should be as close to a pure racer as possible, carrying no excess bulk and weight. This is the Stratos exactly: a precision tool for the high-speed transport of two people and their baggage over any road that's passable for cars. In other words, a sports car.

The combination of the lively V-6 with the Stratos's curb weight of only 2155 lb. yields exceptional results. Built and geared for quick response, the car accelerates to 60 mph in 6.8 seconds, to 80 in 11.5 and to 100 in 17.6 sec. Revving to 7500 gives

speeds in the gears of 40 mph in 1st, 58 in 2nd, 79 in 3rd and 106 mph in 4th. Its top speed is just over 140 mph, not all that fast but its shape was designed for stability, not speed.

And what a joy that Dino engine is! It is 2418 cc (92.5 x 60.0 mm) of Ferrari power, with twincam heads of aluminum on a cast-iron block and triple twin-throat 40-mm Weber carbs. The six is as happy running slowly as it is flat-out: It has no awkward periods or flat spots. It pulls well on full throttle above 2500 rpm, starts to come on strong above 3000 and above 4000 booms forth in a deep-chested roar. As the tach flicks past 5000, curious crackling sounds join in, and then at more than 6500 rpm the exhaust is a joyous chorus of ebullient soaring sound,



a potent scream like a swarm of 911 Porsches.

Its combination of big tires, short wheelbase and the concentration of masses in the center gives the Stratos an agility, an immediate response to the wheel, that is usually found only in racing cars. This plus an absence of roll in corners makes it unbeatable through snaky, twisty road sections.

Stratos steering is very light at all speeds, pleasantly so, with the precision feel of a micrometer. Even when cornering hard it offers little additional resistance, little indication of how much grip there is, or isn't, at the front wheels. Yet over bumpy roads it can kick back strongly, forcing you to grip the wheel tightly to hold the line you want. Strong hands help.

As a Stratos keeper for a decade and a half, this author drove a yellow example as far afield as Cornwall and Loch Ness in Britain, and in France, Germany, Austria and northern Italy.

One trip took the Stratos to the St. Kassian district in Italy's German-influenced Southern Tyrol, in the heart of the Dolomite Mountains. There in September 1986 a trio of German fanatics had organized the grandly titled World Stratos Meeting. In fact it was pretty global with representatives from four continents and 11 countries bring-

ing 67 Stratos to the courtyard of a rustic hotel.

One yellow Stratos was spotted leaving the hotel early on the last morning of the meeting, skipping the tour of the local roads laid on for that day. Due in Paris that night, its driver wanted to make an early break for the Brenner Pass. The sun was already bright but the air was cool as the squat Stratos sped down the sparsely trafficked roads with an arrogant metallic snarl from its twin exhausts.

Soon the road snaked through the jagged Dolomites, clinging to cliff-sides and switching back, forth and back again incessantly between rock hillsides, shallow stone retaining walls and through narrow tunnels and bridges. The Stratos driver was working hard now, punching the shifts through, squeezing the brakes

hard into the tight, blind turns the car attacked so eagerly. Short straights brought full throttle to which the light car responded with a shrill whine that echoed through the gorges.

Sun, shadow, sun, shadow—an occasional companion, notably a hard-driven 16-valve Mercedes-Benz 190—the Dino winding out and out to that exhilarating zone beyond 7000—slowing sharply for small towns, just waking up—pointing the Stratos's nose into the turns and feeling the shudder of grip through the tiny wheel—a seemingly never-ending mountain road, climbing and falling, just the kind of road this car was built to conquer.

The terrain began opening out, relaxing, flattening. The road and the yellow car tracing its surface swerved out of the mountains and onto a plain. The sun higher, the driver could feel its warmth. He realized he was perspiring. The road was straighter now, no challenge. He braked gently to a stop at a crossroads and switched off the ignition. Swinging the ultra-light door open, he unbuckled, stepped out, stood and looked down at the bug-spattered Stratos, its metallic parts clicking and pinging as they cooled. Holding out his hands, he saw them tremble.

It had been a great drive, one of their best ever together. Neither would ever forget it. And happily, Paris was still many kilometers away. ☐