

# Big 3 didn't deserve this punch in the eye

There are just three domestic auto companies buying magazine ads compared to 20 import automakers, which is one reason why the auto enthusiast magazines traditionally favor foreign cars.

I, for one, think most foreign cars are more fun than domestic cars. I also like women with foreign accents, which is why I married someone from New Jersey. But I digress.

I resist trying to justify my preference for foreign cars, but I freely acknowledge it as I struggle to maintain objectivity in automotive-type prose.

THE FOREIGN-CAR bias is a preference shared by most auto writers, many of whom remember their first love as a sadomasochistic affair with a British roadster.

Rarely, however, have I read such a one-sided barrage at the domestic industry as the three distributers in the current issue of Car and Driver, all taking swings at the domestic industry's stand against raising the national corporate average fuel economy standard.

William Jeanes, Brock Yates and Tony Asenza gang up on Detroit as a reluctant dinosaur, building overweight gas-guzzlers, so technologically backward and callous about the environment that they refuse to see the benefits of a 40 mpg car in the future.

THE COLLECTIVE wrath was mainly aimed at the likes of Don Runkle, head of advanced engineering at GM, who claimed that a higher corporate economy standard in



auto talk  
**Dan McCosh**

the face of current low fuel prices would mean a bunch of dull, slow cars at best, and a market heavily favoring the Japanese at worst.

Adding injury to insult, the magazine includes 10 car reviews, including a brushoff of Chevrolet's new Lumina, glowing praise of the new Nissan 300ZX, Porsche and Jaguar, then a couple of salid remarks about the Ford Escort.

C'mon guys.

I DID a little figuring and discovered that the average fuel economy of the issue in question was 23.4 mpg highway — two mpg worse than the current CAFE standard, let alone any proposed in the future.

More interesting, two of the three highest-mileage cars in the issue were domestics, the derided Chevrolet Lumina sedan, and the Escort — with the third the Chrysler-marketed Eagle Summit, engineered in Japan.

The Chevy ranked with the top three in mileage despite an automatic transmission and five passenger seats, and weighs less than the two-place 300ZX, as well as getting 5 mpg better fuel economy. Maybe Msrs. Runkle et al have been doing their homework after all.

THE "CRUDE" Escort turned out to be the lightest car tested in the issue, as well as the most economical. Heavyweights included two Japanese and one British sedan. Only Ford's Continental (which also had the worst fuel economy in the issue) made the list of the five heaviest cars tested, and two of the five were actually two-seat sports cars. Guess which domestic car impressed the editors the most.

Unnoticed to the performance-ori-

ented enthusiast press, domestic cars have made the greatest gains in fuel economy and have surpassed imports in fuel economy per passenger carried for several years, while the imported sports cars and performance sedans favored by the magazines have been getting fatter and less efficient.

Typical is the the current issue of Car and Driver, where the most slavish praise is reserved for the least-efficient cars.

Based on its magazine average economy score, Car and Driver would be paying hefty gas-guzzler taxes right now. Any government legislation raising the MAFE would, of course, put them out of business far more quickly than raising the CAFE standard would hurt the domestic auto industry.

## marketplace

Office Automation Consultants of Birmingham is opened for computer consultation for hardware and software selections. It provides on-going support and maintenance as well as the business areas of problem identification, setting a long-range strategy, vendor selection and financing options.

Retail Computer Center Inc. of Farmington Hills joined Connecting Point of America. Retail Computer is a full-service hardware and software dealer.

Michael Flora & Associates, a Troy-based advertising agency, was named agency of record by Southland Center, managed by the Rouse-Southfield Management Corp.

TRW Inc. of Troy signed a letter of intent with Boge AG to sell Boge absorbers and struts to North American vehicle producers.

Ferraro of Troy was awarded Ford Motor Co.'s Q-1 Award. Q-1 is awarded to automotive suppliers that demonstrate continual on-time delivery of high-quality products.

Comerica Inc., the bank holding company, announced it intends to acquire Bloomfield Mortgage Corp. of Southfield from First Nationwide Bank, a subsidiary of Ford Motor Co.

Phoenix Group Inc., a Farmington Hills company that provides marketing and sales automation services, has moved into a new, 15,000-square-foot office suite at the Westhills Office Complex, 34115 12 Mile, Farmington Hills.

Metrolite Systems Inc., the electronic funds transfer subsidiary of Empire of America Federal Savings Bank, has been acquired by Money Access Service, which operates a large East Coast automated teller machine network.

## Some 3rd-class mail is insulting

It used to be that Thursdays were junk mail days, but now it seems that almost every day is junk mail day for the small business owner.

Used as a means to promote a company's products or services, junk mail represented 30 percent of the total mail distributed in this country last year — up from 14 percent in 1945.

Junk mail are those pieces that are sent through the U.S. Postal Service third class. So these statistics do not reflect the distribution efforts of "fast-heads" and those who opt for first-class mail.

ALTHOUGH third-class mail represents a legitimate form of advertising for small businesses, it may have hit a new low with celebrity endorsements.

To add to the national disease of junk thinking, form letters from celebrities are included as another method to feed on your sense of flattery.

Louis Rukeyser, Investments an-



focus: small business  
**Mary DiPaolo**

lyst, said, "The idea that we're going to be so bowled over by seeing the name of somebody important on a letter machine-addressed to us and that we're going to fall into an awestruck stupor and buy whatever is being sold is ludicrous."

HE ADDS that when such mail plays fair with us it can have its uses. "But too often, as in the case of

the celebrity form letter, it treats us with contempt and inspires the same in return."

For example, "valued Shuttle customers" of Eastern Airlines' frequent flier mileage program are due to receive a letter and bonus mileage certificate from Donald Trump if they fly a couple hundred miles on the new Trump shuttle.

In another, Grace Mirabella, for-

mer Vogue magazine editor, who has started her own magazine, suggests: "I believe there's an important segment of the female population . . . and you and I are a part of it . . . that is not being served by the magazines that are currently being published."

SOUNDS PRETTY impressive except for the fact that Rukeyser received both letters and has neither flown the shuttle nor is he a woman.

I've always wondered why the opportunities you would like to take advantage of never seem to be included in the mail. For example, Canadian travelers under age 25 may stay free at one of 55 hotels throughout Canada during Youth Travel '89, which runs until July 9.

**MACNIFICENT ITALIAN LEATHER**  
**from NICOLETTI & NATUZZI**

**50% OFF**  
**2 DAYS ONLY**  
**SATURDAY • JULY 8**  
**SUNDAY • JULY 9**

**SHERWOOD STUDIOS**  
**CLEARANCE CENTER**  
24734 CRESTVIEW CT.  
FARMINGTON HILLS

**SOFA**  
REG. \$3190 NOW \$1595

**CHAIR**  
REG. \$1990 NOW \$995

**LOVESEAT**  
REG. \$2290 NOW \$1295

**BLACK & WHITE IN STOCK**  
**OTHER COLORS AVAILABLE**

**HOURS: SAT. 10-5 • SUN. 12-5**  
**SALE • 476-3760**  
**PHON TO SALE • 334-9640**

**Immediate Delivery • Nominal Charge**

**Starts July 6th**  
**FURTHER REDUCTIONS!**  
**"HATS • OFF • TO • SUMMER"**

**SALE**

**CONTINUES WITH SAVINGS OF**  
**40 TO 75% OFF**  
original retail

**STYLISH SPRING, SUMMER CLOTHING**  
**AND ACCESSORIES**  
**GRAB YOUR AHAPAU AND GO!**

**acorn**  
Twelve Oaks Mall  
27496 Novi Road, Novi  
344-0880

**THE 72nd ANNUAL**  
**STOREWIDE**  
**Summer Sale**

**SAVE 30% AND MORE**  
on ALL Pennsylvania House

**SAVE 20% - 40%**  
on all other furniture and accessory lines

**SIZZLES AT**  
**Stewart-Glenn**

Conover • Pearson • Statton  
Jamestown • Sherrill • La-Z-Boy  
Dixie • Temple-Stuart • Stiffel  
Hammary • Stearns & Foster  
& many other fine lines.

Stewart-Glenn is celebrating our 72nd year with our greatest **STOREWIDE SUMMER SALE** EVER. Save thousands of dollars on Pennsylvania House and every other fine furniture line in our store. We want to be your full service furniture store. See us while the savings sizzle.

**The Solid Cherry Bedroom Of Your Dreams From Pennsylvania House**

Group includes Full/Queen Size Mid-Poster Pediment Headboard, 62" Dresser, Pediment Mirror, Door Nightstand.

Was \$3274 ..... Now only \$2299

Other items as shown:  
Chest-On-Chest  
Was \$1590 ..... Now only \$1069

For complete Queen Size Mid-Poster Pediment Bed

Add \$350

**Stewart-Glenn**

2600 N. Woodward Ave.  
Just South of Square Lake Rd.  
Fine Furniture Since 1917

of Bloomfield Hills

332-8348

Open Mon., Thurs., Fri. 10-9 p.m.  
Tues., Wed., Sat. 10-5 p.m.

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*our new arrival*

**Presenting the birth of our long-awaited Medicare certification at Windermere. As a result of the new Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act, Medicare-eligible patients have a broadened opportunity for skilled nursing care coverage in our facility. Our Medicare experts provide free consultation by telephone or personal appointment. Let us provide you with information that can save thousands of dollars in health care costs for yourself or someone you love.**

**For more information contact Carol Criss, Executive Director**

**Ask for our free Medicare information package.**

4750 Farmington Rd.  
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661-1700