

# Hot dogs from page 1C

The biggest thing that Hygrade lost was goodwill with the stadium association, she said. Consequently, the company won't advertise on Tiger broadcasts this season.

Four factors generally come into play when food suppliers try to sell stadium accounts, Riley said.

"Availability to service the account, the price you're going to sell the product (to the concessionaire), quality of product, and merchandising support you give to the stadium," she said, adding that merchandising would specifically include billboard advertising and promotional giveaway days at Tiger Stadium.

"We were interested in continuing the relationship. They simply informed us after the negotiations that due to a business relationship at Joe Louis Arena, they were going with Thorn Apple Valley."

Some 300,000 pounds or about 1.8 million hot dogs were sold at Tiger Stadium last year, Riley said.

Menus and stadium prices are jointly set by stadium operators and concessionaires, said Matthew D. Bauer, spokesman for Sportservice, which sells concessions in Tiger Stadium.

"It was a mutual decision between the Tigers and Sportservice that we would go with Thorn Apple Valley," Bauer said. "Both certainly have a high profile and certainly a high quality product."

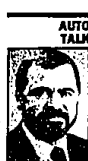
"We're in contact with purveyors of different foods across the country," Bauer said. "We're approached by purveyors on a regular basis. We like to entertain everyone as much as possible. What makes us unique is we like to keep local brands in our facilities."

Hygrade never had a written contract to supply foods at Tiger Stadium, Riley said, basically working on a year-to-year verbal agreement.

Nowadays, food suppliers get it in writing, especially in new venues, she said. Jahneke would say only that he has a multi-year deal for Tiger Stadium.

While disappointed, Riley isn't bitter about losing the Tiger Stadium account. "They were up-front with us," she said of the Tigers. "It was well within their rights. We support people who support Detroit."

# Reviews don't replace 'caveat emptor'



DAN MCCOSH

magazine.

Regardless, CR's annual auto issue is in all likelihood the most feared of any publication offering advice on what new car to buy.

Between their huge circulation, pseudo-scientific testing methodology, and regular polls of readers for product complaints, the magazine has a well-earned reputation of being the source most often consulted when a new-car purchase is in the offing.

There has been a good deal of talk this year about how imported makes took over most of the top spots in CR's annual auto issue,

leaving domestic cars mainly home near the bottom. This has been happening most years, just as most years someone accuses the magazine of bias, if not blatant anti-American sentiment.

The reality is that in the actual ratings, strictly U.S. cars took the top rating in three of the seven categories. Japanese makes took three, one was German, and the remaining category was the expatriated Mercury Villager, designed by Ford, built in a Ford plant, but engineered in Japan and powered by a Japanese engine.

In fact, it is not import vs. domestic that is most noticeable on the CR ratings lists, but the dominance of Toyota, which was at the top of the reliability index for every category where they had a product listed.

No other manufacturer had anything approximating this showing, regardless of country of origin.

This reliability index is mainly based on the input of CR's readers, via a survey that is taken on a regular basis soliciting consumer

complaints. It is both the most interesting and controversial of CR ratings, the one that creates a neat little chart of red targets if nobody much complains, or a nasty-looking row of black spots if they do.

Next as it is, the question remains whether people are really telling the truth about their cars, or are they falling to fess up about the real turkeys?

Out of curiosity, I checked up on the Honda Accord, which as far as I know had the biggest single recall of any car for a mechanical defect last year — a problem with the fuel tank that resulted in more than a million recalls sent out.

I remembered the recall mainly because at the time it had received little publicity, and I wrote a column about it, noting a trend towards bias against American cars.

Sure enough, the Accord got a row of red targets, the best possible rating, under the line on "fuel systems," meaning Honda owner's were part of a massive cover-up. Maybe one example doesn't de-

stroy the credibility of the whole system, but it sure doesn't support it.

Actually, I suspect this incident merely reinforces the contention that most people don't care as much if their car breaks down, as they do about getting it fixed in a hurry.

In fact, the only really reliable records of how well a car is performing in the real world are the manufacturer's own warranty records, which are considerably more difficult to get than the plans for the atomic bomb.

Meanwhile, the consumer must rely on an odd mix of opinion, rumor, and romance that adds up to the reputation a particular car enjoys.

Caveat emptor.

Dan McCosh is automotive editor of Popular Science magazine. If you have a comment, question or suggestion concerning Auto Talk, write to Dan McCosh, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36261 Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48150, or you can call him directly by dialing 953-2047, mail box number 1870, on a touch-tone phone.

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# Schuler from page 1C

"Win Schuler Bar Scheeze and Bar Schips have become Michigan traditions and are two of the most popular regional snack foods in the area."

Nunez says the company, based in Livonia, hopes to expand throughout the Midwest and in the sun belt.

"We're currently in Florida and we'd like to expand that," he said. "Many of our customers have retired down South, and we want to give them the brands they're used to. It's comfortable food."

Asked if the company plans to develop a "light" product line,

**"Right now we're in the early stages of developing the business. Our intent is to grow, to develop and market products that meet consumer needs."**

Robert Nunez  
general manager

Nunez said the company will "develop products that meet consumer needs."

"We support nutritional labeling. The government is mandating it by 1994, but we want to have it sooner. We believe it's

beneficial to consumers."

The company has no plans to change its manufacturing sites. All Win Schuler cheese, meat and sauce products are packed in Marshall, and its snack crackers are packed in Benton Harbor.

Campbell Soup owns the Marshall plant, while Creative Foods owns the Benton Harbor facility.

Snack food sales in the U.S. were up 5.6 percent last year, according to a report issued by the Snack Food Association. Consumers spent \$13.4 billion to quench their snack cravings.

"We see significant growth potential for the industry and our brands," Nunez said. "Win Schuler brands are high-quality, good-tasting products we expect will be extremely popular with today's snack-food consumer."

## Metro Detroit: the newspaper readership story

Detroit is a "city of suburbs." twice the audited suburban Detroit News (274,510) or Free Press (348,698).

As the graph shows, suburbanites comprise more than 72% of Detroit's metro population.

In fact, the suburbs account for 85% of metro Detroit's per survey proves that suburbanites read their SPRING newspapers.

And the 1991 Belden newspaper survey proves that SPRING delivers more total suburban readers (927,400) than the daily edition of The News (743,000) or Free Press (856,000).

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