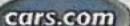


AUTOMOTIVE CLASSIFIED INSIDE AND AT  THE TRIBUNE'S ONLINE AUTO GUIDE

CN

caution that this GS is different is the word "hybrid" appearing in minuscule type along the rocker panel below each rear door. Winter snows and spring-time mud surely will hide it.

The 450h is powered by a 3.5-liter, 292-horsepower V-6 teamed with a nickel-metal-hydride battery pack that boosts the h.p. to 340.

The gas engine/battery combo packs a wallop. Step hard on the pedal and the response is as if a beefy V-8 was under the hood. Unlike a gas engine in which you build to optimum torque, batteries deliver peak torque immediately.

No hesitation. You go now—and very quickly. The battery pack acts like an electronic supercharger to give the gas engine a huge boost when needed.

Press the start button in the dash (you only have to have the key fob on you, you don't insert it into an ignition switch) and the 450h starts in gas mode when the engine is cold or is first started for the day. After it has been running or is still warm, it starts in battery mode.

When in battery mode only, the car is eerily quiet, and that can cause a problem as we found the first day with the car. Started in battery mode and waited for the wife to appear from the front

PLEASE SEE MATEJA, PAGE 7

2007 Lexus GS450h



\$59,260*

Price as tested

CITY
25
m.p.g.HWY
28
m.p.g.

WHEELBASE: 112.2 inches LENGTH: 190 inches

ENGINE: 3.5-liter, 340-h.p. V-6 with electric motor

TRANSMISSION: Continuously variable automatic

THE STICKER

\$54,900 Base
\$1,900 Voice-activated navigation system
\$1,780 Mark Levinson audio system
\$480 Run-flat tires
\$200 Rear spoiler

*Add \$695 for freight

PLUSSES

■ Hybrid that not only conserves fuel but also uses batteries to provide a heck of a power boost when needed.

MINUSES

■ \$50,000 plus investment to conserve fuel.
■ No styling sizzle.

RIDE'S OUTTA TOWN

Hollister, Calif., says thanks, but no thanks, to the annual biker rally that put it on the map—and the big screen.

PAGE 3



Portraits keep the dream car—and its glorious past—alive

From cam to glam

By Phil Patton | New York Times News Service

While elegant prewar classics and rare Italian sports cars are setting sales records on the auction block, automakers' dream cars from the 1950s are drawing top prices from high-rolling collectors.

At recent auctions, bidding wars over futuristic prototypes have turned concept cars such as the Oldsmobile F-88 and the Pontiac Bonneville Special—stars of the auto-show circuit half a century ago—into multimillion-dollar trophies for a prosperous few.

But other collectors are becoming intrigued by the two-dimensional equivalents of those fantasy cars. The dreamy drawings of auto designers and advertising illustrators, "Drawing Power: Motor City Ad Art in the Age of Muscle and Chrome," just finished an exhibition at the Skillman branch of the Detroit Public Library, which is home to the National Automotive History Collection.

Connoisseurs of automotive art are drawn to visionary sketches from design studios—many cars never moved beyond the drawing board—and to paintings of production models made longer, wider and shinier for print advertisements. Last year, the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles presented a small show on the topic, "Driving Through Futures Past: Mid-Century Automotive Concept Art and Models."

Curators of the Detroit show—Jared Rosenbaum and Rachel Mackow of the Palace of Culture, an online "museum" of futuristic design, and Mark Patrick of the Detroit Library—reached into a cache of images by Arthur Radebaugh, he is the advertising illustrator best known for dreaming up and painting fantastic vehicles—streamlined flying buses, hovering monorails and other wonders of the future—in advertisements for Bohn Aluminum & Brass. In the 1930s, Radebaugh turned out gleaming images of production-line Dodges and Chryslers set against Buck Rogers backgrounds.

Many of the paintings are from the collection of Jim Secreto, a photographer in Clarkston, Mich. Secreto found the images while working in

PLEASE SEE PORTRAIT, PAGE 5



A 1939 Dodge as seen through the eyes of advertising illustrator Arthur Radebaugh.

Jean S. and Frederic A. Sharf collection/New York Times



Tribune photo illustration

Fading trading cards a stat-less symbol of cycles

By Chuck Green
Special to the Tribune

Ordinarily, motorcycle card collecting and Beanie Babies probably aren't used in the same sentence. But according to industry experts, non-sports cards such as those depicting motorcycles from around the world largely had their 15 minutes of fame.

"In the early 1990s, there was kind of a burst of interest in collector cards in a few different ways," said Mark Mederski, executive director of the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum in Pickerington, Ohio.

So what happened? Mederski believes several manufacturers of motorcycle cards "learned there was difficulty getting them to market. Even though it was a gorgeous product and had nice information on the back, finding a way to get them to customers in quick stores, motorcycle dealerships or bookstores was difficult."

He also believes, to a large extent, motorcycle cards essentially were crowded out by those that reflected more popular activities. Mederski estimated about 3 to 4 percent of Americans ride motorcycles "versus the number of people who watch stick and ball sports or watch NASCAR racing. If you're driving down a highway, how many trucks and cars do you see something on them related to NASCAR?"

"While they could make a great product, [motorcycle cards] aren't conventional and I think that's the difficulty producers met. They couldn't strike a deal with a chain of quick stores in which to sell them."

PLEASE SEE CARDS, PAGE 5

INSIDE AND ONLINE

RIDE'S OUTTA TOWN

Hollister, Calif., says thanks, but no thanks, to the annual biker rally that put it on the map—and the big screen.

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KICKING TIRES

Join blogger David Thomas in talking 2007 cars.
CARS.COM

CLASSIFIED MARKETPLACE

INSIDE: Autos

Also, find homes for sale in Real Estate, jobs in Career Builder and merchandise in Sports today and weekdays in the classified section.



CARDS:

There are no known plans for re-issues

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Not only that, mediums such as the Internet and even television also helped dull enthusiasm for card collecting, which seems to crop up largely when adults happen upon their cards, added Roxanne Toser, publisher of Non-Sport Update Magazine, aimed at collectors of non-sport cards.

"In the past when kids did not have things like video games, computers and TVs, card collecting was a fun thing to do," she said. "When the kids grew up, they often realized their cards had been discarded but they had fond memories and wanted the cards back. Thus the hunt began."

With all of today's distractions, Toser said, "the attraction is mainly TV show and movie cards. If you like the shows or movies, you may want to collect the cards."

However, that doesn't mean motorcycle cards are unavailable.

For instance, Marc Badeau, president and CEO of distributor and retailer Top Shelf Collectables in New York and Gorham, Maine, said his company carries one of the largest inventories in the U.S., including, among others, the Harley-Davidson Series 1 and 2 (issued in 1992); Harley-Davidson Series 3 (issued in 1993),

American Vintage Cycles 1 and 2 (issued in 1992 and 1993 respectively); Classic Motorcycles (issued in 1993); and Indian Cycles (issued in 1993).

Badeau said those who like motorcycles cards include "collectors of non-sports trading cards in general and motorcycle enthusiasts specifically. Many of our customers are bikers that give the cards to children's hospitals around the country."

The average non-sport collectors are 35-year-old males, noted Toser. "It is difficult to know the number of non-sport card collectors in the world. There are more sports card collectors, but I don't have any figures for this either. The percentage of motorcycle card collectors would be very small."

Badeau added that he knows of no trading-card manufacturers with plans for a cycle issue soon. "Trading cards are manufactured based upon the topics of interest in the trading card marketplace. In the 1990s, the advent of UV-coated ["shiny"] cards became popular and non-comic topics such as motorcycles and automobiles were heavily manufactured."

The cards are made by those familiar with photography as well as the technical information about a cycle, said Mederski. "But they're not sophisticated about the print market, like magazines or books, don't understand how newsstands or motorcycle dealerships operate or where you can establish a point of purchase."

Successful issues, Badeau added, contain memorabilia cards or autograph cards signed by the actors or sports figures depicted on the card. "As such, regular trading card sets, such as motorcycle cards, do not contain the special insert cards and have steadily lost popularity. Given the lack of desirability, they are becoming cost-prohibitive to issue."

Speaking of which, he noted motorcycle card

collecting can be relatively inexpensive. "For a relatively small investment, typically \$5 to \$20 per set, one can build a great collection."

And the interest in information about motorcycles is there, said Mederski. "Motorcyclists are collectors. They collect stickers, lapel pins and patches representing their participation in various events, and they keep magazines, books, manuals and old apparel. I think these collector cards, in that moment, fit a person's passion to save things. And they are probably trading on Internet auctions every week."

But based on visits to the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum Web site, one of most popular topics is the organization's 300 deep registrations of machines on display at the museum.

"If you want to look at a 1940 Indian, there's a picture and description, so people like having that kind of data."

He added the cards often are made by those familiar with photography as well as the technical information about a motorcycle, either directly or indirectly. "But they're perhaps not sophisticated about the print market, like magazines or books, don't understand how newsstands or motorcycle dealerships operate or where you can establish a point of purchase."

Mederski also noted that gaining rights for a card, like those depicting a motorcycle or its driver, can be tricky. He said, "One former card manufacturer attended motorcycle racing events and signed up individual riders writing a contract with the rider and the manufacturer of bike he rode. That's very time consuming."

On top of that, he said royalties can cut into the bottom line. "They'd agree to royalties, which is a correct way to do business, so you'd have a piece of revenues going to that rider, possibly to manufacturer of that motorcycle or at least the U.S. distributor."