

To the moon, Audi

The German maker's latest model is out of this world.

PAGE 4



Lynked up

Will this be the world's most Internet connected crossover?

PAGE 4



Just another dude's garage?

Local group gets personal tour of Jay's car collection by the owner himself.

PAGE 5



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Pain in the neck
What can you do about a headrest that's a little too pushy?
PAGE 5

TEST DRIVE

Accordless

2017 Honda Accord Hybrid

DAN LYONS | text
Special to the Times Union

Fresh from a year long hiatus, the Accord Hybrid returns to the Honda lineup with a new, hometown address. While gas-powered Accords continue to be built in Ohio, the 2017 Hybrids now hail from Japan. The company says that the move was made in the interest of improving manufacturing and the supply of hybrid components.



As the 2017 Hybrid rejoins the lineup, it assumes the mid-cycle tweaks that the rest of the Accord lineup received last year (exterior freshening, cabin and chassis upgrades). In addition, the gas/electric Accord brings a revised powertrain, improved aerodynamics and a smaller footprint for its battery pack.

A plugless hybrid, Accord can be powered by either the gas engine, the electric drive motors, or a combina-

2017 Honda Accord Hybrid
MSRP: \$29,605 (base), \$32,905 (EX-L), \$35,955 (Touring) \$36,790 (as tested)

tion thereof. Motivation is provided by a 2.0 liter four-cylinder, Atkinson cycle gasoline engine, in concert with a pair of AC motor/generators. Total horsepower for the hybrid system is 212 (up from 196 in the previous model). A Continuously Variable Transmission and Lithium-Ion battery pack round out the cast in Honda's i-MMD (intelligent, multi-mode drive) system.

Owning a hybrid — particularly in times like these,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

THE HONDA ACCORD HYBRID returns for 2017 after a year hiatus with refreshed interior and chassis upgrades. The plugless gas/electric hybrid also sports a smaller footprint for its battery pack, leaving more cargo and passenger space.

when gas prices are relatively low — is more a matter of environmental awareness than it is strictly about saving on fuel costs. That said, high mileage numbers have always been part of the buzz about the breed.

The Accord Hybrid's fuel economy is estimated at 49 city/47 highway, according to the EPA. That's just short of the last generation model (50/46) and trails the current, mileage meister of the hybrids, the Toyota Prius (54/50, 58/53 (Prius Eco)). But, the numbers compare very favorably with cross shopped competitors like the Corolla Hybrid (42/38), The Ford Fusion Hybrid (43/41) and the Chevy Malibu Hybrid (49/43). In 300 miles of mixed driving, I registered 37 mpg's; a very respectable number for a midsize, though well shy of the EPA estimates.

Like the gas-powered version, Accord's interior has adult-sized room and passengers enjoy comfortable surroundings.

In daily use, the Honda hybrid has sufficient power to handle all normal driving activities. The sedan eases off the line, aided by the torquey electric motors, and cruises calmly at highway speeds. While the cabin is largely quiet, medium to heavy acceleration (or sustained grades) are accompanied by noticeable engine noise and CVT drone.

Given their multitasking job description, brakes on hybrid cars often lack the pedal feel of conventional powered cars. I found the Accord Hybrid's binders to be a little grabby on first impression, but you quickly adapt to it.

Accord Hybrid is a family sedan, not a sport sedan, and the chassis is tuned accordingly. The car has a comfortable, trip-friendly ride quality, and is stable going

Continued on page 2

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