

More G's from Genesis

There's some new info concerning a new model for Hyundai's premium **Genesis** brand. The **G70** sedan will join the G80 and G90 for the 2018 model year and will go head-to-head with the a number of rivals that include the Audi A4, BMW 3-Series and Cadillac ATS, to name just a few. Design-wise, the G70 will borrow some elements of the coupe-like Genesis New York Concept that Hyundai unveiled in 2016. Rear-wheel-drive will also be standard on the G70, with all-wheel-drive available. A turbocharged four-cylinder engine will also come with the base version, while Hyundai's hot twin-turbocharged 365-horsepower V-6 is expected to be optional.



Genesis G70



Ford and GM have produced hybrid pickups, but Tesla's would be the world's first all-electric hauler.

Tesla trucks on the way?

America's most valuable carmaker (on paper, at least) may soon be in the truck-making business, too. Now that the luxury all-electric manufacturer is on the verge of releasing its more affordable Model 3 sedan (\$35,000, as opposed to the Model S sedan at \$68,000, or the Model X sport ute at \$85,000), Tesla CEO Elon Musk seems dedicated to fulfilling an earlier promise: Producing trucks. One is the **Tesla Semi** heavy-duty all-electric project piloted by Jerome Guillien, who led the development of the Cascadia truck program for Daimler. (Smart money is that they're eyeing this thing to be self-driving somewhere down the line, too, given that Uber's first autonomous Otto tractor-trailer just delivered 50,000 cans of Budweiser on its maiden voyage last fall.) The other Tesla project is a **consumer pickup truck**. While Ford has recently announced plans for a hybrid F-150, Tesla's would be a fully-electric truck. Not a crazy idea, since electric motors produce a lot of low-end torque ideal for towing. Musk suggested an unveiling of the pickup concept might occur in six to nine months, with production aimed for somewhere in 2019-2020.



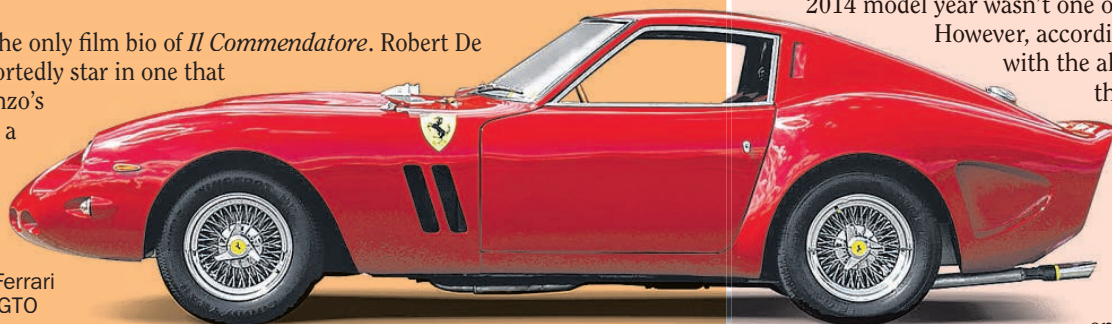
Hugh Jackman has been tapped to play Enzo Ferrari in a new film. Another in production will star Robert De Niro as the legendary sports car maker.

Another Enzo Ferrari film

According to one movie insider magazine, Australian actor **Hugh Jackman** has been tapped to portray the legendary racer and automaker **Enzo Ferrari** by TV and movie director Michael Mann ("Miami Vice," "Last of the Mohicans"). Jackman replaces **Christian Bale**, who dropped out of the as-titled "Enzo Ferrari" because there wasn't enough time for him to gain the weight needed by the start of filming. Those who saw "Logan" can attest that Jackman's halfway there.

The movie will take place in 1957, when driver Alfonso de Portago, driving a 4.0L Ferrari 335S, experienced a tire blow-out during the Mille Miglia race, killing his co-driver and nine spectators, five of them children. Ferrari and tire manufacturer Englebert were charged with manslaughter in a protracted legal case that was finally dismissed in 1961. The film is based on the biography "Enzo Ferrari, The Man, The Cars, The Races" by the late and legendary auto journalist Brock Yates. The script was adapted by Troy Kennedy-Martin ("The Italian Job," "Edge Of Darkness"), with revisions by David Rayfiel ("The Firm") and Mann.

This isn't the only film bio of *Il Commendatore*. Robert De Niro will reportedly star in one that focuses on Enzo's later life, and a third is also set in the 1950s.



1962 Ferrari 250 GTO



This Viziv-7 concept from Subaru might form the basis for the new all-wheel-drive Ascent, which will replace the Japan-based maker's discontinued Tribeca wagon.

Subaru's Ascent to replace Tribeca

Nearly all vehicles sold by Japan-based Subaru have enjoyed rousing success over the past decade, but the seven-passenger **Tribeca** wagon that disappeared after the 2014 model year wasn't one of them.

However, according to our sources, Subaru will give it another go with the all-wheel-drive **2018 Ascent** (its current working title) that's expected here as early as this fall. Clues as to the Ascent's looks were revealed last November at the Los Angeles Auto Show in the shape of the Subaru Viziv-7 SUV Concept.

That vehicle's bold look will most likely be visible on the Ascent, but modified (toned down) a bit. Subaru's 3.6-liter six-cylinder engine will handle the propulsion, but a hybrid drivetrain is also possible option at some point.

TEST DRIVE

2017 Nissan Sentra Nismo

Continued from page 1

voice connection to make/receive calls, read/send texts and emails, select music and request directions from a compatible device. An eight-speaker Bose system is available optionally, as is Nissan Connect with navigation, mobile apps and an upgraded, 5.8-inch touchscreen display.

I'm 6'1" and seated in Sentra's buckets, I wouldn't have said no to another inch of front leg room, though it measures (at 42.5 inches) slightly more than cross-shopped cars like the Elantra Sport (42.2 inches), Civic Si (42.3 inches) and GTI (41.2 inches) (and less than Focus ST (43.1 inches). I'm not very laid back when it comes to seat backs, and with the front seat set to my (upright) taste and at full push back, there was room to fit in back as well. Sentra's rear seat legroom numbers are as good or better than all of the comparable models mentioned above. Trunk space is generous, with 15.1 cubic feet of cargo capacity. Rear seatbacks split

and fold forward to accommodate longer items. However, the height of the folded seats are raised relative to the rest of the trunk, so the load floor isn't level.

It's buyer's choice for transmission: six-speed manual or a CVT with manual mode are offered at the same price. I drove the stick, which (for me) always enhances the involvement with a car that has sporty leanings. The shifter action was fine from gears 1-4, but I had trouble convincing it to make the trip from 5 to 6 on several occasions. Once persuaded, the car cruised easily in top gear, and is expected to post fuel economy numbers of 25/31/27.

The racing inspired looks bundle function and fashion. Nissan says that the ground effects result in a 30% reduction in rear lift. This sort of number is, of course, hard to verify in a test drive on public roads. Some competitive models have an independent rear suspension, a more modern approach than the Sentra's,



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older, torsion beam design. But, Nissan's engineers have a lot of experience tuning this type of suspension setup, and it's obvious that the Nismo's chassis has been nicely tweaked for this application. The car corners crisply and steering feel is nicely weighted. Ride quality is on the stiff side, but not objectionably so.

Stick or CVT, the transmission connects to Nissan's 1.6L four cylinder engine. The direct injection, turbocharged four checks in with 188 horsepower @ 5,600 rpm and 177 lb.-ft. of torque @ 1,600-5,200 rpm. Sentra Nismo pauses ever so slightly before responding to a mashed throttle. The absence of torque at roll-out combined with this bit of turbo lag makes for a momentary pause

before the car grabs the bit and takes off. Turbo engaged, the engine responds reasonably well up to about 5,000 rpm, before the lack of horses catches up with it. Nismo is outgunned on this score rather handily (Elantra Sport 201/195), Focus ST (252/210), GTI (210/258) Civic Si (205/192), and there's the rub.

The styling and suspension suggest a level of performance that the powertrain can't match up to. While it's undoubtedly fun to drive, in this market niche, more is better.

A regular contributor to the Times Union for more than 25 years, Dan Lyons is the award-winning author of six books, and photographer of 180 calendars.