



WHEN? February 2006
HOW MUCH? \$20,000 (est)
UNDER THE HOOD: 4.0-liter V-6, 245 hp, 282 lb-ft
WHAT'S NICE: Just look at the friggin' thing, will ya?

Check out my extra-sweet auctioneering chapeau



Ask Jerry!

Got a car question that your local Mr. Goodwrench can't answer? Each month, mph contributor Jerry Soverinsky provides valuable advice to our insatiable readership. Don't wonder. Don't guess. **Ask Jerry! Get answers.**

Q: I turn 15 in October and want to start driver's ed, but my mom says I'm too short (2'8"). I just can't be the only kid who doesn't drive—everyone will make fun of me.
 —“Thumbelina” Jackson; Gary, Indiana

A: Kids who tease are manifesting doubts about their own self-worth. Take pride and embrace your strengths; they will serve you well as you blossom into adulthood. You seem like a wonderful, sensitive young woman. My guess is that you're an even better kisser!

Q: While driving with my fiancé, he insists I give him oral if the trip exceeds 30 miles. I prefer instead listening to music. When I objected to his latest overture, he called me “bitchy-bitch-bitch,” broke off our engagement, and then made me listen to NPR for the rest of the ride. The whole thing was so traumatic and unsettling...NPR for heaven's sake!

—C. X. Thompson; Brooklyn Heights, New York

A: NPR can be a disturbing experience for anyone with taste. Realize that nobody actually enjoys NPR—they only think that they should. When you understand that most NPR listeners are man-hating, vapid, acutely insecure women with deep-seated body issues, it helps alleviate some of the aural (no pun intended) discomfort.

Q: My daughter, Barbara, just got her license (tear!) and she keeps asking to borrow the car on Saturday nights. Do you think she's sexually active?

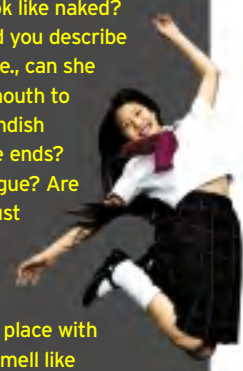
—Anneke Barrer; Skokie, Illinois

A: Anneke, this is a very common concern, so let me start by asking you some basic questions:

What does your daughter look like naked? Is she tanned all over? Would you describe her as limber? How limber (i.e., can she do the splits and press her mouth to her thigh)? Are her eyes roundish with just a slight point on the ends? What is the shape of her tongue? Are her legs firm and trim with just the right amount of muscle? Does she have flowing, brown hair with a slight part to the right that she holds in place with two red barretts? Does she smell like cinnamon? Does she know when to stop talking? And finally, would she let me call her Dawn?

You see, Anneke, without answers to these, it's impossible for me to know her sexual status. Please let me know the answers.

Please.



Man with hat and girl
 Photos from Getty Images

Toyota's FJ Cruiser Comes Correct

The original FJ40 Land Cruiser returns, in kid-friendly form

The star of Chicago's auto show, the Toyota FJ Cruiser is both a response to small hardcore off-roaders like the Jeep Wrangler and a return to the military styling of the FJ40, which was developed for the Korean war but was more likely driven by your ass-wipe assistant football coach. More than all that, though, the FJ Cruiser is just plain dope/fresh/ill/insert mall-gangsta term here. It borrows the 4Runner's running gear, meaning a rugged ladder frame, independent front and solid-rear suspension, vented disc brakes, and two- or four-wheel drive. The 4.0-liter, 245-hp V-6 engine (with a 6-speed manual or 5-speed auto) comes out of the 4Runner as well. But the FJ is 11 inches shorter overall than the 4Runner, with only a four-inch trim to the wheelbase, for great approach and departure angles. The

short wheelbase leaves no room for full-length rear doors. So, the FJ has Honda Element-style demi-doors. Ground clearance is a whopping 9.6 inches.

Toyota says the styling is “authentically functional,” and we have to agree. Just look at those badges: They say “Toyota” rather than that weird circle/oval thing that's supposed to be a T. And that's just one example. The upright windshield is another.

The FJ Cruiser has had a long gestation period—it was unveiled as a concept at the 2003 Detroit show, and what you see here is not the final production version; that won't be on the road for another year. But we're ready to ignore that it's been cooking so long, because when it does finally come out, it will be cheap. Sources predict a \$20,000 base price.

IN BRIEFS

3-SERIES GETS HARD ON TOP

We've learned that **BMW**, which has long held out against the trend toward retractable hard tops, has been seen testing what appears to be a convertible/coupe (CC) version of the new 3-series.



VW'S SICK VIRAL MARKETING

Volkswagen Europe has stepped down from suing the makers of a sick-minded spoof ad for the Polo supermini after the team behind it offered a full apology. The ad plays on the “small, but tough” tagline used in VW's advertising campaign by showing a suicide bomber, sitting in a Polo, detonating himself outside a crowded café. The car is so tough that he's the only one killed. The ad became an internet favorite. VW threatened legal action to make it clear that it gave the ad's makers no official support. It seems to have been a misguided pitch for work by a creative agency. **Have a look:** snopes.com/photos/commercials/vwpolo.asp



World's Fastest Sedan!

The Benz S65 AMG will hit 60 mph in 4.2 seconds. Holy crap.