



The Japanese auto industry got off to a slow start. The need for automobiles in the early 1900's was very small, and only the wealthy could afford the few cars available. By the 1920's, Japan's automotive market was dominated by Ford, General Motors and Chrysler. Combined, they sold over 200,000 cars. The Japanese companies sold just over 10,000.

The first automobile companies in Japan were just small subsidiaries of larger corporations, for instance, Mitsubishi was a ship producer. That handful of Japanese companies sold cars that had been designed in Europe and the U.S. The first mass produced Japanese car was a Mitsubishi which was license built FIAT A3-3, of which 22 units were built. One of the earliest companies was Kaishinsha Motorcar Works (1910), who would produce the DAT, and later change their name to DAT. In 1926, DAT would merge with Jitsuyo Jidoshia Co. They would produce a car called Datsun Type 11 and would later be bought out by Nissan in 1933, who use Datsun name until the 1980's. Mitsubishi, and Isuzu were also early pioneers of the Japanese auto industry, although Isuzu built mostly trucks. Mazda (as Toyo Kogyo) and Toyota entered the market in the 1930's.

A massive earthquake in 1923, devastated Japan. Several GMC trucks were imported to help rebuild the country's infrastructure. These trucks also helped the Japanese



design their own heavy-duty trucks. The 1930's would bring laws limiting imported cars, and the beginning of WWII pushed the American companies out of the country. As the manufacturers began to build war materiel the automobile companies built trucks. One company, Kurogane, designed and built the Type 95, a small four wheel drive car similar to the later Willy's Jeep. Toyota built trucks designed by Isuzu, and their first car, the Toyota AA (1936) which was influenced by the Chrysler Airflow.



Once the war ended, the Japanese industry had restrictions placed upon it limiting the production of aircraft, ships, and any type of military vehicle. Some of these companies would venture into the automobile industry. The 1950's saw the introduction of several car companies: Prince, Hino, Suzuki, Subaru, and Daihatsu. Toyota would export its Toyopet Crown to the U.S.A. in 1957, and Nissan would follow with the Datsun Bluebird in 1958 and then a pickup in 1959. The pickup had the most success of the three.



In the 1960's, the Prince Motor Company would be taken over by Nissan, and Hino would merge with Toyota. Nissan would continue using many of Prince's names and designs, perhaps the most famous being the Skyline (aka the GT-R) sports sedan. Hino would also continue as Toyota's medium and heavy truck and bus producer. They also produce parts for Toyota pickups and built the most recent FJ Cruiser. Honda would produce their first car in 1963, after successfully entering the motorcycle market in the 1950's.

The Japanese companies would also show the world some interesting designs in the 1960's as well. Mazda would introduce a Wankle engine in its Cosmo 110s sports car, only the second brand to offer this engine. Toyota would introduce the Corolla, what would become one of the world's top selling cars and the 2000GT, considered to be Japan's first super car. All of the Japanese companies offered kei cars. These were small city cars made for the increasingly congested Tokyo city streets. Basic transportation at best, kei cars were never officially imported to the U.S.A. Around this time Ford, Chrysler and GM were all buying interest in Japanese companies.

As the 1970's rolled around, gas prices began to rise and consumers began buying imported cars for better fuel economy. The VW Beetle was still the best selling imported car, but Toyota and Datsun were gaining in sales. Datsun introduced the 240z in 1970 as an inexpensive sports car. It was also very reliable. This combination stole many buyers away from M.G., Triumph, and Alfa Romeo. Small pick-ups also became the rage. To counter the Toyotas and Datsuns, Ford introduced the Mazda built Courier, Chevrolet had the LUV which was built by Isuzu, and Dodge would eventually introduce the Ram 50 which was a rebadged Mitsubishi.

To counter the small cars, Ford introduced the Pinto, and Chevy the Vega. Chrysler had two cars in the Plymouth Cricket, which was a rebadged Hillman Avenger from Britain and the Dodge Colt, which was built by Mitsubishi. These faced off with not only familiar brands from Europe such as VW, but the Toyota Corolla, and Datsun B110 and later the B210 as well. The Japanese cars proved to be more reliable, but suffered horrible body corrosion from road salt. Another competitor emerged as well, the Honda Civic. Honda was becoming famous for their engineering prowess with their efficient, reliable engines.

As the 70's turned into the 1980's, many American consumers had become disillusioned with the American cars. Poor build quality and performance, dealerships that didn't cater to the customer complaints and concerns, pushed people towards imports. The European brands had their issues as well, so folks began buying Hondas and Toyotas. Names like Civic, Accord, Celica, and Corolla became common. Datsun offered several cars B210, 310, 510, 710 and pickups too. Toyota 4x4 pickups were becoming a status symbol. Mazda would introduce the RX7, a rotary engine sports car that would become their first big success. Mazda also began selling its pickup as the 'B' series now that Ford had the Ranger.



By the late 1980's an agreement with GM and Toyota was made to build Toyotas in California, and badge them as Chevrolets. GM introduced the GEO brand, which were rebadged Suzuki and Isuzu vehicles. Ford and Mazda continued collaboration and shared a factory in Michigan, Mitsubishi built Chryslers in Illinois. Nissan began building its new pickup in Tennessee. Honda opened a factory in Ohio, and Toyota went to Kentucky to build its Camry. By building in the US, these companies would not have to pay import duties on these vehicles. The Honda Accord and Toyota Camry were becoming the top two mid-size sedans sold in the U.S. Honda, would introduce a luxury brand that could have potentially outclassed Cadillac or Mercedes: Acura.

The Acura brand was introduced in 1986 as a competitor to European luxury cars, chiefly Mercedes and BMW. Cadillac was still suffering from GM badge engineering mistakes, so they were not quite in Honda's crosshairs. Not to be outdone, Toyota introduced Lexus in 1989 and Nissan also brought out Ininiti that same year. In 1990, Mitsubishi began selling its twin turbo V6 powered 3000GT sports car (Dodge sold the similar Stealth). Nissan up the ante with a twin turbo 300Z, Toyota offered the Supra, and Honda had the Prelude and the Acura NSX. These cars were competing for sales with the Corvette and Porsche crowd. These new Japanese sports cars were pushing 300hp or more. Unfortunately, the price for power was becoming too expensive and sales began fall. The Japanese economy begun to flat line as well, which also drove up the car prices.

Around this time frame, the American companies were shaking off their doldrums and began improving their products. A new vehicle was about to become popular: the SUV. Ford and Chevrolet were ahead of the curve when it came to SUV's.



GM had the S10 Blazer/ S15 Jimmy and Ford the Bronco II. Dodge would sell the Mitsubishi built Raider. The Japanese were caught flatfooted, and had to scramble to find products for the US market. Suzuki had the diminutive Samurai which evolved into the Trakker (also sold by GM). Isuzu imported the Trooper, a larger SUV that was tall but narrow raising the risk of rollover. Toyota had its Landcruiser, but needed a smaller vehicle. This led to the pickup based 4Runner. Nissan would bring out the Pathfinder. Jeep crushed them all in sales with the Cherokee, which was the right vehicle at the right time. Full size pick-ups also stymied the Japanese. Toyota offered the T-100 as their first large pick-up. It was more of a midsized vehicle which didn't steal too many F-150 or Chevy C1500 buyers, but inadvertently created a market niche.

Today, the market has had many changes due to economic factors and what the consumer wants. Isuzu and Suzuki are no longer selling automobiles or light trucks in the U.S. Mitsubishi isn't selling too many vehicles either, and doesn't share anything with Chrysler anymore. Mazda and Ford have parted ways. Toyota was shaken with recalls, which were nearly unheard from them. Honda and Toyota manufacture cars here and export them to other countries. Quirky Subaru, always a bit of an oddball, has managed to stay in business by offering all-wheel drive in all of their vehicles. The first successful hybrid, the Prius, was introduced by Toyota, who essentially cornered that market.

From its humble beginnings, the Japanese automobile was often ridiculed, but in a span of about 25 years, these companies had become some of the most successful manufacturers in the world.

FROM THE PRESIDENT by Rockne Riddlebarger

Greetings model citizens! Sorry I had to miss last month's meeting, I don't miss many but when I have to I actually "miss" not attending. I don't really have anything to report this month for official club news. I've been busy modeling and have completed several in the last few weeks and am looking forward to getting some new ones under way. July 10 will be a contest night with the theme of "Imports" so I'm sure we'll be seeing some interesting models on the tables. I'll see you all then!

VP VIEWS by Randy Wilson

Not much from me this month. We need to start kicking ideas around for a Challenge theme. See ya'll on the 10th.

MEETING NOTES by Edgar Linz

A pretty good turnout for June, with 25 members and guests in attendance. Only a dozen models on the table though.

FROM THE EDITOR by Mike Jinkens

My family had several Japanese cars back in the 1980's. I had a '78 Datsun 200sx, my Dad had an '81 280zx, then a 200sx, then a pickup (he couldn't make up his mind!) My mom had an '81 200sx which would later become my second car. My brother, who had been driving a crappy Volare' ended up with a 1980 Toyota Corolla. That Corolla was nearly indestructible! His girlfriend drove a Plymouth Arrow, which was built by Mitsubishi. I really liked it, but you rarely saw any of them on the road. By the 1990's most of us were driving various GM products, but I'll always have a fondness for those old Datsuns.

WINNER'S CIRCLE by Curtis Epperson

Hey Guys and Gals it's July and the theme is Imports. I hope to have something new on the tables. I need to get building. I hope everybody has a happy and safe 4th. See Y'all Monday.

June Contest Results and Photos

1st Tom Selvaggio Mercaholic 2nd Curtis Epperson Cadaclism 3rd Bill Bench 50 Nash

Theme Award Bill Bench 56 Ford sedan delivery.

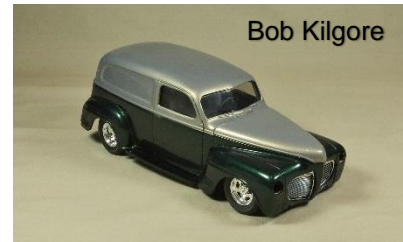




Derek Grau



Dennis Tull



Bob Kilgore



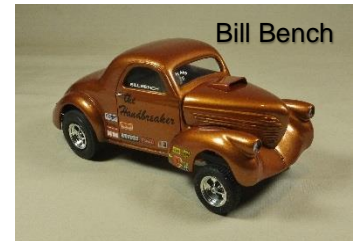
Bob Kilgore



Derek Grau



Derek Grau



Bill Bench

IN THE GARAGE:



The Hino Contessa sedan was initially based on the Renault Dauphine. In 1964, the second generation sedan (PD) introduced with coupe following in 1965. The car was designed by Giovanni Michelotti and was powered by a 1300cc 4 cylinder with twin carburetors producing 64 hp. It bore a strong resemblance to the Chevrolet Corvair and it too had the engine mounted in the rear, but was water cooled.

The Contessa (PD) was the first Hino exported outside Japan, and were marketed in Australia, Switzerland, Israel, and others. Israel would become Hino's largest market outside Japan. The Contessa had a short life, as Toyota bought Hino in 1966 and by 1967, the

Contessa was no longer manufactured.

One interesting footnote, Pete Brock (BRE) was hired by Hino to prep two Contessa sedans for competition in advance of Hino's plan for entering the U.S. market. One of the little Contessas managed to win the 1966 LA Times Grand Prix. Brock would later race the lighter and faster coupe.

LS was a Japanese model manufacturer that disappeared sometime in the 1990's. They were known for their 1:1 scale handgun replica kits. They had a full line of products, including a series of 1/32 scale automobile kits. These kits would later be reissued by ARII, then MicroAce. The series was chiefly made up of vintage Japanese cars, but a VW Beetle and Porsche 911 also made it into the line-up.

These 1/32 scale car kits are curbsides, but have a decent amount of detail for the scale. Later kits released by ARII would contain parts for making a diorama. The LS kits had cooler box art though! Look at this issue's box art. Looks like a scene out of the movie 'The Graduate'.



Hello Model Builders,

I wanted to remind everyone that the 2017 Dayton Concours d'Elegance will once again feature a display of model cars, as has been the case since 2012. For those of you familiar with the Dayton (Ohio) Concours, you know what a great show it is, and how wonderful it is they have this scale automobile display.

This year's featured marques are: The First-Generation Camaro and Firebird, and The Evolution of the MG (examples of the famed British marque from 1936 through 1995). There will also be a special class: The Cars of Orville Wright, featuring models of cars that Wright owned, and another special class: Historic Sports Cars of Japan. Plan your projects and entries accordingly!

So be sure to put this date on your calendar: **September 17, 2017**. We will once again be located inside the Transportation Center at the Carillon Park, so you don't have to worry about the weather damaging your scale creations. I have attached a Save the Date flier for your review. I have attached the show flier, the class list, and the registration form for your review. *

Please note the completed model car display entry forms are due back to me by **August 1st**.

If you are interested, please reply to this e-mail, or you can contact me at the number/address shown below, and I look forward to seeing you there in September.

Dayton Concours Model Car Display Contact:

Randy Derr
4068 Glenberry Circle
Bellbrook OH
(937) 848-1021

* Forms available at CAR meeting

THE FINAL LAP

C.A.R 2017 THEMES:

MONDAY Jan 9 – Pick-ups and Trucks - contest

TUESDAY Feb 14- AMC

TUESDAY March 14 – Tri-Fives (55-57 Chevrolet) - contest

TUESDAY April 4- Customs.

MONDAY May 8 – Letter Cars (A,B,C,etc) - contest.

MONDAY June 12 - Resins

MONDAY July 10 – Imports - contest

MONDAY Aug 14 – Primer and done.

TUESDAY Sept 12 – Funny Cars now and then - contest

MONDAY Oct 9- Same Kit Night - Revell first generation Ford Bronco.

MONDAY Nov 13 - End of the year contest.

MONDAY Dec 11 - Pizza party & Gift exchange

UPCOMING EVENTS

- July 15** **Ohio Valley Regional Model Car Show**
Sun Valley Community Center at 6505 Bethany Ln, Louisville, KY 40272.
Contact: Chris @ 502-438-8580
Andrew @ 502-396-5233
Email: info@derbycitymodelcarbuilders.com
- August 5** **Vintage Truck Show**
Youngs Dairy Farm, Yellow Springs Ohio
- August 19** **LMCC Model Car Contest & Swap Meet,**
Community Reformed Church, 2501 S 18th St, Lafayette, IN 47909
- August 26** **Big Daddy Roth Memorial Run/ Moon Pie Mania**
Car, Truck, and Bike Show (Model Show and many other events involving Moon Pies)
Dutch Mill Plaza 360 N.Main Street Bluffton, IN
Contact: (260) 273-1447
- September 23** **SCIMA**
Bartholomew County 4H Fairgrounds Pavilion, Columbus IN
Contact: Bill Ziehen (812) 376-0435 scima58bz@yahoo.com
Lance Jasper (812) 375-4891 scima64@yahoo.com
- October 7** **NNL Nationals / Toy Fair**
Sylvania Exhibition Center at Tom-O-Shanter 7060 Sylvania Ave. Sylvania , OH 43560
Contact: Rick: papafo55@yahoo.com
Glenn: ospglenn@aol.com
- November 18** **Michiana Scale Model Show & Picture Car Show**
Concord Mall 3701 South Main Street Elkart, IN 46517
Contact: (260) 273 1447 or (574) 875-6501 www.shopconcordiamall.com

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