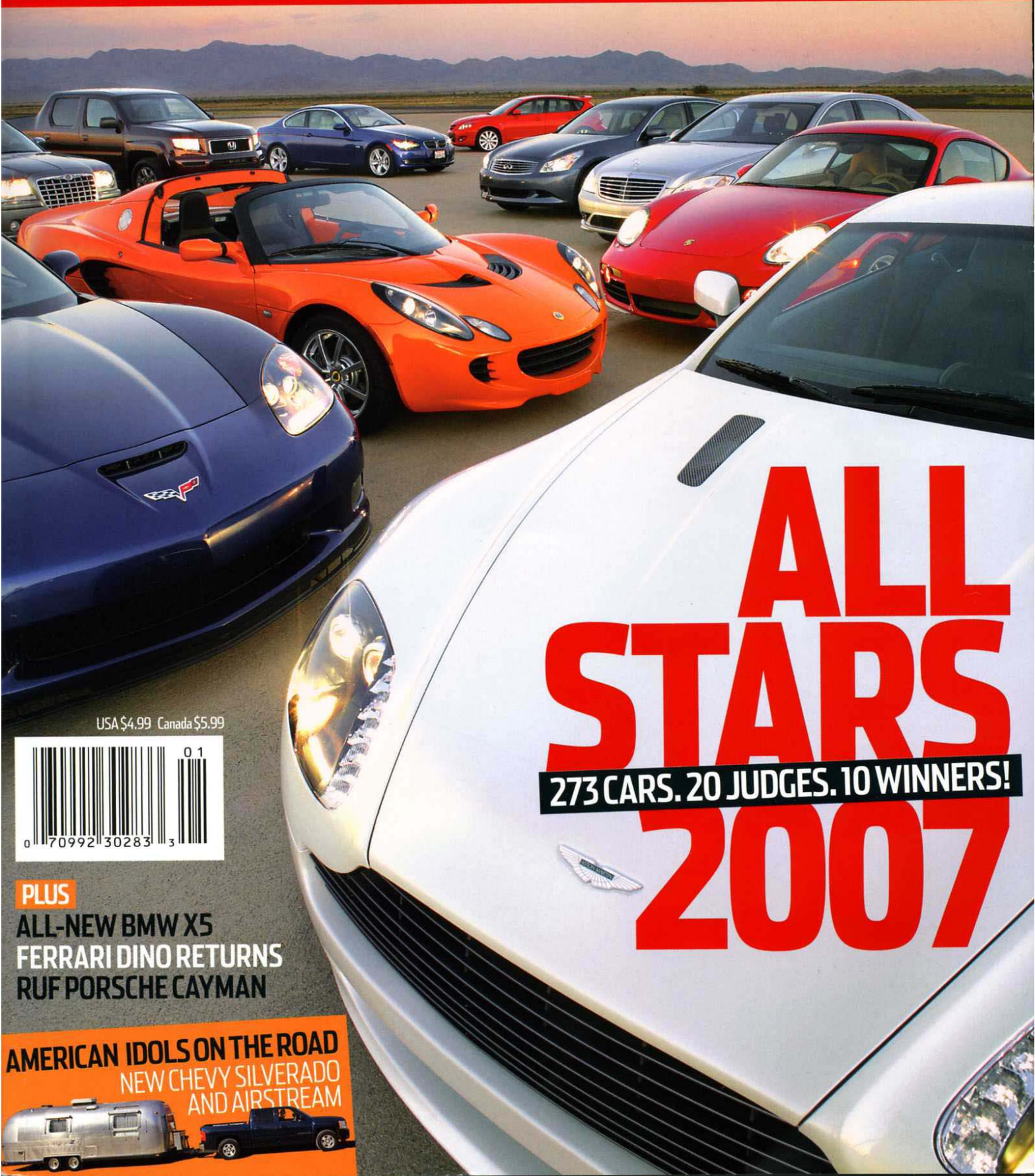


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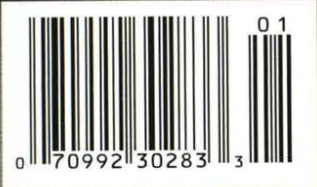
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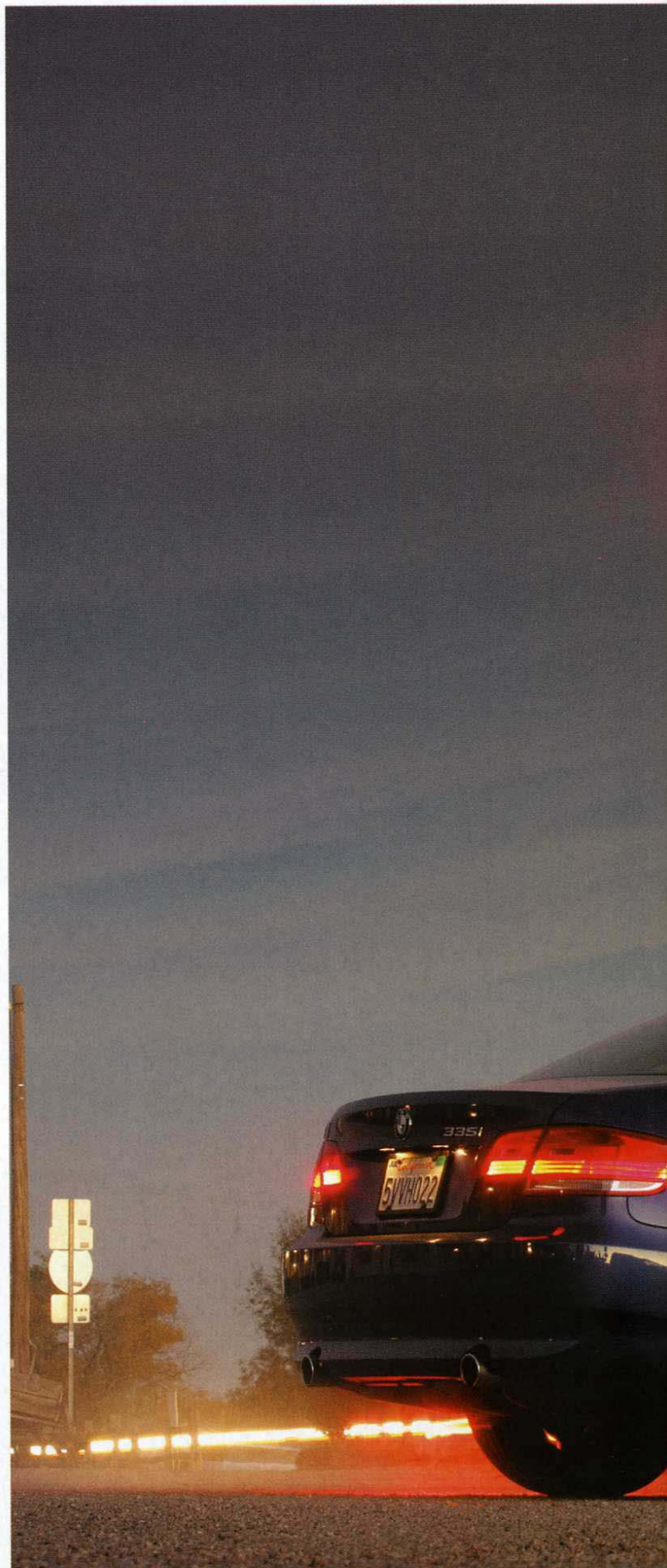
ALL STARS 2007

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW YEADON

Here are ten of the most desirable cars available to American enthusiasts in the 2007 model year. Along with a couple of American cars, our 2007 All-Stars include British, Japanese, and German contenders. And because this exercise is, ultimately, about great drives on the great American road, we felt it right to go to the granddaddy of them all for our photo shoot: Route 66.

Check out our in-depth All-Stars feature at automobilemag.com, too. You can listen to engine sounds recorded from all ten cars during our open-road trials (the Aston Martin is awesome), add your vote to the Readers' All-Stars, tell us why your car should be an All-Star, and look over our huge photo galleries, plus a whole lot more.

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Lotus Elise

At a time when every new car is bigger, heavier, roomier, more comfortable, more luxurious, more tech-laden, and more removed from the act of driving, the Lotus Elise is an All-Star because it's none of these.

The Elise delights by flouting conventional wisdom. Whereas most sports cars make their power through massive displacement, the Elise provides electrifying performance with a lowly, 1.8-liter Toyota four-cylinder.

Whereas other cars have seen their weight balloon with depressing inevitability, the Elise is supermodel svelte. Whereas modern cars hide their mechanicals under plastic "beauty covers"

and behind stylized panels imprinted to look like leather, the Elise lays bare its aluminum structure. Whereas so many cars attempt to artificially replicate steering feel with complicated algorithms that vary their power assist, the Elise dares to go with unassisted steering. Whereas other carmakers take pains to eliminate every last source of noise and vibration, Lotus, er . . . doesn't.

Yes, the Elise is loud and cramped and difficult to get into. It buzzes and vibrates and crashes over bumps. And there's not even a single cup holder. It's still great.

The Lotus Elise offers the purest sports car experience you can buy today. Nothing on four wheels provides a more direct

connection with the road. The mid-mounted engine gives the Elise a gymnast's balance. With less than 2000 pounds onboard (not counting the driver), its responses are ultraquick.

Okay, we could do without the play in the steering rack and the vibrating shifter. Wait—scratch that. If Lotus starts listening to critics, next thing you know it will be giving the Elise wider seats and more sound deadening and lots of storage compartments. Never mind all that. Better to enjoy the Elise the way it is.

In an era of spin and artifice and neck-high bullshit, this car is as refreshing as a truth plainly stated. It's unfiltered, for your pleasure.

Joe Lorio

SPECIFICATIONS

BASE PRICE

\$44,950

ENGINE

1.8L DOHC

16-valve I-4

OUTPUT

190 hp, 138 lb-ft

TRANSMISSION

6-speed manual

POUNDS PER HP

10.4