

## SHOWDOWN

for leagues, slams one out of the park. The LS400 is a formidable stroke.

This car scored highest in six categories and topped the "overall" ballot by a clear margin. Every staffer loved it.

This is an extraordinarily mild automobile, even more so than the Q45, with a friendly temperament, confident moves, and a polished demeanor. It never screws up.

It is by design, though, a very filtered, silken automobile, the hardest job of all

to pull off. We stand in admiration of the engineers who executed this assignment. At the same time we recognize that the Lexus may seem a bit placid to the strong-coffee crowd, those who don't think they're getting real flavor unless their car has the forceful, machinelike demeanor of the Audi or the BMW. The only forceful assertion in the LS400 is correctness.

What do we like best about the Lexus? That's tough. The engine is not quite as

strong as the Infiniti's, but it's a bit more thrilling in its tone. Performance is second only to the Q45. And the automatic seems to read the driver's mind in choosing its gears.

Still, maybe it's the interior that charms the most. The arrangement of the controls is logical and fine. The textures and colors are chic. The seats seem to have just the right shape. And the steering wheel's leather feels as if it came from a heifer that enjoyed Elizabeth Ar-

C/D Test Results		acceleration, sec					top speed, mph	braking, 70-0 mph, ft	roadholding, 300-ft skidpad, g
		0-60 mph	0-100 mph	1/4-mile	top gear, 30-50 mph	top gear, 50-70 mph			
	AUDI V8 QUATTRO	10.2	25.5	17.4 @ 84 mph	4.3	5.9	145	180	0.77
	BMW 735i	10.3	25.1	17.4 @ 83 mph	4.6	6.0	140	183	0.76
	CADILLAC STS	9.2	29.9	17.0 @ 81 mph	4.7	6.2	125	204	0.79
	INFINITI Q45	7.9	19.4	15.8 @ 91 mph	4.6	5.0	153	193	0.75
	JAGUAR SOVEREIGN	9.6	24.1	17.0 @ 85 mph	4.5	5.9	133	190	0.74
	LEXUS LS400	8.6	20.8	16.3 @ 88 mph	3.9	5.0	150	195	0.73
	MERCEDES-BENZ 420SEL	9.3	25.6	17.1 @ 85 mph	5.7	6.2	128	193	0.72

Vital Statistics		price, base/as tested	layout/transmission	engine	SAE net power/torque	dimensions, in			
						wheel-base	length	width	height
	AUDI V8 QUATTRO	\$47,450/\$49,435	front-engine, four-wheel-drive/4-speed auto	DOHC 32-valve V-8, 217 cu in (3562cc), aluminum block and heads, Bosch Motronic engine-control system with port fuel injection	240 bhp @ 5800 rpm/ 245 lb-ft @ 4000 rpm	106.4	191.9	71.4	55.9
	BMW 735i	\$54,000/\$55,140	front-engine, rear-drive/4-speed auto	SOHC 6-in-line, 209 cu in (3430cc), iron block and aluminum head, Bosch Motronic engine-control system with port fuel injection	208 bhp @ 5700 rpm/ 225 lb-ft @ 4000 rpm	111.5	193.3	72.6	55.6
	CADILLAC STS	\$30,981/\$36,870	front-engine, front-drive/4-speed auto	V-8, 273 cu in (4467cc), aluminum block and iron heads, Cadillac electronic engine-control system with port fuel injection	180 bhp @ 4300 rpm/ 245 lb-ft @ 3000 rpm	108.0	190.8	72.0	53.7
	INFINITI Q45	\$38,000/\$38,350	front-engine, rear-drive/4-speed auto	DOHC 32-valve V-8, 274 cu in (4494cc), aluminum block and heads, Nissan electronic engine-control system with port fuel injection	278 bhp @ 6000 rpm/ 292 lb-ft @ 4000 rpm	113.4	199.8	71.9	56.3
	JAGUAR SOVEREIGN	\$43,000/\$43,500	front-engine, rear-drive/4-speed auto	DOHC 24-valve 6-in-line, 243 cu in (3980cc), aluminum block and head, Lucas electronic engine-control system with port fuel injection	220 bhp @ 4750 rpm/ 278 lb-ft @ 3650 rpm	113.0	196.4	78.9	54.3
	LEXUS LS400	\$35,000/\$42,650	front-engine, rear-drive/4-speed auto	DOHC 32-valve V-8, 242 cu in (3969cc), aluminum block and heads, Toyota electronic engine-control system with port fuel injection	250 bhp @ 5600 rpm/ 260 lb-ft @ 4400 rpm	110.8	196.7	71.7	55.1
	MERCEDES-BENZ 420SEL	\$61,210/\$62,600	front-engine, rear-drive/4-speed auto	SOHC V-8, 256 cu in (4196cc), aluminum block and heads, Bosch KE-III-Jetronic port fuel injection	201 bhp @ 5200 rpm/ 228 lb-ft @ 3600 rpm	121.1	208.1	71.7	56.7