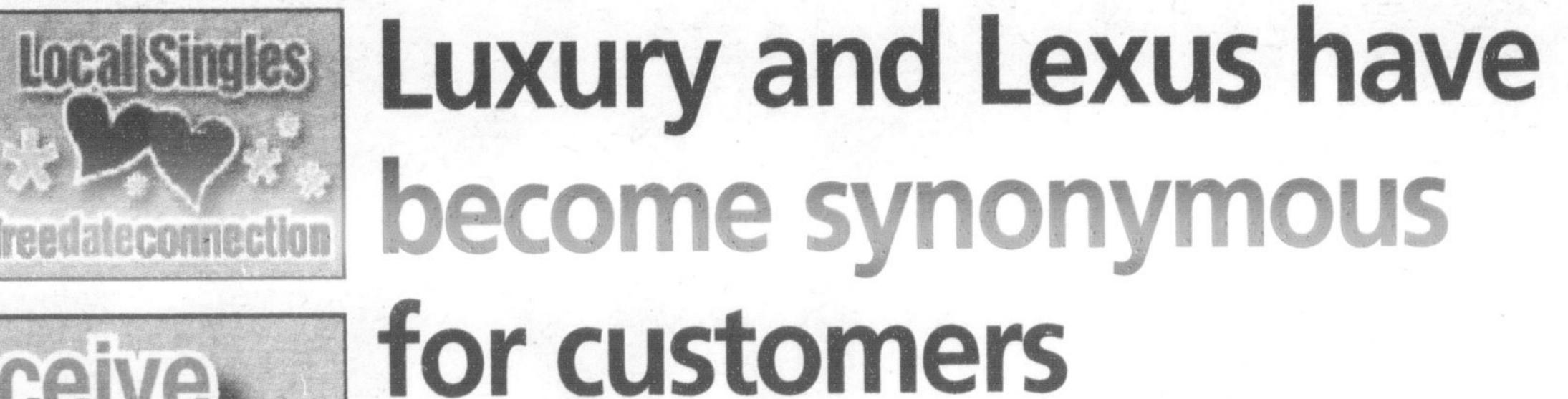


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By ROB BEINTEMA Metroland Media Group

That tends to create a certain level of expectation. And raising the bar on luxury comes with a corresponding set of demands - for power, performance and handling, especially in the increasingly com-

Which explains the Lexus GS

Slotted between the Camry-

If you want to compete with the Germans, you've got to start with the tried and true recipe of balanced power, an agile suspension and a rear-wheel-drive platform. Lexus comes through with those basic ingredients and more in the GS350, as tested here.

The GS 350 starts with a taut chassis mounting an independent double-wishbone style front suspension and multi-link rear control arm suspension. Building on that foundation, the GS 350 offers a full suite of performance technologies starting with electric power steer-

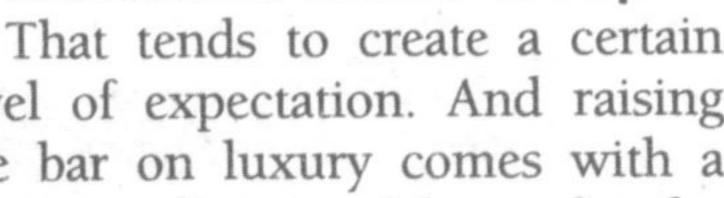
Traction Control and Hill-start Assist. Stopping power is provided by front and rear ventilated disc ABS brakes with Electronic Brake Force Distribution and Brake Assist.

But enough about stopping power, what about go power?

The GS 350 harnesses a 3.5-litre DOHC 24-valve V6 with dual variable valve timing (VVT-i) and it makes an impressive 303 hp @ 6200 rpm along with 274 lb/ft of torque peaking at 4800 rpm. There are other models and power options that I'll mention later, but customers need look no further for satisfying oomph and stoplight launch. The GS 350 accelerates with dignified civility but there's enough of an underlying edge to bring out an occasional muscular moan when the driver demands passing power.

Fuel economy is acceptable, officially 10.9/7.4/9.3L/100km (city/hwy/combined). My average ran around the 11L/100km mark. The V6 comes with a recommendation of premium octane fuel. I guess if you can afford the car, you can afford the gas but I bet Lexus

see SATISFYING on page B12

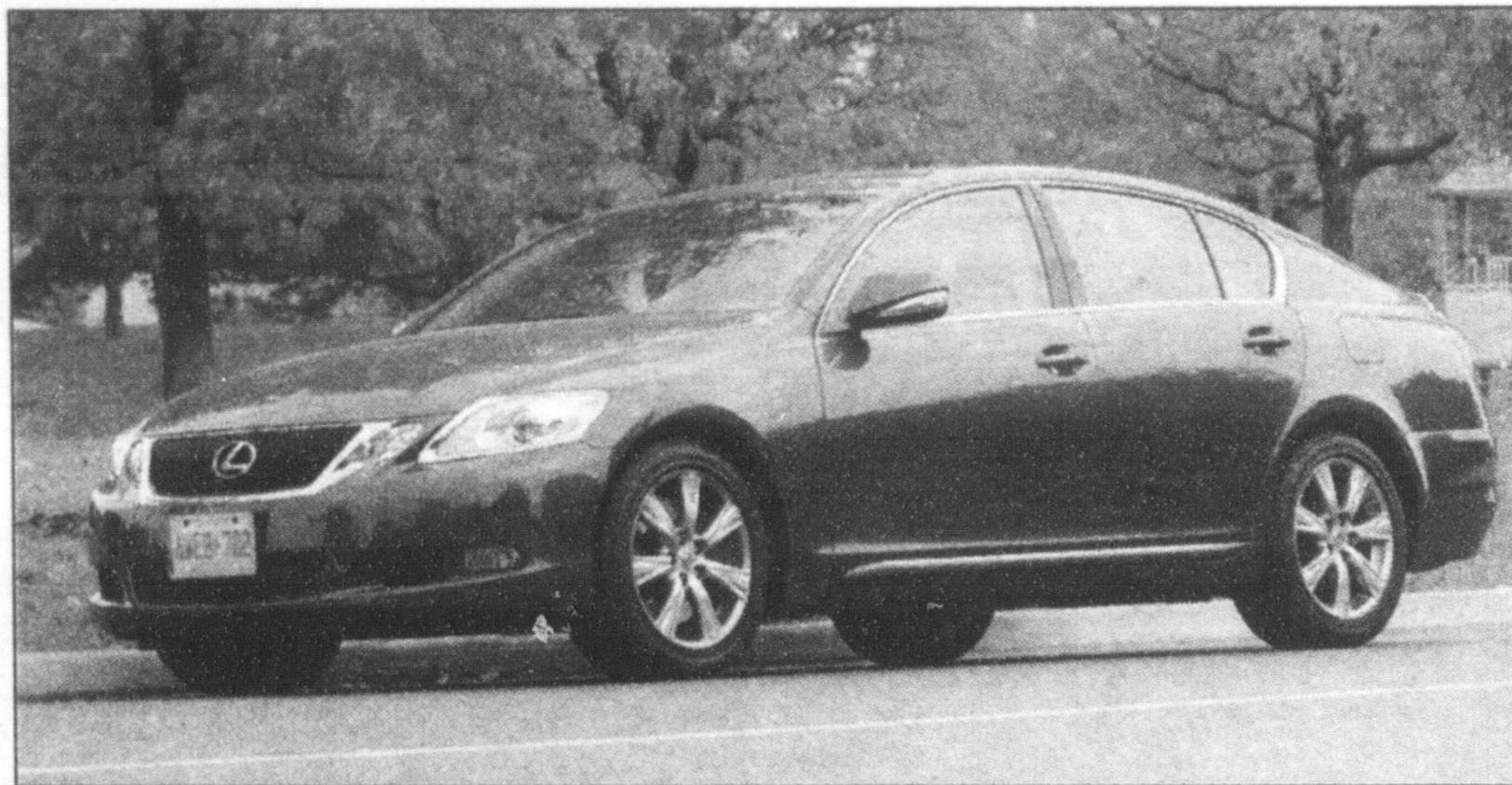


petitive sport sedan segment.

series.

based ES series and the top-of-theline LS sedans, the GS lineup offers a diverse selection of midsize performance luxury cars.

ing, Vehicle Stability Control,





The elegantly proportioned Lexus GS 350, a mid-size luxury performance sedan, situated between the ES series and the top-of-the-line LS luxury sedans, and offering sport sedan-like abilities with all the amenities Lexus customers expect.



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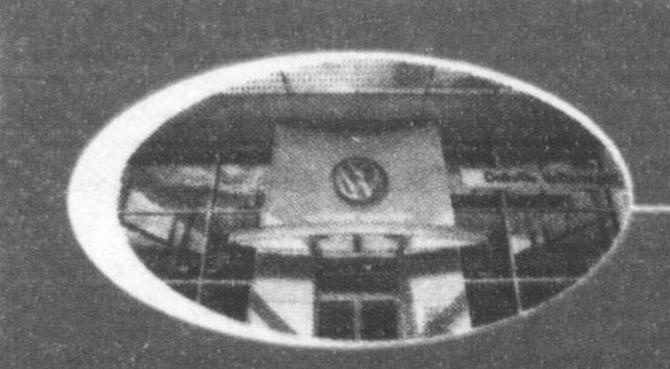


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