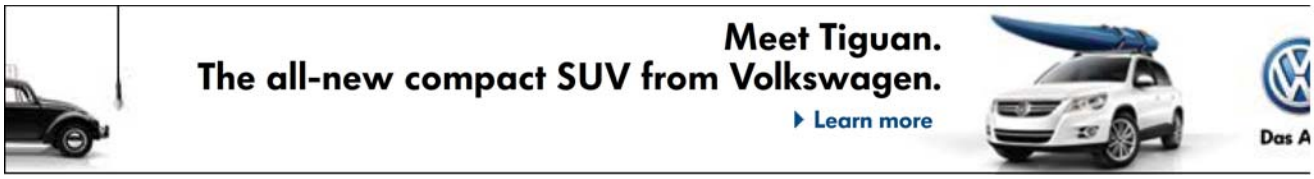

AutoWeek

It's not surprising that many Olympic-caliber athletes share our enthusiasm for high-performance machines. Beginning with the athletes featured here, during the coming weeks, we'll profile the automotive passions of a series of today's top contenders for glory and gold in this summer's Olympic Games in Beijing.

ZOOM

Philip Dalhausser
Sport: Beach volleyball

Age: 28

Hometown: Ormond Beach, Florida

Years in competition: 5

When his car passion started: "I've been into cars for as long as I can remember. When I was younger, I was a big fan of Corvettes, but these days, I'm into bigger cars."

First car: Geo Metro

What he owns now: Scion XB

Dream car: Range Rover

Ultimate goal: "To win gold in Beijing."

ZOOM

Cheryl Haworth
Sport: Weightlifting

Age: 25

Hometown: Savannah, Georgia

Years in competition: 12

When her car passion started: "In high school, my dear friend Ethan began driving a 1979 Chevy Caprice and couldn't stop talking about it. And, as all friendships go, we wanted to see precisely how far we could push the envelope. The evolution of our respective cars became bigger, which in our minds translated into *better*. I now drive 'Mary Todd,' a 1979 Lincoln, and it's the most fun I've ever had behind the wheel."

First car: 1994 Chevy Blazer, followed closely by a 1994 Chevy Impala SS ("What a great car that was!")

What she owns now: "Just Mary Todd, though I have gotten into the habit of occasionally borrowing, for long distances, machines that are better on gas mileage."

Dream car: "Mary Todd with a new paint job"

Ultimate goal: "To accept any undertaking with equal measures of integrity and respect; you will notice these as you

cheer for Team USA this summer in Beijing."

ZOOM

Bernard Legat
Sport: Track and field (1500 meters and 5000 meters)

Age: 33

Hometown: Tucson, Arizona

Years in competition: 12

When his car passion started: "Growing up in Kenya, there were few cars in the village. I loved watching the big trucks blowing up dust on the dirt roads. I was fascinated by fast cars, big cars and, of course, loud cars! It was a dream to own a car one day, and I didn't get my driver's license until I was 23, which is when I guess I was able to build on my passion for cars."

First car: Pontiac Grand Am (used)

What he owns now: 2008 Mercedes-Benz E550, 2006 Lexus GX 470, 2001 Nissan Pathfinder LE

Dream car: Lamborghini

Ultimate goal: "To win Olympic gold! It's my third Olympics, and it's my ultimate goal to win that elusive gold medal-maybe even two!"

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