

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Rod Millen Special Vehicles unveils the Lexus IS430

Las Vegas, Nevada -- The Rod Millen Special Vehicles (RMSV) built Lexus "IS430" was unveiled at the 2003 SEMA (Specialty Equipment Market Association) Show in Las Vegas Nevada last week. Commissioned by Lexus to highlight the immense potential of the IS300 chassis, the concept is powered by an enhanced 4.3-liter V8 engine from the Lexus GS430. The V8 engine is paired with a Getrag 6-speed manual transmission and a lightweight flywheel, driving the rear wheels through a high performance limited slip differential and GS430 driveline components. RMSV engineers estimate that the modifications are good for 70% more horsepower than a stock IS300.



A host of suspension upgrades complement the extra horsepower available from the 8-cylinder VVT-i powerplant. RMSV selected TEIN[®] springs and 16-way electronically adjustable shock absorbers while retaining the stock front suspension geometry. The rear suspension was upgraded with a number of GS430 components to help ensure durability. Wide Michelin Sport Cup tires riding on a set of custom built Speed Star SSR alloys transfer power to the ground. The cooling system was upgraded with a GS430 radiator and the car sports large Brembo[®] brakes featuring vented, cross-drilled rotors and four-piston aluminum calipers on all four corners while retaining the stock ABS.

The concept also features the latest in-vehicle entertainment system, a Mark Levinson[®] 20-speaker/24-channel, 720-watt audio/video system using a proprietary DVD video player and removable 6.5-inch wide-screen video display. Completing the exterior package, Chip Foose from Foose Design[®] used subtle upgrades including a Rhys Millen Racing[®] front lip spoiler and side skirts with a black over red exterior color scheme. A mesh grille and gray headlamp treatment is used up front, and the taillights and rear badging are modified for a simpler look at the rear.

Installing the V8 into the compact IS chassis presented a few challenges , requiring many parts to be specially designed and fabricated at RMSV's facilities. The packaging of the larger radiator, Getrag transmission and limited slip differential also required custom designed adapters and mounts. RMSV also designed a complete exhaust system from the ground up to meet the new packaging constraints and provide enhanced performance.

The electrical integration of the V8 engine to work with the manual transmission and the IS chassis presented a greater challenge. Integrating the GS engine electronics and the IS chassis electronics and getting both to work in harmony, called upon RMSV's extensive electronics expertise gained from years of concept car and military vehicle design and manufacture. "We had to design an onboard computer to trick the powerful GS430 engine into working without its stock automatic transmission," noted Dean Banks, RMSV's engineering team lead. "This was not your traditional engine swap." The final result is a concept offering production car reliability, fit and finish meshed with the straight-line performance of a muscle car and the on-track performance of a well-tuned race machine.

"The standard IS 300 is such a refined, fun-to-drive sport sedan- I am thrilled we were able add the V8 power and extend the handling and braking performance as much as we did while keeping the vehicle well-balanced," said company president Rod Millen during a day of testing at Willow Springs. "The IS430 is truly track-capable, but comfortable enough that you could drive it every day."

Rod Millen Special Vehicles designs and develops vehicles and advanced mobility solutions for the U.S. armed forces and commercial customers. Headquartered in Huntington Beach, California, the Rod Millen Group is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology solutions for high performance concept cars, manned and unmanned military vehicles, race vehicles, and rides for major theme parks.

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