

MONITOR Motoring:

AUTOS '87...Some Highlights

By Myron D. Stokes

If you plan on purchasing a new domestic car any time soon, you may have a bit of a problem. No, we don't mean availability or finance rates.

Oddly enough, your difficulty for the '87 model year will be *choice*. Why? Because General Motors, Chrysler, Ford and American Motors are offering myriad selections of body styles, colors, engines, trim levels and high technology—all intended to woo and satisfy you, the consumer.

In this issue, we critique some aspects of these cars important to your buying decision. Because of space limitations, we are unable to feature all of the new cars. We hope that our sample of General Motors cars in this month's *MONITOR Motoring* and our sample from the other automotive giants in future issues will entice you to see your new car dealer.

PONTIAC

Pontiac is tenaciously clinging to its position as GM's Performance Division, despite Buick's considerable inroads in this area. Nevertheless, their lineup this year is most impressive and includes the all-new Bonneville.

Bonneville: If *MONITOR Motoring* ever establishes a domestic car-of-the-year award, the Bonneville, particularly the driver-oriented SE, would be one of our choices. The only resemblance to its predecessor is the name.

Designed for the fiercely competitive sports sedan market, the Bonneville is available in two other models: Base and LE. The car features front-wheel drive, a 150 hp, 3.8 liter sequential fuel-injected V-6, independent suspension, four-speed automatic and room for six.

BUICK

Hot on the heels of GM's exciting division, Buick has clearly established itself as

leader in automotive high-technology. Within the Division is found this country's most powerful production engine: a 245 hp turbo-charged, sequentially fuel-injected (SFI) intercooled 3.8L V-6.

In terms of computerized sophistication, the Buick Riviera, with its graphic control center (GCC) and self-diagnostic capability, rivals the space shuttle.

Regal: This year, Buick offers three equipment packages to personalize your Regal: T-Package, Turbo package and Exterior Sport package. The elements of each contribute to improved appearance, handling and performance.

The top-line Grand National is the total performance Regal. The heart of this model is the astounding 245 hp 3.8L turbocharged inter-cooled SFI V-6.

In tests, this writer recorded near-phenomenal 0-60 mph times of 6.0 sec, and the standing ¼-mile in 14.0 sec.

Other models are Base Coupe and the luxurious Regal Limited. Standard engine is a 3.8L 2-bbl V-6. Optionally available is a 5.0L V-8 and a 3.8 SFI V-6.

CHEVROLET

GM's Hot Dog and Apple Pie Division has a model lineup that nearly boggles the

mind. Included is America's fastest production sports car and the most fuel-efficient subcompact, the 60 mpg Sprint.

The full-size Caprice will remain in production until at least 1990, according to industry sources. This insures that Chevrolet will literally have top to bottom model coverage.

Camaro: The big news in '87 is a 220 hp 5.7L TPI V-8 for the ultimate Camaro: IROC-Z. This is evidence that Chevrolet has finally responded to the outcry among Z-28 owners, whose cars were regularly trounced by Ford Mustang GT's.

Other Camaro models are LT, Sport Coupe and Base. The standard engine is now a 2.8L MPFI V-6 replacing last year's 2.5L 4-cylinder.

OLDSMOBILE

If R.E. Olds could have seen this latest generation of Oldsmobiles, we think he would be justly proud.

No less than 31 Olds models are offered this year, ranging from the high-tech Toronado to the affordable Firenza. Responding to new data on vehicle safety, Olds is offering a 3-point rear seat belt for Toronado's mid-model year. This is in addition to the automatic safety belt system required by the government on 10 percent of

a manufacturer's vehicle production.

Ninety-Eight: The flagship of Olds is offered in Coupe and Sedan models of Regency Brougham, Regency Sedan, and top-line Grande. Later in the model year, a Touring Sedan version will make its debut.

New for '87 are composite headlights, grille and side marker lamps. Coupe receives a new opera lamp.

Touring is designed with the upscale enthusiast in mind. The car features the FE3 handling suspension, analog instrumentation and articulated anatomically contoured leather covered front seats with power-adjustable head rests. A welcome alternative to overly soft bench-type seats.

Handling on our test car was crisp and responsive to driver input over a variety of road conditions.

All Ninety-Eights, including Touring Sedan, are powered by a 3.8L SFI V-6.

Cutlass Ciera: The Division's top seller, Ciera gets a new aerodynamic roofline for S and SL coupes. This eye-catching styling was only available with GT.

Other new features include flush-mounted composite headlamps. The upscale Brougham Wagon is added to the model
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1987 Cadillac Allante