

Third Generation News

From Third Generation Gold Card Judges Stewart Jones and Terry McCoy

A Little
Bit
of Old

The 1986 Mustang

A Lot
of
New

The 1986 Ford Mustang seemed to be a repeat of 1985 at first glance. But it was actually a clever mixture of old and new. The exterior remained primarily the same as the previous year with the exception of a few minor changes.

However, one of the most noticeable (and important) changes was the addition of a third brake light. A government mandate meant that all auto manufacturers were required to install a third brake light on all automobiles produced. Ford stylists did a wonderful job incorporating this light into the rear spoilers of the hatchbacks, and into the now-standard luggage rack for convertibles.

The base price for a stock Mustang was under \$7,500, while the GT was just over \$11,100. The SVO continued

to be on the pricey side tipping the price scales at just over \$15,200. This was twice the cost of a base model Mustang but might be deemed as twice the car.

The basic body style had been around for a while, but one look under the hood revealed a new set up. Long gone was the familiar carburetor, now replaced by Sequential Electronic Controlled Fuel Injection (SEFI). This new system brought with it words such as Throttle Position Sensor, Barometric Pressure, Ambient Intake Temperature, and Manifold Absolute Pressure, all of which was controlled by the Electronic Engine Control introduced in 1984 (EEC-IV).

The EEC-IV managed the complete running of the engine from all aspects. It dictated the amount of air

that passed through the 58mm throttle bores into the 18.5-inch long intake runners for maximum torque. The fuel flowed through a port fuel injection with Nippon-Denso electronic injectors.

The small-block Windsor also got beefier for 1986. The block received thicker castings for a truer cylinder bore and less friction. Inside the block revealed flat-top pistons which had a compression ratio of 9.2:1, more than 1985's 8.4:1.

The improvements did not stop here. The cylinder

heads were retooled also. They had a fast burn type of style with recessed valve seats and extended reach spark plugs. To cool the engine was an improved water pump with greater flow and less resistance. A new nine-blade fan, which was made of nylon, weighed less,

and had less resistance, was added. To keep all this power seated in the engine bay was a new pair of viscous (fluid filled) engine mounts.

The exhaust system was opened up quite a bit reducing back pressure by 32%. The dual exhaust system introduced in 1985 used a Y-pipe connecting the motor to a pair of mufflers. This was upgraded in 1986 by way of an H-pipe.

In the transmission area, the 1986 received a larger 10.5-inch clutch. And the clutch pedal was lowered one inch to be even with the brake pedal. This gave the driver a good heel/toe driving set up. The rear end got a stronger unit with a single-key locking system know as the 8.8 Traction Lok (which would remain in the Mustang until 1993). The ride was



1986 GT convertible owned by Brian Salyer

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smoother and quieter with new nitrogen-filled struts and shocks, and the increased usage of sound deadening material.

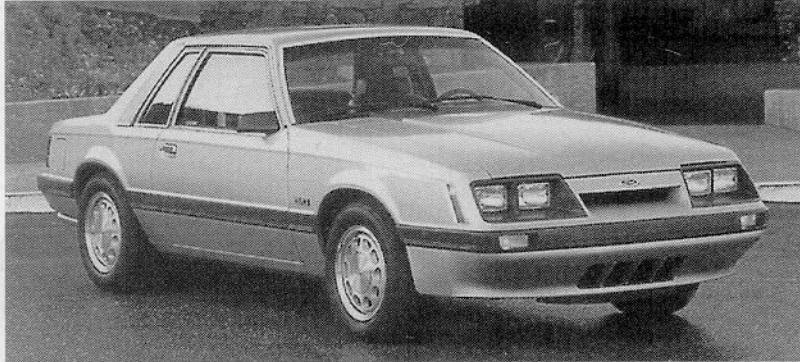
This would be the last year for the high/low head rest on GTs equipped with cloth interior. The console, introduced in 1979, remained the same with the graphic systems monitor, electronic digital clock with elapsed time/day/date, and armrest.

Although many new and exciting improvements appeared on the 1986 models, this would be the last year for the ill-fated and often misunderstood

SVO. A promising era came to an end all too quickly. The general buying public could not justify the extra \$4,000 over the cost of a base V8 GT for a four-cylinder turbo engine. During the production years of 1984 through 1986 Ford built less than 10,000 SVOs.

For 1986 Ford carefully incorporated a lot of new items into an older body style. Many people may have been fooled by the old dual headlight set up and all too familiar interior. What they didn't know was that the next trend in (fuel-injected) performance was hiding underneath that old skin.

1986 LX notchback. Ford photo.



Did You Know? Topic: 1986 Mustang

1. This was the last year for the dual headlight configuration.
2. Last year for the GT lettering to be incorporated into the body side molding.
3. Last year that the GT insignia would appear on the rear of the deck lid.
4. First year for the 8.8 rear axle assembly.
5. Last year for the radio and clock to be separate units. The following years would have a radio with integrated clock.
6. First year for the third brake light.
7. Last year for the chrome Mustang letters on the rear of the deck lid on the LX models. This had been deleted from the GT in 1985.
8. This was also the last year for rear quarter window slats.

Would you like to see your third generation pony featured in this column? If so, send photos, along with your name, address, MCA number, VIN, and build date to Stewart Jones, 923 Raleigh Rd., Palm Bay, FL 32909.

Mustang SVO Owner's Association

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Answers from last month's issue.

1. 1968 was the last year for the T-roof (T-top) option on the Mustang.
2. 1986 was the last year for Marchal Fog lamps and covers.
3. 1983 was the first year that the big Blue Oval appeared in the grill.
4. 1993 really wanted to be heard with the 80-watt CD stereo option.
5. The 1993 Cobra was the first of the third generation cars to have the running horse grill emblem (snake emblems were on the body panels).

The SVO Registry is headed by David LaRocque in Sault Marie, Michigan. This registry has approximately 400 members who enjoy sharing their knowledge. There are currently 19 chapters throughout nine regional areas of the world. A great deal of technical information and some production information is available from the organization.

For additional information contact Mustang SVO Owner's Association, Inc., Suite 429, 4222 I-75 Business Spur, Sault Ste-Marie, MI 49783-3620. Or phone them at (705) 525-SVO1, fax (705) 525-5178.