

From Third Generation Gold Card Judges Stewart Jones and Terry McCoy

"One Hot Piece of American Steel..."

For many years the motoring public had enjoyed the freedom associated with open-air driving in a convertible. But as a result of government regulations, 1973 saw the demise of the ragtop automobile. Mustang excitement would no longer be available in top-down form.

However, after a 10 year absence convertibles reappeared and in a dramatic way. For 1983 the GT, available



1973 convertible owned by Kay & Tom Kleschka

in two-door, three-door, and convertible configuration, received a new front end treatment along with a reversed non-functional hood scoop featuring a satin black hood stripe.

The large GT letters gracing the front edge of the hood lent a fearless attitude to the updated pony. Under the hood, enthusiasts were greeted by a new 17-inch chrome air cleaner sitting atop a genuine Holley four-barrel carburetor.

New for the GT lineup was the introduction of a Turbo GT series. For the first time in Mustang GT history, Ford introduced a four-cylinder EFI turbo. With all the Ford documentation available to us, however, we can not verify that any Turbo GTs were built. We do know that a handful

of prototypes of both three-door and two-door convertible models were made but never titled.

A total of 1,001 1983 GT ragtops were produced, eight of which went to Canada leaving only 993 in the U.S. The first two were made on May 11, 1983 and the last three were built on August 31, 1983.

Of all the third generation GTs, the 1983 version would prove to be the only one which did not feature fog lamps.

Convertible conversion for the 1983 models actually took place in Brighton, Michigan, at Cars and Concepts, Inc. (C&C), an association with Ford that would last for 10 great years. C&C would complete approximately 1/3 of a Mustang before it was shipped back to Dearborn for completion. C&C ultimately played a great role in the development of our favorite pony car.

A 1983 GT promotion was "The Boss -- One Hot Piece of American Steel." Ads also read, "It comes complete with a real bad attitude about being anything but the Boss." However, this would be the last of the Boss ads as Ford was also asking the simple question "Have you driven a Ford lately?"

The second year of third generation GT production easily established that the 5.0 Mustang was a true high performance vehicle. The 1983 Mustang was a great stepping stone in the 15-year history of the third generation Mustang making its own mark in Mustang history books.

Registry of the Month

1983

GT Convertible



1983 GT convertible owned by Tom Wade

The 1983 GT Convertible Registry is headed up by Tom Wade of North Largo, Florida, who has handled the associated tasks since 1990. There are approximately 100 members currently registered.

Tom has a great deal of rare Ford documentation on the 1983 GT and has all the VINs and DSOs from Ford. He has the ability to do a complete breakdown of the VIN. For example - with the last six digits of the VIN he can tell you what day your car was made, how many were made that day, and how many were made with any color combination. Tom can completely authenticate your 1983 GT convertible!

If you own one of these beauties, contact Tom Wade at 3025 Huntington Dr., North Largo, FL 34641 or call him at (813) 535-6063. His E-mail address is twade@gte.net.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What was the last year that the 5.0 H.O. was an option on the Mustang?
2. What was the first year that tilt steering was standard on the GT?
3. First year for the 140 speedometer on the Mustang?
4. What year did four-way disc brakes first appear on a Mustang?
5. When was the last year for cruise control on the 3rd gen. Mustang?
6. The last year for the four-speed manual transmission?
7. The last year for the 8-track tape player in a Mustang?

Watch for answers in next month's issue!

Did You Know?

Topic: 1983 Mustang

1. First Fox body in a convertible form.
2. First year that GT stickers appear on fenders and deck lid.
3. Only GT to display name above glove box on the dash.
4. Only year Mustang to display wording "Premium Sound" above driver-side dash.
5. Newly styled taillights and front end.
6. The only third generation GT to not use fog lamps.
7. Horsepower rating increased from 157 to 175.
8. The last year that the power window option on a convertible had a manual window crank for the rear windows.