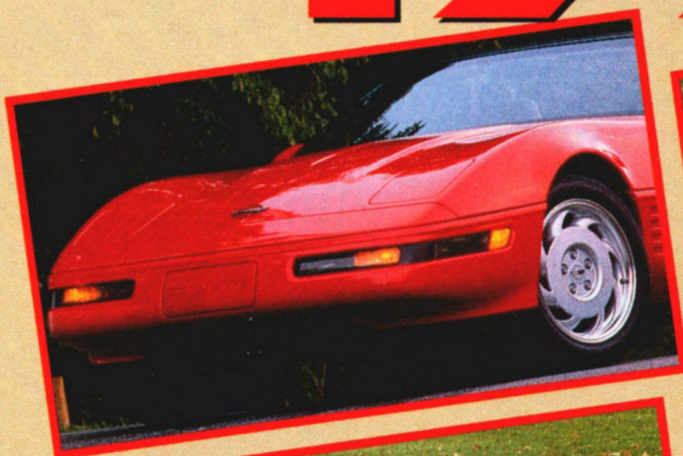


# PERFORMANCE PREVIEW

# 1990



When you get right down to it, American car makers have always been, and will always be at the forefront of technology—especially when it comes to bold new ideas. For 1991, you'll see plenty. From 13-second trucks and space-age-bodied passenger cars to completely new engine designs, there's plenty to get excited about. Here's a sampling of what to look for at your dealer's showroom next month.

# CHRYSLER

**T**wo new models grace the Chrysler line up for 1991—the Dodge Spirit R/T and the long-awaited Dodge Stealth. For us, the Spirit was really a kick in the pants, mainly because it's just so much fun to drive, but another important reason is that it's an American car.



Aimed directly at Ford's SHO Taurus, the Spirit is a four-door, high-performance sedan, with emphasis on performance. With a 220-horse, DOHC turbo-charged and intercooled 2.2-liter four cylinder, the R/T scoots from 0-60 in 6.8 seconds—fast enough to devastate the Hi-Po Taurus. And, because of its twin balance shafts, the engine sings easily to red-line—which is 6500rpm—although Chrysler engineers claim the low-friction valvetrain is capable of 8000rpm!

The Dodge Stealth is Chrysler Corp's premier high-performance car for 1991, although for the most part, the car is a Mitsubishi with a Chrysler-influenced body. Much like the Plymouth Laser and the Eagle Talon, the Stealth is a collaboration between Chrysler Corp. and Mitsubishi—and can blow the doors off a 300 ZX in both the looks and performance areas. In top-of-the-line trim, the Stealth takes on the familiar R/T suffix, and boasts a 3.0-liter, 300-horse, twin turbo (and intercooled) 24-valve V6. Power is transmitted to the ground with all-wheel drive and all-wheel steering. It embraces every high-performance innovation ever thought of, rolled into one handsome package.

*Ah yes, the Viper. A car that thumbs its sleek nose at current car-making trends, the two seater will have an all-aluminum V10 engine, cast by the good folks at Lamborghini. How does 400 horses and 450 foot-pounds of torque sound?*

# PONTIAC

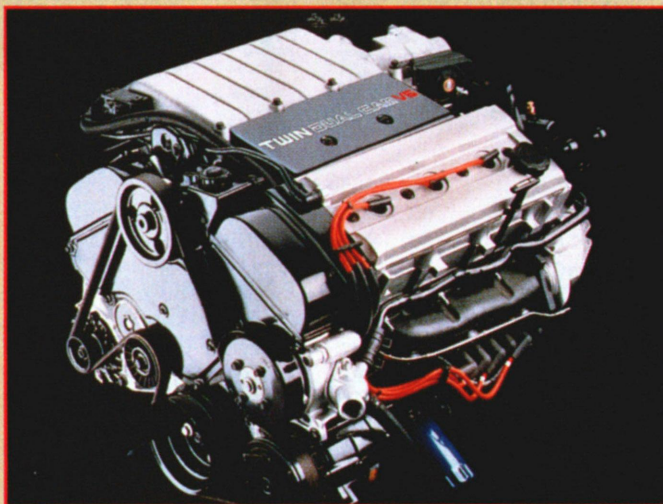
**M**

ixed emotions" would be the best phrase to use about the new line of Pontiac excitement. Gone is the heavily turbo-charged McLaren Grand Prix of 1990. It has been replaced with another,

having similar aero treatments and powered by an all new 3.4-liter "Twin Dual Cam" V6 that also appears in the Chevy Z/34. The 210-horsepower marvel should prove to be an interesting piece for those of us who like to tweak things. It's available in the Grand Prix with either a four-speed automatic or a five-speed manual box.

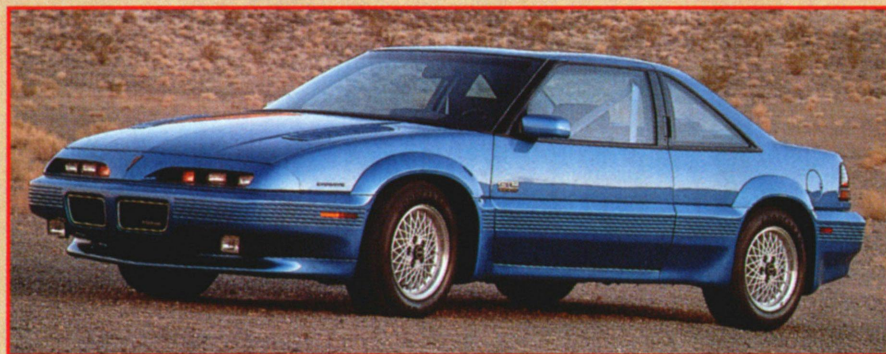
The other mixed reaction at the long lead preview focused on the restyled Firebirds. The general consensus was that the body looked great, except maybe for the front end. You either love it or hate it. Performance packages are still much the same as last year, with the Firebird being equipped with lower profile tires than last year (215/60s instead of last year's 215/65s).

The Twin Dual Cam moniker of the new V6 is reminiscent of Cosworth's Dual Four Valve V8 still used in Indy Car racing. Regardless of the name, the engine is truly an engineering mar-



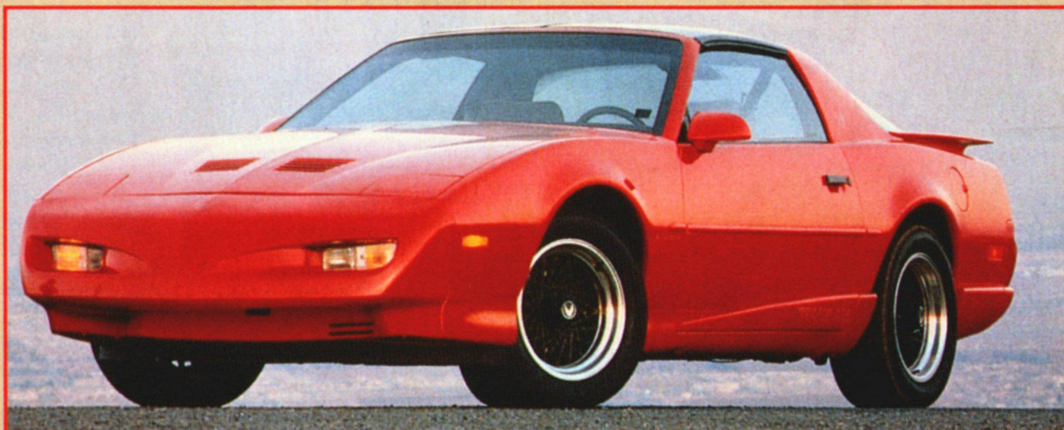
*New for the Grand Am this year will be a Sport Performance Package that includes a 180-horsepower Quad 4 and the WS6 suspension package.*

*GM's newest trophy is the Twin Dual Cam 24 valve 3.4 Liter V6 optional in the Grand Prix and replacing the 3.1 Liter turbo motor of last year.*



*It looks the same as the McLaren Grand Prix of 1990, but this year it's powered by the Twin Dual Cam engine with either a five-speed manual or four-speed automatic option.*

*It may take a little getting used to the new face of the Firebird, but the side sills and rear treatment are perhaps the best they've ever been. Fog lamps and lower profile headlights are also new.*



vel that gives us insight into GM's potential for success when everything gets through the red tape.

The big news in the Grand Am camp is the availability of ABS on the SE version of Pontiac's sports coupe. The Sport Option Package for the LE of 1990 has been replaced this year by the Sport Performance Package, which includes a Hi-Po version of the Quad 4 and a Getrag five speed.

# GMC



**GMC enters the 1991 model year with the fastest production vehicle available from any car, er...truck company. With a 280-hp Turbo V6, the Syclone turns low 13-second ETs @ 100mph!**

how managed to get past the bean counters and the legal departments to come up with a package which will undoubtedly send the division to new heights before the end of 1991. They are in the process of producing the kind of raw acceleration that even Chevy's mega-buck, "try-and-get-it-insured" ZR-1 can't keep up with. For example, 0-60mph in five seconds flat, and quarter-

**G**

MC's Syclone is more than a repackaged S-15 pickup. It's actually a repackaged ZR-1 Corvette—designed for the express purpose of fooling the cops, parents and especially insurance companies. Under the trick skin lies a turbo-charged, 4.3-liter V6 with enough power to literally waste any-

thing that dares get along side of it. Offering up an astounding 280 horsepower @ 4400rpm and 360 foot-pounds of torque @ 3600rpm, you get the feeling that a bunch of Hi-Po happy engineers at Buick jumped ship and came over to GMC just for an opportunity to go fast again. (You do remember the Grand National, don't you?) Actually, the Syclone was developed by only a handful of young enthusiastic engineers at GMC who some-

mile figures like 13.16 @ 100mph! Here's some more good news. Unlike some of GM's limited production street missiles, GMC has every intention of mass producing enough Syclones so street freaks from coast to coast won't have to worry about price gouging. Selling for around 23-25k (We're still waiting for the final pricing information), it's the performance enthusiast's dream come true. This time, though, it's a truck.

# FORD



**F**

ord Motor Company's newest offerings are significant enough to prevent anyone from calling 1991 a "carry over" season. Leading the way are new powertrains for T-Bird and Lincoln families, a completely redesigned Escort, plus the all-new Capri. Of special interest is Ford's multi-billion dollar **4.6-liter modular V8 engine** which gets its first production run for the benefit of the Lincoln Town Car series. To the performance enthusiast, that probably doesn't mean much...but we've been told the Mustang is next in line ( See page 34 for a detailed look at the all new SOHC V8). In the meantime, **Mustang** additions include Z-rated 225/55-16-inch tires for the five-liter models and twin-plug ignition sets for the 2.3-liter four-bangers. Obviously, Mustang owners and future buyers are

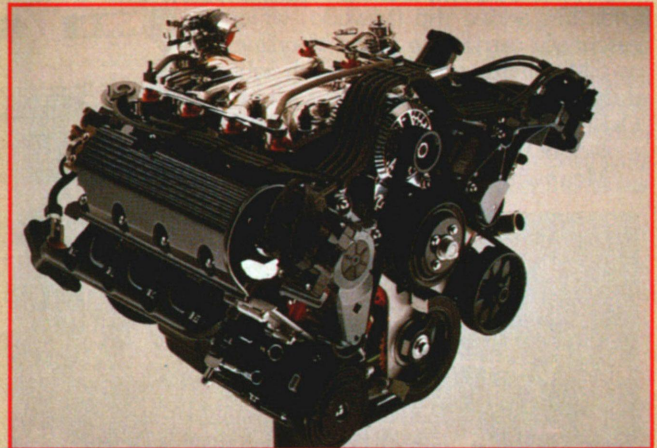
# FORD

perfectly happy with the existing package—the 12-year-old fox chassis package is still an annual sellout.

Concurrently, the **Thunderbird** finally got a V8 engine. Pirated from the Mustang, Ford engineers had some trouble incorporating a dual exhaust system and wound up starting from scratch. As a result, the “single” pipe arrangement will reduce horsepower ratings from 225 to 200.

The **Escort GT** for 1991 (released in April this year) is now an easy qualifier for “Pocket Rocket” status, now with a 127-horse DOHC 16-valve engine, sequential multi-port fuel injection, plus a host of suspension improvements including new rack-&-pinion steering and four-wheel disc brakes. A complete (and welcomed) face-lift inside and out make the new model even more appealing in the performance market.

*T-Bird Super Coupe remains unchanged for 1991 but LX models get a 200-hp V8. Mustang GT will, once again, see no changes except for Z-rated tires. Such is not the case for Escort which got a complete overhaul inside, outside and underneath.*



Ford's big-buck 4.6 modular engine program debuts in '91 under the hoods of the Lincoln Town Car but is soon slated for the Mustang. Mercury's Capri is designed to chase after potential Miata customers, the Aussie-built Capri is available with a turbocharged, intercooled, 1.6 DOHC 16-valve engine. A hardtop is optional but the trunk space and room to breathe is standard.



# OLDSMOBILE



Yes, folks, Oldsmobile is officially building trucks. Their Bravado comes from the S-Truck family of sport utility vehicles, and Olds is obviously looking for a piece of GMC and Chevrolet's action. The Cutlass family gets the new Twin-Dual Cam (huh?!) 3.4-liter V6 which pumps out 210 horses. Quad 442 Calais meanwhile received minor upgrades to FE-3 suspension package.

A

new truck is just about the last thing you'd see with an Oldsmobile badge, but GM's number three car maker is doing just that. Having already introduced the Silhouette, a futuristic multi-purpose mini-van,

Olds has added the Bravado, which essentially carries the same bloodlines as GM's Jimmy and Blazer. With light-duty truck sales still on the climb, Oldsmobile is obviously anxious to grab a piece of the pie.

Meanwhile, Oldsmobile's home-



brewed Quad 442 gets a revised FE-3 suspension package, which includes gas-charged rear shocks, re-tuned front struts and electronically-controlled, variable-effort steering. The 180hp engine remains unchanged. Such is not the case for the Cutlass lineup, which gets GM's all-new 3.4-liter Twin-Dual Cam V6 that carries a rating of 210hp with a five-speed transmission, and 200hp with an automatic trans. Chevy is offering a similar powertrain/driveline setup in the Lumina series.



Now, don't have a fit because we ran a photo of a station wagon in this section. True, most wagons don't belong in a performance car magazine like *PHR*, but take a serious look. Ever wonder what possibilities the Olds Custom Cruiser might have for a street machine or race car? We've offered up the same thoughts to Steve Stanford, who's busy preparing a few ideas in color for the November issue.

# CHEVROLET

*Chevy's showboat Corvette is the same wonderful ego booster it was last year, with the ZR-1 back in production and the L-98 forming the bulk of cars produced.*



*The Lumina this year is offered in new Z/34 trim with GM's all-new 24-valve V6, dubbed the "Twin Dual-Cam" in reference to its camshafts and Vee arrangement.*



*The Beretta remains largely unchanged from last year; the sport engine is the 2.3-liter High Output Quad 4, and the drivetrain features a 3.77:1 low gear with the manual transmission.*

*The 1991 Z/28 brings the familiar name back, now that the IROC series belongs to another manufacturer. Here, a Z/28 convertible is shown with the optional 16X8-inch wheels that are also optional on the RS.*



**Y**es, the ZR-1 is back again and, yes, it's still worth the money. We say that because the car stops as well as it goes, and the electronically-controlled suspension is one of the better options ever offered (it is available on L-98 Corvettes, also).

For the rest of us who wear blue collars, Chevy has built an urban rocket in the form of the Z/34 Lumina, powered by GM's new Twin Dual Cam 24-valve V6. The 3.4-liter beauty makes 210 horsepower and 215 foot-pounds of torque. Its two-stage chain and belt drive is less noisy than full chain drives for the camshafts. The Twin Dual Cam utilizes a speed-density map for its fuel injection.

The 91 Camaro incorporates 16x8-inch wheels reminiscent of the Z/24 Cavalier wheels of two years ago. The IROC-Z has been replaced by the familiar Z/28 logo, now that the IROC has gone to another manufacturer.

Chevy's battle star Caprice comes with an injected five-liter small block, replacing the carbureted engine. 