

FAMILIAR FACES WITH NEW FEATURES FOR 1994

By almost any stretch of the imagination, the 1994 auto season can be summed up in one surprising word -- modest.

Oh sure! The Big Three automakers will introduce a few new cars and trucks, a new name or two, and several new design features. Thanks to the soft economy and new emission controls, Detroit is keeping its eyes on controlling manufacturing costs. The result: we won't see many new models this fall.

But don't cry for Detroit. Chrysler, Ford and General Motors have enjoyed a renaissance of sorts with consumers. New price incentives, technical and design improvements made 1993 a banner year for the Big Three against the imports.

New safety regulations are the big news this auto season as automakers have responded with safer cars. The new rules require each automobile sold in the 1994 model season have frontal crash protection for two occupants. In short, more cars are offering dual airbags as standard features.

Given these safety and technical advancements, Americans no longer simply assume that the Japanese provide more value in their automobiles. Higher prices brought on by a stronger yen against the dollar have hurt the sales of Japanese cars. Honda, Mazda and Mitsubishi have seen their sales slide, and although Nissan and Toyota are still going strong, they remain concerned about their future in the American market.

The European automakers have similar sticker shock problems, but they are also gearing up for battle after seeing their sales drop last year. Mercedes-Benz and BMW are trying to offer value, and Saab, Volkswagen and Volvo

are finally introducing new products to the market in hopes for success.

Given the imports' pricing disadvantages, the American automakers seem to have a wide open lane to the motoring public. Their careful blend of new designs and simple technical updates should win over more consumers in the new automotive season.

Some of the biggest news in 1994 comes from Chrysler, the nation's smallest but perhaps most talked-about automaker.

The new Dodge Ram pickup arrives in showrooms this fall and an optional V-10 engine will be available on the Ram early next year. The restyled truck comes in three models with two bed sizes, two wheelbases and five engines, including a high performance 8-liter, 300 horsepower V-10.

Chrysler also unveils the new Dodge/Plymouth Neon, a front-wheel drive subcompact that will replace the Dodge Shadow and Plymouth Sundance. The Neon sedans feature dual airbags as standard equipment and offer ABS as an option and a choice of two 4-cylinder engines, a 133 horsepower single overhead cam and a 140 horsepower dual overhead cam.

In the popular Jeep group, Chrysler drops the Grand Wagoneer, while the automaker adds integrated child safety seats to the Grand Cherokee. Wrangler and Cherokee comes in new 3-speed automatic with the 2.5-liter, 4 cylinder engine.

The Ford Motor Company brings big changes to the automotive showroom with a newly styled Mustang, the first major change in the car since 1979. A 3.8-liter 145 horsepower, V-6 is standard in the base model, a 5-liter, 215

horsepower V-8 in the GT Coupe and convertible with a hard top cap are offered. An even more high powered Cobra version with a 5 liter, 245 horsepower, V-8 engine and 5-speed manual will come out six months later.

Besides revising a well-known car, Ford will introduce two new four-wheel drive compact cars this season. The Ford Contour and the Mercury Mystique, designed in both America and Europe, debuts next spring and will eventually replace the Tempo and Topaz.

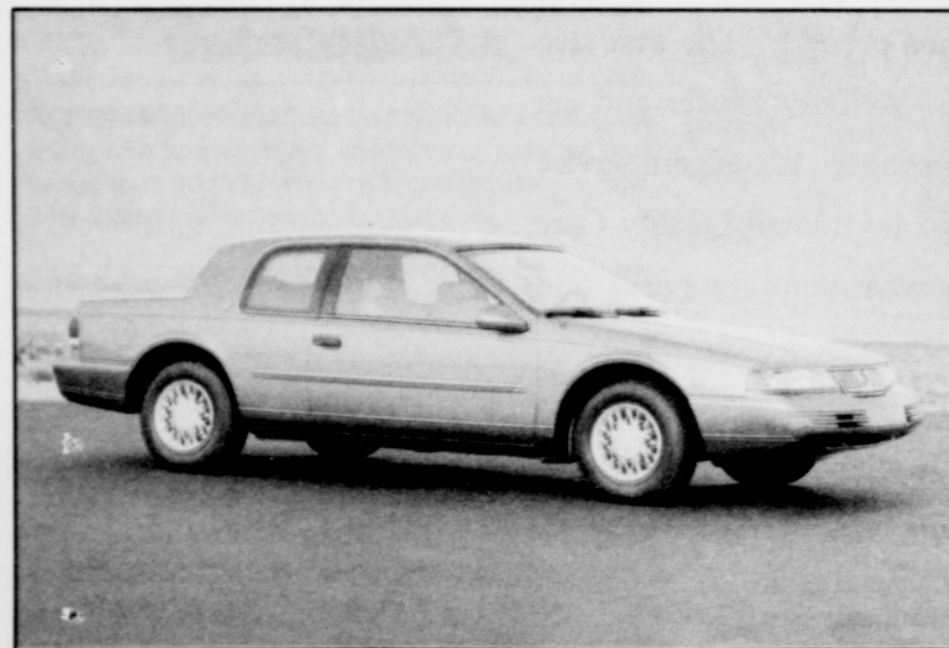
The Ford Thunderbird and Mercury Cougar boast new interiors, modest sheet metal revisions and a new V-8 engine. The Ford Aspire replaces the Festiva, and the popular Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable add cellular telephones as optional equipment.

General Motors is offering several innovations this season, including a new luxury sedan from Oldsmobile, a new S-10 compact pickup truck from Chevrolet, a new Camaro convertible, a restyled and larger Cadillac Sedan de Ville.

The Oldsmobile Aurora marks a comeback of sorts for a GM division that has been mired in the perception of the past. The new luxury sedan, which debuts in May, has a 4-liter version of GM's 4.6 liter, 32 valve, Northstar V-8. The car also has dual airbags, anti-lock brakes and traction control as standard equipment.

Chevrolet's newest offering is the revised S-10 pickup. The truck comes with four-wheel ABS with the choice of two 4.3 liter V-6s and rear-wheel ABS with the base 4-cylinder. A high performance and off-road version are available.

COVER: TOP LEFT/Buick Park Avenue Ultra, TOP RIGHT/Dodge Grand Caravan, CENTER LEFT/Ford Thunderbird, BOTTOM LEFT/Mercury Grand Marquis, BOTTOM RIGHT/Chrysler Concorde



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Whether it's for affordability, performance, safety or status, the smart shopper can wheel out of the dealer's showroom with just the right car with just the right features. The demand for improved safety features -- like air bags and anti-lock brakes as standard features -- are finally being answered in many new models.

New regulations have helped too. Every new

Chevy Cavalier, an affordable subcompact that starts at \$8,845, offers value, performance and a healthy list of options. It remains one of the most popular cars for first time buyers.

Ford Escort is a stylish subcompact that is big on performance. The car's starting price is \$9,035 for the two-door model. Ford's "One Price" sales program on the LX model rolls several options such as air

Jeep Wrangler starts at \$11,390, and with its new optional 4.0 liter, fuel injected six cylinder engine is perhaps the strongest and most versatile sport utility wagon on the road today.

Geo Tracker is an appealing first-time buy. While it lacks the Jeep's raw power and longtime prestige, it comes with a slightly lower price tag -- starting at \$10,865 -- and has a little better gas mileage



CHRYSLER NEW YORKER COMBINES A CLASSIC ROOF LINE WITH CAB-FORWARD ARCHITECTURE FOR A UNIQUE APPEARANCE.

automobile sold in 1994 is required to provide frontal crash protection for two occupants. Virtually all luxury cars, for example, have dual airbags. The new Cadillac DeVille and Fleetwood models go a step farther by offering the "Airbank," a larger than normal bag that protects three passengers in the front seat.

While the big news this season centers on safety, customers can find other incentives to make the trip to the dealership worthwhile. It doesn't matter if you need a car to take the family to grandma's or take on a deserted dirt trail or back road. What follows is a brief look at some of the popular and interesting models of the new season.

First time buyers who are likely to look for value and good gas economy, have ample makes and models to consider. They include:

conditioning into one standard price and makes this sedan a popular option in its own right.

Geo Metro is also an appealing economical buy, beginning at \$7,195. It has the highest fuel economy of any car sold in America and its small size makes it an easy squeeze in tight parking spaces and on tight budgets.

Saturn SC2 is a reasonably economic coupe with a base price of \$11,795 that is also fun to drive. Anti-lock brakes are optional, but that option and the automatic transmission, Saturn also includes a traction control feature for better handling.

First time buyers who are on a budget don't have to sacrifice the fun of driving to buy a sports car. There are several models that will bring performance and excitement without necessarily breaking the bank.

than its better known competitor.

Black "baby-boomers" who are starting a family need to consider more than their own fun and interests. Safety becomes an important consideration and the Big Three and the imports have a variety of new models that provide safety without giving up comfort and performance.

This automotive season brings a number of fine cars that have affordability, style, power, technical sophistication and consumer safety.

With all of these choices, 1994 may be the automotive season where the customer is the clear winner.