

1973



1973 would mark albeit overweight, ponycar. Since its had gained 575

foot longer. As early as 1971, management had plans for a sporty, fuel-efficient Mustang that would offer an alternative to the economical compacts that had been gaining public favor in the face of the threat posed by the Arab oil embargo and rising fuel crisis. Mustang was destined to undergo an extensive change in design for the 1974 model year.

the end of the “true,” first generation of the inception, the Mustang pounds and was over a

1973 also marked the last year for convertibles until their reintroduction in 1983. Announcement of the cancellation jump-started convertible sales by 5,700 units.

In most respects the 1973s were unchanged from their 1972 counterparts, but there were some differences to distinguish them. The front grille size and shape remained the same but the plastic egg-crate mesh was larger and mounted further forward. The pony and corral lost the horizontal bars but the shorter vertical ones, similar to the 1966, returned. New vertical parking/turn signal lights were mounted at each end of the grille and the entire area was surrounded by bright trim. Headlights fit into fender extensions and were housed within a chrome, rectangular bezel. Similarly, the taillight bezels were bright metal. To meet government five-mph impact standards, the front bumper was fitted with a color-keyed, urethane impact-absorbing system and the rear bumper was mounted further away to comply with 2 1/2-mph impact regulations. The front valance, absent the parking/turn signals, was barely visible under the new bumper setup.

The Mach 1 received a new bodyside tape treatment and a three-quarter vinyl roof was optional on the Mach 1 and other SportsRoof models. The Grande remained unchanged with the exception of color selection and vinyl roof treatments.

Engine availability was unchanged from '72. The Hurst shifter with four-speed transmissions used a round knob rather than Hurst's distinctive T-handle.

Total production ticked upward from 125,093 to 134, 867 units. Retail prices increased slightly over the preceding year. In all, a total of 10,820 SportsRoofs; 51,480 hardtops; 11,853 convertibles; 25,274 Grandes, and 35,440 Mach 1s were manufactured.

At this point, the end of Mustang's first generation, a total of 2,978,271 units had been built, including 13,765 Shelys.