

1973 Trans Am - Pontiac's 455 Super Duty

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The 1973 Pontiac Trans Am is the finest TransAM that Pontiac ever built. Not even Knight Rider's bird can compare to the 73 TA. Growing up, I had a 1977 Trans Am (Smokey & The Bandit style) and as much fun as it was to drive, if there was a greener grass on the other side, it was the 73 Trans Am. This is *the* American muscle car dream!

2nd Generation Bird

The 1973 Trans Am is a Second Generation Firebird (2nd gen is from 1970 to 1981). Of the less than 5,000 that were built, the 455 SD (Super Duty) with a 4-speed manual transmission is one of the rarest birds out there with only 72 produced. Pontiac produced a total of 252 Trans Am's with 455 SD engines in 1973.

455 Super Duty Engine Legacy

According to Pontiac's specs, the 455 SD in a 4-speed manual tranny produced 290 horsepower at 4,000 RPM and 395 Lbs/Ft torque at 3,600 RPM. Pretty pathetic when compared to today's horsepower to displacement ratio, but nonetheless, still a rock star in its day.

What's the worst thing that could happen to a 455 SD gas guzzler engine? If you guessed the October 1973 Middle Eastern OPEC nations oil embargo, you win. The Arab oil embargo stopped exports to the US and other Western nations to punish the West for supporting Israel (their enemy in the Yom Kippur War) and to exercise influence through the power of their oil. Until this event, almost no one in America cared about their energy consumption. In 1973, gas prices shot up by several hundred percent followed by the worst recession since the great depression. Suddenly, 30-40 cents per gallon looked cheap compared to the 70+ cents it was heading to.

About The Author:
C. Michael Knight invites you to jump in your 73 Trans Am, stand on it and burn a posi-traction strip over to his website: <http://1973TransAm.com/>