

History of the *Camaro* by Chevrolet

Amidst all the turmoil of the mid-60's with Vietnam beginning to claim thousands of young lives, and perhaps as a diversion of the social disruption, a more enjoyable war was playing out on the streets of America. It was a horsepower war waged by Detroit's major auto-makers. This was a contest where legends like GTO and Super Sport began to emerge, and the context in which Chevrolet's concept for its most popular car – the *Camaro* – was born.

The *Camaro* was part of the most memorable and longest-running, battle of the horsepower wars – the pony car contest. Ford had taken an unbelievable early lead in that contest with the mid-1964 launch of their stunningly successful Mustang.

When introduced on September 29th 1966, the *Camaro*, (derived from a French word meaning “comrade” or “pal”), was more than merely an answer to the Mustang, it was an instant icon that captured the attention of the youth-oriented pony car market.

The all-new, semi-unitized chassis became a basis for a variety of performance suspensions and power plants, and wrapped around the chassis was a body shell destined to become a classic. Pages of options as well as upgrade packages like RS and SS allowed buyers to literally custom build their car. Right out of the gate, the *Camaro* could be powered with anything from a six cylinder to a big-black 396, and the mid-year introduction of the 302 powered Z/28 achieved an almost ideal combination of horsepower and weight for all around performance. Chevrolet dealers like Dana, Nickey and Yenko soon created some legends of their own, by sliding a 427 Rat engine under *Camaro* hoods before sending them out the door.

2002 was the last year of production for the *Camaro*. Today, what every *Camaro* enthusiast has always believed has become a fact, the Chevrolet *Camaro* is a **Classic**.