

Ram 1500 Drives to Urban Truck of the Year Award

by Irena Granaas

Quiet. Smooth. Stylish.

The judging panel for the Urban Wheel Awards used adjectives more commonly used to praise a luxury passenger car to explain their selection of the 2013 Ram 1500 pickup as "Urban Truck of the Year."

Although UWA announced the award last week, the truck will be officially honored Jan. 13 at the 17th Annual Urban Wheel Awards, the "Official Multicultural Event" of the North American International Auto Show. The Awards will be part of a gala evening in the MotorCity Casino Hotel's Sound Board Theater in Detroit.

The Ram beat out the Mercedes Benz GL and Hyundai Santa Fe to win top honors in the truck category.

Meanwhile, Chrysler officials were quick to react to the award announcement.

"We are extremely pleased that the automotive industry continues to recognize the efforts of Ram Truck brand, and honored to receive *Decisive* magazine's 2013 Urban Truck of the Year award for the new Ram 1500," said Fred Diaz, president and CEO, Ram Truck Brand and Chrysler de Mexico, Chrysler Group LLC.

"We've worked passionately to build durable, capable trucks with best-in-class fuel economy. Winning awards in such a fiercely competitive market resonates with our customers."

The UWA judging panel, which included some of the most known and respected automotive reviewers in the country, selected the winning "2013 Urban Vehicles of the Year."

Judges focused on finding vehicles that led their class for being stylish, practical, yet attainable. Months were spent by panelists driving and evaluating dozens of car and truck candidates in various urban settings to determine the winners.

The Ram 1500's all-around excellence and high-end passenger car comfort and appointments was cited by Urban Wheel Awards founder Randi Payne.

"The Ram 1500 is as quiet as a luxury car and yet, is also extraordinarily capable as a truck," he said. "Rugged and yet smooth enough for a night on the town, the Ram 1500 really raises the bar on what a pickup truck should be."

Urban Wheel Awards juror and freelance automotive reviewer Tamara Warren added, "The 1500 is still a big gun on the outside, even while it's both leaner in appearance and more aerodynam-

ic. There's plenty under the hood, yet it's amazingly quiet. Further, the Ram rides and drives like a comfortable sedan."

For urban customers, style is a key consideration, Payne said in a phone interview from Los Angeles, where he was attending the L.A. Auto Show.

"We evaluate our automobiles based on their urban and suburban driving characteristics and performance . . . fuel economy, because most drivers do drive these vehicles in urban environments," he said. "We look at comfort and style because that's important when you're driving long hours in crowded city traffic."

"Chrysler has made tremendous improvements and inroads into the urban markets because of the styling of their vehicles . . . It's a major factor. People look at these cars and trucks and they see how great they look, and they want to buy them," he said. "It's the same thing as fashion - fashion and style are very important to the urban market."

For a pickup truck, the new Ram is remarkably fuel-efficient as well, say Chrysler officials. Users can expect about 18 mpg city and 25 mpg highway, thanks to new technologies and features that raise efficiency without sacrificing any of the "Ram Tough"



2013 Ram 1500

capability loyal Ram customers prize.

High-tech goodies include an eight-speed TorqueFlite 8 transmission, grille shutters, stop-start and air suspension. According to the Chrysler news site, the Ram 1500 also offers best-in-class ride, handling and aerodynamics.

At the heart of the truck's fuel-sipping yet robust performance are two available powerplants: the new Pentastar V6, bringing to the table 42 percent more horsepower, 13 percent more torque and an improvement of 20 percent in fuel economy compared with the previous 3.7-liter V6 engine; and the 5.7-liter HEMI V8 with Fuel Saver Technology, incorporating a class-exclusive eight-speed automatic transmission.

Silver Award Nominees

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- Cornerstone Community Financial Best Business Award for the business of any size that shows the most growth and accomplishment. The nominees are Hirotect America, Plex Systems and Plante Moran.

- dbusiness Emerging Leader Award for the individual who is making significant contributions to his/her field and showing great promise within the business community. Nominated are Megan Robinson of Snelling Staffing Services, Toby Dahm of Hennessey Capital and Melissa Goga of Express Employment Professionals.

- Baker College Education Advocate for the member who embraces and promotes education, training and development. Nominees are Sharon Miller of Oakland Community College, Dung Cao of Delphi Automotive and Plante Moran.

- Oakland University and OU Inc. Innovator of the Year Award for the company providing the best cutting-edge technologies, processes or products. Nominees are Delphi Automotive, Gibbs Sports Amphibians Inc. and Esys Automation.

Ricardo Study Addresses Future Federal CAFE and GHG Regulations

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- Downsizing of internal combustion engine cubic displacements with turbocharging or supercharging to boost power;

- Transmissions with six or more speeds as standard;
- Stop-start systems.

Enhancement of torque at low engine speeds to enable taller gear ratios and opportunities to reduce friction losses also will receive attention.

Niche offerings of hybrids, plug-in hybrid-electric vehicles (PHEVs) and EVs will continue.

During the transition from 2017 to 2025 (which Ricardo executives refers to as the "medium term"), the focus will be on expanding the "menu" of available technologies to address the further increases in CAFE and gas emissions targets.

Ricardo executives say they

expect to be evaluating an array of possible concepts that might currently be in the experimental stage, or possibly not even that far advanced.

These could include: stop-start with regeneration during deceleration; high-efficiency lean stratified ignition; combined turbo/supercharging systems; advanced low-carbon fuel formulations; cam phasing; variable valve lift; automated manual transmissions (hydraulic or electro-mechanical); and dual clutch and automatic transmissions with up to 10 speeds.

In their 2025-and-beyond market scenarios, Ricardo executives project EVs as being purely "city vehicles" and PHEVs as being in only premium and performance segments.

So, while EV/PHEV market penetration might increase, Ricardo management says internal com-

bustion engine-powered products would remain dominant.

In the area of vehicle weight, historical data showed that, on average, passenger car curb weights have increased by close to 50 percent in the past 30 years. This increase largely reflects manufacturers' preferences for constant upgrades in feature/specification levels in or-

der to maintain competitiveness.

As fuel economy targets become more severe, however, automotive manufacturers are acknowledging the need to include weight reduction as an important part of their respective "tool kits" of solutions to meet those targets.

So, the auto industry, say Ricardo executives, can expect sig-

nificant reductions in vehicle weight to occur during the next few years.

They added that it's likely that the typical 2025 car body-in-white will feature a multi-material approach with increased use of aluminum and magnesium alloys and reinforced plastics, along with continued use of steel in a variety of grades.

GM, Chevy Awarded for Their Aid in Fight Against Cancer

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"And then in 2011, Chevrolet really became actively involved with their support, and obviously they got over that one million dollar mark just simply in support of Making Strides, and hence the award they received."

The support from all 19 donors made a positive impact in the lives of people stricken with cancer and will help many recover, she said.

Other contributing honorees were Abbott; Bank of America; Curves International; Foot Locker, Inc.; HairUWear; IBM Corporation; Kohl's; the Kroger Company; National Football League; Proctor & Gamble; Live Positively and Sprite Zero of the Coca-Cola Company; The Pampered Chef, LTD; United Airlines; the Walgreen Company; Walmart; Wellpoint, Inc; Wells Fargo, and Maurices & Dress Barn (divisions of the Ascena Retail Group, Inc.).

"The generosity and ongoing support of these companies has a direct impact on the American Cancer Society's ability to help people stay well and get well, to find cures for cancer and to fight back," said Dr. John Seffrin, who is the chief executive officer of

the American Cancer Society.

"It is with their help that we are able to save 350 lives per day from cancer and continue on the path toward our goal of saving 1,000 lives per day."

In addition to their donations, all of the Excellence in Philanthropy recipients have led the way in supporting many Society programs and services in ways that tap the strengths of each company and the interests of its employees.

GM and Chevrolet are prime examples and the American Cancer Society is highly appreciative of their support.

"We at the American Cancer Society are incredibly grateful for the support that we receive from General Motors and Chevrolet, not only in Detroit but in communities across the country," said Elder.

"They quickly have become one of our most significant supporters nationwide, and, really, they are helping us continue to be the leader in the fight against breast cancer, supporting our programs and services and helping us provide care to the one in every two women who reach out to us when they are newly diagnosed with breast cancer."

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