

# FORD'S POWER PLAY

Electric Mustang SUV turns heads and bends minds - by Joe Sage

There are two primary ways to look at the new Ford Mustang Mach-E—as a Mustang and as an EV. As a Mustang, it has drawn notable angst from some of that badge's longstanding fans. But from a marketing standpoint, it has done wonders, granting it brand stature straight out of the gate.

While making sure people notice this new vehicle during an EV boom, Mach-E is also born with the performance to back up the use of the Mustang name, delivering the power, speed and precision of a well-spec'd modern EV.

(In the expanded Mustang realm, just remember Mach 1 is not hyphenated, while Mach-E is.)

Ford's range of "electrified" vehicles also encompasses hybrids and plug-in hybrids, but only the Mach-E and the new-for-2022 F-150 Lightning (also co-opting a name from gasoline era glory) are full electrics in the current lineup. Using these two

popular, high-profile nameplates is a strong idea for Ford to tackle the EV market in a big way.

Let's get in—though this is unnecessarily tricky (see the caption below). The interior has little in common with familiar Mustangs, far more screen-dependent. The layout, basic settings (e.g. seat and mirrors) and overall experience are conventional enough for an unfamiliar driver to get in and perform the fundamentals in an unexpected situation, which we consider essential. A deeper dive is needed for full personalization.

Underway, this silent stallion is very spirited—with pure go power, a road-hugging low center of gravity, tight maneuverability in traffic, and the consistent, seamless application of power that comes from a single-speed EV transmission. It also offers

one-pedal mode—step on it to go, let up to stop—an appealing way to get an expanded EV experience once you adjust to it, which we easily do.

Brakes, the same across all trims, batteries and drivetrains, provide great stopping power—a huge 18-inch vented, fixed 4-piston fitment in front; 17-inch solid, sliding single-piston in the rear.

One-pedal mode is one thing we'd like to access without digging into the screen, for example when caught in a bottleneck of stop-and-go traffic. But there are few buttons for anything, beyond power on-off, headlights and a couple of options on the steering wheel. It seems Ford wants to make sure you know their EV is a very different experience—not just a new vehicle with a quiet motor, but rather a new tomorrow, here today.

Our sample has the Extended Range battery—88 kWh vs standard 68 kWh—which boosts range from 230 to 300 miles on a rear-driver or from 211

to 270 miles on our all-wheel-driver. The extended battery also boosts power from 266 hp with standard battery and RWD or e-AWD, to 290 hp with RWD, or with power added to the front wheels, to 346 hp on our e-AWD. Acceleration also improves dramatically, though inconsistently due to battery weight vs power, through the range of drivetrain and battery variables. Slowest is rear-drive extended range, at 6.1 seconds, slower than a standard battery rear-driver at 5.8 seconds; however, with e-AWD and its extra e-power, zero-to-60 drops from 5.2 seconds with rear drive to 4.8 with the extended battery. Apples and oranges, but \$2700 for e-AWD and \$5000 for the extended battery (which also upgrades the wheels) gives our sample everything—though with less range.

When a new idea comes to market, it might take one of two approaches—try to seem like it's largely the same except for the new part; or try to seem totally different, despite being in many ways familiar. Mustang Mach-E applies a bit of both.

It does generate interest—our Mach-E inspired



many Mustangs to challenge or gawk in traffic.) Classic purists surely find more controversy in its being an SUV than its being an EV. That aside, the Mustang Mach-E delivers a great drive experience and a giant step into that new tomorrow. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS: AWD EXT RANGE

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| SEATING                   | .....5-passenger  |
| BODY                      | .....unitized mixed metal/composite   |
| ASSEMBLY                  | .....Cuautitlán, Mexico   |
| MOTOR / BATTERY           | .....(no motor specs given); (Extended Range) 88 kWh, 376 Li Ion cells                      |
| PEAK POWER                | .....346 hp / 358 kW  |
| PEAK TORQUE               | .....428 lb-ft  |
| DRIVETRAIN                | .....e-AWD electric all-wheel drive with upgraded secondary motor                           |
| TRANSMISSION              | .....single-speed   |
| 0-TO-60 MPH               | .....(AWD, Ext Range) 4.8 sec   |
| SUSPENSION                | .....F: indep MacPherson strut w hollow stblzr bar; R: indep multi-link w hollow stblzr bar |
| STEERING                  | .....elec assist  |
| BRAKES                    | .....F: 18" vented disc, 4-piston fixed; R: 17" solid disc, 1-piston sliding                |
| WHEELS                    | .....(std) 19" machined-face alum, high gloss black-painted pockets                         |
| TIRES                     | .....225/55R19 all-season   |
| LENGTH / WHEELBASE        | .....185.6 / 117.5 in   |
| GROUND CLEARANCE          | .....5.8 in   |
| TURNING CIRCLE            | .....38.1 ft  |
| HEADROOM (F/R)            | .....w pano 40.4 / 39.3 in  |
| LEGROOM (F/R)             | .....43.3 / 38.1 in   |
| CARGO CAPACITY (INTERIOR) | .....29.7 / 59.7 cu.ft  |
| (FRONT TRUNK)             | .....4.7 cu.ft  |
| WEIGHT                    | .....na   |
| RANGE                     | .....(88 kWh ER, AWD) 270 mi  |
| CHARGING                  | .....up to 150kW DC Fast Charge   |
| MPG                       | .....equiv 96/84/90 (city/hwy/comb)   |

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| BASE PRICE (Premium AWD)                                 | .....\$49,700 |
| <i>(Note: current pricing (below) shows as \$50,300)</i> |               |
| 88KWH BATTERY, PLUS PAINTED POCKET WHEELS                | .....5000     |
| DESTINATION CHARGE                                       | .....1100     |
| TOTAL  | .....\$55,800 |

## 2021 MUSTANG MACH-E LINEUP

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Not including \$7,500 Federal Tax Credit |   |
| Select                                   | .....RWD .....\$42,895                              |
|  | .....e-AWD .....EST 44,995                          |
| Premium                                  | .....RWD .....47,600                                |
|  | .....e-AWD .....▼ 50,300                            |
| First Edition                            | .....e-AWD only .....SOLD OUT                       |
| California Route 1                       | .....RWD only, extended range battery .....50,400   |
| GT e-AWD                                 | .....only, extended range battery .....59,900       |
| GT Performance Edition                   | .....e-AWD only, extended range battery .....64,900 |

Concept cars revealed at big shows often lack such clutter as door handles and mirrors. The Mach-E went to final production without door handles, other than a little nubbin at sill height you can awkwardly try to grab. Entry is reliant upon pulling out the key (fun when your arms are full), unlocking, pressing a button to set the door ajar and grabbing the edge or that nubbin. Or you can set it to lock as you walk away and unlock as you approach (highly questionable in a bad neighborhood or with a carjacker lurking). Equal parts innovative wonder and pure annoyance, we might get used to it in time. Or not. Will they add normal locks and door handles in future years? We suspect most people would greatly prefer that. •

