WHEELS

Safety features abound

From pg. 3

when the car is in gasoline mode and dead quiet in electric mode when all you hear is a bit of tire and wind noise and that s about

What makes the Sonata Hybrid so appealing to me is the fact that it feels and drives like a regular car. That may sound crazy, but with many other hybrids there is a noticeable difference.

I like the fact that it has a traditional sixspeed automatic transmission, not a Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT), which many other manufacturers are turning too because of their better fuel efficiency. There are differences with CVTs, particularly the whine that many of them produce.

Another plus is that the brakes have a very normal feel even though it is through the regenerative braking that electric energy is produced.

There are three driving modes to select from Normal, Sport and Eco. Acceleration from 0-100 km/h takes about eight seconds, which is fast enough in my books. 5.8L/100 km in most of my runs with the car, slightly above that when it was straight highway

Seating is comfortable and the interior has an upscale look and feel, something you wouldn't have said years ago with a Hyundai.

The Hybrid does not scrimp on safety features, which include Electronic Stability Control, Vehicle Stability Management, Traction Control, ABS and a rearview camera also comes standard. While projector headlamps are standard on the Sonata Hybrid, powerful Bi-Xenon HID headlamps with automatic High Beam Assist (HBA) are available. Also available are Forward Collision Warning, Blind Spot Detection, Rear Cross Traffic Alert and a Lane Departure Warning System.

A luxury car touch on the Hybrid is Hyundai's proximity-activated automatic Smart Trunk opening system as standard.

With the improvements on this new generation model, the Sonata Hybrid is now a true contender in the mid-size hybrid sedan market. If that s your shopping territory, be sure to give this car a good long

What's Best: Fuel economy is outstanding for a mid-size sedan.

What's Worst: Pricier than the traditional gasoline model.

What s Interesting: Unlike most hybrids, the Sonata Hybrid actually gets better fuel economy on the highway than the city.



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