

GM wins big at awards show

General Motors was the big winner at the Canadian Car of the Year Awards taking four of the 12 categories.

The announcement of the winners was made at the Toronto Congress Centre in Etobicoke before a room full of auto industry executives and autowriters from across Canada.

The purpose of the Canadian Car of the Year (CCOTY) awards program, created by journalist members of AJAC (automotive Journalists Association of Canada), is to provide consumers with sound, comparative information on vehicles that are new to the market.

- The winners in the 12 categories were:
- BEST NEW SMALL CAR: Saturn Astra
 - BEST NEW FAMILY CAR: Honda Accord EX Sedan
 - BEST NEW LUXURY CAR: Mercedes-Benz C Class
 - BEST NEW PRESTIGE CAR (over \$75,000): Audi R8
 - BEST NEW SPORTS/PERFORMANCE CAR under \$50,000: MINI Cooper S
 - BEST NEW SPORTS/PERFORMANCE CAR over \$50,000: Audi S5
 - BEST NEW CONVERTIBLE: BMW 335i Cabriolet
 - BEST NEW MINIVAN: Hyundai Entourage
 - BEST NEW PICKUP TRUCK: Chevrolet Silverado
 - BEST NEW SUV/CUV under \$35,000: Nissan Rogue
 - BEST NEW SUV/CUV \$35,000 - \$60,000: Saturn Vue
 - BEST NEW SUV/CUV over \$60,000: Buick Enclave



Members of the GM Canada public relations team hold up the four awards they received in the Automotive Journalist's Association of Canadian Car of the Year Awards. They are from left, Tony LaRocca, Stew Low, George Saratlic and Natalie Nankil.

In addition to the 12-category winners, AJAC handed out the "Most Coveted Vehicle" award.

Inaugurated in 2005, the award was created to acknowledge what is truly a dream car; a car that stirs the hearts and minds of automobile enthusiasts. In order to win this award, the majority of the seventy-four voting journalists had to cast a ballot and the winning vehicle had to receive two-thirds of those votes.

The winner of the 2008 Most Coveted Vehicle award is the Audi R8.

The announcement of the category winners was the result of AJAC members' extensive three to four day evaluation of 177 new 2008 vehicles in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Oct. 29 - Nov. 2.

This annual event is known in the industry as "TestFest".

In order to vote, the more than 70 journalists attending had to be on-site and drive the vehicles back-to-back on the same roads, on the same day, in the same weather conditions so as to ensure valid comparisons.

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