

Featured Cars

Building a Collectible

What this reader learned when he ordered a special Millennium Yellow 2000

By Tom Russo

Until the Z06 model was introduced in 2001, C5s were mostly carbon copies of one another, with few distinguishing characteristics. You could purchase a coupe, a convertible, or a hardtop with a variety of options.

Millennium Yellow paint was an immediate hit when it was introduced in 2000.

Production showed this option paint scheme as a “constrained” item, meaning that the production quota had been met and no more would be produced in a particular week. A few intrepid owners and dealers braved GM Distribution and ordered this non-recommended color combination in an attempt to differentiate their C5s from the pack.

According to my research, 1,600 Corvettes were painted Millennium Yellow in 2000, and only 37 were ordered with the Torch Red interior. Fifteen were built with black convertible tops, while the balance was coupes. Hardtops could not be ordered in Millennium Yellow in 2000.

Why such limited production? GM policy regarding non-recommended combinations conflicts with Corvette brand policy. Corvette brand policy is clear—the customer may order the combination he wishes, and the plant will build it. But GM’s order system rejects non-recommended combinations, so when a dealer submits a customer’s order, GM Distribution rejects it. In my case, the Corvette brand manager had to intervene and instruct GM Distribution that, indeed, this was the correct customer order—“Build the car!” And it takes a strong customer-service-oriented dealer to stick with it.

In a model series with few remarkable product differentiations, will this C5—affectionately dubbed “the Ronald McDonald Corvette” by Bowling Green Assembly Plant workers—emerge as the first Corvette collectible of the 21st century? Whether it does or not, it’s the combination I was willing to fight for.

