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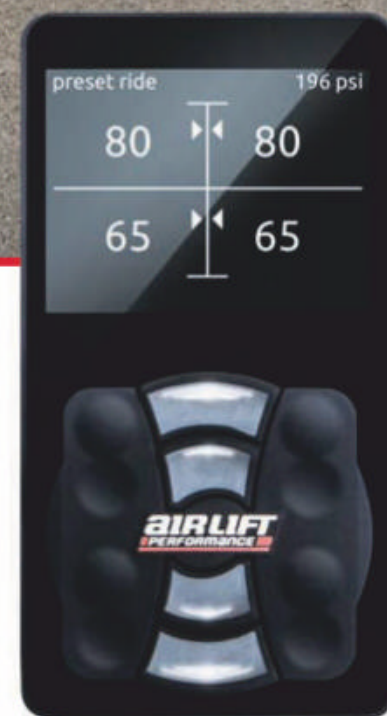


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ED START

Issue 419 April 2020

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

We're nearly there, guys. In fact, we're so close I can smell the tyre shine. That's right, even though it doesn't feel any warmer, winter is almost done, and the show season will soon open its doors. By the time you read this, we'll probably be walking around Ultimate Dubs admiring all the fresh builds. UD's show report will be in issue 420 (on sale 27/03/2020), but what's in issue 419? Well, as per usual, the finest selection of modified cars from across the globe.

We really do pride ourselves on the diverse range of cars we publish each month; there's not another magazine on the market that would feature a Porsche green S14 alongside a 1954 Chevy pickup and a Corsa VXR. All three are amazing builds but represent different subcultures within our scene. The Silvia is a slider, the Chevy a concours-standard custom and the Corsa a bagged show-and-go hot hatch. And that's only 50 percent of the featured metal in this issue. There's also a mental Merc 190E, Honda-powered AE86 and a super-clean Audi A3! So yeah, if you're into cars, you'll be into at least one of these builds.

But this magazine isn't just about the feature cars, there's also tech guides on clutches and wheel refurbishing, plus all the action from Essen, our Top 10 Secret Street Weapons and a bunch of cool new products for your perusal. So, you've got to ask yourself one question... why are you still reading these words? Go on, stick the kettle on, grab a packet of Hobnobs and enjoy the mag.

Big Love,

Slim Jules

Jules

Feature Of The Month: I'm going to have to delete this little box in the future; it's becoming too hard to pick a favourite. I'd happily park any of the cars from this issue on my drive, so instead of choosing one, I'm going to choose my top two this month. And they are... Auto Finesse's pickup and the F7LTHY 190E Merc.



Next Issue **on sale** 27 • 03 • 2020



SLIM JULES
EDITOR

"What's my favourite show of the year? I'm going to have to go with SEMA."



MIDGE
CONTRIBUTING
EDITOR

"SEMA is good, but being a Jap fan, I've gotta go with Japfest Silverstone."



INITIAL G
ART EDITOR

"I don't get to many shows any more but when I do, I go to TRAX Silverstone!"



GLEND A
WEBSITE EDITOR

"My current favourite show is Stranger Things, can't wait for next week's episode!"

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Merc 190E 032
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Corsa VXR 062
This wide-arched Vaux isn't all show and no go! In fact, it's as much go as show.

Audi A3 076
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UP FRONT



AMERICAN TUNERS PLAY COPS-AND-ROBBERS

There used to be a time when 1,000bhp was seen as a really big number. No, wait, that came out wrong... 1,000bhp is a big number, a really massively big one. But it wasn't all that long ago that it was the sole preserve of top-fuel dragsters; the idea of deploying that many horses on the road was total pie-in-the-sky. But the goalposts have shifted a long way in recent years, with numerous hypercar manufacturers touting four-figure outputs. Naturally the aftermarket is all over this, as there's nothing more fun than schooling a multi-million-dollar bauble with a tuned-up road car, and the American muscle car fraternity in particular has become a little obsessed with the idea. Look at the Dodge Charger here – it has 1,500bhp. That's quite a lot, isn't it?

Amusingly, this is also a police car. Well, sort

of... the base for the project was a police-spec Charger Pursuit vehicle, although Speedkore Performance has changed a few bits and bobs. The stock 365bhp 5.7-litre V8 has been thrown away and replaced with the mental 828bhp 6.2-litre V8 from the Demon range. Then they unbolted the supercharger and replaced it with a pair of billet Precision turbos, which necessitated a custom plenum and triple-pump fuel system with 1,700cc injectors. It's got Mickey Thompson semi-slicks and screamer pipes poking through the



front bumper, and the performance is bonkers. With 1,500bhp at the crank (about 1,300bhp at the wheels), Speedkore decided to convert it to all-wheel-drive. But of course.

Naturally high-octane cops need bad guys to chase, and that's where the Fathouse Performance Shelby GT350 1000R comes in. What these nutters have done is to take the already ballistic GT350 Mustang and strap on a pair of Xona Rotor turbos, mounted nice and low down under the car (so you have to keep clear of cats-eyes), boosting the 5.2-litre V8 to a meaty 950bhp at the wheels. So it'll do 0-62mph in 2.5-seconds and run a quarter-mile quicker than a Bugatti Veyron. But we know what you're thinking – the 1,300whp cops will easily catch the 950whp robbers, right? Ah, don't worry, Fathouse has thought of that. So as well as the 1000R conversion, the company also offers 1200R and 1400R packages. You can guess what those numbers mean. This really is a bizarre time to be alive.



OLD SUPRAS GET A NEW LEASE OF LIFE

The Mk4 Supra is one of our all-time favourite rides, and if you're creaky duffers like us it's easy to forget that it's actually quite an old car now – the A80 launched way back in 1993, and went out of production eighteen years ago. So when we hear stories about people's Supra projects turning from tuning and modding efforts into restoration attempts, that all kinda makes sense. It's not just a case of bolting massive turbos on and seeing what happens, suddenly you have to worry about obsolete bushes and discontinued window seals and what-have-you. But thankfully, with the advent of the shiny new A90 Supra, Toyota has decided to give owners and fans of the old A80 a little treat: the GR Heritage Parts initiative means you'll be able to ask your local dealer



for things like brand-new door handles, propshafts, badges and all sorts for your old Supra project. So you guys can keep thrashing these icons for generations to come. That's good news, we're very happy about that.

PAUL WALKER KNEW A THING OR TWO ABOUT E36S

The late actor Paul Walker, arguably best known for his work in the Fast & Furious series, continues to influence the motoring world in 2020 as his iconic car collection crosses the block at Barrett-Jackson's Scottsdale sale. Walker had collected all sorts of cool stuff, both stock and modified, including an E30 M3, the Nissan 370Z from Fast Five, a big-power R32 Skyline, and a Mustang Boss 302 race car – but the big story is that, weirdly, he'd collected five examples of the E36 M3 Lightweight. This limited edition model, of which fewer than 130 were built, was a stripped-out road racer, and Walker seemed to think it had strong investment potential. He was right. The previous auction record for one of these was \$145,750, but when Walker's cars went under the hammer in January, sale prices ranged from \$220,000 to \$385,000.





Appreciating Depreciation **Peugeot 207 GTI**

New: **£14,995** Now: **£2,000**

If you're after a bargain-basement hot hatch, you could do a lot worse than the Peugeot 207 GTI. We reckon it's a pretty canny purchase right now – after all, history has not been kind to this car; nobody really wants them and, let's face it, they're not particularly good-looking, are they? But there is actually a lot to love here. Powered by a revvy little 1.6-litre turbocharged motor, you get a solid 175bhp (the sister model, the 207 GT, had the same engine but detuned to 150bhp), and there's also a pretty decent set of recliners and a reasonably amusing suspension setup. Yes, you will get tired of pub bores telling you that it's 'not a proper GTI' because it doesn't tripod like a 205, but you'll have the last laugh because your new-wave GTI only cost you a couple of grand...



Top 5 mods: Pug1off remap, Milltek cat-back exhaust, Forge induction kit, Bilstein B8 dampers, Airtec front-mount intercooler

JANNARELLY HAS A CRACK AT THE LOW-VOLUME SPORTS CAR MARKET

Niche British sports cars always do well, don't they? That's why you can't cross the street in London without having to jump out of the way of a Connaught Type D Syracuse or a Ronart Lightning. Alright, perhaps we're being overly cynical – the new Jannarely Design-1 certainly does appear to be a compelling package: the £115k 'UK Edition' model features a mid-mounted Nissan 3.5-litre V6 in a steel spaceframe with a carbon fibre body. It's liberally sprinkled with Union Jacks and red, white and blue details, and the fact that it's actually being built in Dubai means it should hopefully sidestep the peril of sinking like a stone through automotive posterity. So it probably won't go the way of the Bristol Fighter, or the Marcos TSO. Or the Arash Farboud GT. Or the Brooke Double R. Or the Jensen S-V8. Or...





BENTLEY BRINGS A SLEDGEHAMMER TO A TICKLE FIGHT

➔ Cars prepped for ice racing are usually fairly lightweight and run skinny studded tyres, the aim being to scrabble for whatever purchase is possible while skating balletically across the surface. But Bentley clearly had a meeting in which the principle conclusion was 'Er, sod that' – so they've built this massive thing. Look at it. It's mental. It's got a whacking great 6.0-litre W12 engine for starters, as well as three-chamber air springs with a 48v anti-roll system. The reason for its existence is to compete in this year's GP Ice Race

at Zell Am See, Austria, with Junior WRC driver (and ex-presenter of CBeebies' *Catie's Amazing Machines*) Catie Munnings at the wheel. "At first I thought it would feel heavy, but I was amazed by how dynamic, nimble and responsive it is," she says. "It can dance like a lightweight rally car." Fair enough, Bentley's engineers aren't usually wrong about this type of thing. And if steamrolling into this event with a Conti GT packing bolt-on arches, Pirelli Scorpions, Lazer Lamps and a shouty Akrapovic exhaust is what it takes, then sign us up.





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Gloss Black & Gloss Black / Polished
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Gloss Black / Polished
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TORINO
Gloss Black / Polished, Polar Silver
6.5x16" 7.5x17" 8.0x18" 8.0x19"



AERO
Gloss Black / Polished,
Gunmetal / Polished & Gloss Black
8.5x18" 8.5x20"



KODIAK
Polar Silver, Gunmetal
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6.0x16" 6.5x16" 7.0x16" 7.0x17"
7.5x17" 7.5x18" 8.0x18" 8x19"



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Matt Black & Gloss Black / Polished
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2020 CIVIC TYPE R GETS A GENTLE MAKEOVER

➔ 'If it ain't broke, try not to cock about with it too much,' as your old grandma used to say (probably). The FK8-generation Civic Type R has proven itself to be essentially the perfect hot hatch in recent years, with its insane performance, stellar chassis, and surprising practicality. So the 2020-model-year refresh is pretty restrained. Debuting at the Tokyo Auto Salon, we saw that the facelift comprises a

bigger front grille for improved cooling, body-colour accents in the air intakes, an Alcantara steering wheel and shorter gear-lever, stiffer rear bushes and two-piece brake discs. It's as if Honda has modified it on your behalf! There's also the option of the new Boost Blue paint shade, plus there's now manual heater controls so you don't have to arse about with the touchscreen to turn the fan up. Smart!

WHAT'S ON APRIL 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
					4th-5th April - Dubshed - Eikon Exhibition Centre, Dublin	
6	7	8	9	10 Good Friday	11	12
					11th April - London Cartel MK1/MK2 Cruise - London	19th April - Simply Audi - Beaulieu
13 Easter Monday	14	15	16	17	18	19
					18th-19th April - GR8 International - Kortrijk Belgium	19th April - Elsecar at the Races - Doncaster Racecourse
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				Issue 421 of Fast Car On Sale	25th April - Pure Ford - Castle Combe	
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
			Initial G Memory Clinic appointment (because he forgot the last one)			



THE ANGRY MAN

*You know who I hate?
Janice.*

Janice is my neighbour. Janice is a bloody terrible driver. Janice has a horrible BMW 2 Series Gran Tourer on finance which she's weirdly proud of for some reason, even though it looks like a coffin on wheels. Janice is the bane of my life.

The main problem is that Janice is such an appalling driver, it only takes one element of her routine to change and she gets totally thrown off course. Like, for example, if I've parked an extra car out the front of the house. Which I'm prone to do, as I like cars and tend to drive them a lot. Now, all the other neighbours are cool with this, as they're not shit drivers and they realise that it's not beyond the wit of a competent grown-up to steer around obstacles. But not Janice. No, Janice will come and ring my doorbell and yell at me: "You have to move that car, I can't get into my parking space." F**ksake love, have you tried using that big round thing in front of you? Jeez.

Or let's say I'm out there washing the car. It's only a matter of time before she comes out of her house to bitch me out about wasting water. "Don't you know there's a hosepipe ban in effect?" Er, no there isn't, mate. And the fact that you take your horrible MPV to the local hand car wash place doesn't make you a bloody saint, we're both using exactly the same volume of water, you unstoppable cleft.

What I really hate, though, is the jeopardy. The constant worry that she's going to bang into one of my cars. She comes careening down the street, way too quick and barely in control, and swings right towards my cars before spearing off towards her own parking space. It's only a matter of time before she makes contact, and then she'll undoubtedly bloody blame me for it anyway.

Not every street has a Janice. But if one of your neighbours drives a 2 Series Gran Tourer, you probably know the type of person I'm on about.



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Words: **Dan Bevis**, Photography: **Slim Jules**

Educating Essex

With its show-winning finish and track-honed setup, Boyden Barlow's S14a has been teaching everyone a thing or two on the UK drift and show scene. And with an LS swap starring in its latest evolution, ESX 80Y just keeps on getting smarter...

Boyden Barlow is our favourite type of car guy.

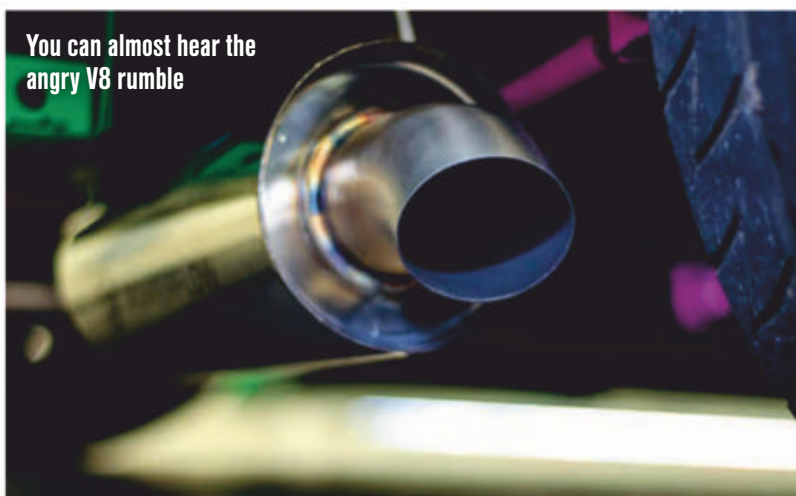
He's been a fully-fledged petrolhead for his entire life, and he's got a supremely focused eye for how to build a unique and alluring show car, as well as the skills and contacts to carry these ideas out to flawless perfection. But at the same time, he's not out to impress anyone; Boyden builds cars the way he does simply for the love of the craft. It's all fuelled by passion, he lives for this stuff and he's really good at making it happen. Most importantly, while he does build cars to a show-and-shine-winning finish and he enjoys displaying them, they're primarily built to be used. And used hard. See, he's a guy with a heavy right foot and a supernatural talent for precise horsepower deployment, never happier than when he's drifting a self-built weapon or tearing up the mean streets of Essex.

The Nissan you see here? It's all about evolution. Indeed, some of you will recognise the number

plate and think 'Hang on, didn't that used to be on a gloss-grey S14a?' – and you'd be right. That car is this car. While many enthusiasts flit from one project to another on a regular basis, this Nissan represents an enduring love affair for Boyden. We've actually featured it on the cover of Fast Car before, back in 2015, although it's safe to say the car's very different today to how it was then. And it takes something special to earn a second cover slot with us – we can count the number of builds that's happened with on our fingers, and it leaves a lot of fingers left over. Readers with even longer memories may recall that the infamous ESX 80Y plate has had another outing in these pages too, way back in 2009 when it was bolted to Boyden's old Renault Clio.

"I've always tried to do things my way," he explains. "After the Clio I got into RWD, and had an M3 which got me interested in exploring the limits of traction – but I was spending a lot of money on

You can almost hear the angry V8 rumble





COVER CAR



swap the RB from the other car into. “Unfortunately, it turned out that the engine was knackered too,” he recalls, which was presumably a bit of a kick in the teeth. But this fella’s focused on solutions, and with the help of some online research he found himself a decent RB for sale with forged internals and all the tricks. Problem solved – he could build his dream S14a around that.

Job one was to get the structure up to his precise and exacting standard: a full rollcage from Custom Cages was fitted, then the shell was sent off to the sandblasters... who somehow managed to drop it on its roof. “I couldn’t believe it,” he says. “If I hadn’t had the cage in there I’d have just scrapped the thing, but a lot of work went into that so there was no choice but to fix the roof and press on. We kept at it, and when it all started to come together I took it off to be mapped... and found that the camshaft had snapped and the ECU didn’t want to play ball either. I was starting to get a bit pissed off with it by this point, to be honest.”

Fair enough really, although Boyden’s no quitter and – after a bit of swearing and stamping – he was able to regroup and get stuck back in. Garage-D came to the rescue again with a decent RB25 NEO, and he was then able to crack on with all the exciting stuff he’d planned from the start, drawing in a cast of skilled characters to assist: tubbed arches and a custom tube-frame front end by Charlie at Essex Offroad, engine setup by Torque Developments, the impeccable grey paintwork by Barney Clark at B Clark Body Repair. It all came together to create something that dominated the show scene in 2015, a fabulous fusion of form and function.

➔ that car, so I picked up a cheap S13 to learn to drift properly with something that didn’t really matter if it got a bit battered. Following that I found myself in a Skyline, and that was when I fell in love with the RB engine. I’d always been a fan of the S14 shape too, so I decided it might be fun to fuse the two together.”

RB DAMNED

Serendipity struck as he found an S14a on Pistonheads which already had an RB engine swapped in. Travelling to the other end of the country to collect it (in the dark), he trailered it back home and discovered that it was actually a bit of a dog – rotten as a pear and completely unusable. But he had a taste for the idea now, and Garage-D came up trumps with supplying a much better shell that Boyden could



Nothing to see here, just a 6.2-litre Chevrolet LS3 V8 crate motor



THE NEXT EPISODE

“Having recently attended a few track events, I’ve caught the bug again and now I’m getting ready to make a few more changes for 2020,” Boyden tells us. And he’s not mucking about either – a quick scroll through his Instagram (@boyden_barlow) shows us that the S14a has once again been stripped down to a bare shell and the green paint is gone. He’s keeping tight-lipped about which colour it’ll be painted this time, but we do know that he’s planning a fully forged engine build with a Garrett GTX4058 turbo – so we can expect some pretty eye-watering horsepower. He’ll also be tube-framing the rear end to match the front, swapping to a rear-mounted radiator setup, and much more. Hell, we might even end up featuring it again...

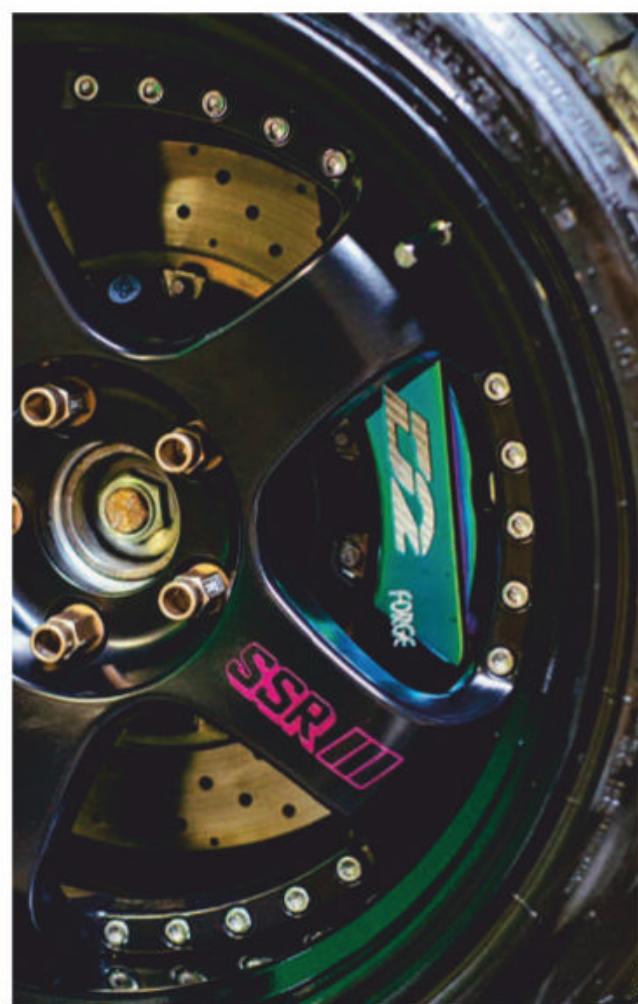
“The answer came in the form of the Chevrolet LS3, a 6.2-litre crate motor with 525bhp”



That's the work of the Wisefab V2 lock kit

...but today, half-a-decade along the line, many things have changed. Not least Boyden's own outlook, as those five years also represent another life; he's become a father, and the burgeoning petrolhead gurgling away in the pram has caused him to reassess a few priorities. Of course, as a lifelong petrolhead himself, this doesn't mean Boyden's going to be laying down the spanners any time soon. No, what it meant was that he wasn't taking part in as many drift events as he anticipated, and ended up spending more time at shows checking out other people's builds. This inspired him to take his own project to the next level and, with plans to attend a lot more track-based events in the near future, that entailed shaking up the S14a's performance as well as its aesthetics. And the first item which needed addressing was a conceptual one: after years of refinement and experimentation, the enthusiasm for the RB straight-six was over.

"I went through three engines and just as many turbos in the space of two-and-a-half years," he reasons, "so I was really after something more reliable." The answer came in the form of the Chevrolet LS3, a 6.2-litre crate motor with 525bhp



COVER CAR



➔ in as-delivered form and endless potential for more. Before that could be shoehorned in however, Boyden was keen to strip everything down and start again properly. "I carried out a bare shell rebuild to clear a few niggly issues that I wasn't 100% happy with," he says. "With that done, I then built it up over the course of evenings and weekends with the help of some friends. The car got a new engine, gearbox, different body styling and a colour change, bigger front brakes, retrimmed seats..."

PULLING A SIKKY

It's a remarkable transformation, it really is. Let's start with the engine, as that's the noisiest bit: "I got the LS swap kit from Sikky," Boyden continues. "Being an American company, they didn't have right-hand-drive kits, they only had left-hand-drive – but I bought it anyway, hoping for the best. I got the LS in place with the engine mounts, however the clutch master cylinder didn't fit due to the cylinder head being in the way. Therefore I had to move and adapt the MC back two-inches in the bulkhead. And when it came to the gearbox, the Sikky kit only came with props for the T56 'box which has now been discontinued, so I had to dig a little deeper in my pockets and get a T56 Magnum 'box and throw the Sikky prop in the bin, opting for a whole new bespoke propshaft to suit."

All the hard work has paid off, as the sight of an LS in an S14a bay is more than backed up by the brutal bellowing that pounds out of the custom pipes, and the super-hardcore chassis specs are suitably track-ready to help

deploy it all. We see a lot of cars running BC Racing coilovers, but it's not often people fork out for the remote-reservoir ER Series; this is pukka kit, the additional oil capacity reducing peak temperatures and thereby decreasing variations in damping rates – this makes them perfect for the track. The obscene steering angles are thanks to a Wisefab V2 lock kit, which offers a staggering 65-degrees of lock, along with parallel steering – that is, both wheels turning at the same angle. There's also a high roll centre and



The custom rollcage by Custom Cages isn't shy



Corbeau Pro Series seats have been retrimmed and mated to TRS harnesses

OWNER PROFILE:

Name: Boyden Barlow

Age: 30

Occupation: Flooring specialist

First car: Renault Clio 1.2

Favourite car: Bugatti Chiron Sport

Favourite show or event: FittedUK, or Gravity (close call!)

Track day or show and shine?: Track day

Favourite modification on your car: The engine

Lessons learned from this project: LS everything!



COVER CAR

↘ steering jacking control, all of which is a technical way of saying that it's a clever setup that helps you get very sideways. And Boyden's brake upgrades are incredible: at the front end is a shiny new set of neo-chrome D2 6-pots with 356mm 2-piece discs, while out back he's running four Nissan 300ZX calipers mounted on twin-caliper brackets from GKTech. With the hydro mayhem-handle and the line-lock, this baby's hot to trot.

"Other than ordering many parts blindly from Australia and America and relying on reviews, I think this has been quite a smooth conversion," he grins. "Being such a small engine bay fit for a 2.0-litre, as you can imagine it was a tight squeeze for the V8's manifolds to pass the steering column and starter motor, due to both being on the same side; I had to buy a plate from Australia that sandwiched between the engine and gearbox, which switched the starter motor over the other side giving me much more clearance." Such tribulations are par for the course when you're trying something new, it's all just a badge of honour in this game. Quite simply, Boyden wanted big power that was reliable, and Detroit iron was the way to achieve that, so he figured out a way to make it happen. Like we said, he's all about solutions.

Naturally, anyone who saw this lurid green remix on the show scene at the back end of last year will have been as wowed by the fresh Rocket Bunny makeover (those are modified S13 arches, incidentally) as the powertrain redux. And they'll be equally impressed to learn that the car's already been torn down to first principles so that it can enjoy another new life in 2020. That's just the kind of guy Boyden is. He can't help himself and we love that! ■

TECH SPEC: NISSAN S14A

STYLING:

Full bare-shell rebuild and respray in Porsche Signal green, S13 Rocket Bunny arches – modified to fit, Vertex-style front bumper, Navan rear bumper, rear quarter window louvres, Seibon TT carbon fibre bonnet, carbon bootlid

TUNING:

6.2-litre Chevrolet LS3 V8 crate motor, Sikky conversion kit inc. CNC mounts, aluminium intake manifold, ASA cams, custom long-tube exhaust manifolds (by Dave at @mad_dp), twin 2.5in pipes into Powerflow rear boxes, Sikky engine mounts, Sikky baffled aluminium sump, Japspeed radiator, Sikky air filter, Chase Bays power steering reservoir, ATL fuel cell, 2x Bosch 044 fuel pumps, Holley fuel rails, Sytec fuel pressure regulator, Odyssey battery (relocated), Tremec T56 Magnum gearbox, LS7 clutch and flywheel, Wilwood clutch master cylinder, Skyline GTS-T differential and shafts

CHASSIS:

9.5x18in ET10 (front) and 11x18in ET11 (rear) SSR SP1 3-piece split-rims, tube-framed front end, BC Racing remote-reservoir coilovers, Wisefab V2 lock kit, Japspeed rear control arms, D2 6-pot neo-chrome front calipers with 356mm 2-piece discs, 4x 300ZX rear calipers with GKTech twin-caliper brackets, Skyline GTS-T brake master cylinder, Wilwood hydraulic handbrake, line-lock valve, braided lines throughout

INTERIOR:

Full custom rollcage by Custom Cages, Corbeau Pro Series seats – retrimmed in black leather/Alcantara with pink stitching, TRS harnesses, Vertex 1996 steering wheel, Stack instrument cluster, Stack fuel gauge, Talon switch panel



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TOP 10 SECRET WEAPONS

Performance motoring means different things to different people. Obviously we all want a fast car, that's a gimme – we're so into the idea that we named a magazine after it, and we've stuck with it since the 1980s. It's a way of life. But the manner in which we celebrate this keenness for quickness out on the road? It's very different for each and every car fan out there. Flicking through the pages of this magazine, you'll find yourself amazed (as is true of every issue we've ever put out) by the level of attention to detail that modders and tuners put into the finish and presentation of their projects. Every car featured in this mag is a surefire show-stopper, drop-dead gorgeous and as desirable as any off-the-peg supercar.

...but some people like to sneak below the radar. They want to slide through the

traffic with nobody suspecting just how much horsepower they're hiding. And we're not talking about traditional sleepers here – yes, we all know that things like the Volvo 850 R and the Mercedes-Benz 500E exist as full-fat street-sleepers, Q-cars that weaponise the commute with improbable firepower. But the cult of the sleeper isn't what it once was, as more and more people become aware of these things. The cat's out of the bag. So instead, we've pulled together a top 10 of the secret weapons – the cars with the capacity to really take people by surprise. The ones that no-one would expect to be quick. If stealthy mischief is the name of the game, here are your main contenders... some of them are fast in factory form, others will need a few mods and upgrades to get you there, but every one is a guaranteed thrill-ride.



TOP 10 SECRET WEAPONS



Audi A4 (B8)

Everyone knows about the hot Audis. The B8-era RS4 is a pin-up for a generation of petrolheads, with its brutal 4.2-litre V8 and pumped-up wideboy arches. More realistically achievable for many is the S4, which is still an absolute weapon of a thing thanks to its hilarious supercharged 3.0-litre V6. But there's no secrets here, no element of stealth. The S and RS badges are too well-known. No, what you want is a base-spec A4 saloon, preferably in silver with small wheels; get it in SE spec rather than the more overtly sporting S-Line, and you'll have something that looks for all the world like a default fleet choice for a sales rep who's not doing all that well.

But here's the clincher: you get one with the 2.0 TFSI petrol motor and the manual 'box. Not a spec many people went for, but they are out there, and for under five-grand you'll have yourself 200bhp+ in an unassuming saloon. Bang a Revo Stage 1 map on it and suddenly you're close to 250bhp. And no-one will suspect a thing.

PRICE TODAY: £5,000

TOP 3 MODS: Revo Stage 1 remap, Milltek exhaust, KW V1 coilovers



Volvo C30 T5

We love a hot hatch, always have done. And there's a real offbeat choice here from Volvo which has the massive added benefit of being a bit of an unsung hero. After all, if you stop a random person on the street and say 'Quick, tell me your top-ten hot hatches,' it's very unlikely that they'll say 'Volvo C30'. (In fact, it's most likely that they'd say 'Piss off, you weirdo,' but that's just life. Don't blame us for these broader social issues, people are grumpy these days.)

The C30 model range is something we've always been a fan of, as it's just a really cool piece of design – particularly from the rear end, with that bizarre glass tailgate flanked by alien-eye light clusters. But when the engineers wrestled the accountants to the ground, gave them all an atomic wedgie and won the right to shove a T5 motor in the C30, that's when our ears really pricked up. This thing has a goddamn 2.5-litre 5-cylinder turbo engine hiding in it! Pick up an example from the initial 2006 run and you get 217bhp; any other year up to its demise in 2013 brings 227bhp. That's spicy. And make sure you don't go for the obvious bright blue or red paint options, people will be onto you. They did a version that was white with a brown lower bodykit (seriously), and that's the one you want.

PRICE TODAY: £6,000

TOP 3 MODS: Beaded seat covers, tin of travel sweets, 1997 AA Road Atlas





Toyota Yaris GRMN

It's quite hard to look cool in a Yaris. OK, there have been a few warm versions released by Toyota over its various generations (the second-gen JDM Vitz RS was kinda cool) and people have modded some into entertaining track toys, but for a lot of car fans the inherent uncoolness of the fact that it's a Yaris is just too high a hurdle to vault. And this, of course, is where your secret weapon stealthily unveils itself.

Now, given that there's so much excitement over the new Supra right now, you're probably familiar with Toyota's GR sub-brand, right? Standing for Gazoo Racing, this is the in-house performance arm that concentrates on deflecting people's attention away from the Prius and reminding them that Toyota is also pretty good at making sports cars. And Gazoo Racing decided to have a crack at the third-gen Yaris too, creating the limited-run Yaris GRMN. The initialism here stands for 'Gazoo Racing, tuned by the Meister of the Nürburgring', which is a pretty bloody bold statement. And the car backs it up: hidden inside this diddy hatch is a Lotus-tuned and supercharged 1.8-litre 2ZR-FE motor, the same spec as you'd find in the Series 3 Elise, and it's also got sodding great brakes and an LSD as well as Ultrasuede sports seats and fancy Sachs suspension. Just a Yaris? No, this thing's a total headcase.

PRICE TODAY: £19,000

TOP 3 MODS: Beige wrap, rally trip meter, stealthy custom rollcage



Nissan Juke Nismo RS

Alright, you're going to have to bear with us on this one. After all, nobody wants to own a Nissan Juke, do they? They're just a bit... shit. Clearly Nissan is doing something right in terms of spec and pricing because these things are selling like hot cakes, and to be fair we've always secretly kinda liked the design, quite simply because all crossover SUVs look basically the same whereas this one doesn't. It may not be pretty, but at least it's not a carbon copy of every other generic box.

Doesn't mean you want one though, does it? You see one of these on the road, you think 'There's someone who's given up on life'. Which is exactly why, actually, you do want one: specifically, you want a Juke Nismo RS. Why? Because hidden inside the humdrum junior-SUV tedium is a surprisingly fruity engine – the 1.6 turbo gives you 215bhp, which is good for a 0-62mph dash

of seven seconds dead, plus you get sweet Recaros to nestle in. Take off the giveaway Nismo badges outside and you'll just be another git in an SUV.

Actually, wait... sorry, we see what we've done here. We've just suggested you buy a Nissan Juke. Sorry about that. Moving on...

PRICE TODAY: £10,000

TOP 3 MODS: HKS induction, Stilen exhaust, Tein Street Advance coilovers



TOP 10 SECRET WEAPONS

Volkswagen Bora 4Motion

Bit more of an old-school choice here. The Bora was essentially a Mk4 Golf with a redesigned face and a saloon boot grafted on the back. This existed as a weird snapshot in time, as generally a booted Golf is badged as a Jetta (or, briefly, Vento); the Bora arrived in 1999, and the niche was popular enough for it to survive for seven years or so. Most Boras were pretty uninteresting, with low-output diesel engines and flat cloth seats and steel wheels, so the public perception of them is akin to a sort of mist or vapour: people barely even register that these things exist, they're just automotive white noise.

But, as is their whimsical way, the VW engineers had an ace up their sleeves. For no real reason other than to amuse themselves, they decided to shoehorn in the 4Motion drivetrain and a 2.8-litre VR6 motor, just to see if anyone would actually buy it. Predictably, very few people did... but there were just enough sold to ensure that you can still find them if you look hard enough. You'll be paying about £5k for the privilege, which is a hell of a lot of money for a Bora by most standards – but the Bora 4Motion can't really be measured by traditional standards. It's a ludicrous tearaway of a thing. But shhh, don't tell anyone.

PRICE TODAY: £5,000

TOP 3 MODS: Audi RS wingback Recaros, Golf front-end conversion, Air Lift suspension



Suzuki Swift Sport

Picture the scene: you're driving through a leafy village in Hampshire or Surrey, somewhere very pleasant and well-to-do, and you're crawling along behind a Suzuki Swift. You assume that it's some crumbly old giffer behind the wheel, and resign yourself to the fact that there'll be no fun to be had when you pass the national-speed-limit signs and head off into the countryside, because Doris in the hatchback will be maintaining a steady 27mph. But then the sixty limit arrives and suddenly you don't see which way the Suzuki went. Double-you-tee-eff?

Aha, you've just been ambushed by the Suzuki Swift Sport. It may not look like much, but this perky little scamp has a chassis to die for, and it's never happier than it is sniffing out apexes on your favourite spaghetti-strand B-road. The third-gen model, sold from 2012-17, boasts a surprisingly mental engine; 130bhp doesn't sound all that thrilling, but it peaks at a fizzy 6,800rpm and this thing loves to rev; couple that with light weight and a peach of a chassis and you've got something really quite surprising. You can get a decent low-mileage one for about £6k too. Smart.

PRICE TODAY: £6,000

TOP 3 MODS: Toda cams, Ultra Racing anti-roll bars, Cusco rollcage





Skoda Superb (Mk2)

In the grand spectrum of terrible car names, 'Superb' ranks pretty highly as one of the worst. It's just bizarre, isn't it? All of the other names in the model range sound like girls from posh public schools – Octavia and Fabia and so on (well, until all the K-models arrived, the Karoq and Kamiq and Kodiaq, which sound like old men with cataracts) – but Superb? That's an uncharacteristic bit of boasting.

It's not something driven by people who are especially interested in performance motoring either. Essentially being a bigger and more luxurious version of the Octavia, it really looks like an airport minicab; it's a foot longer than the Octavia so you get oodles of room inside, and being the range-topper it's got very high equipment levels, but fun? No, it's not fun.

Or, at least, that's what people think. After all, if you're going for a petrol/manual (which you should), you're most likely to find yourself looking at a 1.8 with 160bhp, and frankly that's not enough horsepower. But what if we go back to our chums at Revo? A simple remap takes that up to somewhere between 200-220bhp, which is much more like it. Suddenly the Superb is starting to get interesting. And if you go for a Stage 2 map and splash out on a beefy FMIC, exhaust and induction, you'll be nearer 250bhp. And everyone else on the M25 will just assume you're ferrying the Joneses to Heathrow.

PRICE TODAY: £7,000

TOP 3 MODS: Revo Stage 2 map, Wagner Tuning intercooler, RamAir induction



Ford Fiesta Ecoboost

The Mk7 Fiesta ST is a legend. That's just a fact. A car that'll go down in history as one of the all-time great hot hatches – it's got one of the best chassis ever nailed together by a manufacturer, as well as exactly the right amount of power to make it entertaining and eager, a great seating position, perfectly-judged steering, it's just a delight. And because it's won so many awards, everyone knows what it is. People will chase you down country lanes because they know the ST loves to play. But what if you were to take all of those elements (apart from the engine) and hide them in something far more unassuming? Ladies and gentlemen, allow us to present the 1.0-litre Fiesta EcoBoost.

No, wait, come back! We're actually onto something here. You see, for all its cleverness and efficiency, this has always been a car lauded for its eco credentials – that three-pot motor (the block of which is so small, you can fit it on a sheet of A4 paper) is all about efficiency and miles-per-gallon. But it's also hilariously tuneable. Even in stock form they put out a surprising 125bhp, and all you need is an uprated front-mount intercooler, fatter induction, a freer-flowing exhaust and a decent bit of mapping, and suddenly you've got 170bhp. That's only 10bhp away from the stock ST output, with the added benefit that you'll be paying zero road tax. Who's laughing now?

PRICE TODAY: £4,000

TOP 3 MODS: Airtec intercooler, AutoSpecialists induction, custom Powerflow exhaust



Nissan Pulsar

To a certain generation of enthusiasts and modders, the Pulsar name is something of an icon. After all, this was the badge glued to the back of the JDM import versions of the legendary Sunny GT-R – the 1990s megahatch that showed the European manufacturers a thing or two by stuffing a sodding great 2.0-litre turbo engine and AWD setup into granny's shopper hatch.

The current Pulsar, however, is not exciting. The C13-generation car that's been on sale since 2014 (and officially badged as a Pulsar in Europe) is your typical mundane hatchback – decent enough equipment, but bland styling, uninspiring dynamics, and really nothing to appeal to the likes of us. A car for people who don't really care about cars, and who just wants to pick up an A-to-B appliance from CarGiant?

PRICE TODAY: £9,500

TOP 3 MODS: K-Sport coilovers, custom remap, Bride Low Max seats



Citroën C4 Cactus

Alright, stop laughing. This is actually the best car in the whole of this top-ten. Well, OK, not the best car... but the one that best fulfils the idea of being a secret weapon. This is because literally no-one in the world has ever bought a Cactus for sporting or performance purposes. This is a functional and utilitarian crossover SUV designed for ferrying small families about while leaving as little impact on the environment as possible. They're well-built and superbly well-equipped (buy the 'Flair' spec and you get touchscreen nav, DAB radio, panoramic glass roof, reversing camera, all the good stuff), but they're not fast. In fact, most of them are incredibly slow, and the automatic transmission they were offered with is one of the worst gearboxes ever made.

But – and it's a big but – you can find intriguing potential here. You see, in an effort to make the Cactus as eco-friendly as possible, Citroën made it incredibly lightweight. This is obvious from the biscuit-tin sound when you slam the doors, and the pop-out rear windows... and as we well know, low weight means a better power-to-weight ratio. This car only weighs about 1,000kg. You can basically lift it up with your bare hands. And in terms of performance potential, what you want is the pre-facelift (2014-17) 110-spec, which has a 1.2-litre three-cylinder turbo offering 110bhp, mated to the manual gearbox. A Quantum remap takes that little putt-putt-putting three-banger up to 145bhp – and you know what else has a power-to-weight ratio of 145bhp/tonne? Ooh, an S13 Nissan 200SX, a Renault 5 GT Turbo, a Mk3 Toyota Supra Turbo...

Those squishy airbumps down the side of the Cactus may make it look like a cutesy cartoon, but they're disguising the ultimate secret weapon. The school run will never be the same again.

PRICE TODAY: £10,000

TOP 3 MODS: Quantum Tuning remap, Eibach Pro-Kit springs, Forge universal front-mount intercooler



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HOT RIDE

A modified 190E is one thing. But this? This is surely the product of some frighteningly deranged laboratory experiments. The team at F7LTHY Fabrication are the ones stirring the beakers, and things are about to get freaky...

If the hysteria of social media is to be believed, there are strange things going on in North America. And no, we're not talking about that fellow in D.C. with the intriguing hair, or the common belief that aerosol-propelled cheese is an acceptable foodstuff. It's the SEMA show we're on about, and specifically the colossal deviations from normality that essentially broke the internet from its moorings at the back end of last year. We're used to seeing cars which are absolutely bananas bleeding out from every Vegas orifice, but 2019 really knocked things up a notch. And if you teleport yourself to the north-west border of Washington state, then amble twenty miles or so up to Coquitlam in British Columbia, you'll find the root of some of this mischief. This is where F7LTHY Fabrication resides, and it's their 'Evil Evo' Mercedes-Benz 190E that's got all of these digital tongues wagging with such fervour.

"I couldn't find the car of my dreams, so I built it," reasons the company's owner, Tim Lajambe, and you can't really argue with the logic of that. It's clear that he's a man possessed of both clarity of vision and extraordinary skill too, as this vivid and vibrant creation isn't just any old 190E – it's the weirdest and scariest one we've ever seen. The new gold standard for retro Merc saloons.

The history of the 190E as a model is an interesting one, as it's characterised by a fabulously beguiling phrase: 'Massively over-engineered'. Not our term, but in fact one genuinely employed by Mercedes-Benz themselves to describe the model when it emerged blinking into the motorscape way back in late 1982. This car represented the dawn of a new era for Mercedes, the so-called 'Baby Benz' being the marque's first foray into the compact-executive sector. They poured over £600m into the model's R&D, patenting a natty new five-link



MERCEDES 190E

WEIRD SCIENCE

Words: Joe Partridge Photography: Larry Chen



HOT RIDE



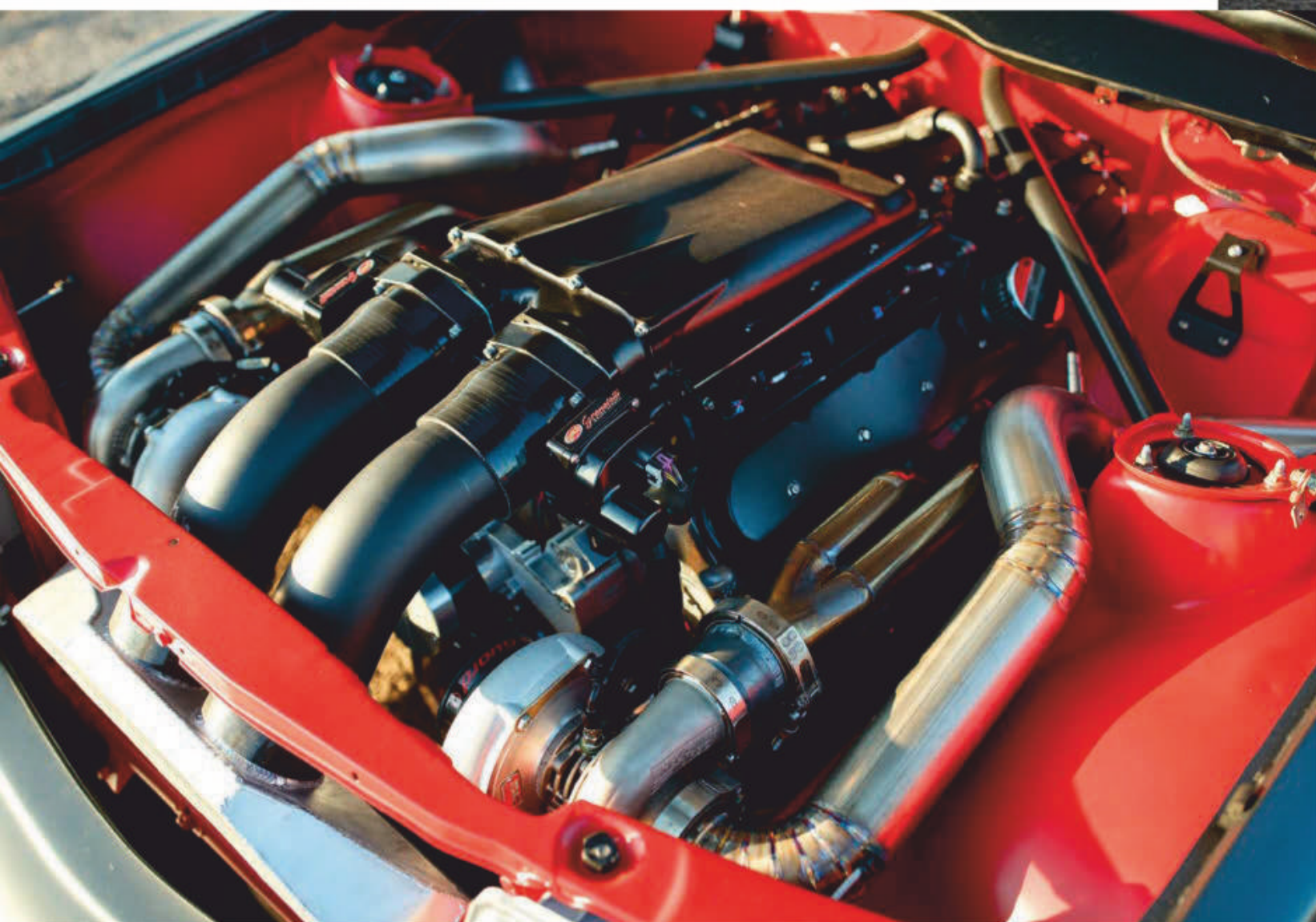
“For a generation of burgeoning petrolheads, wide-bodied 190E Touring Cars were the stuff of dreams”

➔ rear and throwing in all sorts of über-modern accoutrements: seatbelt pretensioners, airbags, ABS... with BMW dominating the sector with the ubiquitous 3 Series, M-B had to go in hard. They needed to over-engineer the thing, it was the only way to muscle in. Crisply styled by Bruno Sacco and engineered by a team headed by Prof. Werner Breitschwerdt, the finished product offered everything from luxurious family transport to minicab chic across its broad spec range; the results spoke for themselves on the road, and the model proved hugely

successful in motorsport too... minor waves were made in rallying thanks to the likes of Snobeck Racing, but it was the flame-spitting DTM where it really made its mark. For a generation of burgeoning petrolheads, wide-bodied 190E Touring Cars were the stuff of dreams.

F7LTHY THOUGHTS

This sort of developmental extravagance and motorsport prowess has, unsurprisingly, given the 190E quite a strong following. You



THE POWER AND THE GLORY

So, how much horsepower do you think Tim and the F7LTHY team are getting from this colossal Texas Speed V8 with its vast Precision turbos? Incredibly, they're planning to rein it back a bit to ensure reliability and they're still talking about a four-figure number! "We're going to run it at about 1,000bhp," says Tim, with an impressively straight face. "It's easily capable of more, but that's where we're going to keep it for reliability and longevity."

The final tuning is well underway and it'll all be set up for the track very soon... and Tim's got a little secret too, just between you and us: "Honestly, I ran it naturally-aspirated at SEMA, the turbos were there for show," he smirks. "We ran out of time to tune it for boost, and it was already terrifying." When we point out that cars like this are supposed to be terrifying, he eagerly agrees. With the turbos hooked up and tuned, this Merc's going to be very scary indeed. We can almost feel the boost building already...



tend to find pretty fervent brand evangelists in the retro car world – Mini fans who’ll drive nothing but Minis, Mk1 Golf owners who won’t shut up about Wolfsburg – but it’s interesting to note that Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts are more effusive than most. Once that three-pointed star is emblazoned upon the subconscious, it’s there for keeps. This is true of Tim at F7LTHY; “the passion started the same as it did for so many others from my generation,” he says. “It was a poster of a 190E Evo 2 that inspired me to follow DTM racing, and that imagery was forever burned in my head! So I daily-drove a 2.5 16v 190E for years, which furthered my love for the platform. And once I was in a position to be able to afford to build my perfect version of a modern Evo, and I had acquired the skillset and team to execute it correctly, I did.”

This skillset was hard-earned from day one, as Tim’s first car – a Datsun 240Z – turned out to be what he describes as ‘a bit of a bondo wagon’. He’d bought it at the age of just fifteen, and there’s no denying how awesome it must have seemed to own such a beautiful and revered classic at that



What’s that lurking under the hood?

age, but the rose tints quickly fell away as he realised just how much work he was facing to fix it up. Never one to shy away from a challenge, he tore into the rusty Datsun with ninja force, and it was there that Tim built the bedrock of skills that permeate this Mercedes today.

“I realised early on that I wanted to build

cars for a living,” says Tim, “which wasn’t a popular choice with my parents, but it has been working out pretty good so far.” Yep, the evidence before us would suggest things are moving in the right direction. What’s particularly interesting to learn is that this car isn’t based on his trusty 2.5-16; Tim was reluctant to cut that up, so



HOT RIDE

With that turbo'd LQ9 this is the view most people get to see



➔ he sourced another project base. This car actually started out as a base-model 190E in a Champagne-on-brown colour scheme. The transformation, it's fair to say, has been colossal. And even that's an understatement.

So there are many out-of-the-ordinary elements of this car, and perhaps the most significant is that engine. No, it's not a Merc motor. In fact, it's a 408ci (6.7-litre) V8 from the lunatics at Texas Speed. This is a company which starts out with a General Motors 6.0-litre LQ9 iron block, and liberally festoons it with a stroker crank, forged pistons and rods, Precision Race Components cathedral-port alloy heads... this is very serious stuff. Nestling malevolently in the 190E's bay, it's now wearing a Late Model Engines billet intake manifold with Granatelli 103mm billet throttle bodies, and brilliantly there's a pair of massive Precision turbos from Mirror Image as well. Given the nature of what F7LTHY does, this all had to be a showcase of fabrication prowess, and consequently you'll find some very clever engineering in



here. The mighty intercooler was fabbed in-house around a Mishimoto core, the custom exhaust system was made up using titanium from Ticon Industries, it's all very smart. And if you thought that was special, wait till you find out what other weirdness has been going on...

HOT AIR

The suspension setup is a bit of an unexpected treat. Naturally we're used to seeing air-ride on project builds, but this is very far from an off-the-shelf kit. There's wily cross-pollination at play here. "The suspension was sourced from an R129 Mercedes SL600; it was formerly sitting behind a V12," Tim grins. "The 190E's entire rear subframe was cut out and replaced with the R129 unit, as that is much more robust and much wider, ultimately allowing us to widen the Evo 2 kit we made for the body. The struts are D2 Racing air struts which have been great for showing the car, although once we start to have fun with it and do some track days I think we'll be switching them out for coilovers." The presence of the SL600 architecture means that the team were able to stay OEM with the brakes too, upgrading to the big-brake SL factory option



OWNER PROFILE:

Name: Tim Lajambe

Age: 45

Occupation: Fabricator, and owner of F7LTHY Fabrication

First car: Technically a Porsche 914 (which was resold before picking it up); officially, a Datsun 240Z

Favourite car: Ferrari F40

Favourite modification on your car: Visually, the hood vents with throttle bodies poking through. Mechanically, the rollcage – everyone wants a 'cage!

Favourite show or event: SEMA, for the fact that so many builders push to create and innovate

Track day or show and shine?: Show and shines are a big part of promoting my business, but track days are where my heart is
Lessons learned from this project: Sounds cheesy but learning to trust my team and give them the room and support to do their best

What's next – any future plans? We'll continue to refine the Evil Evo, take the momentum it's created, expand on our abilities, and apply that to our customers' builds. And when the time is right and I've recovered from the expense of that build, I have another V12 Mercedes-powered build that I'd like to do for a future SEMA





that comprises 4-pot fronts and 2-pot rears.

A further surprise presents itself when you peep into the interior, as it's not all stripped-out race car – it's quite luxuriously trimmed. And yet it is stripped out. Sort of. It's a bit of a melon-twister, to be honest. See, the bones of it are pure race car, removing the rear seats and what-have-you and installing a rollcage... but then the NRG carbon fibre seats were stripped down and rebuilt with red nappa leather, with the original dash and various other panels trimmed in the same sumptuous hide to match. There's full soundproofing throughout the car, and the headlining and upper trim panels are all finished in light-absorbing dark Alcantara to complement the Cerakote Glacier Black



The NRG carbon fibre seats have been stripped and rebuilt with red nappa leather

HOT RIDE



finish on the 'cage. It's all marvellously strange, and it's the attention to detail which really makes it work as a whole. As can be said of the exterior treatment: that's F7LTHY's own custom Evo 2 widebody kit you're seeing, the body painted in satin-finish Mercedes-Benz Selenite Grey. But this is no DTM pastiche. The custom front splitter, rear diffuser and swan-neck rear wing all help to hurtle the aesthetic vibe into 2020, each one picked out in black Cerakote to marry the exterior to the innards. The upshot of all this is something pretty terrifying, which is just the effect the F7LTHY team was hoping for.

The rich mix of approaches has certainly led to some interesting reactions. People who get it really, really get it. Those who don't, well, they just don't. "Responses to the car have been amazing," Tim enthuses. "Of course there are haters, because the car isn't all the way one thing or another; it's not a purebred racer, it's meant to be an aggressive street car and a display of our abilities at F7LTHY Fabrications." Brilliantly, that's just the way this massively over-engineered project has turned out. There are strange things happening over there on the North Pacific side. And long may the strangeness continue. ■

TECH SPEC: MERCEDES 190E

Styling:

F7LTHY Evo 2 widebody kit, Mercedes-Benz Selenite Grey satin-finish paint, custom front splitter, swan-neck rear wing and rear diffuser finished in Cerakote Glacier Black

Tuning:

Texas Speed (GM LQ9) 408ci long-block, Precision Race Components aluminium heads, Late Model Engines billet twin-throttle body intake manifold, Granatelli 103mm billet throttle bodies, twin Mirror Image Precision turbos, custom-fabricated intercooler with Mishimoto cores, custom-fabricated exhaust system in Ticon Industries titanium, Tremec T56 Magnum XL transmission with cryo-hardened gears, ACE twin-disc race clutch

Chassis:

9x18in (front) and 12.5x18in (rear) custom-widened Fifteen52 Turbomac wheels, 255/35 (f) and 305/35 (r) Toyo Proxes RR tyres, R129 Mercedes SL600 V12 suspension with D2 Racing air struts, SL600 OE big-brake upgrade option (4-pot front, 2-pot rear)

Interior:

NRG carbon fibre seats – stripped and rebuilt with red Hydes nappa leather, dash and assorted panels trimmed in matching leather, headlining and upper panels trimmed in black Alcantara, sound deadening throughout, AiM digi-dash, Digital Delay Mega Panel, custom gear shifter, carbon flat-bottom steering wheel, rollcage finished in Cerakote Glacier Black

Thanks:

"Thank you to my family, my sponsors, and my team: Rob Mosser on fabrication, Tim Baillie (Installer of the Year 2019) on wiring and electronics, Brett Padula on paint and body, Luca Rizzo on mechanicals, and Greg and Sarah from @f7lthyinside on interior and upholstery."

“The custom front splitter, rear diffuser and swan-neck rear wing all help to hurtle the aesthetic vibe into 2020”



ONE GIANT LEAP FOR PERFORMANCE BRAKING

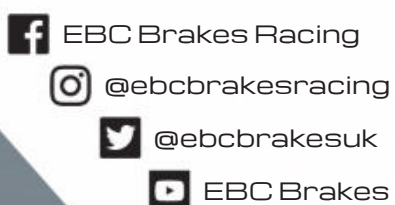


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For overseas prices please visit the Kelsey Shop website. Bookazine is on sale 27th March 2020. Offer ends 26th March 2020.



XXR 571, FROM £156 (EACH)

It's been a fair old while since we've seen a new wheel from XXR land in the UK, but we have to say that this 18-inches of pure pant-wetting loveliness, has been well worth the wait. Launched at SEMA, and now available here through SRB Power, there's not many cars – Audi, Nissan, Beemer, whatever - that we think this crazy design wouldn't look the part on, certainly in the relatively restrained (er, ish) bronze and black finishes. That Candy Red job, though? That's the boy, isn't it? This particular hue really is off the 'effin chain, and we've even heard that there's a Candy Purple version on the way, too!

Of course, either of these lairy buggers would be a brave choice for many, there's no doubt about it. But remember, kids, big trouser potatoes mean big kudos on the streets. And, on the right build, we're talking elevation of the highest order. Choirs will sing, angels will fall, you'll be instantly more attractive to the opposite sex, and Jules will personally buy you a pint at TRAX (Midge you bastid! – Jules).

Anyway, let's move on to the fitments, of which there are many. All the major 5-stud PCDs are catered for, and an 8.5x18 is an extremely

useable prospect on everything from VW Golfs, to Mitsubishi Evos. Dare to cram those 10s on the back, though, and you'll instantly become a god among men.

Can you tell that we quite like these? We thought so, and at around 600 quid a set, they're a proper Bobby Dazzler, too.

www.srbpower.com

FEATURES

- **Sizes:** 8.5 and 10x18
- **PCDs:** 5x100, 5x112, 5x120, 5x114.3
- **Offset:** 25-35
- **Finishes:** Chromium Black, Candy Red, Liquid Bronze, Candy Purple (TBA)



FRESH KIT

NEW PRODUCTS

The shiniest and freshest mods on the market

DRAPER TOOL CAB, £3095

If you're anything like our Midge, and your holy grail is the biggest toolbox in the known cosmos (but without paying second-hand R8 money – Midge), then this 72-inch monster from Draper could be the one for you. Standing at 5 foot 5 and a hefty 6-foot wide, you could land a Boing 747 on this one, so you're gonna need more gear than Ant Anstead and Bob the Builder put together to fill the bastard. We mean, it's even got its own suspension and everything!

Not got a garage? Well, that's no problem either; stick it in your bedroom and caress it every night. The missus will love it!

www.drapertools.com



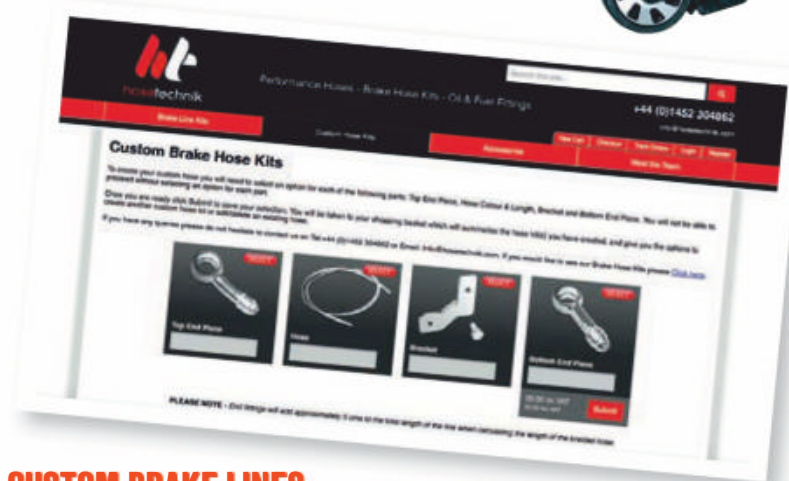
POWERFLEX BMW EXHAUST MOUNTS, FROM £10

Sometimes it's the little things in life that can make a huge difference, and these new exhaust mounts from Powerflex offer one of those rare occasions when you can make a big impact for not a lot of cash.

Designed for 1-4-Series BMWs and F56 Minis, these CNC-machined exhaust mounts are not just stupidly pretty, but they're available with an insert constructed from either red 65A durometer – which is around 15% stiffer than rubber – or polyurethane 'Black Series' material for the ultimate control in a combat (and by combat we mean trackday) situation.

The idea is a simple one: the stiffer material will allow less flex, stopping your exhaust flopping around all over the place during hard driving. And all this starts at just a tenner. Bonza!

www.powerflex.co.uk



HOSOTECHNIK CUSTOM BRAKE LINES, FROM £75 (SET OF FOUR)

There's been loads of new, specific-fit kits launched from the British performance brake line manufacturer over the past few months – the Fiesta ST, I30N, Swift Sport and Focus RS to name but a few. But what's even more interesting is that these guys can make up custom kits for any application out there, and what's more, they can now be ordered online from their brand-new website.

Ensuring that nothing gets lost in translation, you can choose from a huge range of stainless steel banjos and other fittings. And then have them fitted to their uber-quality, PTFE-lined, PVC-coated hoses in any length or colour.

With hundreds of specific-fit kits, and now the ability to make press braided lines on any other modified vehicle, we guess it'll be easier to list the stuff that they don't do.

www.hosetechnik.com

Yet More Schweet Hoops...

Wolfrace Wolfsburg, from £136 (each)

Our spidey senses are tingling with this one, and call us strangely physic, but we reckon that the bods at Wolfrace had VW's finest in mind when they crafted this crazy split-ten. Yep, we know it's amazing; it is but what we do.

Anyway, apart from the design, which seems to make them look even bigger than they are in the first place, we're also loving the duo of finishes. Gloss black for a touch of class, and gloss black with a polished face for when you've really got your party pants on. There's a good selection of PCDs as well, so they will also fit stuff that's not from Wolfsburg. Good game, we say.

www.wolfrace.com

Sizes: 8x18, 8.5x19, 8.5x20

PCDs: 5x112, 5x114, 5x120

Offset: ET35-45

Finishes: Gloss Black, Gloss Black/Polished Face



White Label Icon, £450 (set)

White Label has been killing it over the last few months, dropping more jaw-dropping hoops than the Chicago Bulls (yep, a Basketball gag, we totally went there). The thing is, though, never has a wheel been so aptly named as the Icon. It's clearly a classic design inspired by the land of sushi and Skylines; an icon in every sense. But the thing is, the fact that it's a tad on the Jap side makes it just as perfect for standing out from the crowd on the odd Euro hatch, too.

The staggered 15-inch sizes, nice low offsets and an almost universal 4x100PCD fitment are all very handy. But best of all, if you've got a monkey to spend on a set of top rims, you'll still have 50-quid change. Impressive!

www.nuts4wheels.com

Size: 8 and 9x15

PCD: 4x100

Offset: ET10

Finish: Black/Polished

Vossen HF-5, from £523 (each)

This latest release from Vossen is modelled on its forged brother, the mega-money S21-01, and it's strictly for those who need dubs and above to fill their arches. Of course, it's hardly what you'd call a 'budget' wheel, but being Hybrid Forged (or flow formed to you and me), it is more affordable than the fully forged McCoy... in the same way that a Fiesta ST is more affordable than a Bugatti Veyron. But, then again, the Fezza is still frickin' awesome, don't you think? And so are these gigantic, super-concave stunners.

They are also available in 10 different finishes, and can also be machined to any PCD and offset. Slick McSlick.

www.vossenwheels.com

Sizes: 8.5-12x20, 9-12x21, 9-12x22

PCD: Any

Offset: Any

Finishes: Matte Gunmetal, Gloss Black (standard)

Satin and Gloss Silver, Gloss Gold, Anthracite, Satin and Textured Bronze, Matte and Satin Black (custom finishes)



Awesome Audio



JL AUDIO JD AMPS, £TBA

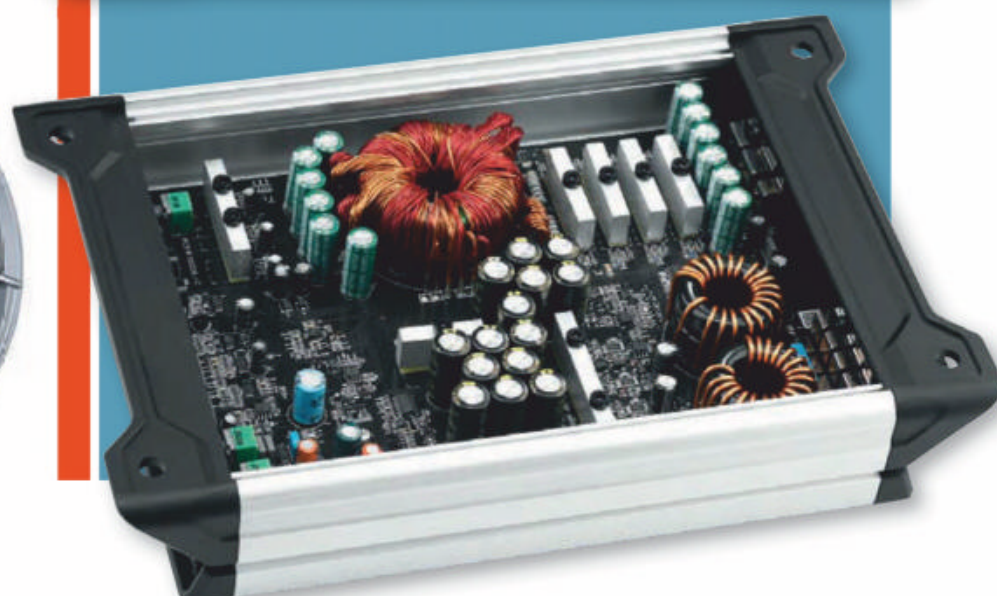
We don't have to tell you that JL Audio put together some of the finest high-end amplifiers ever to storm the audiophile universe. What many forget, though, is that they have a pretty bloody amazing entry-level range too. In fact, their JX amplifiers have always been extremely highly regarded by those in the know, and now they're set to be replaced by something even better. What's more, the new range – these seriously powerful, compact 'JD' jobs – will be landing here in the UK in a couple of months.

Instead of a simple update on the older JX kit with a little added shazam, they've gone the whole hog with a quadruple hit of re-engineered Class D tech. There's no less than three new (250, 500 and 1000Watt RMS) monoblocks, along with a 4x100watt RMS full-range unit.

As always with JL, there's lots to shout about. For a start, all four benefit from their patented NexD switching technology for outstanding fidelity with next to no noise and distortion. They also have signal sensing, differential-balanced inputs, which means that they can take high-level signals of up to 8V without a separate line-out converter (just splice your speaker wires to a set of RCS leads and away you go).

What's perhaps most impressive, though, is that all these have 'Integrated LED Clipping Indicators', something that's pretty much unheard of in an entry-level amplifier. These allow you to set the gain quickly and accurately without any special equipment. You can simply download the free test tones on the JL website, and set it up like a pro. It doesn't matter who you are, that's bloody clever!

www.jlaudio.co.uk



LIFESTYLE

The car culture experience doesn't just belong in the garage



Sealey Retro-Style Tool Chests, from £287

Yeah, you're right, we have shown you these awesome retro-style tool chests from Sealey before, but they're so good we've decided to show you again. And while we're on the subject of car-themed furniture (see bottom right), we reckon these toolboxes could easily cut it as an interior accessory too – and funny enough, that's exactly what our Midge has done with his! Pictured is the full-fat topchest, mid-box and rollcab combo with red anodised drawer pulls. This will set you back over a grand but the retro range starts at just under £300.

www.sealey.co.uk



Vee8Design furniture, from £700

So, the missus has been banging on at you about replacing the sofa? Well, before you head to DFS why not check out Vee8Design? These guys make custom car-themed furniture to order. Using genuine seats from the likes of Maserati, Rolls Royce and Bentley, they aren't just super comfy, luxurious and stylish but they're also environmentally friendly as they are upcycled items.

Vee8Design don't just make sofas and armchairs but stunning coffee tables too. The one pictured boasts a Jaguar V12 block and would set you back around £1000. That's one powerful way to make a statement in your living room.

www.vee8design.com



Bell & Ross 05 Skeleton, £5300

Bell & Ross, the leading brand in the aviation watch market with its iconic square BR 03 model has unveiled its stunning new BR 05 collection. And the watch manufacturer is coming in hard with our favourite of the pack, the new-age urban looking BR 05 Skeleton.

While other variations of the BR 05 have a solid face, this timepiece boasts an exposed skeletonised main plate and hovering hour markers. As with all B&R watches, it packs heavy duty casing and a satin-polished steel strap that would survive the apocalypse. It's somehow classy, rugged and classic all at once. A bit like our esteemed editor Slim Jules (can you guess who wrote this eh? Initial G). Want one? It's on a limited run of 500 pieces, so get your credit card ready and buy it!

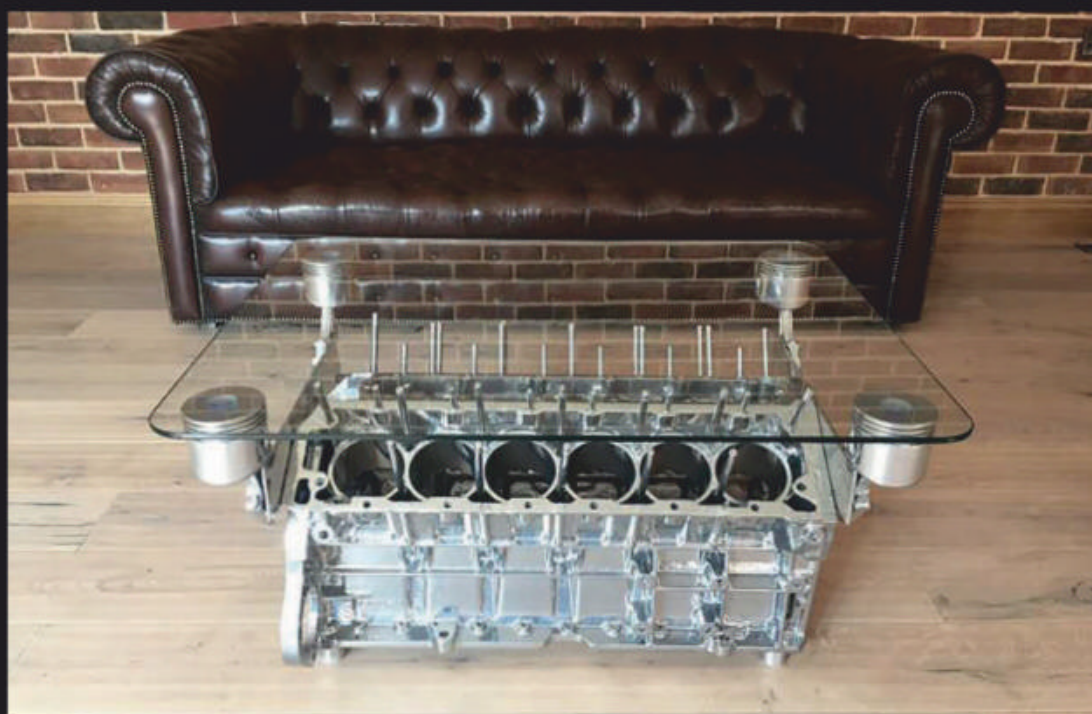
www.bellross.com



Tamiya RC Cars, from £135

Our friends over at Tamiya have been killing it recently with their latest releases. Here's just three we picked out from their current range, and as you can see, they've got the Jap and Euro market covered. In the Euro corner is the Renault 5 Turbo that runs Tamiya's M-05Ra chassis and comes complete with the race livery and block-pattern tyres for great grip, then there's Slim Jules' personal favourite – the wide-arched Mk4 Supra that's mated to the TT-02 chassis, six spoke wheels and slick tyres. And if that's a bit too mad for you, why not opt for the super-cool MX-5? This one uses the M-06 chassis that provides rear-wheel drive, just like the real thing. Get involved.

www.wonderlandmodels.com



Fast Mods

It's barely been on sale for five minutes, but the UK's top aftermarket firms have already jumped on Audi's incredible C8 RS6

The Audi RS6 has always been a bit of a lunatic: a car that has supercar performance that can take the kids to school and get a herd of Great Danes in the boot. But the latest incarnation, the C8, takes things to the next level. Tick the Dynamic Package Plus box when buying one and you'll get a car that's electronically limited to 190mph and can hit 62mph in 3.6-seconds. Yeah, you did just read that right. It might have cost you over 100k for the privilege but that's just ridiculous performance by anyone's standards.

But this is Fast Car magazine and while the above figures are mighty impressive, they are still standard figures and we know the RS6's 4.0-litre, twin turbocharged V8 is capable of more. With a few choice modifications from the industry's finest aftermarket tuners, you'll very easily have a 200mph+ family car that looks even more special.

Here's what we would do if we had a C8 RS6 in our lives...



GTECHNIQ CRYSTAL SERUM LIGHT AND EXO V4 KIT, £79.95

If someone said you could protect your 100k investment for less than 80 quid, you'd do it, wouldn't you. So, there's no excuse not to coat your C8's fresh paint in Gtechniq's awesome enthusiast-friendly nano-ceramic sealant that's based on their professional Crystal Serum. Then finish the job with a layer of EXO for added reflectivity and an unbeatable water-beading finish.

www.theultimatefinish.co.uk

AUDI C8 RS6

KW HEIGHT ADJUSTABLE SPRINGS, £815

So, the car's sounding like it should thanks to that Milltek exhaust system, but now it's time to improve the stance, and that's where KW come in with their height adjustable springs; lowering the C8 between 5 and 30mm at the front and back. And being from KW, you're guaranteed that the spring rates will harmonise with all the driving modes of the RS6's adaptive suspension.

www.kwsuspensions.co.uk



MILLTEK SPORT EXHAUST SYSTEM, £4038

If you've just spent supercar money on a 'base-spec' RS6, you're going to want it to sound and go like one too and that's where our friends at Milltek Sport come in. They've already developed a number of systems for Audi's flagship Avant that'll help airflow and increase power. Plus, with it being a Milltek, it comes with the peace of mind that you're buying one of the best systems available to the car.

As well as the particulate filter back system with oval trims (pictured), they also offer a front pipe pack system and downpipes with hi-flow sports cat or cat delete. We can only imagine how good that will make the 4.0L V8 sound!

www.millteksport.com

ROTIFORM 3-PIECE ARA WHEELS, FROM £POA

The RS6 is such a beast of a car, that it's deserving of a serious set of 3-piece wheels. And while you can spec pretty much any forged Rotiform to fit the car, we think a set of ARAs would look tough on the hyper-estate.

www.rotiform.com



PRODUCT TEST

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THE GOOD STUFF

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- ✓ You get a whole litre!

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www.autofinesse.com



THE VERDICT

As with the vast majority of Auto Finesse products, Eradicate is designed to make life easy for the people who just want to clean their car without the fuss – a novel concept we're sure. What makes it really special, though, is that it will do the job to an exceptional level; enough to impress the guys who are seriously into their detailing, too. Basically, it's a bit of a jack of all trades, but most importantly it masters them all.

What's perhaps best for the mass market is the 'ease of use' bit. Working on a cool engine bay, it's a simple case of spraying it on, leaving it to dwell for a couple of minutes, agitating each section with a brush for any stubborn grime build-up in the awkward areas (I'd recommend investing in a pack of their detailing brushes for this – £12.95 for a selection of three sizes), and then washing it off. To be honest, it's all over so quickly, you'll wonder what you were worried about in the first place.

What I like most is that even though Eradicate has been formulated to be safe on everything from the paint to the plastics (like engine covers), it doesn't mean that it's any less effective on the dirt than the seriously-harsh industrial products. You can actually see it working on the oil and muck as you go. It's safe for sure, but it doesn't fall down on where it counts. You just can't go wrong for a tenner.



One of the most common questions we're asked here at FC is: how do I clean my engine bay effectively? It's a fair point too – blasting away at it willy-nilly with a pressure washer is the highway to disaster. And, all this, along with the inevitable fear of messing something up under your bonnet, can make it a bit of a dark art.

Of course, some professionals will whack out all sorts of expensive kit: steam cleaners and the like, along with harsh chemicals and specialist formulas to lift away the sort of baked-on grime you'll always find in your bay. But, and it's a big but, surely it just doesn't have to be that difficult, does it?

Well no, because that's exactly why the detailing experts at Auto Finesse reckon it's simply down to finding the right product. And, as if by magic, here's one they prepared earlier...

THE PRODUCT

What we're looking at here is a heavy-duty engine degreaser, but one with a difference. The short of it is that, unlike most of the toughest products you'll find out there, this special formulation is safe enough to use on every sort of surface – paint, rubber, bare metal, you name it. With that in mind, forget that it specifically says 'engine degreaser' on the bottle, and think of it more as a general-use grimebuster, designed to quickly eat through the seriously tough stuff. Come to think of it, Eradicate is also pretty phenomenal under your wheel arches, inside your door shuts and even for a quick spruce up of your tools. A master all-rounder for the grimeiest bits and pieces.

What's great here is that you can target specific areas under your bonnet, like you would with a normal degreaser, or just spray it all over (being careful to protect sensitive areas like intakes and electrics, obviously). It foams up quickly, and it's great to see that they've made the formula thin enough to get in all the annoying little nooks. Those hard-to-reach areas like inside the panel shuts and around nuts and bolts being a particular speciality.

Making this stuff a spray-on product is the real genius bit. There are many brush-on degreasers around but they can be a bit of a pain to get to the areas you want to clean, and many are thick gloopy liquids that are even more hassle to wash off. There's none of that here. Oh yeah, and you get a whole litre of the stuff!





DETAILING ACADEMY

MASTER THE ART OF DETAILING

Take your car cleaning skills to the next level and master the art of detailing at the Auto Finesse detailing Academy - Full day One to one detailing tuition on your own car for just £295 inclusive.



FIND OUT MORE AT WWW.AUTOFINESSE.COM/ACADEMY

Words: Midge



DIY DAY JOBS & WEEKEND WONDERS

DIY DAY JOBS & WEEKEND WONDERS

Get your hoops looking slick this season.



Wheels, they make our world go around, quite literally. And, the short of it is that no one likes to see battered, scratched wheels on any motor. In fact, if you're thinking of selling up, many will see the wheel condition as an indication of how you've looked after the rest of the car.

With that in mind, this time we thought we'd bring you a few tips for a little home refurb

and, although we do not recommend you do this with super-posh expensive wheels, it may be useful if you have a set that need a bit of love on a budget.

So, whether you've been straying a bit close to those curbs or you'd just like to refresh your wheels with a new hue for the coming season, here's how you can spend your time this weekend...



THE GEAR

Fitting Time:

It takes a while – mostly waiting for paint to dry. Give yourself a good 12-hour shift, and preferably a couple of days.

Costs:

Wheel Paint: From £5.29

Two cans of wheel paint will usually be enough for four wheels. Normal spray paints: you may need a can for each wheel.

At the risk of sounding like Captain Obvious, you'll be needing some paint, and the type you choose will often depend on the colours available. Just remember that there is a difference between a traditional spray paint and a dedicated wheel paint. While wheel paints are only readily available in standard colours (like silver, black and white), they are designed to be extremely tough. This is because wheels need to stand up to a hell of a lot of salt, road grime and hot brake dust.

If you're looking for a particularly special shade – say, if you're colour coding or contrasting with your bodywork - you can still use a traditional paint, but it may not be as durable. Very often you'll have to apply more coats to build up a sufficient layer. You may also need to prime first, and often lacquer (clear coat) after. For this reason, some prefer to use a wheel paint first, then a colour paint over the top.

Other than that, it's just basic stuff like wet & dry scotch pads, panel wipe, masking tape and possibly some filler. A sander will often help too... all will become clear.

Specialist Tools:

You don't need any specialist tools as such, not unless you're feeling flush and want to buy a tyre machine. You will, however, need a painting mask and a well ventilated garage to do the job safely... don't try this in your mum's living room.

www.eurocarparts.co.uk

DO IT!

1 GET SET UP

First, inspect your wheels. You'll not only need to work out what sort of paint you want, but also if there's any damage that needs to be repaired. It's a lot easier to pop to your local Euros if the wheels are still on the car, right?

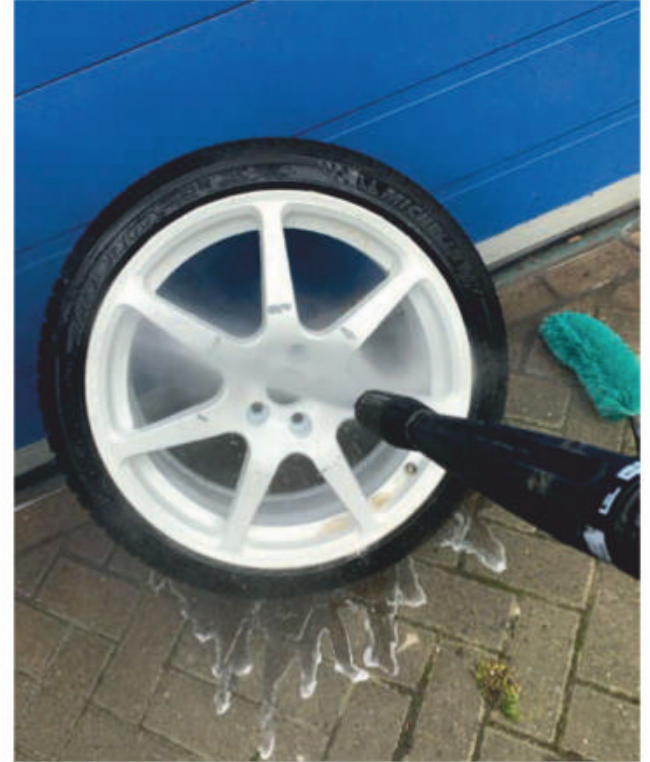
Once you're happy that you have all you need, it's time to get your wheels off. So, observe all the usual precautions, get your car up on proper axle



stands and, above all, use your noodle to stay safe.

Right, have got your wheels off? Good, then we can begin...

Pop out the centre caps, and give 'em a good wash, inside and out, using wheel cleaner and soapy water. If you have one, use a pressure washer and a stiff wheel brush. If, like most of us, you're not going to be removing your tyres or

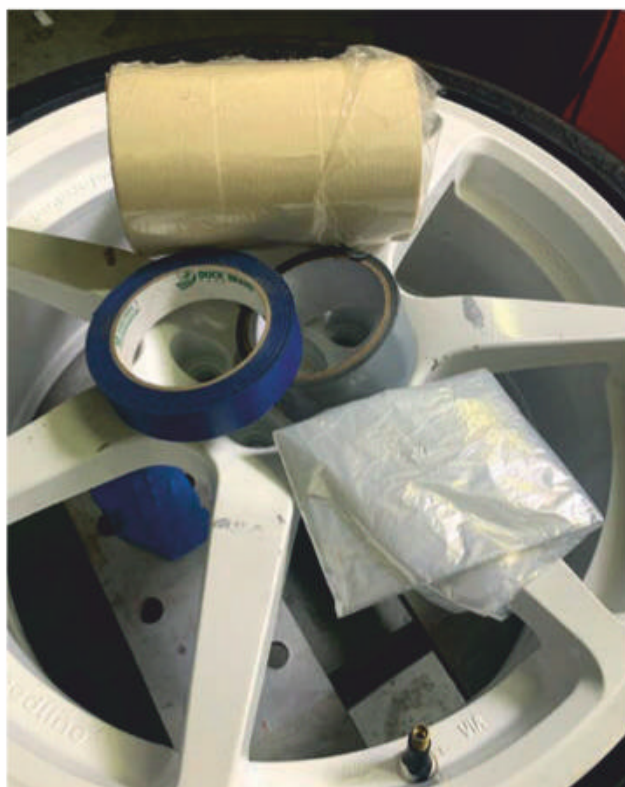


painting the barrels, be careful not to blast off any stuck-on wheel weights.

Basically, you just need to remove any dirt, brake dust and oil that will stop paint sticking... come to think of it, a good blast of brake cleaner will go a long way here, too. Once you're happy that your hoops are as clean and dry as they can be, you can get them inside.

2 MASKING

In an ideal world you'd have the tyres off, but obviously that's not the most practical for a home refurb. So, the first job is to let all the air out, and this is even easier if you have a valve remover (they're only about a quid on eBay). Once your tyres are flat, you'll want to get them as far away from the lips as possible. You'll never totally break the bead without specialist equipment, but often you can move them just enough for masking by standing on the sidewall (not in our case, though, but you can't have everything).



For masking, you can use paper to cover the tyres, but personally I find a cheap plastic dust sheet (or a disposable rain poncho, like here) is better. Start by masking under the tyre lip, don't forget to mask off the valve, and then use your dust sheet to cover the whole lot. Finally, you can cut out the centre of the plastic/paper and tape it up.

The real trick here is to use decent masking tape. The cheapo stuff won't always stick to the



tyre or even to itself, and may lift when you're painting. Another thing I like to do is use some super sticky gaffa tape around the lip first, just to give the masking tape something to cling to.





3 PAINT REMOVAL

The first thing is to decide how far you want to go or at least how far you need to with the old paint. If you've got a load of flaky stuff and corrosion, you'll need to get it all off (a sander and a wire wheel on a drill/grinder can be useful here). Your new paint simply won't cover imperfections and deep gouges.

There's also the age-old question of chemical paint strippers. These can be useful for corroded or severely damaged paint. Basically, you spray or brush them on, they'll eat down to the metal, and you can scrape all the paint off (please wear gloves, a mask and goggles if you're taking that route; it's nasty stuff). It's also true that professional wheel refurb peeps will acid dip the wheel to remove any trace of the old paint. But, bear in mind that the pros usually powdercoat wheels for a tough finish,

rather than paint them. And, even if they do use paint, they'll use a few coats of tough primer to protect the metal.

For a light refurb, however, you're better off leaving as much of the original paint on there as you can. After all, more paint means more protection kids.



4 REPAIRS

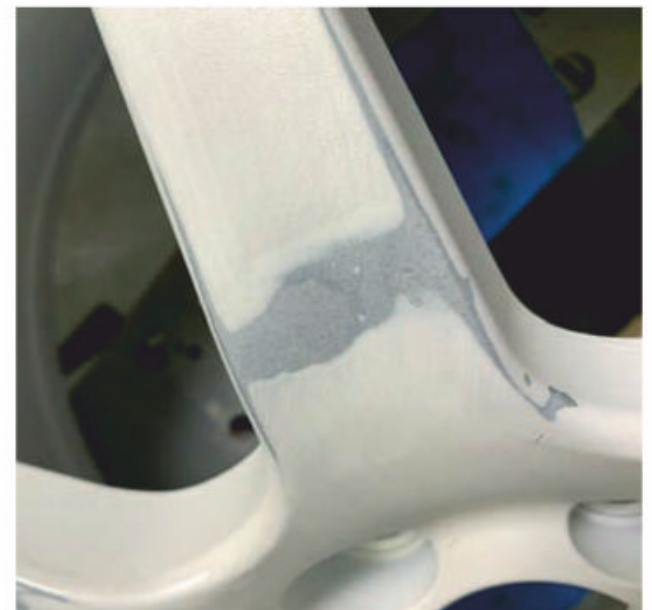
As for any repair work – curb marks and such – light repairs can often be sanded, but heavy curbing and gouges will need filling. Most body fillers will do the job nicely, but I'd always recommend using a tough 'liquid metal' type filler if you can. This is where a detail sander can come in very handy as the tougher the filler, the harder it is to sand down. In our case, there's only damage on the face of this convex wheel and this can be sanded out.



5 SURFACE PREP

Ending up with a smooth surface is the key to success, but it also needs to be a surface that the paint will stick to. Every part that you're spraying will have to be prepared and there's two main methods.

If there's no damage to the wheel, you can usually get away with 'keying' the whole surface by giving it a good going over with a scotch pad (a paint preparation pad). For heavier work, where you have more imperfections or repairs, you can use various increasing grits of wet & dry paper. I like to start with around 4-800-grit wet and dry to sand the paint back, and then some 12-15000 to smooth it out.





You'll find your own way with materials, but what's most important here is to feel the surface as you go – often you can pick up more imperfections this way.

You'll know when the surface is prepared because it'll be smooth to touch and you will have taken all the shine out (it needs to be dull). Then it's time for more cleaning. Give the whole

wheel another good wash down (if you have an air-line it helps to blow all the dust away), and then a thorough clean with a suitable panel wipe or degreaser.

The idea here is to eliminate any dust and fingerprints that will ruin the finish, so take your time to get it all as clean as possible... and after that, sweep your work area to make sure it's free from dust.



6 PREP FOR PAINT

Once you've got a nice clean area to paint your wheels, you can lay them out. You'll need plenty of room to get around each wheel to get your paint in all the nooks.

To avoid any obvious runs, I find it best to lay them flat, rather than against a wall. Some people do recommend having them upright but I'm not sure why this is – it doesn't make much sense to me unless you're hanging them



for powdercoat.

Anyway, if you're painting the barrels, it's best to do those first, laying the wheels face down on some cardboard or foam. Sometimes you may get paint running onto the face when you spray the barrels and that's exactly why you do them first. This way you have the chance to rectify any mistakes on the faces (where it's far more obvious) when you flip them back over.



Now, for the actual spraying bit. First, make sure you're wearing a mask and that your garage is not only ventilated, but nice and warm. This is to help the paint to stick, so if you have a heater use it. (If it's a fan heater, you'll always have the risk of blowing dust around, so never point it directly at your wheels). You'll also need to cover anything else in the vicinity that you don't want covered in overspray.

Some recommend using a primer, and technically speaking, that's correct – primers help topcoats stick, and will show up any imperfections that need to be rectified. That said, many wheel paints are designed for use without priming, so it's one of those 'use your best judgement' situations.



7 PAINTING

When it comes to painting topcoats, it's all a waiting game. Give those wheels another wipe down first, and be gentle with your very first coat. This one should be more of a light dusting, getting hardly any colour on there at all. Hold the can six inches or so away from the surface and you'll see the paint particles actually float down and come to rest. You're looking for a dusty speckled finish. Do a couple of coats like this (15-mins or so apart), and don't be impatient because the colour and shine will build up in the latter coats as the wet paint melts together. Just think of the first couple as an extension of the prep stage, to ensure that the rest of the paint sticks.

Four or five coats should see the job done... although you may need more if you're using a normal spray paint, and then you may need a lacquer over the top. (Most wheel paints are designed for use without a separate clear coat, making the job far easier.)

When you're happy with the finish, carefully take off the mask while the paint is still wet, and leave your wheels to dry for as long as possible. The longer they're sitting in the warm, the more the paint will cure and the tougher it will be. Overnight really is the absolute minimum.

Er, that's about it. Easy.



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HOT RIDE



Words **Emma Woodcock** Photography **Daniel Pullen**

Ryan Crew upgraded to a Corsa VXR in 2014 – and he's been working on its show-stopping style ever since

LONG TERM PLANS



“1.4-metres wide, 175mm deep and supported by a pair of aluminium wing mounts, there’s no missing the BYC Designs rear wing”



It all starts with a 1.2 Corsa D. The mass market supermini isn't quite as glamorous as a range-topping VXR – and it can't take the fight to the faster car's turbocharged 1.6 Z16LER – but the simple Vauxhall makes a perfect first car. For Ryan Crew, the basic machine sparked an enthusiasm that's still burning today. "It was my first car and I immediately fell in love with the shape," he remembers. We can see why. Upswept and angular, the fourth-generation Corsa is a radical departure from its rounded predecessors. "There was just one problem... I always wanted a bit more power."

Enter the VXR. A quick drive in a friend's example is all it took: Ryan had to have the fastest Corsa going. He sourced a near-new 2014 example from a nearby dealer, choosing Flame Red over the more ubiquitous Arden Blue, and set to work with his imagination. "I started changing it straight away – I'd got the bug!" A collection of splitters came first, then a backbox and an AMD Tuning software calibration that yielded 225bhp. It was only the beginning – Ryan had far bigger plans in mind. Quite literally...

1.4-metres wide, 175mm deep and supported by a pair of aluminium wing mounts that snake down the bootlid, there's no missing the BYC Designs rear wing. That's exactly what Ryan wanted. "The build blew up as

WORK of art...





Ryan has tuned the Corsa to a thoroughly respectable 270bhp

soon as I fitted it," he grins, "a lot of people took an interest and that's when I started thinking the key point of my build is to be different, extreme and out there."

WING COMMANDER

The wing wouldn't be enough by itself. A victim of its own success, the high-rise appendage has now spread to other cars across the scene. So, Ryan decided to turn his Corsa into a one-of-one original. Additional changes cluster around the front end and vary from simple – see the Opel OPC front grille combo, smoothed bumper, debadged bootlid and window air deflectors – to staggering. Carbon fibre dive planes bring a racetrack aesthetic that's supported by a full width Stuke splitter and a pair of bonnet vents.

Designed for aftermarket fitment to a Mk3 Ford Focus RS, the bold grilles stand apart from the more common Mk2 Focus RS items and demanded extensive custom metalwork. "It's an attempt to make the car sleeker, and to stand out a bit more," says Ryan, "but what a pain to fit! We had to very carefully cut them in, having made sure the pair lined up perfectly from side to side." Underbonnet implications have been considered too, Ryan cutting the mirror to skim around the new slots with



Twin exit Cobra exhaust

millimetre precision.

The glass reflects the aesthetic focus applied to the inline-four. Blue silicone hoses appear throughout, a metal hardline intake pipe sears from the bottom left and there's an extensive Badass Performance dress up kit which adds sparkle to the heatshield, head tank, brake reservoir cover and more. A strip of LEDs sits further back – to give onlookers better visibility at night-time

HOT RIDE



It's not how you stand
by your car...



meets – but the custom rocker cover is easily the most dazzling engine bay alteration. Airbrushed with the VXR logo, Spiderman and a portrait of the Corsa itself, it's a playful nod to Ryan's adult and childhood interests.

Time has been poured into the interior too, though the result is far more subtle. An OMP deep-dish steering wheel is the only obvious swap up front, Ryan retaining the original Recaro front seats for their snug driving position, so you have to look further back to see real change. Glance past the B pillar and the reward is a rear bench delete, a Stern Performance boot brace... and a customised floor mounting with a cluster of air ride tanks and a giant subwoofer. "I'm a carpenter by trade," says Ryan, "so I made the surround out of MDF then spoke to InterMotiv about what I was trying to achieve with the air. They've created my dream!"

Pretty pipework is only the beginning: the Corsa sits on Air Lift struts and bellows all-round, supported by Air Lift Performance 3P digital management and custom InterMotiv mounts. The result is a front end that can touch the floor and a rear that stands just 30mm from terra firma, all achieved without a single chassis notch. "It's perfect and I'm just flabbergasted." Now the perfect stance needed arches and wheels to match.

"I nearly cried before the first cut. It was an emotional moment." No-one wants to take the grinder to pristine sheet metal but Ryan's mind was made up. An Instagram search had thrown up the wide arch conversion developed

by Italian firm RSI C6 and now his VXR had to have it. "I saw the one-off kit they'd made for a European Corsa on Instagram and I messaged them for months, asking them to make me a set. They finally came around!" This would be no copy-cat evocation, mind. While the original item finished above the sideskirts, Ryan requested a new variant that flowed into the surrounding bodywork and the company complied.

Construction wasn't so simple, Ryan taking the whole of 2019 to juggle the arches, air suspension and a set of custom WORK Seeker FX two-piece alloys to create the tucked-up look you see today. "It was such a stressful process: fitment was one of those projects where you almost give up hope..." Measurement, mathematics and adjustment filled month after month but Ryan never abandoned his twin aims of maximum wheel width and no spacers. At the front you'll find ET35 9x18s, while at the back sit 10x18s with an aggressive ET10 offset, the Metallic Bronze alloys couldn't make better use of the available space.

SHOW AND GO

Extra performance goes hand in hand with the visual flair, the turbocharged engine now boasting full forging with Wossner pistons, a KO3 hybrid turbocharger, a shouty Cobra 2.5-inch exhaust system and software recalibration from specialists SM Tuning. "It all started



OMP steering wheel
looks the part



We get the feeling Ryan is
a bit of a perfectionist

HOT RIDE

because the model can suffer piston failure... and mine went at 38,000 miles. I had it forged during the rebuild and added the new turbocharger. It's not a massive specification but I knew I'd be happy with somewhere between 250bhp and 300bhp." A dyno proven 270bhp shows the Corsa is now right in Ryan's sweet spot.

Ancillary upgrades ensure that the VXR can handle the 76-horsepower upswing without drama. There are Bosch 395cc injectors to get fuel flowing faster, a Forge Motorsport turbo actuator to support higher boost pressure and an Airtec intercooler to keep charge air cool. Down at the crankshaft, there's a stronger, lighter flywheel and clutch combination to eliminate transmission slip. It's sourced from Vauxhall experts Courtenay Sport and – having been designed for Stage 3 Astra VXR builds – it's more than strong enough for the job. Extra heft keeps the brakes effective too, Ryan opting for 330mm front discs and massive D2 Racing six pot calipers after the original VXR kit cried its last at Goodwood.

Six years have gone by since Ryan first upgraded to the VXR and his enjoyment of the go-fast Corsa hasn't dimmed one bit. "I look at my car now and I love it even more than when I first bought it," he grins. "I still get that excitement every time I drive the Vauxhall, every time I look back when it's parked up. I've reached my goal: I can't ever see myself changing for another car." Hard work, commitment and imagination define this build: the Corsa true love never did run smooth. ■

Ryan and his VXR cruise
off into the sunset

TECH SPEC: CORSA VXR

Styling

RSI C6 wide arches, Backyard Civics rear wing and mounts, Stuke front splitter, Maxton Design sideskirts and rear treatment, T2 rear diffuser, smoothed front bumper, Opel Corsa OPC front grille and foglight surrounds, LED foglights, AFL headlights, DNA rear light clusters, CM Composites window louvres, Ford Focus RS Mk3 bonnet vents

Tuning

Fully forged Vauxhall Corsa VXR 1.6-litre turbocharged inline four with Wossner pistons, KO3 hybrid turbocharger, Forge Motorsport actuator, Bosch 395cc fuel injectors, AIRTEC intercooler, Cobra Sport Exhausts 2.5-inch twin exit system, Courtenay Sport Astra VXR Stage 3 single mass flywheel and clutch, SM Tuning software calibration

CHASSIS

WORK Seeker FX two-piece alloys in metallic bronze, 9x18-inch ET35 front and 10x18-inch ET10 rear, InterMotiv air ride conversion with custom mounts, Air Lift struts and bellows, Air Lift Performance 3P management system, 330mm front brake discs with D2 Racing six-pot calipers

INTERIOR

Vauxhall Corsa VXR Recaro front seats, rear bench delete, OMP steering wheel, VXR Racing door protectors, Stern Performance boot brace, custom boot build with subwoofer and InterMotiv air system build, Badass Performance engine bay dress up kit, blue silicone engine hoses, custom airbrushed rocker cover

THANKS TO

"InterMotiv for the suspension, www.f-e-v.co.uk, Work Wheels, Washington Coachworks for paint and bodywork, SM Tuning for the map and that's about it!"



CLUTCHES

Don't let yours be the weakest link... and say goodbye.

A clutch has one job in your car - to transfer the power from the engine to the gearbox, via the flywheel. Now, obviously, you'll be wanting as many of those lovely horses as possible to be transferred across, hopefully without eating your clutch or flywheel along the way. Perhaps what's most important is the last bit, there's no point in having any clutch if it explodes every 5-minutes... although there's equally no hero points achieved for having a highly-tuned engine where all the power goes to waste in a huge cloud of smoke and slippage either.

The truth is that, when there's any sort of engine tuning or fruity driving thrown into the mix, then the extra torque or extreme conditions your clutch has to endure can make it struggle to cope. Still, that's where uprated performance clutches come in, these are designed specifically to ease the burden and keep you on track. Here's what you need to know...



THE SCIENCE

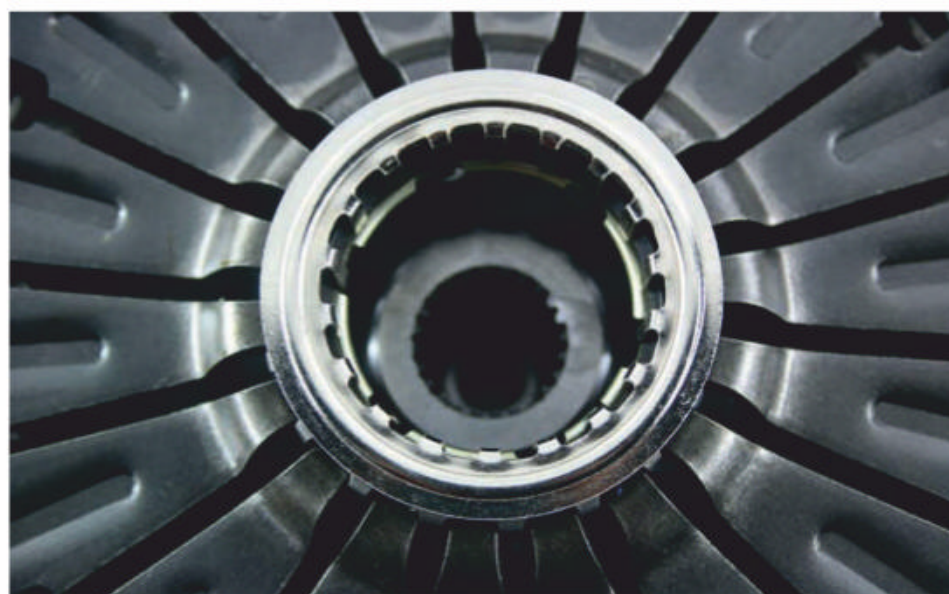
A conventional clutch setup has three main parts – the clutch plate (otherwise known as the disc), the release bearing and the cover. These work in conjunction with the flywheel to make your car move.

The plate is the part that includes a specially-engineered friction surface, in that way it's not unlike a big brake pad, this is connected to the gearbox by a shaft that slots through the splines in the middle.

The other part, the clutch cover, mounts over the disc and

is bolted to the flywheel. The cover has a collection of finger springs and its job is to hold the plate securely against the flywheel, essentially clamping the friction surfaces together. This physical connection is what allows the engine and gearbox shaft to turn as one.

When you press the clutch pedal the finger springs are released from the clutch plate by pushing on the bearing, allowing the plate to disengage from the flywheel while you change gear.



COMMON CLUTCH PROBLEMS

When your clutch slips it means that the plate isn't being held tightly against the flywheel, even if the clutch pedal hasn't been depressed. At best the lack of solid connection will result in a reduced amount of power transfer to the gearbox and, at worst, a total lack of drive. There are a few common reasons this can happen...



Overheating

Generally speaking a standard clutch is designed to be strong enough to cope with a little beyond normal driving, but even an aftermarket clutch that's built for plenty of abuse can only take so much.

On the track, drift arena or drag strip where there's plenty of hard launches and clutch kicking involved, it's obvious that the friction surfaces can get extremely hot as they're trying to hold together.

With enough abuse, these surfaces can overheat and that will stop the plate gripping the flywheel effectively.

Apart from the awful smell that comes with a clutch burning out, you'll find that it gets increasingly difficult to select a gear and eventually you'll have no drive at all. Letting the clutch cool down can, in rare cases, solve the problem, but all too often it'll be too late.

Driving Habits

We all pick up bad habits over years of driving and many of these can have a detrimental effect on your clutch.

Holding your car on a slope without using the handbrake, slipping the clutch to pull away, driving with your foot on the clutch (even just a little) or sitting at the lights with the pedal down are all easy ways of wearing out your clutch prematurely. To be honest, they're all things that most of us do regularly too!



A worn clutch

The most common cause of clutch slip, not to mention failures in general, is the simplest – they just wear out. As we said, a clutch plate is just like a big brake pad and, over time, the friction material will wear and become less effective at gripping the surface of the flywheel.

In other words, it's a consumable part and it's rare for even the most looked-after clutch to last the lifetime of the car. It's inevitable that a clutch will wear out, but just how quickly your car eats one depends on many things including the spec of the clutch, the power you're putting through it, and the way you drive.

The other common problem is simple mechanical failure. This can cover anything from finger spring failure to oil finding its way onto the friction surfaces. These will all cause varying degrees of clutch slippage.

Tyre Grip

The weakest link in the whole drivetrain can often be the clutch, and having super-sticky track tyres can have a similar effect as having too much power from the engine. If you accelerate hard on normal tyres, sometimes the wheels will break traction and spin on the spot. With hugely increased grip the tyres will not spin, and this torque transfer will be looking for the weakest link in the setup. In many cases this can stop a standard clutch plate from gripping the flywheel effectively.

Too much power

Okay, so there may not be such a thing as too much power in our world, but it's worth remembering that, if your clutch can't transfer all this extra power to the gearbox, you're defeating the object of tuning the engine in the first place! Slippage can be caused when there's simply too much power for the clutch plate to hold on to the flywheel. Then again, that's the whole point of choosing an uprated version, right?



UPDATED CLUTCHES

In many cases, standard clutches can actually cope with more abuse than you might think. That said, they're not designed for the more hardcore driving style or big power increases because, like every other component on a standard car, they're always built to a tight budget. Standard

items have to be a compromise between cost, longevity and ease of use, they're also engineered to be quiet, smooth and durable during normal driving. It's when you get to hard driving and power increases that an uprated clutch is needed. Performance items are stronger due to

the way they're designed. Manufacturers take into account three basic parameters when they build an uprated unit. These are friction material, the number of friction plates, and the design of the cover, often incorporating stronger springs/fingers for increased clamping force.

CLUTCH PLATE FRICTION MATERIALS

Organic

Standard clutches and a few fast-road clutches are said to be 'organic' and this refers to the binding agent that holds the friction material together, and sometimes the actual friction material used. It's probably something of an outmoded term and comes from the days when asbestos was used - before they found out it was carcinogenic and banned it.

Nowadays organic friction material is generally a mix of cellulose-reinforced phenolic resin, mineral wool, fibreglass and various heat resistant plastics. The cellulose will provide the initial bite while the other materials give increased

burst strength.

They may offer relatively low friction, but the whole point of an organic clutch is that it's easy to live with and hard-wearing for normal driving. These have good feel and excellent bite initially, but they're relatively easy to overheat under high torque loads.

Cerametallic

Cerametallic clutches are similar to organic items in that they're fairly user-friendly, but the ceramic and metal minerals that make up their friction compound gives significantly better grip on the flywheel, and can usually handle more abuse.



Kevlar

The name refers to the plate friction material which uses a proportion of chopped Kevlar fibres for increased burst strength and far greater temperature resistance. Confusingly enough, many organic performance-orientated clutches contain a small amount of Kevlar (or even ceramic/metal/carbon elements) but a so-called Kevlar item will have much more because it will be built from more abuse and designed to be more difficult to overheat. Although that doesn't mean it's impossible, in a racing environment, with enough boot-action, Kevlar clutches are also susceptible to overheating under extreme use. Once overheated, they won't return to their original state either, so you'll be needing a new one.

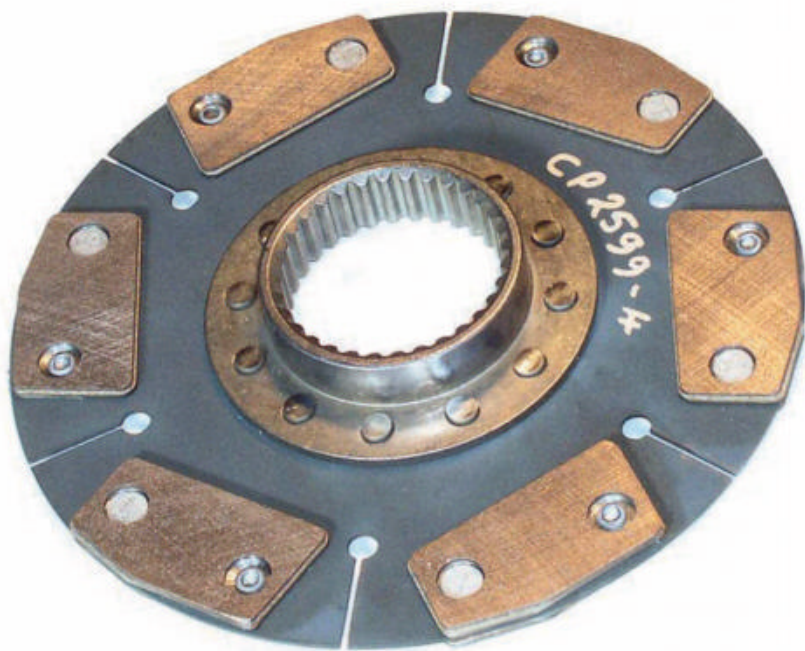
Like many other performance clutches Kevlar kits will include an uprated cover with very high clamping pressure. Here though, it's because (compared to organic material) they tend to have relatively low frictional properties. Even so, these are still a popular upgrade.



Carbon/Ceramic

Most believe carbon and ceramic clutches to be the ideal solution for race use and there's no denying both have become increasingly popular of the past decade or so. Neither are exactly cheap, but they do have excellent grip and wear characteristics, are extremely hard to overheat, and many can be smoother to use than you might think. They do have a harsher engagement compared to an organic or Kevlar item of course, but not so harsh that they can't be used on the street... although admittedly many tend to perform better when you've got a bit of heat in them for maximum grip. These are fast becoming a favourite on any seriously tuned car, both for fast road and track applications.





Semi-Metallic/Metallic

You're getting into some serious motorsport kit here, semi-metallic and metallic (sometimes called 'sintered') clutch plates are usually for the mega-power applications, and built to withstand the most extreme temperatures.

The friction material usually contains powdered copper, iron or bronze and sometimes a combination of all three, it's this that makes them amazingly grippy. The downside is that any metallic clutch won't be easy to live with because of the harsh engagement and sudden biting point. In the same way as racing brake pads, some will also slip until they're fully up to temperature. These tend to kill flywheels rather rapidly too and all this means they're rarely used on cars destined for the road. In fact, it's true to say that nowadays with multi-plate clutch technology, they're rarely used at all except in extreme competition cars like those found in endurance racing. They're simply too extreme.

Hybrid Clutches

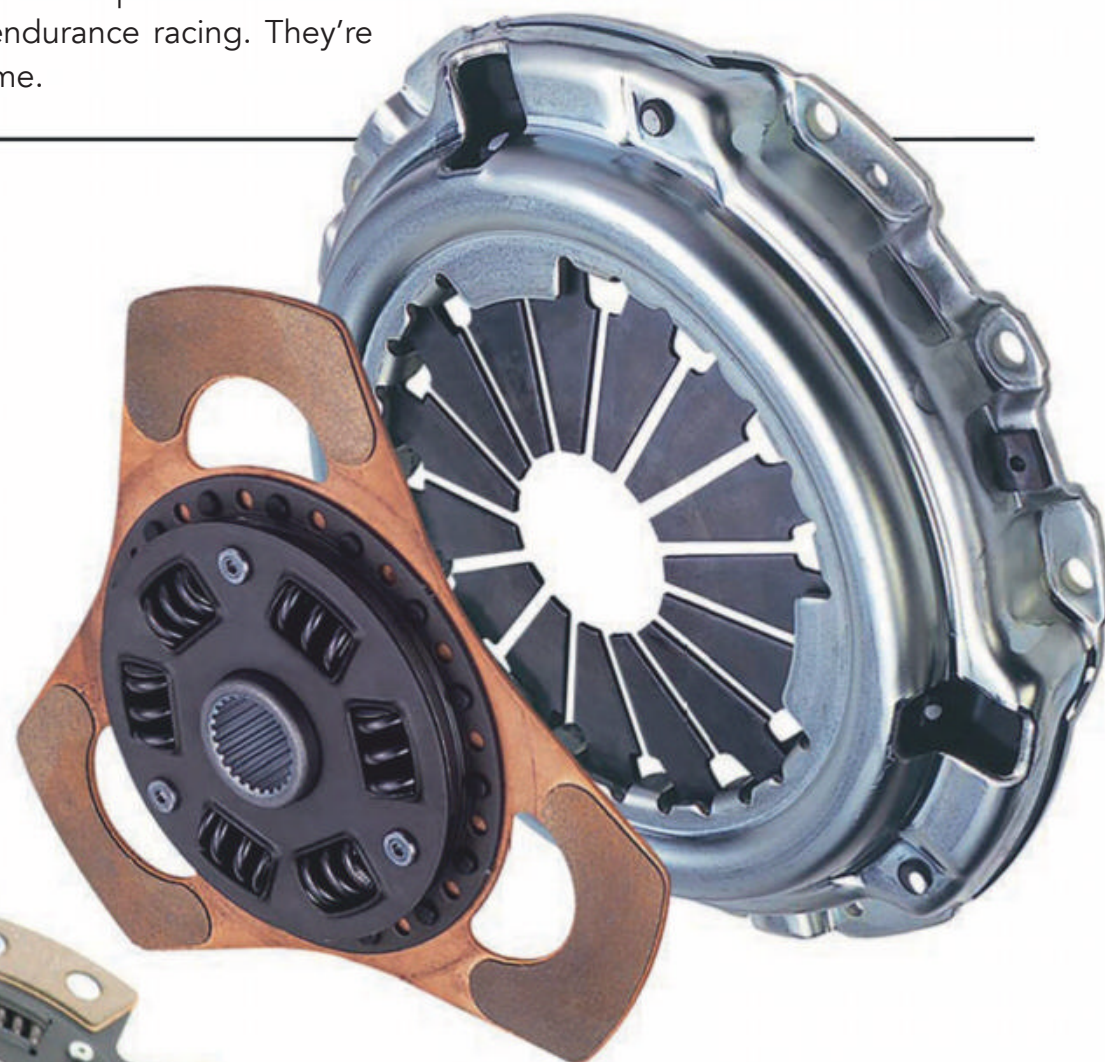
Some clutch plates are simply a mixture of different types. Some are organic clutches but with the addition of carbon, Kevlar or metal and there's also Kevlar-carbon clutches and carbon-metallic items. Basically, these are designed to take advantage of any number of material characteristics, although it's worth remembering that what they gain in some areas may be lost in another. Unfortunately, there's no overall perfect solution, it all depends on the car, how you intend to drive, and how usable you'd like it to be.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Paddle clutches

Paddle clutches, the ones the Americans call 'pucks', have a segmented plate rather than a more-common circular disc. Each arm, usually there's between 3 and 8, will have its own pad of suitably hardcore friction material.

The idea is that the gaps in friction material contact make dissipating heat easier. Not having a full circular plate of seriously uprated friction material also



makes them more useable. Don't be fooled in to thinking the design makes them easy to use though, many of these are what many call an on-off item. Sudden bite and super-harsh engagement are par for the course with paddle clutches, and this increases with less sections on the plate. They won't be too forgiving in traffic and, for this reason, these are normally reserved for motorsport applications or the tuner cars that simply can't do without them.

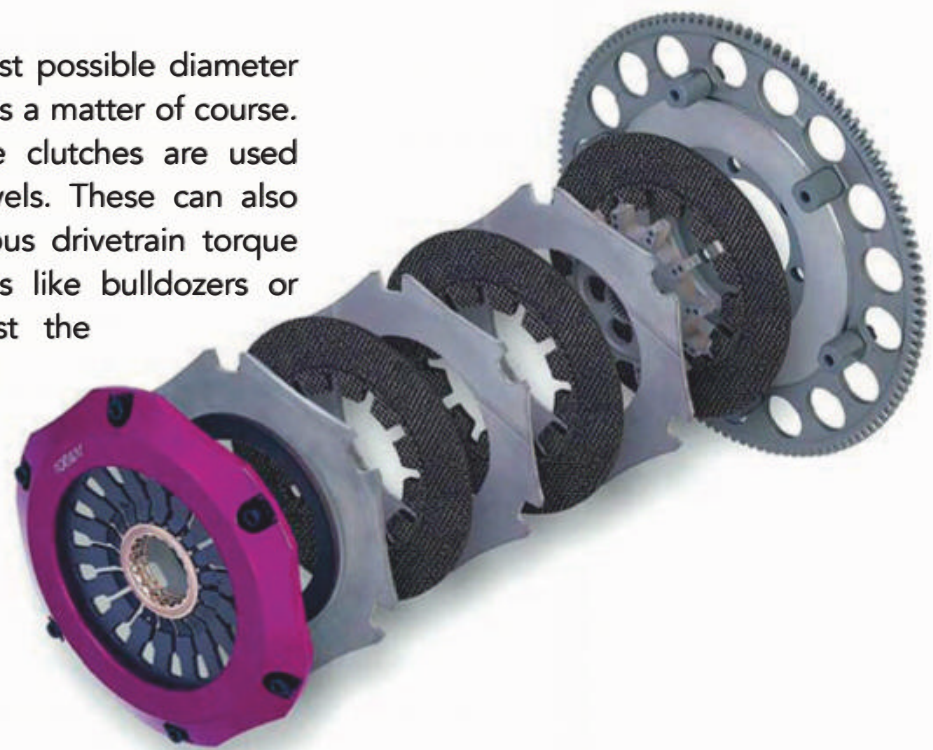
FC TECH: CLUTCHES



Multi-plate clutches

Designed to handle serious power with surprisingly good drivability (compared to the equivalent race-derived, single plate items), multi-plate clutches commonly have up to 4 plates stacked together with intermediate plates mounted in-between. By using multiple plates these spread the load and increase heat dissipation so you get more grip for the overall diameter. In other words, these can be engineered to be much smaller than a single plate item that needs to take the same load or abuse. In motorsport a smaller clutch with the same overall friction force is useful for cutting down on rotating mass. In fact, many teams

will go for the smallest possible diameter and the most plates as a matter of course. Nowadays multi-plate clutches are used at all the highest levels. These can also be handy when serious drivetrain torque is needed in vehicles like bulldozers or tanks... and not just the Japanese ones either!



Unsprung Clutches

You'll notice that the vast majority of clutches have springs incorporated into the friction plates, these are there to cushion the blow when they engage, and one of the devices used to make them smoother to operate on the road when you're constantly changing gear. They're there to make the clutch setup easier to live with, it's as simple as that.

In the case of unsprung clutches, these don't have the shock-damping provided by springs, and that can make them a nightmare to use on the road. They can also put excess strain on the gearbox. On a race car though, smooth operation isn't so much of a worry and these are designed to give the most positive action possible, along with less weight and less component parts that may be susceptible to mechanical failure.



TOP CONTACTS

• DKM – www.dkmclutch.eu

DER KUPPLUNGSMEISTER

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PERFORMANCE CLUTCH KITS

MS TWIN DISC CLUTCH KIT

The MS clutch kit can hold up to 900 Nm at the wheels. This is achieved through two organic clutch discs (up to 240 mm), which offer a larger contact surface to transmit the power. Each kit includes a pressure plate, two clutch discs and a steel flywheel. Additional parts such as pilot bearing/bushing, throw-out bearing, and alignment tool are also included.*

*May vary based on applications

DRIVE HUB DESIGN FOR BMW N54 / N55

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PERFORMANCE CLUTCH KITS FOR EUROPEAN APPLICATIONS

WWW.DKMCLUTCH.EU

Words: **Dan Bevis** Photography: **Dan Pullen**

CABBIN' FEVER

The team at Car Audio Security know their way around a show build; these things titillate and inspire, and with the NYC taxi-like vibes of this yellow A3, they've got us all mopping our feverish brows...

Way back in 1970, when all this was fields and everything had a sepia tint, Joni Mitchell was lamenting the nature of how 'they paved paradise and put up a parking lot'. The song in question, Big Yellow Taxi, made a bold and pioneering statement about environmental concerns, about deforestation and the pursuit of human convenience over the beauty of nature, although as Alan Partridge subsequently pointed out in the 1990s, this act of town planning was 'a measure which actually would have alleviated traffic congestion on the outskirts of paradise'. So there you go, there's always a counterpoint of view.

With a fusion of logic and reality firing on all cylinders, we find the fellas at Car Audio Security distilling this offbeat thinking into the 2018 Audi A3 sedan you see before you. The base is an interesting choice, as this company has a long and distinguished history of building modified cars to exquisite standards, for two key reasons: first of all, because if they can turn up at shows populated by the sort of core audience that's going to want to buy their products, and fill their stands with the kind of dream cars that said customers would want to build, that makes the corporate point rather well. And secondly, Car Audio Security is staffed by a bunch of bona fide petrolheads, so quite frankly any excuse to modify cars is going to be grabbed with both hands. But since their back catalogue is positively brimming with high-end sports cars, BMW M3s and M4s and what-have-you, why did they choose a 1.5-litre TFSI variant of the A3 saloon? The reason is actually pretty straightforward: not everyone can afford top-of-the-range sports cars, so this build demonstrates very clearly just how awesome you can make a car with a relatively everyday spec, with well-chosen upgrades and a keen sense of vision.



“Car Audio
Security is staffed by
a bunch of bona fide
petrolheads”



HOT RIDE



OWNER PROFILE

Name: Robin Kellam
Age: 32
Occupation: Sales Manager at Home AV Direct
First car: Citroën C2
Dream car: Audi RS6
Favourite thing about your car: The Air Lift suspension
Hardest part of the build: Resisting a colour change
Lessons learned from this project? Focus more on engine power
What's next? Maybe a colour change!

NOT SO MELLOW YELLOW

"When the time came to get us a new company car, I knew I wanted to stick with Audi," says company manager Parm Panesar. "The original plan was to get a Mk3 TT, but when they released the facelifted A3, and after seeing the optional factory upgrades available, my mind was very quickly changed. So the car was purchased brand new from Audi, and I added a bunch of spec upgrades including deletion of the silver trim, the Tech Pack, and the panoramic sunroof – all of which I love and totally make the car for me... that and the colour of course!"

Vegas Yellow certainly is a bold choice, and it really elevates the facelifted lines above the usual greyscale A3s that we see every day on Britain's roads. The model Parm optioned, the 1.5 TFSI, offers a stock 148bhp along with a 7-speed S-Tronic transmission, and with the optional extras he found himself driving a rather pleasant steer back to the Car Audio Security workshop. Of course, 'rather pleasant' was never the overarching purpose of this acquisition – Parm doesn't just buy company cars for fun, these things have to work to earn their keep, and the first thing he did after signing on the dotted line was to drive it straight into the workshop and get his team to begin dismantling it. This is very much his *modus operandi*, we've heard the same from Parm when talking about previous builds – there's no messing about... as you'd imagine really, given that this company is the UK's biggest independent in-car entertainment specialist, and in recent years has become one of the biggest Air Lift Performance dealers worldwide. Every custom build is a shop window.

"All of the work was carried out in-house here at Car Audio Security," he confirms. "We started with the suspension, fitting an Air Lift Performance setup with 3H management, before moving on to the security upgrades." 3H is a highly intelligent system, using both



height and pressure sensors to provide perfect control in any scenario – and cleverly, as well as the in-car controller, you can also operate it via an app, which is a thoroughly modern way to behave. And when it came to security, well, you'd expect these guys to have the cream of the crop ready to wire in; in this instance, we're talking about a Viper DS4 with digital tilt/motion sensor and dual-zone shock sensor with Bluetooth control. "This was actually the very first Viper DS4 security system to be installed in the UK, and was used for Firmware validation," Parm explains. In addition to all this, there's Thinkware F770 dashcams front and rear, ensuring that this A3 is about as secure as it gets.

AERO PACKAGE

Now, it's all very well dumping your car into the weeds on air-ride, but you need to fill those arches with something sweet in order to maximise the effect, and today we find the A3 wearing a set of the popular Rotiform LAS-R design in 19-inch flavour. But there's a twist... these rims are also rocking the fresh Rotiform Aerodiscs, and they're a pretty cool idea: if you've got LAS-R, BUC-M or RSE wheels, they simply bolt on





using the central hex nut, and as well as choosing from black or white discs, they're also infinitely customisable and offered with all manner of downloadable graphics packages. A clever way to change up the wheel-modding game that nobody saw coming, and they look outstanding tucked up inside the arches of this luridly yellow saloon, particularly with Parm and the squad's on-point fitment prowess.

As was always its destiny, the gloriously updated A3 gets a lot of action on the showground, but it's also on daily-driver duty commuting to and from work at the hands of the ever-enthusiastic Robin Kellam. "The car gets a lot of attention, largely due to the colour," he grins. "And when it was wearing its NYC taxi livery, there were a lot of jealous looks from the local Uber drivers..."

All of this represents a wonderful evolution for the Car Audio Security demonstrator bloodline. "The company started twenty years ago with just four people and about 50 square-feet of space to work in," Parm explains. "Today there are forty of us and 30,000 square-feet! And my first Air Lift-equipped car was a B7 Audi RS4, and since then all of my cars have been on Air Lift Performance suspension." The 1.5 A3 is arguably the perfect continuation of a long line of low-down rides, once again choosing a car that people in

the scene wouldn't necessarily expect, and at the same time really helping customers relate to what's possible. The team may be paving paradise with this car, but their intentions are pure. It's a big yellow taxi with a heart of gold. ■

“when it was wearing its NYC taxi livery, there were a lot of jealous looks from the local Uber drivers”





TECH SPEC: AUDI S3

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION:

1.5-litre TFSI, 7-speed S-Tronic transmission

POWER:

Stock: 148bhp, 184lb.ft

CHASSIS:

19in Rotiform LAS-R wheels with Rotiform Aerodiscs, Air Lift Performance suspension with 3H management

EXTERIOR:

Vegas Yellow – Black Edition, panoramic sunroof

INTERIOR:

Factory half-leather/half-Alcantara interior with Virtual Cockpit upgrade

AUDIO:

JBL Club 4505 5-channel amplifier, JBL GTO609C front and rear components, JBL S2-1224 12" subwoofer

Security: Viper DS4 with digital tilt/motion sensor and dual-zone shock sensor with Bluetooth control, Thinkware F770 front and rear dashcams

THANKS:

"Thanks to Car Audio Security, Rotiform, Air Lift, JBL Car Audio, Clifford UK, and Sycographix."



THE REALM OF MORE-DOOR

The third-gen (8V) A3 was the first of the line to offer a saloon/sedan variant; the 8V hatch launched in 2012, and the booted four-door arrived the following year when the covers came off at the New York Auto Show. It's the versatility of the VAG MQB platform that allows such a variety of bodystyle variants, and when the 2017 facelift came in, the A3 saloon was treated to the Matrix LED headlights which had previously been seen on the flagship A8 and the R8. The facelift grille and bumper treatment is really quite aggressive too!

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Words: Dan Bevis

Photography: AUTOMOTIV MEDIA / Eddy Paesschezoone

the Future

Screaming in from the 1980s, this Corolla Trueno GT-S has been treated to an ultra-modern engine swap, bespoke widebody conversion, a Levin facelift, and prepped for top-flight drifting. This is the kind of generation game that gets played at SEMA...



HOT RIDE



ALL IN THE DETAILS

The more you look at this car, the more details you unearth. One thing we particularly love is how, despite wearing that custom Pandem 86 widebody kit, it also makes a real feature of its original Sprinter bumpers and OEM body addenda – look how the glossy black plastic at either end has been artfully reworked to follow the lines of the fat new arches, complete with original red pinstripes. It's this level of attention to detail that really sets SEMA builds apart from the rest.



These custom BBS Racing wheels measure in at girthy 9x15-inches



Carbon details adorn the AE86



It may not be a DeLorean, but this outstanding 1980s Toyota has its own flux capacitor. Not a real one, obviously, but a figurative one that worms its digital tendrils into your brain's frontal lobes as you gaze upon it, desperately trying to process the magnificence of what you're seeing, and trebuchets you back and forth through time. You see, on the one hand this is the archetypal old-school JDM hero: the AE86 Corolla has been with us for thirty-six years and people have been modifying them consistently throughout in cool and interesting ways. Thanks to Initial D, it's an iconic drift car; it's also campaigned as a Touring Car across the world, and it responds very well to the show-car treatment too. It's essentially the Japanese Mk2 Escort – lightweight, rear-wheel-drive, with a super-tuneable motor and a truly playful chassis.

On the other hand, however, this hot-to-trot hachiroku is as modern as they come. How so? Well, just look under the bonnet. That's no retro 4A-GE twin-cam. And while we've seen a broad spectrum of unlikely engines swapped into these little Toyotas – Lexus V8s, Honda F20Cs, you name it – what you're witnessing here is a world-first.

This is the first AE86 ever to be fitted with a Honda K20C1 motor. Upsetting for the purists, perhaps, but we just can't get enough of the sheer audacity of it.

If you're not sure what a K20C1 is, allow us to fill you in. The K20 engine family stretches back to 2001,

when the then-new 2.0-litre VTEC four-pot was used in the EP3 Civic and DC5 Integra Type R. It was used in various different forms in other models over the years, and then in 2015 Honda decided to blow away the traditional concept of what a Type R engine should be – they strapped a turbo to it. The FK2 Civic came complete with this 306bhp force-induced hooligan, and it was carried over to the current-model FK8 Type R.

WHEN OLD MEETS NEW

In a nutshell then, what we're seeing here is an iconic classic car fused with an equally iconic modern-era engine. These are entities from different ages, different companies, different mindsets and approaches... these are not things which should happily go together. And yet, somehow, they do. Brilliantly. And it's all thanks to the high-functioning mind of drift supremo Daijiro Yoshihara. This world-class make-over is Yoshihara-san's stellar

vision, and it all started with a Corolla Trueno GT-S which was owned by KW Suspension's Chris Marion. Chris had lent the car to him on a track day, with the immortal

“You break it, you buy it. And Yoshihara-san broke it. So he bought it”

phrase 'You break it, you buy it'. And Yoshihara-san broke it. So he bought it.

This isn't to say he's careless of course; no, it's more that he's comfortable pushing his own limits. This is a lifelong passion for him – as a teenager he worked a



HOT RIDE



number of jobs outside of school to pay for his fledgling drifting habit, finessing his skills on touge runs in the hills outside of western Tokyo in his AE86 Sprinter Trueno. Fast-forward to 2013 and, the hobby having long since turned into a way of life, Yoshihara-san moved to the USA to live out his competitive motorsport dreams. Sadly this meant leaving his beloved AE86 behind, and this was always a regret that sat at the back of his mind. Competitive commitments in the Formula Drift Championship and the Lamborghini Super Trofeo series meant that he never had time to exorcise that Toyota-shaped demon... until now. Thanks to a golden opportunity from Turn 14 Distribution and his various sponsors, he was granted the opportunity to develop the hachi-roku of his dreams, the AE86 R.

So, he had the opportunity, and he had the donor car (albeit slightly damaged). And the plan was to go in hard from day one – this wasn't just to be a cool car specced for drifting, this had to be a full-bore showstopper. The team were aiming for SEMA 2019, and you know how hardcore cars have to be to shine at the world's biggest aftermarket trade show. The world is watching. SEMA is a big, big deal.

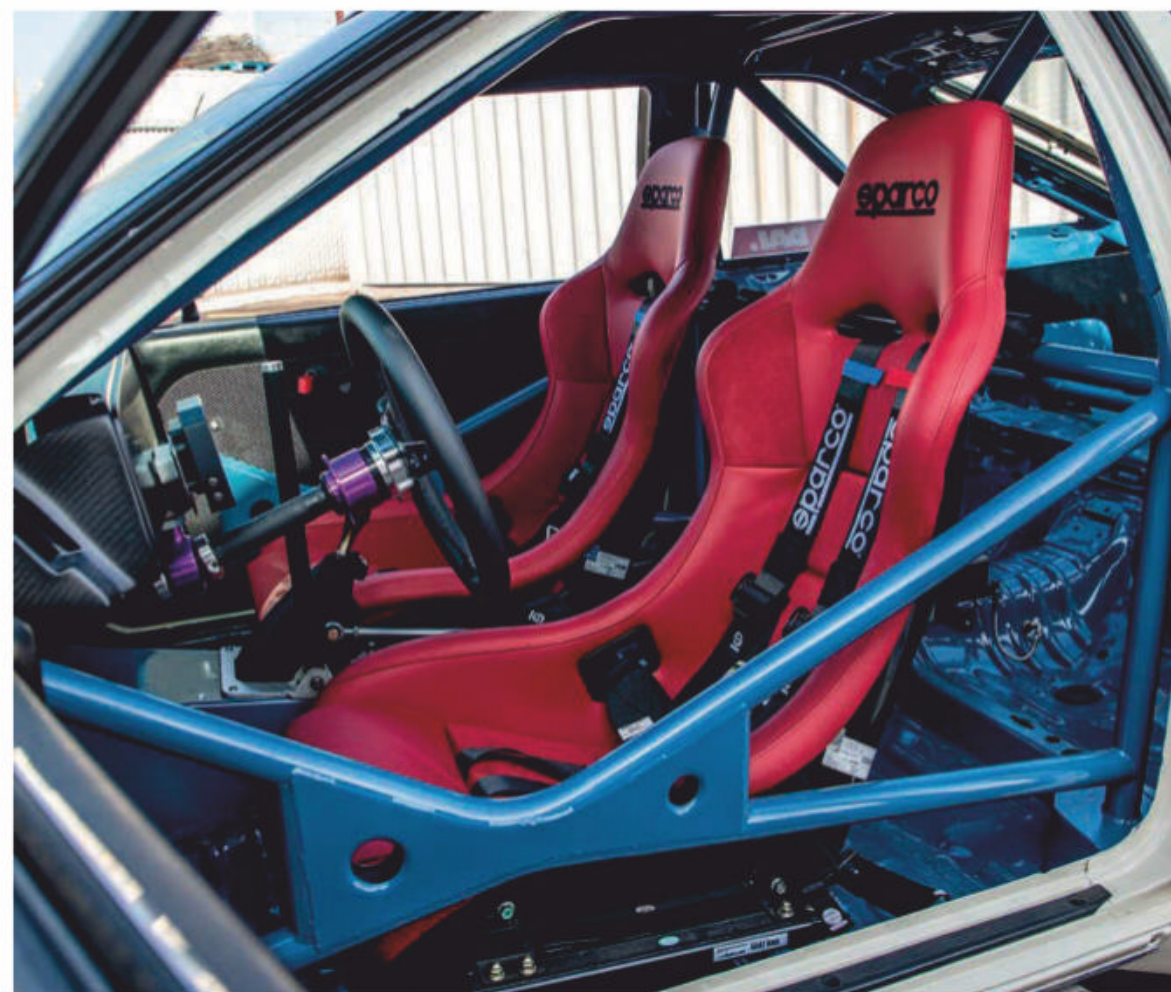
Job one was to tear the car down and assess its condition, a task carried out at Evasive Motorsports in Santa Fe Springs. The bare shell was then loaded onto a trailer and carted over to Eimer Engineering in Anaheim – an outfit headed up by race fabricator Chris Eimer, who had previously worked on Yoshihara-san's Formula D Subaru BRZ as well as acting as his crew chief for several years. He wasted no time in fabricating a custom competition-spec chromoly rollcage, with all sorts of extra triangulation points, crash bars, and the A-, B- and C-pillars gusseted in. The rear end was designed around a Celica XX Supra axle that had been chosen for its strength, widening the track by a handy 15mm. All manner of fabrication work was happening at this point, and the focus was every bit as much on form as function; all of the superfluous holes were being welded up and smoothed, a custom transmission tunnel fabricated for the much larger gearbox that would

be required, and the spare wheel well was cut out to make way for the Radium Engineering fuel cell. The suspension is something really special too, as KW was drafted in to create something bespoke for the car; the end result was some fancy 3-way adjustable coilovers which, should you so desire, can be created on request by the company's Custom Service Department.

While all of this is going on, we find Kei Miura of TRA-Kyoto casually sidling into the narrative from stage left. A little while back, Yoshihara-san had got chatting with the Rocket Bunny boss-man, and asked if he'd be interested in designing a custom widebody kit for the AE86 R. Miura-san was very keen on the idea, and so it came to pass; offering something markedly different to the more usual TRD N2 kit, the Pandem 86 setup applies that trademark JDM aftermarket vibe, something which proved so popular at SEMA that Miura-san has since agreed to start selling it to the public via GReddy USA.

FACE-OFF

The rear haunches offer an extra 120mm of width, so a fat set of rims would be necessary, and this box was ticked by a custom quartet of 15-inch BBS Racing wheels, 9-inch wide apiece but with vividly staggered offsets front and rear. Meanwhile, there were dramatic developments unfolding under the bonnet. For starters, the arrangement of chunky CSF dual-pass radiator and GReddy intercooler meant that the original Trueno fixtures were left with no room for its pop-up lights, so the car has enjoyed a face transplant from a fixed-headlight Levin. (Those lights, incidentally, are custom Vision Autoworks items with retrofitted Accord Euro R projectors inside the original housings.) The Honda K20C1 remains largely stock, although there was a whole





That's not just any white, that's
Honda Championship white



Link MXS Strada display feeds
Yoshihara-san the vital stats



HOT RIDE

↘ world of effort required in getting it to work in a place where it really shouldn't be. For starters, it would be mounted transversely in its native FWD Civic, whereas the RWD Corolla necessitates it sitting longitudinally. The crossmember was modified and re-welded to suit, and a Honda S2000 gearbox is bolted to the back using a custom bellhousing adaptor and McLeod Racing clutch and flywheel. The Spoon Sports yellow valve cover is a nice touch to really Honda-fy the Toyota bay, neatly studded with IP Ignition direct coils, and the inlet manifold's been cunningly flipped by 180-degrees on a bespoke Eimer Engineering 3D-printed adaptor. Since this is an engine swap that no-one's ever done before, it took a bit of head-scratching to figure out how to get it all running properly, but thankfully Link came to rescue with its G4+ Force GDI ECU.

The clever management system talks to the Link MXS Strada display, and this serves to imbue the interior with the retro-modern mashup vibe prevalent throughout the car. Painted in vivid Cavalry Blue (a Toyota TRD Pro shade), that minimalist interior makes a feature of its mighty 'cage, and also sports super-modern safety gear to ensure that it's a safe competition vehicle. The steering column, for instance, is a collapsible item from Speedway Motors, while those limited edition Sparco QRT-R seats are lightweight and super-strong. And how good does that unique dry carbon dash look, juxtaposed with the towering hydraulic handbrake handle?

The final flourish to the exterior is a bit of an easter egg for the aficionados: that crisp paint shade you see is actually Championship White, and every Honda fanboy and fangirl will tell you that this is the traditional colour of the Type R. Slathered cheekily over those fat Pandem curves, it's been topped off by the racy Turn 14 Distribution livery. This move really sums up the build as a whole – it's something stuffed to bursting with exotic and geeky details, every decision carefully considered, to create something that's at once ready for the track and prepared to scoop up all the silverware. And, of course, it's also a time machine. Yoshihara-san's distilled the essence of the 1980s and Soda-Streamed it right into 2020, and we're all eddy in the turbulence of it. When this '86 gets up to 88mph (and beyond), you're going to see some serious shit. ■



TECH SPEC: TOYOTA AE86 R

STYLING:

Custom Pandem 86 widebody kit, Honda Championship White paint, Turn 14 Distribution livery, Sprinter taillights, Sprinter bumpers, modified Sprinter bodykit, Levin front end conversion, carbon fibre bonnet, custom Vision Autoworks headlights with retrofitted Accord Euro R projectors, EVS dry carbon mirrors, Lexan windows, custom rear wing

TUNING:

Honda K20C1 2.0-litre VTEC turbo, Spoon Sports yellow valve cover, IP Ignition direct coils, intake manifold flipped 180-degrees on custom Eimer Engineering 3D-printed adaptor, custom induction, polished CSF dual-pass radiator on relocated brackets, GReddy intercooler, stainless hardlines for brake and clutch master cylinders, Radium Engineering fuel cell surge tank, Link G4+ Force GDI ECU, shaved bay with opened-out wheel wells, modified stock crossmember, Honda S2000 gearbox on custom Eimer Engineering bellhousing adaptor, custom transmission tunnel, McLeod Racing clutch and flywheel, Supra M46 rear axle inc. diff

CHASSIS:

Custom 9x15in ET-30 (front) and 9x15in ET-75 (rear) BBS Racing wheels, 245/45 Falken Azenis RT660 tyres, custom 3-way adjustable KW Classic coilovers, custom lateral bar, Techno Toy Tuning 4-link rear, drift bash bars, StopTech big brake kit

INTERIOR:

Painted Toyota TRD Pro Cavalry Blue, full Formula Drift-spec chromoly rollcage, custom dry carbon dash, custom Speedway Motors collapsible steering column with Sparco wheel, hydraulic handbrake, Link MXS Strada display, limited edition Sparco QRT-R buckets, Sparco 5-point harnesses

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FAST PROJECTS



TOM'S 1967 VOLVO AMAZON COUPE

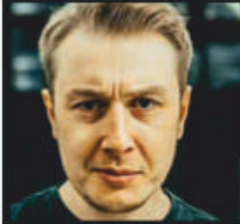
Tom has been a very busy boy this month and when we say Tom, we mean Gary from GM Bodycraft.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: GIVE 'EM A CHANCE...





DALE'S JAGUAR S-TYPE R

The de-Jagging of the Jag is continuing. This month it gets caged!

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: GIVE 'EM A CHANCE...





POWER MAXED RACING BTCC ASTRA

That's right readers, we're going racing with Power Maxed! Get strapped in.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: GIVE 'EM A CHANCE...



MISSING IN ACTION



MIDGE'S AUDI TT

After its 'guest' appearance last month, the TT is back on his mum's drive.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: AM WIPER, VOSEEN WHEELS, HAIRJET SUSPENSION, TUNED ENGINE, ICE INSTALL





GLENDA'S AUDI RS4

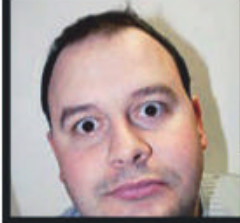
Glenda is still recovering from his recent purchases. But that's enough about his custom size-16 Air Force Ones.

START

NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: MILLTEK EXHAUST • KW COILOVERS • KENWOOD HEADUNIT • ROTIFORMS • TOYOS





SLIM JULES' BMW E91

The big man promises they'll be an update next month. Only time will tell if he's telling the truth...

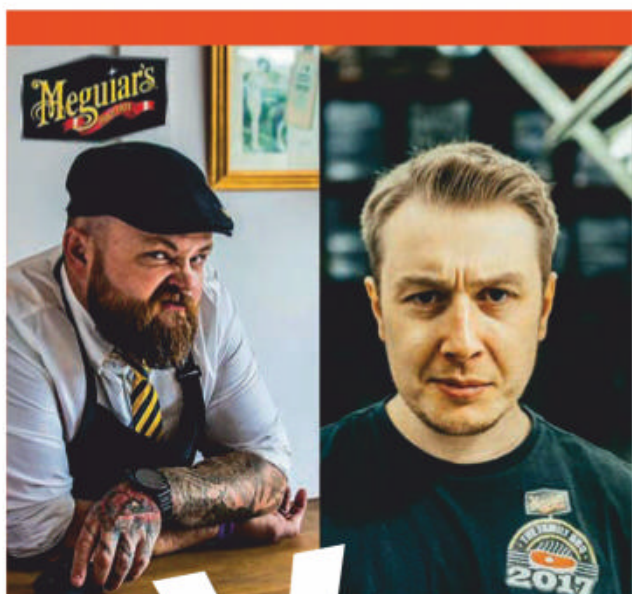
START

NEVER FINISHED

8 MAIN MODS: BC COILOVERS • 3SDM 0.04 WHEELS • HYDRO-DIPPED INTERIOR • TINTS • CARBON M SPORT WHEEL



FAST PROJECTS



Tom V Dale 2

After last year's epic battle, the UK's most famous detailing duo are back for round two...

Last season, Tom's R5 GTT build just pipped Dale's awesome W114 build. In our eyes they were both winners, but this hasn't stopped Dale wanting his revenge. So, they're both back with their new projects, and of course, we're here to document the builds. Again, the deadline for the finished projects is Players Classic at Goodwood in June. This might seem like an age away but when you find out what they've got planned, there's really not much time at all. Let the battle commence...



Sparks are gonna fly



Tom's pretending to 'help' but really he's catching forty winks



TOM'S 1967 VOLVO AMAZON COUPE



Name: Tom Clarke

Job Role: Senior Marketer, Meguiar's UK

As I type these words, Players Classic is in less than 14 weeks. Yeah, that may seem like a long time but as the deadline shortens, my to-do list seems to grow and grow! But I've made some great progress in the last month and when I say I, I mean Gary at GM Bodycraft. Sure, I 'help out' when I can but Gary's the genius behind the fab work on this build.

The old engine and 'box have been removed and replaced with a 2.3-litre turbo from a Volvo 940 that's been mated to a BMW ZF gearbox. This obviously required new custom engine mounts and Gary's fabricating skills. Why did I choose this engine? Well, apart from the obvious power and reliability advantages, I also wanted to keep everything



Volvo, and the four-cylinder lump works within my budget requirements.

The axle has also been removed and the transmission tunnel has been cut. This will house a narrowed axle from a 240 and a Burton Power 4-link kit. Gary has also raised the subframe 75mm, relocated the battery and welded in a brace bar. Yeah, he's been a very busy boy over the past four weeks, but this build really is starting to take shape now.



CONTACTS

www.meguiars.co.uk
@gmbodycraft



Dale's got a very tidy bush



SEE THE VIDEOS HERE!

WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/MEGUIARSUK

DALE'S JAGUAR S-TYPE R



Name: Dale Masterman

Job Role: Full-time Swirl Slayer & Events Coordinating Marketing Executive, Meguiar's UK

So, this month I've been back down at Swallows Racing armed with a box of Powerflex bushes. We've gone full race car and opted for Powerflex's Black Series; these will help to tighten the chassis and keep things nice and stiff, exactly what you want on a race car. While we were under the car, we also refreshed the swing arms and components with a fresh coat of paint.

If you cast your memory back to last month, you'll remember that we offered up the new Cobra seats. These have now been fully mounted, and I've got to admit they look like they mean business. But

perhaps this month's biggest development is the big metal bars that have found their way inside the Jag.

Of course, I'm talking about the roll cage that was fabricated by the guys at Caged Laser – these guys are amongst the best in the business at building safety cages, so it was a no brainer to give them the task. Hopefully I'll never actually need



it, but if I do, I know it'll be up to the job. And let's be honest, the safety thing is obviously the main focus, but roll cages look the nuts too, especially bright red ones that match the seats...



Peekaboo

CONTACTS

www.meguiars.co.uk
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Tom Chilton doing his best Terry Grant impression in 2017

POWER MAXED RACING ASTRA BTCC

We're once again taking on the BTCC in 2020 and we're delighted to announce that Fast Car is coming along for the ride...



The British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) is the most popular form of motorsport in the UK. We're not blowing our own trumpet, it's a fact. Just under 20,000,000 of you watched it on ITV last year, and 400,000 turned up in person to watch it at the tracks. Those of you that watch it will have heard of us, but let's give you a bit of background on what we do and who we are:

We started racing in 2015, and at first, we ran solely in the BTCC. We had two Chevrolet Cruzes, which wouldn't be your immediate thought when imagining thoroughbred race cars, but with a proven history in both BTCC and WTCC (World Touring Car Championship), they didn't do so badly.

In fact, in year one we won the Jack Sears Trophy for Best Rookie with Josh Cook, alongside seasoned BTCC veteran Dave Newsham. 2016 saw us run the cars for another year, pedalled by GT star Hunter

Abbott and bejewelled Strictly winner Kelvin Fletcher, also known as "that mechanic off of Emmerdale Farm."

2017 saw us step up a level, though. This is when we brought Vauxhall back into the championship as a factory entry. Being a factory team means we run with an elite few, at the top of their game. The top of the tree, if you will, with backing from the manufacturer themselves. Not only that, but we made the decision to actually design and build the new cars in-house. Many people would assume that all race teams build their own shells from scratch, but that's simply not the case. In fact, we're one of only two teams that have that capability within the BTCC.

Anyway, with the cars making their way from drawing board to track in just three months, we had some seriously late nights and stressful days, but we made it!

In 2017, we racked up a number of podiums, and again won the Jack Sears

Trophy; this time in the hands of the aptly named Senna Proctor, with teammate and mentor Tom Chilton supporting all the way. It was a success, but what would year two bring us?

We were to set the tone for the rest of the year during the second race of the season. After an unfortunate incident in race one, Senna found himself near the back of the grid in P27 (out of 32), in what was looking to be a wet race. He made the decision to go out on slick tyres, which is usually a no-no in the wet, but with a chance of drying up, it was worth the risk. But would it pay off?

Well, in a word, yes. He battled his way from the back to take the win, in what has been dubbed "one of the greatest races of all time." We won another two races across the following couple of rounds at the hands of Josh Cook, and ended up finishing joint second in the Championship. We had well and truly made our mark.

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Hello Jason

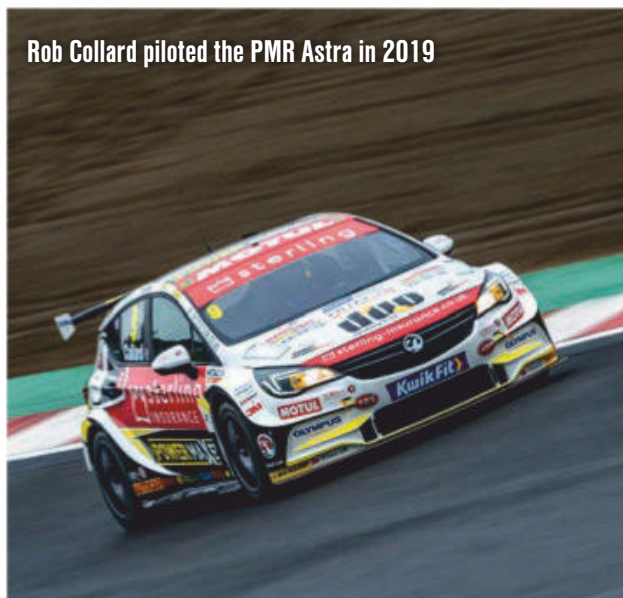


Last year was a big year for us, and one of the main reasons for that was the driver line up. Former Independent Champion Rob Collard, something of a stalwart of the championship, was to be joined by none other than Jason Plato. Motorsport royalty, Jason's the most successful British racing driver ever: racking up 97 wins as we headed into the championship.

It was to be a year filled with highs and lows. Jason putting the car on P2 in his first qualifying session was a high, though him stopping past the line (let's not go there) and being "awarded" a drive through penalty (basically driving through the pit lane mid-race) was something of a low. Between the two drivers, there were a number of podiums throughout the year, and Jason took the win at the very last round at Brands Hatch. We only managed 5th overall, and although this would be good enough for most teams, we wanted more.

As I write this, we're currently getting ready for our 2020 assault. We've been doing some serious development work throughout the winter, which you'll be able to read all about in the next issue, and we'll be keeping you abreast of everything we've been up to during the year. Stay tuned.

Rob Collard piloted the PMR Astra in 2019



Josh Cook had a couple of wins for PMR in 2018



CONTACTS

www.powermaxedracing.com

Words **Daniel Bevis** Photos **Matt Woods**

Ranch Dressing

Back in the 1950s, this Chevrolet pickup would have been in its comfort zone acting as a rugged farm truck deep in rural America. But in 2020, with an ocean between it and its birthplace, it's been taken off the ranch and dressed up as something altogether more fancy...

There's a reason why so many 1950s and '60s American pickup trucks wear such dramatic and timeworn patina these days. The very purpose of these vehicles was to be functional rather than overtly desirable; sure, manufacturers put effort into giving them alluring design features to elevate them above their market rivals, but General Motors' marketing department in the 1950s would no doubt have been a little surprised if they'd learned that these sturdy workhorses would become desirable collector vehicles half-a-century on.

Just picture the scene: after a decade or two of hard work on the farm or delivering groceries in small-town America, a truck finds itself parked up in a rural field, its shiny new replacement taking its place in day-to-day life. The gentle chirrup of crickets as the milky orange sun peeps over the horizon. The delicate beads of dew on the rushes, mirroring those collecting on the grand haunches of gently weathering steel. Time creaks along. Slowly, inexorably, the sun warms away the moisture and sets about baking the abandoned

hulk, as bored dogs and dispassionate rodents amble past. The sun goes down. The crickets resume their staccato symphony. The cycle starts anew. This is how patina is earned, base materials slowly but surely returning themselves back to the elements from whence they came.

PICKUP SHINE

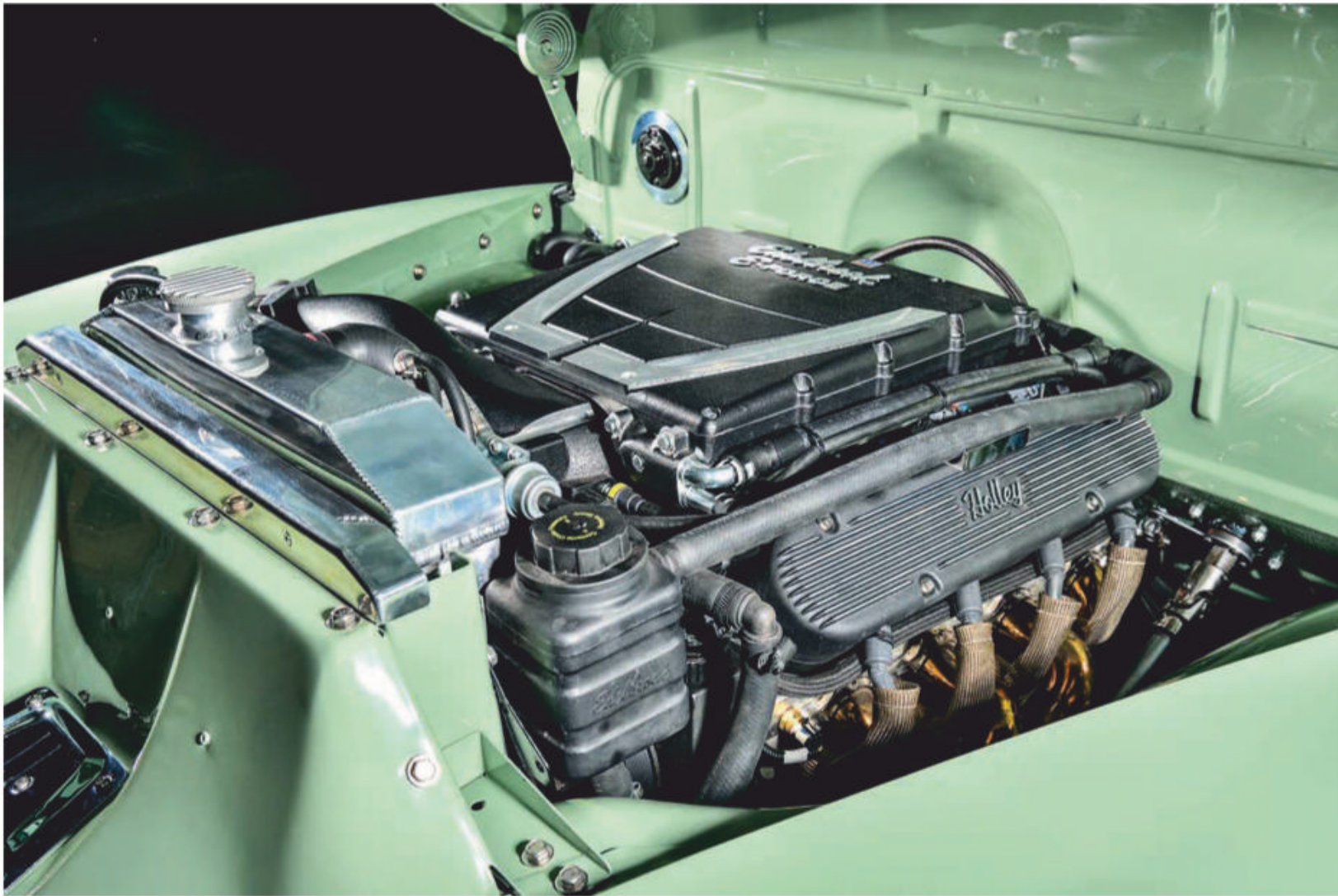
It's little wonder that custom shops like to throw a coat of lacquer over this rust and decay while upgrading everything under the skin. There are tales to tell. However, this is hardly an approach befitting a company like Auto Finesse, whose stock-in-trade is to make things nice and shiny, and it's this keenness for a flawless finish that informed the creation of the 1954 Chevrolet 3100 you see here today. It's served its commercial purposes with aplomb, but that was in another life. Today the truck's still working hard, but the focus of its duties has somewhat shifted. This project is all about positive reinvention.



CHEVROLET 3100 PICKUP



WILD CARD



ABOVE: You could eat your dinner off it but expect a kick in the spuds from James if you do

BELOW: The detail and finish is truly next level



Now, if you've been to a car show recently (which you have, we know who's reading this, you love a car show) you'll definitely have spotted the Auto Finesse team showcasing their quality wares. And you'll most likely have seen boss-man James Batty's VW Caddy on the stand – a low-slung pickup in a deep metallic red, sporting a full-fat 3.2-litre six-pot with 'Porsche' emblazoned upon the engine cover. That was James's first demo car, something built on a tight budget in a chicken shed while he scrimped and saved to build up Auto Finesse as a business. As the brand evolved so did the Caddy, and it's become something of a mascot, coming to a vast number of shows with the team. It's still very much part of the family, although to mark the company's twentieth anniversary James wanted to add something even more special to the fleet. A bigger-brother pickup if you like, and that's where the Chevy 3100 enters the scene.

"I wanted to shake things up a bit," he reasons. "If we're going to move on, we need to take things to the next level." It's this go-getter attitude that's made Auto Finesse such a success, so we know that when James makes a statement like this he's not mucking about.

Helpfully, an existing customer had already imported this Chevy from the States, and it had previously received a body resto and retrim. However, the quality of work was pretty shonky and it wasn't really up to scratch. Old Bones Fabrication in Weyhill, Hampshire had started to remedy this by fitting a

“James wanted to add something even more special to the fleet”





RIGHT: Custom 17-inch Old Bones Fabrication wheels with original GM steel centres in polished split-rim barrels

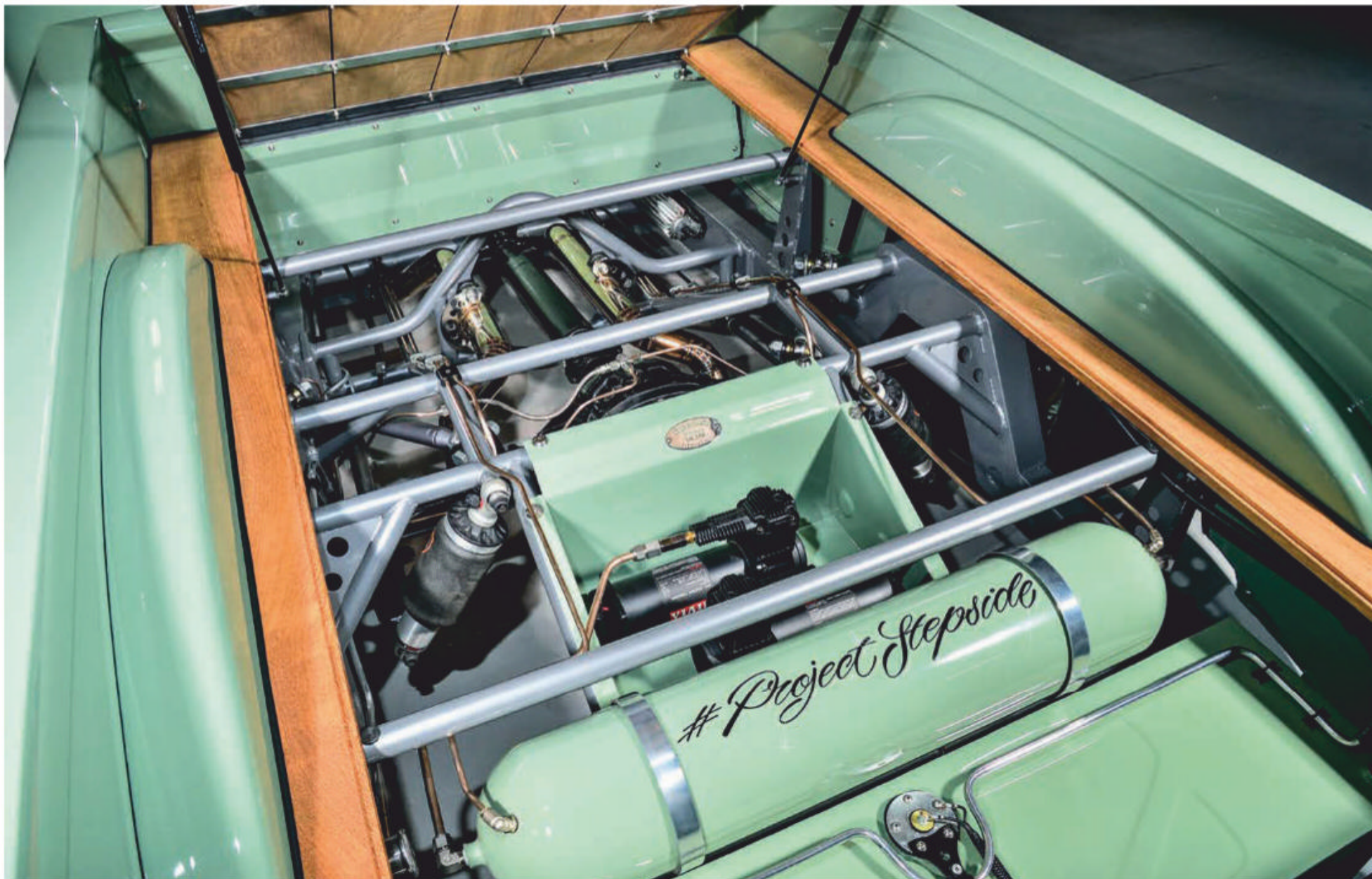


HOLY ROLLERS

If you're wondering where the wheels came from, make no mistake: these aren't off-the-shelf items. Very far from it. In fact, Old Bones Fabrication made them specifically for this build, taking original Chevrolet steel wheel centres and mating them to split-rim barrels. The vital statistics are 7.5x17in up front and a meaty 11.5x17in out back, and they cleverly match James's colour-coding template: the over-arching concept was to make the body green, the suspension components grey and the drivetrain black. So while the wheels' outers have been beautifully polished, the inner bits are painted gloss black to match the rest of the drivetrain.



WILD CARD



new back end and were planning a new front clip, before the owner ran out of money and enthusiasm – and this is where James swooped in to buy up the project. “People know us from the stance scene, but I wanted to show that that’s not all that we’re about,” he explains. “We go to a huge number of shows every year and American pickups are always around. Most of them are in original paint though, or unpainted, and we wanted to do the opposite, to build one that’s more relevant to us as a detailing brand.” So having bought the truck, and then shopped around for the engine, gearbox, air-ride setup, and a whole load of other bits, James delivered it all to Old Bones in early 2019.

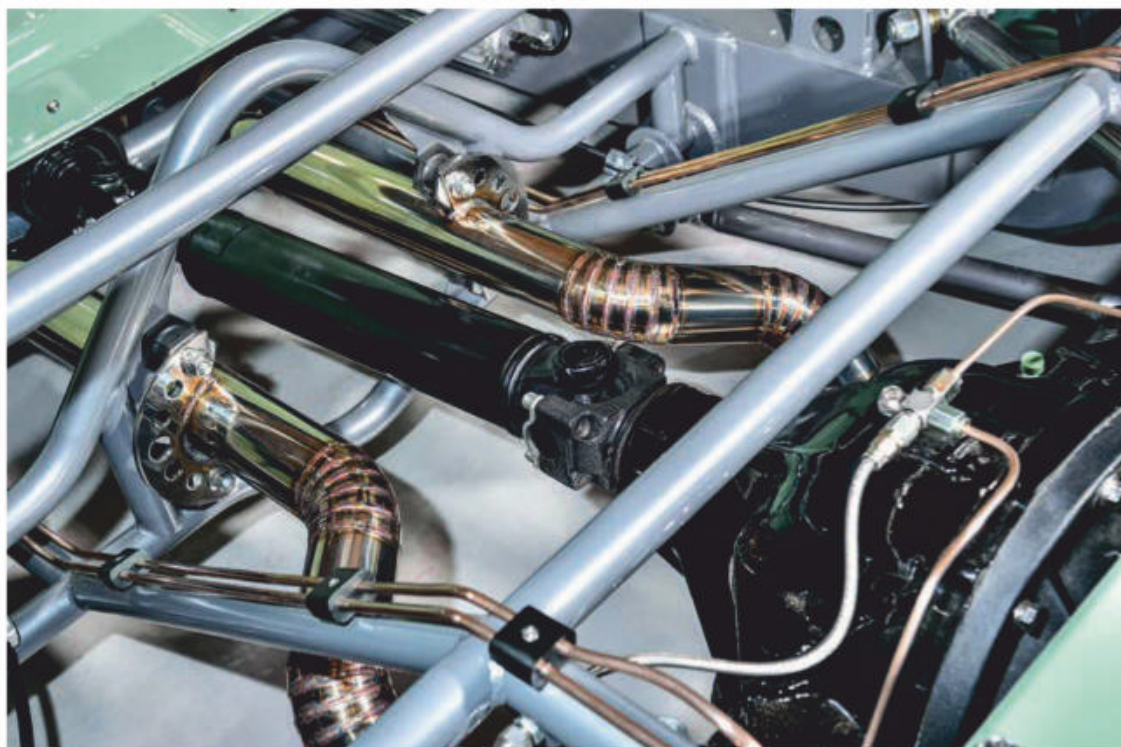
While the truck had been previously restored, it was now torn right down to first principles for a full nut-and-bolt rebuild to get it all done properly, with the body panels e-coated before being painted in a custom mix of pastel green. “I’d always had the urge to paint a project car,” James assures us. “With all of our other projects we’ve inherited other people’s paint and perfected it with our products, but this time we could start from scratch.” The shade of green is unique and works perfectly with the Chevy’s swooping lines, providing a hint of an old-school 1990s custom vibe mixing with the vintage 1950s feel, and artfully counterpointed by the way the pickup sits – this is thanks to its Ridetech ShockWave system, airing it out beautifully over those fully custom split-rims.

DETAIL MASTERCLASS

“I wanted it to look very traditional on the outside,” James continues, and the effect that’s been achieved is a masterful lesson in contemporary updates to a classic design. The more you look, the more you find; the taillights sit on billet mounts, the original-style badges bear the Auto Finesse name, and the load bed has been seam-welded and re-panelled with CNC-cut iroko wood – the first five panels of which hinge upwards to reveal that it’s all a bit less

ABOVE: The iroko wood bed lifts to showcase the chassis work

BELOW: The exhaust TIG-welds are a work of art





WILD CARD

OWNER PROFILE:

Name: James Batty

Occupation:

Company Director

First car: Citroën AX GT

Favourite car: BMW M3 (E92)

Favourite show or event:

The annual trip to Wörthersee

Track day or show and shine?:

Show and shine, obviously

Favourite modification on your car:

The interior

Lessons learned from this project:

Take a budget, and double it!

What's next – any future plans?

Building something Japanese...



traditional underneath. The chassis components, picked out in grey powder-coating, showcase a four-linked rear matched to a Mustang II-style independent front end, and this sophisticated chassis is just what's required to help deploy the almighty grunt up front. You see, when you raise that deseamed bonnet, you'll find something rather special...

What you're looking at there is a brand-new crate V8, packing a beefy displacement of 376ci – that's 6.2-litres to you and me. In stock form, this fuel-injected motor would kick out a robust 430bhp, but you see that thing sitting on the top? That's a low-rise Edelbrock E-Force supercharger. Thanks to this, along with a charge-cooler, custom exhaust and air intake, and a tune-up by Paul at Wortec in Chichester, this truck now rumbles to the vibrant energy of 580bhp. And that really is rather a lot. The exhaust is worthy of particular note, as the Old Bones team have fabricated something utterly spectacular here. The stainless system starts with a pair of block-hugging manifolds, running through electrical cut-outs into twin Magnaflow silencers before ending in bang-on-trend pie-cut tail sections, all beautifully TIG-welded and polished. It's a work of art, and the sheer number of hours involved in creating the system is mind-blowing.

This level of attention to detail is evident wherever you look. Have you seen how fancy the interior is? Being

a Deluxe model, this truck would have come from the factory with two-tone trim, and James has chosen to follow this tradition with premium material upgrades. Chris Burns at Retro Retrim in Taunton, Somerset was charged with the task of taking the original Chevy seat frame and boarding, re-foaming and trimming it in distressed leather and houndstooth cloth, covering the doorcards and headlining to match. The seat provides an ingenious packaging solution too, as hidden behind it are the air-ride management system, the washer bottle, a secondary battery, and the stereo which streams from James's phone via Bluetooth and plays through hidden speakers. How cunning is that?

"I wanted the truck to look like something that might have been built in the fifties, like a real top-of-the-line model," says James, and it's clear that attention to detail is the winner here in achieving this effect. The more you pore over this pickup, the more ingenuity and uniqueness exposes itself, but at first glance it appears simply to be an incredibly clean and cherished truck. That's the vibe it needs to exude on the showground. The signwritten logos are the final flourish; this build is all about the perfect finish, that there's far more to old-school Americana than corrosion, dents and patina. All of that has its place, but with this old Chevy truck, James has imagined something new. ■



TECH SPEC: 1954 CHEVROLET 3100

STYLING:

Full nut-and-bolt rebuild by Old Bones Fabrication with body panels stripped and e-coated, custom-mix pastel green paint, seam-welded load bed with scratch-built wheel tubs and CNC-cut iroko wood panels (inner five panels open on hinged struts to showcase chassis), new rear panel with central fuel filler, new floors, new transmission tunnel, bonnet front de-seamed, custom billet taillight mounts, hand-stitched chain protectors on load bed (in same leather as interior), signwriting by Neil Melliard at Prosign, laser-cut Chevrolet 3100-style Auto Finesse badges

TUNING:

376ci (6.2-litre) GM LS3 crate motor, fuel-injected, low-rise Edelbrock E-Force supercharger with custom pulleys, charge-cooler, custom Old Bones Fabrication stainless exhaust system (with block-hugger manifolds, electric cut-outs, twin Magnaflow silencers and pie-cut TIG-welded tails), cold air intake, vintage-style Holley rocker covers, GM 4L60E four-speed auto with column-shift and custom linkage, GM 10-bolt rear axle with Moser shafts, 3.23 Richmond gears and Eaton Posi diff, various drivetrain elements finished in gloss black

POWER: 580bhp

CHASSIS:

Custom 7.5x17in (front) and 11.5x17in (rear) Old Bones Fabrication wheels – with original GM steel centres in polished split-rim barrels, 225/45 (f) and 285/45 (r) Nitto tyres, Ridetech ShockWave air-ride, Air Lift 3H management, twin Viar 444C compressors, air tank mounted behind rear axle, triangulated 4-linked rear, Heidts Mustang II-style independent front suspension setup, Wilwood disc brakes, various chassis elements powder-coated grey

INTERIOR:

Full custom retrim in distressed leather and houndstooth tweed, air-ride management, washer bottle and secondary battery hidden behind bench, Bluetooth audio interface with hidden JBL speakers, Vintage USA Woodward Series gauges, So-Cal Speed Shop Art Deco dash knobs, repro steering wheel on polished Flaming River tilt column, restored Chevrolet heater under dash

THANKS:

“Thanks to the Old Bones Fabrication crew: Steve Jones, Matt Tucker, Mike Williams, Joe Readings, Rob Watson, and Red.”



ABOVE: Full custom retrim featuring distressed leather and houndstooth tweed



ABOVE: So-Cal Speed Shop Art Deco dash knobs BELOW LEFT: Air Lift 3H management






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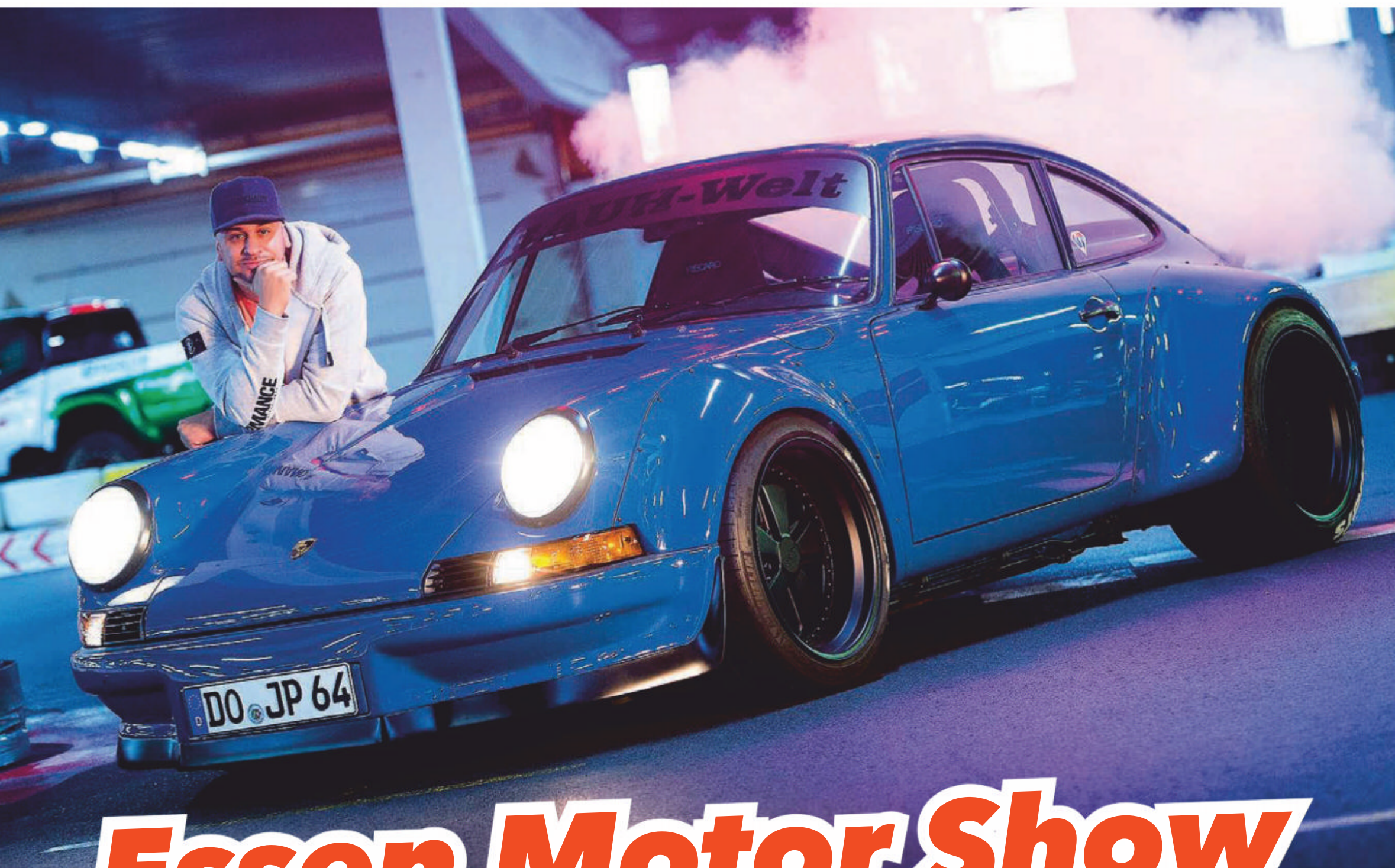
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Essen Motor Show

Dubbed the European SEMA, Essen Motor Show has a lot to live up to...



Not heard of the Essen Motor Show? Well, you should have as it's one of the biggest car tuning events on the continent! And this year saw over 360,000 car nuts visit the eight-day show. Yes, eight days! That'll give you an idea of the sheer scale of this event, as that's precisely how long it takes to walk around it.

Essen is the European version of SEMA, but instead of being in Las Vegas it's in Western Germany where there's less gambling, less strippers (not that we looked) and no hotels that look like they've been designed by someone on acid. Nope, Essen is suave, stylish and super-cool – a bit like us. So obviously we jumped in the car, hopped on the Eurotunnel, headed East through France and Belgium and then into Germany.

Our German friends describe the Essen Motor Show as 'the showcase event of the



Words **Slim Jules & Glenda** Photography **Frederic Vanaverbeke, Schuchrat Kurbanov & Rainer Schimm**

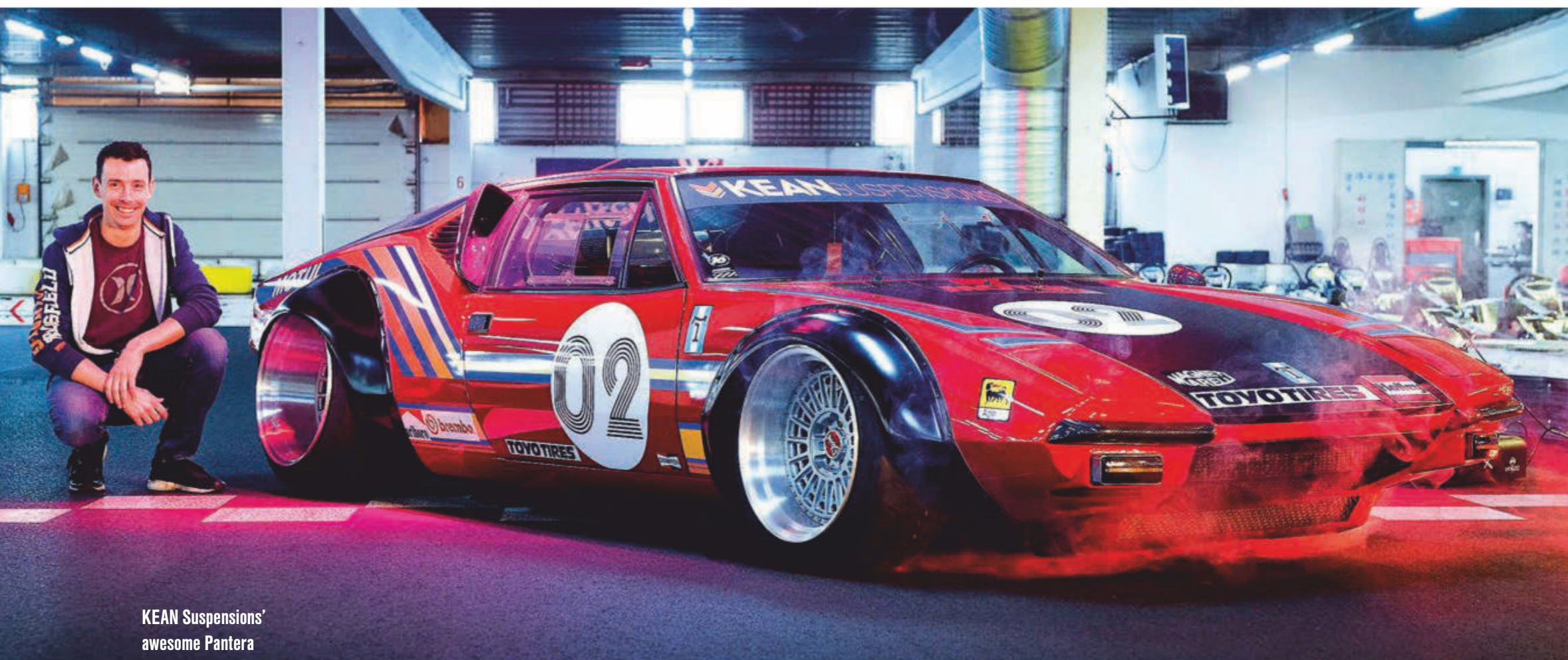


OUT THERE



year for the tuning community' and they're not wrong, as over 500 exhibitors put on some stunning displays. It was pretty much like a who's who of the tuning community, especially when it comes to the German brands, of which there's plenty.

Obviously, there were tons of new product launches, loads of car enthusiasts and the very best modified metal in Europe, and then there's the fact that the Germans know a thing or two about making good sausages and even better beers, and it becomes a show we just couldn't ignore. And here's the proof...

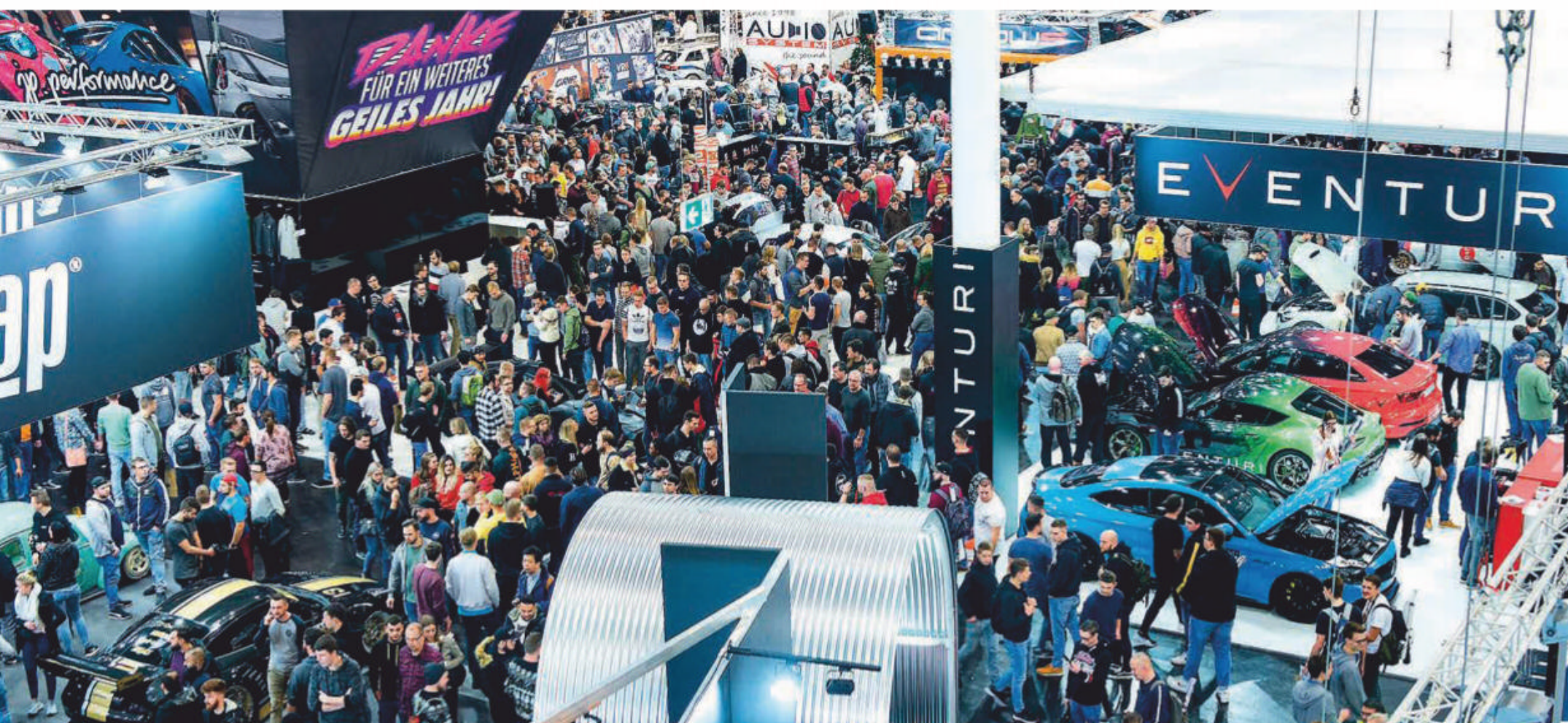


KEAN Suspensions'
awesome Pantera



Electric Polo

Julien Floyer and Mathieu are the owners and masterminds behind this futuristic, electric-powered Polo 6N which was built as a tribute to their close friend Laurent Maman who died in a car accident in 2004. As well as the Smart Fortwo electric motor, it boasts some truly phenomenal custom modifications including Porsche 997 PDK steering wheel paddles, a Porsche 918 Spyder-inspired front bumper, home-made rear taillights with charging points for your smartphone and a panoramic roof with solar cells. It's next level stuff and one of the best builds we've ever seen!



OUT THERE



Impersonating die Polizei

Featuring original polizei car markings, flashing blue lights, a hefty 530bhp and 508lb-ft, this is no ordinary police car. In fact, it's not a police car, nope, it's this year's campaign vehicle for TUNE IT! SAFE! An initiative by the German Federal Ministry of Transport and the German Association of Automobile Tuners.

The Polizei RS4-R was built by ABT Sportsline, as the poster boy for the German safe tuning initiative launched at Essen. The potent Avant, which accelerates from 0 to 62mph in just 3.8 seconds and has a top speed of 174mph features some serious upgrades over the standard 450bhp RS4 B9, let alone your average German police car.



Go next year

The Essen Motor Show 2020 takes place from the 28th November to the 6th December, yes you read that right – it's on for eight days! The Essen Convention Centre is located in Messe Essen, Germany. That's just under 250 miles from Calais and makes a great road trip. For more info see www.essen-motorshow.de

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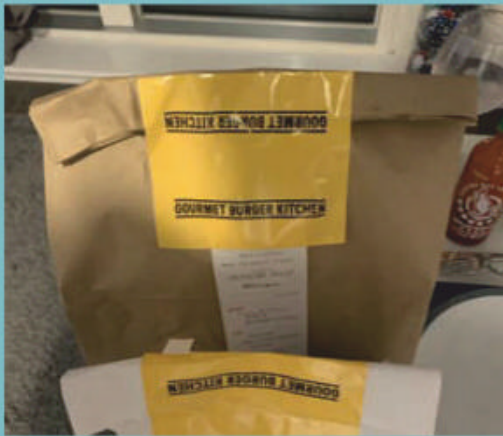
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ARSE END



Midge: "Right, who downloaded Deliveroo on my phone? That's fucked it..."



Midge: "Look what I got!"
Jules: "Are you sure you're not a closet American?"
Midge: "I don't own a gun."

Midge: "You know what they don't sell in Selfridges?"
Initial G: "Enlighten me."
Midge: "Fridges."



Midge: "Who's the bald fella?"
Glenda: "I think he invented something, like the NutriBullet or George Formby Grill."

Midge: "Fish cakes with blue cheese, I've unintentionally invented the Surf and Smurf!"



Build Off

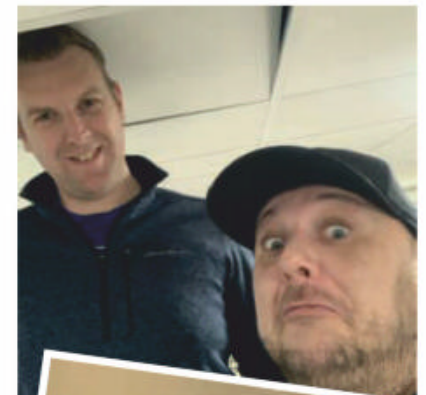
You'll already know that the Ed to Ed Build Off is over, and that Midge lost in spectacular style in the Car Sumo Challenge last month. Well, what you won't have seen yet is the final forfeit where Jules cooked up a load of Japanese muck, and made the little one eat it. Check out the video on www.fastcar.co.uk/tag/ed-to-ed/ or, if you've got a delicate gag reflex, don't. In other news, the organisers of Japfest and TRAX enjoyed the Build Off so much, that they only want to do another one in 2020. Here we go again...



Salvage Hunters

You can't beat a bit of top telly, so when Jules, Midge and our snapper Chris were invited along to see Salvage Hunters: Classic Cars being filmed, they were only too happy to check out all the old skool metal.

"We know you're all professionals and won't mess about distracting the camera crew and disrupting the filming," they said. They must have been thinking of someone else...

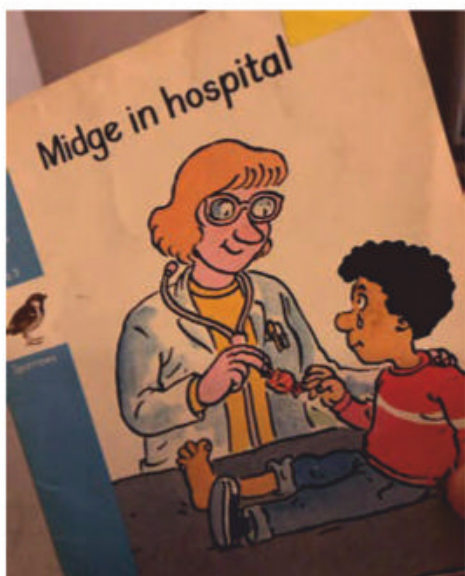


THE FC PHONE GALLERY THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Text of the Month

Are Apple missing the UK obesity crisis? We need some fatter emojis.



Bedtime Stories

Here's a rather questionable little publication, one that's presumably designed to warp children's minds forever and ever.

Thanks to our publisher for sending this in, because we're now even more positive that Midge is a little cry baby who will do anything for sweets. Readers of *Midge in Hospital* also purchased; *Midge Gets Diabetes* and *Midge Visits The STD Clinic* (probably).



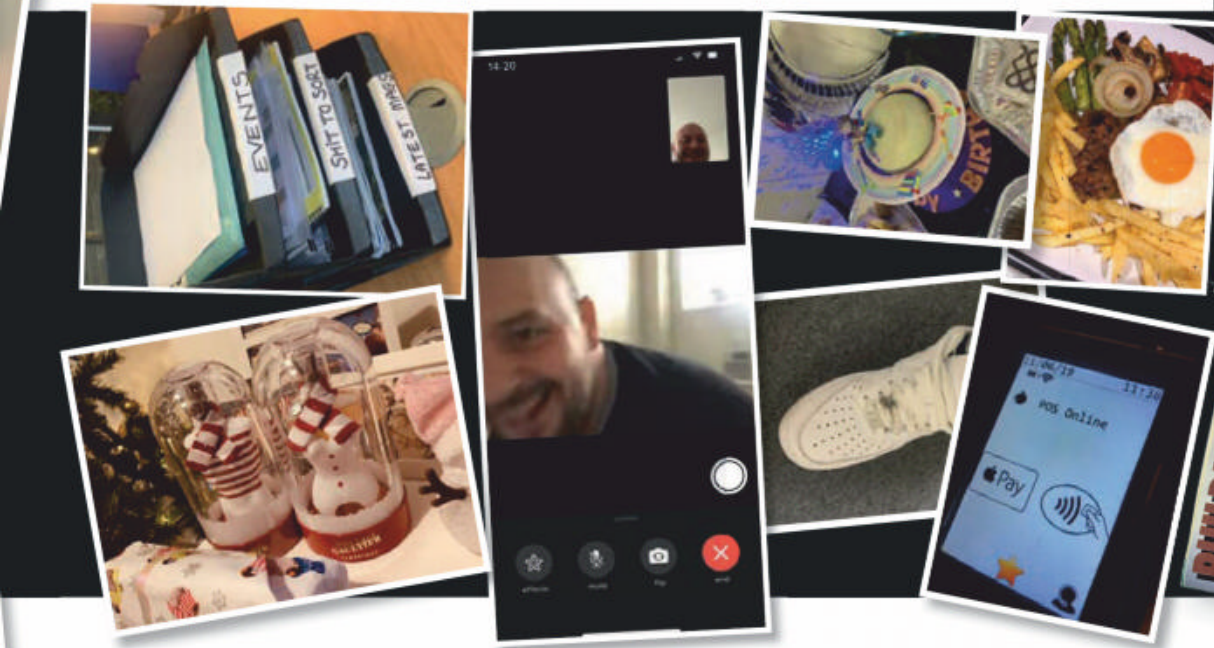
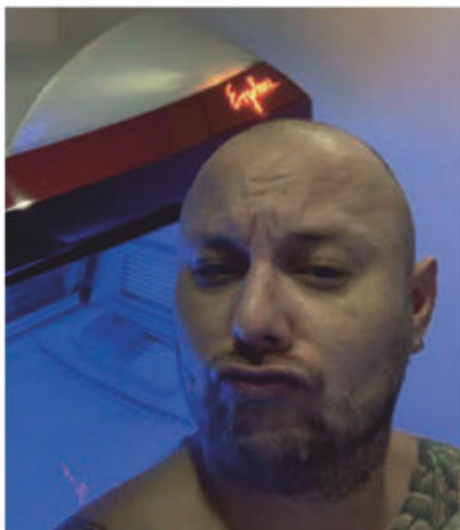
Pisshead

We've always admired our Glenda's dedication when he says he'll always go to the World's End to get his work done properly. What we hadn't realised is that he actually meant he'll be taking his laptop to the pub that's 100-yards from his front door. He should have been a politician that one.



Face Like A Slapped Arse

Jules and Midge have been on the case with loads of FC videos lately, in fact, you'll be seeing some extremely special stuff very soon. Speaking of special though, you may be interested in a behind-the-scenes peek on how our self-proclaimed 'manliest' staffer prepares himself for a tough day in front of the camera. Shameful isn't it? And, we can't help thinking that it's gonna take a fair bit more to sort out that mush!



BLAST FROM THE PAST

ISSUE 94 – APRIL 1995



25 years and 325 issues ago...

- We'd like to say that we all worked on this issue, but we were all still at school... well, except G, who was 42.
- The MG F was a brand spanker in 1995, and the boys said that it would be good, which it... er, wasn't. That's the benefit of hindsight, eh?
- After all this time we're still trying to think of something better than a Cossie-powered Mk2 Golf Cab. Nope, nothing.
- Thought that little wide wheels were a modern thing? Just check out the 13x15-inchers on this old skool Manta.
- 156.6mph in a Mk4 Escort? Sod that! They were a hardy breed of RS Turbo nutters back then for sure.
- There you go, proof that FC has featured a Lada, maybe not in the last 25-years, but even so.
- Jules still wants an R5 GTT more than he wants Jaffa Cakes for lunch... that's quite a lot in case you were wondering.
- Blimey technical guides haven't changed much in the last 3-decades, have they?



NEXT MONTH IN FAST CAR...

The Monster Slayer

We bring you the story of 2019's most incredible motorsport moment – Mantas Sliogeris taking the Gymkhana GRiD World Championship in his home-built MX-5



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