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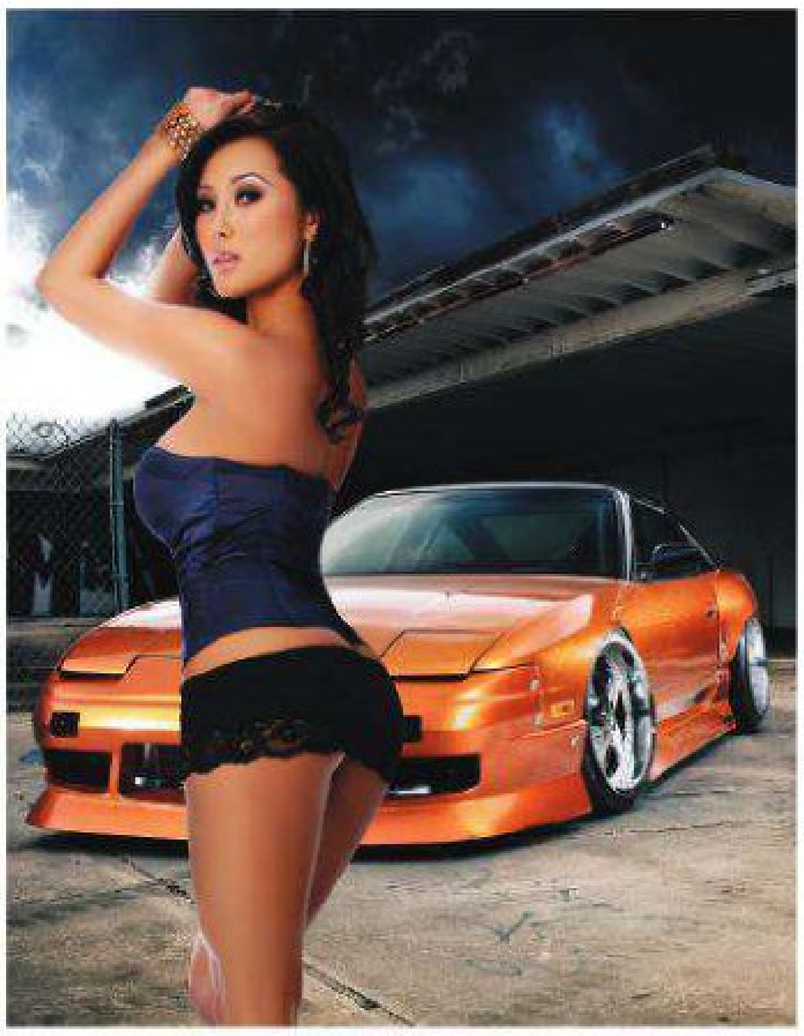

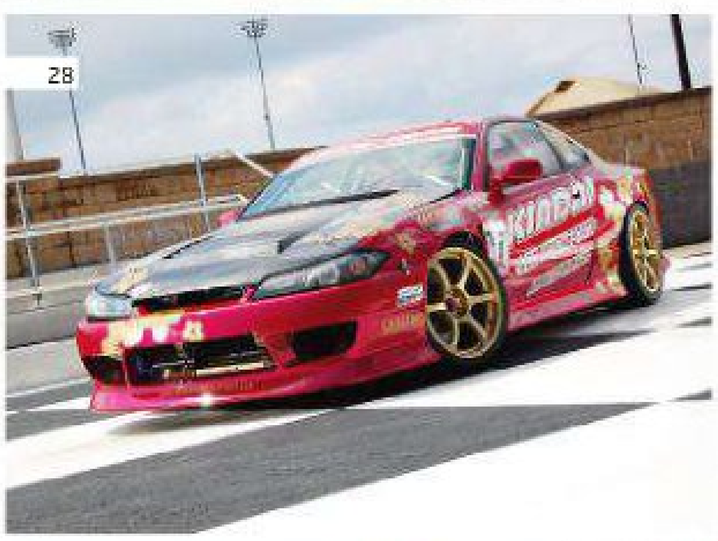
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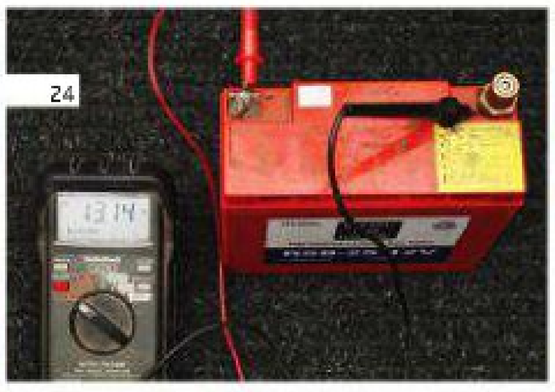
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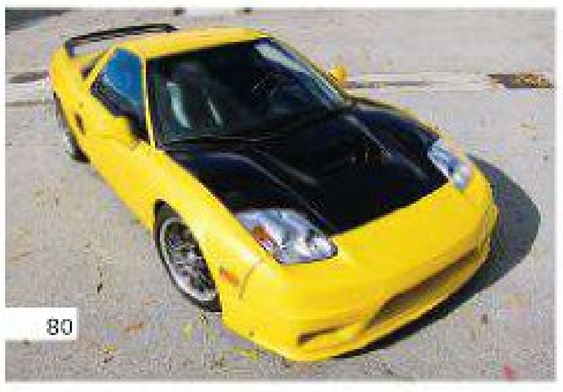
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You've probably noticed that *2NR* has been editorless for the last couple of months, with no new installments of Initial Timing. There's been a change of personnel here at Source Interlink Media, and I'm now in charge of this here magazine. Change is good, and is inevitable with anything. Coming from *Super Street* magazine, I'm no n00b that will ruin your *2NR* experience. But I will be implementing a lot of change in the months to come. Don't worry, we won't lose your favorite departments like Power Pages, Fact or Fiction, or the super-hot girls. We'll be taking them to the next level.

This issue, we're hitting the scene's roots hard. We're coming out of Japan with one of the cleanest, well-rounded R34 GT-Rs built for the street. And for the wild 'n out lovers, we got a pink purpose-built S15 Silvia—if you haven't heard of Kindai of Atlanta, GA, you have now. The most anticipated build in Japan right now is the Garage Revolution RX-8. Yes, RX-8s aren't that popular here or overseas, but Garage Revolution never builds a car shy of total domination. Dressed in all black like death's chariot, the three-rotor menace is destined to rule the tracks of Japan. Finishing off our features from Japan is the Tsukuba Super Battle. This is the highest profile event in Japan for our industry. See which tuners have real parts and real engineering.

A treat for everyone is our model of the month: Amy Fay. I found this little hottie working at a Vietnamese coffee shop. I can't go into more detail about those places as they'd revoke my hood pass. Amy's rather new to modeling but has been noted as "the next big thing." She's got some big *things* alright, and we get big things poppin' in this issue.

Here's your car life, materialized and printed for the month. Enjoy.

Charles Trieu
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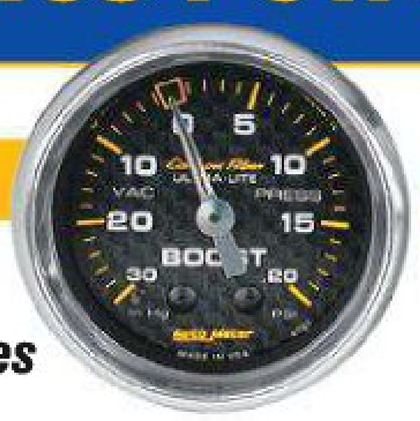

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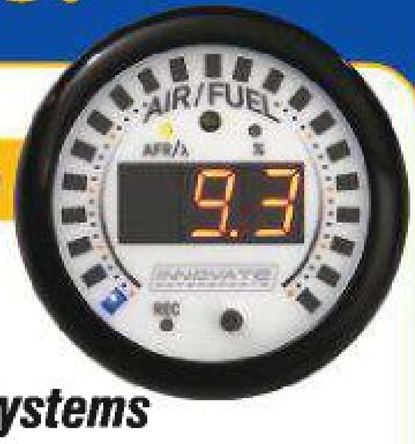

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THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE HORIZON

As we ring in the New Year, there have been changes within the magazine. One includes welcoming our new editor, Charles Trieu. Many of you might recognize his name, as Charles was a member of *Super Street* magazine before taking over the helm here. Within one month's time working with Charles, I've learned he owns as many cars as I do and loves frequenting coffee shops of the unordinary kind. In all honesty, he's a car fanatic like you and I and his knowledge of the import scene promises to bring a new angle, filled with fresh ideas to our magazine.

An *Import Tuner* makeover has officially begun taking shape. But before diving headfirst into our redesign, we would like to hear from you, our faithful readers, on your thoughts and/or opinions—because it's important to us—on what subject matters you would like to see more or less of in the magazine. Perhaps you crave more in-depth tech stories or lifestyles coverage? BTW, don't respond by email pleading for us to implement naked chicks or male models because it's not happening. In closing, I leave you with a photo of Charles working hard as he snaps away at some unknown import model's booty. Welcome to the *Import Tuner* team, Chuck!

SENIOR EDITOR
SCOTT TSUNEISHI
scott@importtuner.com

LIVING it.

RIDING SHOTGUN WITH THE EDITORS

RAINOUT = NO WRENCHING

The holiday weather threw us Californians an eventful curveball as torrential rain blanketed the region. The rainstorms left me with zero probability to work on my cars as I peered helplessly out the window, hoping for any improvements in the weather. For once, I played the optimist in my otherwise pessimistic life. I made the most out of being cooped up in the house by playing the top three PS3 games in my current rotation. Who says gaming can't be productive?

SENIOR EDITOR
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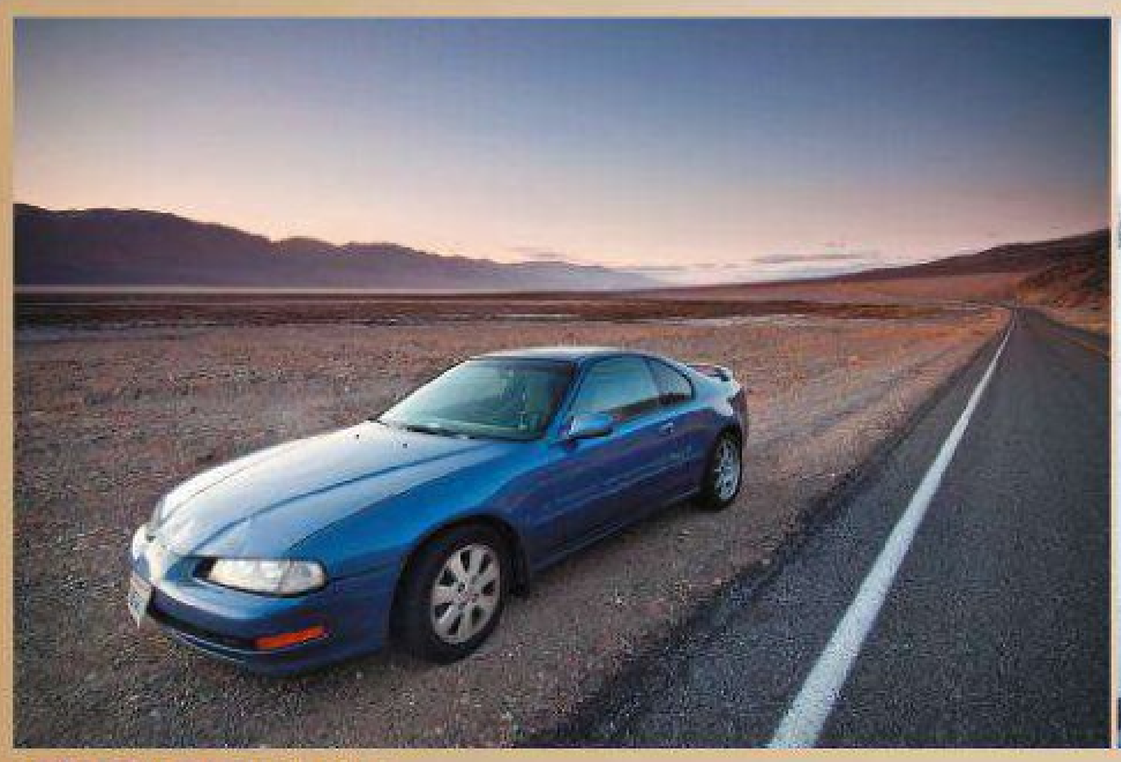

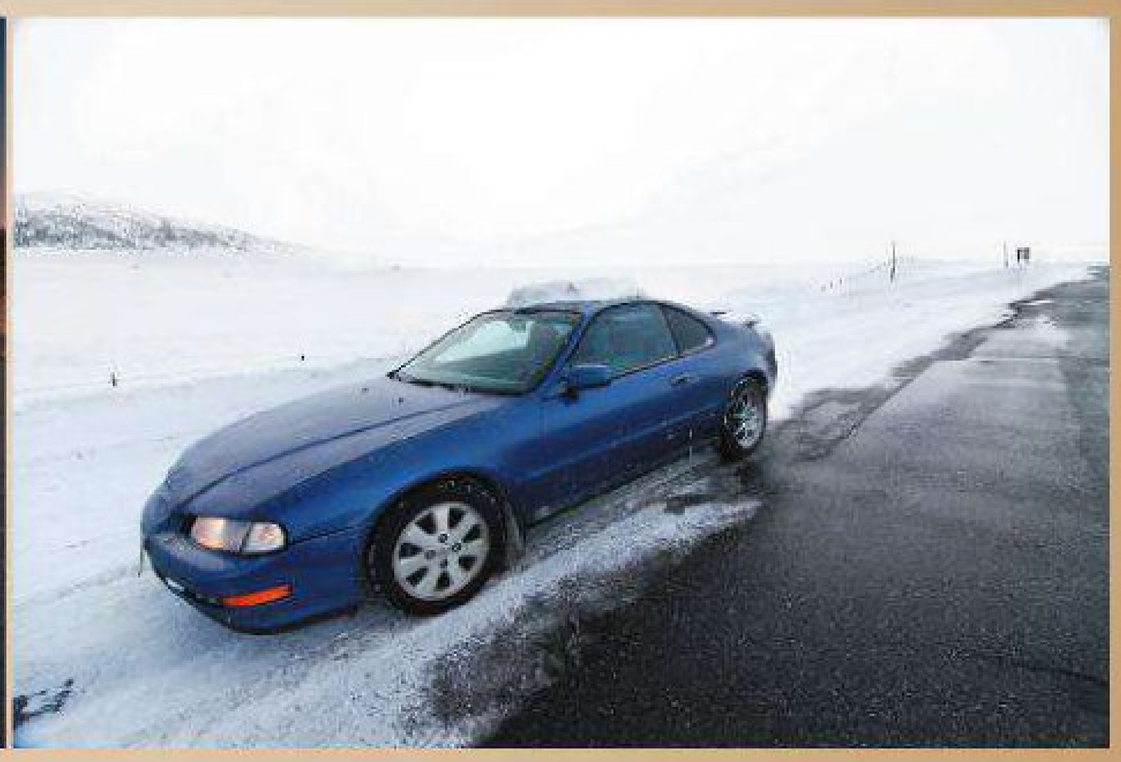

'94 HONDA PRELUDE

You would NOT have wanted to be riding shotgun with me on my last adventure: trekking back and forth to Cali's Mammoth Mountain for NYE. 258 feet below sea level in Death Valley at sunrise (pictured): Awesome. Climbing 9,000+ feet of elevation in the same day (pictured): Awesome. Shredding fresh powder at 11K feet for the weekend: Awesome! The normally five-hour drive back taking 12 hours due to extreme ice and snow, and a bald-tired, snow-chain-laden, automatic Prelude with no heat: I can't legally print the words (very, very bad).

TECH EDITOR
LUKE MUNNELL

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What a good month for Going Postal! We think we've gotten more informative, entertaining, thoughtful, and ridiculous rants from you this month than in any other all year. But alas, we are writing this intro text in January. Looks like it's gonna be an interesting 2011.

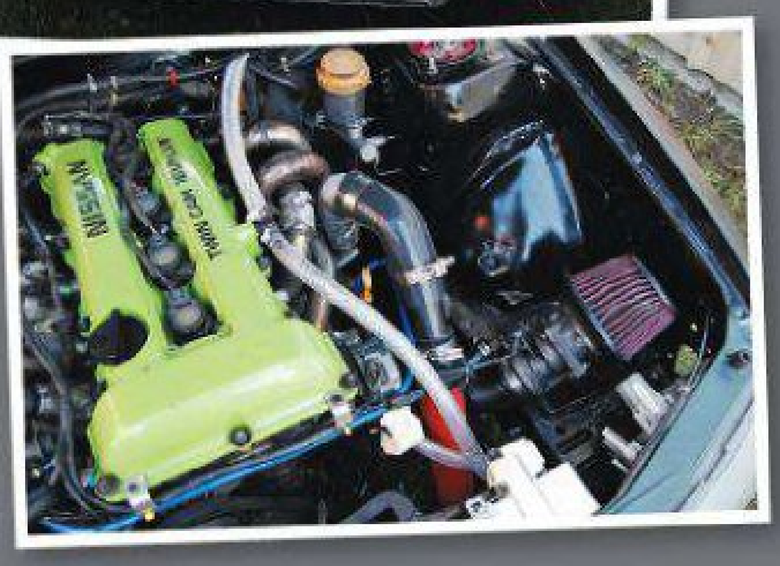
FIRST OFF: HUGE FAN. SECOND: YOU SUCK.

First off, I'm a huge fan. I've been a reader for years. Secondly, I have a small question in regards to Hiroya Jin's R34 V-Spec II in the January 2011 issue: Does that thing even run? No wiring to the cam sensor, injectors, or thermostat, no coolant hoses, and when the hell did they start making wireless ignition systems?! Oh yeah, don't forget to yank the dust cap off the fuel rail. All I'm saying is if I'm going to buy your magazine for what's on the cover like Mr. Carter Jung so specifically states in Initial Timing, don't you think I at least deserve the finished product? Hell, my '97 Civic EX would stomp the piss out of this car with the condition it's in. Just sayin'. Love you guys though, really. Keep up the hard work.
-Micheal Barnes
Joplin, MO

You forgot one crucial aspect of the car in question while butt-ramming us, Michael. It's not just your run-of-the-mill V-Spec II, but a Pro Stock Racing N1 model—a car so far ahead of its time it doesn't need wiring, coolant hoses, or even fuel to kick ass. Its exposed T04Z could suck your Civic through any one of the ports in its shroud and spit it out its exhaust . . . even though it doesn't have one of those, either. But yeah, we love you back, really. We're just effing with you. Keep up dissing us for bringing you the scoop on what may prove to be the world's fastest time-attack car ever (nearly) built, and we'll keep keeping it up!

THE RIGHT WAY

Hello *2NR*, my name is Rob, and I'm contacting you today to see what it takes to be placed in your magazine. I was inspired by your July '10 issue ("Sick RWD Swaps"), and have started a similar project of my own: a RWD SR20DET-powered Impreza coupe. The car will be full race trim when finished, including a Formula D-spec rollcage and switch panel. I'm not looking to be on the cover or anything, but maybe something like you did for the RWD F20C-powered EG Civic in that issue. If you'd like to take a look at my build, here's a link to a forum I belong to:
http://www.rs25.com/forums/f145/t147666-premium-rwd-sr20-95-impreza-l.html
I'd appreciate it if you could get back to me when you have time. Thanks and have a great day.
-Rob



Listen up, guys. Rob's email not only got read (they all do ;-), but ogled over, passed around the 2NR office, talked about at length, and responded to as soon as we could for three valuable reasons: 1. His respectful, grammatically correct text. 2. The fact that he included a link (attached sample pics would've worked, too) directly in the email, instead of sending a first email simply asking if he could send another one. 3. He has a pretty kick-ass project going on. Sure, some Boxer loyalists will flame Rob for swapping to a smaller Nissan powerplant, but we can't wait to see this thing up and out-sliding 240SXs. We have a feeling you'll be seeing more of it as soon as we do, too.

THE WRONG WAY

Hi I'm very fan of this magazine I love this magazine this magazine make me buy a car and make a show car I love my car is my passion,but please I want to be in this magazine Im in a lot of magazines in puerto Rico but Is like a dream to have one full page or more in your magazine that's all I want I got a jeep wrangler 1989 but very beautifull and I visit every auto show and I won I would t like to be in thi magazine tell me what pictures how Many and the answers you make and I can send you all by email or if you can't please be my sponsor and I can show your catalog in every auto show or whatever you want, thanks god Send us your feedback you and please help me and make my dream come true.
-Belnan colon, Guayama, Puerto Rico

Now, Belnan's email also passed around the 2NR office and talked about at length for different reasons. The fact that he never once used our magazine's title tells us he probably sent this same impeccably written plea to everyone he could think of. His pitching an '89 Jeep-friggin'-Wrangler to Import Tuner doesn't score any points either. But what stings the most is that he didn't include pics of this prize or tech specs from the get-go. Or even pics of his g/f or hot sis posing next to it. We love you Belnan, but if you're gonna get us kicked out of PR for turning down 6-second dragsters in favor of your Heep, at least hook us up with the goods! And capitalize the "G" when you call us God.

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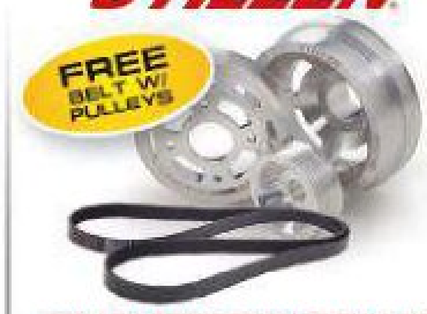

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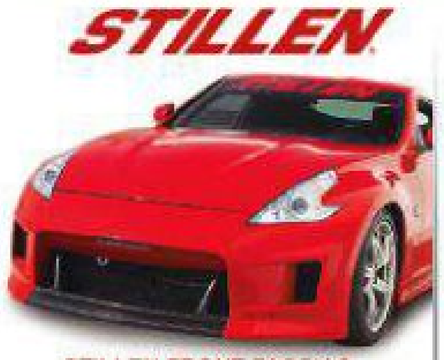

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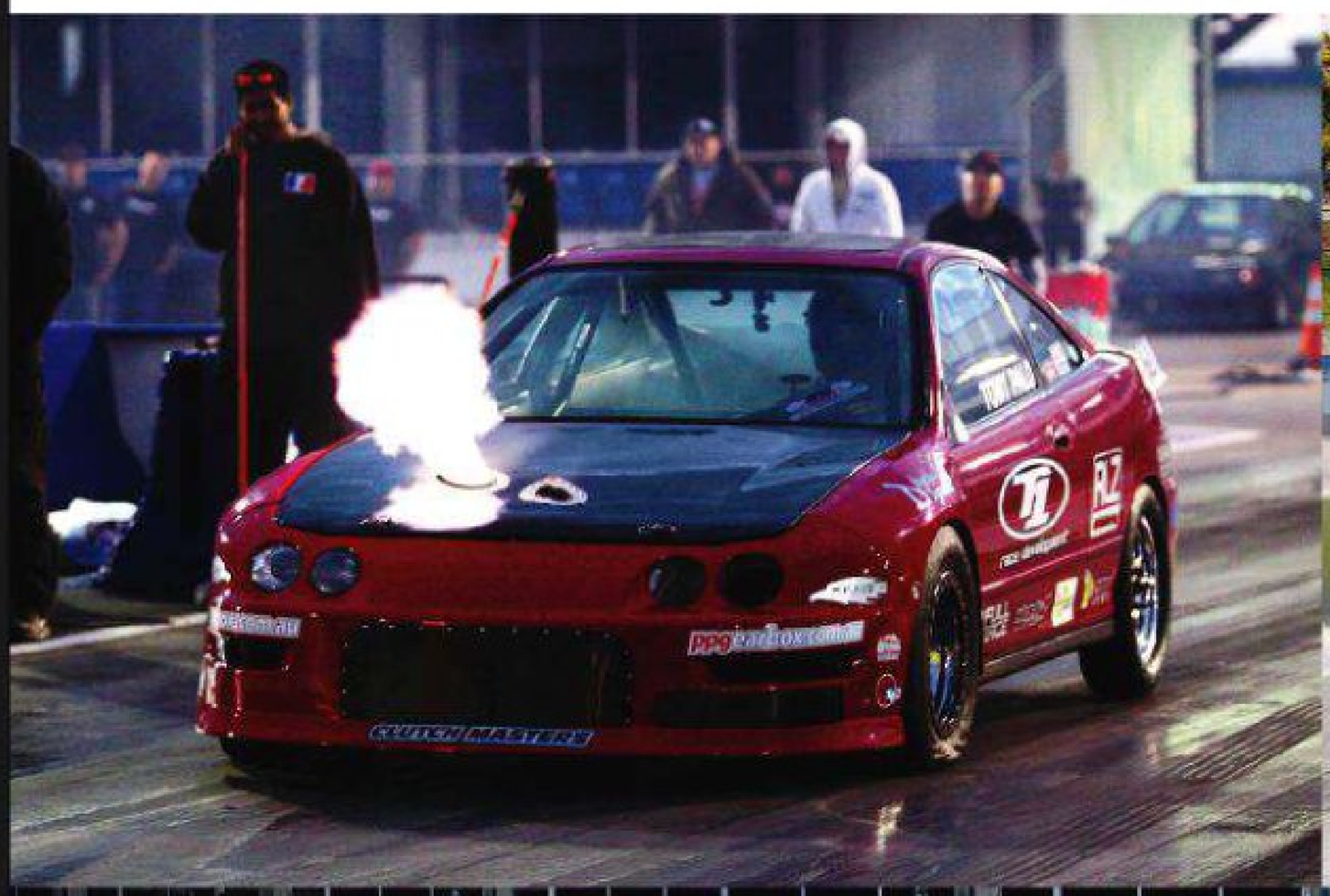
IMPORT FACEOFF, DALLAS

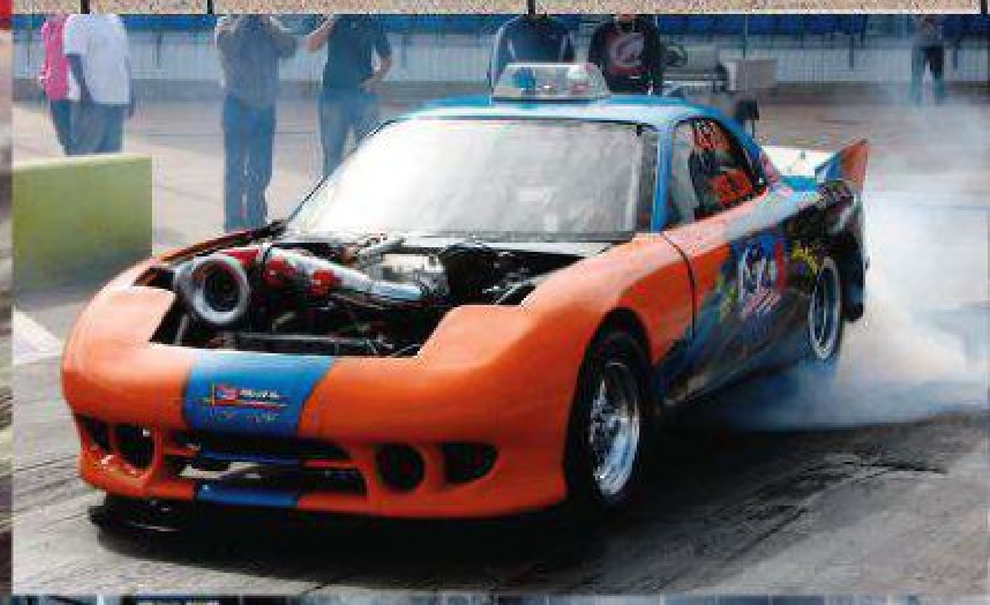
Import Faceoff revisited the Texas Motorplex of Ennis (Dallas area), TX, for the fifth year in a row, to bigger crowds and more racer participation than ever before. Competition was even more impressive. FWD Sportsman classes were divided into two: one traditional class and another "top flight" class called Gambler FWD, in which racers ponied up a $400 entrance fee to vie—against Tony Palo, Aaron Lopez, and the like—for a $4,000 payout. In the end it was Tony and Aaron who battled at the line, Tony cashing in with an 8.577 @ 183.84 run in his 1,200hp, red DC2 to Aaron's 9.491 @ 161.38 from his unsuspectingly fast "Stoopidfast" black EK.

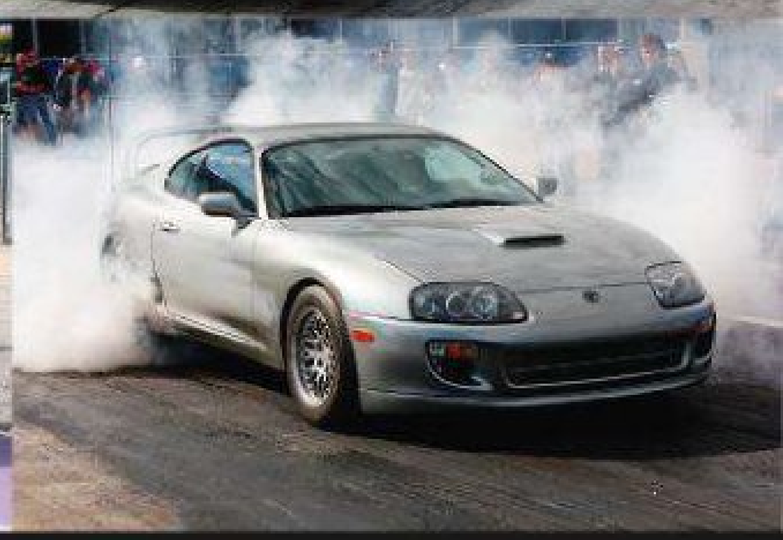
All Motor Pro saw an Alex Pagin vs. Jason Lumpkin final, for the fourth time in a row, with Alex coming through FTW with an 11.011 @ 123.80 in his K-series red hatch to Jason's B20-powered green CRX and an 11.307 @ 108.98. Forced Induction Pro competition proved every bit as competitive when third-string qualifier Ryan Sprehe ran an 8.865-second Final-round pass to upset 8.6-second competitor Ross Baird (both in Supras), who deep staged and redlit under pressure. In contrast, Outlaw class racing became a double bust when Kenny Tran's normally low-7-second tC was set to battle the even faster FD RX-7 of Puerto Rico's Jose "El Loco Policia" Zeda in the Finals, when both cars broke beyond repair prior to competition.

In real police news, one inconsiderate competitor nearly left the race in cuffs for his high-speed antics on the public two-lane back road leading to the track—not smart. "We had a fan die on his way back from the Louisiana event this past year," said IFO owner Cliff Wallace. "He had all day to race at the track for a few bucks, but decided to race on the street instead and ended up paying the ultimate price."

Importtuner.com for more; www.importfaceoff.net to get involved. it







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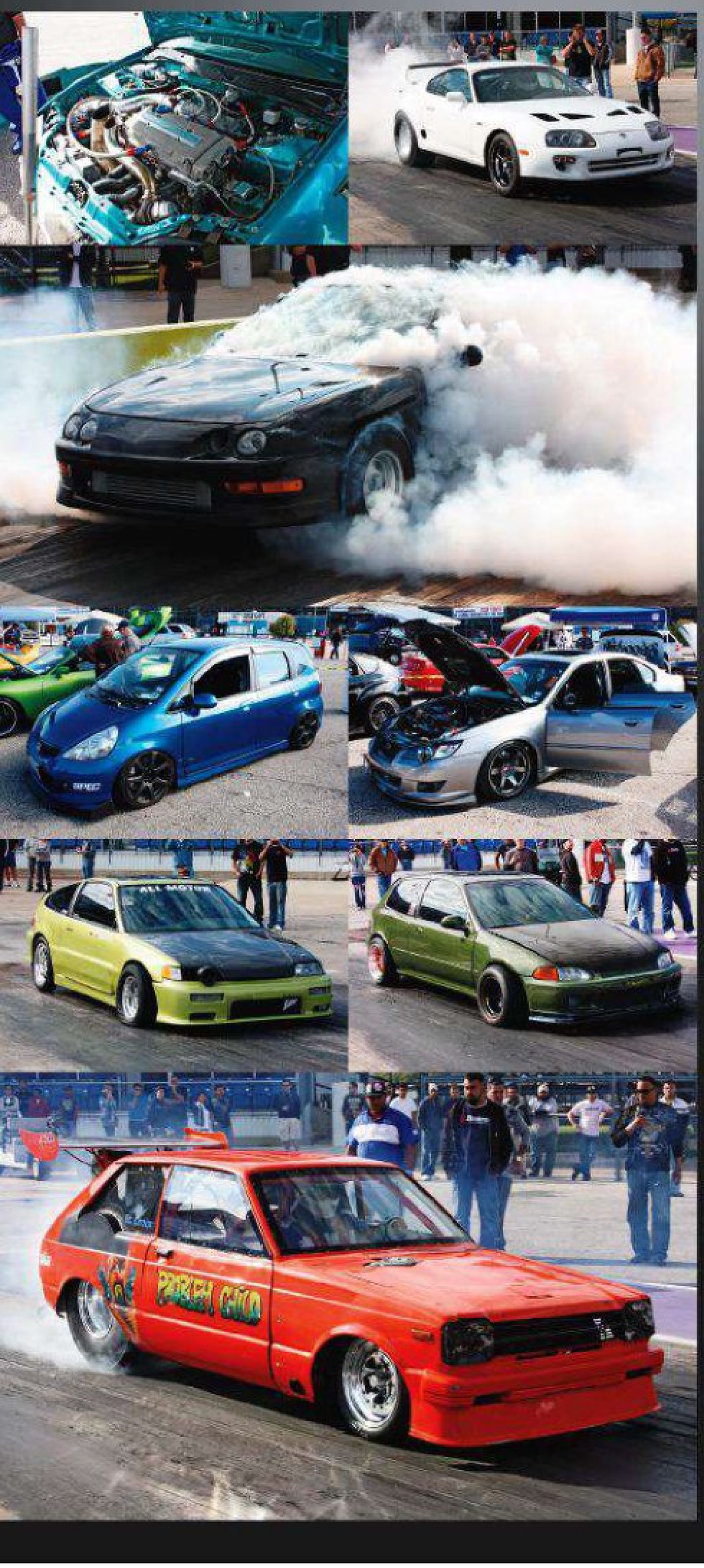
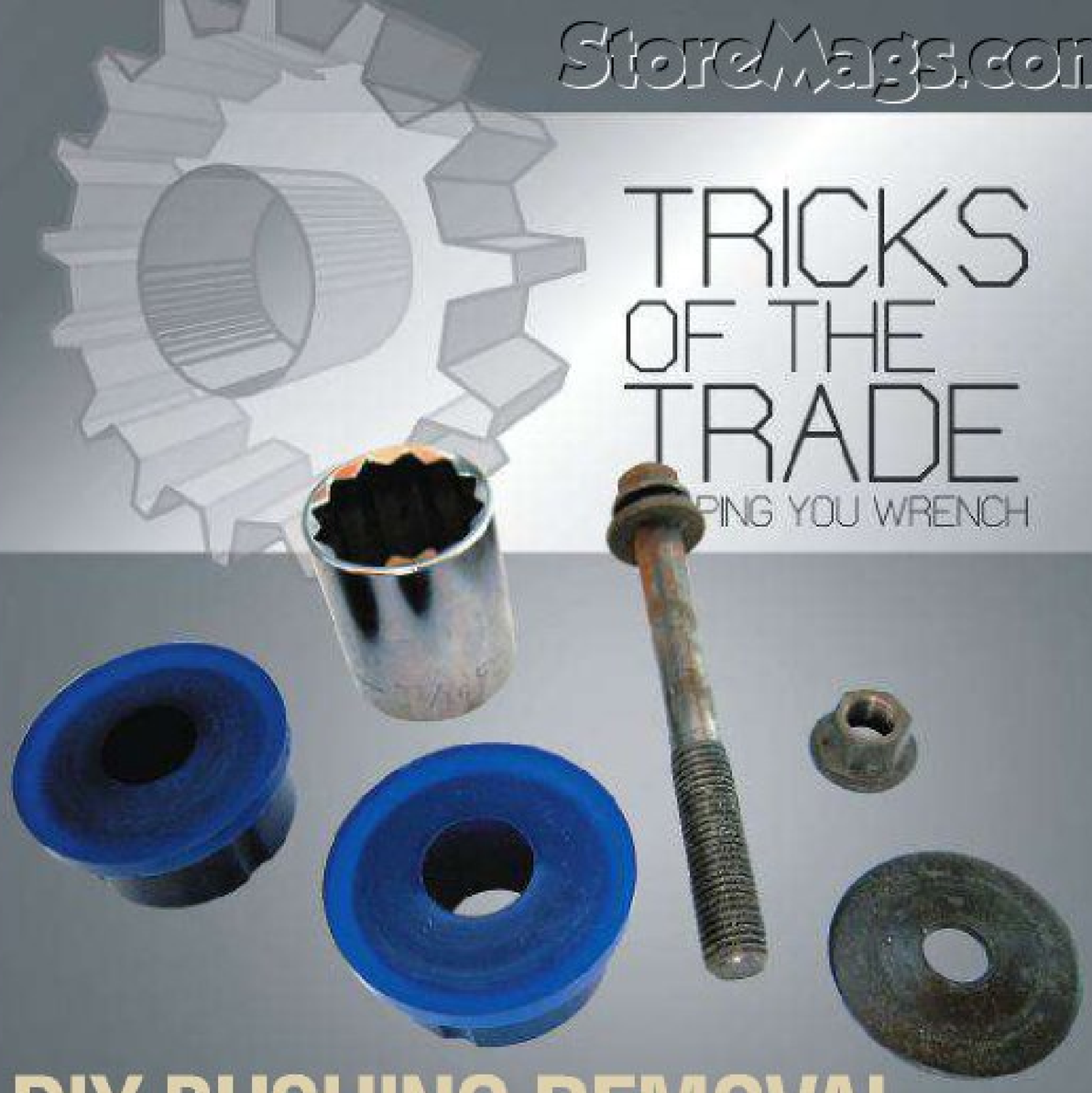
EVENT SCHEDULE

3.12	XDC DRIFT, LOS ANGELES, CA
3.12	FATLACE WORDUP! DRIFTING, SANTA CLARA, CA
3.13	IMPORT FACEOFF, IRWINDALE, CA
3.20	IFO, WICHITA, KS
3.27	IFO, COMMERCE, GA
3.27	IFO, SHREVEPORT, LA
4.3	IFO, RICKINGHAM, NC
4.8-9	FORMULA D, LONG BEACH, CA
4.17	IMPORT ALLIANCE, ATLANTA, GA





TRICKS OF THE TRADE

PING YOU WRENCH

DIY BUSHING REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

Suspension bushings are an overlooked item on many vehicles and unless they are squeaking or groaning, we really don't pay much attention to them. Cracked, split, or oil-soaked bushings are typically removed using a propane torch to burn the bushing out, a hacksaw to cut the outer metal sleeve, and a heavy-duty press to press the new ones in.

But consider the fact that burning the rubber emits toxic fumes and that most people don't own a press or want to buy an expensive, specialized tool. We're here to offer an alternative DIY solution using what's called the "threaded rod technique."

The "threaded rod technique" consists of a simple build-a-tool that uses an oversize socket to "receive" the old bushing and another socket to push the new bushing through. In order to remove the OEM steering rack bushings from our Honda S2000 we built a homemade press out of a piece of threaded rod, a nut, washers, and two sockets.

We began the removal process by finding a socket just smaller in outside diameter (OD) than the bushing in the steering rack (to chase the bushing out). On the opposite end of the rod, we used a socket with an inside diameter (ID) larger than the OD of the bushing to be removed to provide area for the displaced bushing to travel into. To remove the bushing, we inserted a bolt through the bushing and two sockets, and sealed it using flat-washers and a coupler nut before we began tightening while using a wrench to hold one side of the bolt to prevent the rod from turning the nut. When assembling your "threaded rod," make sure there is enough meat on those washers so the nut doesn't cave the washer into the socket.

It should only take a couple of minutes, or seconds if using an impact gun, to push the bushing out. You can also use this method in reverse order to insert new bushings.

QUESTION it.

FIXING WHAT YOU BROKE

Fact: Eric Hsu will be picking his favorite tech question for each installment of Question IT over the next few months, and we'll be hooking up whoever submitted it with some new threads from our go-fast homies at Eat Sleep Race. Russell Sims takes top honors this month, with his ADD-infused inquiry regarding which engine he should swap into his Hachi, which internals he should use, how it should be aspirated, which cams/EMS/mounts would be best for each variation, and what the compression should be. We're confused, but Eric likes it—and that's all that counts.

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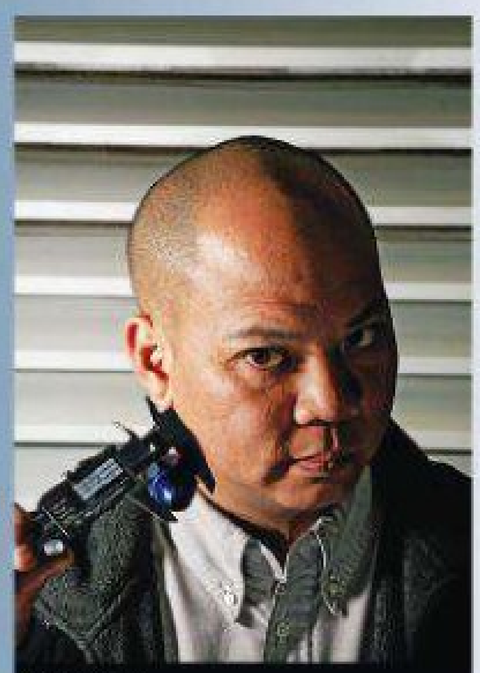

ERIC HSU
WWW.BEYONDTHEDYNO.COM/BLOGS/ERIC

THIS MONTH'S WINNING LETTER

ENGINE SHOPPING

I own an '86 Corolla GTS and know that you (Eric) are not a fan of the 4AGE engine, and that is understandable as it really produces no torque and is gutless below 4K rpm. I came up with two different engine build scenarios for my daily driver and as much fun as it is revving to redline, I know redlining is not good for my 4AG. The first option would be to build a 4AGE by using the 7AFE crank. I want to maintain the high-revving nature of the 4AG so I plan to balance and knife edge the crank, drop in some 10.5:1-compression pistons and run some mild cams—nothing bigger than 264-degree duration. To keep costs in check, I plan to run a Mega Squirt engine management. I like this engine combination idea, but don't know how well it would rev and if it could sustain rpm similar to the 4AGE. My second option is to run the supercharged 4AGZE with a larger crank pulley and use a piggyback engine management to fine-tune it. I like this idea as well, but am afraid it will lose the revability of the engine. I have also considered a 20-valve engine but would like to keep the build rather simple and cost effective without having to source parts for the 20-valve, which is a huge pain in the ass. My goal is to build a fun, 150hp daily driver with no intentions of participating in track events. I'm not worried about the degree of difficulty to make things happen since I'm pretty decent at turning a wrench.

I also thought about doing an SR20VE swap. The motors are pretty cheap and I know of a few shops that make bolt-in kits for the AE86. I figured this way it would keep the soul and spirit of the original AE86 intact by providing excellent revs as well as decent power. I just don't know if the SR20 will clear the firewall, which is a common AE86 problem.

-Russell Sims
Via importtuner.com

Keeping the build simple is important in any project. Oftentimes, inexperienced builders or DIY enthusiasts go too far by adding parts or performing modifications based on speculation without good old engineering. That's fine if you have more time than money or just a shitload of money, but I'm guessing in your situation, that's not the case. With that said, I'd recommend simple, proven modifications that can be done on a relatively small budget: Arias 11.5:1 pistons (off-the-shelf for a standard-stroke 4AG), shot-peened stock rods, a ported and polished cylinder head (from a trusted shop like Port Flow Design in San Pedro, CA, or Technosquare in Torrance, CA), enlarged factory throttle body from RC Engineering, and a 4-into-1 header. Be sure to have both the header and exhaust manifold port matched to the intake and exhaust ports. If your budget allows, the 7AFE crank and billet connecting rods are nice, but will add considerable expense to the build. As for the ECU, I've only ever had experience with the Apexi Power FC on the 4AG. I know for a fact it controlled the 4AG very well, including idle, boost, etc. Unfortunately, it was an AP Engineering special which means it may not be available any longer and difficult to find—try checking Yahoo Auctions Japan, or contacting Apexi for more information. The Power FC would be the easiest way to have absolute control of the 4AG with only a distributor change (the PFC uses the JDM 4AG distributor). The included adapter harness allows the PFC to directly plug into the Corolla's engine harness. An SR20VE swap would probably be the easier way to attain your power goals. All in all, the SR20VE swap would probably be similar in cost, but you would end up with significantly more power and reliability. Sometimes you just can't get around newer technology and designs. I've had a couple of friends swap SR engines into AE86s so I can tell you it does fit. If somebody took the time to make a mount kit, then I'm sure they also took into account the firewall clearance (or I should hope so!).

BUYER'S DREAM

The time has come for me to purchase my first car. My dad is going to loan me $25,000, which I plan to pay him back over time. My new car interests include the Pontiac GTO (domestic, I know), Mazda6 Sport six-speed manual, and Accord V-6 manual; while used cars would either be a Mitsubishi EVO IV MR or a Subaru WRX STI. I don't know which vehicle would be better for crappy Pennsylvania roads, but I would like to build any of the cars I previously mentioned to race weekend events around the area. With all that said, which one would you recommend that I build up nicely while I attend UTI in Exton, PA? Or what models do you think I overlooked that you would recommend? I'm looking for a good balance between speed and handling and want to make sure I pick the right car.

-Steve
Via importtuner.com

The GTO, Mazda6, Accord, EVO IX, and STI are all quite different vehicles in terms of performance. If your goal is to go fast and do some racing, then go ahead and delete the Mazda6 and Accord from your list. While they are great passenger cars, they were never designed to go fast. Sure, you can make them faster, but you'd be hard-pressed to race them against the GTO, EVO, or STI even after dropping $15K into the Mazda6 or Accord. As for the GTO, EVO, or STI, they can all go pretty damn fast. The GTO does it with cubic inches and bolt-on superchargers, but its 4,000-pound curb weight makes it sluggish against the EVO and STI when considering your requirement of balance between speed and handling. Other cars you may want to consider are the JZA80 twin-turbo Supra, FD3S Mazda RX-7, or 350Z, but all of these cars will require slicks at the dragstrip to keep up with any lightly modified EVO or STI. In a road racing situation, these rear-wheel-drive cars with suspension mods can keep up with lightly modified

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QUESTION it.

FIXING WHAT YOU BROKE

EVOs and STIs. To keep up with highly modified EVO and STIs you'll basically need a highly modified ____ (fill in the blank with the car of your choice) and a shit ton of money because the EVO and STI are the "do it all" platforms. They can kick ass at the drags, smoke plenty of competitors at the track, and then go kill at the autocross. The only thing they can't do is impress a chick like the Skyline GT-R can, which are the bigger "do it all" platforms. But then again, that just depends on your taste in chicks.

WHAT'S THE SECRET RECIPE?

I own a '95 Mitsubishi Eclipse non-turbo and want to add a little more juice to it. I'm thinking about upgrading the header, intake, adding a throttle body spacer and underdrive crank pulley, and porting and polishing the cylinder head. The car originally makes 140 hp and I'm trying to squeeze 200+ hp out of it if possible. My question is what would be the best nitrous kit to obtain 200 hp at a safe level? I don't want to blow my engine or damage parts, including my transmission.

-Scott Durand
Via importtuner.com

If you're set on hitting the 200hp mark with nitrous then I'd recommend only upgrading the exhaust, header, and intake, and letting the nitrous system do the rest. Since your car has a fuel pressure regulator under the hood and is normally aspirated, you can use one of the "dry" systems from any of the popular nitrous kit manufacturers such as NOS, NX, ZEX, and Nitrous Direct. For some degree of reliability, it would be wise to use the highest octane fuel available at the gas station and keep the nitrous system's power adding to under 75 hp. For consistent as possible power output on nitrous and to use as much of the bottle as possible per fill, make sure you use a bottle blanket to heat the bottle and regulate the nitrous pressure. Once installed and dialed in, make sure you hold on because there's no experience quite like the hit of torque from nitrous. I used to laugh my ass off from how fun it was to hit the nitrous . . . button of course.

OLD-SCHOOL WITH NEW-SCHOOL PROBLEMS

I am running a Haltech E11V2 stand-alone engine management in my '76 Datsun 280Z with an '82 280ZX turbo swap. I recently purchased an MSD-6A ignition box and was curious if I can run the unit with my Haltech E11V2 engine management since I am getting mixed opinions on the subject matter. Also, will it make any difference in increasing my spark output?

Engine Upgrades:
1982 280ZX P90 cylinder head; '75 280Z N42 short block (0.30 overbore); ARP head studs, rod bolts; 240SX 60mm throttle body; RX-7 550cc/min injectors, oil cooler; custom front-mount

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intercooler, 2.5-inch intercooler piping; HKS blow-off valve; Haltech E11V2 w/ Flying Lead harness; Palnet fuel rail, fuel pressure gauge; Tial wastegate w/ 17psi spring; Garrett GT3076R ball-bearing turbo; DynoMax 2.5-inch exhaust; Maxima alternator; Zeitronics wideband with EGT sensor; Walbro 255lph fuel pump; Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator

-Berk Piccirilli
Via importtuner.com

I'm not sure how you have the Haltech E11 wired in, but you would only be able to use the MSD-6A if the distributor and a single ignition coil are still being used. You did not mention if there are current ignition related issues, but if there are, the MSD-6A can provide some assistance. It provides hotter, multiple sparks with the idea of each combustion event being more complete due to the hotter multi-strike sparks. The MSD-6A will work independently of the E11. If you are having spark related issues, you'll want to make sure the cap, rotor, and spark plug wires are in good shape before throwing parts at the problem. Also, you'll want to make sure that you have the E11 configured with enough coil charge time to charge the coil adequately. Having too much charge time can also be detrimental if the coil is run saturated and running too hot. Since your E11 has 14 pwm outputs (pulse-width modulation) it can also support six individual coils for the ultimate spark energy. This would probably eliminate any spark related issues you may be having. Otherwise it looks like you got yourself a pretty well set-up 280Z. The only thing I'd change might be the exhaust. Engine power output will definitely benefit from a straight-through muffler and reduced exhaust backpressure.

HOME-BUILT SUBARU

I recently purchased a '99 Impreza RS with an aftermarket intake, header, exhaust, cams and suspension parts. I was considering turbocharging the car and building a home-brew 22B STI. I've read that the factory EJ251 in my car will only handle around

6 psi of boost safely. If so, can I find a wrecked STI and swap in the whole motor and drivetrain? Also, will an aftermarket standalone run the setup properly, or do I need the complete harness out of an STI as well?

-Frank V
Via importtuner.com

The RS engine can handle 5 to 8 psi of boost depending on quality of fuel, intercooling efficiency, exhaust flow, and turbo size, assuming the ECU tune is perfect. But your best bet is to obtain a complete front clip from a JDM GC8 STI to gather the necessary harnesses, ECU, sensors, etc. Certain year GC8 STIs also came with forged pistons and limited-slip differentials as a bonus. Even if you were able to locate a complete swap without the clip, the swaps usually include the JDM front subframe that includes a notch for downpipe clearance. The newer the year in GC8 front clip you can afford the better, since the engines, turbos, and electronics evolved considerably throughout the 10 years of production from 1991 to 2001. Whichever setup you end up with, I'd recommend an Apexi Power FC ECU for the best engine control management system and bang-for-the-buck standalone ECU available on the tuner market.

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01

THREE-SPEAKER BOOMBOX

01 Strap on your shell-toed Adidas and sequined glove, and prepare to cue up some block-rockin' beats. Rewinding the clock to the era of *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo*, this retro-futuristic ghetto blaster (two-speaker unit also available for $399) lets you party like it's 1985. Featuring AM/FM radio options, touch-sensing backlit buttons, and connectivity with external gear like microphones and guitars, just connect an iPod or USB drive, and its 6-inch, 15-watt subwoofer and 6-inch, 10-watt stereo speakers will make your ears bleed.

TDK / $499 / www.tdkperformance.com

02

03

04

05

02 Universal X103 3D Glasses ■■■□□

Picking the right 3D TV, let alone figuring out how to afford one, is tricky enough without having to worry about supporting 3D glasses. Thankfully, even though industry standards have yet to be finalized, these active shutter goggles—which work at home or in the theater—are compatible with a wide range of models unlike many manufacturer-specific units. Cop a pair, and you'll be ready to watch films, play games, or ogle airbrushed jugs from a whole new perspective.

Xpand / $129.00 / www.xpandcinema.com

03 Kanex XD ■■■◧□

Rather than purchase a new TV, try transforming your 27-inch Apple iMac into a standalone high-definition monitor via an accessory that lets you hook up Blu-ray players, video game consoles, or digital set-top boxes. Letting you enjoy PlayStation 3 or Xbox 360 titles right on the computer, or screen favorite boxed sets, resolution sadly taps out at 720p (still HD, for those counting), not that most will notice. Besides, it'll also save you the aggravation of assembling a tacky, discount-store-bought entertainment center.

Kanex / $149.95 / www.kanexlive.com

04 3DPF8 ■■■◧□

Ups the ante on digital photo frames by adding the ability to display 3D images of smiling spouses and passed-out fraternity brothers without the need for cumbersome glasses. Beyond packing an attractive 8-inch, 800x600 screen and a hidden touch panel interface, you also get slideshow and video playback and 128MB of internal memory. But 2D to 3D image conversion should prove most compelling, letting you watch in awe as every pimple from prom night portraits literally pops from the display.

Viewsonic / $179.99 / www.viewsonic.com

05 Cio Mobile Digital TV ■■■■□

Streams live episodes of primetime favorites straight to your sweaty palm, courtesy of a 10.2-inch touch screen LCD display that downloads mobile TV feeds on-demand. Letting you cram a portable boob tube in the car that travels anywhere you go, it also plays DVDs, CDs, SD memory cards, and iPod-ready music and video, plus promises 3G and WiFi connectivity. Powered by a rechargeable battery and AC or auto adapter, the gizmo even includes an auto mount so you can cram it right on a headrest.

Winegard / $799 / www.ciomobiletv.com

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06 Dead Space 2

A sci-fi survival/horror outing that not only sees you creeping about a futuristic city while dismembering mutants and walking corpses limb-from-limb, but also shrieking your way through suicidal scenarios. Emphasizing fast reactions as you plummet through thin air or face hordes of chittering horrors that explode from air ducts, its adrenaline-soaked blend of puzzle solving and mayhem strikes a surprisingly spine-tingling chord. Options to use telekinetic powers to wield shards of shattered glass like flying daggers? They're just a nifty bonus.

Electronic Arts / www.ea.com / PC, PS3, Xbox 360

07 Test Drive Unlimited 2

Skillfully straddles the line between solo racer and massive multiplayer rubber-burning outing, offering immense seaside environments to explore in the company of friends. Less about flooring the pedal and more about enjoying the scenery, it wows with a humungous range of striking vistas, unlockable goodies, and play options to discover. While not all will appreciate the title's laid-back approach—it accurately captures the feel of cruising better than any other outing—added support for custom car clubs and extensive online connectivity provide endless miles to the gallon.

Atari / www.atari.com / PC, PS3, Xbox 360

08 Marvel vs. Capcom 3

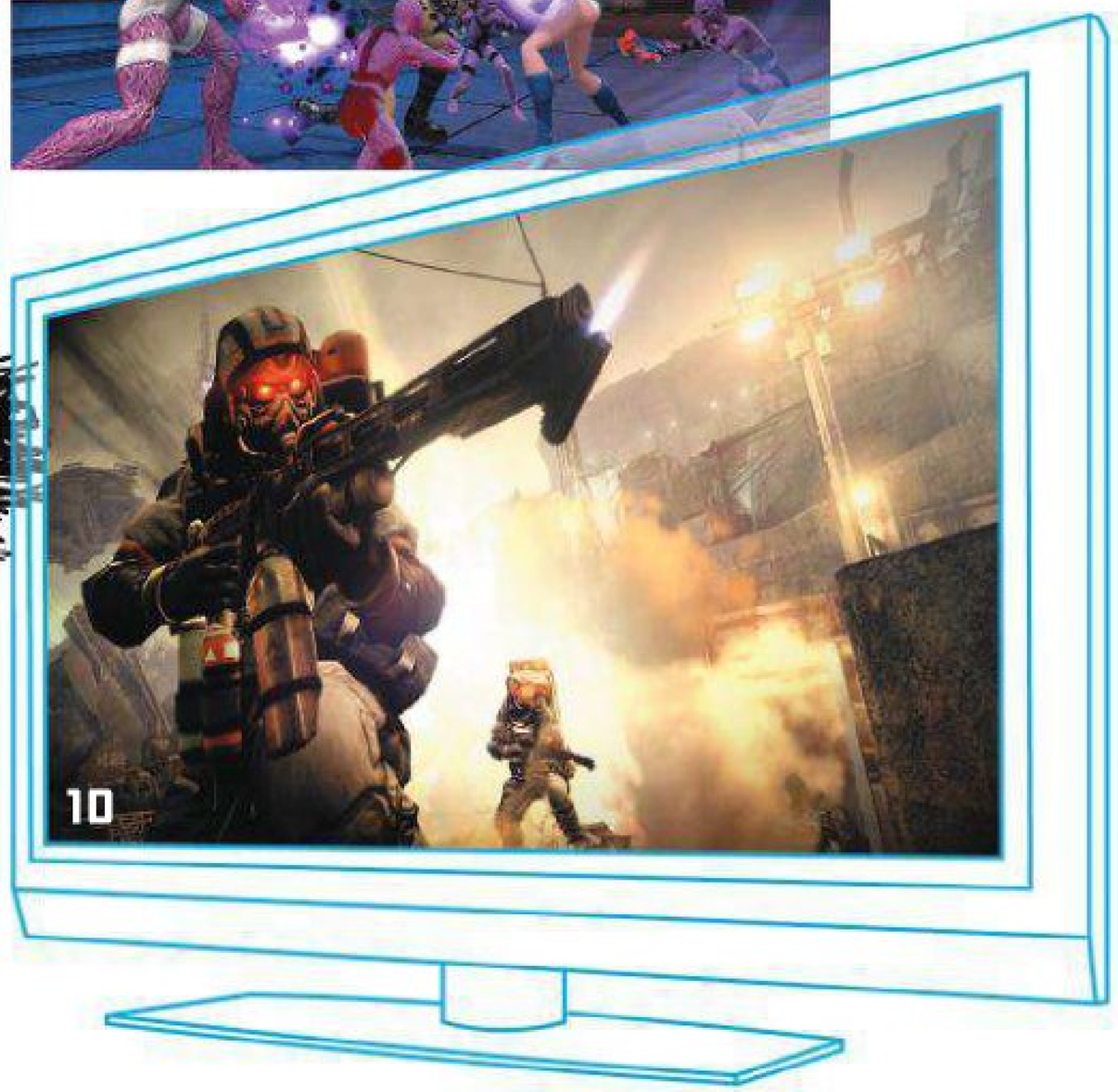
Old-school arcade fighting action takes top billing as comic book staples (e.g., Iron Man, The Hulk, Wolverine, etc.) trade claws and laser beams with popular gaming heroes (e.g., Street Fighter's Chun-Li and Resident Evil's Chris Redfield). Gorgeously animated and unexpectedly deep, teams of three characters compete to knock each other senseless with increasingly complex chains of combo attacks, ensuring that the game's best experienced in smack-talking multiplayer standoffs. Play for a one-way trip back to 1995 . . . and, yes, we mean that as a compliment.

Capcom / www.capcom.com / PS3, Xbox 360

09 DC Universe Online

A massively multiplayer online title where you don the tights of a caped crusader or masked super villain and slug it out alongside or against favorite comic book heroes, (e.g., Batman and Wonder Woman). Delivering a more action-intensive alternative to the typical snooze-inducing role-player and live adventures alongside hundreds of fellow closet geeks, extensive storytelling and character customization options make it a winner. From strolling notable locales like Arkham Aslyum to turning friends into living punching bags, good luck logging off.

Sony Online Entertainment / www.soe.com / PC, PS3



KILLZONE 3

10 Sony's answer to Halo, this newest installment of the popular sci-fi run-n-gun odyssey wows with its intense firefights, variety of inventive set pieces, and gob-smacking visuals (also available in 3D on compatible TVs). Blowing holes in glowing-eyed adversaries across snowy arctic environments and lush jungles, or shooting jetpack-equipped adversaries out of the sky, fighting for survival in a variety of hostile environments. Cleverly upping brutality levels and offering a more sophisticated melee system, its aim happily proves right on target.

Sony / www.playstation.com / PS3

FACTORFICTION

DEBUNKING TUNING MYTHS

TESTING AND PHOTOS BY **SCOTT TSUNEISHI**
TEXT BY **LUKE MUNNELL**

One of the hardest truths to swallow as a car owner is realizing that you're going to spend time and money simply maintaining the damned thing. This is doubly painful for enthusiasts whose performance budgets are really just maintenance budget surpluses. While this month's installment of Fact or Fiction doesn't evaluatve products claiming to show you how best to (or not to) modify for performance, it does examine whether a questionable maintenance measure can save your bottom line, to help get you going faster sooner.

THE CLAIM:
BATTERY DESULFATORS CAN BRING DEAD BATTERIES TO LIFE.

When it comes to our cars' electrical systems, most of us know just what we need to get by. This is especially true of battery maintenance: Keep your terminals clean, jumpstart it if you park with your lights on, let the alternator take care of the rest, and you'll be good to go for a long while. Until the battery eventually refuses to hold a charge and you have to fork over hard-earned loot for a replacement, right? Not necessarily, say the makers of battery desulfators.

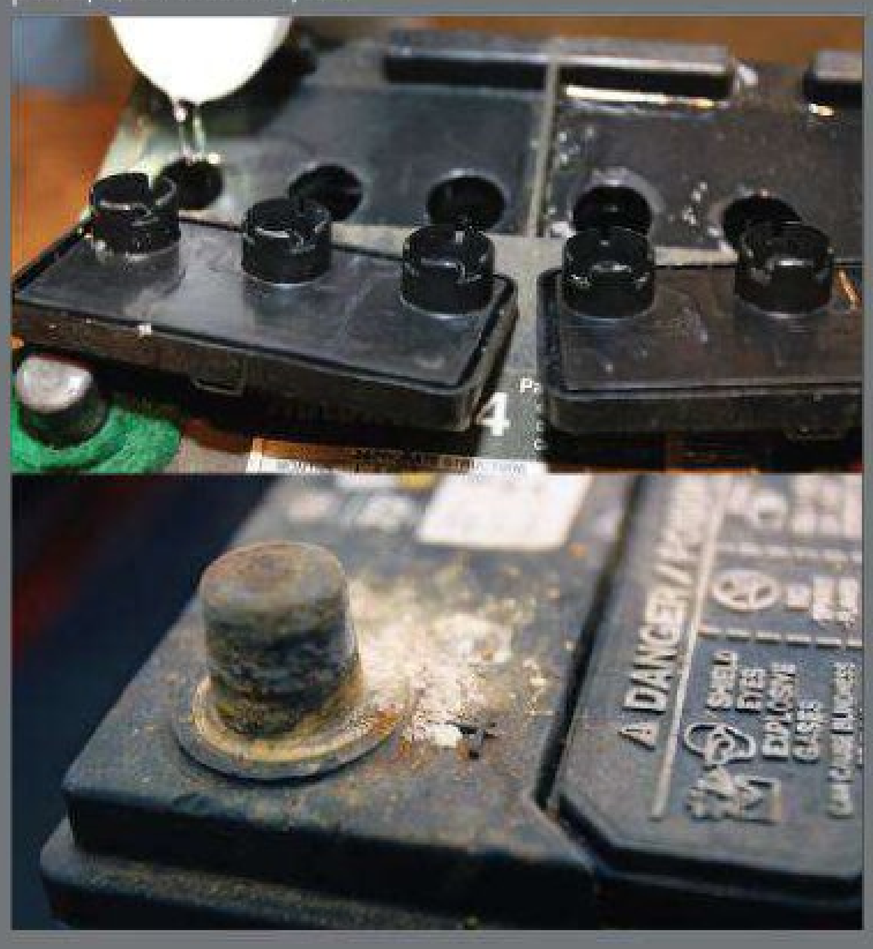
Batteries come in many different shapes and sizes, are made of many different components, yet all serve the same fundamental purpose: storing and discharging electricity by converting chemical potential energy into electrical kinetic energy. The ones we'll be concerning ourselves with this month are standard 12V lead/acid batteries like the one in your car. Essentially the world's oldest rechargeable batteries, their construction and functionality are very simple: a positive terminal composed of lead dioxide and a negative terminal composed of porous lead are each immersed into electrolyte solutions consisting of water and sulfuric acid.

Chemical reactions between each terminal and its surrounding electrolyte solution produce a surplus of electrons in the negative side and a deficit of electrons in the positive side that prompts a flow of electrons from negative to positive once each side is connected through a circuit, when electricity is needed from the battery. This electro-chemical reaction produces a crystalline byproduct called lead sulfate, which collects on terminals in a process called "sulfation." When your car's alternator recharges the battery the process works in reverse, and the lead sulfate is reconverted into lead and sulfuric acid through a process called "gassing" (in which water is also converted into its essential elements of hydrogen and oxygen) before all components ideally return to their natural state.

The problem is that we don't live in an ideal world, and when a lead/acid battery is repeatedly overused or run dead, especially if it's really old, lead sulfate ions can grow increasingly stronger bonds with the lead of the battery terminals, severely limiting the amount of voltage a battery can store and discharge. Manufacturers of battery desulfators claim that through controlled bursts of high voltage, their products can reverse even the most severe cases of sulfating, restoring battery performance to like-new condition.

To test their claims, we rounded up two popular battery desulfators—VDC Electronics' Battery Minder and the Xtreme Charge by Pulsetech—and two seemingly dead test subject batteries: A run-of-the-mill Autolite 84, and a lightweight dry-cell Buddy Club Racing Spec Battery.

The first order of business is physical battery maintenance. Lead/acid batteries aren't usually perfectly sealed, allowing the water in their electrolyte solution to evaporate over time. Make sure any battery you're about to charge/restore is filled with the proper amount of clean, distilled water. Sulfation can spread to terminal posts; clean these off, too.



With our Autolite battery cleaned and filled, it still registered barely any charge—we had to switch our multimeter to millivolts for anything to register. Oh, and this was after it sat on a traditional charger for the better part of a day. Pretty much dead.

Its voltage was so low that we had to actually jump it from another battery just to start the desulfation/restoration process with the Xtreme Charge.

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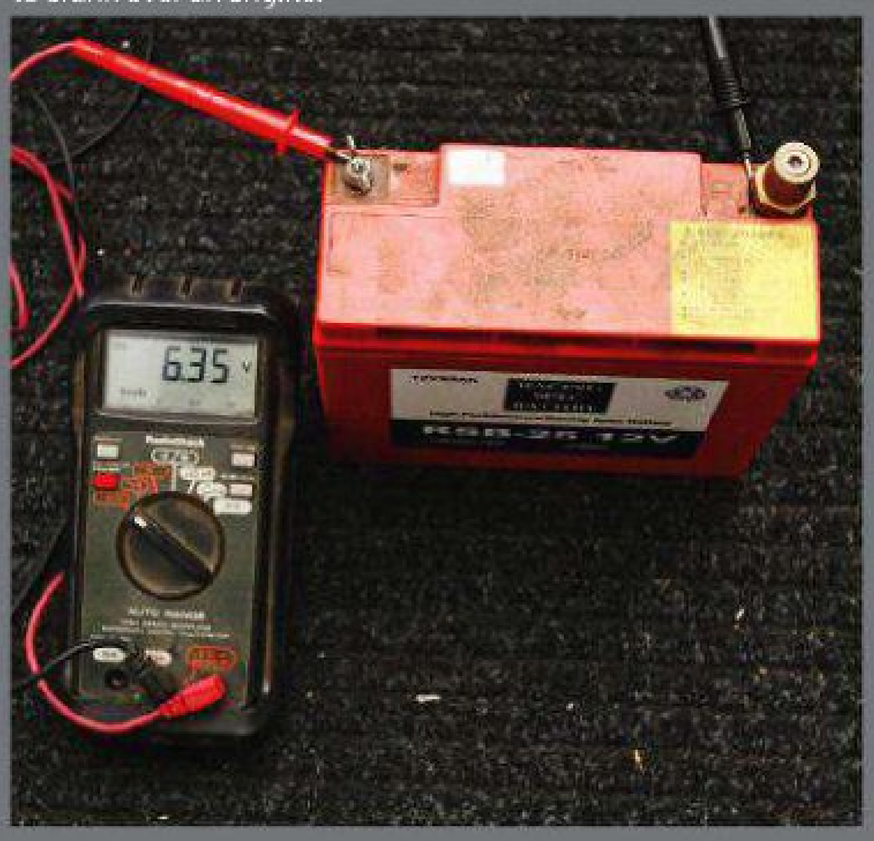
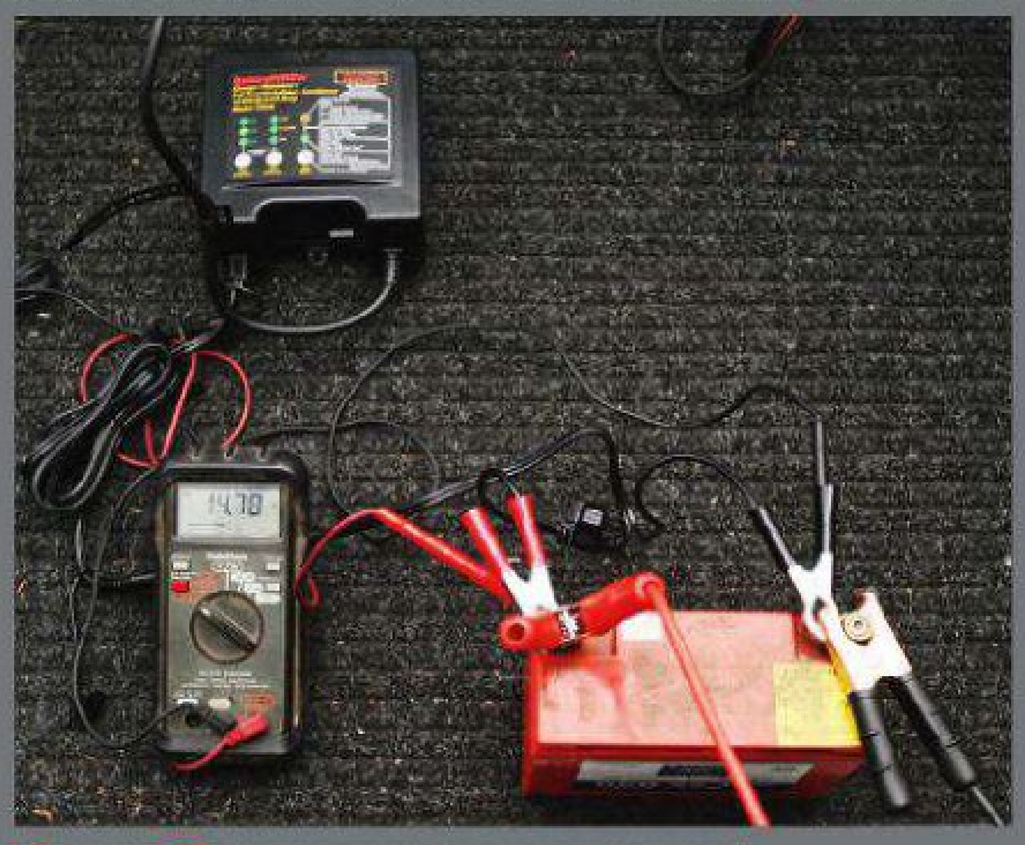
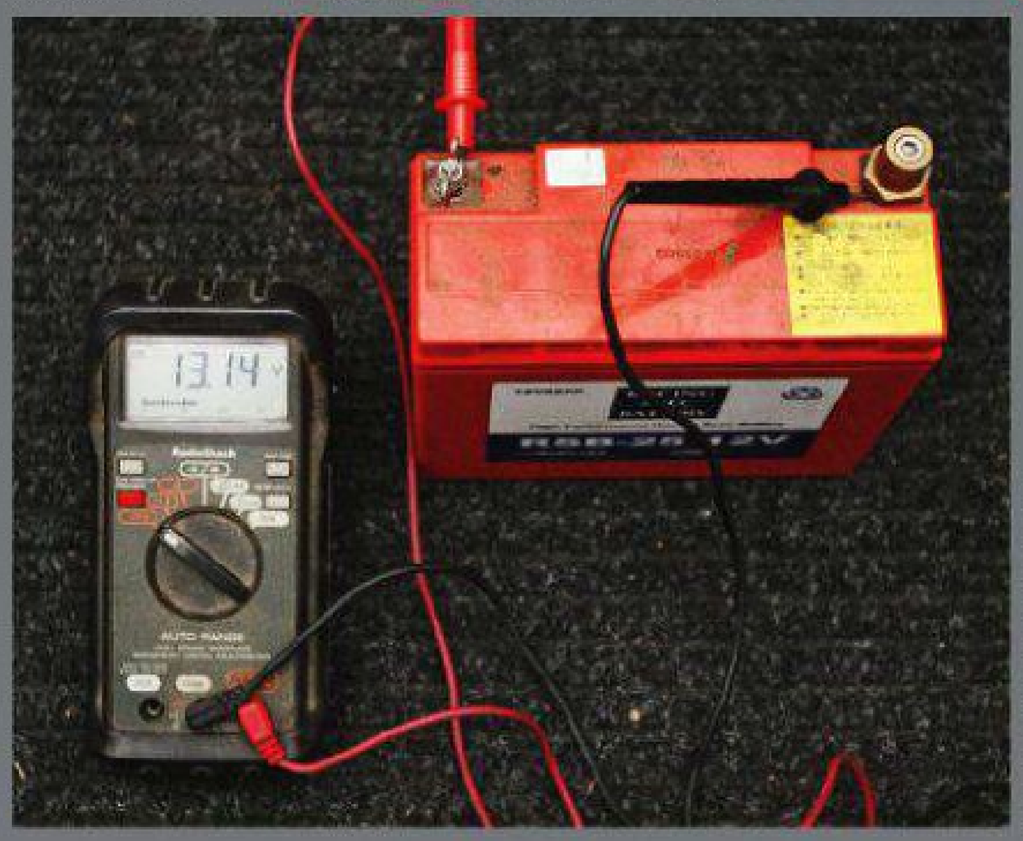
Average voltage while hooked up to the Xtreme Charge held at around 14 volts, though occasionally jumped much higher to facilitate the desulfation process. During three weeks of restoration, our Autolite was monitored using a voltmeter as the restoration process improved voltage to 11.38 volts, eventually finishing at 13.85, which it held for the following four months until we wrote this. We've driven it a lot during that time and also let it sit in our garage. For all intents and purposes, it's been near-perfectly reclaimed.

Next up was Buddy Club's Racing Spec Battery, a sealed, Absorbed Glass Matt (AGM) battery commonly referred to as a "dry-cell" battery. It's still a lead/acid type, but its semi-solid electrolyte replaces the water/sulfuric acid solution of traditional batteries like our Autolite. It's still susceptible to sulfation; this particular one was drained and overcharged for years in competition before spending the subsequent four years abandoned on a garage floor. After spending an entire week on a traditional charger, it registered only 6.35 volts at rest—not nearly enough to crank over an engine.



We hooked this one up to the Battery Minder. During its two-week test cycle, voltage rapidly fluctuates between 13.2 and 14.8 volts as the unit worked its magic to break down those sulfate bonds.





After testing was complete, it held a consistent charge of 13.1 volts at rest and 14.1 running in our test Subaru STI. It, too, has upheld this performance for four months.

THE VERDICT:

FACT

The say the proof is in the pudding, but for us, it's in the driving. With brand-new spares in tow, we drove with one of each reclaimed batteries under our hoods for months after our testing with no fault. Sure, their voltages aren't exactly what they were sitting on the shelf at the speed shop all nice and new, but they're a far cry from how we left them for dead. Battery desulfators win. We have no complaints. Other than not being able to find the receipts for the back-up batteries we bought . . .

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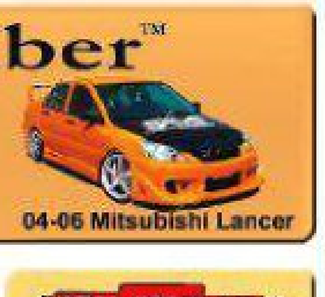
03-07 Accord



05-Up Cobalt

02-04 RSX

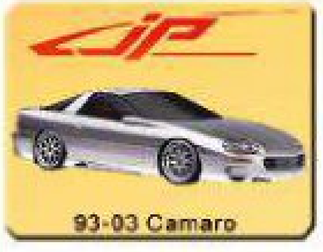
03-Up 350z

95-05 Eclipse

93-02 Camaro

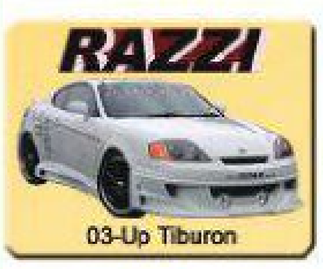
05-Up Mustang

04-06 Mitsubishi Lancer

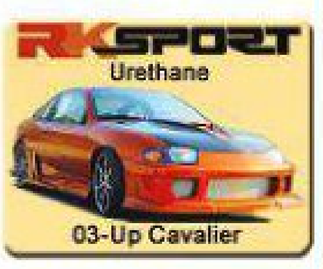


93-03 Camaro

05-Up Cobalt



03-Up Tiburon

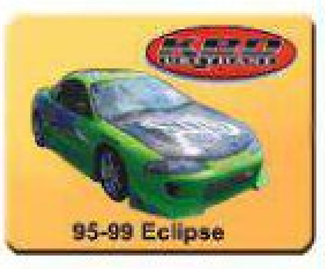


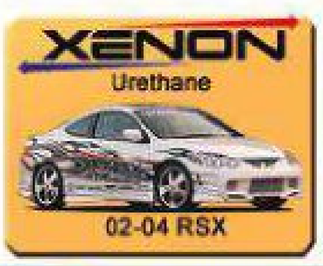
03-Up Cavalier

04-Up Maxima

05-Up Mustang

89-94 240SX


95-99 Eclipse



02-04 RSX

97-02 Prelude

99-05 Grand Am
98-04 Intrepid
01-04 Stratus
89-94 Nissan 240SX

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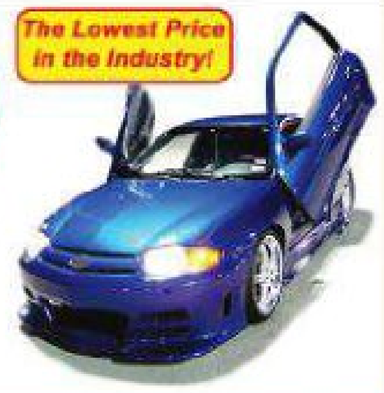

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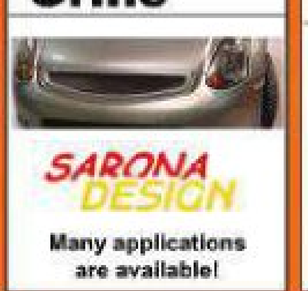

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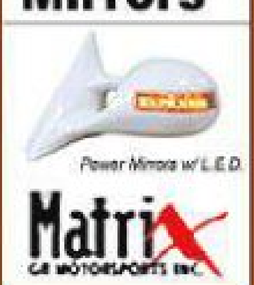

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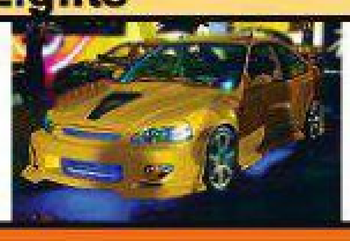

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TEXT BY **LUKE MUNNELL**
PHOTOS BY **RYAN BELVILLE**

1999 NISSAN S15 SILVIA

SOUL FOOD

THE CRAZIEST DRIFT MACHINE YOU'VE SEEN, FROM THE LAST PLACE YOU'D EXPECT.

If you didn't already flip to the last page in this feature for a quick look at this car's tech specs—don't. Let's play a guessing game. Glance over this JDM S15 beast for a minute; it's pink-covered D-Max widebody kit and cherry blossom-themed graphics, staggered gold lightweight alloys in matching hues, fully built and boosted Tomei Genesis SR20 powerplant. Where would you most likely bet to find it? Front and center in the Yashio Factory garage in Saitama, Japan? Maybe stuffed into one of the tiny service bays surrounding Fuji Speedway. The name "Kindai" covering its flanks is definitely Japanese, but look at that name on the driver's door; that's definitely Taiwanese—is it a glimpse of Japan's newest foreign drift challenger? What if we told you this little guy is a Southerner. No, not Osaka—Atlanta, GA, born and bred. No, really. We're serious! For real.

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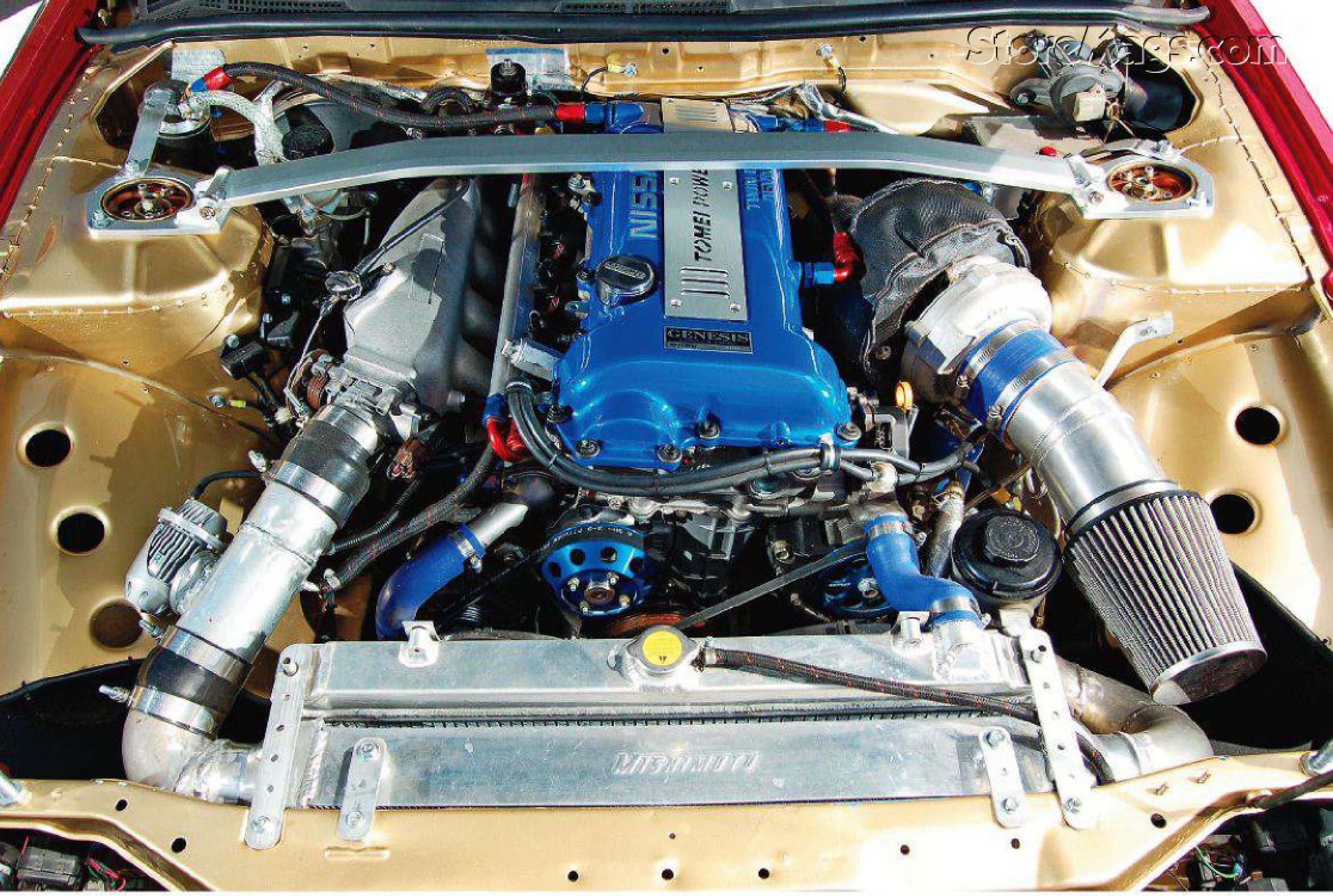

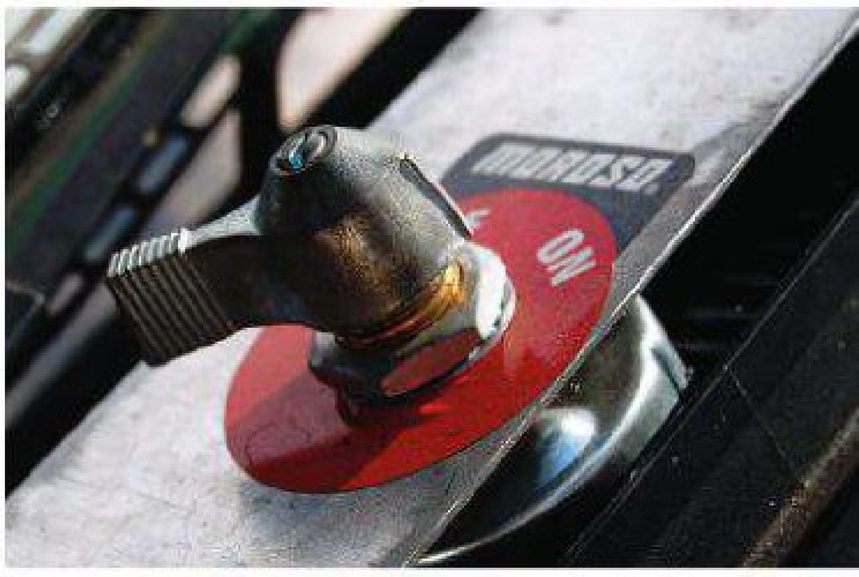

Kindai Neo Motorsports is in fact a U.S. based entity—not a Japanese tuning garage's Stateside effort in the tradition of Signal, HKS, and the like, but not entirely different. Know a guy named Kenji Yamanaka? Well, when he emigrated to the U.S. with his sights set on the American drift scene, he first touched down in Atlanta . . . and pretty much stayed there. Drift Emporium gave him a shot at the driver's seat of their V-8-powered S15, and an SR-powered S14 backup—in which he did well, earning over 300 championship points in 2009, competing in only a few events. As a result of the friendship he developed with then crew chief Jerry Yang, the duo went on to co-found Kindai Neo Motorsports, a tuning effort with a name harkening to Kindai Neo Graffiti, Kenji's Japan-based lifestyle biz. The rest, as they say, is history.

This is largely the duo's first project, commissioned by Taiwan native Chanin Prapapyueryong to serve as his entrance ticket into the world of Formula D Pro-Am and XDC competitive drifting. With decades of experience tuning Japanese competition vehicles, it should come as no surprise that Jerry and Co. settled on a built SR20 as their powerplant of choice. It should also come as no surprise that they knew exactly where to find the ideal one—the engine bay of Kenji's S14. The tradeoff was a win on both sides; Kenji was planning to move up to his Titan V-8 powerplant to hang with the rest of the FD Pro grid, and funded it by passing down his fully Tomei-built Genesis SR20DET to help Chanin dominate amateur ranks. The Genesis treatment is just that—a complete rebirth of a lightly used SR20DET mill by way of a Tomei 91mm stroker crankshaft, H-beam connecting rods, 87mm overbore pistons, a fully machined block to suit, a fully ported and polished cylinder head to match, and a full Tomei valvetrain. This one's twin-scroll Garrett GT3076R turbocharger (.78 A/R exhaust housing), trusty Tial gates, and battle-ready Full-Race twin-scroll turbo manifold were optional equipment—just like the Mazworx-adapted six-speed Z32 tranny and HKS twin-plate clutch now sending all that power to the rear wheels.

Jerry's handiwork can be seen surrounding it all, though. Notice the custom Mishimoto front-mount intercooler taking the radiator's place, with matching Mishi rad and electric fans behind it. This allowed Jerry to fabricate shorter intercooler piping for optimal throttle response, and features the side benefit of relocating vital equipment away from the front bumper, (i.e., the "crash zone"). Also note the stitch welding and gusseting Jerry applied to the bay for extra rigidity—perfect for allowing the car's footworks—Stance GR+Pro coilovers and bushings, and just about every trick component from your favorite JDM suspension tuners—to really shine through.

That ethos was continued in the interior. A safe, supportive rollcage is required of all Formula D and D1GP competition vehicles, but the gusseting and additional supports given this S15 chassis were chosen by the Kindai and fabricator Bell Chassis Works crews to be as rigid as possible. More to that end, everything not conducive to the win was deleted—right down to excess wiring, which the Kindai crew will be quick to point out is not only unnecessarily heavy, but complicates the troubleshooting process; something that should be a consideration for any serious competitor. Painless wiring was called in to handle that aspect, while Bride, Takata, Defi, and Nardi cater to the driver—no surprises there—and all exposed metal was re-coated in gold. "I want everyone to remember, crew and driver alike, that we're after gold," says Chanin.

Let's go back to the exterior. Remember those staggered lightweight alloys? We'll let you in on a dirty little secret: They're Rotas. "We considered more expensive wheels and a harder-to-find kit," Jerry explains. "But these look and work as well as any. Those items will be replaced regularly on a competition car, and less money and time spent waiting for replacements means more time for practice and competition."

As of the start of the 2011 season, the car has yet to shake down in drift competition. "2010 was a busy year for everyone," admits Jerry. "Chanin spent a lot of time overseas and didn't get to compete here like he wanted." Maybe that was a good thing. In the months since we shot the Kindai car, its owner decided to ship it over to Taiwan to try his luck breaking into (and busting up, we suspect) drift competition in his homeland. "We're actually working on another very similar build for Chanin, involving a V-8-powered car that will stay here in the States," hints Jerry. We'd wonder what tricks the Kindai crew has up their sleeves for the new build, but taking in all they've accomplished with this one, we're fairly certain they won't have to resort to them.

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BEHIND THE BUILD

'99 NISSAN S15 SILVIA

480 WHP / 395 LB-FT OF TORQUE

NAME
KINDAI NEO MOTORSPORTS

LOCATION
ATLANTA, GA

OCCUPATION
BRINGING JDM TO THE DEEP SOUTH

HOBBIES
DRIFTING

BUILD TIME
SIX MONTHS

FEEDBACK
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QUOTE
"WE BUILT THIS CAR TO TAKE OVER DRIFTING!"

ENGINE Tomei Genesis 2.2L S15 SR20DET (Tomei 91mm stroker crankshaft, H-beam connecting rods, 87mm pistons, Poncam camshafts, V2 oil pan, ported cylinder head, valves, A-type valvesprings, retainers, valve cover); Greddy intake manifold, crankshaft pulley, oil coolers; Garrett GT3076R turbocharger; Full-Race Gen 2 twin-scroll turbo manifold; HKS blow-off valve, boost controller; Tial wastegates (x2); PTP turbo blanket; Buddy Club Spec II exhaust; Mishimoto radiator, electric fans, front-mount intercooler; Kindai Neo Motorsports intake, intercooler piping, downpipe, oil catch can; NGK plugs, wires; Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator, pump; RC Engineering 1,000cc/min injectors; Electromotive Tec GT, tuned by Tom Heidenbergs

DRIVETRAIN Nissan Z32 300ZX six-speed transmission; Mazworx adapter plate; Drive Shaft Shop Stage 2 axles; Tomei Technical Trax two-way limited-slip differential; HKS twin-plate clutch, flywheel

SUSPENSION Stance GR+Pro coilovers, subframe bushings, differential bushings; Nismo upper front strut tower brace; Bell Chassis Works competition-legal rollcage; JIC rear camber arms, rear toe arms, traction rods, tension rods; Yashio Factory tie rods; Uras tie-rod adapters; KPR Engineering steering angle kit

BRAKES Rotora brakes; Circuit Sports stainless braided brake lines

WHEELS/TIRES Rota Boot wheels (18x9" +20mm front, 18x10" +20mm rear); Federal SS595 tires (235/40-18 front, 265/35-18 rear)

EXTERIOR D-Max Type 3 full kit (front bumper, rear bumper, side skirts, D1 front and rear wide fenders, carbon-fiber aero hood); GP Sports custom fiberglass doors; Kindai Neo Motorsports custom acrylic glass, Kindai Neo Pink exterior paint, Kindai Gold engine bay and interior paint, applied by Lang Ngo; custom sakura graphics applied by Jerry Yang and Pooh Ounkeo

INTERIOR Bride Zeta 3 front seats; Takata harnesses; Nardi steering wheel; Works Bell quick release; HKS shift knob; Defi gauges; Painless wiring

GRATITUDE Jerry Yang, Leon, Kalvin at Kindai Neo Motorsports; Lang Ngo at Nalley; Upin Albert at UAB; Victor at KPR Engineering; Koji at D-Max; Pooh; Mishimoto; Uwe at Electromotive; Phase 2 Motortrend; Robbie and Denton at Chastain Engine Center; Ace Torraiha; Nigel; Kevin Law; Eric; Apirak; Eric Yang; Kenji Yamanaka; Team Nissan of Marietta

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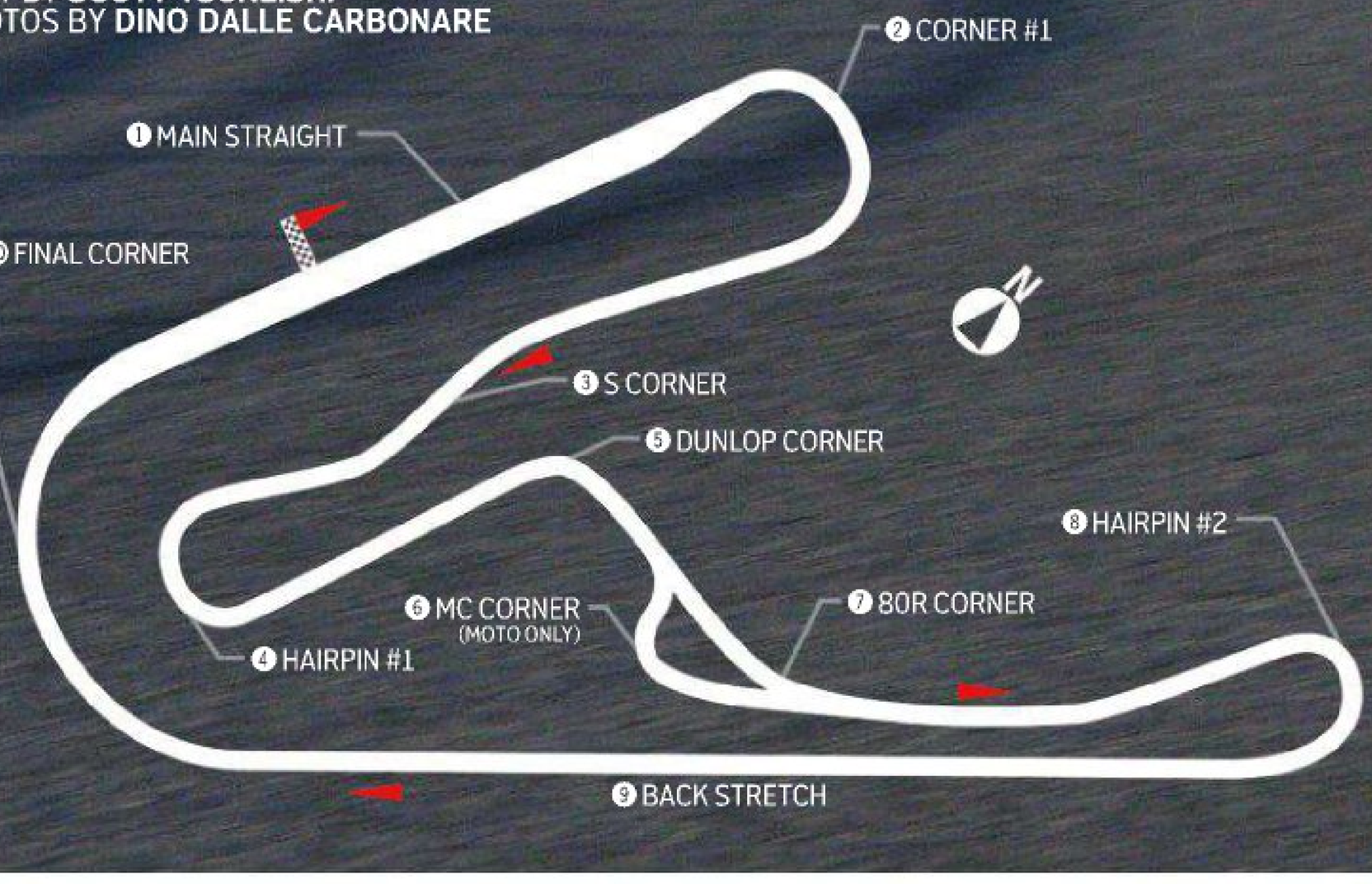
TSUKUBA SUPER BATTLE

PRESENTED BY REV SPEED

TEXT BY **SCOTT TSUNEISHI**
PHOTOS BY **DINO DALLE CARBONARE**



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One of the most famous time-attack events in the world is held annually at Tsukuba Circuit in Japan, and has been for the past 19 years. Tsukuba Circuit is only 2.045 kilometers (1.28 mi) long but is regarded as a technically challenging circuit with a variety of corners, ranging from long sweepers to tight hairpins, making it the most popular track in Japan for time-attackers to battle the clock to achieve their fastest lap times.

To recap last year's Tsukuba Super Battle event, the Voltex/Sun Auto Cyber EVO VII placed First with a 54.925-second lap time, while Garage Revolution's carbon-fiber-clad FD3S RX-7 ran a close Second with a time of 55.915. By midday, both teams claimed their cars were not running at full potential, as the Cyber EVO crew was testing a new aerodynamic package and engine settings while Garage Revolution's Super GT-inspired RX-7 was experiencing engine problems.

With only a few days left leading up to this year's event, Super Battle competitors burned the midnight oil preparing their machines with one common goal in mind: to capture the coveted Tsukuba Super Battle record that's been untouched since 2007.

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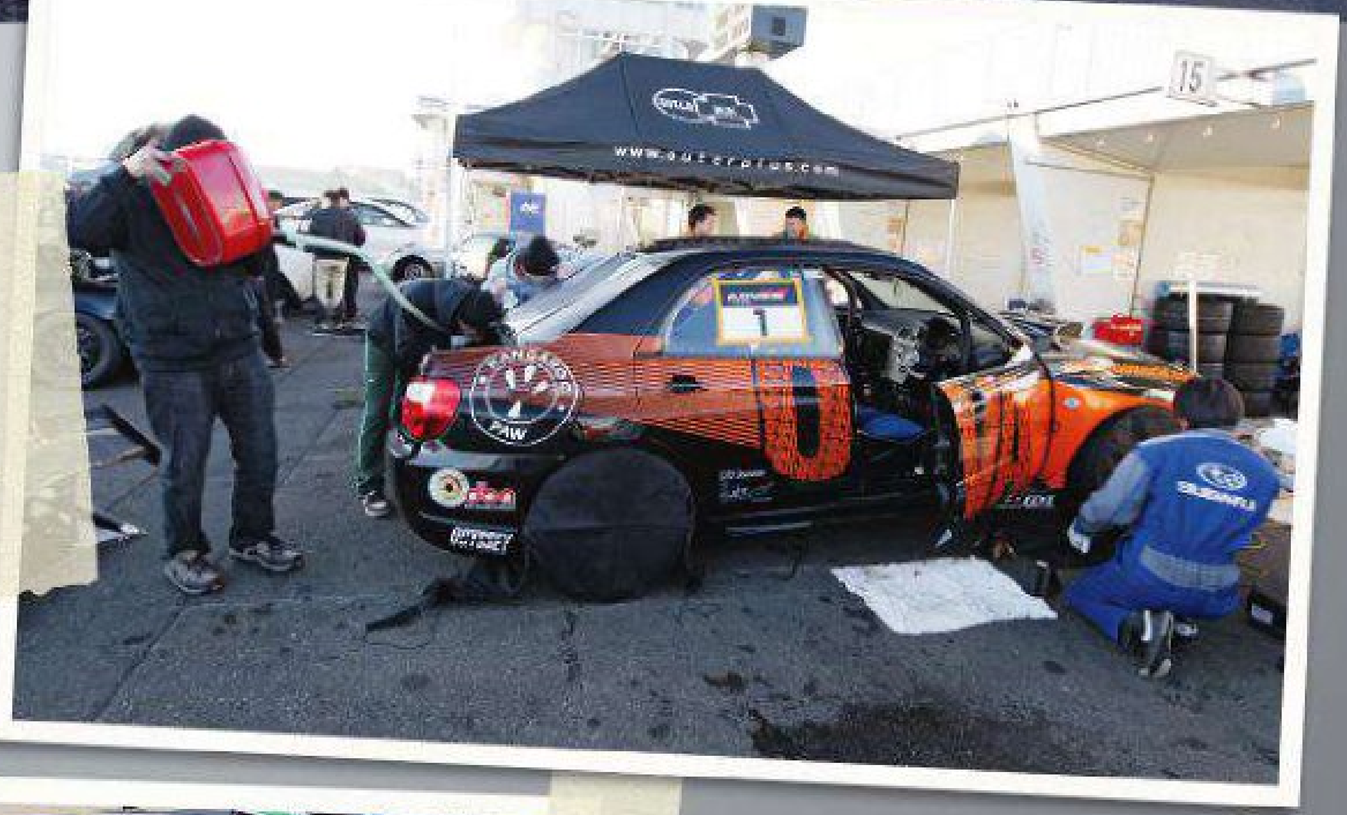
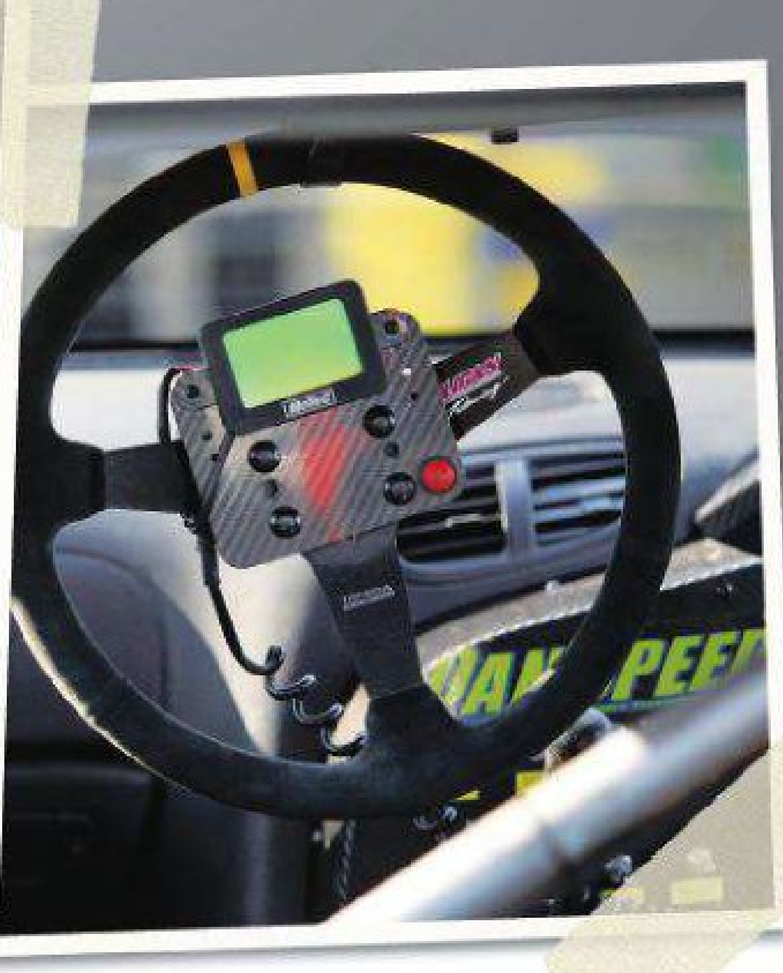
This year's lineup of superstars didn't include many pro-class teams and cars, such as the Voltex/Sun Auto Cyber EVO, Tomei/Cusco Impreza STI, and M-Speed R34. Team USA's Sierra Sierra Enterprise EVO VIII was rumored to make their Japan debut after coming off their record-setting Buttonwillow run one month prior, but was also a no-show. This year's competition proved to be an all-rotary affair, as Mazda RX-7s filled the top four positions with one in particular nipping at the heels of the record time set by HKS in their CT230R EVO (53.589) back in 2007.



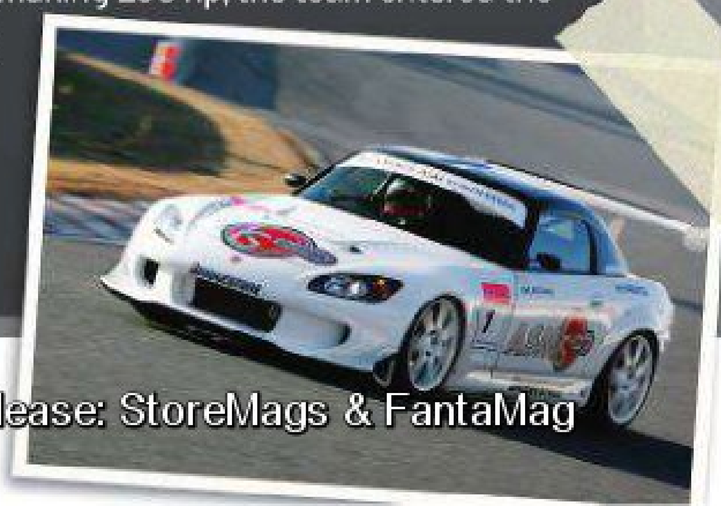


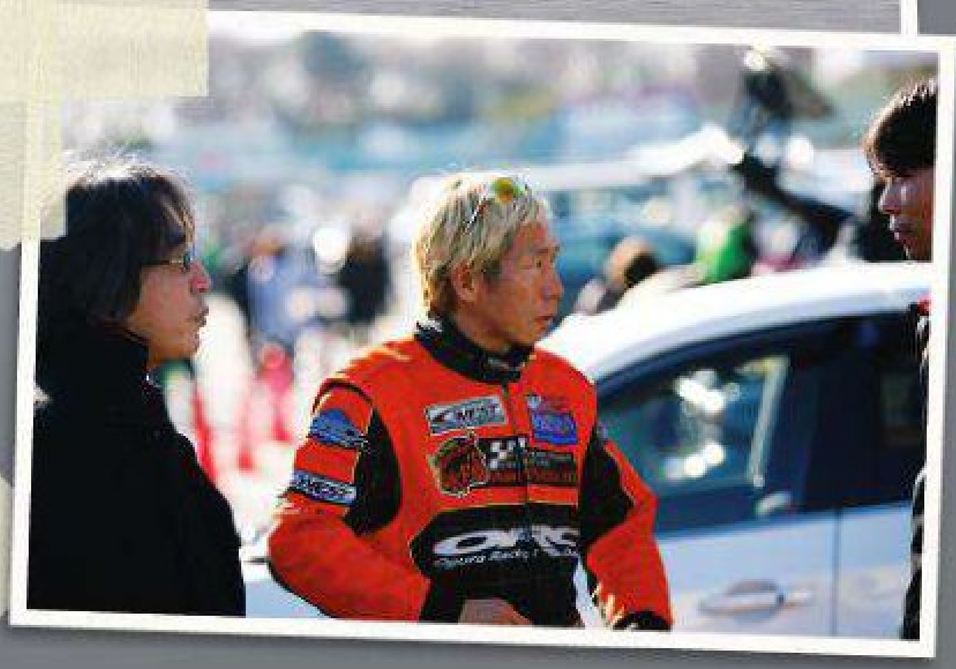
The Garage Revolution FD, (Feb. '09 issue) now adorned in Hankook Tire graphics, lit up the tarmac with a 53.673 lap time and top speed of 225.8 kph around the Tsukuba Circuit; a mere one tenth off the HKS record. With a stellar lap time, Garage Revolution's hired gun Yasushi Kikuchi became the second fastest man at the Tsukuba Circuit next to HKS driver Nobuteru Taniguchi.

Kikuchi's extensive driving resume presented similarities to Nobuteru Taniguchi's, with involvement in Super GT, Super Taikyu, endurance, 24 Hours of Nurburgring, and time-attack. He also piloted the Swift Springs Nissan S15 several years back at our inaugural Super Lap Battle time-attack held at Buttonwillow Raceway. Interestingly enough, a day after competing at Tsukuba, Kikuchi boarded a transatlantic flight headed to the U.S. to participate in a driving exhibition for Buddy Club. How's that for dedication? Rounding out the top cars included Panspeed's 600hp FD3S with a time of 55.970 and Pro Shop Screen's 580hp FD3S stopping the clock with a 56.089 lap time.

While the day officially belonged to the Garage Revolution RX-7, it was Tarzan Yamada, driving the Street Special Garage Yahata R32 GT-R that brought spectators to their feet. The Yahata R32 is not your typical street machine, as its nitrous-enhanced RB26, Hollinger sequential transmission, and a radiator stuffed in the passenger seat compartment to make room for the enormous front-mount intercooler were laying thick blankets of tire smoke and rubber all around the track. Tarzan's exceptional driving skills helped tame the 750hp beast to a best time of 57.0 seconds, with the fastest top speed of the day at 226.7 kph. An amazing feat what with the R32 considered an outdated chassis with minimal aerodynamics and engineering technology by today's standards.

ASM prepared for this year's event by making numerous improvements to their S2000 from last year to compete in the N/A Open class. The S2K was fitted with ASM's newly designed GT-10 I.S. front bumper to reduce front-end weight and re-designed front fenders with vents to provide additional downforce. Titanium bolts and lightweight hardware were used throughout the vehicle to reduce overall weight, bringing the car to 2,339 pounds—a weight savings of 59 pounds over last year. With a freshly rebuilt Toda motor making 298 hp, the team entered the event with high expectations of improving their best lap time of 57.389 with a goal of eclipsing the sub-55-second marker. Unfortunately, traction problems and tire selection hindered the S2K's performance as it ran a 1:01.585.





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Team 5Zigen obtained the FWD class victory in their newly revamped FD2-chassis Honda Civic Type R, as they broke the FWD course record with a 58.222 lap time, previously held by Feels Honda Twincam's FD2 Civic by more than one second. The 500hp, turbocharged, K20-powered, time-attack machine was outfitted with a plethora of carbon-fiber panels, lightweight doors, and custom wide fenders to accommodate a set of 18x9.5 +12 offset wheels wrapped in 255/40-18 Dunlop Direzza 03G semi-slick tires. The team had anticipated quicker lap times as track temperatures increased throughout the day but remained deadlocked in the 58-second barrier.

Coming out of the final hairpin turn, the driver of the Power House Amuse 350Z lost control and plowed head-first into a retaining wall. The driver walked away with only his ego crushed, but the car was not so lucky.

Within hours of concluding the Tsukuba Super Battle, rumors spread of Garage Revolution's FD3S making an appearance at the 2011 World Time Attack Challenge in Sydney, Australia, with plans of taking the Voltex/Sun Auto Cyber EVO's championship title. Rumors continued with word of HKS bringing the CT230R out of retirement to improve their previous course record, but we won't hold our breath on that one. Needless to say, if both rumors hold any validity in the upcoming months, it would make for quite an event. But till then, we can only hope and pray as we patiently wait for the drama to unfold at the next Tsukuba Super Battle.

NOTABLE MENTION

LAP TIMES (SEC.)/TOP SPEED (KPH)

Garage Revolution - Mazda FD3S RX-7
53.673 @ 225.8
PanSpeed - Mazda FD3S RX-7
55.97 @ 209.7
Pro Shop Screen - Mazda FD3S RX-7
56.089 @ 212.6
Street Special Garage Yahata - Nissan BNR32 GT-R
57.071 @ 226.7
Outer Plus - Lotus Exige
57.826 @ 191.4
Ti Racing - Mazda FD3S RX-7
57.833 @ 202.3
Varis - Mitsubishi CZ4A-RS EVO X
58.028 @ 201.9
Advance Auto – Chevy C6 Corvette
58.047 @ 208.2
5Zigen International - Turbo Honda FD2 Civic
58.22 @ 206.7
AVO Turbo World - Subaru GDB WRX
58.298 @ 203.6
RE Wing - Mazda FD3S RX-7
58.624 @ 203.7
Prostock Motorsport - Nissan BNR32 GT-R
58.779 @ 206.8
Feels Honda Twincam - Honda FD2 Civic
59.625 @ 193.7

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ROUND V | JULY 22-23 | EVERGREEN SPEEDWAY
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TEXT AND PHOTOS BY **DINO DALLE CARBONARE**

MAZDA SE3P RX-8

REVOL

Competition couldn't be fiercer right now among rotary shops in Japan. Time-attack has helped forge names of rotary specialists like Pan Speed, RE-Amemiya, R-Magic, and (especially, as of late—flip to page 34) Revolution, pushing them to raise the bar of tuning well beyond what anyone could have imagined back when it all got started. While the RX-7s each of these shops have created remain the epitome of the scene, it is extremely refreshing to see that they haven't ignored the most modern of Mazda's rotary-powered models: the RX-8. It was Panspeed that got the ball rolling in transforming what is in essence a unique four-door family sports car into a dedicated, stripped-out track weapon. Revolution, Panspeed's fiercest competitor, has not only recently stepped up their game by setting a new Tsukuba lap record for rotaries with their FD3S, but has pulled yet another stunning creation out of the box: the RX-8 you see here.

MAY 2011 / ISSUE#146
IMPORT TUNER MAGAZINE

REVOLUTION
RX-8

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While Pan Speed was looking to squeeze as much performance out of the Renesis engine as possible, Revolution has taken a completely different approach and created a custom, peripheral-ported 20B for this application. The car has so far only done one shakedown test and this is the first time it's been shot by a magazine. Suck on that, Option! The idea behind the project was to get people more interested in the RX-8, a car that since it's introduction back in 2003 hasn't done much to get die-hard rotary heads away from their turbocharged vehicles. The highly strung and carefully engineered Renesis was developed to meet ever-stringent emissions regulations (and ever-tightening budgets) and thus just hasn't responded well to aftermarket tuning. Forced induction has on average resulted in moderate power gains, and trying to extract more power from just intake and exhaust upgrades has at times achieved just the opposite.

Revolution's Aoki-san knew there was only one way to get the required power levels he was shooting for without resorting to forced induction, and that was to get rid of the Renesis altogether and go for a naturally aspirated three-rotor 20B instead. In typical Revolution fashion, the build began much as a race team would approach the construction of a dedicated race car: with a full strip-down of the car to the bare chassis. At this point a custom rollcage was fabricated and welded in place, helping to boost rigidity particularly in the center of the car where—due to the ingenious way the rear doors open—there are no B-pillars. Hydraulic jacks were also welded in place, items that further exemplify just how serious Revolution is with these kinds of projects. The use of the slightly longer and heavier 20B required additional bracing in the engine bay, as well as custom mounting points that would move the engine as far back as possible for optimal weight distribution. A custom transmission tunnel was cut and finished off in dry carbon, ready to accept a Hewland six-speed sequential transmission. Custom Revolution adjustable dampers were then fitted and mated to stiff Swift springs, making the most of the neutral handling characteristics of the RX-8. AP Racing calipers all round take care of the braking, biting down on Project Mu slotted discs with matching pads.

Aoki-san wanted to keep the looks of the car relatively simple, and proceeded to change only what was going to have a direct benefit on performance. The front bumper remains but is joined by a very sturdy carbon-honeycomb composite under-panel, attached directly onto the chassis. You can put all your weight on the protruding front lip splitter without any problems, indicating the amount of aerodynamic downforce it could potentially generate. A vented carbon-fiber hood helps extract hot air from the engine bay and shed some weight from the front of the car. However, front and rear carbon doors provide the biggest weight reduction, the rears even doing away with the windows. More carbon can be found in the rear "windshield," which replaces the standard glass window just like on Super GT cars. Rear downforce is generated via a high-mounted carbon spoiler, helping keep the rear of the car planted at higher speeds. Rays Engineering came into the project by supplying a lightweight set of Volk Racing RE30s, sporting a new type of finish called Hyper Bronze Premium. The 18x9.5-inch rims are shod with sticky Hankook Ventus Z221 tires—the same tires used on their FD3S time-attack car.

The donor 20B was taken apart and rebuilt using 13B housings and was peripheral ported to guarantee the highest performance from the setup.

Special Revolution rotors were used to achieve a 9.7:1 compression ratio, and a complex exhaust manifold was created to help keep just the right amount of backpressure throughout the rpm range. Aoki-san chose to deliver oil via a dry sump for two reasons, the first being that it could be mounted low to keep a low center of gravity, therefore benefitting handling, and secondly, to make sure optimal oil circulation and pressure is maintained even through the most grueling conditions. The engine breathes via a custom triple-throttle setup, mounted inside a specially built airbox that's fed by large tubing directly from the ram-air scoop at the front of the engine bay. Air is throttled through 50mm throttle ports and mixed with fuel supplied by 1,000cc/min injectors, ignited by six NGK spark plugs. Revolution had ARC create a custom radiator setup with extra-long aluminum piping as well as twin oil coolers to keep the high-revving engine cool. Engine management is taken care of by the Motec M4, which is joined by race-spec wiring and connectors. To mate the engine to the Hewland sequential, a custom adapter plate had to be made, along with a custom linkage for the shifter in the cabin. The driveline upgrades are completed with an ATS carbon LSD to handle all 414 hp the engine has to offer. Yes, again, that's naturally aspirated.

Gently open the featherweight driver's door and you'll see that Revolution sourced a left-hand-drive car for better weight distribution. The race car attention to detail continues: The carbon dashboard retains only a skeletal shape of the standard item, with all switches and instruments completely eliminated. Due to the rearward-shifted driving position, the steering column has been extended and an adjustable pedal box allows the driver to set up the controls as he pleases. Even the pedals are made of carbon fiber. All switchgear has been positioned on the carbon transmission tunnel, around the tilted gear selector. The only instrumentation is the Motec LCD display, encased in a carbon-fiber box at the center of the steering wheel. With no view out of the back due to the carbon rear windshield, a small LCD screen replaces the rearview mirror, displaying the view from the rear back-up camera.

With its buzzing 414 hp and 2,500-pound curb weight, the Revolution RX-8 has the potential to record some stunning track times. The car has however been put on the back burner for a few months so that the Revolution team can prepare for another season of time-attack, where they will be trying to extract an even faster Tsukuba lap out of the RX-7, before (we suspect) carting it off to Australia once again for the World Time Attack Challenge. Maybe we'll see a dual performance? it.

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REVOLUTION RX-8 / head to the message boards at **www.importtuner.com** to chat about this feature vehicle

BEHIND THE BUILD

NAME.
REVOLUTION

AGE.
LEGIT, IN DOG YEARS

LOCATION.
GREATER TOKYO, JAPAN

OCCUPATION.
ROTARY RECREATION

HOBBIES.
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BUILD TIME.
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REVOLUTION
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MAZDA SE3P RX-8

414 HP / 289 LB-FT OF TORQUE

ENGINE 20B engine, 13B housings, 643cc 9.7:1-compression rotors, peripheral ported; Revolution custom dry-sump system, exhaust manifold, titanium exhaust system, carbon airbox, carbon ram-air scoop, 50mm individual throttles, high-pressure fuel pump, 1,000cc/min injectors; NGK Racing R6725 #11 plugs; ARC custom radiator with air-separator system, aluminum radiator piping, custom twin oil coolers; Motec M4 ECU

DRIVETRAIN Hewland six-speed IGT-A sequential transmission; custom bellhousing adapter; ORC triple-plate Super GT clutch, 303 lightweight flywheel; ATS carbon LSD, 3.909:1 final-drive ratio

SUSPENSION Garage Revolution racing dampers; Swift 18kg/mm front springs; 10kg/mm rear springs

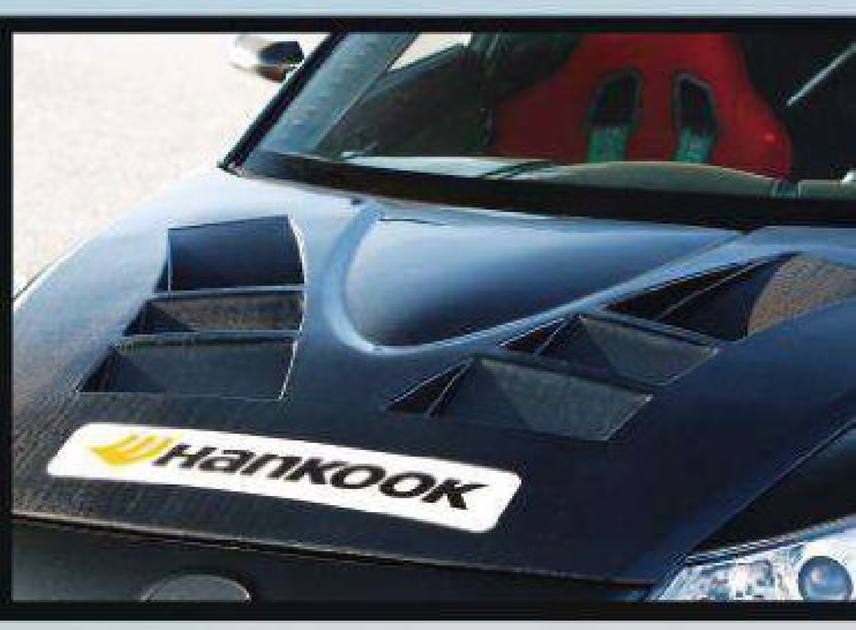
WHEELS/TIRES Rays Engineering Volk Racing RE30 wheels (18x9.5-inch +40mm offset front and rear); Hankook Ventus Z221 265/35-18 tires

BRAKES AP Racing six-piston front calipers, four-piston rear calipers; Project Mu 355mm two-piece slotted front rotors, 328mm two-piece slotted rear rotors, 999 brake pads

EXTERIOR Garage Revolution carbon-fiber front under-panel, GT cooling hood, GT high-mount wing, front and rear doors, rear windscreen; Craft Square carbon-fiber mirrors

INTERIOR Garage Revolution race-spec chromoly rollcage, bucket seats, steering wheel, custom reinforcement to front & rear, chassis spot welding, hydraulic jacks; Extended steering column with tilt-up Super GT style boss, adjustable pedal box with dry carbon pedals, dry carbon dashboard, transmission tunnel, selector console and switchgear, custom gear selector and linkage; Takata Racing harnesses

ELECTRONICS LCD screen for rear camera; Motec wheel-mounted data logger/display



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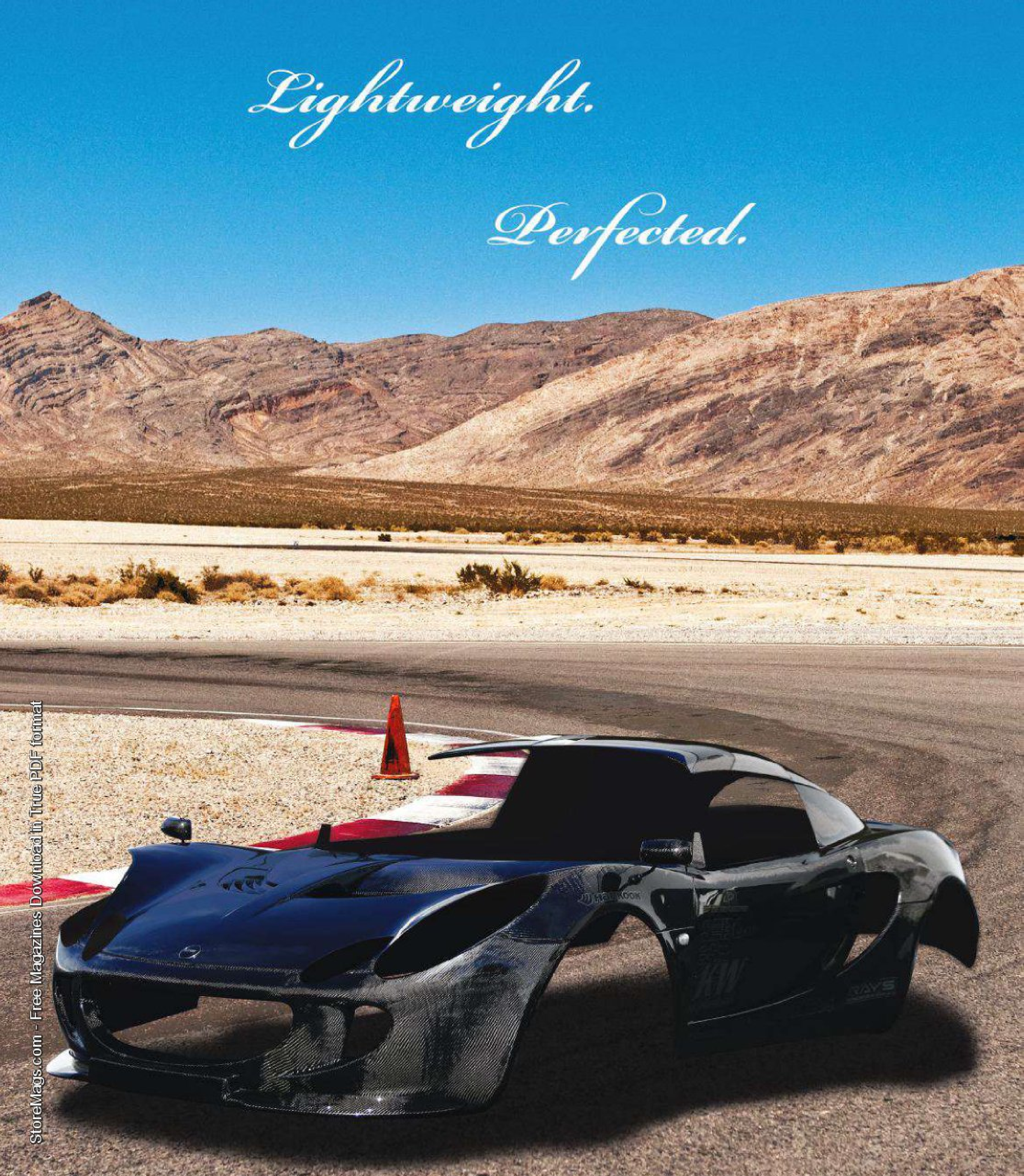

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TEXT BY TATSU TSUCHIDA AND STAFF
PHOTOS BY CHRIS JUE

'00 R34 SKYLINE GTR

Z-TUNE PERFECT

NOT A Z-TUNE, BUT PERFECT NONETHELESS

Many visit Japan as tourists. The sights and sounds, the exotic smells, the hustle and bustle of Tokyo . . . I'd compare it to a diving excursion; you know you're not a part of this world, but just a visitor. The tourist's experience is an escape from the norm, an oasis of calm—none of the deadlines, bosses to please, nor schedules to adhere that the natives bear.

In contrast, my visits to Japan are seldom so perfect. Having lived here a few years back, there are friends I want to see (more than I can ever manage), in-laws to visit, dozens of cousins/aunts/uncles, automotive contacts to appease, and of course, these articles I sign myself up for. Not that I'm complaining—I love the gig and the travel, but the same imperfections can be said of visiting Japanese tuning garages. Demo cars are often in some back corner, collecting dust, many times un-assembled as never-ending work on them continues. Many are dedicated race cars, and thus have no license plates and cannot be driven on public roads. Not that that matters much—the typical tuning garage is small, in an unsightly part of town, and offers little to no room for photo shoots. Google any of Top Secret's cars and see how many have been shot in front of the shop's blue and white exterior.

Perhaps the worst part of the gig is interacting with the people. Being American-born Japanese, the senior editors love me for my ability to speak the language and infiltrate these often-unknown tuning garages. But to their owners and staff, I'm some undereducated shmuck who can't speak properly. Certainly my Japanese is good enough for 90 percent of the situations I get myself into, but at tuning garages we're talking about engineers and mechanics—usually not the most social nor empathetic types. I might as well be speaking urban jive to an Oxford University recruiter.

Imagine my surprise when we visited Endless, in Kobe. First off, they're in the sticks amongst rice patties and forest. When we arrive, we see the usual array of Skylines and such in the garage, but what really floored me was the person who greeted us: Rick Colgate, Officer of Export Sales. Apparently, tuning Japanese cars is at a fever pitch in his native country of England, not unlike the level that it hit in the U.S. in the late '90s/early '00s, but with a bonus: JDM vehicles older than 10 years can be legally imported into the U.K. and street driven. Anybody who's studied Japanese knows there's a level of formality that is often cumbersome, but Rick set that aside and spoke colloquial English. To make things more perfect, the empty lot behind Endless has a picturesque bamboo forest behind it, an ideal backdrop for photos. But best of all, Rick showed us this Bayside Blue R34 we were to shoot.

You see those fenders. No, this car is not an authentic Z-tune, but a mix of real Nismo and Do-Luck pieces on the exterior, and strategically chosen everything else to give it looks and performance to rival one. One day, when the import generation is old and gray, and those in it wealthy enough to drive the price of each one of the original 20 Z-tunes into "collectable" status, the Endless recipe seen here will allow wage-limited enthusiasts like us to embarrass their performance with base-model GT-Rs.

Shinya Kaga is the pioneer of the concept, and the one who commissioned Endless to build this example. Possibly his most radical move was to convert to an IHI Turbo, model T90-R; a unit initially developed for semi-trucks which was adapted by Endless to the RB26DETT powerplant for the same reason it was originally bolted to Cummins Diesel mills—to build superior low/mid-range power and torque. Corner exit speeds are dramatically improved when power comes on in the lower part of the rev range, and yes, this R34 was built specifically to best its collectible brethren on its home turf—the street and the track, alike.

Heat dissipation becomes an issue when such a great turbo comes into play. A Trust triple-core R-type aluminum intercooler is entrusted to those duties. A Type C Trust wastegate spits excess exhaust flames, and an HKS EVC EZ keeps the boost to a prescribed level. Another place to where Kaga-san and his Endless cohorts turned their attention was the engine's rotating assembly. No, this RB can't brag the N1-spec Z2 engine block, Nismo pistons, rods, or long-stroke GT500 crankshaft, but no worries—its RB26 has been machined to accept a fully balanced and blueprinted, complete Tomei 2.8L rotating assembly. What's more, its head has been ported and polished, given Trust valves and the renowned HKS V-Cam setup, which adjusts cam phasing to maximize power and torque throughout the rev range. Endless president Sugino-san even went so far as to fabricate a custom intake manifold for Kaga-san's R34, endowing it with an Infiniti

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Q45 throttle body for increased flow that even the Nismo Z-tune unit can't offer.

An HKS F-Con V Pro oversees fuel management, including an RH8 fuel pump feeding thirsty 720cc/min Sard injectors. Once ignited, power is distributed through an OS Giken R3C triple-plate clutch (compared to the Z-tune's Nismo twin), and Kaga is currently in the process of acquiring a Nismo sequential transmission—something not included with the Z-tune.

Where the Z-tune would flex Sachs three-way adjustable coilovers, Kaga-san's R34 boasts Quantums. Isolating their movement is stitch welding painstakingly applied by the Endless crew to more of the chassis than simply its door jambs, as is the case with the Z-tune. To further accentuate the road-holding power of the suspension, 18x10.5-inch Volk Racing TE37s, shod with super-sticky Advan DNA GP rubber, take the place of what would be 18x9.5" Nismo LM GT4s and Bridgestone RE01Rs with the Z-tune. And where you'd find 365mm two-piece Brembo front rotors, you'll see 380mm Alcon two-pieces and six-piston calipers on Kaga-san's R34, taken directly from a Super Taikyu car.

Kaga, having previously owned an EVO 5, Camaro, Porsche 997, Ferrari 360, and various BMW and Mercedes sports cars, is clearly addicted to speed. Fellow speed junkies all over the Kansai area know him for his top-speed runs on the Osaka *Kanjo* (loop-line), and his new goal for this R34—aside from embarrassing Z-tunes wherever possible—is to hit 300 kph (186 mph) on the street. While we technically shouldn't wish him luck in that endeavor, if we had to place a bet on whether or not he'll succeed, you know where our chips would lie. it.

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Z-TUNE PERFECT / head to the message boards at **www.importtuner.com** to chat about this feature vehicle

BEHIND THE BUILD

NAME.
SHINYA KAGA

AGE.
32

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LOCATION.
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'00 R34 SKYLINE GT-R

OUTPUT: UNDISCLOSED (600 HP GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT)

ENGINE Tomei 2.8L Engine Kit (77.7mm crankshaft, 119.5mm connecting rods, 87.5mm pistons); HKS V-Cam system, camshafts, F-CON V Pro; Endless oil pan, cylinder head porting and polishing, Super Surge air intake, adjustable cam gears, intake manifold, prototype T90-R Holset turbocharger; Infiniti Q45 throttle body; Trust valvesprings, Power Extreme Ti exhaust, downpipe, turbo manifold, wastegate, front-mount intercooler; Racing 8 spark plugs; Koyo racing radiator; Sard high-flow catalytic converter, fuel pressure regulator, 720cc/min injectors; Nismo radiator cap; Samco silicone hoses and vacuum lines

DRIVETRAIN OS Giken R3C triple-plate clutch

SUSPENSION Quantum coilovers; custom upper front strut tower bar, chassis stitch welding, carbon-fiber-wrapped radiator support

WHEELS/TIRES 18x10.5" Volk Racing TE37 wheels; 255/35-18 Yokohama Advan DNA GP tires

BRAKES Alcon 380mm two-piece rotors, six-piston calipers (front), 355mm two piece rotors, four-piston calipers (rear), pads

EXTERIOR Nismo Z-tune front fenders, side skirts, rear wing; Top Secret carbon-fiber rear diffuser; Do-Luck front and rear bumpers; custom carbon-fiber front lip spoiler, rear wing stays

INTERIOR Recaro SRIV front seat; Momo Race 3000 steering wheel; Endless floor mats, custom carbon-fiber-look shift boot, e-brake handle, center console wrap, armrest reupholstery; Trust shift knob

ELECTRONICS Pioneer Carrozzeria MEH-P919 Mini Disc head unit

GRATITUDE Sugino-san, of Endless Japan

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SPORTSMAN'S STRUGGLE

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TEXT AND PHOTOS BY **LUKE MUNNELL**

Our story begins on a chilly fall weekend, at Bakersfield, CA's Famoso Raceway (read: the middle of nowhere), lending moral support to my roommate, Robbie Perez, who was shaking down a stock-block, turbo B20-powered "Rat Wad" Civic coupe he'd built for sister mag *Project Car*. We had the unpleasant circumstance of showing up on the one weekend of the year preceding NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing's series Finals at Pomona, CA. As far as we could see rolling in alongside 600 or so dead-serious Top Fuel, Pro Stock, and otherwise domestic hot-rod professionals, we were the only knuckleheads with an import in tow. Don't even think of borrowing tools from that crowd:

"Sure, what do you need?"

"A half-inch ratchet and some metric sockets."

"Metric? What are you racing?"

"See that Honda over there? That's us."

"Huh. Sorry, wish I could help . . ."

The situation only got worse as we worked our way through the lanes for our first pass. There were other imports in attendance, most breaking axles at the line or blowing up and coating the strip with oil, holding up the show for competition dragsters that would run nearly twice as fast while shutting down mid track. To nearly all in attendance, we were a scrawny, rag-tag bunch of kids. Even the announcer echoed the popular sentiment with a disgusted tone:

"And in the right lane, another *Honda*, about to break an axle." We needed help.

And then we got some. Into staging lanes rolled the flat white, wide-fendered, slick-clad, front-mounted-turbo-powered, parachute-braked embodiment of what we wanted our foes to forever associate with the term "import tuning": Jason Park's FCS Fab/Park's Racing Engines Outlaw Street FWD-class Integra, dubbed "Ghostrider." Conversations halted and eyes stared as it cranked to life and rumbled its way to the burnout box, its built LS/VTEC struggling to manage high compression, forced induction, lumpy Web cams, and a flood of E85. Overpowering the comparative silence of muffled imports before it, the DC2 roared to life with the din of its domestic rivals, all 1,100 horses instantly erupting its 25-inch Toyo slicks. The announcer was at a loss for words.

"Be careful," he nervously chuckled to Jason, who guided driver Chris Cook through the staging lights. "It's sticky down there."

"Good," Jason grinned back.

Spectators squirmed for a better view as the DC2 pegged its anti-lag system at the second staging light, its custom Borg Warner S372 turbo screaming an amalgamation of F-14 fighter jet and C-4 detonation as its fender-exit exhaust shot fireballs to match. For 9.8 seconds, it owned the eyes and envy of everyone in attendance, not counting the hearts it stole at the line. The announcer screamed the E.T. and traps and cursed in disbelief. The critics said nothing. Score one for the imports.

• • •

Back at the pits I learned more. Ghostrider is owned and was largely built by Jason "Parker" Park. It's an '00 Integra GSR, and has been in race trim in one form or another for nearly a decade. After a few years in storage, it's made its long-awaited re-appearance for the second half of the 2010 season and has gone as fast as a 9.30 @ 166 mph at Import Faceoff in the hot Las Vegas desert. More importantly, I learned that Parker and Chris are DIY enthusiasts like most of us. No Renegade rig,

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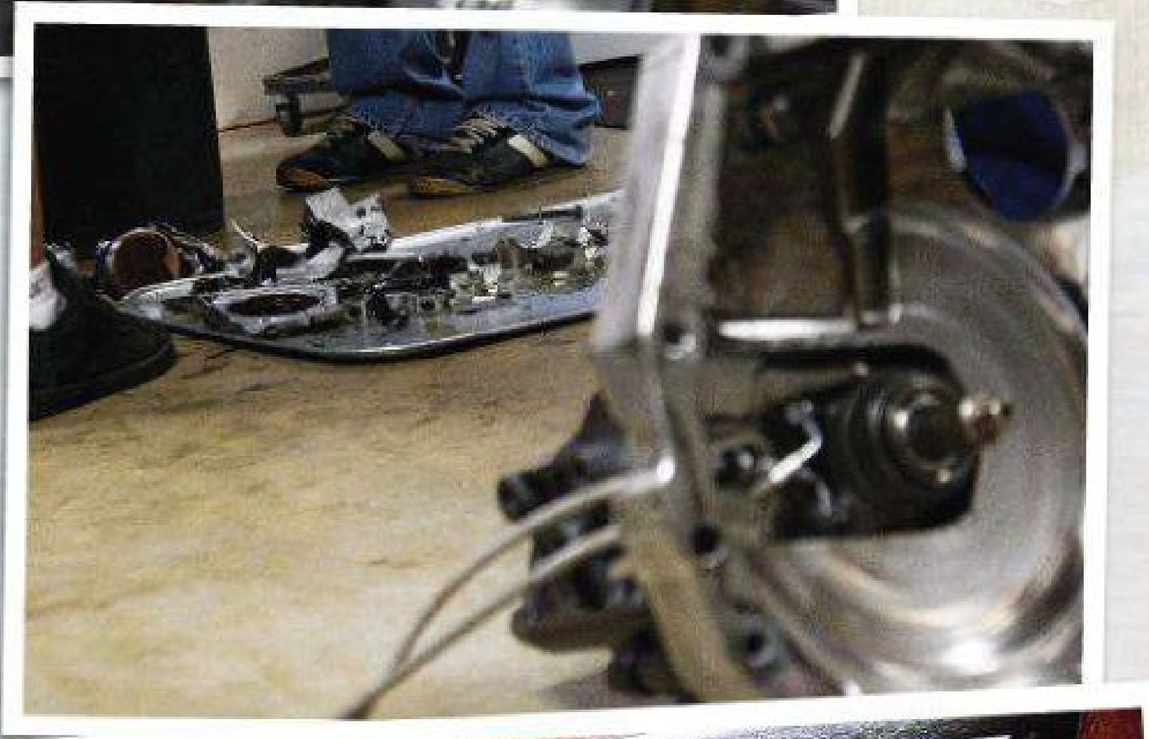
multi-car enclosed trailer, six-figure budget, or comped entrance fees. No sponsors, even—just a couple of import gearheads who live for speed. Our conversation paused as the Rat Wad limped back to the pits with a blown motor suffered during its second pass. Once the friendly trash talking by Parker and Co. died down he turned to me and confessed, "I've been there; that sucks. Let's hope it doesn't happen to us."

And then, at the top of what data-logging would later show might've been the team's first eight-second pass, in the same lane and nearly at the same spot of the track where the Rat Wad had thrown a rod, the DC2 threw three, splitting its built B18 block in half and engulfing the engine bay in flames. "F*ck!" was all Chris could say, grinning from ear to ear when we caught up with him back at the pits. "That would have been an eight!" He hadn't even looked at the data yet. Despite the misfortune, the mood was light. "That's racing," shrugged Parker, after Robbie's return jeering had subsided. Our conversation was again interrupted, this time on a more serious note when a pristine Pro Mod Mustang dragger lost traction at about 180 mph and totaled itself into a wall. We all walked over to survey the damage. For a long while no one spoke. "What are you going to do now?" I asked Parker as we walked back to the pits, partly to break the nervous silence. "Rebuild it," he replied. "BOTI finals are in two weeks. We're going to get that eight." And then, with a nod back at the track, "At least we still have the car."



The next day I got a text from Parker with directions, saying, "Stop by tonight. We're getting started." A quick drive into the Valley and I found myself in his house and two-car garage, next to the Integra in pieces. Despite the unfortunate circumstance that brought them all together, Parker, Chris, Robbie, and friends Adrian Guerrero and Jeremy Tsuneishi (yes, Scott's cousin) were in high spirits. Most of the DC2's engine lay on the ground in the car's competition-mandated catch pan/splitter (an FCS creation). Only the block, crank, and one surviving rod were on the stand above it as Parker and Chris took turns whacking it with hammers and pry bars. "We need to crack the block to get the sleeves out to examine them," Parker explained. "Wanna take a turn?"

We talked and I learned that Parker spent his early years forming Park's Racing Engines and putting in work for import drag racing's most iconic machines. He saved what little coin he made and in 2004 bought the Integra from a customer who couldn't keep up with the project. He finished its build and drove it to Sport FWD semi-finals in the NHRA Summit Sport Compact series' Vegas event later that year, as well as a Street Comp class win at Battle of the Imports' final-round competition in Fontana. Its 10.80 pass ranked it Top 16 in the nation, with the number-one spot belonging to Courtney Green running 10.30s—a time Parker and the DC2 had their sights set on, but never accomplished. "It was actually shot for *Import Tuner* the following year," he explained, motioning to the cover feature framed on the wall in his garage, "right before it went into storage." He went on to create the Sportsman Alley drag racing venue for NHRA's Sony Xplod Sport Compact Series, before the organization foreclosed on import drag altogether. He moved onto BOTI to serve as Op/Tech director, but times were tough. Hours were many and pay was little. He started FCSFab.com to cater to the burgeoning street scene and earn some spare cash, but just never had time to get out and compete himself. That was until a few years later when he and longtime friend Chris Cook talked racing over a few beers. "Chris built a badass turbo motor and was looking for a car. The DC2 was still in perfect shape," he explained. "Literally the next day we got started putting it back together."

Once the old engine had been thoroughly destructed and the garage cleaned, the damage was assessed. It was surmised that either rod bolt or bearing failure led to the engine's demise, but miraculously the cylinder head remained unscathed, as did Chris's $8K straight-cut dogbox that he repeatedly made clear he couldn't afford to replace. I asked Parker when the car would be moved to his shop to have its new powerplant assembled and dropped in, and a new splitter fabbed up. "This is it," he laughed. "Park's Racing Engines and FCS Fab. This is where it all happens."

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SPORTSMAN'S STRUGGLE

I rejoined Parker and Chris about a week later back at the garage, just as Chris bolted the crank into his new, freshly machined block and Parker took to assembling the pistons and rods. Clearances were verified, bearings installed, and everything went together like clockwork. It was a Friday night, and Battle of the Imports was scheduled to go down two days later. The plan was to have the car together that night and hit Do It Dyno in Long Beach, CA, for tuning a couple hours the next day. Things were looking promising . . . until it came to the head studs. One of them wouldn't seat completely, most likely the result of the block's threads having been stripped from an incorrect head gasket replacement during its stock life. The garage fell silent.

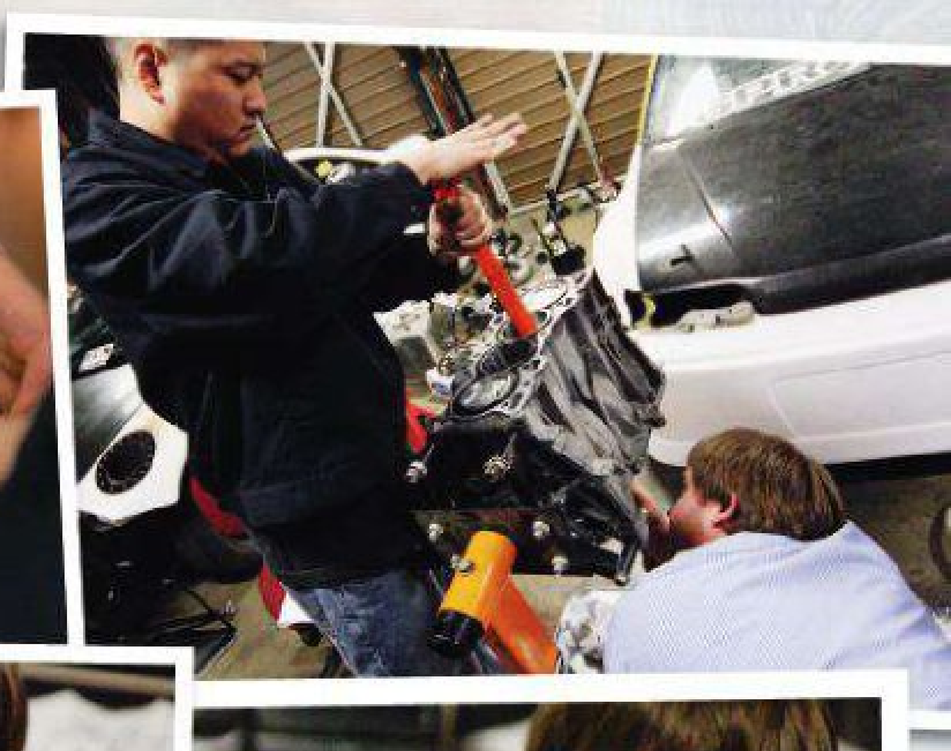
"What do you want to do?" asked Parker.

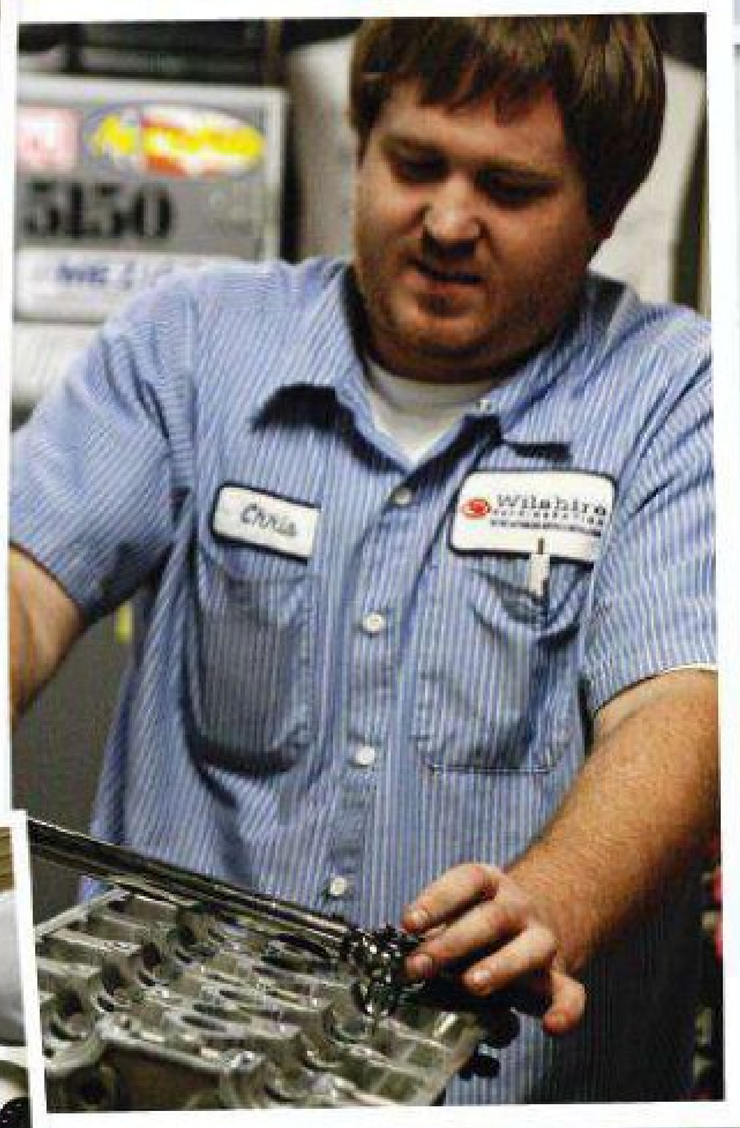
"F*ck it," said Chris, with one of the suspect studs nearly tightened down completely. "Let's go for it."

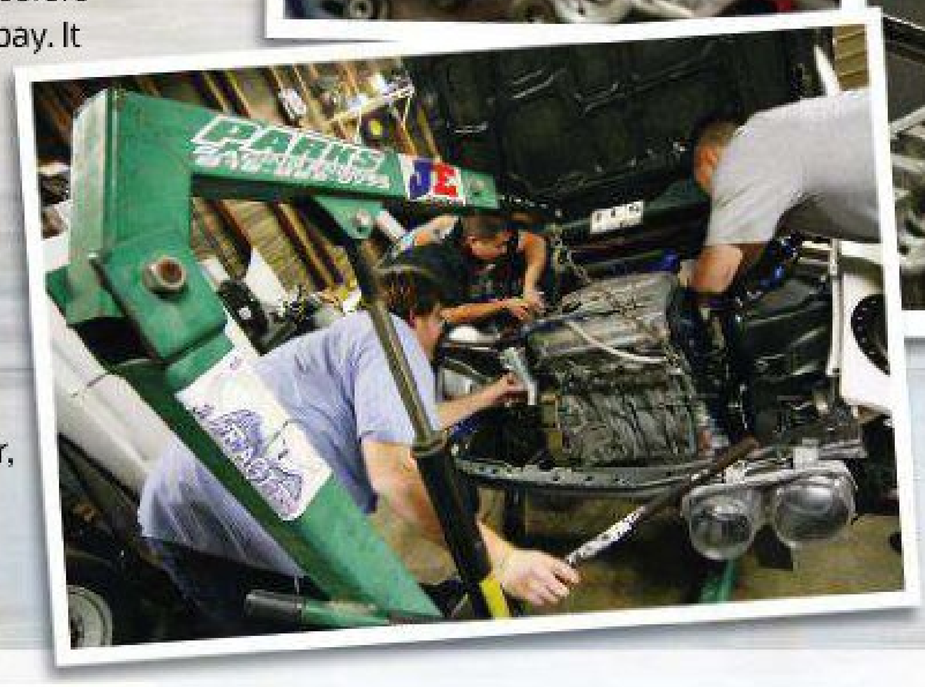
A quarter of a turn later, it happened—*Pop*!

All he could do was smile in desperation. "F*ck."

By the time I returned the next night, the block had been fitted with helicoils in each of its head stud galleys—an emergency bailout courtesy of RS Machine in Downey, CA. Parker and Chris were joined by Adrian and Jeremy, each with a task to do. The crew's jovial attitude had morphed into stress-laced priority; no joking, only focus. There was a slight sigh of relief once the trans had been bolted up, just before the new powerplant would be reinstalled in the DC2 bay. It lasted about 5 minutes—just enough for everyone to burn a square and throw back a beer. They were starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel but knew more work remained. I left about an hour after I'd arrived, just as Adrian finished assembling new fuel lines and Parker got started on the splitter. "Get some sleep," I said to Chris, who looked like he needed it. "I got an hour or so this morning before work," he shrugged off. "We're gonna get this thing together, shake it down on the street in front of the house and call it a night. I'll take another nap before we get up for the track. I'll be good to go."







I returned to the garage after about four hours of sleep, questioning the logic behind what I was doing and feeling like shit. Chris hadn't even slept. Ghostrider was loaded into a borrowed enclosed trailer, the shop was cleaner than I'd ever seen it, and he sat in his chair at the welding table, having a smoke. I could see the gears turning. "Hector will be here with the ice soon," he said. "Jason's inside getting ready. We gotta get out of here as soon as possible."

The drive up was more light-hearted; Parker and Co. regained enough of their affable attitude to make faces at us as we shot their tow vehicle and rig. After a quick stop for gas at one of the three service stations in SoCal that offer E85, we were rolling in to Auto Club Speedway at Fontana. Parker, Chris, Jeremy, and Adrian sprang into action setting up the pit and prepping the car as they had so many times before. The DC2's liquid-to-air intercooler was filled with ice water, its day-old plugs were replaced, and Parker took one last look over the data gathered on the street the night before. It was go time.

Previous champ Courtney Green checked in a clean-looking white Civic hatch completely devoid of sponsor logos, Sportsman turbo and All-Motor class competitors from Jerry Built brought out their infamous street race machines, Do It Dyno owner Carlos "Bubba" Ocegueda and his newly turboed CRX made their late-season debut, RS Machine's Anthony "Baby Boy" DiNallo set up his 9.0-second Civic hatch toward the very far end of the pits where no one could see his business, and all the old-school, off-beat, and street-car competitors that made any BOTI event came out in force. It was the organization's 20th anniversary event—quite an accomplishment, but in true form no one brought pomp or circumstance. They came to race. Chris and Parker were even given a few minutes to joke around with their old friend Frank Choi, Battle of the Imports founder. It was a good vibe; the reward for having put in the wrench time to make it happen.

StreetMags.com

Ghostrider's first Qualifying pass was another story. While we waited to run, a familiar bad omen reappeared when Skunk2's "Driver B" broke an axle in his Civic coupe at the line. Even more so than Famoso, Fontana is known for its grip. The DC2's burnout was good; a little drama was encountered while staging when an opponent in the other lane sat on one light too long, but the real problem happened when the green light dropped and Ghostrider didn't move. The culprit: a right-side axle had somehow slipped out of the differential just enough for the attached half of its splines to shear off under the torque of launching. The crew thrashed back at the pits, a replacement axle was installed and the problem had passed without too much cause for alarm, other than leaving only one remaining pass to make the cut for competition.

Downtime between runs was about an hour and a half—a long time to wait when you're eager to prove yourself, but Parker and Chris passed the time with some friendly heckling of their opponents and lending helping hands where they could. The crew reconvened when the call was made for the second round of Qualifying; the checklist was gone over again, and everyone verified that nothing further was needed. It was go time. Again.

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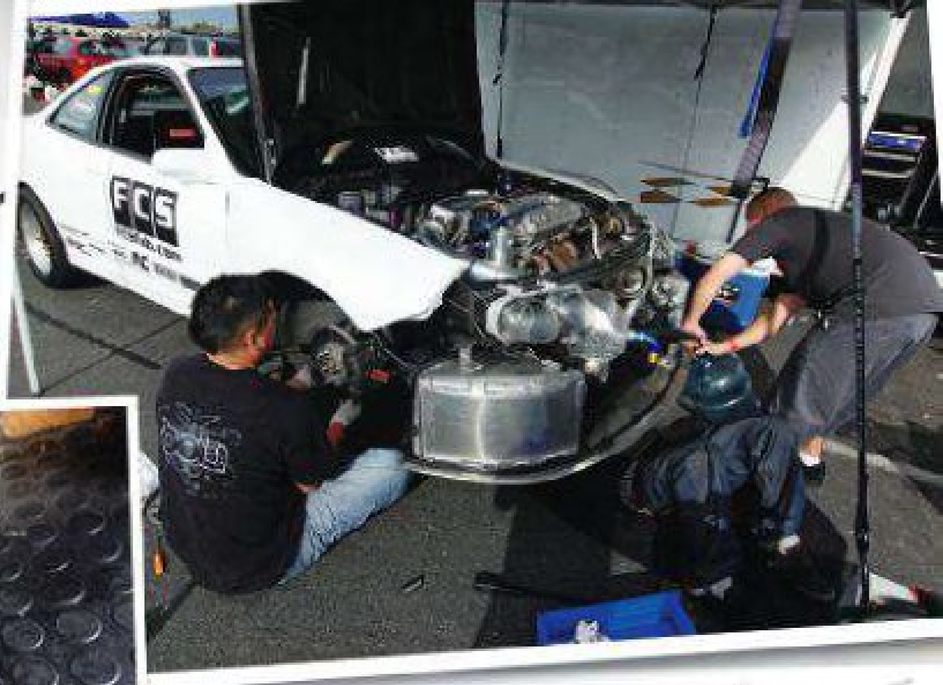
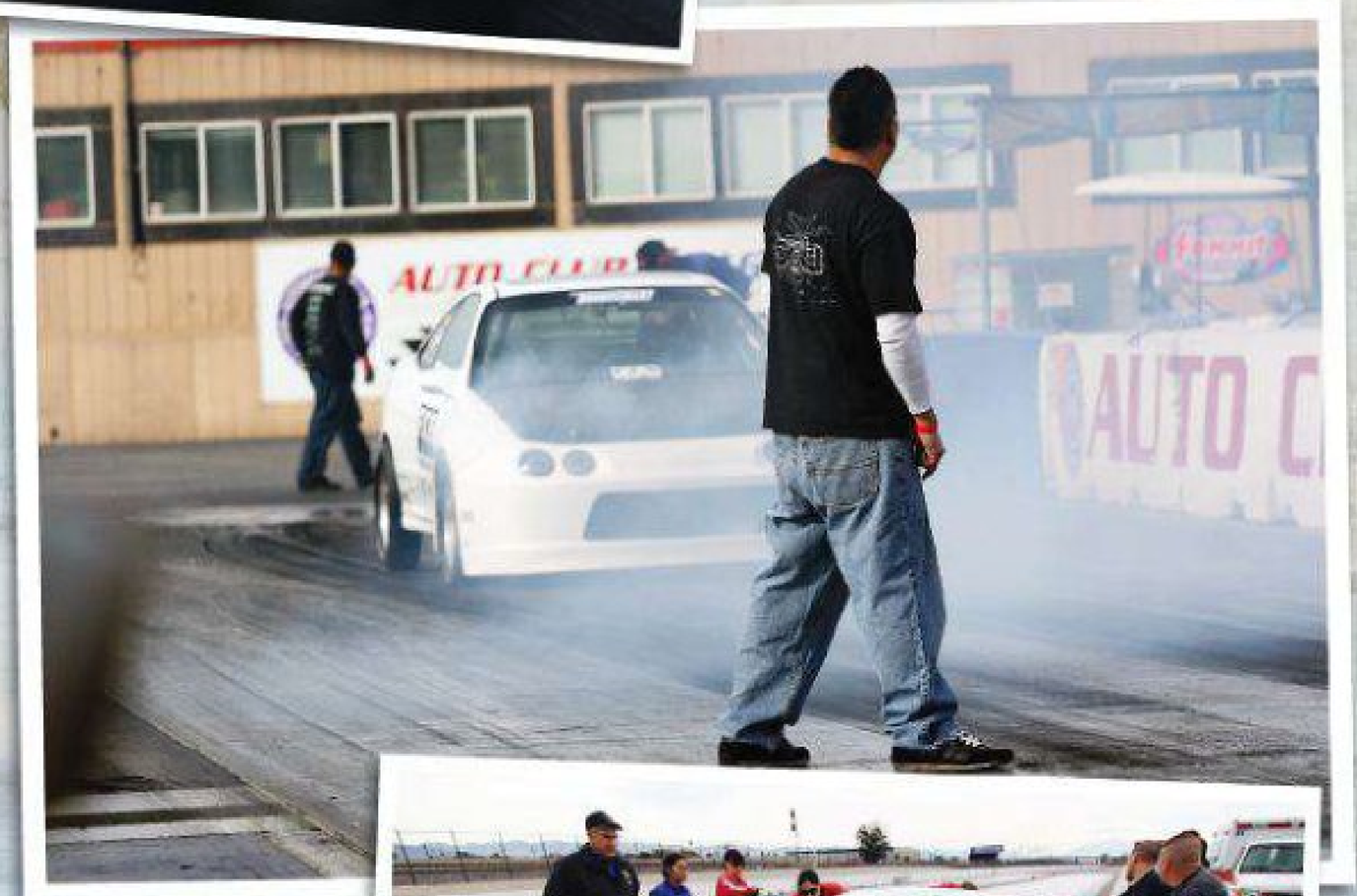
SPORTSMAN'S STRUGGLE

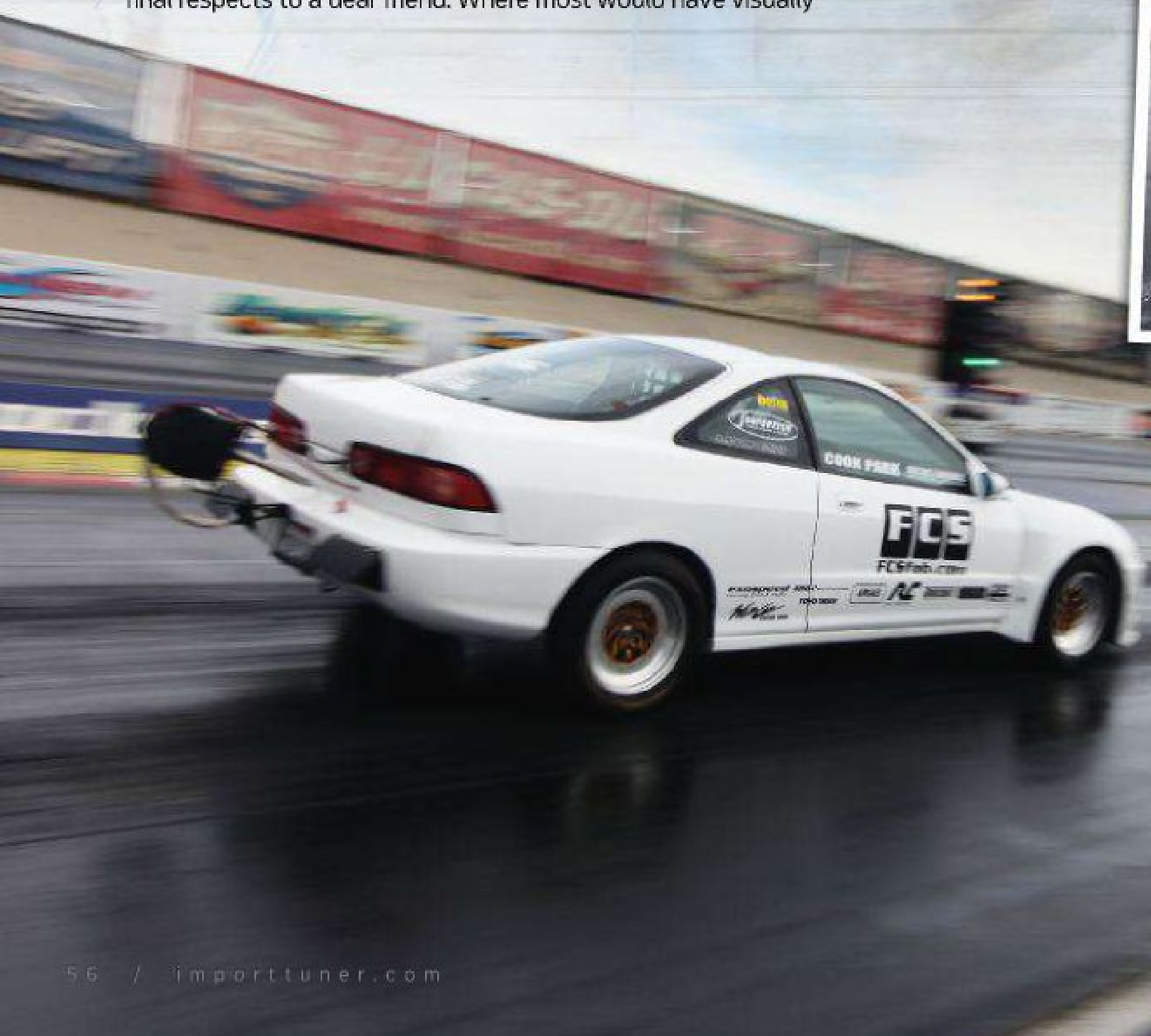
Chris idled the car to staging lanes, occasionally throttling it a bit to "feel it out," as the rest of us watched from the truck. The car re-assured us in the box with a strong, smokey burnout. Whatever tension had loomed over the crew was gone as they focused on getting the run. Adrian and Jeremy opened the DC2's doors as Chris backed up to the line and Parker guided him and Ghostrider into the "groove"—facing completely straight down the centermost part of the lane—and through the first staging light. His opponent matched the performance in the left lane and both cars crept forward to their second staging light, laying into their anti-lag. I became so caught up in the drama that I nearly forgot the reason I was there, and that I had a camera around my neck. A month had gone by since I first saw this car and met its crew, and at that moment none of us wanted anything more than to see Chris cut a fast light and power down the strip to that elusive eight-second pass. I managed to click off just one frame as the green light dropped and the car sped out of range. I had to see the rest with my own eyes.

The DC2 gradually veered to the left under full throttle, pulling Chris out of the groove. The left slick struggled to find traction on the uncoated center portion of the track, while the right gripped—hard—redirecting Chris and Ghostrider toward the wall. For an instant, it looked as if he was going to save it. He'd been racing for years; surely he'd gotten out of worse situations. But not this time. There was no recovering from this one.

I booked it on foot; we all did. When we caught up to the car, it had come to rest alongside the right wall, facing backward, just shy of the traps. Its hatch and parachute had jettisoned mid track from impact with the wall and lay in pieces in front of the grandstands. It took a hard hit in the left rear quarter-panel. It was done. An ambulance arrived and Chris, grasping his chest, was loaded on for a look-over, as an Auto Club hooker chained up the car and towed it back to the pits like any other day at the office. No one said anything, except to speculate what had happened. I thought the car attracted a crowd when it rolled in and the crew set up shop; it was nothing compared to those who came in silence for one last look at the aftermath, not unlike a funeral procession paying final respects to a dear friend. Where most would have visually





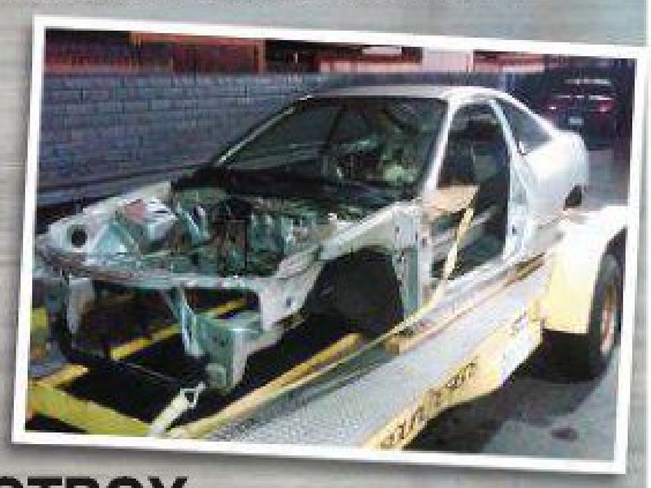


been bummed, Parker didn't let it show. One look at the car was enough for him to begin planning what would be needed to get back out on track. A half hour passed until Chris rejoined the group. A bolt from the DC2's window netting had jammed into his side upon impact, bruising his rib, but possibly his ego was hit hardest. He'd been put in an unwinnable situation, yet seemed disappointed not to have come out on top. I suspect that's just how he is.

To sullen moods further, rain began to fall almost as soon as the track had been cleaned. The event couldn't progress past Qualifying, so it was decided that payouts and honors would be based on competitors' fastest runs. Like he had all those years ago, Courtney Green led the pack with a 9.3-second pass he blasted early on. Parker walked over to congratulate him when the two met half way, Courtney en route to offer encouragement and a helping hand to Parker and Chris should they need anything. After some BSing and more friendly jabs, I made my final shot of the day Courtney's ran-soaked hatch loaded onto his trailer, and we parted ways for the drive home; I headed south while the rest of the caravan drove off into the could-covered sunset.

• • •

A few days later I received a text from Parker. It was a picture of a stripped, bone-stock, silver DC2 chassis loaded onto his trailer. "Stop by tonight," he said. "We're getting started." **www.importtuner.com** it



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TEXT BY LUKE MUNNELL
PHOTOS BY WARREN SHIM-QUEE

'91 S13 NISSAN 240SX

ORANGEMEMBER

LOVE IT? HATE IT? YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT EITHER WAY.

We know what the thought process is for some of you here:

"I hate this thing!"

"When is this stupid fitment craze going to die out? What does this car have besides wheels and a kit? It's not even functional. No one can possibly track something like that. I bet the owner doesn't even drive it."

"At least its clean. The kit does accentuate the car's lines. Turns out the engine is built, too—upgraded turbo, hybrid internals, it even makes decent power. But those wheels are just too much!"

"Wait . . . 18x13 inches in the rear?! Damn, that's wider than two of my stock wheels put together. I guess that's kind of cool. For a wannabe fanboy drift car!"

"Hold up . . . says here the cage was built by Mazworx. Don't they own the fastest SR-powered car in the world? Got some serious money behind it. But the owner probably got everything for free!"

"Hmm. Apparently the kid and his dad built the whole thing themselves—even did the paint. In only eight months, too? And he ran it to a 12.6 in the quarter and built it just to drift with his friends?!"

"I kinda like this thing!"

Then again, we also know what the rest of you thought right off the bat:

"I love this thing!"

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Yes, we've had faster, more powerful, and more accomplished cars on our pages. Record-breakers. Budget busters. And having handpicked them all and seen their accomplishments, we're putting Marc Neron's right up there with them. While most of us strive to one day own trend-setting and record-breaking tuned imports, but blame our situation for holding us back, Marc went out and made it happen with what he had at his disposal—which was impressively very little.

Marc, hailing from the outskirts of Melbourne, FL, is either a lot like you or a lot like whom you wish you could be. He's a car guy through and through. His dad, Alain, was one and kept Marc in the loop of automotive culture since the day he was born. They've owned 15 or so (the number's sure to have grown by now) of the baddest project cars to which any avid enthusiast would love to own—an S2000, USDM Integra Type R, a RHD-converted DC2, '96 EK9 Civic Type R, a black S13 Silvia very similar to this 240, another USDM S13 with an LS1 swap, a '71 VW Westfalia, '57 Karmann Ghia, '56 Beetle, and a '96 Caddy Fleetwood lowrider to name a few—most acquired in project condition or in trade for service. "This 240 was actually free," Marc says, of the flavor of this month. "I traded it for work on a Miata. It was already caged, so I thought, 'why not?'"

Like any half-begun/fully begotten project car, Marc's new S13 was rough everywhere. "It was really nothing but a shell with a cage," he elaborates. As a planed competition vehicle, that stuff was to be expected. But having dropped from the hot rod and lowrider ranks, Marc saw no reason it couldn't compete while still looking cherry. "There's no excuse for an unfinished car," he explains. "Look at pro race teams. Even when they wreck their cars they're back at the next race looking mint." Of course, this plan is easier to implement when you own a body shop.

The location where this particular one was shot isn't some run-down, forgotten-about, heavy industrial remnant, it's Menace Kustoms, the full-service shop Alain and Marc own. "My dad's had it for years," states Marc. "Together, we've probably completed hundreds ground-up builds. I can't even begin to count." Their first move was to paint that cage purple to match the D2 coilovers Marc bolted up around the same time. Tasteful, but we like his method of dealing with the shitty interior even more: scrap most of it, drop in a Bride bucket and Takata belts, replace the broken climate controls with dry carbon-fiber plugs—the one occupying the stereo spot cut to house a trio of Auto Meter Sport Comp gauges and a Blitz FATT—and paint all exposed metal flat black to reduce glare.

ORANGEMEMBER / head to the message boards at **www.importtuner.com** to chat about this feature vehicle

Underhood treatment, the next phase, would pan out to be every bit as functional, but with a little more flash. As he pieced together an S13 SR20 reinforced with S15 SR internals, force-fed by a Garrett GT2871R, and mated to a Z32 300ZX six-speed via a Mazworx adapter, Marc removed non-necessary engine bay components (such as power steering, A/C, and certain emissions equipment—"Good ol' Florida," he says, about not having to deal with smog Nazis) and coated everything in House of Kolor Global Gold Flake—undercarriage included. Believe it or not, the exterior is actually the same color, sprayed between Gamma Gold base coat and five coats of Tangerine Kandy, all from House of Kolor. And if you think its flawless now, "We still need to wet sand and buff it," Marc says. Seems he and the old man know a thing or two about how to shoot clear.

Of course, a lot went on before that point. A full Uras 4 body kit was bolted on with quick-release Dzus fasteners, windshield squirters in the hood and the hatch's brake light were shaved, and like the taillights and headlights, rear quarter-glass was swapped with the JDM option. And don't think the car's stock steel fenders could have been rolled into that flare after paint went on. Same with the rears: 50mm oversized Bayspeed over-fenders "pinched" (bolted onto the quarter-panels short of where they should meet the doors and rear bumper) to 100 mm. Even more work went on underneath. "I had to trim the stock rear fender lips to fit the wider wheels," says Marc. "And I also tubbed out the rear wells a little while we replaced the hubs and brakes with Z32 300ZX ones." And that low stance, in case you were wondering, isn't something easily achieved with a coilover suspension; Marc removed all the height-adjusting locking collars from his D2s to get it that way. Even with it all done, physically fitting the wheels and tires proved problematic. "The car was actually sitting on jack stands for eight months while we sorted out sizing issues," he explains. "It took me three different sets of rear tires to find the right ones, and my friends and I had to mount them by hand since none of the local tire machines were tall enough for the 13-inch width." And once he found the winning combination, it all had to come apart so Marc could have his new Works re-chromed and fitted with all-new hardware.

Aside from some small details—further suspension work, custom wiring, maybe a turbo upgrade, maybe painting the interior—Marc's happy with how the S13 sits now. We can see why. Yes, there are more powerful, more accomplished, and more heavily modded S13s out there. But they're also the ones owned by shops, race teams, and tuners who dedicate them to the track or show. Marc's does both better than most, and was built to be driven and enjoyed anywhere he sees fit. Like his numerous other projects, it's a car many would sell kidneys for to call their own—even those of us who only "kinda" like it.

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BEHIND THE BUILD

NAME:
MARC NERON

AGE:
26

LOCATION:
MELBOURNE, FL

OCCUPATION:
AUTO TECHNICIAN / PAINTER / REFINISHER

HOBBIES:
DRIFTING, BUILDING CARS, BEING A WHEEL WHORE

BUILD TIME:
EIGHT MONTHS

FEEDBACK:
MENACERACER@HOTMAIL.COM

MOTIVATION:
"TO HAVE A DRIFT CAR NICE ENOUGH TO MAKE PEOPLE SAY, 'W(HY)TF IS HE SLIDING THAT?!'"

'91 S13 NISSAN 240SX

300 WHP / 275 LB-FT OF TORQUE

ENGINE '93 S13 redtop SR20DET; 9.0:1-compression S15 SR20DET pistons, rings, fuel injectors; Cometic head gasket; ARP studs; Garrett GT2871R turbocharger; Spoolin Performance turbo manifold; HKS wastegate, boost controller, rocker arm stoppers, adjustable cam gears, intake; custom 3-inch divorced wastegate downpipe, straight-through exhaust, intercooler piping, A/N fittings; C/X Racing 2.5-inch aluminum radiator, silicone hoses; OEM Honda S2000 radiator reservoir; NGK-R spark plugs; Sard fuel pressure regulator; Walbro 255-lph fuel pump; Tomei Stage One CPU tune, tuned by JDM Country

DRIVETRAIN Blitz Super Single clutch, flywheel; Circuit Sports short shifter; custom solid transmission mounts, welded limited-slip differential

SUSPENSION D2 coilovers (8kg/mm front, 10kg/mm rear); Tanabe Sustec front and rear sway bars; Mazworx competition-legal rollcage; custom "mini-tub" rear wheelwells, trimmed rear quarter-panels, trimmed rear coilover sleeves

WHEELS/TIRES Work Equip street wheels (18x10-inch -3mm offset front, 18x13-inch +4mm offset rear); Nankang Sports NS-1 street tires (225/35-18 front, 295/30-18 rear); MB Battles race wheels (17x9.5-inch +12mm offset front, 17x9.5-inch +12mm w/25mm spacer rear); Falken Azenis front race tires (215/40-17); Nexen 3000 rear race tires (235/40-17); custom bullet-tipped lug nuts and valve stem caps

BRAKES Project Mu brake pads, drilled/slotted rotors; Agency Power stainless steel braided brake lines

EXTERIOR Uras 4 front bumper, side skirts, rear bumper; Bayspeed 50mm rear over-fenders, custom pulled/flared front fenders; shaved windshield squirters; '98 S13 Kouki taillight conversion; JDM IKI 9004 sealed-beam headlights; 180SX rear quarter glass; House of Kolor Gamma Gold base coat, Global Gold flake, Tangerine Kandy finish, applied by Marc and Alain Neron of Menace Kustoms

INTERIOR Bride Low Max front seats; Nardi Taniguchi Drift-model steering wheel; Nismo shift knob; custom carbon-fiber deletes; Auto Meter Sport Comp gauges (boost, oil pressure, volt), Blitz FATT

GRATITUDE My dad, Alain; friends; drift team We Drift 322 -- Gee Ef Cee <3; Camelstyle; Phat Bill; Daybid @ Vile Photo Productions; Polish Alex; Ralph Nitts Liljizzon; Menace Kustoms; Warren Shim-Quee for the sick shoots; Luke, Charles, and *2NR*!

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that girl

Amy Fay

TEXT BY **LUKE MUNNELL** AND **STAFF**

PHOTOS BY **STEVE BITANGA**
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WWW.BABEBLVD.COM

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY **LINH T. NGUYEN**
MSLNGUYEN1@GMAIL.COM
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Despite how much we'd all like to be considered the life of the party, few of us are. And if you're not one of those naturally outgoing, outspoken, confident, witty, intriguing people—with just the right amount of verbal explosivity—you might end up stopping that party dead in its tracks if you try. Amy Fay doesn't have to try. Even working alongside some of the prettiest faces in Southern California, her stand-out persona and flare lit up the room the first time we met. She's the type of girl all the others love to hate, but one they end up loving all the same. She's the girl all the guys want, but never have for too long. But this month, she's ours.

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[*2NR*]So first off, where are we?
[AF]At Café Lu, in Westminster, CA.

Who are all these beautiful women serving us coffee?
They're my co-workers. It's a Vietnamese coffee shop, and we all wear bikinis and lingerie and sexy stuff all the time.

We've heard rumors that you're Thai and French, *oui*?
No, I'm 100 percent Vietnamese, but I was born in a Thailand refugee camp. The only thing French about me is this. [points to tattoo]

And what does that say?
It's French, for "Love conquers all."

Got any more tattoos?
I have a Hello Kitty bow on my wrist that my cousin and I got together. I have to get it redone 'cause I went swimming the same day I had got it.

Nothing else? No hidden ones? We're good explorers . . .
[laughs] No, that's it. I used to have my tongue pierced.

And what happened to that?
My mom made steak the day I got it done and I couldn't eat with it in, so I got rid of it. [laughs] I'm pretty easy-going with that stuff.

Sounds like it. We Internet-stalked the hell out of you for a good 15 minutes before this interview . . . Let's talk about your Facebook, since you're pretty easy-going about that, too.
Noooo! [hides face]

Oh yes! There are quite a few pics of you on there kissing other members of the female persuasion. Who are better kissers: guys or girls?
[Hesitates] Girls! [laughs] I think it's because they know how we want to be kissed.

Kissing disaster story. Go:
OMG, there was this one guy who just . . . I dunno! Did the same thing over and over. Every time. Sooo boring! Guys need to be extra-good kissers.

Facebook Fact #2: You have a photo album called "ASSS & TITTIESSS", and we've seen multiple status updates from you about having a sore ass and disco parties in your vagina. Please explain:
[laughs—hard!] I can't believe you saw that! Yes, I do like to have fun with my Facebook. But my friends are mostly to blame—they hack the shit out of my profile any time I have people over and leave my laptop open.

Shenanigans. We love those. So wait—do you have a traditional Vietnamese name?
Of course! We all have one. Mine's Mai-Thy, pronounced, "my tee." [laughs] American kids used to always make fun of me for it, calling me "my tits" or whatever.

We'd call you Mai Tai, like the drink. Being only 19, what's it like not to know what alcohol tastes like?
Sucks! I can't wait. [sarcasm]

On that note, what's the craziest party moment you don't remember having?
Oh! We were having so much, um . . . "fun" at this club one time that I sat down for a second, put my head down, and just threw up everywhere! I don't remember that, but all my girlfriends who had to carry me out always remind me of it.

Sounds like a lot of dri ... um, dancing!
[laughs]

What about *Muay Thai*? Are you a fighter?
No, but I did punch a guy in the face once! I'd rather not get into why . . .

Fair enough. [ducks] What does a guy have to do to totally blow it with you?
Be clingy! If I had a boyfriend, I could go a week without seeing him, no problem.

So what you're saying is that you're single?
Yes.

Score! What's the key to your heart?
Optimism, confidence, sense of humor, a guy who's got his shit together. Oh, and someone who can cook for me!

Checks all around. Do you like bad boys?
Not really. I like clean-cut guys.

Damn.
Older guys, too.

Score!
[laughs]

Do you get hit on a lot, looking as good as you do and working in a place full of guys?
No, not really. Everyone here is pretty easy-going and knows what's up. You don't really come here if you can't act right. There have been a few, though . . .

So it's kind of a local scene. Did you grow up around here?
Yeah, in Orange County pretty much my whole life.

And you got into modeling specifically because of the import scene?
I've been right in the middle of it for as long as I can remember. All my guy friends drive hooked-up imports.

If you had to pick, would you rather drive something plush and slow, or something that looked like crap but was fast as hell?
Why couldn't I have the best of both?

Good answer. You recently got a new car, huh?
Yes, an '11 Honda Civic. I also got a new puppy! He's a pitbull, and I literally got him like a few hours ago.

Aw! What's his name?
[laughs] Yayo. He's all black, but with a liiiiitle white line on his nose.

Amy! Are you a crazy party girl or something?
[laughs] No! I'm really not too crazy, I swear! I just like to joke around and have fun. Too many people take themselves too seriously, you know? I'm just a big ball of funness!

Cats or dogs?
Dogs! And kittens.

After kittenhood they're on the street. Gotcha. So other than punching out clingy guys, cuddling baby animals, partying with Yayo and Facebook-jacking friends, or slamming "soft drinks" at the club, what are your big plans for 2011?
Modeling, partying, and enjoying life! You'll see me around. I'll be big time. [winks]

Got any plans for that Civic?
Drive it. [laughs] I'm planning to trade up soon.

No doubt.

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AMY FAY

Height: 5' 2"

Measurements: 34D-24-36

Ethnicity: Vietnamese

Age: 19

Birthday: January 4th

Sign: Capricorn

Location: Orange County, CA

Website: www.facebook.com/amy.fay2, www.atouchofamy.com

FOR EVEN MORE PICTURES OF AMY FAY, ESPECIALLY THE ONES WE COULDN'T PRINT, GO TO WWW.IMPORTTUNER.COM

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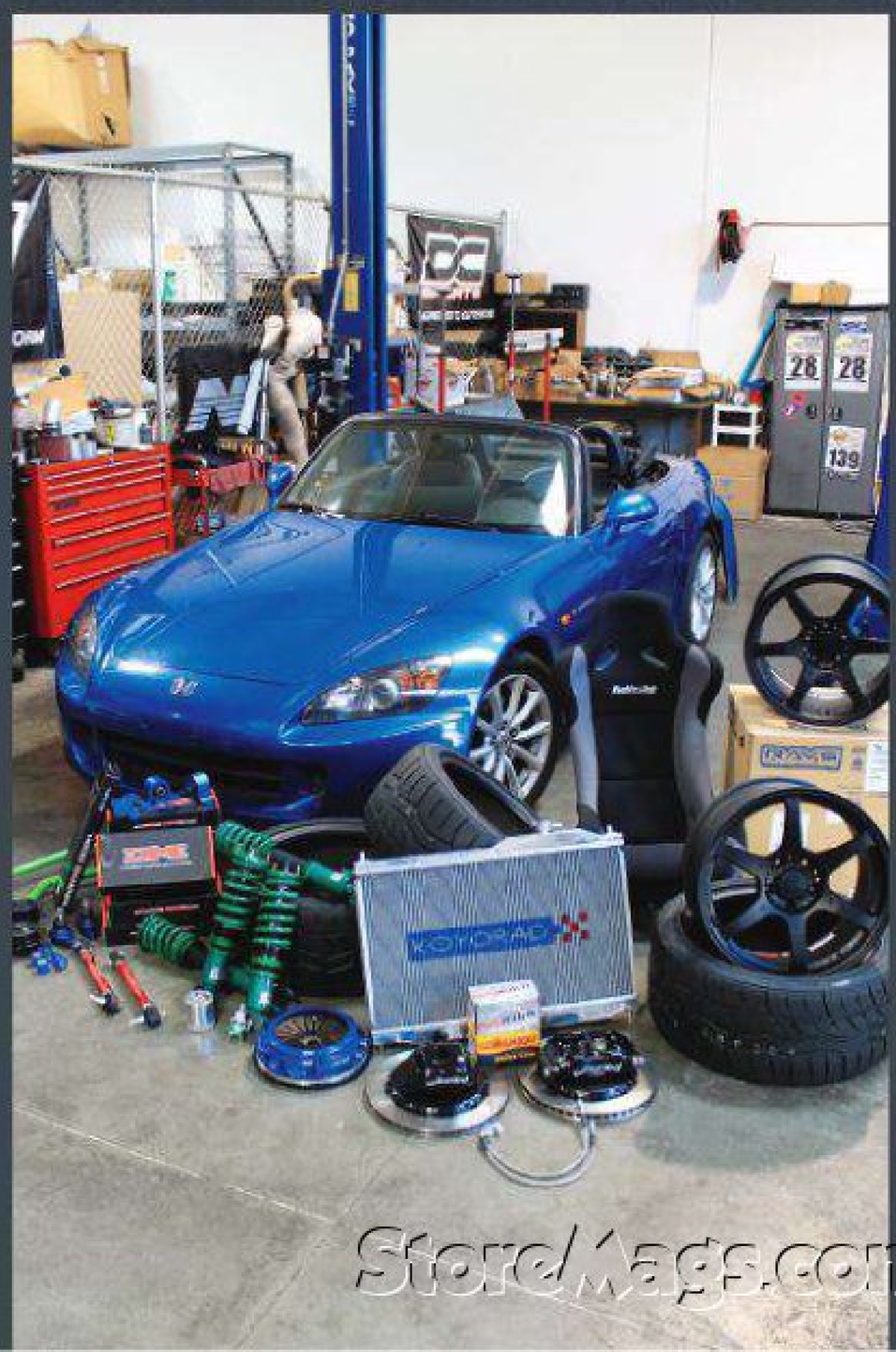
TEXT BY **SCOTT TSUNEISHI**
PHOTOS BY **HENRY DEKUYPER** AND **SCOTT TSUNEISHI**

PROJECT S2K

SUSPENSION UPGRADES AND IVTEC: PART 2

Since we last left off in our build, we upgraded our S2000 with a set of Tein Mono Flex coilovers, Suspension Techniques sway bars, Buddy Club bucket seats, a Kaaz 1.5-way limited-slip differential, Wilwood big-brake kit, and Spec clutch. After months of planning and weeks of installing parts, we have finally arrived near completion. At this point, you may be thinking that this build is overkill for the average street car. We would resoundingly agree, but excessive planning and building is what is going to take us to our promised land of sub-two-minute lap times at Buttonwillow Raceway. With much of our build geared towards suspension upgrades and aerodynamics to improve the vehicle's handing, we haven't forgotten about adding some much needed grunt to our beloved F22C engine. Follow along our buildup process as we upgrade our suspension and install Design Craft Fabrication's infamous iVTEC system.



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The S2000's highly rigid body and X-frame chassis are major contributors to its excellent handling characteristics. What's the S2000's X-frame chassis, you ask? Simply stated, the front and rear portions of the chassis frame and the side sills tie into diagonal braces (X-braces) at the rear of the cockpit and at the front cowl. These X-members connect the front and rear suspension subframes to resist chassis twist, and also provide a strength that's been proven by Honda to be greater than what many closed-top sports cars achieve.

CHASER HARDTOP

We replaced the OEM soft top with an aftermarket Chaser Aerodynamics hardtop. With optional OEM hardtops selling for $2,000 the cost would have tipped us over our budget, not to mention finding one in such a short time would be nearly impossible. Luckily, a call to Chaser landed us their fiberglass hardtop. The Chaser hardtop, including brackets, weatherstripping, window seals, and a Lexan rear window, weighed in at 28 pounds—a weight savings over the OEM soft top of 31.8 pounds.

KOYO RADIATOR

The Koyo R-Core radiator uses a 53mm core versus the factory 16mm core, which allows for better efficiency in dissipating heat with its larger coolant capacity. The Koyo radiator's increased water capacity and improved cooling efficiency will prove beneficial when driving our S2000 during the hot summer months ahead. The Koyo R-Core aluminum radiators are Nocolok brazed for added strength and are designed as a direct bolt-in, retaining the stock mounting points for the shrouds and fans.

SUSPENSION HEAT WRAP

Knowing our S2000 was going to frequent the track, we wrapped the outer ends of the ball joints and tie-rod ends with heat-reflective cloth and secured them with wire ties. This simple modification has proven beneficial in protecting suspension components from high-heat stress and is a mod used by many popular Honda race teams, including J's Racing of Japan.

VOLK WHEELS AND FALKEN TIRES

Here's a close-up shot of one of our Volk Racing Generation 2 forged wheels, 17x9 inches with +40mm offset, wrapped in a Falken RT-615K 255/40-17 tire. Since our S2K is destined to be a street/track superstar, our wheel and tire combination will be playing a dual purpose for the months ahead.

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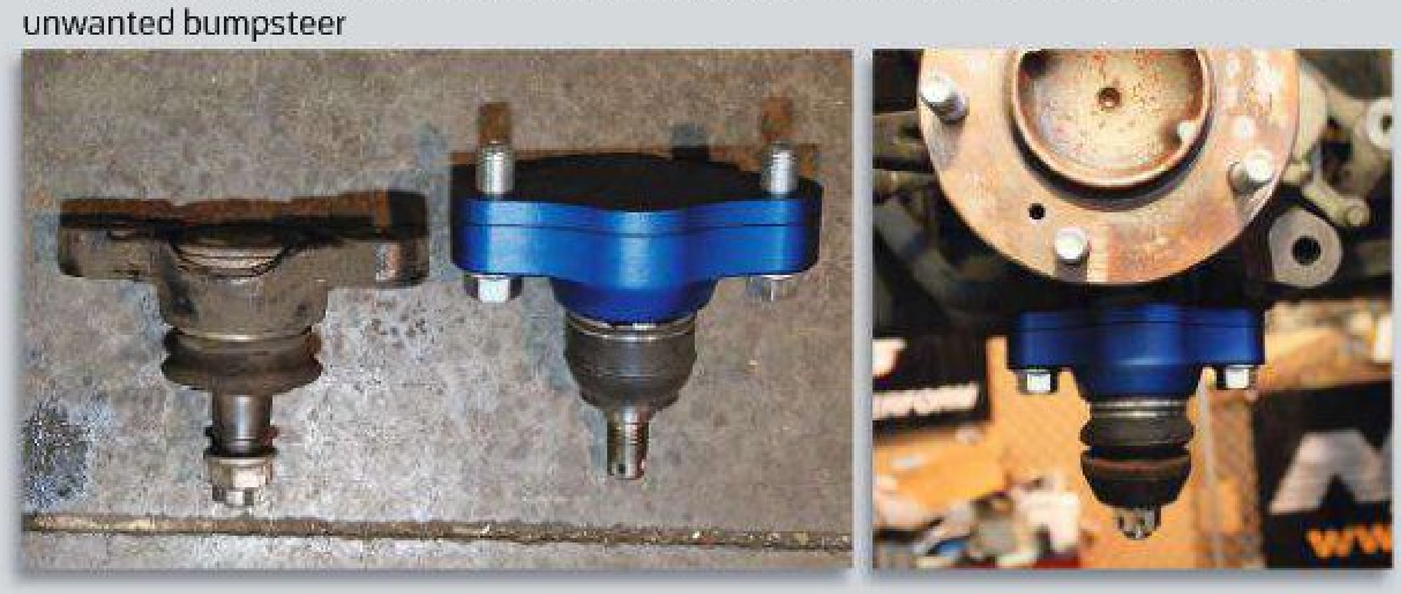
This photo gives you an idea of how aggressive our wheel fitment is when using the factory fenders. Fortunately, the C-West 20mm widebody fenders should take care of our fitment issues. Evasive Motorsports will roll the rear fenders for additional clearance.

Philip Chase of Tein USA paid us a visit to help properly set up our custom, revalved Mono Flex suspension.

DME ROLL CENTER ADJUSTERS

When a car is lowered, the entire spindle and wheel move up in relation to the chassis compared to stock ride height, adding stress on the ball joints. DME roll center adjusters are manufactured physically taller than the stock pieces, allowing your vehicle to keep its original suspension geometry settings while maintaining the lowered ride height. Along with maintaining the stock suspension geometry, aftermarket roll center adjusters avoid unwanted bumpsteer



DME SOLID PILLOW-BALL JOINTS

Using solid pillow-ball joints in place of the OEM bushings improves a vehicle's handling, but has the potential to translate into a rougher ride. We were willing to trade comfort for handling if it meant quicker lap times at Super Lap Battle.

DME UPPER CONTROL ARM BUSHINGS

This close-up photo shows a comparison of the newly pressed DME Spherical bushing on the left vs. the OEM bushing on the right. DME uses rubber covers on their bushing kits to prevent dust and contaminants from entering.

DME REAR TOE CONTROL ARMS

The factory rear control arms can't provide enough suspension travel on a lowered vehicle, leaving you stuck with as much as half an inch of toe-in, resulting in poor handling and rapid tire wear. DME rear control arms restore proper suspension geometry on a lowered car, while the spherical rod ends replace the compliant rubber factory bushings for improved suspension response and feedback, and also reduce toe changes during acceleration and deceleration.

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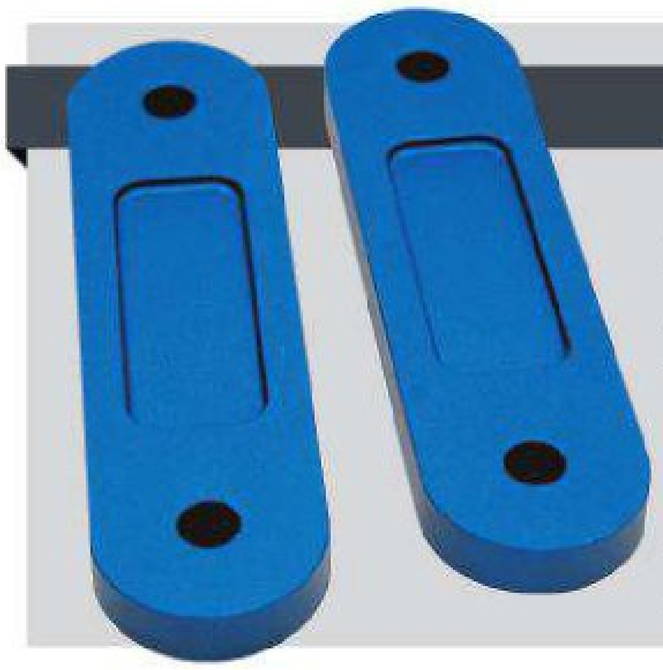
DME REINFORCED DIFFERENTIAL MOUNTS

The factory oil-filled rear differential mounts degrade and crack over time due to age and/or driving conditions. In comparison to the OEM differential mounts, the DME differential mount kit features higher durometer rubber that reduces differential flex, which improves power delivery to the wheels.

DME MOUNT

OEM MOUNT

ANTI-BUMPSTEER KIT



Bumpsteer is caused by the angle of the steering linkage (inner and outer rod ends) being different than the angle of the lower control arms, and is a common occurrence on lowered vehicles. As the wheel and tire assembly move on the pavement, the difference of the two angles causes the tie rod assembly to become longer and/or shorter, causing a toe-in or toe-out condition, which makes the car suddenly pull from one side to the other. Using the DME bumpsteer kit helped return the steering tie rods to their optimal setting while eliminating the quirky vehicle movement we experienced when driving over bumps and/or making turns.

EVASIVE MOTORSPORTS HALFSHAFT SPACERS

Any time you lower a car, the vehicle's driveshaft angle changes (depending how much you lower your car), creating an unwanted gap in between the driveshaft roller and spider gear inside the driveshaft. This gap causes the inboard joint to move back and forth, causing stress binding and premature wear. For those very same reasons, we installed a set of Evasive Motorsports aluminum halfshaft spacers to eliminate the gap and increase component lifespan.

ENGINE MODIFICATIONS

DC SPORTS COLD-AIR INTAKE

The DC Sports Cold-Air Intake uses a two-piece design to locate the filter away from the engine bay, allowing cooler outside air to flow into the filter. The kit includes an air filter that requires no oil, therefore eliminating any chance of contaminating the intake pipe or manifold with unwanted oil residue.

OKADA PROJECT PLASMA DIRECT COIL PACKS

Okada Project Plasma Direct coil packs use a high-power amplifier built into the unit to increase spark current by two times that of the original equipment. The Okada Project coil packs replaced our factory ignition coil system to increase ignition output and supply greater combustion efficiency—two important features we deemed necessary as we attempt to squeeze every last bit of power out of our 2.2L engine.

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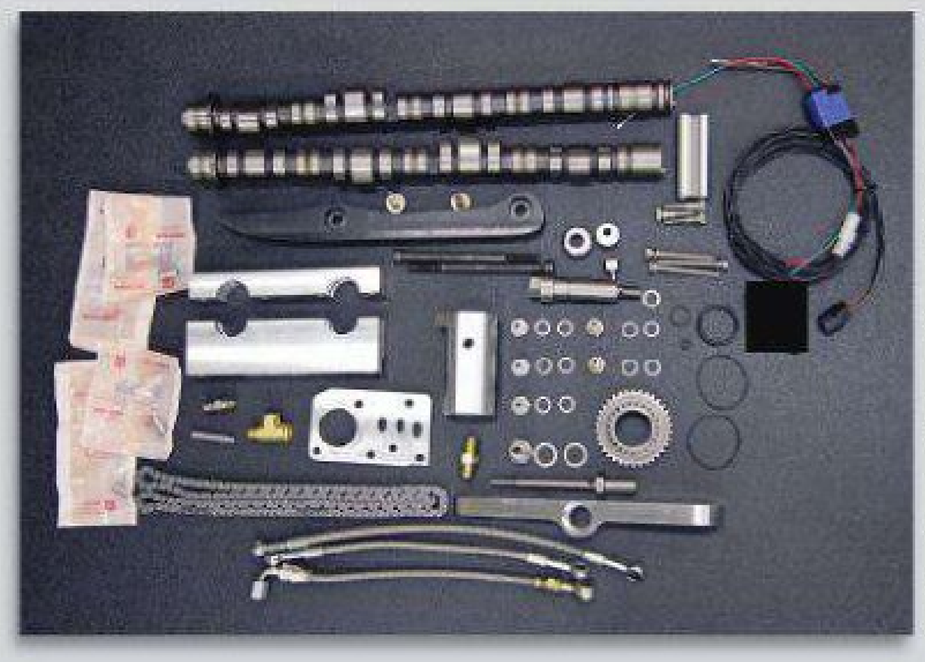
DC SPORT HEADER

The DC Sports 4-2-1 one-piece header is manufactured using 409 stainless steel alloy, and is robotically TIG welded and finished in a corrosion-resistant ceramic coating. The DC header's equal-length primary piping ensures more power throughout the rpm range, and we plan to mate it to a custom 3-inch exhaust system. The header weighs 10 pounds compared to the 22lb OEM unit.

PURE POWER OIL FILTER

The Pure Power filter, made from 6061 T6 CNC machined forged billet aluminum, is marketed to be 90 percent more efficient than paper or cellulose filters at removing particulates (10 microns and smaller is the size generally considered to be most harmful to engines). The filter can also be cleaned with soap and water and reused due to its stainless steel, dual-woven media filter element. Two Neodymium magnets, located on each side of the filter media, capture metal contaminants that could otherwise harm your engine.

DESIGN CRAFT IVTEC ECS (ELECTRONIC CONTROL SPROCKET)

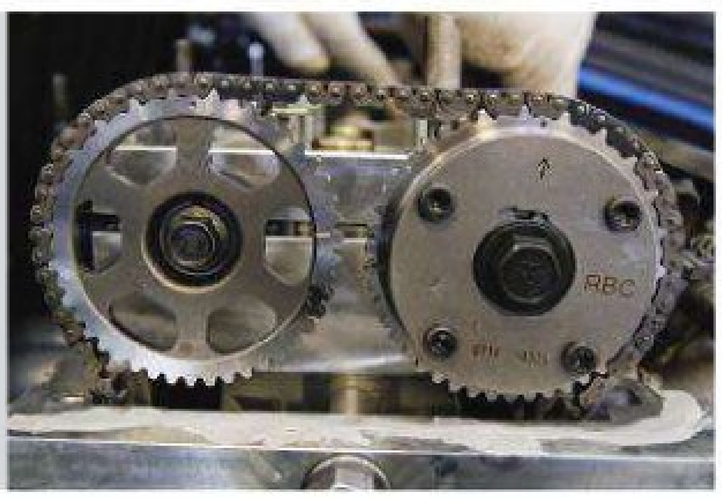


As we continued to focus on building our 2.2L engine to propel our S2000 to a target goal of sub-two-minute lap times at Buttonwillow Raceway, we contacted Gary Castillo, owner of Design Craft Fabrication and mastermind behind the infamous iVTEC system for further assistance. Castillo's knowledge of S2000s proved invaluable in our quest to build our ultimate street/track machine, as he recently developed an iVTEC system that works with the S2000's drive-by-wire system. Previous testing with the BC/C-West turbocharged S2000 equipped with a prototype ECS unit made considerable low-end to mid-range horsepower gains over the factory—40 more, to be precise. The BC/C-West machine made a whopping increase of 99.3 hp and 130.4 lb-ft torque at 4,000 rpm, compared to its previous VTEC numbers. After careful consideration, while taking into account our F22C's high-flowing cylinder head and the dynamic/continuous intake valve timing and overlap control of the iVTEC, we came to the conclusion that the iVTEC system was going to be the perfect addition to our S2000.

Since we first featured Design Craft's ECS system in our January '10 issue, it's gone through plenty of changes, both physically and mechanically. A side-by-side comparison shows just how much the ECS system has evolved from the first iVTEC prototype to the newest Version 1 system that's currently available. One major change to the system is the oil retard feed line that originally went from the center of the cam on the prototype unit, which has now been relocated to the top of the valve cover. Castillo states the reason behind the redesign was to promote "fewer oil leaks and eliminate the need to modify the factory hood to clear the previous model iVTEC valve cover."

F-series engines utilize a timing chain that spins an idler gear, which in turn makes direct contact with two helical cam sprockets. As the crankshaft spins clockwise, the camshafts rotate counterclockwise.

The ECS setup was designed to operate like a K-series engine, with the timing chain only wrapping around the cam sprockets and crank sprocket, thus eliminating the helical gears.



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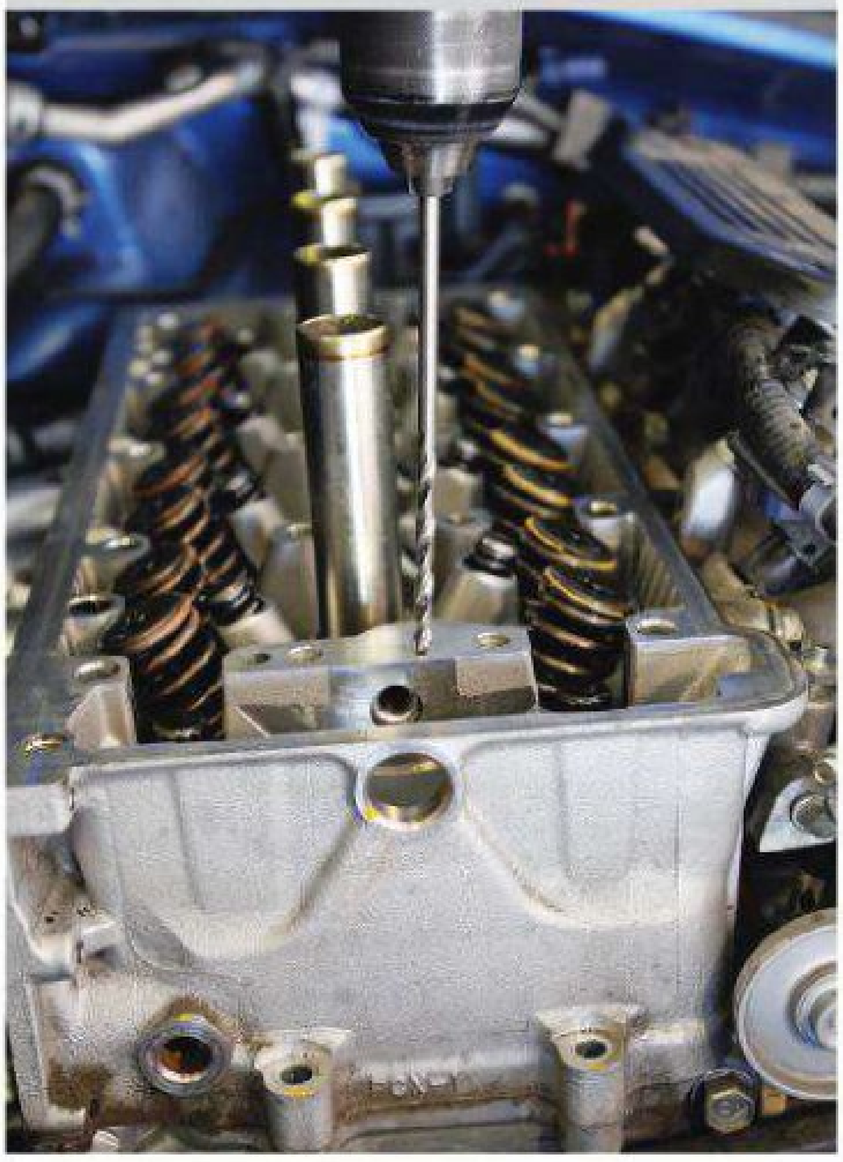
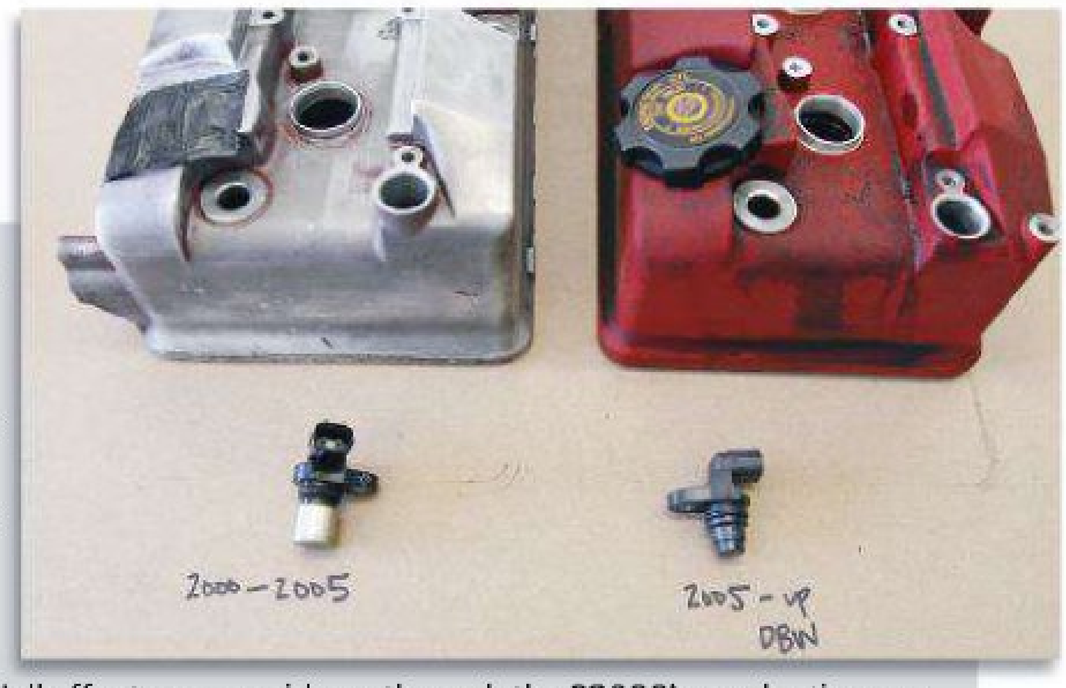
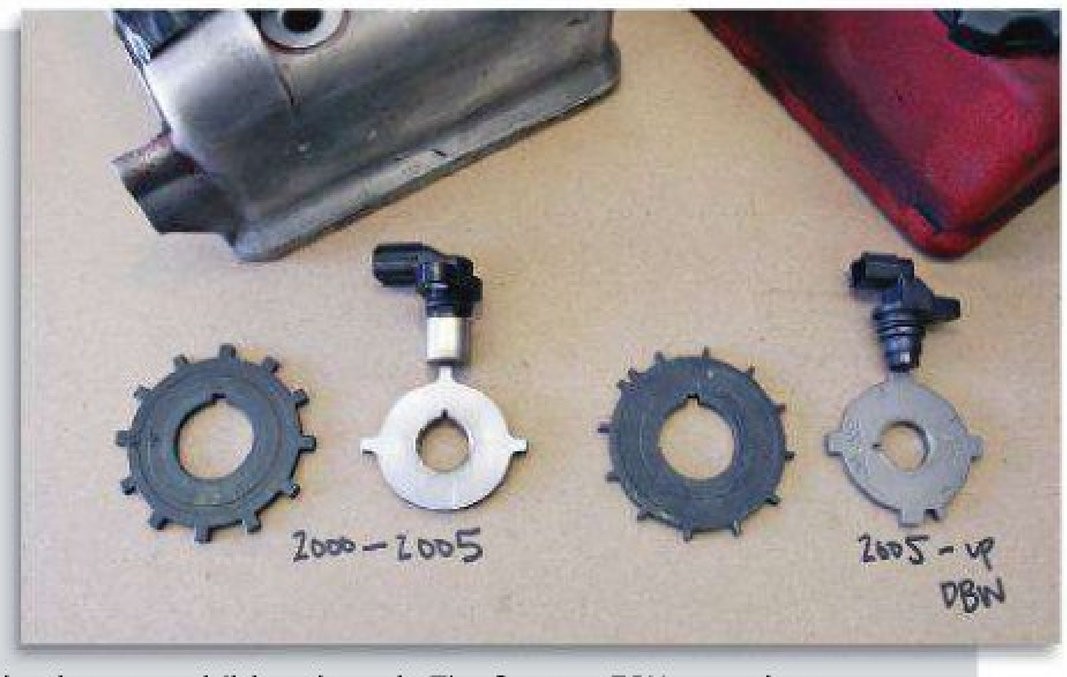
Located directly underneath the number-one cam journal is a 1/16-inch oil passage that provides oil to the factory idler sprocket bolt. The iVTEC setup requires using a 3/16-inch drill bit to enlarge this oil feed hole. Neglecting to make this modification will cause the iVTEC to not function properly.





On the left in the photo is an '00 to '05 factory magnetic pickup sensor used to monitor the rotation of the camshafts, versus an '06 to '09 Hall effect sensor on the right. We're not sure why Honda decided to switch to a Hall effect sensor midway through the S2000's production run, but we assume it was because the Hall effect sensor is more accurate at higher rpm, where the F-series is known to thrive.



The '00 to '05 F-series engines use a 12-tooth crank trigger and dual 4-minus-1 cam trigger for ignition timing. For reference, a 4-minus-1 cam trigger is defined as a full circle with evenly spaced teeth minus one tooth while a 4-plus-1 (used on '06 and up models) uses a cam trigger that's got four evenly spaced teeth, plus one additional tooth. The factory ECU uses these cam triggers to read proper positioning and firing sequence of the cams—the engine will not run and will randomly misfire if the wrong one is used.

The sensor shown in the middle of the photo is Design Craft's direct replacement piece that's necessary when changing to the iVTEC system on a drive-by-wire (DBW) vehicle. Based on the mounting depths of the sensor, the DBW and non-DBW cam triggers are different. In order to convert to a Hall effect sensor on a non-DBW valve cover, Design Craft provides a new unit that works with the factory Honda ECU.

On any DBW S2000, you will need to convert to an '00 to '05 valve cover due to the drive-by-wire valve cover using only one camshaft sensor on the exhaust camshaft. An '00 to '05 valve cover allows the iVTEC system to use the exhaust camshaft to run the factory ECU and the intake camshaft to control the iVTEC.

Look for the third and final chapter of our S2000 build as we wrap up our iVTEC build, install our body kit, and prepare to shake down the engine as we put the iVTEC to the test on the dyno and the car at the track. Will our S2000 have what it takes to clock sub-two-minute lap times?

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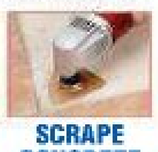
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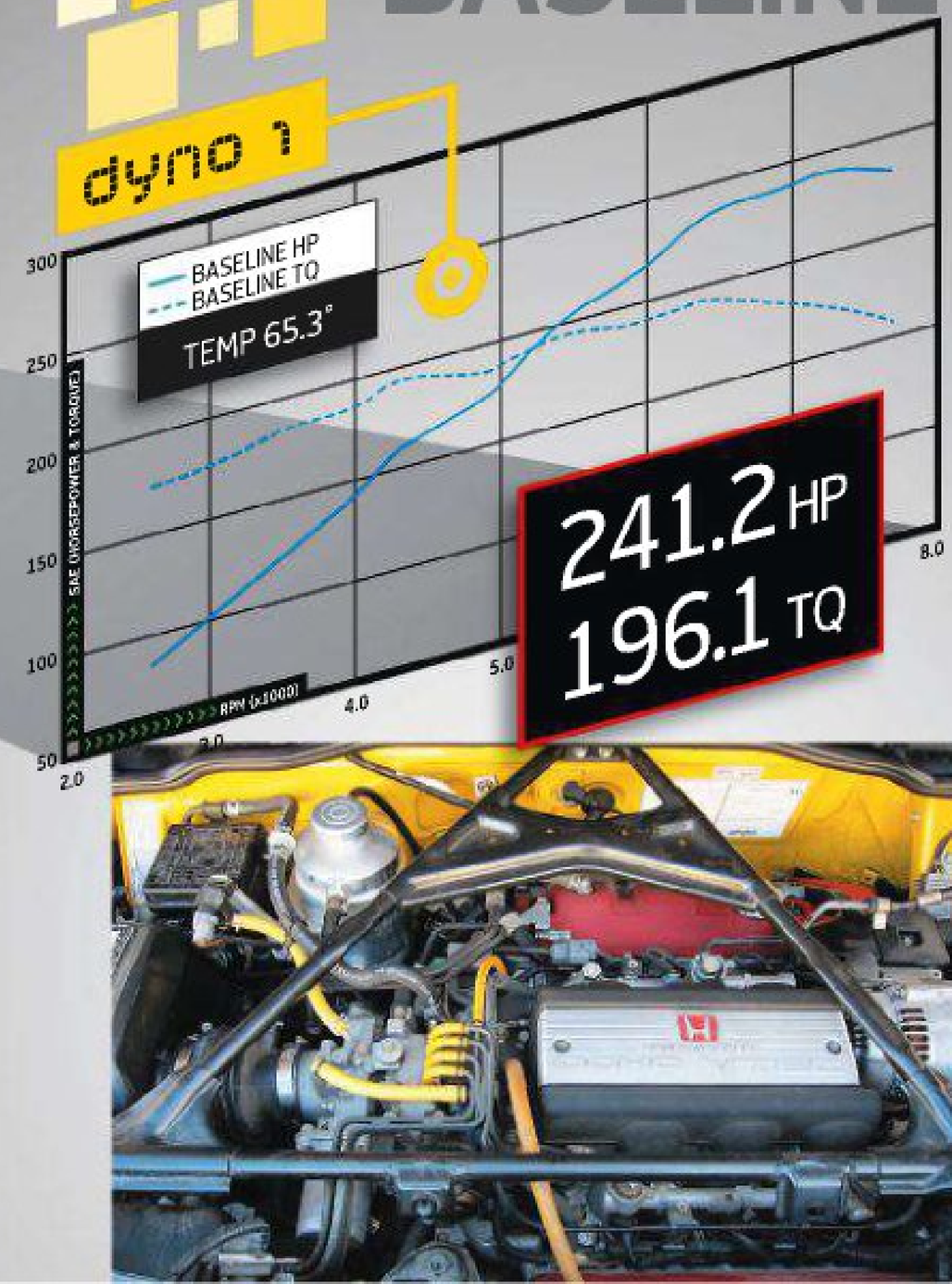


PROS

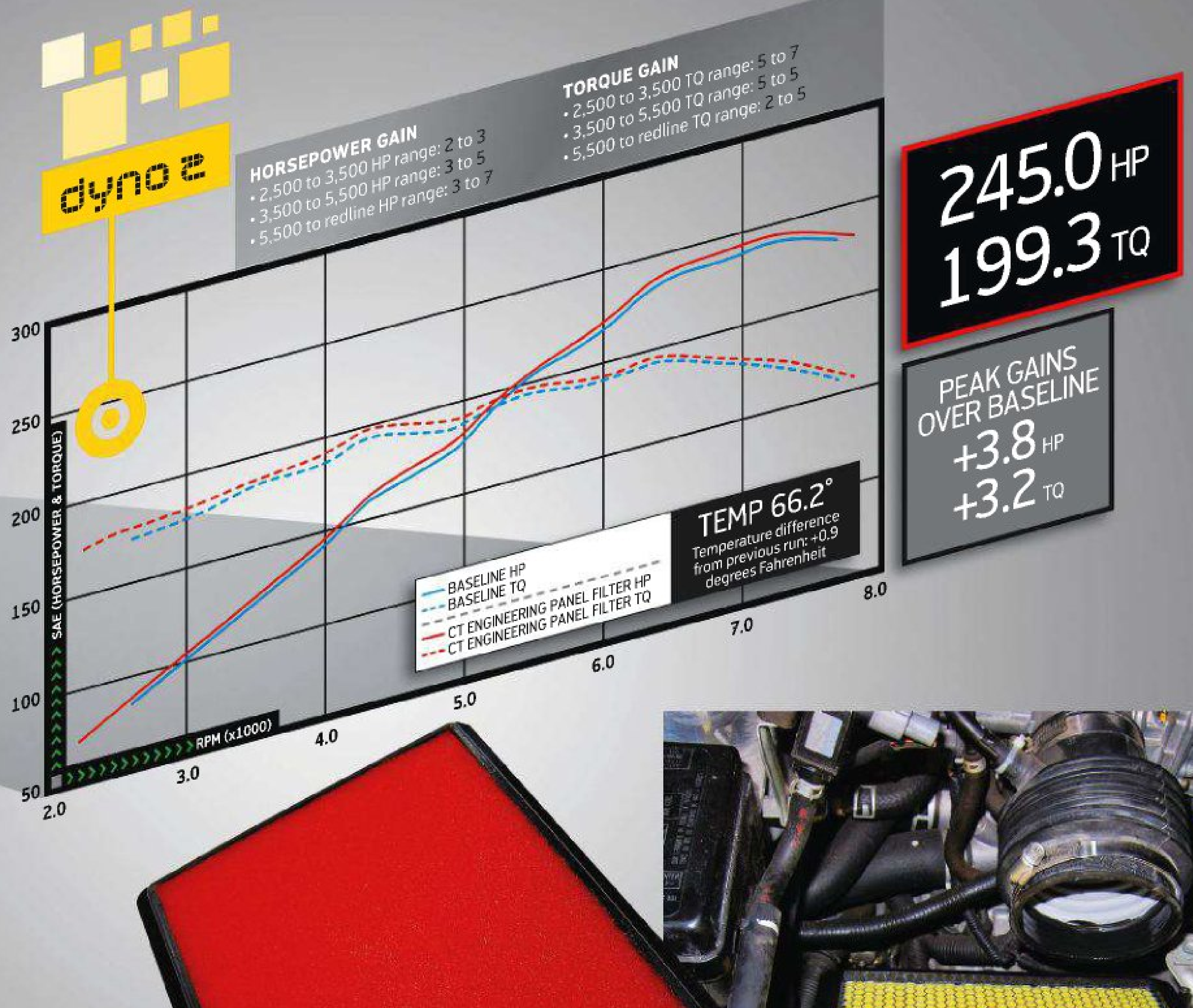
The Acura NSX was Japan's offering when it came to competing directly with the elite sports cars of the time, which included the Ferrari 348, Porsche 911, and Chevrolet Corvette. The NSX, short for New Sportscar eXperimental, was manufactured using a body and suspension made of aluminum and was powered by a mid-engine, transversely mounted, naturally aspirated 3.0L V-6 engine that produced 270 hp, with the latter 3.2L model making 290 hp. The mid-engine, rear-wheel-drive platform proved a lethal combination; the NSX offered excellent engine response and exceptional handling both on and off the track. With the high-end used car market becoming more affordable within the past few years, we seized the opportunity to Power Page a '97 NSX with only 30K miles on the odometer.

CONS

With an MSRP of $60,000 in the '90s (which rose to between $84,000 and $88,000 by the time the '00 models hit the market), sales of the NSX were lack-luster as Acura manufactured no more than 3,000 cars per year in the U.S. After 15 years of production, Acura had sold only 8,900 NSXs; compare that to the '95 Honda Civic, which sold three times as many in a single year alone.

NOTES

Our NSX was given an oil change, spark plug check/replacement, and OEM intake filter replacement before being strapped onto the dyno. Bald tires were replaced with a fresh set of Falken RT-615Ks, (215/40-17 front, 275/25-18 rear) with plans to road race this machine after our Power Page modifications are complete. In stock trim, the NSX delivered 241.2 hp and 196.1 lb-ft of torque.



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20 minutes

PROS
CT Engineering's high-flow panel filter uses a reusable two-stage foam element that is a direct replacement for the NSX's air filter, helping to improve filtration and power. The CT Engineering panel filter is 50-state emissions legal and can be washed, reoiled, and reused many times over with CT Engineering's Uni filter service kit, helping you save money by not having to buy replacement filters.

CONS
Installing the panel filter required loosening the factory inlet pipe to remove the upper half of the OEM intake box. Due to the oily nature of the CT Engineering filter, we suggest wearing a pair of latex gloves or keeping a shop rag handy to keep the oil from transferring from your hands onto the engine bay when reassembling the box.

NOTES
The new panel filter delivered a peak gain of 3.8 hp and 3.2 lb-ft of torque over the baseline run, with both horsepower and torque gains throughout the entire powerband. The largest gains were recorded in the midrange with a gain of 5 hp and 5 lb-ft of torque from 4,300 rpm to 5,000 rpm. From 6,500 rpm to 7,000 rpm, the NSX gained 7 hp and 5 lb-ft of torque over our baseline run.

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FUJITSUBO
SUPER Ti EXHAUST

PARTS
Exhaust, piping, brackets

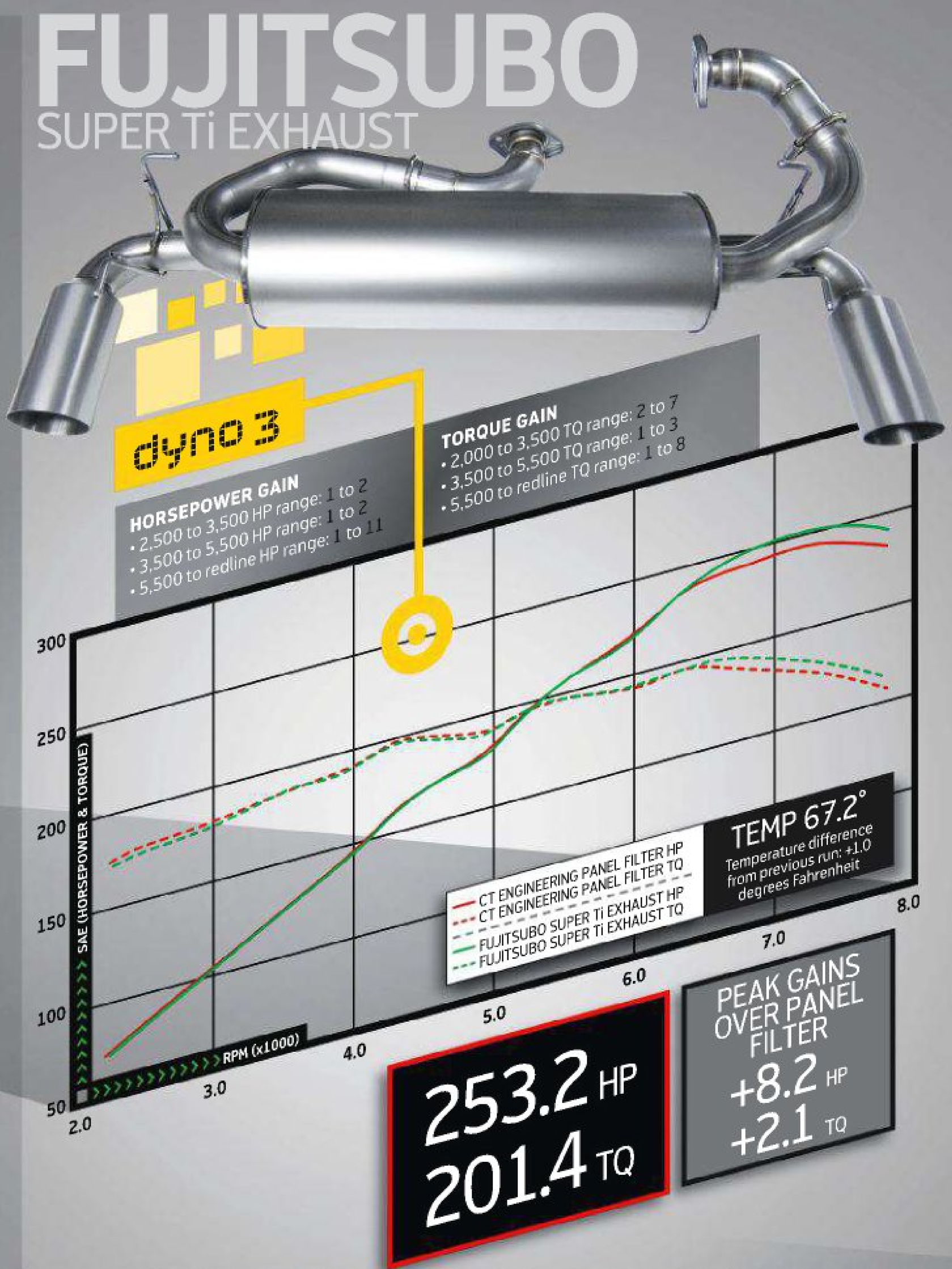
TOOLS
10-, 12-, 14- and 17mm sockets, 10-, 12-, 14-, and 17mm open-end wrenches, ratchet, extension, crescent wrench, and WD-40

INSTALLATION TIME
70 minutes

PROS
Fujitsubo individually hand crafts their Super Ti exhaust system from full titanium. Featuring larger diameter 60.5mm mandrel-bent piping, and a high-flow muffler, the Ti delivers optimum horsepower throughout the rpm range with an emphasis on high-rpm power with greatly reduced weight. If you're looking for a loud, annoying exhaust system, the Super Ti isn't for you. Compared to the OEM exhaust, the Super Ti displays a throatier, deeper tone, but only emits 71dB at idle (factory 64dB) and is one dB louder than stock at 3,000 rpm, which you can be appreciative of if ever tailed by cops.

CONS
Due to the significant weight and bulkiness of the factory exhaust, we suggest asking for assistance to help speed up the removal and installation process.

NOTES
Not only does the exhaust help increase horsepower, its titanium construction means it weighs a mere 23.4 pounds, a weight savings of 24.8 pounds off the stock 48.2-pound exhaust, helping to reduce overall weight and benefit all aspects of vehicle performance, including acceleration, braking, and handling. With the newly installed exhaust in place, the NSX delivered an increase in top-end power with gains as much as 11 hp and 8 lb-ft of torque from 6,600 rpm to redline.



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DC SPORTS
3-INTO-1 HEADERS

PARTS
Headers, mounting hardware, 02 sensor harness, instructions, stickers

TOOLS
10-, 12-, 14-, and 17mm sockets, 10-, 12-, 14-, and 17mm open-end wrenches, ratchet, extension, screwdriver and pliers

INSTALLATION TIME
6 to 8 hours

PROS
The DC Sports NSX 3-into-1 header system is performance engineered and constructed from mandrel-bent, polished, T-304 stainless steel, delivering a substantial power improvement over the stock manifolds. The headers are compatible with '95 to '05 NSX models and are CARB-legal up to the '04 model. DC headers also include an 02 sensor extension harness.

CONS
Make no mistake when we say the NSX is a pure nightmare to work on. The header installation took us 7 hours, which required dropping the sway bar, catalytic converter, support brace, shift linkage, subframe brace, A/C compressor, and heat shields.

NOTES
Often one of the biggest horsepower-per-dollar improvements you can make to your NSX is to replace your stock exhaust manifold with a tuned header system. The DC Sports headers increased both horsepower and torque throughout the powerband, as the NSX made gains of 8 hp and 5 lb-ft of torque at 4,800 rpm, and 13 hp and 10 lb-ft of torque from 6,300 rpm to redline.

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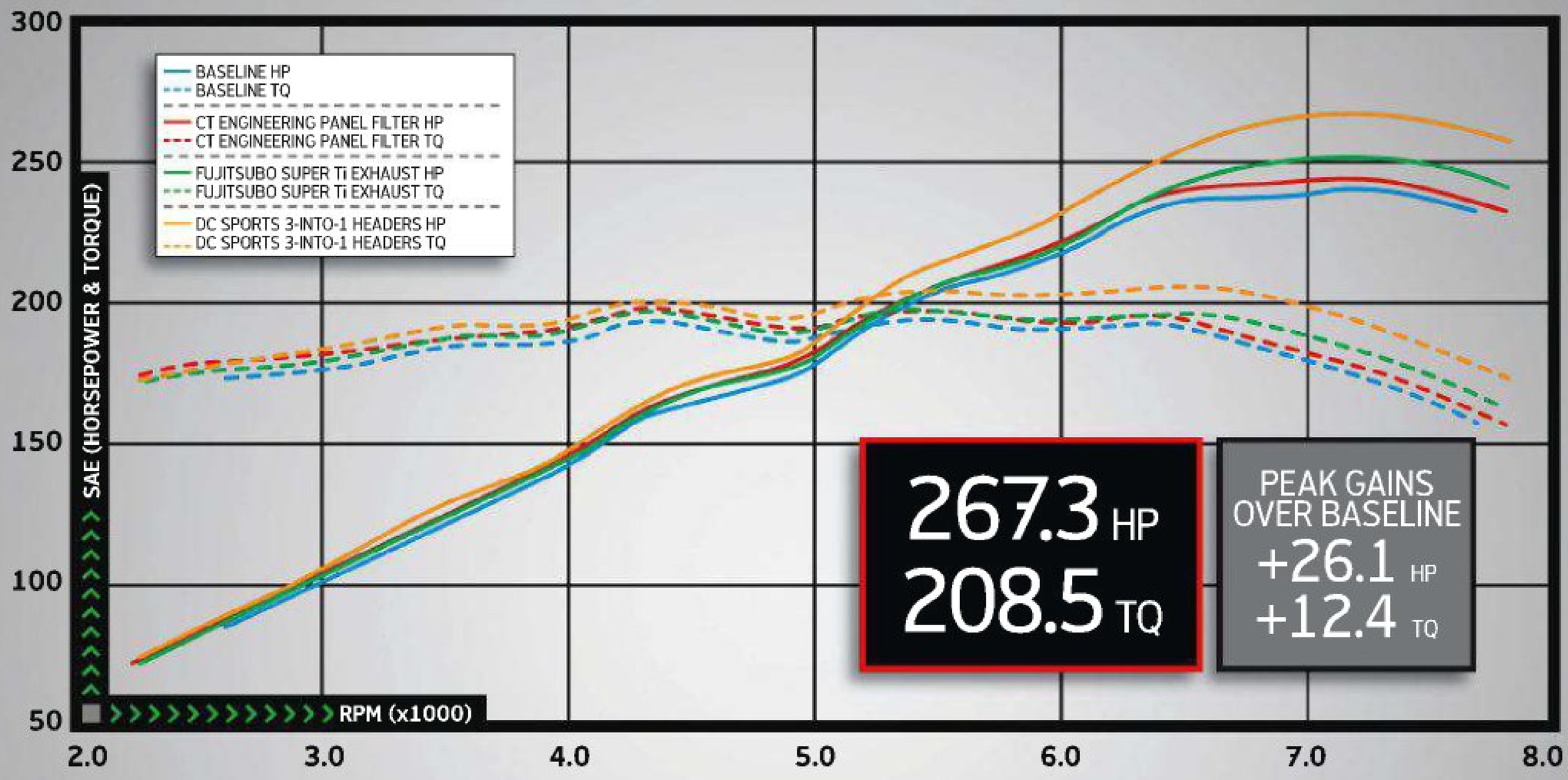

CONCLUSION

	HP	+HP	TQ	+TQ
BASELINE	241.2	-	196.1	-
CT ENGINEERING FILTER	245.0	3.8	199.3	3.2
FUJITSUBO SUPER TI EXHAUST	253.2	8.2	201.4	2.1
DC SPORTS 3-INTO-1 HEADERS	267.3	14.1	208.5	7.1
FINAL	**267.3**	**26.1**	**208.5**	**12.4**

CONCLUSION

Our final testing saw peak output improve to 267.3 hp and 208.5 lb-ft of torque—an increase of 26.1 hp and 12.4 lb-ft of torque—with the largest gains of 28.7 hp and 22.3 lb-ft of torque occurring at 7,000 rpm. With nearly 270 hp to the wheels, a quick drive around the block revealed a day-and-night difference in performance. We found this newly upgraded NSX a blast to drive on the street, as torque output and horsepower were improved greatly in all the right places. IT

BANKROLL

CT ENGINEERING INTAKE	$59.00
FUJITSUBO SUPER TI EXHAUST	$4,720.00
DC SPORTS 3-INTO-1 HEADERS	$935.28
MSRP TOTAL	**$5,714.28**

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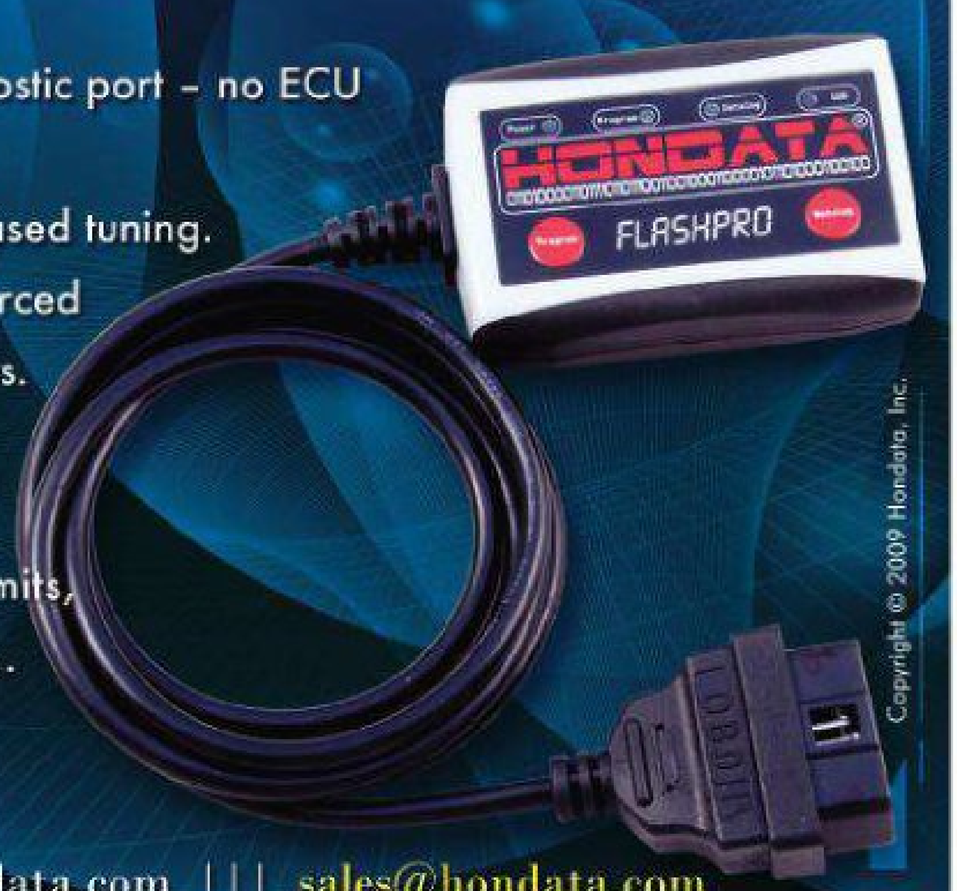

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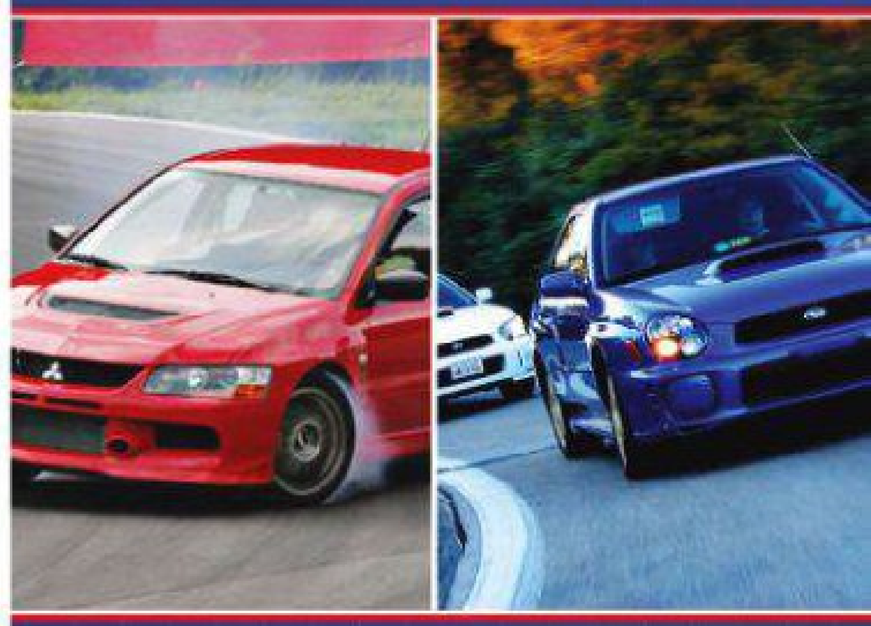

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01 FORGELINE GA3R WHEELS

Forgeline's newly released GA3R wheel uses "I-Beamed Spoke" technology to reduce weight while applying additional rigidity within the spokes. The hidden titanium assembly hardware not only gives it a smooth, clean look, but also functions to ease the efforts of cleaning the wheel. In addition, the GA3R features an enlarged open center area for quick and easy lug nut removal, critical for quick pit stops. The GA3R is produced using Forgeline's traditional forging method utilizing 6061-T6 aluminum with heat-treated rim shells, and comes available in multiple sizes and finishes, including center-lock applications.

Forgeline / www.forgeline.com / 800.886.0093

02 KW VARIANT 3 COILOVERS FOR '06+ HONDA CIVIC

KW Suspensions announce the release of their stainless-steel-constructed Variant 3 coilovers for the '06 and up Honda Civic. Each kit offers adjustable (and independently reacting) rebound and compression damping for superior driving performance. The V3 coilover design allows Civic owners to lower their vehicles up to 2.5 inches while retaining enough suspension travel to handle maximum loads and handling for various types of driving. All KW coilovers come with a lifetime warranty and pass stringent German TUV safety and quality testing standards.

KW Suspensions / www.kwautomotive.com / 800.445.3767

03 DIAMOND PISTONS DOUBLE COATING

Diamond Pistons introduces a new piston coating formula that combines heat-resistance with a friction-reducing coating. By combining hard-coat anodizing with a moly-skirt coating, Diamond's double coating provides a thermal barrier and increases both corrosion resistance and wear resistance, while deterring piston rings from micro-welding themselves to the ring grooves. Diamond's moly-skirt coating uses molybdenum dry-film lubricant to provide an anti-friction, anti-scuffing surface to free up power. The turn-around time for the Diamond double-coat process is about two days and costs $50 per piston.

Diamond Pistons / www.diamondracing.net / 877.552.2112

04 COBB ACCESSPORT WITH TCM SUPPORT FOR NISSAN GT-R

Cobb Tuning's most popular engine management solution for R35 enthusiasts just got better with the introduction of the Accessport with Transmission Control Module (TCM) support—the world's first hand-held ECU and TCM flashing engine and transmission management system. Now GT-R owners can install maps to enhance launch control, clutch capacity adjustment, clamping force and clutch touch points with +/- seven levels of adjustments to enhance driveability and improve performance, all with the simple push of a button. Just like the original Accessport for the Nissan R35 GT-R, installation is simple and can be returned to its stock configuration at any time.

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01 KENWOOD KIV-BT900 HEADUNIT

Kenwood's KIV-BT900 in-dash MP3/WMA receiver combines the convenience of built-in Bluetooth with an innovative, easy-to-use iPod interface. The 3-inch TFT color screen sports a multi-line display that makes it easy to check out song information when you're on the go, while an audio/video output allows you to send iPod video content to a rear monitor. The KIV-BT900's volume knob operates like an iPod click wheel interface, with high-speed search keys positioned just to the right. You can jump straight into alphabet and percentage searches with the search mode key, while a "favorites" memory lets you instantly pull up your favorite tunes.

Kenwood / www.kenwoodusa.com / 310.761.8802

02 KICKER SOLO X SUBWOOFER

Kicker engineers spent two years tweaking and fine-tuning their subwoofer lineup to develop the new Solo X subwoofer. Kicker's patented square subwoofer technology uses a titanium deposit impregnated cone for a more rigid woofer with less cone flex and distortion. The Solo X increases heat dissipation using their ARCTIC (Aluminum Rapid Cooling Thermal Induction Centering) Cap design to create a venturi-effect, forcing greater amounts of cooling air through the X-Vent, while its aluminum basket acts as a heat sink. Additional features include oversized dual voice coils and copper-clad-aluminum, edge-wound coil wire to withstand extreme heat.

Kicker / www.kicker.com / 800.256.5425

03 KENSINGTON LIQUIDAUX CAR KIT

The Kensington auxiliary car kit with Remote Control allows you to stream music instantly by plugging your iPhone or iPod into the car kit using a 3.5mm audio cable to deliver music through your car's speakers. Designed specifically for vehicles with in-dash auxiliary ports, the LiquidAux not only enables your portable audio player to play music through your vehicle's audio source, it also charges and holds your iPhone or iPod securely within view while you drive. Kensington's LiquidAux auxiliary car kit is compatible with the iPhone (1G and 3G); iPod nano (1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation); all iPod generations (1st through 6th); and iPod touch.

Kensington / www.kensington.com / 800.535.4242

04 PIONEER PREMIER PRS-A900 AMPLIFIER

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Pioneer / www.pioneerelectronics.com / 800.228.7221

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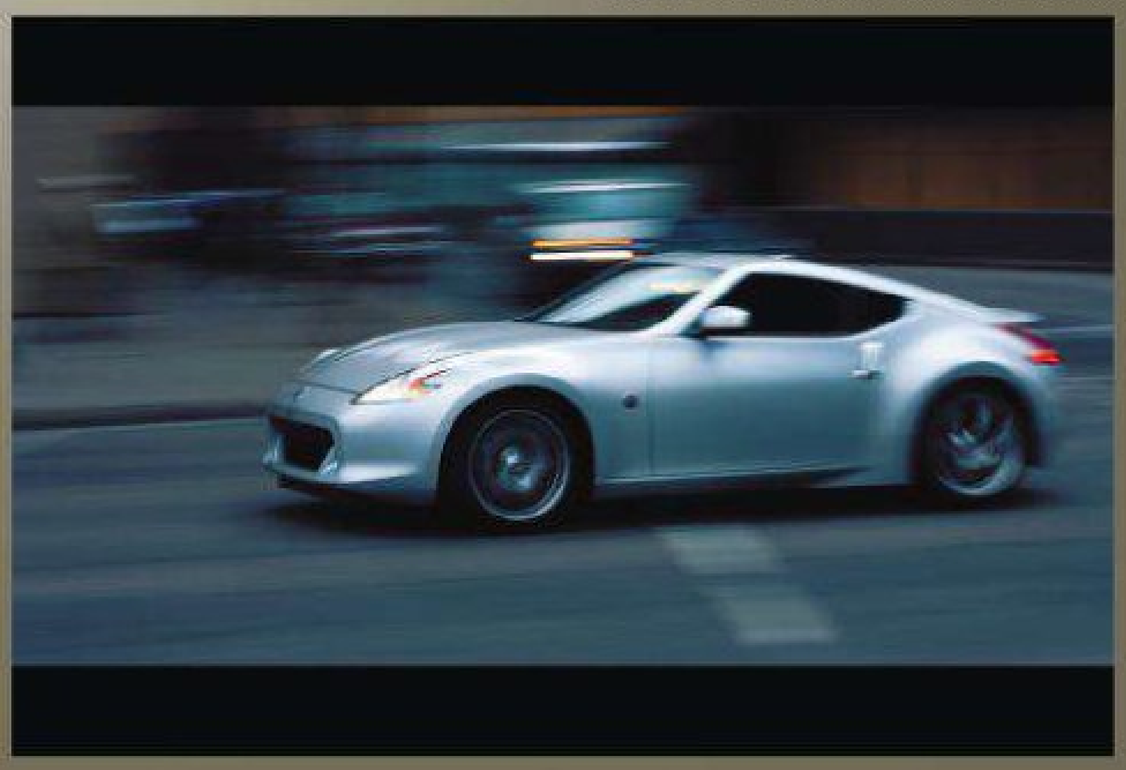
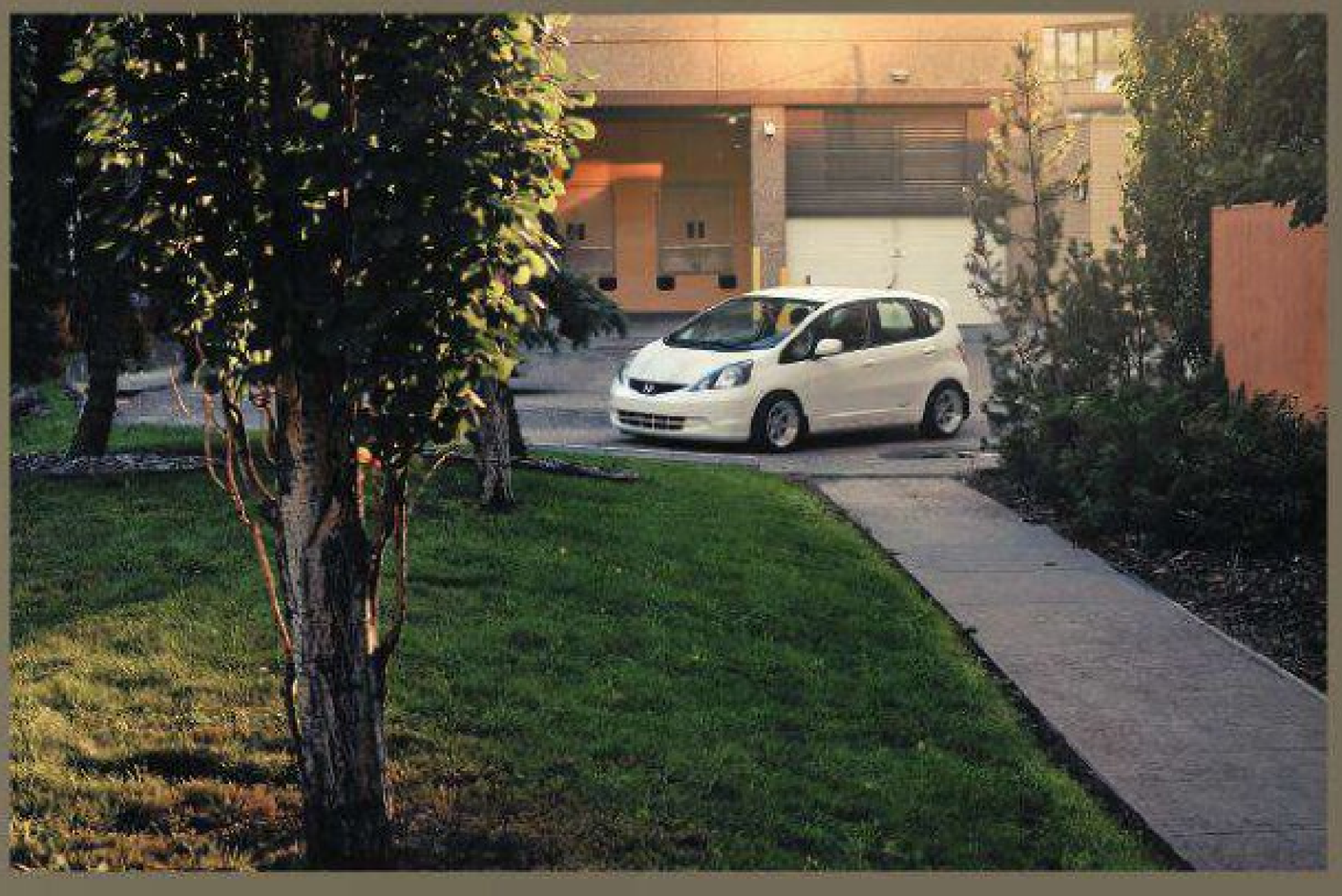
No matter how hard we try to shoot cars in exotic locations, sometimes they just look better in their element. Especially exotic cars, and while that 350 looks sick racing down the street, that GD is a perfect Fit in its owner's driveway, and the icy calm of snow strangely cools that hot RX-8, we have to hand it to Josh and his back-to-basics capture of the suburban GT-R we all wish was ours.
Got shots? Show 'em off: **longshots@importtuner.com**

NAME: JOSHUA LEGAULT
LOCATION: EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA
SHOT LOCATION: EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA
EQUIPMENT: NIKON D60, 55-200MM LENS; COREL PAINTSHOP PHOTO PRO X3
CONNECT: FLICKR.COM/JOSHUALEGAULT

NAME: JEFFREY CHIN
LOCATION: EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA
SHOT LOCATION: DOWNTOWN EDMONTON
EQUIPMENT: CANON REBEL XS, 50MM F/1.8 LENS, ADOBE PHOTOSHOP 7
CONNECT: FLICKR.COM/JEFFREYCHIN1



NAME: FLAMUR BINAKAJ
LOCATION: EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA
SHOT LOCATION: IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE!
EQUIPMENT: CANON REBEL T2I, 50MM F/1.8 LENS, ADOBE LIGHTROOM 3
CONNECT: FLICKR.COM/FLAMUR



NAME: SAM MCCARGAR
LOCATION: EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA
SHOT LOCATION: DOWNTOWN EDMONTON
EQUIPMENT: NIKON D300, 35MM F/1.8 LENS ADOBE PHOTOSHOP
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