



### President's introduction

Well - here I am, back in the hot seat once again. Snowy certainly left some big shoes to fill, but I'm sure I can keep the momentum up to continue moving the club forward.

As a first point, the last few weeks have seen the committee focus on more support and sponsorship from

A third new item is our merchandise. The various Autosalon t-shirts and the 'GT' polos have been great... but it's time for something new.

You may have seen the black long-sleeve DECA shirts which are now available, and - to help with this cold weather - we have some 2-piece polar fleece vest/racing jackets on the way.



*Being the Pres has it's perks - Snowy & I taking a \$325,000 Maserati for a spin*

the business community. As a result we have secured 8 new partnerships - listed on page 2. This is by no means the end, and we hope to have even more value to offer members in the coming months.

Our event planning has also stepped up a gear with the inclusion on the 2006 committee of Adrian and Joel from the WRX Club. Through this new relationship we will try to arrange bigger and better events for both clubs. Stay tuned for more shows, drag days and overnight cruises before the end of the year.

Delivery time and pricing is still to be confirmed, but expect member prices to be around \$100 - and non members about \$150, with goods arriving mid July.

In all - it looks like being another great year to be a part of SAU Vic. I am honoured to again be in the 'top job' for the club, and along with the new committee look forward to even better things as we move on.

Cheers  
James Ward (Jamezilla)

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### Editor's note

10 issues in - and we have our first article freely submitted by an SAU Vic member! Read Troy's article on preparing your car for a track day on page 15.

You too can be published! Submit any articles, reviews, photos or jokes to [editorial@jamezilla.com](mailto:editorial@jamezilla.com)

Cheers  
SAU Vic Committee



## News

### New sponsors and supporters

June has been a huge month for SAU Vic sponsors and supporters with no less than 8 new businesses now supporting the club!

A big thanks and 'welcome aboard' to...

**EXEDY**  
No.1 for Clutch

**immersive**  
immersive.com.au

**BECHTRANS**  
International

**MOTORSPORT** Logistics

**KEVIN FLYNN'S**  
**DRIVER DYNAMICS**  
ADVANCED AND PRECISION DRIVER TRAINING

**J-SPEC IMPORTS**

**RACING LINE**  
motorsport

**RAMPANT**  
performance imports

**TUSPEED**  
driving - tuning - racing - style - www.tuspeed.com

### 2006 SAU Vic Committee

Following the AGM in May, where a new club executive was elected, the committee positions have been finalised. Say hello to your new club ambassadors...

#### President

James Ward - *Jamezilla*

#### Vice President

Andrew Richmond - *Snowman*

#### Secretary

Adam Nightingale - *Adzmax*

#### Treasurer

David Lee - *Leewah*

#### Motorsport Director

Chris Thomson - *Scotsman*

#### Merchandise & Communications Officer

Bec Pretty - *Bec*

#### Events Co-ordinators

Ash Cosgriff - *R31Nismoid*

Paul Rivoli - *PaulR33*

#### Drift Co-ordinator

Peter Blythe - *Bass Junky*

#### Social & inter-club events Co-ordinators

Adrian Hard - *Age*

Joel Strickland - *joelstrick*

(Adrian and Joel are a duel post to compliment their positions on the WRX committee).

### Learn to Drift!

Mid July will bring us one of the most exciting new SAU events ever - a learn to drift day at DECA in Shepparton.

Stay tuned for entry details as numbers will be strictly limited. This should be a great event - and hopefully be the start of more SAU run Drift events.

## Welcome new members!

Serge Alexander  
Patrick Antoskiewicz  
Evan Boyack  
Peter Christopher  
Jarrad Davis  
Amal De Silvia  
Joshua Eddy  
Colin Fox  
Ron Freeman  
Jonny Giampietro  
Tim Honig  
Simon Husk  
Shane Janssen  
Benjamin Johnson  
Natasha Lisk  
Adam Newton  
Robert Nigro  
Vu Quach  
Mathew Sampson

*essay*  
*Rekin*  
*Startrippa*

*Silvia*  
*LiQuiD IcE*  
*kozeyekan*  
*cln*

*AREP3*  
*\*\*JAR\*\**

*TIMZ33*  
*180\_mph*  
*VSPEC-33*  
*AOZORA*  
*RUSHS*  
*Adz*  
*THENIG*  
*evilsb*

### All new Merchandise!

DECA shirts (long sleeve black cotton) are now available - \$40 for members

Winter Jackets with a zip-out polar fleece vest are coming soon. Reserve your order now!

Lanyards, stickers and Team Wang stubby holders are all still available - as are the red and black 'GT' polos as modeled by Taco Baz.

Coming up for summer - more t-shirts!

Have a merchandise idea? Let us know!







## Event review

### Track championship round 3: Sandown - 25.04.06

Sandown, for most of us it's a nice and easy track to get to and usually the spectators are out in force. Being nice and close it's a popular event and some serious cars come out to play.

Sandown's management wasn't impressed by our spectator turn out last time, so decided to enforce an entry list to be checked off at the gate. Being a public holiday, (Anzac Day) they probably thought spectator numbers would be out of control, but in the end it was very civil.

It was a slow start to the day with an oil slick being dropped all the way down the front straight. The WRX officials were correct to close the track down while it was cleaned up. It was great to see all the volunteers jump the fence to help clean up the oil and get the day back on track. With 16 SAU Members driving out of a maximum of 96 entries, it was a packed field. It was so packed that Jarrod and Ryan had to be put on a

waiting list, and were lucky enough to get some laps as other drivers pulled out with mechanical faults early in the day.

A big highlight of the day was to see all Skylines entered leaving the day on their own four wheels. As we have seen so many times in the past the excitement and pressure of Sandown usually takes out at least one Japanese casualty. For me a PB of a 1.22.3 with a standard turbo GTR was a great milestone. We all have to keep in mind that these days are meant to be fun and we shouldn't put pressure on people to punch out quick times. Sandown is a track that has claimed many Skylines, and i'm glad we didn't see that this time around. I must admit I feel more pressure at sandown, as people seem to use this as a benchmark and all the big cars come out to play.

The adopted club mascot (The Crazy Russian Tank Lada) was also out for kicks and giggles masquerading as a tow vehicle. Luckily there were no major incidents, as it would have been a slow toe back to the pits at 40km/h.

*Chris Thomson (Scotsman)*



*The prancing horse was put on a composite only diet to save weight*

## PHILIPS



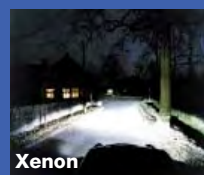
### SAU VIC SPECIAL OFFER

Xenon HID Conversion Kits  
RRP \$1980

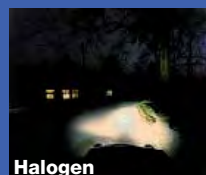
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6000K \$1200

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Xenon



Halogen

### Track championship round 4: Morewell - 20.05.06

On Saturday May 20th, the fourth round of the SAU/WRX Vic club championships were held at the Morewell hillclimb track, located about 2 hours from Melbourne. For those that aren't familiar with the track and have participated in an event at DECA in Shepparton, the track is very similar to the back track, just a bit more technical, and a little hairier!!

The field for the day consisted of an array of cars, but the EVO's, WRX's and MX5's dominated the entry list, and the times, bar one notable standout by the name of Aaron Panozza, eventual winner of the day with an awesomely quick 54.10 the quickest time of the day, with consistent 54's being run all day long. Congratulations to Aaron. Unfortunately, there was a severe lack of Skylines at the event, with Shane Nolc, William Li and myself the only other competitors from SAU, but we did our best to show that you don't need AWD, it just helps a lot!!

As a whole the day ran very smoothly with just a few scrapes here and no major incidents. I suffered a broken



ph: 0419 877 437  
Jack (JagR33)

### Track championship round 5: Sandown - 11.06.06

It was cold. Very cold. This may have had something to do with the slightly lower entry numbers than usual, but cold, crisp air is good for turbo cars and some good times were expected

- providing the drivers thawed out in time.

A good showing from SAU Vic members with the the top 4 times of the day being Skylines. Aaron punched out a fantastic 1:19.17, with Jack not far off the pace at 1.21.53 - both personal bests!

Despite a brief shower and the bitter cold - it was a remarkably incident free day, with only mechanical failure marring the day. Ray may have to get some new underpants though.

Once again a big thanks to the WRX club for running these events - and to the officials who had to endure some very unpleasant weather, but did so with a smile (and a shiver)

*James Ward (Jamezilla)*

### DECA Motorkhana Championship Round 2

The DECA Motorkhana event is becoming a traditional event on the WRX & Skylines Australia Victoria club's calendar's. So is the Friday night before the event, as after a cruise up from Melbourne to Shepparton the traditional drinks start and then as a result of these the last minute modification begins. This time around it was the changing of wheel and tire packages ready for the next day, or the decision to change spark plugs at 10pm.

The next morning we were greeted by a very dense fog covering Shepparton, once at the DECA facility we found that the fog had covered the entire skidpan area making visibility almost impossible.

Scurtiering began at 8:30am with cars slowly rolling up. To pass scrutiering everything loose inside the cars has to come out such spare tires, jacks, mats, tool kits and inside of glove boxes etc. Licenses when then also inspected as well as helmets to make sure they passed the rules.

By 9am there were some interesting types of car starting to appear in the car park. From your WRXs and STIs, to a range of GTRs from early R32s to full R34 GTR V-Specs. There were a few other GTS-T models thrown in as well as a couple of 180SX's. For something a little bit different there was a very nice R33 GTS-T with a full Kakimoto Racing wide body kit.

A few other different manufactures were represents with a couple of Ford XR6 Turbo's as well as other things



*They'll never be a dime-a-dozen, but those pesky Evos seem to be everywhere.*





## Mythbusters - wider tyres mean you can't break traction. Busted.

like a Ford TX5, a Subaru Liberty, and a BMW Z4.

One exotic car was trailered to the event, you know there is some serious competition out there when a car rocks up to event on the back of a trailer.

Once scrutenering is finished its time for the driver briefing where the rules and plans for the day are read out and covered.

After a quick roll call it was time for everyone to head off to the tracks, be it in two groups. The first group headed over to the skidpan and with the course names such as Muppet Run & Can Opener you knew it was going to be an interesting course. The set up consisted of a mark course with witches hats on the skidpan with each competitor heading off one at a time to follow the course and finishing inside a garage on the other side of the course. It can be very tricky to learn the course off the map on paper and if the car before you makes a mistake when you're watching them, it can confuse you totally before you head off to attempt the course.

Whilst the first group was on the skidpan attempting the Motorkhanna's, the second group was on the other side of the facility on the back track area, which consisted of two tracks called "Long Wang" and "Mini Wang". Which were two timed road events where the cars had to follow a marked course with witches hat slaloms set up to slow the cars down on the longer course. Helmets are worn on this section as cars can reach high speeds.

The Mini Wang was a short track, around 500m in length, with two sweeping corners followed by a long straight but over a blind crest. The Long Wang was around 1km in length with a car park to enter just after start line. The cars had to go around a couple of tight witches hats and then back out the way they came. It made for some very amusing attempts with competitors trying it with and without the handbrake, with some entertaining results. The rest of the circuit was made up of a couple tight corners with two chicanes to help slow the cars. With the cars having to stop inside a "garage" at the end of the course.

Once each group had finished their courses they swapped over to the other.

Once the two groups had finished morning activities it was lunchtime, the Skylines Australia club are renowned for their BBQs and their Wang Burgers and this time was no exception. After a hard morning of driving, the competitors were all very hungry. In between bites of food, stories were exchanged about how they tackled a certain part of the course.

After lunch the two groups were put together on the skidpan for the battles in the afternoon. The battles were set out with each car competing on the same course side by side.

There were all kinds of interesting match ups, a father and son in a R33 GTR vs R33 GTS-T. The two Ford "taxis" showdown, GTR vs GTR, WRX vs WRX and of course WRX v GTR. But the most entertaining part was watching all of the rear wheel drive cars trying to race under pressure and drifting around the track as opposed to trying to follow the course, but it definitely made for some enjoyable racing with many close finishes.

The day ended well with the Skyline boys again taking it to the WRX boys in the AWD competition and again taking out the top three places. Blaise



# race brakes



Paris took out first place in a R34 GTR which was owned by third place getter, Andrew Richmond. Second place was taken out by R33 GTR driver Chris Thompson, there was also a ladies trophy which was won by Alicia Matthews in a WRX, but there was some tough competitors in this competition

In RWD it was a walk over by Nigel Beale in the awesome Orange Toyota Supra followed by Wayne Sterling in a R33 GTS-T and Craig Moore in third also in a R33 GTS-T.

All in all the day was a very big success with lots of fun had by all and some great friendships made. The after party was also a great event, but that's a whole different story, lets just say the night involved Margaritas and Mexican hats!!

After the success of this event last year, this year it has been turned into a four round series with each being staged three months apart. The demand has been high over the first two events this year with each event filling in a matter of days. The last two events of 2006 have roughly been scheduled for September and November as this stage, and are to be confirmed in the coming months. To compete you need to be a member of CAMS approved car club and have a CAMS level 2 or AASA licence, as well as a helmet and a car that is roadworthy.

Joel Strickland (joelstrick)

### Inter-club Drag Day at Heathcote

Well, the inaugural Skylines Australia / WRX Club Drag Day has been and gone.

It all started for me at 5:45 am, getting myself and a 7 year old out of bed and into the car. The morning was cold, but the vibes were good.

Leaving STI Docklands at about 7:30 a good bunch of cars, about 40 odd, left for the trip up to Heathcote. Unfortunately, or predictably maybe, the field was split when somebody took a different turn to the rest which left a small crew of about 7 cars to go a slightly different way. So at 8:30 we all met in Lancefield bakery for some much needed breakfast.

Then onto the track; 52 vehicles entered the challenge, including two shit-box challenge cars (the Mighty Lada and a soon to be Turbo Tarago) and two Crotch Rockets.

The track started pretty slippery with my first run resulting in wheel spin all through first, second and into third. I guess you can thank road the night before and some dust for that.

As the day went on, the track got better and people were getting right into running numbers.

### ICE Performance

7 Dissik St  
Cheltenham  
mob: 0414 359 888



Personally, I had a couple of pairs of tyres to play with, so I took it upon myself to smoke em up at every opportunity. Maybe it's because deep down, I'm just a yobbo, or maybe because I love the smell of tyre smoke. Let me take this opportunity to thank The Tyre Factory Mitcham for supplying my tyres for your entertainment. Times tumbled during the day for everyone except for Mike Lowry who was most consistent with a string of 15.43 @ 96 mph. This is why drag racers that run in brackets use autos!

The shit-box challenge was something that we were all looking forward to, and although only 2 cars entered, it was good fun. James' Lada had the Super Cheater Spec exhaust modification, and the Tarago reportedly had the DVD player going during their runs!

In the end, the dial in times were 20.25 (Lada) and 19.0 (Tarago) and after the first two runs, they were one a piece. Surprisingly enough, the Lada never ceases to amaze. IT BROKE OUT! This basically means it lost because it went faster than its dial in



SAU Vic vs WRX Vic - not quite sheep stations, but it was on!





## Drag day results...

### Fastest STi

Shiraz Ali Patel 12.68 @ 107mph

### Most Consistent Sti

Shiraz Ali Patel

### Fastest WRX

Chris Sleeman 12.91 @ 117mph

### Most Consistent WRX

Chris Sleeman

### Fastest GTS-t

Pete Blythe 12.86 @ 113mph

### Most Consistent GTS-t

Steven Lowry

### Fastest GTR

Aaron Panozza 11.74 @ 121mph

### Most Consistent GTR

Aaron Panozza

### Fastest Intruder

Ray Evans 13.23 @ 133mph

### Most Consistent Intruder

Tharaka Pathirage

### Highest MPH

Ray Evans @ 133mph

### Most Improved ET

Ben Winstone (GTR)

### Winner Shit-box Challenge

"THE PIMP TARAGO"

time. The Lada lost because it was too fast! Can you believe it?

For me, the day was a bit more special. I have been chasing the 12 second quarter mile for a long time. I promised my Fiancé Gemma that once I made the 12 second bracket, I would stop doing power mods to my car. And true to my word, there will be no more chasing power by Bass Junky. That is of course, until something breaks.....

Thanks to all those who participated in what will become, as most of our event do, a regular event.

Not that you could tell ;) but I had an absolute ball and I hope everyone else did too.



*What better way to warm up a new workshop than with a dyno day*

Special personal thanks from me go to Jamezilla for transporting my wheels and tyres up to Heathcote and back! The Lada ROCKS

*Peter Blythe (Bass Junky)*

## Girl's night out

Well after a hard day at work I was quite looking forward to meeting up with some fellow SAU girls and having a few quiet drinks.

I headed down to Crown and met up with Sarah, had some dinner and went and lined up to get into the club. More ladies than I first thought actually take advantage of the Manicures and Martinis Ladies Night at Barcode, it was pretty busy.

On entering we received a free cocktail and a card for a free service (massage, manicure, make-up, etc) or another free cocktail – needless to say we all got the extra cocktail!!!

We played air hockey and pool most

## Racingline Motorsports Dyno Day

Technical day's form part of regular events for the SAU Vic Club. This time it was on open Dyno Day at the new premier workshop Racingline in Cheltenham.

The dyno day provides a useful way for car owners to measure their power output and compare with other cars and owners on the day. These days often serve as a great medium for speaking with tuners and modifiers 'in the know'.

The day proved to be very successful with a touch over 15 cars which kept the dyno facilities busy right up until 6pm. Al and Bass Junky both took our max rear wheel drive power for the day.

*Paul Rivoli (PaulR33)*

## Xtremeline

car detailing

: Car Wash	: Gift Vouchers
: Full Detailing	: Mobile Service
: Cut & Polishing	: Fleet Discounts
: SAU Member Discounts	

For bookings and information please contact  
Gavin on 0407 559770



Go-Kart picture

of the night and also played a bit of Daytona, which of course we were good at. There were also pool competitions, etc throughout the evening and to end the night, a male stripper.

Overall it was a good turnout, and was great to spend a bit more time with some girls I had only met once or twice before, and of course the regulars. Thanks to all who came and thank to Joel for driving me home. I'm looking forward to the next one already!

Bec Pretty (Bec)

## Go-Kart Grand Prix

There are few sports that have best friends laughing and joking around mere seconds before they become sworn mortal enemies. Indoor go-karting is one such sport.

### Go-karts - top 10 times

1 (Mavric) Matt	33.37
2 (SXR) Ray	33.46
3 (Chrisman) Scott	33.47
4 (Roy) Troy	33.53
5 (Leewah) Dave	33.56
6 (Scotsman) Chris	33.65
7 (kasanoff) Che	33.77
8 (Snowman) Andrew	33.78
9 (Bass Junky) Pete	33.84
10 (Ferni) Andrew	33.93

The SAU vs WRX go-kart challenge recently held it's 'selection trials' for our 10-fastest racers. The WRX boys had put in some good laps - with a few times in the 32-sec range ensuring the battle to represent SAU Vic

would not be fought lightly.

Our 26 starters were split into two groups - each having a 15-lap qualifying and 15-lap race session. Some took this seriously... some did not. One thing made certain however, is go-karting is loads of fun!

Some very close racing resulted in the finalists all within 0.6 of a second! See below for the top-10 times of drivers who will be heading into the final against the WRX club.

James Ward (jamezilla)



## 20th Anniversary of the Aussie 7th Skyline

July 28-30th 2006

SHEPPARTON, VIC

**\*\*OPEN TO ALL MODEL SKYLINES, PRINCE TO V35\*\***



Friday 28th - Sign In All Day From 10 AM Saturday 29th - Show & Shine - Concourse  
Sunday 30th - Deca Track Day & Presentation Dinner

Open to ALL clubs  
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Call the Visitor Information Centre: 1800 808 839  
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## Event Gallery

### Sandown Anzac Day - round 3



*Jack's car is so cool, it wears sunglasses*



*Team recovery making the world a better, safer place - with less oil dumped by careless Elfin's*





## Event Gallery cont...

Morwell Hillclimb - round 4

Photos: Andrew Edgar.com



Dane bags up those fat rears pushing the 180 around the tight Morwell track



## Event Gallery cont...

Girls Night Out



Sarah shows she is a girl not to be messed with!





## Event Gallery cont...

### Sandown June - round 5



1:22 huh dad?... meh, seen better



## Event Gallery cont...

### Racingline Dyno Day



Someone always tries to out do the Lada



RB20 readies itself



Series 3 GT-R Xenons... memories...





## Event Gallery cont...

### SAU vs WRX Drag day



\* insert amusing Vin Diesel Fast 'n Furious quote here



A big thanks tu the day's sponsor - Tuspeed!



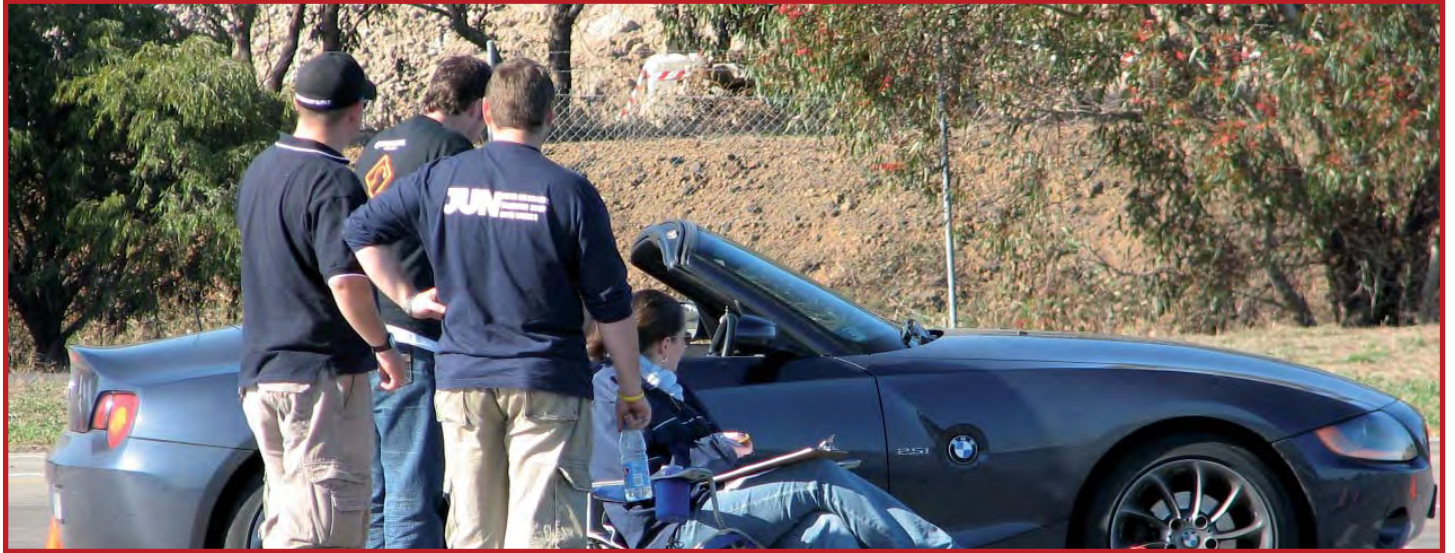
Plenty of variety in the pits - bring on the next one!





## Event Gallery cont...

### DECA round 2



*Last minute instructions for the Bimmer - go that way, turn left at the cone...*



*Owning Shepparton - part of the event schedule*



*Everyone loves Team Purple*





## Event Gallery cont...

### Go-Karts



Race faces for all - even Campbell!

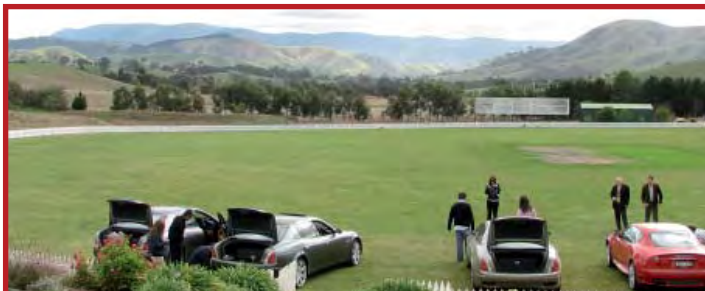


The Chapel St simulator was a great success



## Event Gallery cont...

### Maserati Drive day



Great views from remote cricket ground in Flowerdale



Choices - Snowy shops from over \$1,000,000 worth of toys





## Skyline Lessons

### Track Day preparation

*Thinking of taking your car to the track? Well heres an introduction on how to get your car ready.*

In a perfect world we would all be able to pay a reputable workshop for a service before every event. A service and inspection of the vehicle on the hoist, with some preventative maintenance is the best way of ensuring that you maximise your fun at the track with trouble free running.

However there are those of us who either cannot really afford the luxury of such frequent services, or perhaps we like to have a go at servicing our own vehicles. The latter approach does have its merits. You do become far more intimate with your car, getting a better feel for the things that wear at an accelerated rate when you track your car. Brake pad wear, oil degradation, tyre wear and the like all add to the cost of running the car in the long term. If you are able to counter some of these costs with preparing your own car, well you are in a better position to more regularly enjoy your car on the track or skidpan.

Firstly it should be noted this is not an exhaustive guide on preparing

your car. However it will provide most owners with a basic check list of things to inspect and/or replace before and post events.

#### 1. Read the Supplementary Regulations for the event.

The requirements for each day can differ based on the insurance the day is run under, the requirements of the organiser or even the classification of the event. Along with clarifying any car requirements such as fire extinguishers and driver requirements related to clothing and helmets, the Supp regs will also advise the entrant on any licence requirements.

#### 2. Do not rely on Scrutineering

Scrutineering requirements differ from event to event. Many Open Practice Days at tracks require you to scrutineer your own car, which involve the driver signing a waiver stating the vehicle has been inspected and safe to enter the track. Other events will require basic scrutineering carried out by organisers of the event, others rely on licensed scrutineers to inspect and pass vehicles before entering the track.

Before presenting your car to scrutineering, make sure your car meets all the requirements of the Sup-

plementary Regulations. If there are requirements for particular clothing and helmets etc then ensure they are presented with the vehicle for inspection as well.

#### 3. Check the basics

Neglect the basics and you will find no matter how much go gear your car has, it won't last the distance. At a minimum you should:

- Inspect you oil level and condition
- Check your coolant level and condition of hoses
- Inspect the battery is free of build up on the terminals and the leads secure. You should also ensure that the battery is securely located and free of movement.
- Inspect tyre wear is even, with no visible canvas or belts. If the tyres are unevenly worn due to poor alignment or excessive camber then it may also be a good idea to rotate the tyres.
- Brake fluid level and pad thickness. Carefully consider the thickness of pad you have left. Different events have different levels of pad wear. If your not sure then its best to replace them.
- Inspect hoses and wiring. This is especially important for people with modified engines. A quick check of fuel lines to ensure they are not perished or brittle, Crank Angle sensor and plug are secure, AFM and filter are secure.
- No oil drips or leaks around not only the engine, but gearbox and diff as well.
- Gearbox and diff levels. Periodically it's a good idea to check these levels and at the same time the condition of the fluid. The frequency at which these fluids are up to you and your mechanic. But if you know if have a diff or gearbox problem, be it noise/wine or fluid loss then obviously its something you need to monitor closely.





#### 4. A few little touches that may help the reliability of the car when at the track.

Some owners prefer to remove the coil pack gallery cover in order for the coil packs to run cooler. Excessive temperatures have anecdotally been known to cause premature failure.

Whilst oil down at the track is inevitable from various failures, if you know you have a problem don't put yourself in the position of having to be towed and the track cleaned up. And whilst taking your car to the track is great fun, safe and if you normally not detrimental to your car, be prepared that things can and do go wrong, and sometimes a gearbox or engine will call it quits...

Troy Brisby (Roy)

### Life in the fast lane

#### SAU Presidential Maserati drive day

My Sundays are usually reserved for a bit of a sleep in followed by the couch. There has to be something pretty special happening for this routine of mine to be broken.

But this Sunday I found myself up bright and early and making my way in slight drizzle down to Zigame's in Richmond where I was to meet up



*Now, was it red-wire to blue-wire, or red-wire to green-wire...*

with James..... and a number of super hot Maserati's. Zigame had provided 3 of the new Quattroporte (one standard, one of the Sport GT's and one of the Executives), along with 2 GranSport's and finally a Coupe for a small group of us to have a bit of a play in.

The day was going to see us getting to have a test of 3 of these cars and James and I were hoping for the sportier versions. So we were suitably impressed when we were informed our first drive for the day was to be in the Quattroporte Sports GT. The Quattroporte is the newest car in the Maserati line up and in a real stroke of

naming genius Quattroporte in Italian means four doors.

But this car is much more than just a four doored Maserati. Under the bonnet is found the same 4.3L V8 that powers the new Ferrari 430 (it's slightly detuned but still makes 400bhp). Blipping the throttle in neutral, the sound is unmistakably Ferrari. Anyways it was time to hit the road. The first leg was going to see us pretty much just freeway driving so I thought this was a section best left to James. The entire Maserati range is only available with their six-speed electro-hydraulic transmission – aka auto/flappy paddles. So the first task when starting the car up was to switch the car to "Sports" mode (i.e. manual gear changes via the paddles) and to switch off the Maserati Protection System (MPS – aka traction control).

The freeway drive allowed us to play with some of the toy's in the car. These included switching on the dynamic seats (so that they tilt when the car is going around corners), the seat massage devices, the seat ventilators and the seat heaters. In fact there were so many seat buttons that I found myself in a bit of a pickle. The seat heaters were on high and I was







slowly melting but it took me 45mins to find the dial that turned it off! Other than the seats there was a vast array of other computer data including a sat navigation system that was pointing out a number of new towns we'd never heard of before. But cruising along the freeway with the massage seats on and the sun roof open we knew we were driving in a very luxurious vehicle.

After 70 odd kilometers of freeway driving it was time to stop and for me to get behind the wheel. It was also time to get away from the main roads and have some fun. Patrick Latin from

to be muffled even at the redline of 7,000rpm.

But the performance of the car was exceptional. Maserati quote the Quattroporte of having a 0-100km/hr time of just 5.2s which is impressive given the weight of the car is as close to 2 tons that it doesn't matter. Given the weight of the car the most impressive aspect of the car were the brakes which I must say pulled us up once or twice quicker than I expected (thankfully!) The flappy paddles were not too bad either once you got used to the delay and learnt to press them early. Although there was a notice-

of the little computer tricks available to the Quattroporte. It seems as we ventured onto the gravel I must have driven over a large stone or something and punctured the rear left tyre. The Quattroporte has a tyre pressure monitoring system and detected immediately that the tyre was going down. It consequently displayed this information on the drivers console and prompted me to pull over immediately.

With the Quattroporte supporting 20" rims the concept of a spare wheel in the boot is just a fantasy. So luckily for us I was just able to hand the keys over to the following Maserati service crew and James and I went up to the morning tea location for some nice coffee and scones.



Maserati lead the way and I made sure I was the first car behind. Once we were off the freeway the cars were opened up and we got our first appreciation of the sporting prowess of the Maserati. As previously mentioned we were in the Sports GT model which has 20" rims (over the 19" standard), a throatier exhaust and stiffer suspension. But following Patrick in the standard version Quattroporte there was very little obvious difference between the two cars. Whilst blipping the throttle in neutral produced a very sweet sound, I found the engine noise when driving the Quattroporte

able difference in ride comfort when lifting off the accelerator for either up or down shifts than keeping the foot planted. The suspension was never uncomfortable but yet the handling in the twisties was exceptional and the car also felt completely stable at 220km/hr (um.... Apparently!). My only complaint as far as a sports car went was that the steering felt a little light and so the feedback was a little vague. But for a four door luxury saloon I was pretty impressed. The last kilometer before our morning tea and consequent car swap stop was on gravel. Here we discovered one

After the short break it was time for us to test out our next Maserati. It seemed the gods were indeed smiling on us as we were chosen to take the Maserati GranSport. The GranSport also packs a 400bhp 4.2L V8 but with a lower weight of around 1660kg's the car is capable of 0-100km/hr in 4.8s and a standing ¼ mile time of just 12.7s.

First impressions on sitting in the car were the marked differences in styling over the Quattroporte. Gone were all the computers and fancy chairs and instead you found yourself in a much more compact space surrounded by carbon fiber fixtures. Turning the car on was this time done with the assistance of the always fashionable start button and the second noticeable difference was found – the sound. Whilst the Quattroporte was unmistakably Ferrari, the GranSport sounded like a traditional deep V8. The two cars however do share the same transmission systems so the first thing to do again was to switch to Sports mode and switch the traction control off.

This time around I was driving first as the second part of the drive was due to be more twisty so I figured I'd let James have some fun this time around. So as we took off I did what





all good test drivers would get an appreciation of the car – I planted it. At this point the rear wheels lit up and I found myself giggling like a school girl. This was fun.

The steering of the car was considerably heavier and consequently there was a much better feedback for the driver. But the best thing about this car was the sound. The engine noise was exquisite and down shifting the car came with a highly addictive automatic throttle blip. It was so addictive that I found myself down shifting for no reason at all other than to hear the engine. This was a cool car. It seemed my time behind the wheel was all too short as we reach the driver change over point. James saddled in behind the wheel and we proceeded to drive some fantastic roads on the way to our lunch stop. The only disappointment was we managed to be held up with traffic most of the way so we never really got to appreciate the full potential of this car.

Our lunch stop was the famous Château Yerring and after a variety of canapés we were treated to a fantastic three course lunch. There was a coach available to take us all back into town however we were offered the opportunity to drive one of the cars back with the sacrifice of passing on the great selection of wines the were provided with the lunch. Since the return drive was not going to involve a driver change I sacrificed the wine for the opportunity to drive some more, whilst James proceeded to get nicely pickled.

The only car in the range we had not driven was the Coupe. The car is very similar to the GranSport in design with the same engine only detuned slightly. There are also a few design differences that lead to a slightly reduced performance package over the GranSport.

The lunch break also saw the onset of rain and so it was decided much to my delight that I should drive the more powerful GranSport home in those conditions. Leaving Château

Yerring in my traditional fashion (i.e. foot planted) had those rear wheels spinning like mad in the wet. The decision was made to turn the traction control back on at this stage. The next time the car came to a stop, we tested out the traction control on the next launch. The system worked very effectively and wheel spin was cut almost immediately. It was then decided that this was no fun so the traction control was turn off again and I was back to giggling.

A lot of the drive home was in traffic and so I got an appreciation of the car as an around town vehicle. It was still fantastic and I was regretting the inevitable return. For me this was a car I could very much enjoy having as a regular commuter which would still provide fun for a weekend run up the hills. James however was more inspired by the luxury and technology of the Quattroporte. It was a decision we were happy to disagree on.

But of coarse there has to be a downside to everything and in these cars case it is there costs. With the on road cost of the Quattroporte Sports GT at around \$320K and the GranSport at \$275K they are not a car that either James or myself are going to be able to afford any time soon. But it was a most enjoyable way to spend

the day and out thanks must go to Zigame for the opportunity to experience these cars. I'd happily give up another Sunday on the couch to do it again.

Andrew Richmond (Snowman)

## 1:24 Scale Nissans - deal!

- AutoSpeedBits have kindly offered these awesome model cars at a special SAU Member price:



- We can offer to SAU Vic Members \$40 incl. GST (Pickup from Rowville or Bayswater)

Orders are placed every Friday. Limited Stock.

- See thread for more info:

<http://www.skylinesaustralia.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=123293>

A big thanks to AutoSpeedBits!

## Picture of the month



*The Lada's poise and balance on the road is second to none!*





## Brain Buster

### What car is that?

Name each of these fine machines and win a prize!



## Committee Listing

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