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## TEST DRIVES

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TOYOTA COROLLA ALTIS  
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FLIGHT OF THE  
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BURNING RUBBER  
An Intro to Motorsports



THE PERFORMANCE  
CAR ROUND-UP



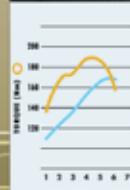
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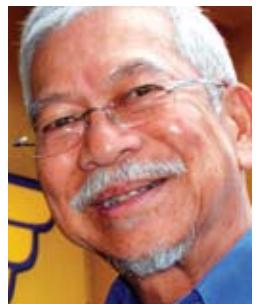
ON ALL PABORITO MEALS

\*FOR DINE IN ONLY

SULIT  
MEAL



P49



Gus Lagman  
PRESIDENT

## Solving Traffic

**B**Y the time you get hold of this issue of AQ, the festive mood of the Christmas season would already be upon us. But then, traffic on the road would also be intolerable. That is, if the government hasn't come up yet with an ingenious solution to this perennial problem.

Not too long before I wrote this piece, the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) announced plans to revive the Odd-Even scheme to regulate the number of vehicles on the road. The scheme is fairly simple: If your car's plate number ends with an odd number, then you can only use it on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. If it ends with an even number, then you're free to use it on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. If fully enforced, the scheme expects to reduce vehicles on the road by half.

The Odd-Even scheme was implemented years ago and was declared a major failure. Those with only one car protested to high heavens saying that it's not fair for the government to disallow them - taxpayers after all - use of the roads half of the time. Those with extra money to buy another car did just that to be able to drive a car every day.

So how do you solve this complex problem we call traffic? I don't have a fool-proof answer but I have six suggestions particularly on the main thoroughfare that cuts through the metropolis, the road we call EDSA.

1. Get illegal vehicles out of the road. This is a no-brainer: If a bus or a jeepney doesn't have a franchise, then it has no business being on the road. Authorities estimate that about 30 percent of buses on EDSA are colorum or illegal. If these buses are removed, then traffic will ease up substantially and buses with legal right to ply EDSA would earn more. You must have noticed that even during the rush hour, buses are usually only some 30-40% full. But because according to some people, these colorum buses are owned and operated by ex-generals and policemen, getting them off the roads will need a lot of political will - something, fortunately, that the new administration apparently has. Remember the "no wang-wang"?
2. Where feasible, set up loading/unloading bays along EDSA, but instead of how it is set up now, where the bays eat up one or two lanes of the road, they should be recessed from the road. Observe where the traffic choke-points along EDSA are and you'll find that they are almost always at the loading/unloading areas for buses. These areas make the already tight road even tighter because they eat up lanes from the main carriageway. (I understand that the DPWH is planning to implement this scheme along the national roads.) An option would be to use side streets with the appropriate configuration, as loading/unloading bays. Buses can turn to these side streets

to load/unload, turn left twice, then turn right, back into EDSA (like going through three sides of a rectangle). There may be some sections along EDSA where this scheme is feasible.

3. Move the terminals (stations) of provincial buses to areas near the end-points of the MRT/LRT. Those would be in the Monumento and Bonifacio Drive areas for the north-bound buses; and Baclaran, for the south-bound buses. For the latter, the Food Terminal (FTI) is actually ideal, but I suggest that the LRT be extended to reach it to make it more readily accessible to the riding public.
4. Invest on mass transportation. This is the long-term solution to traffic. Nobody wants to sit in the car that crawls through EDSA. We all want to get to our destination the fastest, easiest, and cheapest way possible. And subways and trains are the only way to go. With modern tunnel-boring machines, subways are no longer as expensive to build as they used to be. In the meantime, let's increase the number of coaches on the MRT. I understand it can carry a few more of those, for which reason, the LRT will lend to the MRT four of its coaches.
5. Eliminate the "boundary" system. This system is the root of our problems with buses and jeepneys, but it is also most difficult to eliminate. In many countries, drivers (and conductors) are salaried employees. Under the "boundary" system, which is the most popular scheme in our country, the drivers don't earn a peso until he meets a certain minimum amount that's due to the operator. It is therefore no small wonder why drivers try to out-maneuver each other on the road to grab passengers. And they'd stop anywhere to wait for passengers. In most other countries, it's the passengers who queue up to wait for the buses, which arrive exactly at pre-scheduled times.
6. Assign only one lane for buses, but operate them under a unified dispatching scheme, so they pretty much simulate a train system. There will be complications ... like when buses coming from other points merge with those along EDSA. But this situation exists in other countries, too, so obviously the problem is not insurmountable. I must admit, though that this scheme can only work if Scheme 5 above can also be implemented.

Solving traffic is a major social, technical, and economic exercise. We need thinkers to regularly assess our situation on the road and come up with innovative solutions. The above suggestions are just that - they're logical ideas that need to be studied, validated, and tested. But we should pore over them - and others - more seriously, instead of recycling old formulas that never really worked in the first place.

Merry Christmas to all!

For comments or suggestions, email me at info@aaop.org.ph .

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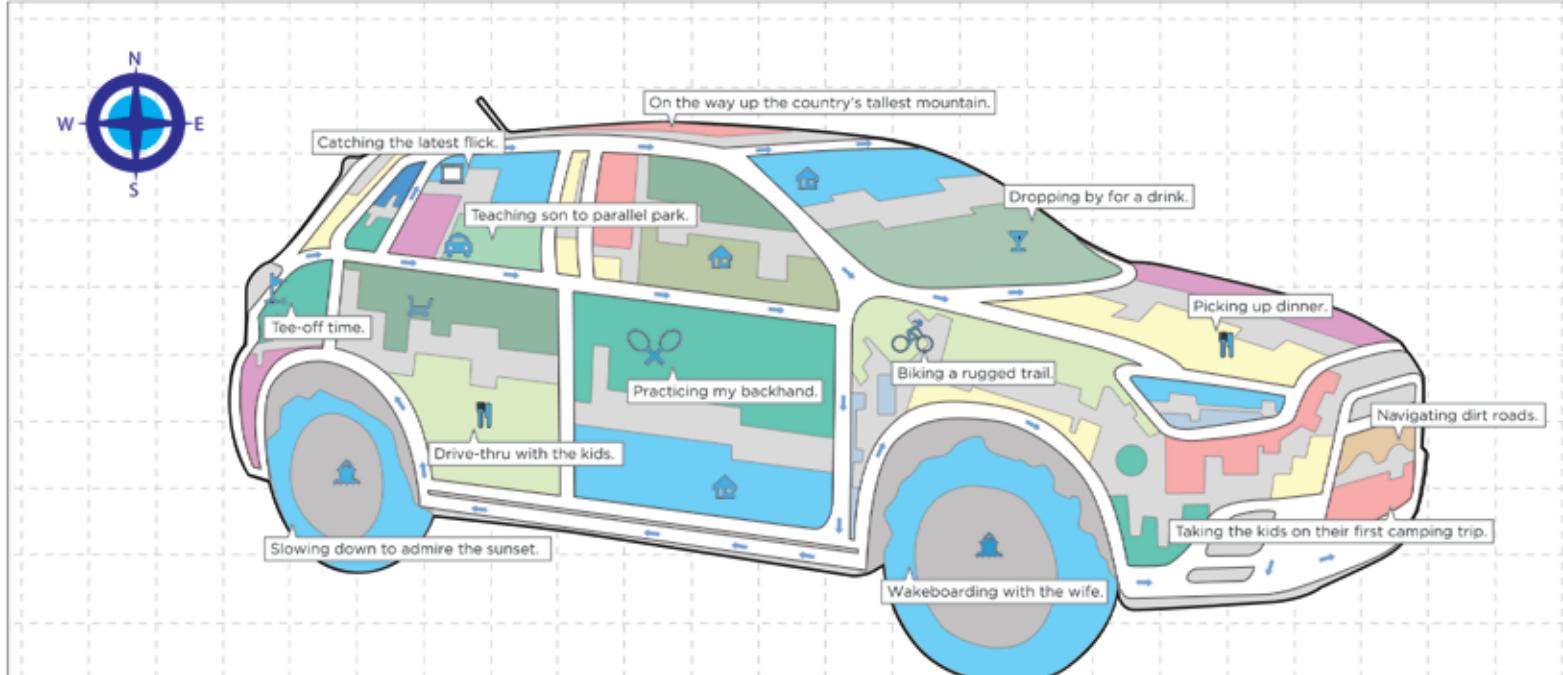
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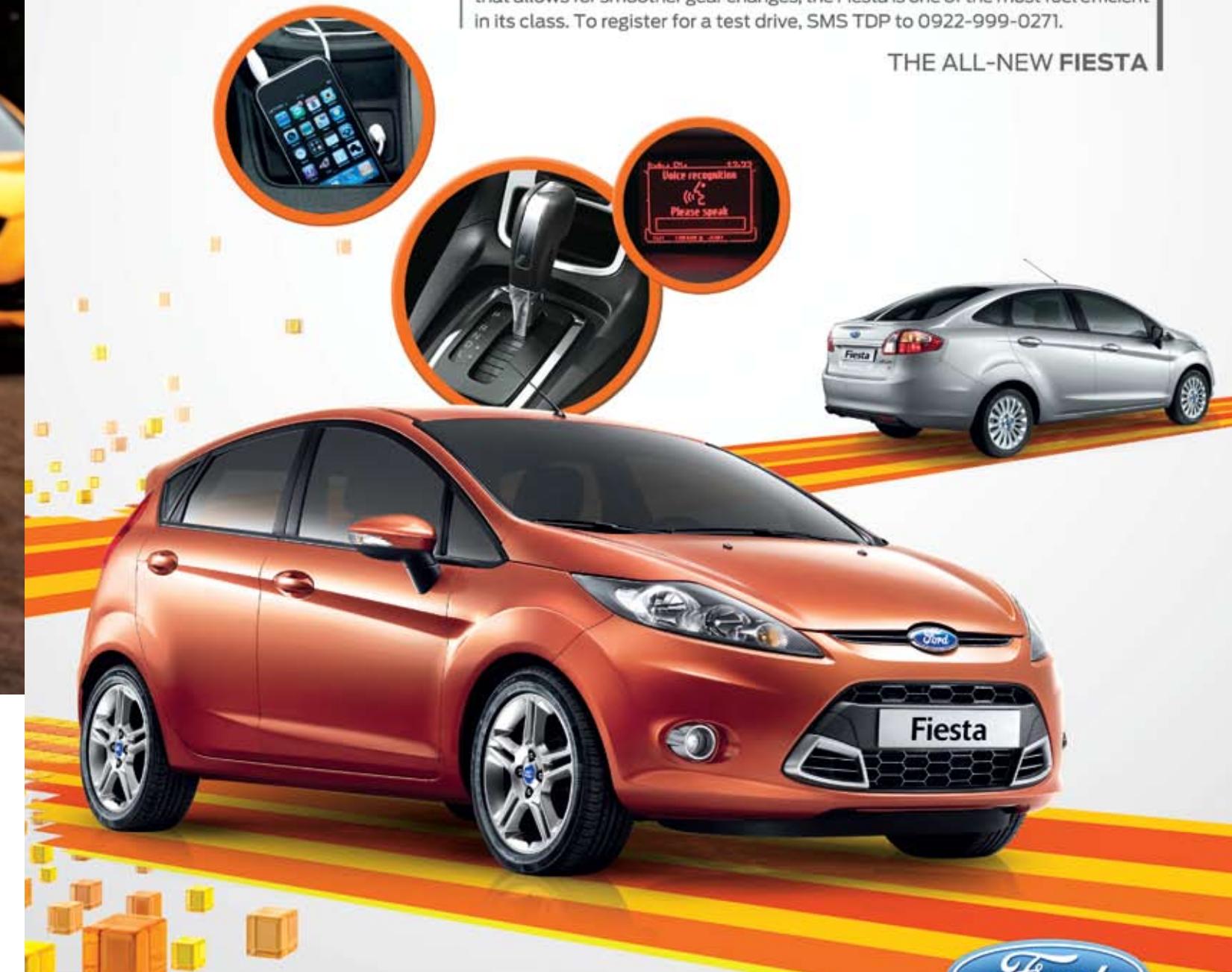
Andre Palma

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We dedicate this issue to the memory of Kookie Ramirez

## EDITORIAL

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**Angelo Puyat**  
An avid tuner, AG, as his friends call him, is the ideal guy to talk to when it comes to prepping a car for more power, more style and more audio. For this issue, AG takes us through what can be done to three popular cars off the showroom floor.



**Chris Van Hoven**  
Experienced driver and award winning writer, Chris has an unbridled love for anything with four wheels, and for the performance issue, we turn to Chris to lay down the basics of various types of local motorsports.



**Andre Palma**  
Andre thought he was meant for great things behind the wheel even from an early age. Obviously he was wrong and is in fact mediocre as a wheelman at best -- proof positive that everything works out in the end.

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## Readers of sport auto award eight prizes to Audi

The readers of sport auto, a German automotive magazine, declared the Audi R8 Spyder best in its class in the "Sportiest Cars of 2010" survey. All in all, Audi took eight awards. The Audi R8 Spyder left its category's competitors in the rear-view mirror by capturing 17.3 percent of readers' votes. This high-performance sports car featuring a lightweight soft top dazzles thanks to the synergy of its technologies – such as an ASF body made of aluminum and carbon fiber; quattro permanent all-wheel drive; LED headlights; and an innovative seat-belt microphone.

In addition, three Audi models finished in second place. The Audi A5 Coupé 3.0 TDI quattro, the TT RS Roadster and the Audi R8 4.2 FSI quattro all won silver medals in their respective classes. Further impressive achievements: the Audi S3 2.0 TFSI, the RS 6, the TT Roadster 2.0 TFSI and the Audi TTS Coupé 2.0 TFSI came in third, respectively.

In the "Sportiest Cars of 2010" survey, 8,674 sport auto readers chose their favorites in 15 categories of series-production vehicles and ten tuning classes.

For more information on the Audi R8 Spyder and other Audi models available in the Philippines, please contact Audi Philippines at 727.0381 or visit our showroom at 201 Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

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Aida Sevilla Mendoza  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## Fast Women

**T**HE women I refer to here are those who live in the fast lane. Women who compete in motor sports are generally admired for their courage and driving skills but are not expected to participate in – much less win – the most demanding, the most prestigious motoring contests like Formula One or Le Mans 24 Hours or the World Rally Championship.

The weaker sex, they say, cannot withstand the g-forces that F1 cars, the fastest in the world, inflict on the driver. Driving a Formula One car whose engine revs at 18,000 rpm with pistons going up and down 300 times per second and whose small steering wheel is the most complicated in the world -- with numerous buttons, switches and paddles that regulate everything from the differential to the front wing, the brakes, the fuel mixture, the engine settings and the gearshift – surely, these are not for the feminine gender?

Neither is the Le Mans 24 Hours an event for women, people say, as this is the world's most famous, most grueling 24-hour endurance race covering up to 5,000 kilometers through the French countryside with drivers reaching speeds of 340 km an hour or more, even in the dark.

But whoa! At the 75th edition of Le Mans last June, an all-women crew of four led by Natacha Gachnang was among the 168 drivers of 23 nationalities who competed. The all-female team drove a Ford GT. According to the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile), since 1923 when the first Le Mans was held, 50 women have competed as drivers and there have been 22 all-female crews. The highest position ever for a woman driver in Le Mans was achieved in 1932 by Odette Siko, who placed fourth overall in an Alfa Romeo 8C with a male co-driver. In 1951, an all women-crew finished 15th overall in their Ferrari 166 MM

**“Women who compete in motor sports are generally admired for their courage and driving skills but are not expected to participate in – much less win – the most demanding, the most prestigious motoring contests like Formula One or Le Mans 24 Hours or the World Rally Championship.”**

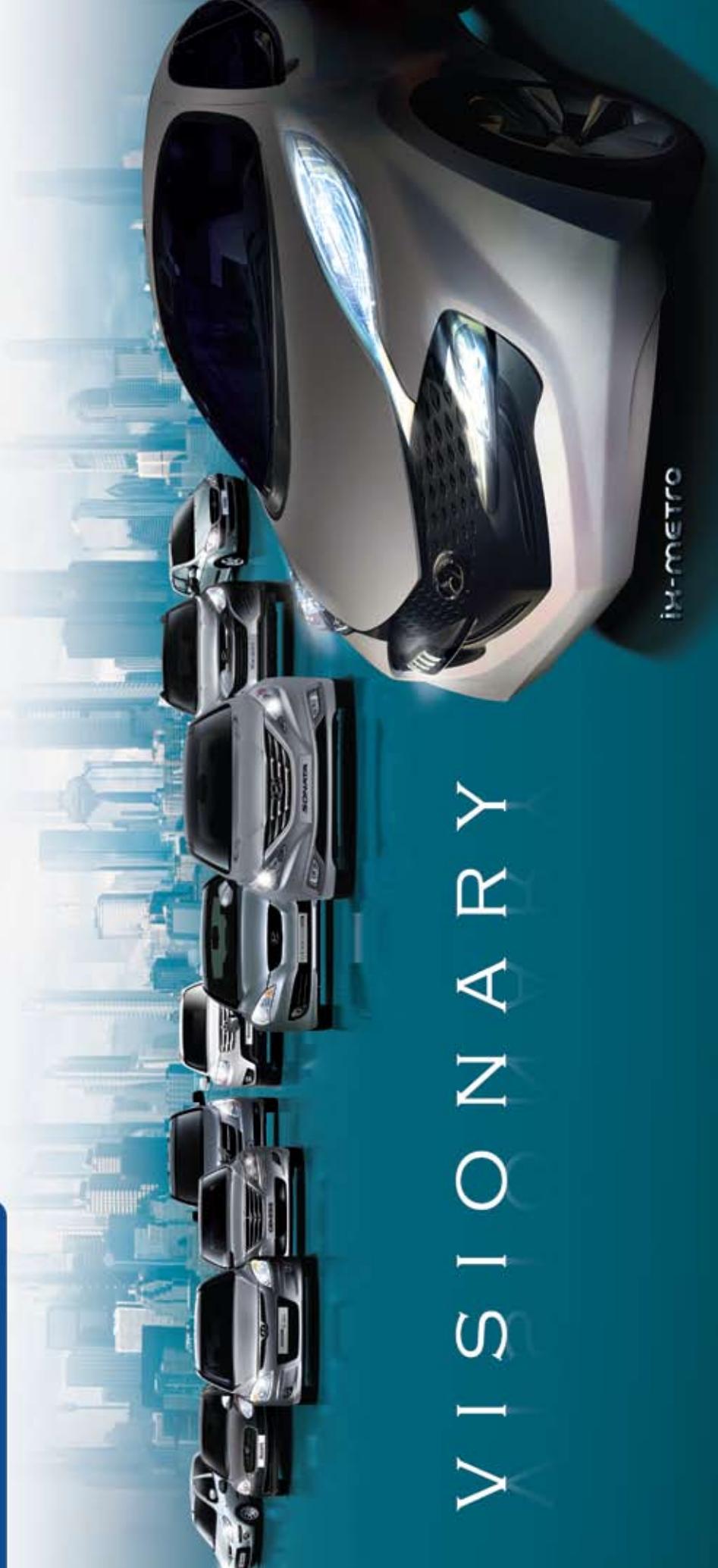
Coupe. Michele Mouton, Vice Champion in the 1982 FIA World Rally Championship and two other women won the 2L prototype class at Le Mans in a Moynet LM75 in 1975.

The only lady points scorer in the history of Formula One to date was the late Leila Lombardi, an F1 driver with March. Lombardi was also the first woman to win an FIA World Championship event when she won the 1979 Enna 6 Hours, a round of the FIA World Manufacturers Championship for sports cars. At Le Mans, she finished 20th in 1976 with Christine Dacremont and 11th overall and second in GTP with Christine Beckers in 1977.

Desire Wilson, a South African, won the 6 Hour races at the Monza and Silverstone FIA World Championship events in 1980. She competed at Le Mans in 1991 with Cathy Muller and Lyn St. James as team mates. Muller has also raced in F3, F3000, the World Sports Car Championship and Indy Lights in the USA. Lyn St. James is just one of five women to successfully qualify for the Indianapolis 500 and the first woman to win the Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year award.

Fast women Michele Mouton, Natacha Gachnang and Cathy Muller are actively involved with the Women & Motor Sport Commission (WMC) recently organized by the FIA, the Paris-based federation that governs all four-wheeled motor sports worldwide including F1, Le Mans 24 Hours and the WRC. Headed by former World Rally star Michele Mouton, the 19-member WMC aims to create a motor sport culture that facilitates the full participation of women, to create strategies that will promote education and training of women in motor sport and to organize events allowing knowledge sharing on how to increase women's participation and to collaborate with international organizations on joint sports projects.

At the International Working Group World Conference on Women and Sport in Sydney, Australia last May, WMC president Mouton reiterated the WMC's commitment to establish policies that will strengthen women's roles in motor sport and increase the participation of women at the highest levels of motor sport. As a director of the Automobile Association Philippines, the only FIA affiliate in the country, I would like to laud the fast women here and abroad who help to promote the WMC's objectives by competing in motor sport events.



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Mandy Eduque  
COLUMNIST

## My Auto-Biography of Performance Cars

**W**HEN asked to focus on performance cars for this issue, I was initially somewhat at a loss as to which cars to write about. Ferraris, Porsches, BMW's...and so on?

Then it dawned on me that I had been driving what would have to be considered the truest, purest forms of performance cars for most of my adult life. Except that these were not performance cars for normal, everyday driving. Rather, they were made to perform on racetracks and rally roads.

These cars would first be stripped of any unnecessary amenities - seats, upholstery and carpeting, airconditioning and sound systems, even windows - to make them as light as possible. Bodyshells would be stripped, lightened, then seamwelded to integral rollcages to maximize chassis stiffness. Standard suspensions would be replaced by adjustable, heavy-duty springs and dampers to be able to keep the car planted on the roughest roads. Engines and gearboxes would be tweaked to maximize power and torque output. Finally, install the most powerful brakes available and you end up with a car with only one purpose in life - perform and win.

Allow me to wander down my memory lane and recall the cars I have driven in competition - my Auto-Biography, if you will.

The first car I ever drove in anger was the Ford Escort RS2000 which I drove in rallies from 1975 to 1984. In a way, I was fortunate to start rallying with the Escort. Compact, light and blessed with excellent handling, the Escort really taught me how to drive a

rally car as it was so easy to induce oversteer with it, which was the only way to make the rear-wheel drive cars of those days turn on loose surfaces. In 1979, the Escort and I finished first in Group A in my first international rally - the Asean IV.

In that 10-year period, I only ever drove two other cars, both Toyota Corollas. One was a four-door DX with a 2TG engine I drove in Malaysia in 1984, the other a 1979 SR I drove in one local event. While the Corollas had the edge over the Escorts engine power-wise, the latter had the better handling and remains my favorite rally car of that era.

The Group B era arrived in 1985 and with it the Nissan 240RS. I campaigned a Bill Blydenstein-prepared 240RS in Malaysia that year and, later that year, Jun Espino and I placed 8th overall in the first Honkong-to-Beijing Rally. As a member of the three-car official Nissan factory team, we also beat the factory Audi, Toyota and Opel teams and won the Overall Team Award. In retrospect, that was the highlight of my rally career as we were pitted against my rally idols - Mikkola, Waldegard, Kankunnen - and did pretty well.

The next year, 1986, I drove another 240RS in New Zealand, this one prepared by Kiwi Tony Teesdale, which I also drove in the 1986 and 1987 editions of the Hongkong-Beijing Rally. While certainly more powerful than the Escort and just as well-handling, the 240Rs would eventually be overshadowed by the superior traction of the four-wheel drive Audis and Peugeots in Group B. But, to my mind, it was the best of the rear-wheel drive Group B cars.

In 1987, I decided to try a less powerful Group N car as I could not afford the equipment to be competitive in Group B in WRC rallies. So I drove

GG

**My last rally hurrah came in 1997 when I won the National Rallycross Championship with a Mitsubishi Lancer Evo2 which was even better to drive than the VR4 as it had all the VR4's attributes but was lighter and more compact. JJ**

the Olympus Rally of that year in a Group N (read showroom stock) Toyota Corolla AE86. While we fared well with 4th overall in Group N and 2nd in class, we ended up 21st overall. Driving in Group N was a bit boring. There really is nothing like power to liven up a rally.

I also did another Rally of Malaysia, this time in an amazing Filipino-built car called the Conge. Handbuilt by Binky Victa, it had the innards of a Toyota Corolla 2TG and a totally fiberglass body. It was crude, unrefined and difficult to drive but it was the only locally built car to have ever run in an international rally abroad.

By now, I was totally convinced that four-wheel drive was the only way to go so, in 1988, Jun and I campaigned a Subaru RX Turbo built in the U.S. by Chad de Marco. The first four-wheeler to run in local rallies, it was an eye-opener, particularly in venues like Pantabangan where traction was critical. It was, however, short on power and we only managed 2nd in the national championship that year.

We went upscale in 1989 and ran a Toyota Celica GT4 in New Zealand and Australia. It was an improvement over the Subaru but, in Group N form, was a tad heavy. That same year, Ralliart Asia invited us to run local rallies with the factory team and put us in a rear-wheel, 2-litre turbocharged Mitsubishi Starion. That car was hairy to drive as the power was always in

one of two modes: off or ohmigod. But it was great driving for the factory team and not have to worry about anything except driving.

In 1990, Ralliart brought in two Mitsubishi Galant VR4's. Aussie Ross Dunkerton drove one, I the other. I won Driver of the Year that year and, together with Vip Isada, the Shell-Mitsubishi VR4's totally dominated local rallying for the next four years. While it was a large full-size sedan, the bespoke suspension, four-wheel drive and 300bhp engine transformed the VR4 into a car that was a dream to drive on gravel or tarmac.

My last rally hurrah came in 1997 when I won the National Rallycross Championship with a Mitsubishi Lancer Evo2 which was even better to drive than the VR4 as it had all the VR4's attributes but was lighter and more compact. At the end of the day, this was the best rally car I ever drove. By this time, the Subic track had opened and I was driving mostly Lancers and Evos on the circuit.

The car that sticks in my mind from those days, however, was an ex-German DTM BMW E30 Evolution that was so powerful and quick but one needed the reflexes of a cat to drive well. Caught me out more often than I care to remember.

There you have it, my Auto-Biography of my performance cars.





Tito F. Hermoso  
COLUMNIST

## Confessions of the unschooled

**C**OMPETITIVE sports are a great way to channel men's aggression in between times of war. As in any competition, tuning and toning up oneself to a higher performance level is also the best way to be ready for the next war. With these fumbling words, I already betray my disinterest in any kind of sports and ergo, the technique and physique of high performance. I have great respect for high performance, whether man or machine, but I have no desire to emulate, much less imitate the fans' super heroes.

Which is not to say that I do not appreciate speed. To me speed is anything faster than walking pace. Off road? Climbing rocks and rivers at slower than walking pace is no fun for me. To the impatient, speed is merely a means to an end. My faith in speed is rooted in engineering and economics. Speed is efficient. Hence the need for it. And the need for both man and machine to be good enough for it.

Put speed and competition together, and you have ever rising benchmarks. As cars and motorsports get faster and more sophisticated, it is only proper that people's skills are up to scratch. Happily, our country today is not short of high performance driving schools and teachers. Though we may not have many, closed racing circuits are where errors, whether in driver training, suspension tuning or performance testing, can be corrected and risks placed under control. Indeed, all that schooling and practice does make for better cars and drivers for the public road.

But what about us who enjoy speed but not competition?

A public road is not a venue for racing. I always back off when someone else on a public road mistakenly spoils for a "fight" (race). Speed is best enjoyed when the scenic vistas are wide, the weather good and my car is the right one and the only one

on the road. There are still places in the world where one can "legally" do this and the world (and our lives) is none the worse for it.

It need not be triple-digit speeds. My most enjoyable "speed" rides were done in total isolation in the back roads of the provinces. Arcing, unpaved national roads, single track and steeply crowned in the middle, they get a semi-annual grading and haphazard landfill once a year. Winding through rice paddies, glistening green or dried haystack amber depending on the seasons, sharp curves dive into thickets of bamboo.

At about the same time, a younger brother returned to the home country, after studying under one of the Flying Finns, doing the same thing in Wales and Finland, in '80s Ford Escorts and Alfasuds instead of my '65 F-350 stake truck and '52 1200cc VW Kombi. He, always the sportsman, joined all the dramatic pre-dawn dust-ups and mud-plugs in Pantabangan, Cordilleras, the Sierra Madre, etc. and earned trophies for it. Later on, he taught and shared all his rallying skills to students in a motorsports school founded by his racing buddies. He was into sports so he went to school. I wasn't so I remained, unschooled. Our driving paths finally crossed when in mid career, a kind sponsor put me up in his driving school. And there, I unlearned all the wrong things I learned before.

Moral of the story? Whether your objective is to give your offspring a high performance car to make him/her a budding race car driver or just a better driver, send him/her to a school whose teachers have a motorsports background. We, like it or not, will have to live with speed and because those with motorsports background embrace it, they know it better than the average driving school teacher. Indeed, racing improves the breed.

In time, I became a better driver, better equipped to deal with high performance testing of very expensive cars on and off track. But the sports bug never bit me. Proof of this is that the next sponsored driving school lesson I went to was for drifting. Now any motorsports guy or gal will tell you that drifting is not a sport. Absolutely! Maybe that's why I thoroughly enjoyed it!

**We, like it or not,  
will have to live with  
speed and because  
those with motorsports  
background embrace  
it, they know it better  
than the average  
driving school teacher.**

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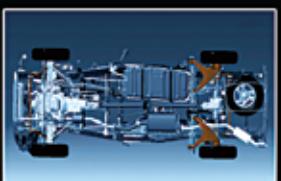
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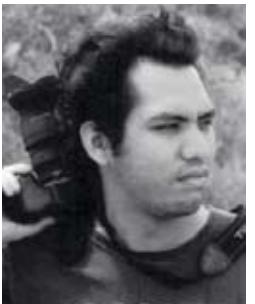
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# Life through the Kookie cutter



Iñigo S. Roces  
COLUMNIST

**C**ARS and speed practically go hand in hand in this industry. One would think that we hop from one car to the next, and simply relate the experience with a matter of keystrokes and pictures. Truth be told, it takes generous doses of patience and commitment to move from a Kia Picanto to a Ferrari 575 Maranello.

I learned both qualities from the most unlikely of sources, a race car driver by the name of Kookie Ramirez. He passed away just last October 28, fighting an up and down battle against the big C.

I first met Kookie as a new staff writer for a home grown car magazine. Newly hired, I thought it would be jumping from one car to another, touching them, driving them, and writing about them would be just like talking to your fellow aficionado. Of course, being a neophyte, I'd have to prove myself, both in writing and driving. My career hadn't launched off the line like a race car. It stalled at first before slowly accelerating.

My work at the magazine began, not with a story, but with proofreading and what we called "blurbs" (captions for photos). My work behind the wheel was hardly as exciting as well, representing the publication at fuel economy events where slow and efficient was the name of the game.

A few months in, a big break came. The staff were to put together a shoot and story involving a Ferrari 575 Maranello, Jaguar XKR and Maserati Cambio Corsa. We had been assigned to research on the specifications and if we were lucky, could possibly drive the cars.

Of course, one of those tasked to evaluate my skills before I even so much as park one of these cars was Kookie. The test involved a lap in an MR2. Confident of my own skills, and with Kookie observing from the passenger seat, I popped the clutch to launch the car. It promptly stalled a meter after, within sight of the entire team. Presuming I'd be living down the shame and driving slowly, Kookie took a call and pointed the line every now and then. Foolishly, I tried to redeem myself in one of the hairpins. I poured on the gas, turned in the wheel, and let the back end slide a little. Kookie could only yell "Not so..." before dropping the phone and correcting the error with his free hand. Despite my shenanigans,

I was allowed to drive all three cars later on, much more slowly and ever mindful of Kookie's instructions this time.

Another shoot that year pit me, a gamer, against a racer, Kookie. It would test whether realistic games like Gran Turismo could indeed breed future racers. Of course, in real life circuit, driving the same car, Kookie had left me behind with a 4 second gap. In the game (which he apparently plays a lot), he diminished my gap to only a hundredth of a second.

Frequent shoots after that allowed us to test drive all sorts of cars. Every time our shoots would end early, Kookie would gladly hop in a car with us and teach us the finer points of racing. It was a rare honor to see Kookie's skills in consistently extracting the very best out of these cars. Even more priceless was the knowledge Kookie would pass on to us to do the same.

Some time later, Kookie served as an instructor for a Porsche event, teaching members of the media, Porsche owners and potential clients how to handle a Cayman in a slalom course. There was no coaching this time, simply try your best and see your time after. Despite Kookie's best teachings, the car's sheer speed was daunting. I would have clocked the best time were it not for one pylon I knocked over. Despite that, at the end of the day, Kookie had handed me an award for "Best in Driving Style."

It might be a trivial award to some, but it's one I cherish to this day. It still stands proudly on my mantle, reminding me of how patience and commitment has taken me from test driving lowly city-bound econo-boxes to the finest of German sports cars.

They're not so different, the world of a racer and that of publishing. Like any Karting prodigy hoping to make it to F1, or any staff writer hoping to be an editor, getting from start to pinnacle, as some years working under Kookie taught me, isn't as simple as hopping from one car to the next. There is no shortcut. It is a responsibility that has to be earned, with each opportunity a chance to prove yourself. You have to go through every car, page or photo shoot in between, each time exhibiting your very best, not necessarily fastest performance. With some patience and lots of commitment, you WILL get there.



**It was a rare honor to see  
Kookie's skills in consistently  
extracting the very best out  
of these cars. Even more  
priceless was the knowledge  
Kookie would pass on to us to  
do the same.**



## Weekend Warrior 101



Andre Palma  
COLUMNIST

**I**T can be said that wisdom is paid for in countless instances of failure. Why else would the age-old saying, 'learning from one's mistakes', make sense? Or better yet, why does 'learning from the mistakes of others' seem so much more appealing?

It is because we know trial and error can be a very painful process of learning.

So listen to me, ladies and gentlemen. Save yourselves the humiliation and money. When it comes to starting to drive competitively in the Philippines, there can be no greater counsel or guide than yours truly, or any of the countless others who have tried to drive and not made the cut. Failure and disappointment are my given and middle names. I wonder what their excuses are?

If you are like most of us Filipinos who've been bitten by the competitive driving bug, you probably lack the single most important factor to a decent run at motorsports. If the Almighty Peso does not grow on trees in your backyard, you are going to have problems racing. Remember that money, not physics, makes the planet turn on its axis and nowhere else is it more of a determining factor to success than in racing these darned automobiles.

Barring a trust fund in your name, you will have to do what 99.9% of drivers have done before you. You will need to make do with what you have. Only the insanely rich can wave a magic wand and conjure up even the simplest of racecars. So what does one do in that case? That means turning your daily driver, or worse, someone else's automotive pride and joy into something that vaguely resembles a racecar.

Many tuners and enthusiasts will argue that turning a daily driver into a simple weekend adrenaline machine is easy. Spend money. Go fast. Yawn. Get bored. Seek meaning of life.

Repeat, ad infinitum. Realize though that turning your daily commute into a competitive racer is slightly more cerebral a task. How so? Isn't it practically the same thing? Well, not really. Remember, this is motorsport, where rules are our reason for being.

My advice for dealing with the inevitable rules is simple. Read them. Understand them. Follow them. Do or do not, there is no try.

**Spend money.  
Go fast. Yawn.  
Get bored. Seek  
meaning of  
life. Repeat, ad  
infinitum.**

If this process is broken at any point or should you disagree with any part of what makes a particular kind of driving a sport, please do yourself and everyone else a favor. Move along. Find some other discipline to drive. It is quite possible as well that formal organized racing isn't for you. Just stay home and fiddle with your Play Station. You'll be happier in the long run.

Only after having dealt with the rules can one begin to even think of preparing a racecar. And it is here where so many people make the mistake that leads to frustration and disillusionment. Remember this next sentence because your nascent driving aspirations are hinged on this single thought. Ready? Here it is: forget about making your car more powerful. Reflect on that idea for a bit and continue to read on after the urge to bin this magazine leaves you.

Think about it. Power without any sort of control is useless. Many first time racers blow the bank on more engine power. That is usually the end of that. The image of a raging bull, trying to navigate its way through a shop packed with antique porcelain can't get any better. So much power, yet so impotent. You get the picture.

It is best to begin preparing the car with two things in mind. Improving the driver interface and making sure the car does what the driver wants, when the driver wants it. Being in control is what it is all about. Now, imagine the same porcelain shop, but picture a cat cavorting through it instead of the bull. Not as much power for sure, but more nimble and aware as heck.

Please remember one more thing. There will be a point of no return at some time in your competitive driving jaunt. It could be giving in to the temptation to remove the last trappings of civilized motoring in your car, like the radio or heaven forbid, the aircon. Maybe it could be when you realize that maintenance costs are beginning to outrun the amortization of your car, or maybe even your home.

It is at this point you need to make a decision. Has your race been run or is it only the beginning? Whatever your answer is, remember one thing. It's only a car, my friend. Life goes on. Believe me.

2010 Ford Fiesta 1.6L Trend

# The Game Changer

**STORY:**  
Vince Pornelos  
**PHOTOS:**  
Author & FG Reyes

I have to admit off the bat, I've never been a big fan of subcompact cars.

In the past, that class of car has always been linked to built-in cheapness, low quality, puny engines, bare features and, "worst of all, a very uninspiring drive". Then along comes a gamechanger: the Fiesta.





The guys over at Ford have taken their time to bring the Fiesta to the Philippines and the ASEAN region, in fact it took them 2 whole years to get it here. However, I'm glad they took their time, as the Fiesta we're getting is already the redesigned version, available either as a sedan or in hatchback configurations. From the front, there's plenty of character in this new Ford, staying quite true to the kinetic design language introduced in the Iosis concept car, creating an unusually emotionally compelling look in the subcompact class.

And then there's the great interior. While most people focus on the exterior look, it's really the interior design that the driver will be immersed in while stuck in traffic. The Fiesta is well and truly stylish inside, and with plenty of attention paid towards build quality and interior fit and finish. The fabric seats in this 1.6L Trend model are simply fantastic, while the control surfaces (steering wheel, shift knob, buttons and stalks) feel great to the touch and feature excellent ergonomic contours.

Powering the new Fiesta are a choice of 2 engines: a 95 hp 1.4-liter or a 120 hp 1.6-liter, both being Duratec inline-4, have twin camshafts and 4 valves per cylinder. The 1.6 liter, as tested here, is the better choice of the two, especially with dual camshaft variable valve timing that advances or retards timing to suit either for economy or power delivery. The block, cylinder and head are all made of aluminum to shave weight, while composite materials are even used for the intake manifold to further lighten the car and even improve intake air temperatures (colder is always better).

Great as the powerplant may be, it's in the transmission that the Fiesta has a clear leg up over the competition. All of them. While most of its contemporaries use conventional, torque converter automatics, the Fiesta has a highly advanced dual clutch transmission; the first in its class. The technology, usually reserved for high end, high performance machines, makes its way under the hood of Ford's most affordable car, promising seamless shifts, better gear ratios, a more direct drive and, most importantly, better fuel economy.

Taking the car out for the first time, the Fiesta's powertrain does live up to the hype. Power delivery is excellent, and the transmission kicks down a gear or two if you floor it. Having the 6-speed breaks up the ratio more effectively for the 120 hp engine to deal with, and at highway speeds, RPM is kept low for good fuel economy, upwards of 17 kilometers to the liter. In town, it's literally point and squirt, though the 2nd to 3rd and 3rd to 4th gear upshifts need a little work as the Powershift transmission tends to linger in a lower gear, something you wouldn't want for fuel efficiency.

Where the Fiesta truly delivers is in the driving dynamics. It's one of those cars that really cut its teeth in the UK and the rest of Europe, where the demand for a car that handles itself in the corners is a must. Toss the car into a mountain pass and it feels instantly at home, taking them with a confidence so rarely found in most locally available cars, regardless of class. Steering feels superbly weighted, and overall the driving manners exceed that of the Mazda2, the Fiesta's platform brother. In terms of NVH, the Fiesta is right up there too, as for a car that can drive and corner this well, it soaks up the rough stuff with ease.

Refreshing is one way to describe the new Fiesta. Superb is another. With the new Fiesta, Ford has definitely raised the bar, and set a hard new standard for others to meet.

# Mid-life Excitement

2010 Toyota Corolla Altis Dual VVT-i



STORY & PHOTOS:  
Iñigo S. Roces

The arrival of an all-new model is often an eagerly awaited one. Buyers often hold off for one's arrival while dealerships and marketing execs are enthusiastic in promoting its striking new looks and cutting edge features.



It is the years after it is launched that interest begins to wane and the same dealerships and marketing execs struggle to find new and innovative ways to promote the vehicle. Often times, it has nothing more than a set of new lights and wheels to show off.

Toyota, however, has decided to take advantage of this lean period, taking the opportunity to launch its new line of engines for the Corolla Altis.

The changes start on the Altis's exterior. The formerly round and subtle body gains some sharp yet subtle lines that better direct the wind flow. This approach is also seen on the headlights and tail lights. New three-dimensional design 5-spoke wheels and side mirror turn signals are fitted as standard.

Inside are some noticeable changes as well. The drab dashboard gets a more contrasting color treatment. New illuminated instrument gauges are bright and easy to read whether day or night. The 2.0 has some of the more exciting changes with a new, thicker, flat-bottomed three spoke wheel and redesigned, chrome accented paddle shifters.

Of course, the real meat of the change is in the engine and transmission department. Whether 1.6 or 2.0, all new Corollas will sport a Dual VVT-i engine. Previous VVT-i engines featured adjustable timing of the intake valves. The Dual VVT-i system adds adjustable timing of the exhaust valves. This produces smoother engine starts and stops while also reducing emissions. Power has also increased by 10% jumping to 120 hp and 143 hp for the 1.6 and 2.0 liter respectively.

The 2.0 liter benefits the most from this with the inclusion of Acoustic Control Induction System (ACIS) first seen in Lexus cars. In brief, the system optimizes power and torque while reducing the intake "roar" heard at high throttle inputs. And to better enjoy this new flexibility, a CVT transmission is paired with the engine. Toyota's Super CVT-i is a steel belt driven continuously variable transmission. Like most CVT's, it automatically and

continually adjusts itself to deliver the most efficient combo of power and efficiency. To add to the fun, the manual mode divides the range into 7 preset gears accessible from the stick itself or through the paddle shifters. The 1.6 liter on the other hand is available in either a 4-speed auto or a 6-speed manual.

In more tangible terms, acceleration from a standstill is a little bit faster but still comfortable and quiet. The CVT adjusts from low speeds to high (like a typical overtaking manoeuvre) pretty quickly. Typical CVTs will take this on smoothly while Toyota's CVT still "shifts" at around 100 km/h to a better ratio. Speaking of shifts, the gear changes in manual mode are far more responsive than the previous model. When left on its own, it will automatically shift once it hits the redline.

As for handling, the difference was evident as well. The previous model's heavy weighted steering was difficult to overcome in tight turns. The newer model was far more obedient be it in sweepers or hairpins. The handling limits feel similar though the built-in stability control is far more forgiving in the newer. No more "panic beeps" when taking tight turns at high speeds. The new Corolla's stability control hardly feels like it's there at all.

The last addition is a more environmentally conscious one. The new Corolla also gains the "eco" mode formerly exclusive to the Camry. The Eco mode is simply an indicator light that flashes when the car is driven at its most efficient.

All told, the changes in the Corolla are hardly minor at all with the 2.0 liter model clearly benefiting from this the most with its new engine, transmission and look. The 1.6 liter at the very least has a new look and the 120 hp Dual VVT-i engine. Paired with a 6-speed manual option, it should be both exciting and efficient to drive.

In its history books, Toyota might mark this down as simply a minor change. For us laymen, this is one make-over, however, that won't go unnoticed. **aq**

# FULL TRANSFORMATION

## 2010 Chevrolet Cruze CMP Street Edition

When Chevy introduced the Cruze, it felt like a breath of fresh air as after all, the Optra was a car most of us would not be missing. When they introduced the Cruze Street Edition, however, it became a whole new ball game.

STORY & PHOTOS: Vince Pornelos



Seeing the tuning and customization potential in the Chevy Cruze, the Covenant Car Company, exclusive distributors of Chevrolet in the Philippines sought the expertise of Blanco Race Engineering, headed by the ever colorful tuner and our favorite Colombian, Francisco "Pacho" Blanco. A true car enthusiast, racing and tuning nut, Pacho cut his teeth during the Philippine Touring Car Championships as the chief engineer for the Tuason Racing School. After setting up his own shop, Pacho immediately went to work on the Chevy Cruze race car that competes in the PHTC, and along with the new Chevy Motorsports Program, headed by Arby Andaya, sought to create a performance package for the Cruze for the street.

The most obvious changes are in the body work, as car aesthetics expert Atoy Llave of A-Toy Bodykits created a 6-piece bodykit especially for the Cruze. The kit enhances the look of the car, giving it a lower, more aggressive look thanks to the wraparound skirts and a ducktail spoiler. Sammy Liusion of Concept One also got involved, and installed a set of special 18 inch Concept One Replika wheels and Nitto Tires to complement the new look of the car.

Inside, the CMP Street Edition also has a customized look, thanks to a specially designed leather upholstery system from Leder Interia. Depending on the car's color and the owner's preferences, CMP offers a range of swatches of leather for that quality, custom look.

In the handling department, CMP sourced the expertise of H&R and Arvin Lim with a set of sport lowering springs for improved handling and a lowered ride. For even better handling but at the expense of comfort, a full competition coil-over suspension system can be ordered.

Being a true tuner, Pacho and BRE sought out a list of mods that will greatly enhance the Cruze's abilities. A custom made intake system with an HKS power flow filter takes care of aspiration, while a custom fitted full exhaust system, from headers to muffler, was sourced from Fremuff.

I've always liked this car from the start, given its design, quality feel, pricing and handling. With the upgrades, I was eager to get a feel for what the Street Edition has to offer. Firing up the engine for the first time, there's definitely a different burble from the stock. There's an extra willingness from the engine to rev quicker and higher with the replacement of the restrictive exhaust



system, along with an aggressive intake growl with every prod of the throttle.

The intake and exhaust notes are properly aggressive and exciting, but it's not all sound and show, as the mods raise the horsepower produced by the 1.8 liter engine from 115 horsepower at the wheels (141 hp rated at the crank) to 127 horsepower at the wheels. The lack of pull from the stock engine was the only real shortcoming with the Cruze, and the power package addresses that, but only slightly, as the Cruze is still a very heavy car.

On the corners, the already good handling abilities of the Cruze were further improved by the upgraded springs. The car is a relatively heavy one, and having stiffer springs most definitely handle the weight much, much better. And if there's anything to really love about the Cruze's handling is the stability and how forgiving it is on the track.

With most upgrade packages, it's just all about show and not much go. With the CMP Street Edition on the new Clark International Speedway, the suspension upgrades, power mods and wider tires combine to elevate the stock car's lap time from 1:24.57 to 1:20.12, a full 4 seconds quicker over a lap... a remarkable achievement considering that no weight has been removed yet.

The package for the Cruze CMP Street Edition is priced at PhP 192,000 (exclusive of VAT), and can be re-upgraded to include even better suspension, tires or leather at extra cost. But as a package, the CMP Street Edition is a very worthy upgrade to an already very worthy car from Chevrolet. 

Back in the 90's, life was much simpler if you were in the market for a new car. Go to any dealership and you can classify most cars into any of seven distinct categories: hatches, sedans, SUVs, pick-up trucks, sportscars, vans and AUVs.

STORY & PHOTOS:  
Vince Pornelos

# Ahead OF THE Curve

## 2010 Mitsubishi ASX GLS



Fast forward to today however, and things get a little more confusing. It's not hard to understand why, with diversified demands and needs of the car shopper. Now there are so many niches around, with four door coupes, MPVs, sports activity vehicles and urban crossovers, and frankly, it's getting harder and harder to tell which is which.

The ASX is one such car. Introduced earlier this year, the ASX, or Active Sport Crossover, is Mitsubishi's stab at a class of car that hasn't taken off yet. It's part sedan and part compact SUV, all rolled into one; literally (almost) a cross between the Lancer EX and the Outlander. Again, it's easy to get confused with this car, but let's break it down, bit by bit.

For one, it's strikingly similar to the Lancer EX in terms of design, especially with a face dominated by the aggressive jet-fighter grille and the angry, tapered headlamps. Towards the side and rear of the car, however, it shares more in common with the Outlander with the body of a small SUV and a lift up tailgate. The ASX is finished off with a set of multi-spoke 17 inch alloy wheels with wide 215/60/R17 tires.

SUV traits are shared with the Outlander, but the ASX is not as large. Branded as a 'little brother' to the Outlander, measuring 4295mm in length, 1770mm in width and an overall height of 1625mm. The ASX, however, rides higher off the ground than the Lancer at 195mm, and that's a good thing, as the top of the line ASX does feature four wheel drive, though this GLS version is a front wheel drive model.

Inside, the basic Lancer EX interior architecture has been updated, with fresh fonts on the instrument cluster, as well as a new dashboard design. There is seating for 5 adults, with the driver and front passenger having sporty bucket seats. The rear bench has a 40-20-40 folding system, with the center able to fold down to become an armrest with two cupholders. For carrying capacity, the ASX can swallow up to 384 liters of cargo, along with other versatile storage solutions.

Standard on the ASX is a full suite of standard features, beginning with a 6.2-inch touchscreen LCD with DVD, iPod connectivity and Bluetooth. The airconditioning system is a fully automatic climate control system while for convenience, the ASX is equipped with a long list of power features with power windows, mirrors, locks and a smart key with a push start ignition system. This GLS model gets satellite

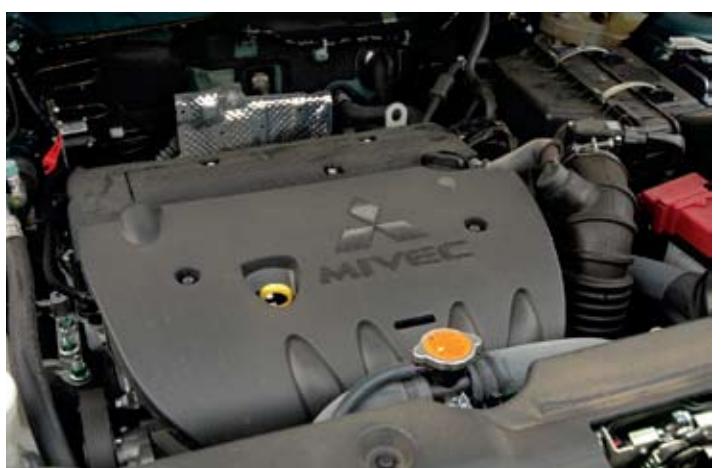
navigation, magnesium paddle shifters, steering wheel audio controls and headlamp washers.

At the heart of the ASX is the same 4B11 engine found in the Lancer EX. Along with Mitsubishi's Innovative Valve Timing Electronic Control, or MIVEC, the engine pumps out a healthy 150 horsepower at 6000 rpm and 197 newton-meters of torque at 4200 rpm. Being a GLS variant, the engine is fitted with Mitsubishi's efficient INVECS-III continuously variable transmission for efficient, convenient driving, but has a manual override to function as a 6-speed via the paddle shifters or the more conventional shiftknob.

Driving the ASX is a very familiar experience to that of the Lancer EX GT-A. The seating position is more upright like the Outlander's and gives a better, more commanding view of the road ahead. However, in terms of handling, it's quite close to that of the Lancer with the same suspension set up (MacPherson up front, multi-link in the back), with a touch more give in terms of ride firmness for a more comfortable ride.

Being a good performer on the straights and the corners, the ASX can be easily reined in by 4 powerful disc brakes, as well as a high level of safety kit with dual airbags, ABS and the Mitsubishi RISE body as standard, and all comes at a pricetag under PHP 1.3M.

It may be confusing at first to tell what niche the ASX is filling, but with this new crossover, Mitsubishi not only continues their steadfast rise from the troubles of the past, but getting ahead of the curve as well. ☙



STORY &amp; PHOTOS: Vince Pornelos

# Out for Redemption

## 2010 Nissan Sentra 200



Let's face it. The Sentra of the past was never an outstanding car. It was never really that stylish nor was it great to drive. Perhaps the new Sentra 200 will change that.

The Sentra 200 arrives as an all new model, replacing the local Sentra "i-Style", otherwise known as the Pulsar N16 in other markets. The new model comes with an all new look, mimicking the design language of US domestic models such as the Altima and 350Z. To be honest, the new look feels a bit dated when compared to the other current model compact cars, but nevertheless, looks much better than the outgoing i-Style.

I do like the interior design, with a logical, easy to understand layout and straightforward feel. The dash resembles the Kia Soul's (which I like), and the seats are quite comfortable and offer up plenty of support for spirited driving.

What's unusual with the Sentra is its drive. On the spec sheet, the powertrain of the Sentra seems just right. Powering the Sentra 200 is a 2.0 liter, twin cam 16 valve engine, good for 140 horsepower and matched with

a continuously variable transmission. Off the line, the Sentra's acceleration feels positive, and the matching CVT is smooth and seamless.

The suspension set up, with MacPherson struts and an aging torsion beam in back may seem very underwhelming on the spec sheet, but what's unusual is in the way the car behaves on the road, feeling much sportier and more engaging to drive than what the specs would suggest. The ride and drive characteristics feel very European for an American market unit.

Where the Sentra will have a difficult time being convincing on the showroom floor has to be the pricetag. At PhP 1,150,000, it's not as compelling a sales proposition as I would like, but considering the unexpected surprise hidden in the drive itself, the Sentra 200 is a worthy successor to one of Nissan's oldest nameplates. **dk**



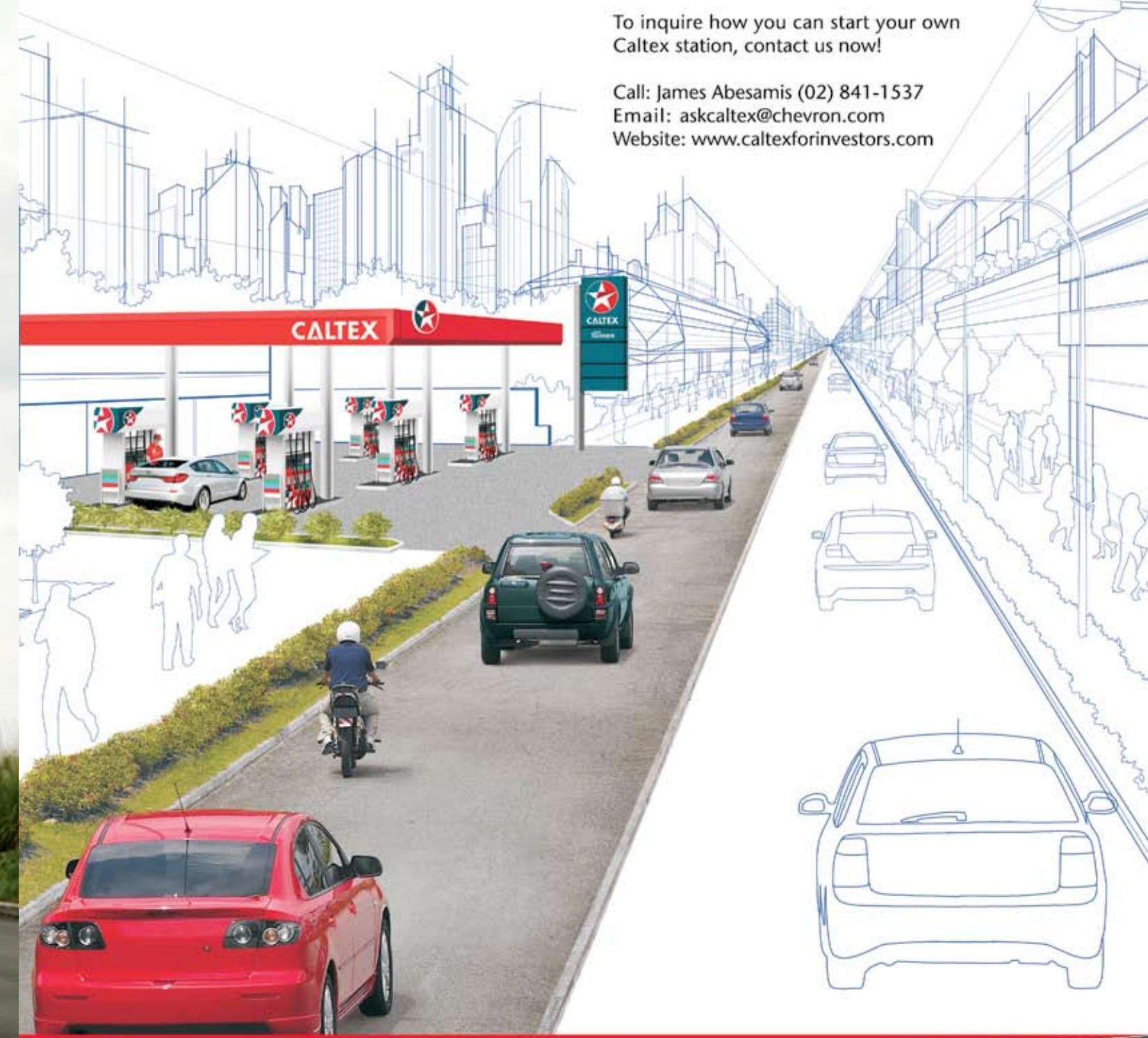
# What Drives You

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# Never The Same Again

**Mercedes-Benz  
SLS AMG**

EVERY time a new supercar is launched, car enthusiasts the world over welcome it with open arms. For the Performance issue of AQ Magazine, **Mandy Eduque**, renowned rally driver and Motorsports Director of the Automobile Association Philippines, takes the new Mercedes SLS for a spin, and gives us a taste of AMG supercar immortality.

PHOTOS: Vince Pornelos





**A**S this, the third issue of AQ, is devoted to performance cars, it is entirely appropriate to ask the question: what makes a performance car a supercar? What makes one car stand head-and-shoulders above the other cars of its generation? What makes it stand the test of time and become an automotive legend, an icon? What sort of automobile sees its market value soar over the years, instead of depreciating?

To my mind, such a car must be blessed with several qualities. Firstly, its performance - measured by its speed, acceleration, handling, stopping power - must be of the highest level, superior to most, if not all, other automobiles of its era. Then its design and styling should be stunning and timeless so that decades later, it will be as pleasing to the eye as it was when first brought into the world. It should possess rarity, a paucity in its numbers, to enhance its desirability. A culture, tradition, heritage of prowess and success on the racetrack would not only add luster, but be indispensable, to the aura of a supercar. The cover photo of this issue is that of an automobile that is imbued with all these qualities - the Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG.

To view the SLS AMG in the flesh is to be inescapably reminded of another car that made its own debut more than half a century ago - the Mercedes-Benz 300SL Coupe. Codenamed the W194 but thereafter, and for all eternity, nicknamed the Gullwing, the 300SL was very much a product of fortuitous serendipity. It was produced, in limited quantity, only to appease Mercedes-Benz's North American dealer at the time who wanted a different kind of Benz to sell to their American customers. Ironically, this 300SL Coupe, which started out as pretty much of an afterthought, went on to become the most iconic and coveted Mercedes-Benz model of all time.

Another bit of serendipity had to do with the SL's famous gullwing doors. Due to the initially small number of units to be produced, the company decided not to design and build the SL from a blank sheet of paper. Instead, they took their already existing SLR racing car and decided to simply modify it into a passenger sports car. The SLR, however, was never designed to be a passenger car, much less have two doors. Being spaceframe in construction, it had only a network of tubes where doors on a passenger car would normally have been and these tubes could not be removed without compromising the SL's structural rigidity. The only plausible solution was to hinge the doors on the car's roof - hence, the gullwing-like doors that became the defining design theme of the 300SL. A perfect example of necessity mothering innovation. Serendipity indeed.

The racing SLR, on which the 300SL was based, dominated motorsports in its day, both in circuit and road racing. While it was victorious in circuits like Le Mans, Nürburgring and Spa-Francorchamps, it was equally successful on road races such as the Mille Miglia and Carrera Panamerica. Its most famous exploit, though, took place in 1955 when it won the toughest road race around - the Mille Miglia - with Stirling Moss at the wheel and journalist Denis Jenkinson in a hastily improvised passenger seat, reading >>



**“** The SLS is the modern-day incarnation of the Gullwing of the fifties. **”**

Moss his notes on the road and turns ahead, the notes written on a roll of toilet paper. Indeed one of the greatest racing stories of all time, with the Gullwing's racing sibling playing the starring role.

Mercedes-Benz has not built another model of the same stature of the supercar Gullwing since. Its SL-series models over the years have been quite capable and well-designed cars, but never as charismatic as the Gullwing. The closest it got was, I would say, when Mercedes collaborated with McLaren to produce the McLaren SLR. The SLR was, however, always regarded as more McLaren than Mercedes and when the SLR's production run ended, the big question on everyone's mind was not when the tri-star emblem would appear on another supercar, but when. For close to 20 years, that question remained unanswered. That is until now... when Mercedes-Benz unveiled its next supercar - the SLS AMG.

At its launch in August, Felix Ang - boss of M-B distributor, CATS Motors - displayed his silver SLS beside an original 300SL Gullwing in pristine condition. Although the SLS is larger in every dimension, the design heritage is immediately and strikingly obvious. While not a slavish imitation, nor even a retro image of its predecessor, the SLS AMG is clearly intended to evoke the design themes and styling of the older Gullwing. From the grille, the long bonnet, the side engine air vents, the greenhouse with the (of course) gullwing doors to the sloping rear, the SLS is the modern-day incarnation of the Gullwing of the 50's. While a gap of five decades does exist between the two SLs, there is virtually no design gap between them. They are clearly two peas from the same Mercedes-Benz design pod. This is where, however, any resemblance between the two ends.

Performance-wise, the newer SLS AMG totally eclipses the older 300SL with 571 PS (563 hp) to the older car's 175.

While a top speed of 256kph qualified the Gullwing to supercar status in its day, it pales beside the SLS's top speed of 317kph. Zero to 100kph took 7.2 seconds in the original Gullwing, the SLS will do it in half the time: 3.8 seconds. Even by today's elevated standards, the SLS's numbers are in genuinely supercar territory. As well they should be as the SLS is the first car entirely developed by AMG, Mercedes-Benz's performance tuner subsidiary.

AMG took the already powerful 6.2-litre V8 engine off Mercedes' shelf and turned it into the world's most powerful normally aspirated engine, producing 571bhp and 650Nm of torque. To further enhance its performance, they also made the SLS extremely light by constructing the body and suspension components almost entirely (96%) from aluminum. No component was spared from the almost manic weight-reduction exercise. The driveshaft, for example, is made entirely of carbon fiber and weighs only 50 lbs. This quest for >>



lightness has resulted in the SLS being lighter than the M-B SL65 AMG Black Edition as well as even the carbon fiber McLaren SLR. And everyone knows the formula that says power plus lightness equals performance.

In addition, the SLS AMG's weight is almost perfectly balanced between the front (47.5%) and rear (52.5%), making it the most evenly balanced rear-wheel drive passenger car today. This was achieved by locating the engine behind the front wheels (thus qualifying the SLS as a mid-engined car), and the double-clutch transmission over the rear wheels. The SLS is, as a result, blessed with almost mystical handling.

I was recently given the chance to drive the first SLS AMG in the country. Ingress into the cozy cockpit was surprisingly easy in spite of the relatively high door sills. One learns the technique for doing so - sit half on the door sill, half on the seat, swing both legs in feet-first and, voilà, you are seated on the comfortable, supportive bucket seat. Closing the door once you are in may turn out to be somewhat of a challenge, however, for the short of arm. I am informed, however, that the factory has addressed this problem by affixing a strap on the door, the same as what they used on the Gullwing 60 years ago. As the French like to say, plus ça change...

Once ensconced behind the wheel, your eye is immediately drawn to the 360kph speedometer. If you didn't know before you saw that speedo that you are in a seriously fast car, you certainly know it now. I was pleasantly surprised at how simple the SLS's controls and instruments were, especially when compared to many of today's cars whose dashboards resemble the cockpit of a Boeing 747. Aside from the climate control and entertainment system switches, the only other switches are for Start/Stop, AMG Drive and ESP. So easy, so uncomplicated.

Press the Start button and the engine comes to life. The only sound from the engine at idle is a high-pitched whine,

somewhat reminiscent of a jet-turbine engine. Give the accelerator a healthy nudge though and Mr. Jekyll turns into Mr. Hyde. The whine becomes a roar, first deep-throated, then increasing in pitch as the revs build up. What a glorious, exhilarating, and intoxicating sound the SLS engine makes. To be sure, the SLS is equipped with a superb state-of-the-art sound system, but I hardly ever turned it on. The only music I wanted to hear was the roar of that engine. By the way, the engine backfires slightly on deceleration, something I have not heard a car do in ages. Nice touch.

What is the SLS like to drive? I would run out of superlatives attempting to describe the experience. Suffice >>



## COVER STORY

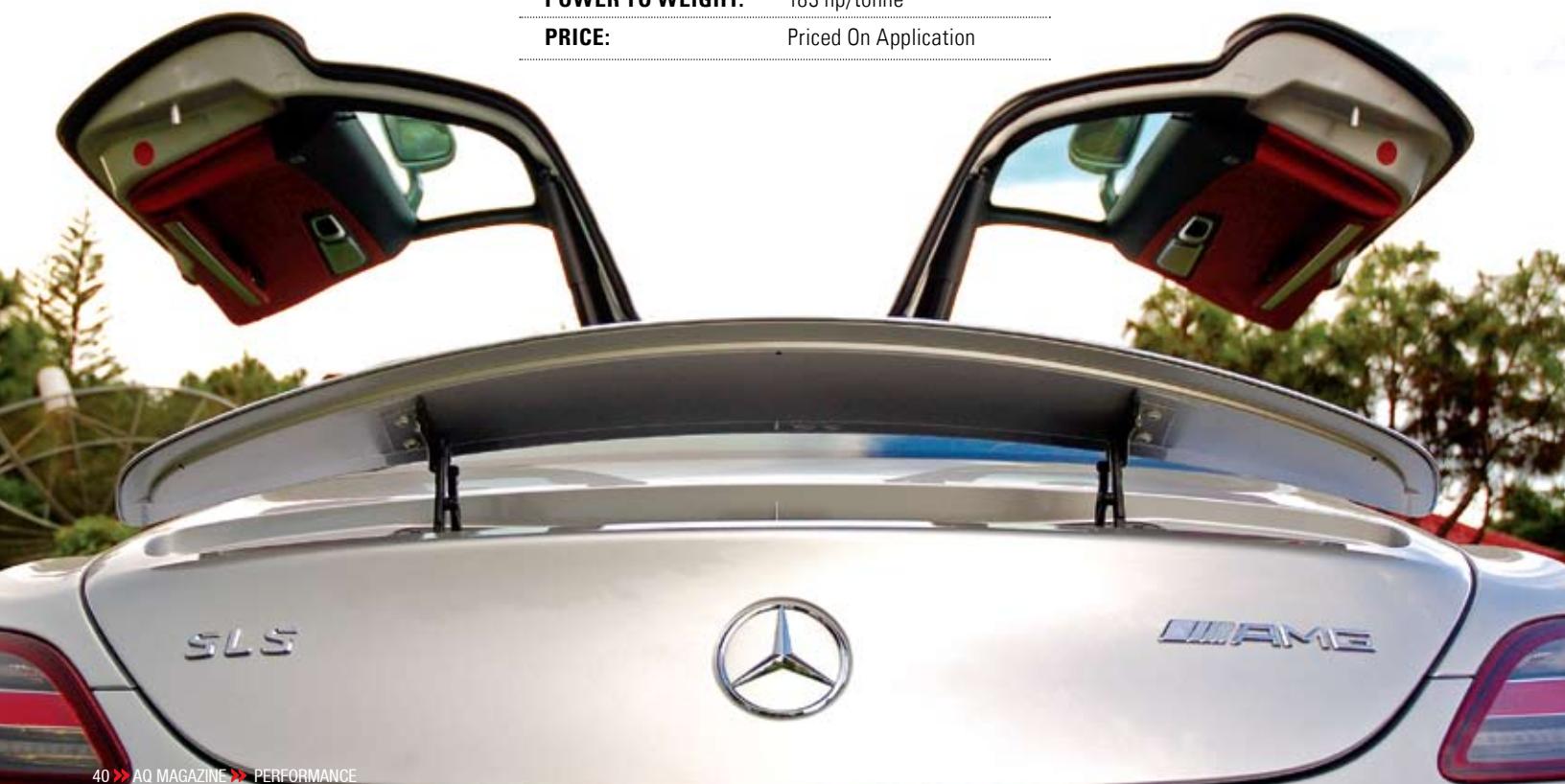
it to say, nothing short of amazing. The 6.2-litre engine's response is immediate, compelling and almost overpowering, but it's always smooth and progressive. No lurch or stutter, just a steady, growing pressure as the acceleration seems to press you deeper and deeper into your seat. The reserve of power is huge. At 120kph, the maximum speed allowed on our highways, the engine is loafing at only 2,200rpm. Considering that redline is at 7,000rpm, you know 317 km/h is only a step on the accelerator away... if you have the stomach for it.

As amazing as the go of the SLS is, so is the slow. The brakes will stop this car from any speed... pronto. Just as the gas pedal will press you into your seat, the brake pedal will yank you out of it; only your seatbelt will keep you in under hard braking. The ride is firm but never harsh. The handling is, to put it simply, that of a no-compromise sports car: neutral even when pushed, with hardly any



### ► SPECIFICATIONS

<b>MAKE:</b>	Mercedes-Benz
<b>MODEL:</b>	SLS AMG
<b>ENGINE:</b>	6.2L DOHC 32v V-8
<b>ASPIRATION:</b>	NA, Variable Valve Timing
<b>MAX POWER:</b>	563 hp @ 6800 rpm
<b>MAX TORQUE:</b>	480 lb-ft @ 4750 rpm
<b>TRANSMISSION:</b>	7-speed AMG Speedshift DCT
<b>POWER TO WEIGHT:</b>	183 hp/tonne
<b>PRICE:</b>	Priced On Application



## SLS AMG

lean or sway. The SLS is planted on the ground under cornering and although I never got to push it that hard, I am certain the SLS will exceed 1G. Driven fast or slow, the SLS is always poised, smooth and under control. Its capabilities will clearly exceed the abilities of most who will own or drive it.

It is meant to be able to handle any situation it may intentionally or inadvertently find itself in and come out of it cool, calm and collected. That is what I really like about the SLS - it instills confidence in the driver, making car and driver can then become partners in the driving experience.

At the end of my stint behind the wheel of the SLS, I was faced with a good news, bad news conundrum. The good news was that I had just had a memorable experience with what may be the best car I have ever driven. The bad news? Nothing I drive now will ever feel the same again after the SLS AMG. **qq**



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**01**  
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**05**  
Lower fuel costs. The Chevy Cruze runs on unleaded 93 gas. Yes, the less-expensive kind.

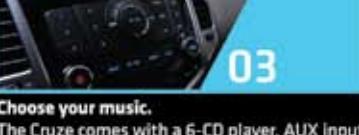


**06**  
The Cruze LT A/T offers luxury for less. The Cruze LT is armed with power amenities, keyless entry, automatic trunk, auto-climate control, leather seats, reverse parking sensors, 17" wheels with disc brakes, traction control, rain-sensing wipers, foglamps...and the list goes on.



**02**  
The 6-speed advantage. Automatic variants come with standard 6-speed automatic transmission with manual mode.

**07**  
PMS LOW MAINTENANCE COST  
It's your car and your time. With a 10,000km PMS interval, the Cruze saves you more of your valuable time.



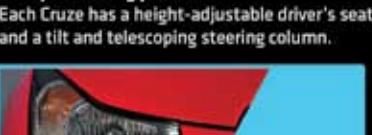
**03**  
Choose your music. The Cruze comes with a 6-CD player, AUX input for your MP3 player, USB input, and steering audio controls, matched to a premium sound system.

**08**  
Find your driving position. Each Cruze has a height-adjustable driver's seat and a tilt and telescoping steering column.



**04**  
Safe and secure. Every Chevy Cruze has Anti-Theft and Burglar Alarm with Immobilizer.

**09**  
No drain. Every Chevy Cruze has Battery Run Down Protection, preventing incidents such as leaving your headlights on from exhausting your battery.



**10**  
Ace of space. A wide track and long wheelbase gives the Cruze a bigger interior cabin space and trunk space.

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# ON DAYS LIKE THESE...

The AQ Magazine Performance Car Roundup

I wish we could start all days like this.

There we were, having just downed breakfast, sipping coffee and reveling in awe as an inspiring collection of cars gather just as the sun finds its way through the skies.

Performance cars, all of them: a bright yellow Chevrolet Camaro, a black Cooper S, the proud Lancer Ralliart and the yellow Genesis Coupe comprise a grand total of over one thousand horsepower at our beck and call. Our destination: to the east, to take on the challenging mountain roads of the Sierra Madre range.

It's the most varied, if not the most international and unusual, collection of performance cars around... and we have the keys to all of them.

Enough said, coffee done. Are your driving gloves ready?





FROM the United States, we have a heavyweight in the Chevy Camaro.

The Camaro looks mind-blowingly awesome from any angle. I just love how faithfully GM's design team stuck to the Camaro Concept Car with that wide stance, extra high beltline, deep-set front grille, low roof, wickedly raked windshield and retro-futuristic styling. Even if you are not a fan of the Camaro, the design effort that went into this one is more than guaranteed to make one out of you.

Then there's the interior of the car. Interiors of muscle cars past were quite on the bland side, as the dashes seemed to have just been lifted off a pick up truck. Not the case with the new Camaro. The cabin is well and truly busy, with unique square gauges, a deep dish steering wheel, Playstation-like controls for the aircon, and even a quad cluster of auxiliary gauges for water temp, volts, oil pressure and temperature. The seats on the Camaro are great on the back, and probably one of the most comfortable around this lot, even for a wide guy like myself.

In all honesty, I was rather disappointed that the Camaro sent to us for testing was the 3.6L V-6 LT RS version and not the full on 6.2L V-8 SS variant, but my sentiments shot out the window when I fired the engine up and took the Camaro for a spin. Under that long hood is the latest powerplant from General Motors: a new 3.6 liter V-6 with an excellent output of 312 horsepower. This swelled up figure is primarily due to the high tech nature of the Camaro's V-6, as it utilizes the latest gasoline direct injection technology. With GDI's high pressure injection, the same 3.6L engine that produces 255 horsepower in a Cadillac has been beefed up to make 20% more power in the Camaro.

Floor the throttle from a standstill and the Camaro will lunge forward, hitting 100 km/h in the mid 6-second range. What's surprising is the almost continuous pull from the new engine, lending the question on whether the V-8 is still the way to go for American muscle cars. The 6-speed automatic tranny is a great match for it, and even has "paddles" for manual mode.

“

**Floor the throttle from a standstill and the Camaro will lunge forward, hitting 100 km/h in the mid 6-second range.**

”

As much as we all love the Camaro's powertrain, its in the handling department that it disappoints. The fault is not with the suspension, as the Camaro does have fully independent arms, decent damping and wide, 20 inch wheels and tires. The problem lies at how much the Chevy tips the scales.

With well over 3700 pounds to huff around each corner, driving it is like trying to teach bigfoot how to dance. In fairness to the engineers, the Camaro stays quite composed through the passes, but you're always reminded of the car's weight, giving the suspension a true workout. Compared to the other coupe here that punches at the 300hp mark, the Genesis, the Camaro RS would be easily left behind on these corners.

Sure, up here the Camaro could be given a run for its money by the less powerful Ralliart and the supremely sharp Cooper S, and would be trailing in the wake of the Genesis, but when it comes to the feeling of driving satisfaction and style, the Camaro is a tough act to overtake.



**G**LANCING out onto the small, slit type side mirrors of the Camaro RS, it's all too easy to spot the yellow Hyundai Genesis Coupe hounding the Chevy's tail.

Launched early last year, the Genesis Coupe is Hyundai's tour de force, turning the notion that Hyundai can only make cheap economy cars and popular family vans right on its head.

The Genesis is stunning to look at, taking nearly all the pages out of the best design books for sports and super cars from Italy. For starters, you have a wide, low slung coupe body, one that evokes a true sense of performance and pace. Broad shoulders, a high beltline, pronounced curves and concave surfaces complete the Genesis Coupe's aggressive sports car bodywork. The large 19 inch sport wheels and rear wing contribute to that demeanor, and definitely makes it look fast and angry on the road, even when just sitting still.

Hopping from the Camaro to the Genesis Coupe is a very odd experience. Compared to the American, the Genesis Coupe's interior is quite plain and straightforward. There are no fancy surfaces, gauges, or other touches, but it cannot be denied that the GenCoupes interior layout is incredibly driver centric. The gauges are clear and concise, while ergonomics are top rank with a perfectly shaped steering wheel with anatomic grips, along with the comfortable placement of the shift knob. The center console reminds me of the Honda NSX's in the way it was angled, with all the pertinent controls intuitively laid out for the driver. The seats are the best part, as reclinable buckets firmly but comfortably hold the driver in place, perfect for high performance driving... something that the Genesis Coupe has in spades.

At the heart of the Genesis Coupe is the most high performance engine to come out of Korea that wasn't installed on a supertanker. With 306 horsepower, Hyundai's 3.8L Lambda V-6 is indeed the perfect engine to drive Hyundai's first proper sportscar. Along with a 6-speed ZF automatic transmission, the GenCoupe is well capable of acceleration figures in the low six second range.

As much as the Camaro wants to just get the corners over with and nail the long straights, the GenCoupes wants to take on the twisty stuff all day long. Thanks to a fully sport tuned suspension system with MacPherson struts up front and a five-link arrangement in the back, the Genesis creates true driving inspiration on initial turn in. By any means, the GenCoupe is not that light a car, but it can behave like it, and always feels confident when taking any corner or series of corners. When you're past the apex, floor the throttle and the rear tires will light up, rocketing the Genesis out of the turn with a red blooded exhaust note at high revs.

Of course there are other things like the superb Infinity sound system, the sunroof, automatic climate control and the plethora of safety features (brake control systems, traction control, stability control and 6 airbags), but those just combine to be the icing on the cake. It's the inspiring drive that truly defines the Genesis Coupe, and to top it off, it's priced at a very reasonable PHP 1.8M.

It's so unexpected for Hyundai to produce something as exciting as the Genesis Coupe, a car that is a real revelation in the league of performance cars.

# SCENE STEALER

Hyundai Genesis Coupe



GC

**With 306 horsepower, Hyundai's 3.8L Lambda V-6 is indeed the perfect engine to drive Hyundai's first proper sportscar.**

JJ



# THE SMALL PACKAGE GREAT THINGS COME IN

MINI Cooper S



**I**F the GenCoupe was the way of the future for Hyundai, well, the Cooper S is out to prove that retro is still the way to go.

You would be forgiven for having a “What the hell is a Cooper doing amongst this lot?” thought bubble right about now, but let me respond in kind: what the hell are these other cars doing with the MINI?

In the design front, it’s one of the best lookers of the lot, with an uncanny attention to details and style. The classic Mini outline shines through after over 50 years since the original. Like the exterior, the cabin is the same way, featuring unusual layout and design, with recurring motifs of the brands logo, seemingly odd shapes and controls.

Before you start thinking that this MINI Cooper S is just some retro style statement, think again. It’s a truly red-blooded performance car, and there are many obvious cues. The tachometer stares the driver in the face, just behind the steering wheel, just as most racing cars do. The steering wheel is perfectly shaped for vigorous driving, and the seats offer plenty of support. Since BMW

owns the MINI brand, there are BMW-style paddle shifters (push to shift down, pull to shift up to complement the shifter on the center console). There are buttons to deactivate stability control and next to it is the button to activate sport mode for the transmission. These touches are subtle, but to the mind of an performance enthusiast, they are essential.

Being a Cooper S, what lies underneath the retro skin is the pumped up version of the standard Cooper’s 1.6 liter, twin cam, 16-valve inline four engine. To boost power, literally, from the standard 120 horsepower, MINI engineers installed a twin scroll turbo system, bringing the grand total for the powerplant to a very respectable 173 horsepower, minus the turbo lag. Nail the throttle and the front wheels madly spin forward, kept in check by the traction control system. Once they are able to lay the power down, the Cooper S reaches the 100 km/h mark in just 7.3 seconds, and tops out at 220 km/h.

While those power and acceleration figures aren’t mind blowing on their own, having them at the heart of a light car car is. The most

**GG** The Cooper S comes as a smart, sharp little package, and proves that you don’t need big engines and big power to have such a big smile on your face. **JJ**



apparent comment is that the MINI is the puniest car around here, but at 1200 kilos, the Cooper S is also lightest contender, shaving off a good 300 kilos from the next car, the Lancer Ralliart. And with super short overhangs, thanks to having all the wheels pushed out as far as possible (read: like a go kart), it’s an obvious observation that the Cooper S is a definite handler.

To match the inherent dynamics in the design, the suspension has been likewise tuned to deliver supreme handling and sharpness. It may be a bit bumpy on city streets, but take it out on a mountain road such as this and the Cooper S comes alive like no other. Turn in and the Cooper remains remarkable flat. Hitting the apex is easy and oddly enough, there’s quite a hint of oversteer, unusual for a front wheel drive car as the rear exhibits a willingness to play around, and thus shutting off DSC up here is not recommended.

The Cooper S comes as a smart, sharp little package, and proves that you don’t need big engines and big power to have such a big smile on your face.

# STEALTH FIGHTER

## Lancer EX Ralliart

Just as the Cooper S maxes out, there's an unmistakable sound coming up behind, and fast. I take a look at the mirrors and there it is, the Lancer Ralliart.

It's the newest version of the venerable Lancer EX lineup, slotting just in between the Evolution X and the Lancer EX GT-A. Before Evo purists cast stones at the Ralliart for what is perceived to be a watered down version of the all-conquering, rally-bred street fighter, allow me to point out that the Ralliart isn't a diluted Evo, instead, it's a daily-driveable Evo.

Having driven the Evo X before, it's easy to get carried away by the performance and the character of the car, but when all is said and done, the Evo X is a hard car to live with on a daily basis. Things like the hard suspension and non-existent fuel economy are things you don't want on the drive to and from work. The Ralliart seeks to bridge the gap between the Evo and the Lancer GT-A by providing similar performance when you demand it and yet the calm and comfort when you need it.

Unlike the Evolution X with its tall wing, aggressive widebody and aero kit, it's not that easy to spot the fact that this is a high performance variant of the Lancer apart from the lightweight, vented aluminum hood and the larger, twin tip muffler. There are some little Ralliart accessories if you look a little closer, like the Ralliart logos on the grille and trunk, the Ralliart lug nuts and centercaps for the wheels.

Inside, it's the same story, as the Lancer Ralliart just has a few subtle touches on the trimmings. The giveaway that this is a high performance car is the appearance of the the Evo X's steering wheel and the baseball-stitched Twin Clutch SST shifter on the center console, but more on that later.

Beneath the lightweight bonnet is the same engine as the entire Lancer range: the 4B11. For more power and performance, Mitsubishi outfitted the engine with a single scroll turbo and an intercooler, giving it a total output of 237 horsepower. Impressive figures indeed, but the engine is really only part of the magic with the Ralliart in this lot, as it is the only one with four wheel drive and the most advanced transmission with the Twin Clutch SST system.

Having the superfast and smooth shifts of the TC-SST system as well as the grippy nature of four wheel drive gives the Ralliart's driver supreme confidence to take on the corners. The suspension is an uprated version of the Lancer GTA's, and even has improved brakes, but what's remarkable is the Ralliart's ability to tone down after a day of hard driving, allowing you to relax on the way home.

Compared to the Genesis Coupe, the Ralliart's on-the-limit turn-in is slower, but once you hit that apex, just punch the throttle and watch the greatness of the engine and drivetrain work for you. Acceleration wise, the Ralliart is one of the most immediate here, as that turbo does spool up quite quickly and the drivetrain is able to lay the power down better than all the other cars in this group.

Like the Evo, the Ralliart does change the way you drive. You begin to taunt other fast cars, begging them to think that you're just driving an ordinary front wheel drive, 155hp Lancer EX, only to show them how a 240hp, 4WD Lancer Ralliart will blow them away.

Insert evil laugh here.







# IGNITION: OFF.

**I was wishing  
that I could start  
all days like this...  
I just didn't want  
this day to end.**

**A**fter a day's worth of hard driving, the most unusual collection of performance cars came to a rest.

The Camaro was really the one that made us feel like boys again. The flashy concept car looks, both inside and out, made the Camaro RS an instant favorite amongst us, turning heads even though the car itself wasn't that capable a turner as the rest.

Impressive to look and impressive to drive was the Mini Cooper S. The S may be pricey (PhP 2.45M) for such a small car, but a well sorted chassis, excellent and efficient engine performance from a 1.6L and classy, retro style meant that the Cooper S is something we want to be behind the wheel of time and again. It's just that much fun.

Then there's the Lancer's missing link from Mitsubishi. Bridging the gap between the

almighty Evo's high performance abilities and the Lancer GT-A's comfort and practicality was a tough task, though by our assessment, Mitsubishi has hit the mark. The pricetag is still on the high side (PhP 2.348M), but think of it as a performance car that you can drive everyday and play with on weekends.

So what about the Hyundai Genesis Coupe? It's hard car to fault on any front. Striking style, a powerful heart, a great drivetrain, high levels of quality and a surprisingly affordable pricetag for a sportscar (PhP 1.858M) make the Genesis Coupe a true standout, even amongst such distinguished company.

And now, as we head on down the mountains and back to civilization, I was left to ponder what I said this morning. Maybe I was wishing that I could start all days like this, but in reality, I just didn't want this day to end.

Wouldn't you agree? **qq**

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# Burning Rubber

STORY: Chris Van Hoven  
PHOTOS: Various



## The Different Forms of Automobile Racing

THERE are a few things in this world that come close to the excitement and fulfillment you get from car racing. The thrill of competition, the adrenaline rush from pure speed and the fact that tragedy is one unfortunate slip away all combine to create a sport that is hard to beat when it comes to sheer exhilaration.

Every sense is pushed to its limits, and a tiny mistake spells the difference between winning and losing. Former Formula One driver Damon Hill summed it up nicely: "You should never feel comfortable. There is something wrong if you are. You should always feel under threat, on the edge of your seat and pushing yourself. Win one and you want to win more. It's never ending."

Since the birth of the automobile, different forms of racing have evolved; and while the rules have changed, the cars faster and the drivers more skilled, one thing never changes: the need for speed. But before you grab that helmet and head for the racetrack, here are a few things you might need to know about some of the most popular styles of car racing. Each one requires a different skill set, and naturally, a completely different car set-up. Which one suits you best?



## Drag Racing

One of the most popular forms of car racing, drag racing has endeared itself to millions over the years. Two cars revving beside each other, the tension building before the starting flag drops, the driver's pride at stake; drag racing is probably the closest thing two people will get to a Western sunset duel, minus the actual dying.

The objective is simple enough. Two cars start off side-by-side with one goal: be the first to cross the finish line while going in a straight line. And while that may seem simple at first, there are actually a lot of factors that go on in any drag race. The three most important elements are the driver's reaction time, the power of the car and how well the car can plant all that power to the ground.

The most popular distance for a standard drag race is a quarter mile, or 402.3 meters. Both cars come from a stationary start and are allowed to move once the

light turns GO. This is where the driver's reaction time comes into play. Once that light gives the go signal, the car has to leave the starting line as fast as possible. Professional drag racers have reaction times faster than one tenth of a second.

The next time measurement that is important to keep in mind is the elapsed time. This is simply the time it takes for the car to get from start to finish. Obviously, a more powerful car will get you there quicker, but it's also important to keep in mind that if your car has too much power, it'll be harder to keep those wheels from spinning. That's why drag racing cars have the biggest, thickest tires on the wheels where the power is coming from (usually the rear) and some even use wheelie bars to keep the cars from flipping over.

If you're wondering just how fast professional dragsters go, Top Fuel Dragsters usually hit around 500 km/h by the time they cross the finish line.

## Circuit Racing

Circuit racing is one of the more traditional types of automobile racing. With origins dating as far back as the ancient Greeks racing their chariots, circuit racing consists of a group of vehicles going around a set racetrack. Modern racetracks are usually constructed from concrete or asphalt, and drivers must compete for the fastest time around the track, given a set amount of laps.

Circuit racing is arguably the most popular form of racing, as everything from the British Grand Prix, NASCAR, the 24-Hour Le Mans and Formula One all use it for their competitions. That makes circuit racing one of the world's most televised sports. Race cars come in different shapes and sizes, as anything from touring cars, stock cars, production cars and open seat cars are used in these races. Since the amount of cars competing can range from three to over thirty, contact between the cars is a normal occurrence, and can sometimes lead to breathtaking (and sometimes fatal) crashes.



# Rally

Rally racing, or Rallying, is a form of auto racing that takes place on public or private roads where drivers have to get from point A to point B in the shortest amount of time possible. As opposed to circuit racing, where the cars drive around a set race track, Rallying can span over 1,000 kilometers over all kinds of road conditions, whether tarmac, dirt, gravel, mud or even ice. The whole race course is usually divided into special points or stages, where the driver and navigator must get the car to each point either as fast as possible, or under a given ideal time, depending on the format of the race.

Most cars used in Rallies are production cars with modifications done to improve handling, performance, braking and suspension. All-wheel drive cars are heavy favorites for this type of auto racing, as these cars provide better traction for off-road situations. Interestingly enough, it's because of Rally racing that the Audi Quattro was born, and that led the way for other manufacturers to come out with their own version of all-wheel drive technologies used in a lot of cars seen on the road today.



# Autocross

Autocross is a form of auto racing that is quickly gaining popularity simply because it is very easy to set up and participate in. Also, it's one of the safer types of motorsports because average speeds are typically slower in these kinds of races. Instead, autocross emphasizes a car's agility, handling and ability to navigate through tight twists and corners. An autocross racetrack is typically a temporary course marked by pylons or traffic cones, usually held in a wide paved area or parking lot.

As opposed to drag racing, where horsepower is given a lot of importance, driver skill, reaction time and even memory skills are put to the test when participating in an autocross. The objective of an autocross is to complete the course as quickly as possible, and autocross times can vary from 30 seconds to under 2 minutes depending on the size of the course.

Autocross is a great motorsport for amateurs since not only is it relatively safer than other forms of racing because of the lack of solid barriers, obstacles and contact with other cars, but also because this is one of the few ways you can enter a stock or unmodified car and still remain competitive. This means that people who are interested in joining don't have to pay an arm and a leg to compete. A variation of the typical autocross is called gymkhana, which relies on the same basic principles using a much tighter course, with numerous 360 degree turns and even greater turning angles. Since the course requires a high level of agility from the car, modifications usually extend to the car's suspension system, since stiffening or lowering the suspension gives the car a lower center of gravity, giving it the ability to handle tight corners better.

# Drift

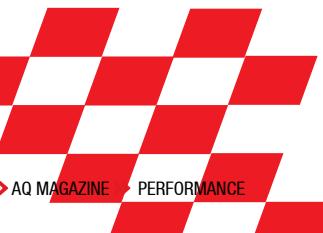
The latest form of auto racing to gain popularity is drifting. Relatively new to the scene, drifting is slowly becoming the new darling of auto racing because of its high level of style, skill and glamour. Many films, TV shows and even cartoons have contributed to its steady increase in popularity, and it doesn't look like the trend is going to stop any time soon.

Drifting is a driving technique where the driving intentionally induces oversteering in a vehicle, causing the rear wheels to slip and lose traction. Points are awarded to the driver depending on how long he sustains the slide, how fast his entry and exit speed are relative to the apex, his style factor (amount of smoke, crowd reaction, how close the car is to the wall) and how big the slip angle is.

Because of the unique nature of drifting, the cars are set up in a distinctive way as well. The most



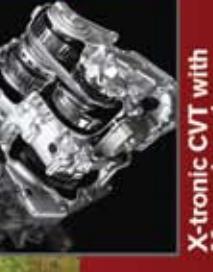
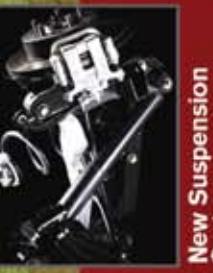
So there you have it. There are plenty of ways to get involved in motorsports. All you have to do is pick one and see which one suits your style the most. One thing is for sure, no matter what you pick, you're going to have fun. ☺



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# Stock Just Ain't Enough

## The AQ Tuning Guide

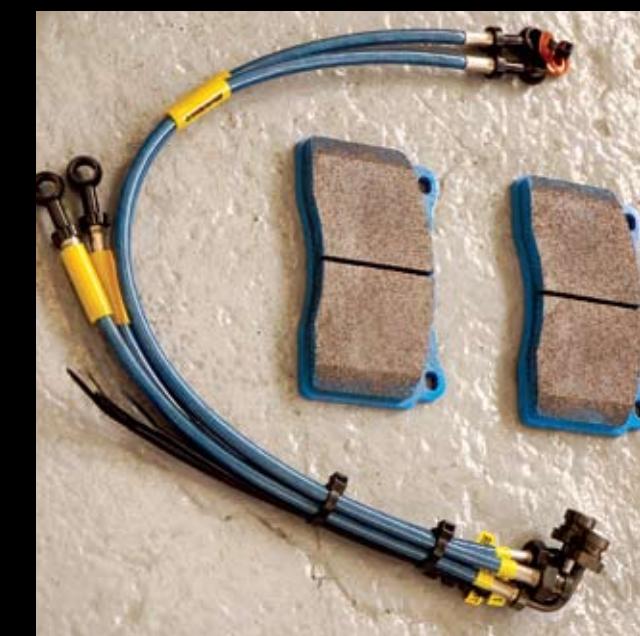
STORY: Angelo B. Puyat PHOTOS: Vince Pornelos

### It's all about personalization.

In as much as your home is an extension of yourself, the car you drive also speaks volumes about you. Hence, you'd naturally want your ride to reflect traits that make you...YOU.

Today's aftermarket scene thrives with more products than ever. Similar to the ubiquitous applications of the iPhone, modifications and upgrades abound catering to your every need. Mind you, these aren't just annoying trinkets with giant bobbing heads glued to the car's dash.

In this issue, AQ has hooked up with two of the most popular tuning firms in the business, namely Emperor Motorsports and Speedlab. Offering bolt-on parts for both show and go, you're sure to find your customization fix with these two. We then fit these goodies to three different vehicles that represent varying tastes. From the mild mannered but satisfyingly torquey Ford Focus TDCi, to the downright sporty Mitsubishi Lancer GT-A, then to the purist's choice Mazda MX-5...here's to driving with a more personalized touch.





# Ford Focus Ghia TDCi

For a lot of motorists, the Focus turbo diesel is a unique option as it offers the fuel savings of a diesel-powered vehicle and the comfortable packaging of a sedan. Owners who find its overall demeanor a bit staid though have a lot going for them. Speedlab may well be the perfect stop for those looking to add a little more spice to the Focus. Speedlab is a partner of the Tuason Racing School (TRS), which campaigns a Ford Focus TDCi in the Philippine Touring Car Championships (PTCC). Without doubt, this tuning shop definitely knows its way around this car.

Customizing the Focus can begin with a little more muscle under the hood. Speedlab carries K&N air intake systems that improve engine response and increase engine output, while they can also customize a freer flowing exhaust system for that racier note. Speedlab also installs Unichip, a plug n play piggyback device that alters the factory fuel and timing

parameters for increased power. This will work well to extract the most out of the Focus' turbocharged motor. For the truly power hungry, Speedlab can accommodate a big turbo upgrade with the requisite larger intercooler for more efficient engine intake cooling.

Improved looks can come by way of larger rolling stock, and Speedlab will be happy to supply you with edgier G-Games rims, that will pair well with the in-house coil-over suspension system. Not only do these coil-overs allow for ride height tinkering, they also return a more controlled ride giving the Focus sharper handling. Looking good not only outside but also inside is easily achievable, beginning with the supportive OMP Racing Seats that really give off a race-car vibe.

The list doesn't stop there, but like with anything, the more you put also means the more you pay. For more choices, log on to [www.speedlab.com.ph](http://www.speedlab.com.ph). >>



# Mitsubishi Lancer GT-A



Emperor Motorsports initially gained fame with its affinity for Lancer Evolutions. Taking its name from the well-loved Anime series - Initial D, Emperor has grown its expertise to encompass both JDM and European brands. When looking to personalize the current generation Lancer, what better tuning company to approach than this Lancer stalwart?

With striking lines and shapes already built in, it's not hard to further enhance the car's aesthetics. Emperor suggests to go with these handsome BBS wheels that bump up the style points quite nicely, setting this ride apart from the many Lancer's cruising the streets. Achieving that Need for Speed flair are a pair of carbon fiber bits for the hood and chin, which not only look sportier, but also cut back on weight.

Inside the cabin, Defi gauges can be installed for that high-tech boy-racer

feel. Aside from looking very cool, these gadgets help monitor vital readings such as oil pressure and temp. Just like any proper performance car, bucket seats are needed to hold the driver in place. For this task, Emperor employs various bucket seats from brands trusted for decades. Capping off the interior make-over is a Ralliart shift knob, reminding the driver upon every shift of Mitsubishi's rich rally heritage.

Emperor certainly won't forget about the go-fast bits, and for the Lancer the list begins with an HKS Super Flow air filter. More air in means more air out, and this is achieved with a Fujitsubo racing muffler. Helping the Lancer carve faster lines is a set of Tein coil-over suspension, adjustable both for ride height and damper firmness.

This is just a taste of Emperor's treats, for the whole gamut of mods log on to [www.emperormotorsports.com](http://www.emperormotorsports.com). >>



## Mazda MX-5

A car as rewarding to drive as the MX-5, not to mention as eye catching, may elicit questions as to why one would even want to tinker with it at all. Well for some people, personalization is one thing they cannot get enough of. For the modification crazy, Speedlab has exactly what you're looking for.

Making the MX-5 an even better handler is a set of XYZ coil-overs, allowing the driver to dial in just the right amount of firmness. It'll also give him or her that versatility to drop the car, no doubt complimenting the over-all look once those Rota Track or Rota GT3 rims are mounted. An

Ultra Racing Strut bar is also available to help eliminate that last drop of understeer from this ever flickable Mazda.

Need more speed? Why don't you get started with a K&N air filter that goes nicely with Speedlab's exhaust system. Feel that the MX-5 needs a serious bump in HP? A bottle of Nitrous Express will fit in nicely in this 2-door's diminutive trunk, giving it that extra straight line oomph. Oh, and just in case you stay on the nitrous a little too long, Speedlab offers Runstop rotors to enhance the vehicle's braking ability. Now stop drooling and let the personalization begin... **aq**



**PTCC and PPCC Series heat up!**

STORY: Mark Desales

Rounds 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the 2010 Philippine Touring Car Championship together with the Philippine Production Car Championship series came to a complete success when 17 competitors battled all the way up to the chequered flag last November 20-21 at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The four-round PPCC races are organized and promoted by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP), the only National Auto Club that is affiliated with the FIA, a Paris-based organization that governs all Four-wheeled motorsports worldwide and is co-presented by Concept One Wheels, Nitto and Starfire tires, Seaoil Extreme 97, Mako Lubes and powered by Aeromed Ambulance Transport, Cut and Paste Digital Design, Velocity Motors and Six Fingers and Media partners Chequered Flag, Turbo Time and Power Wheels Magazine.

It was an action-packed weekend as novice drivers showed off their driving skills. Arnel Carlos of DKC Racing Team got the pole position followed by his teammate Dean Jason and closely followed by Alvin Ng of the TRS Team. After 10 laps of racing, it was Ng who took the chequered flag in the first race of the weekend followed by Singaporean Marcus Wong and Cyrille Fontaine of the BRE/Chevy Racing. Pole sitter Carlos finished in 5th after a 30-sec time penalty for a jump start. In the PTCC, it was a very good weekend start for Joey Pery taking the pole position followed by Seaoil/Velocity Racing Dennis Uy and Juny Binamira on Third. Pery maintained his lead and pulled away with almost one-second time difference between Uy and Binamira crossing the finish line.

In Round 6, a red flag was given when an accident involving Arnel Carlos and Diane Montecillo on lap 1 forcing the deployment of the Safety Car.

Rounds 7 and 8 in the PPCC were a different story when BRE/Chevy Racing got their first pole position after entering this prestigious circuit racing series this year sending Marcus Wong in Second and the newly-repaired damaged car of DKC Racing Arnel Carlos in third. In the PTCC, it's still Joey Pery who dominated the day, grabbing the pole position and taking control of the race after Seaoil/Velocity Racing Dennis Uy was slapped with a 30-sec time penalty for a jump start causing him to drop to 5th place and giving his 1st place finish to Pery in round 7.

The championship legs of the 2010 PTCC and PPCC series are all set on January 8-9, 2011 at the newly constructed 4.1 kilometer Clark International Speedway. For more inquiries, please contact Mark Desales of the AAP Motorsports Department at 723-08-08 loc 823.



# MOTORSPORTS ROUNDUP



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## Anton stamps class in Tarlac Hillclimb races

Mark Young-Yokohama Racing ace driver Carlos Anton dominated the fourth and fifth rounds of the Hillclimb Championship held in the hills of San Jose, Tarlac winning both the day and night stages of the course.

Anton led his team to a rare triple double with Alfie Concepcion and Frankie Domingo winning both legs in their respective Group 4 and Group 2 classes.

The fourth round was held in two separate day stages while the fifth leg was raced up the mountain at night to the Monasterio de Tarlac.

"All the stages in both rounds were quick, we were on the limiter on fourth gear at one point on that single lane road!" Anton said after checking in at 1:29.27 seconds on the 3-kilometer second stage for an average speed of over the 120 kph from a standing start.

Danby Yaptinchay finished the stage second in an Evolution 3 with 1:33.21 seconds.

Hornitex-Yokohama-Total teammates Concepcion and Domingo extended their lead on the group 4 and 2 championships with flawless runs up the Tarlac mountains. They now only need to finish in the points of the final leg to clinch their titles.

In group 3, Baguio driver Ramsey Kairuz won leg 4 but faltered in the night stage to a disappointing 5th place finish while drag racer Jessie Magat in his inaugural hillclimb race won 3rd place in group 5 during the night stage. BJ Frondoso won both legs in group S.

"We prepared the car over the long break for these crucial rounds and all the hard work paid off, we are now ever so close to a 4th title in Hilleclimb for Carlos and the Team." Team owner Mark Young commented after a long day of racing. For full results go to [Hillclimclub.com](http://Hillclimclub.com).





## Luck steers Santos to drag race win

A twist of luck pivoted an unexpected victory for Pepi Santos of H3 Autoworks to keep snatch his third straight victory recently in the 2010 Northern Series Philippine Drag Racing Championships at the Clark International Speedway.

Santos nearly gave up hopes of winning but destiny intervened to hand him the virtual Quick 8 crown of this series sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) and supported by Yokohama Tires, San Miguel Corporation, PAGCOR Sports, Aeromed, Chequered Flag and Stoplight TV.

He had a late takeoff at the start of the final showdown against JCT-Blanche Racing's Ed Christopher Go of San Mariano, Isabela who quickly pulled a wide margin in the first 300 meters of the quarter-mile course.

Santos thought it was the end as he nearly gave up efforts to catch up with his rival. But Go, to everyone's surprise, suddenly got haunted by a problem.

A nut on fuel injection pump got loose -- causing drops of oil to leak and a small spark may trigger fire that can endanger Go's life.

Seeing Go slowing down, Santos was back on his usual zest and immediately stepped on the gas to drive his Honda hatchback to victory.

Santos clocked 11.921 seconds in the crucial triumph to virtually capture the overall Quick 8 crown as he now holds a total of 45 points.

Slowly but surely, Go managed to reach the finish line in 13.030 seconds for the runner-up crown while the country's fastest lady drag racer When When Dagondon took third place.

But Go got his share of luck when he ruled the postponed second leg Pro class showdown against JCT-Blanche Racing teammate Anthony Go.

Anthony was more favored being the new National series Pro champion but lost the match following a red light violation as Christopher romped to victory with a fast time of 11.176.

Why Why Dagondon of Vannitec claimed third place.

Winning the other titles are Jason Kabigting, Sherwin Esguerra and John Gonzales.

Kabigting prevailed in the Expert division over Allan Ararao and Johans Esperson; Sherwin Esguerra using Yokohama Tires, ruled the Sportsman class anew against Ronald dela Cruz and Arvin Millet while Gonzales topped the Hotstreet division over James Esteban and Andrew Blas.



### Marcelo earns third karter of the year award

Stefano Marcelo of Maranello-San Miguel Corporation-Marcelo Racing pulled off a big sweep to capture the Karter of the Year award in the championship round of the 2010 Magnolia Purewater Karting Super Series at the Carmona Racetrack recently.

It was another career milestone for the 18-year-old Ateneo law student who bagged his third Karter of the Year award, equalling the feat of Pepon Marave in this event sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines and sponsored by Magnolia Purewater, San Miguel Corp., Petron Corp., Yokohama Tires, Motorstar and Aeromed.

He also wrapped up his campaign with a total of 463 points or nearly 50 points ahead of closest title rival Roby Benito of Ready2Race (413.5 points).

Marcelo also copped the ROK Senior crown against Juha Turalba of Ready2Race. **aq**



# Mini Mania

## 1st Philippine Classic Mini Track Day

Photos: Lito Madrigal,  
Gigi Martinez, Tony  
Rufino, Allen Reyes,  
Dominic Ocampo



**F**OR the first time in Philippine history, hundreds of owners of classic Minis converged in a race track for a day of spirited driving, endless talking and raw, high-octane fun which can only be derived from owning such small-but-powerful motor vehicles.

The Clark International Speedway in the former United States Air Force base in Angeles, Pampanga, teemed with well-preserved Minis which came from as far south as Lucena City in Quezon province and the nearby province of Nueva Ecija.

There was even one participant who came all the way from London to attend the event.

According to Solomon Picache, president of the organizing PhilMiniRacers group, a total of 140 Minis participated in the track day and a total of 350 spectators came to watch.

"At least eight groups of Filipino Mini car owners were represented. We were truly surprised at the big turnout," he said.

The event was patterned after the Mini Action Day of Mini World, the official magazine of Minis. It gave Filipino Mini owners the chance to try their treasured pocket rockets in a world-class race track. Track sessions were categorized according to engine types, namely 1275's, 1000's and automatics.

Three Minis broke down on the track, which is a common sight in events like this even in the United Kingdom where the cars originated.

A drag race was held as one of the side events of the day, pitting an A-Series 1275 Mini to a Mini that is powered by a Honda engine. The A-Series won, delighting the crowd which is composed of mostly purist Mini owners.

The first Philippine Classic Mini Track Day was made possible through the support of Mang Inasal, Stavros, The News Today, Topgear Philippines, Tutti Frutti, PLDT/Smart, TV 5, Studio 23, ABS-CBN, Sports Unlimited, British United Automobile The Fort, Castrol BP, Selecta, Miniworld UK, AWS UK, Blue Bonnet Café, Anzhal Paint, and Automax. **aq**





# Vroom with a View

The 2nd AAP Caravan

Text and photos: Iñigo S. Roces



ONE needn't travel far away from the country to see exotic works of art, priceless artifacts of national heritage or the peerless wonders of nature. A myriad of sites and attractions await the avid motorist just a few hours away from Manila.





Exposing the Filipino traveler to these destinations was the objective of the 2nd AAP Caravan that happened last November 27, 2010. Petron Blaze was the official fuel provider of the drive tour mounted by the Automobile Association. AAP members and motoring journalists gathered at Petron Blue Wave at sunrise to register for the convoy. Joining them would be several AAP support vehicles and an AeroMed ambulance.

The caravan, which flagged off from Petron Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City, took the Coastal Road to stop at the De La Salle Museum in Dasmariñas, Cavite. Located inside De la Salle University – Dasmariñas, the museum is designed to recreate the 19th century illustrado lifestyle of the colonial period. The museum features collections of antique family heirlooms such as furniture, decorative objects, and fine and applied arts.

From here, the caravan then proceeded to the GBR Museum in Gen. Trias, Cavite. The dream of Geronimo Berenguer delos Reyes, Jr., the venue houses more than 3,000 vintage photographs of key events in Philippine and world history. Owing to Berenguer's fascination with flight, two of the pavilions display various commercial and military model airplanes, arranged in chronological order.

The convoy proceeded further down South, stopping at Petron along Aguinaldo Highway in the Tagaytay Ridge for some Magnolia ice cream courtesy of Petron Treats. The convoy then moved on to the historic Taal Town to view the famous

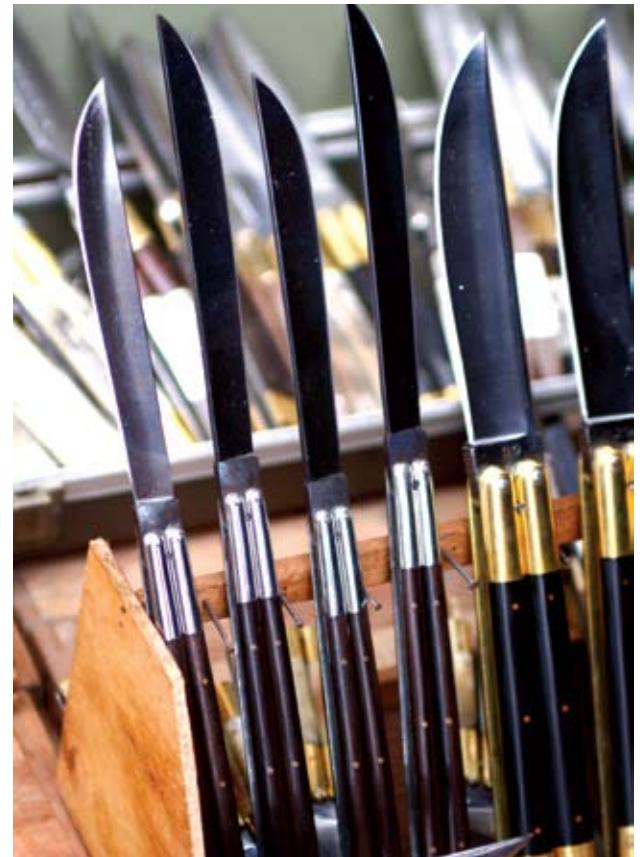


ancestral homes and Taal Basilica and have a hearty lunch at the Escuela Pia building. There, they were quizzed on what they learned so far with delightful prizes, including accommodations at Microtel Hotels in Baguio and Batangas, awaiting those who paid attention.

Next stop was a visit to the Ruins of Old Taal Church in San Nicolas, Batangas before proceeding to the provincial capitol in Batangas City, where the participants were treated to native delicacies. The last pit stop on the way home was Petron Star Toll, capping a most enjoyable day of driving and sightseeing.

Participants to the 2nd AAP Drive Tour Caravan were privileged to enjoy the ultra-high performance of Petron Blaze, and were able to experience its enhanced benefits in actual Philippine driving conditions. Owners of high performance and regular cars were assured that the country's only pure, high-octane unleaded gasoline would be able to protect their priceless vehicles.

Despite the long drive, there's no doubt that all participants were satisfied both gastronomically and culturally what with abundant helpings of both along the way. **aq**



# A FIESTA FIRST

MANILA, Philippines- The all-new Fiesta found its way to the first-ever owner in the Philippines –Christian Caballes, the ecstatic San Juan native who couldn't wait to get his hands on Ford's newest car. This forensic pathologist with a zestful taste for fun and adventure was one of the many excited faces at last weekend's Ford Expo, where for the first time, the Fiesta was made available to Filipino consumers for test drives.

"The first time I got behind the wheels of the Fiesta was the moment I decided that this was the car for me and my lifestyle," says Caballes. "I feel privileged to be the first Fiesta owner here in the Philippines."

The Fiesta is Ford's globally-popular and multi-awarded small car that's big on style, design, drive quality and safety features. Available in a sleek and stylish four-door sedan and a bold and sexy five-door hatchback in a total of six variants and eight sophisticated colors, all are loaded with technologically savvy features and an engaging interior with never-before seen advancements in its category. Both the Fiesta sedan and hatchback were on display and available for test drives at last week's Ford Expo- the largest and most complete consumer expo that showcased Ford's complete line-up for vehicles.

"The Ford Expo 2010 weekend was the perfect occasion for us to unveil our entire line-up of class-leading vehicles, to mark the first sales weekend of the Fiesta in the Philippines by meeting our first-ever Fiesta owner- Christian," says Dino Obias, Ford Group Philippines Assistant Vice President for Marketing. "Christian embodies our target audience for the all-new Fiesta. Someone bold and daring, exciting and fun, adventurous and passionate, this is what the all-new Fiesta is truly all about."



Christian actually heard about the Ford Fiesta about 6 months before its launch in the local market. "Online, I already learned a lot about the Fiesta's features. I really liked the reviews. So when I heard that they were bringing the Fiesta here in the Philippines, I made sure to check out the display at the Philippine International Motor Show," says Christian. "Making the reservation for it was the easiest decision I made that day."

The Fiesta fits Christian's busy and distinctive lifestyle. He takes it on long road trips to fulfill his thrill-seeking persona and his favorite activities which include rock-climbing, running and hiking. Christian also uses it for city driving, meeting with friends and going to work; all precisely matching the characteristics of the all-new Fiesta.

"What made me decide to buy the Fiesta was first

and foremost, its safety features and not to mention its good looks", says Christian. The all-new Ford Fiesta is equipped with an Anti-Lock Braking (ABS) system with Electronic Brake Distribution (EBD) that is standard in all six variants of Fiesta.

"I find that the Fiesta has a very quiet drive and the acceleration is superb," Christian narrates. All of the Fiesta's six variants pack powerful engine performance. The Fiesta Style has the 1.4L 4-door manual transmission powered by a 16-valve Duratec I4 engine. The Fiesta Trend is available in both a 1.4L manual transmission and a 1.6L engine in both 4-door sedan and 5-door hatchback in Twin independent – Variable Camshaft Timing (Ti-VCT) engine in automatic transmission. The top-of-the-line Fiesta Sport model packs the 1.6L 5-door hatch back body with 6-speed PowerShift automatic transmission.

## Fiesta is Here!



The All-New Ford Fiesta makes its way to twenty-one Ford dealerships all around the Philippines as consumers are invited to test drive. Ford dealerships are located in Alabang, Balintawak, Commonwealth, Edsa, Global City, Libis, Manila, Quezon Avenue and SM Fairview. Provincial dealerships are located in Batangas, Bacolod, Cabanatuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cavite, Cebu, Dagupan, Davao, Iloilo, Lipa, Pampanga, San Pablo SM Marilao and Subic.



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Delivers outstanding fuel economy and customized driving through the shiftronic feature.

### ECONOMY



#### BATTERY SAVER

Automatically shuts off all electronically actuated devices preventing battery discharge thus prolonging battery life.

## PERFECTION IS IN THE DETAILS



## THE KIA SORENTO

Powered by Theta II 2.4L Dual CVVT Gas Engine



2010 AUTO FOCUS PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD  
**AUTOMOBILE OF THE YEAR**  
& MID-SIZE SUV OF THE YEAR

Available in 4x2, 4x4 5-seater configuration.



### The whole is only as good as its parts.

The smart key, 6-speed automatic transmission and the technosmart battery saver are only some of the unique features that set the Kia Sorento a cut above the rest. Truly worthy of the people's choice as Automobile of the Year.

## 2010 Isuzu Challenge concludes with D-MAX leg

SUZU Philippines Corp. has officially wrapped up its 2010 Isuzu Challenge fuel-economy series with the successful staging of the third and final leg featuring the D-MAX pickup. The first two legs had showcased the NHR truck and the Crosswind AUV, respectively. For the final leg, a unit of the D-MAX ran a total of 1,844 kilometers for a fuel-economy rating of 24.26 kilometers per liter. The vehicle took off from Matnog, Sorsogon, and passed through the provinces of Cagayan and Ilocos Norte before finally running out of fuel in Barangay San Isidro in Paniqui, Tarlac.

The Isuzu Challenge is part of the "Isuzu Diesel Mission," a yearlong promotional campaign that aimed to demonstrate the fuel-efficiency and environment-friendliness of Isuzu vehicles. One of the main components of Isuzu Diesel Mission was the 'Isuzu Farthest Mission,' a series of events that included 4x4 driving clinics, mall tours, sales-and-service caravans, and the aforementioned Isuzu Challenge.

In each leg of the Isuzu Challenge, a specified Isuzu vehicle was driven using only a single tank of Caltex Diesel w/ Techron D. The public was then challenged to guess the total distance that each vehicle would travel. The contestant who submitted the right answer (or at least the figure closest to the right answer) won an actual brand-new unit of the Isuzu vehicle featured in the leg.

For the D-MAX leg, Jennie Lyn Tiongson Villanueva of Santa Cruz, Manila, submitted first the exact total-mileage figure, thus winning for herself a tax-free, brand-new D-MAX. The second exact guess was submitted by Zaldy Titular Caiga of Ibaan, Batangas, who was rewarded with a Sony Bravia 40-inch LED HD TV. The third exact figure came courtesy of Ace Galindo Montecalvo of San Isidro, Northern Samar, who bagged for himself a Canon EOS 550D SLR camera.

"I am confident that after three legs of the Isuzu Challenge, we have been able to convince the commercial-vehicle market that Isuzu vehicles are truly fuel-efficient," said IPC President Ryoji Yamazaki. "I believe we've also shown that our vehicles are very much compatible with Philippine roads. Their legendary durability is what makes them very popular, most especially among overseas Filipino workers, who value their hard-earned money down to the last peso."

In the first leg of the Isuzu Challenge held in May, an NHR light-duty truck ran a total of 972.4 kilometers from Pagudpud to Naga City, and Amelita Sison Fernandez won a new NHR unit by submitting a close guess of 967.9 kilometers.

In the second leg held in July, a Crosswind XL unit traveled a total of 1,190 kilometers from Cauayan, Isabela, all the way to Quezon province in Southern Luzon. By some stroke of good fortune, Ryan Dexter Pinpin Dizon correctly guessed the exact mileage, and won for himself a brand-new Crosswind.

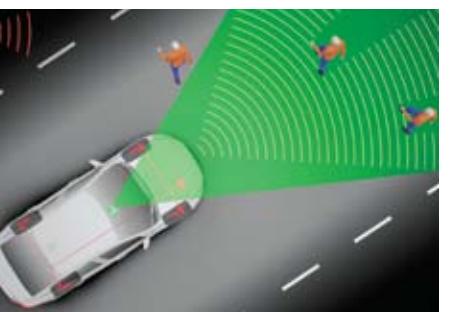
In addition to the mentioned prizes, all winners each received a nice-looking Freego polo shirt.

The main sponsors of the Isuzu Challenge were Caltex Diesel with Techron D and Freego Jeans. It was supported by JVC, AVT, Centro Manufacturing Corp., Home Depot, Smartlink, Matabungkay Beach Resort, Monde Nissin Corp., and Magnolia Fruit Drink Health Tea Beverages. The media partners were The Philippine Star, RMN (DZXL 558khz), DWIZ (882 khz), Jam (88.3), Wave (89.1), Magic (89.9), Mellow Touch (94.7), Crossover (105.1), DWJR (100.3), Home Radio (97.9), NU Rock (107), DWRT (99.5), and Max (103.5).



## Rollover Protection System (ROPS) standard in the S60

THE new S60 is equipped with Roll Over Protection System (ROPS) as standard. Using advanced sensor technology. The pretensioners will tighten the safety belts and the Inflatable Curtains (IC) will deploy in case the car is involved in a rollover. This together with the safety cage will help to reduce the risk of injuries for belted occupants in such situations.



### Collision safety including an improved Inflatable Curtain

In a frontal collision situation, the well-balanced combination of high-strength steel of various grades dissipates the impact energy and helps prevent intrusion into the passenger compartment. The front body structure of the all-new Volvo S60 is divided into four zones, each of which has a different task in such event. The transverse engine installation creates more space for deformation and helps reduce the risk of intrusion into the passenger compartment in frontal collision situations.

The all-new S60 has safety belt pretensioners in all seats. The Pre-Prepared Restraints\* (PRS) regulate the airbags and the safety belt load limiters to optimize protection depending on the force of the impact.

Among its various other safety systems, the all-new sedan model also has an advanced Side Impact Protection System, seat-mounted side airbags, Inflatable Curtains and Whiplash Protection System – one of the market's most effective systems to help reduce the risk of neck injuries in rear impacts.

The Side Impact Protection System (SIPS) has been further improved in the all-new S60 to address a wider span of real life situations, such as side impacts on either side of the passenger compartment. This has been made possible by combining information from accelerometers in the vehicle and a world unique use of a gyro measuring yaw rate for controlling the activation of the IC, SIPS airbag and seatbelt pretensioners in such situations.

"No previous Volvo model has ever had such advanced safety technology as the all-new Volvo S60 does. It is a worthy representative of our aim to build the world's safest cars – and it marks yet another step towards our vision of a crash free future and ambition of no fatalities or serious injuries in a new Volvo car by the year 2020," says Thomas Broberg.



## Power and sophistication in the all-new Nissan Teana

DELIVERING its commitment to provide quality and world-class products that suit Filipinos' needs and tastes, Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. (NMPI) introduces its latest vehicle model – the all-new Nissan Teana. As the company's flagship model, the all-new Nissan Teana shows Filipino consumers how power and sophistication translate to a vehicle, packed with features, design, and amenities that clearly make it a cut above anyone else.

"We promised to deliver the best products that we can offer, and with the introduction of Nissan Sentra 200, Nissan X-Trail CVT and now, the all-new Nissan Teana, we can truly say we delivered," said Allen Chen, president and CEO of Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. "We certainly saved the best for last – our new addition to the Nissan vehicle lineup, characterized by premium design, performance and comfort, exemplifies how we value the Filipino consumers' taste and value. It redefines sophistication and reinvents first-rate vehicles to fit their requirements."

Inspired by Infinity's seamless design, the all-new Nissan Teana boasts of an uncompromising modern design similar to Executive European cars. From the outside, it is a sight to see as its exterior speaks of power, sophistication, and elegance.

### WORLD-CLASS PERFORMANCE

Consistent with the Nissan brand's promise to give vehicle owners a total driving experience that they will enjoy, the Teana features world-renowned technology like the new generation XCVT (Xtronic Continuous Variable Transmission) to give drivers a smooth "no-shift-shock" driving experience. Providing a smooth gear change regardless of driving condition, the XCVT technology offers a natural and powerful sensation of acceleration that ensures lesser fuel consumption.

Additional enhancements also include the electronic control system and hydraulic system and the adoption of a high-performance ATF (Automatic Transmission Fluid) that boosts response and stability.

With these features, the CVT ratios about 30% faster than the previous version as it continuously provides instantaneous response to the driver's intention, in addition to a natural feeling of powerful acceleration.

Mated to the XCVT technology is one of the best features of the all-new Nissan Teana – the powerful VQ-V6 engine that lets drivers rev up smoothly to high speed with radical reduced level of friction plus improved rigidity. A highly acclaimed engine, the Nissan VQ has been cited for its powerful evolution in line with its concepts of simplicity, compactness, low friction and responsiveness. In fact, the Nissan VQ engine is the only engine in the world to win a spot on "WARD's 10 Best Engines list for 14 years running."

Providing better fuel efficiency and lower exhaust emission, the Teana's VQ-V6 engine incorporates the world's first hydrogen-free valve lifter coated with diamond-like carbon which significantly lessens carbon emission, as well as reduces 40% surface friction.

Further raising the bar is the Teana's New D-Platform that provides driving comfort – imagine a smooth and quiet ride around the city with effortless handling.

The all-new Nissan Teana's seats are equipped with vibration absorbing



## New Porsche Cayenne scoops awards in Europe and USA

THE world's largest international reader jury has awarded the new Porsche Cayenne the "Golden Steering Wheel 2010". Almost 250,000 readers from 23 different countries voted on participating vehicles in Springer-Verlag's pan-European reader poll, with the Cayenne emerging triumphant in the SUV category. The latest version of the successful sporty off-road vehicle particularly impressed readers with its attractive design and high practicality, alongside maximum efficiency and the typical driving pleasure of a Porsche.

For the "Golden Steering Wheel" awards 40 million readers of "AUTO BILD", "BILD am Sonntag" and 26 other European car magazines were invited to vote for their favourites. Porsche had previously won the coveted award in 2000 with the 911 Turbo, in 2005 with the Carrera GT and in 2009 with the Panamera.

This announcement virtually coincided with the coronation of the new Cayenne as "Sport/Utility of the Year" by the renowned US trade publication "Motor Trend", in the home country of the SUV. The editorial panel of experts assessed a total of 15 new



models in this category according to the six objective criteria design, technology, fuel efficiency, safety, value stability and performance.

On top of these accolades, the new Cayenne generation is proving a resounding market success worldwide. Particularly in the guise of the Cayenne S Hybrid model, Porsche serves up its most compelling

combination of efficiency and performance for customers and trade journalists alike, demonstrating what "Porsche Intelligent Performance" is all about.

For more information on the new Porsche Cayenne please contact PGA Cars Porsche Center Philippines at 7270381 to 85 or visit its showroom at 201 EDSA Mandaluyong City.

## KIA SORENTO IS 2010 AUTOMOBILE OF THE YEAR

DURING a rare repeat of the Auto Focus People's Choice Award in 2008 when the Kia Carens was declared the year's best car, the Kia Sorento ran away with this year's Automobile of the Year Award in the annual selection conducted through popular voting. The Sorento, Kia's Highline Cruiser, bested Hyundai Tucson and Grand Starex in a spectacular fashion, outpacing the two other finalists with a wide voter margin.

The Sorento was also the segment winner in the Mid-Size SUV category, joining the Kia Carens which was voted as the Mini Van of the year and the Kia Rio as this year's Sub-Compact Sedan. Kia ran away with four awards this year, a feat that topped the record it established in the 2008 Auto Focus People's Choice Awards when Kia won three major awards for its various car models.

Felix J. Mabilog, Jr., President and COO of Columbian Autocar Corporation, exclusive distributor of Kia in the Philippines is ecstatic about the Kia Sorento's selection as Automobile of the Year. "We had thought all along that we have a winner in our hands. This award just confirms it," says Mabilog. "The Sorento is a beautiful car. It has superb styling. Its design is something to rave about. The performance is beyond what you could imagine," exclaims Mabilog.

At its market introduction in December 2009, the Kia Sorento received raved reviews from the motoring editors of the country's leading broadsheets, major publications and TV motoring programs. "Every one of the top editors and TV columnists we've invited to test drive the Sorento had given it a rating not lower than 9/10. One of them even gave the Sorento a 10/10 rating. You can't top that!" enthuses Mabilog.

In the segment awards, the Kia Sorento was also named winner in Mid-Size

SUV category, besting the Mitsubishi Montero Sport and the Hyundai Santa Fe. The Kia Carens, the 2008 Automobile of the Year, made a gracious comeback by topping the Mini Van category, outpacing rival Toyota Previa. The Kia Rio won the segment award as the year's best Sub-Compact Sedan, winning over Toyota Vios and Hyundai i10.

The Kia Sorento on sale in the Philippines comes in either an R2.2 liter CRDi VGT diesel engine or a 2.4 liter Theta II gasoline engine, available in 6-speed automatic transmission and in five- or seven-seater configurations. The all-new Sorento gasoline retains the styling touches of its diesel-powered kin. Longer and lower than its predecessor, its sleek exterior lends a futuristic touch to the world of urban SUV. With its longer front overhang wedge profile, crisply-defined greenhouse and accentuated wheel arch volumes, Kia's new SUV looks thoroughly modern and sporty. In true sedan-like fashion, the interior is comfortable and stylish, complete with high-tech amenities and versatile seating and storage capabilities that reflect the Sorento's cavernous cabin and enhanced dimensions.

The Kia Carens meanwhile fuses the utility of the MPV with SUV style. It comes in a 2.0 CRDi diesel engine mated with 6-speed manual and 4-speed automatic transmission for a smooth ride and handling.

The Kia Rio comes in a 1.4 liter four-cylinder DOHC 16-valve, fuel injection power plant with 94 ps@6,000 rpm horsepower, and a maximum torque of 12.7 kg-m@4,700 rpm. It is available in 5-speed manual transmission or 4-speed automatic transmission. Because the Rio stresses frugality and performance as its main selling point, it has become the favorite of first-time car buyers and fleet and taxi operators.

## Goodyear Philippines Sponsors Two Pinoys In Asia's Most Thrilling Drift Event - Goodyear Formula Drift Thailand 2010'

GOODYEAR Philippines strengthens its commitment to the drifting sport as it sends two Filipino drivers to compete in the second annual Goodyear Formula Drift Thailand 2010, scheduled to take place on the 20th and 21st of November, 2010.

"As we have mentioned before, Goodyear is strongly committed to drifting, the fastest growing motor sport in the country and in the ASEAN region. From the onset we have dedicated ourselves to building and nurturing talent within the ASEAN drifting community. We are especially excited to see enthusiasm and the level of local talent growing in the sport and we are proud to be sending two drivers to compete in the international level," said Gerry Alava, Goodyear Philippines Managing Director.

The DMF Drift team marks its fourth participation at the international Drift event, having previously competed at the Formula Drift series in Thailand and Malaysia last 2009 and in FD Singapore last April 2010. The team headed by David M. Feliciano, holds the distinction of being the first Filipino team to compete in an international Formula Drift competition.

This time around, Goodyear Philippines will also be sponsoring Goodyear Autocare Dealer and rising drift driver Norman Agojo. Apart from being a seasoned businessman, Agojo, is strongly passionate about drifting having secured a spot at the podium in the recently concluded Lateral Drift competition held this year. With his powerful Nissan Silvia RPS13, Agojo sets out for Thailand to secure a title at the prestigious event.

Feliciano armed with the "Great White", his white 1989 Nissan Silvia PS13 and Agojo with his Nissan Silvia RPS13 will both be equipped with the Goodyear's Eagle F1 Asymmetric, the multi-awarded ultra-high performance tire known for its 'no-limits' driving experience. The Eagle F1 Asymmetric was designed with a keen understanding of what the ultra-high performance segment needs for faster, more powerful and heavier vehicles requirements. The tires' cornering ability plays a vital role in drifting because of its Active CornerGrip technology which was developed with the objective of increasing the tire-to-road contact area by distributing a more even pressure across the width of the tires' tread patch thus resulting in better control



especially in tight corners.

David Feliciano narrates "The FD series made me realize that drifting is not about slipping and sliding, but about power and control. I learned that to compete at this level the choice of tires do matter.

You need the right tires with responsive grip and handling to be able to take a wide drift angle using a force generated by 350++ horsepower engines. Goodyear has the perfect winning tire in the Eagle F1 Asymmetric."

With a rich, 100-year long legacy in racing and as the leading brand of performance tires, Goodyear's strong heritage has been translated into a prestigious event - Goodyear Formula Drift Thailand 2010 to be held at the world-class drifting arena, Wonderworld Park, Ramindra, Thailand. The second annual Goodyear Formula Drift Thailand 2010 marks a highpoint in Goodyear's history after concluding the Goodyear International Drift Series last 6th and 7th November 2010.

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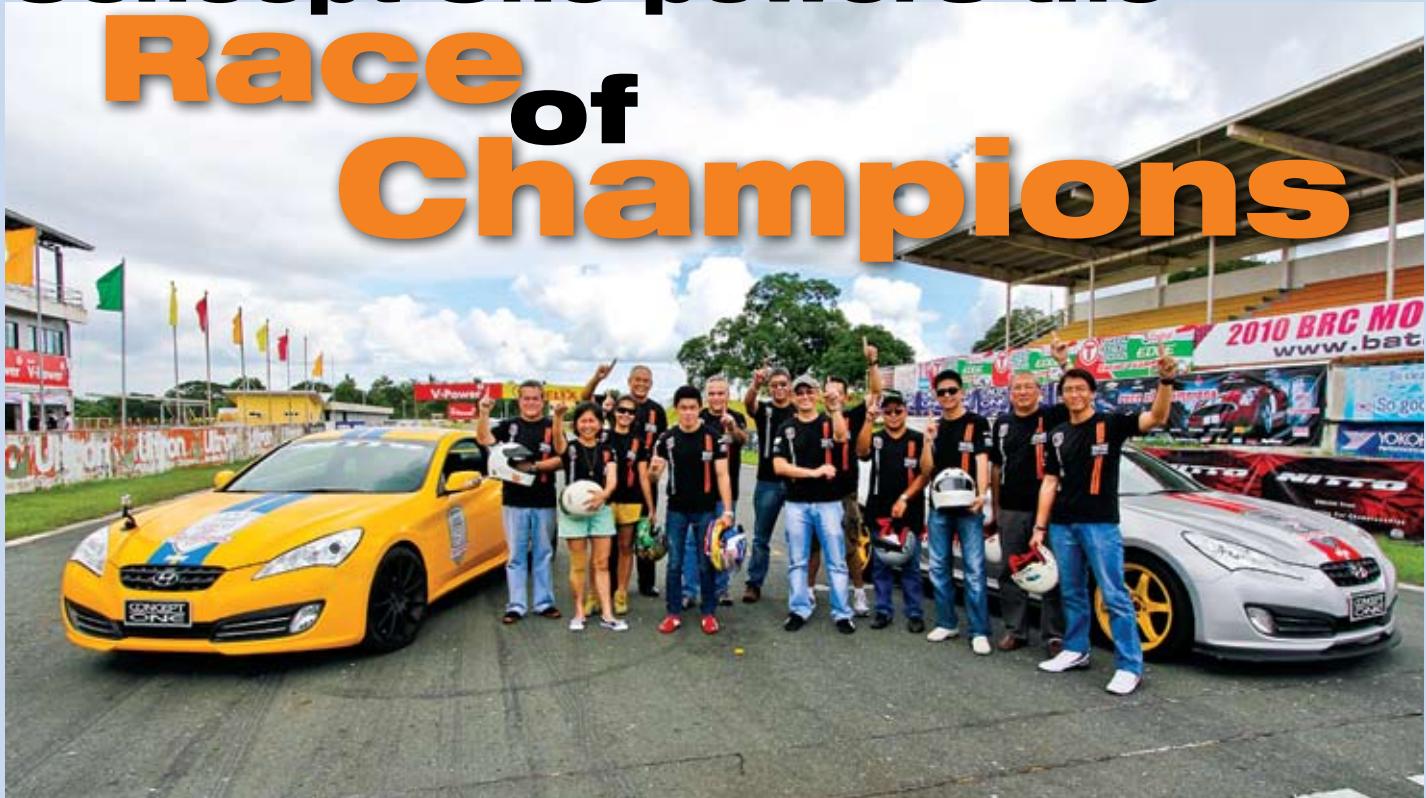


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THIS IS THE NEW JAGUAR

# Concept One powers the Race of Champions



**W**HILE most automotive aficionados converged at the SMX Convention Center on the third weekend of November for the 2010 Manila Auto Salon, some of the country's top motorsports personalities were busy at the Batangas Racing Circuit for the second leg of the Concept One Race of Champions.



Photos: Ardie Lopez

## A MASTERPIECE IN MOTION

### The All-New Hyundai **SONATA**



A surefire head-turner. A distinctive fluidic elegance. A breakthrough in automotive engineering that stirs the soul and makes the heart sing. Seeing the all-new Hyundai Sonata, one cannot help but be overwhelmed by its exquisite presence. A masterpiece beyond compare and beyond words, the Sonata is a sophisticated breed; an executive road partner that ignites spirited driving in high style and utterly smooth performance.

The all-new Sonata boasts of Hyundai's new design philosophy: the Fluidic Sculpture, which characterizes a sleek, flowing sheet metal body with a purpose-sculpted roof and smooth character lines that contribute to optimized aerodynamics, thereby allowing this Hyundai sedan to move like flowing water with top-notch agility and motion. One of its most distinctive features that contributes to its fluidic elegance is its all-glass 3-piece panoramic sunroof (Premium variant) equipped with unique motor-operated sunshades for the front and rear, which further ups its level of sophistication and distinctiveness as a premium sedan.

Inspecting under the hood, the Sonata's new core of power, the 2.4-liter Theta II MPI petrol engine, gleans even more this sedan's capacity to enthrall its driver. The Sonata's Theta II engine is known to deliver up to a maximum power output of 178ps at 6,000rpm and a staggering torque of 23.3kg-m at 4,000rpm, reinforcing the intensity of this exquisite sedan beyond the contours of its mesmerizing physique. Adding to the remarkable performance of the Sonata's gasoline-fed powerhouse is its emission quality that is eco-environmental at a molecular level, and when it comes to fuel consumption, this advanced engine is also one of the most efficient in its

class. It also boasts of minimized engine vibration, particularly when idling and accelerating, to keep your driving expeditions as slick and comfortable as possible. Power is distributed proportionally to the two pairs of 17" (or 18" for the Premium model) alloy wheels underneath the chassis, which provide adequate traction for that safe grip on the road, and also contribute to increased engine efficiency.

Effortless and fuel-efficient gear-shifting is achieved with its gate-type 6-speed H-Matic automatic transmission system, which offers an easy, unobstructed command over acceleration for that fluidic yet powerful expression on the road.

Upgraded with an Amplitude Selective Damper (Premium variant), this mid-size sedan automatically regulates its shock absorption mechanisms beneath its chassis, thus increasing driving stability and comfort even on rough roads. Reliable stopping power is achieved with its front and rear disc brakes amplified by a brake booster, triggering instant yet safe braking.

Inside, the interior comes very much equipped with an impressive new look. Slip in its full leather seats (Premium variant) that provide a cozy and ergonomic experience. At the cockpit, the X-design center fascia makes a fine impression with its forward-looking design with its enhanced vacuum fluorescent display which lights up in Hyundai's signature blue illumination for a sportier feel.

Other conveniences inside the Sonata's elegant cabin include a Push Button Ignition (Premium variant) that lets you start the engine sans the key. And while the Organ-type Accelerator Pedal gives

you superior leg comfort during long drives, the innovative Paddle Shifters behind the steering wheel make you feel like riding a race car as you can now change your gearshifts at your fingertips. Music aficionados will surely find the Sonata faithful to its musical derivation with its audio system with built-in radio, 6-CD Changer (Premium variant), and MP3 Player. Fitted with an auxiliary input and special ports for USB/flash drive or iPod, the Sonata gives you the freedom to connect your music gadgets and listen to your favorite tracks with its six (6) speakers and subwoofer with external amplifier (Premium variant). Comprehensive security features are also integrated into this Hyundai automotive masterpiece such as advanced airbag technology, seatbelts with pretensioner (for both front seats), and impact-sensing auto door unlock and speed-sensing auto door lock.

The Sonata also utilizes the Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) standard to keep the wheels from locking instantaneously, thereby preventing skids. Coupled with an Electronic Stability Control or ESC, traction is greatly enhanced, correcting understeer or oversteer condition during cornering and stabilizes the car to help the driver regain control. The Sonata is also equipped with the Hill-Start Assist Control (HAC) and Brake Assist System (BAS) that prevents the vehicle from slipping for up to two seconds when stopped on an incline and reduces braking distance by increasing brake fluid pressure during sudden braking, respectively.

Words are simply not enough to describe an encounter with the Hyundai Sonata. Test drive one today and let the Sonata inspire a masterpiece in your journey.



Hyundai Asia Resources, authorized distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the country, fielded two 3.8-liter V6 Hyundai Genesis Coupes on November 20. The silver variant was shod with 19-inch Concept One Replica Design wheels with Nitto NT555 tires while the yellow variant had Nitto NT05 intermediate tires.

For the November 21 race, British United Automobiles, the official importer of Mini in the Philippines, assigned two units of the Mini Cooper S that wore 17-inch Concept One Pursuit wheels with Avon ZZ3 tires.

Thirteen motorsport champions participated in the two-day event, including AAP Motorsports Director Mandy Eduque who was a champion rally driver in the '80s. Former Asian Formula 3 driver Tyson Sy topped the time sheet on both days -- an impressive showing considering that SY has been inactive in the motorsport scene for the past three years. Other participants in the races were Vip Isada, Gaby dela Merced and Rikki Dy-Liacco. Dy-Liacco took time out of his busy schedule as operations director of the Zhuhai International Circuit in China and flew home just to join the race.

On November 20, Sy was shadowed by Georges Ramirez who took second place while Mike Potenciano could only manage third, no thanks to a minor accident that gouged the silver unit's sheet metal. With the Mini Cooper S, Sy was trailed over a second behind by second-place finisher Edgen Dy-Liacco followed by Pepon Marave in third.



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The two-day event also honored the late race car driver Kookie Ramirez. His wife, Menchie, ran a ceremonial lap around the track in memory of her late husband before the races were officially flagged off.

Concept One wheels have proven not only their street cred but also their racetrack mettle as they have been used in the Race of Champions (ROC) series, which forms part of this season's Philippine Touring Car Championship (PTCC), and which is sponsored by the Concept One.

According to the company, the race teams and drivers who participated in the ROC's first leg, held on October 3 at the Batangas Racing Circuit (BRC) using Chevrolet Cruze cars, cited the wheels' advanced designs and exceptional build quality—hallmarks of the brand.

"I have been using it since last year in the PTCC and I'm happy with how it performs at the track," said race driver Dennis Uy. "If it can take the punishment of racing, then without doubt, it can survive the potholes and ruts on the streets. Also, it improves the looks of my car."

For his part, Sammy Liuson, president of Concept One distributor Wheel Gallery, said that the ROC has served as an excellent way to gauge Concept One wheels and Nitto tires, which Liuson also distributes.

"What better way to evaluate our products than by having them driven hard by motor sports experts?" Liuson said. **aq**



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PHOTO OP

# LOFTY DREAM



PHOTO: JUNEP OCAMPO

The owner of this Mini which AQ spotted at the Total station on North Luzon Expressway has big dreams. Obviously, the guy (or gal) has passion for performance and he probably is just starting small. Whoever you are, text or email us when your Mini finally grows up. We'll make another photo story about it.



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