

Fast and Furious

If this Supra seems familiar, that's no surprise. It's a close replica of one of the star cars of 'The Fast and the Furious'. It's as fast as it looks, too



There are people out there who reckon that the car you drive says a lot about your personality. In some cases, I suppose, it might be true. Anyone who drives a Ford Fiesta obviously hasn't got one, and Ferrari owners have an ego the size of Wales and don't care who knows it.

Now, before you go judging Mark Sawbridge and his 'The Fast and The Furious' replica, you should consider what he planned on buying before this car arrived, and you'll see what I'm getting at. Once he'd decided to get a new car, it was a Porsche Boxster that headed the list. Then he went to look at a few. 'They were all driven by the same sort of person,' he remembers. 'And I didn't want anyone to think I was one of them!' Let's not cast any further aspersions on Boxster owners and just say that Mark is as down-to-earth as you like, and would rather enjoy giving his car a good thrash up a drag strip than ponce about round town. Oops, sorry to any Boxster owners here by mistake...

So, instead of going for one of Stuttgart's finest, he quickly came round to thinking about a Japanese performance car, and then he remembered the interesting orange motor that appeared in 'The Fast and The Furious'. Having skipped through the DVD again, he decided that he was going to make a Supra replica and tool around in that. A few hours of web-browsing later, Mark had located Suprastore, which provided the bits for the film car, and was

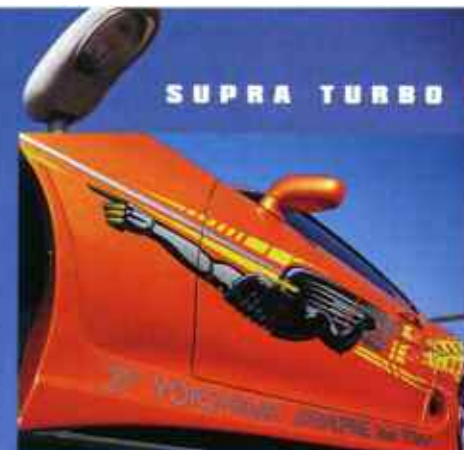
offering to build replicas for \$75,000. 'If they could build the replicas, they could supply the bits,' he reasoned – and he wasn't wrong.

With the necessary bodykit on order, Mark started looking for a car to stick it to. He found this one at Jap Village, and it already had a few mods to make it a little peppier. Well, it purportedly had over 500bhp – and the mods, which we'll talk about later, were extensive. Mark thought he'd go for a ready-tuned car and then do the exterior stuff, rather than get a standard car and then have to spend a small fortune getting it up to a decent level of performance.

There were a couple of things to sort out when the car arrived, though. The first was that it had been booked to go to a top-speed event at Bruntingthorpe soon after it arrived in the country. In fact, Mark picked up the car from Jap Village and then drove it straight to Bruntingthorpe that morning! He told them that he'd buy the car but, if any problems occurred during the thrashing, he'd be taking it straight back.

But there weren't any hiccups and the car proved that it was reasonably fit by posting a 177mph run. So, having found a really good base car, Mark sent it away for the transformation work. The bodykit took about ten weeks to arrive and he took it straight down to Avon Customs where the car was being fitted.

The other thing that needed attention was the interior, because the Supra didn't have one! A race driving seat and bare paint were



Supra's 3-litre six has had the twin-turbo system ditched in favour of a massive GReddy single T88 unit with HKS intercooler, 650cc injectors and Blitz electronics

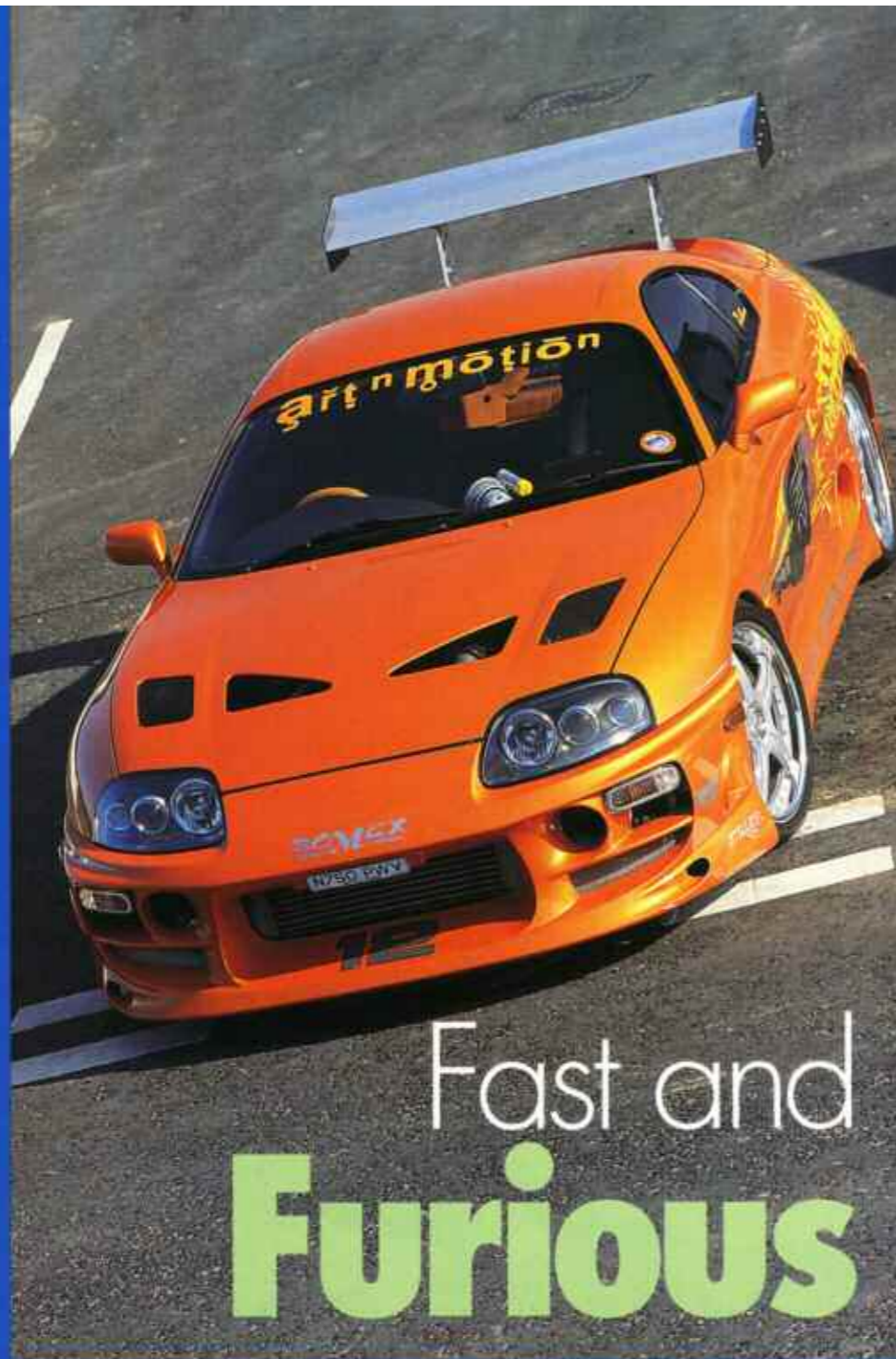
all that faced Mark when he opened the door. The carpets, roof lining, rear seats and half the dash had been slung into a skip to keep the weight down, so he needed to think about what to do with the interior once the bodywork was sorted.

To get around buying new Supra bits at hideous cost, Mark found a damaged-repairable car and stripped out what he needed, then sold the rest on. All he had to do after that was come up with something as lairy on the inside as the car was going to be outside. 'I wanted to go one step better than the real thing,' he comments. 'I've always wanted a big screen and a games system in a car, and no one had done an Xbox, so I thought I'd have one of them. I probably got a bit carried away! Well, if that's getting carried away, I wish more people would do it more often.'

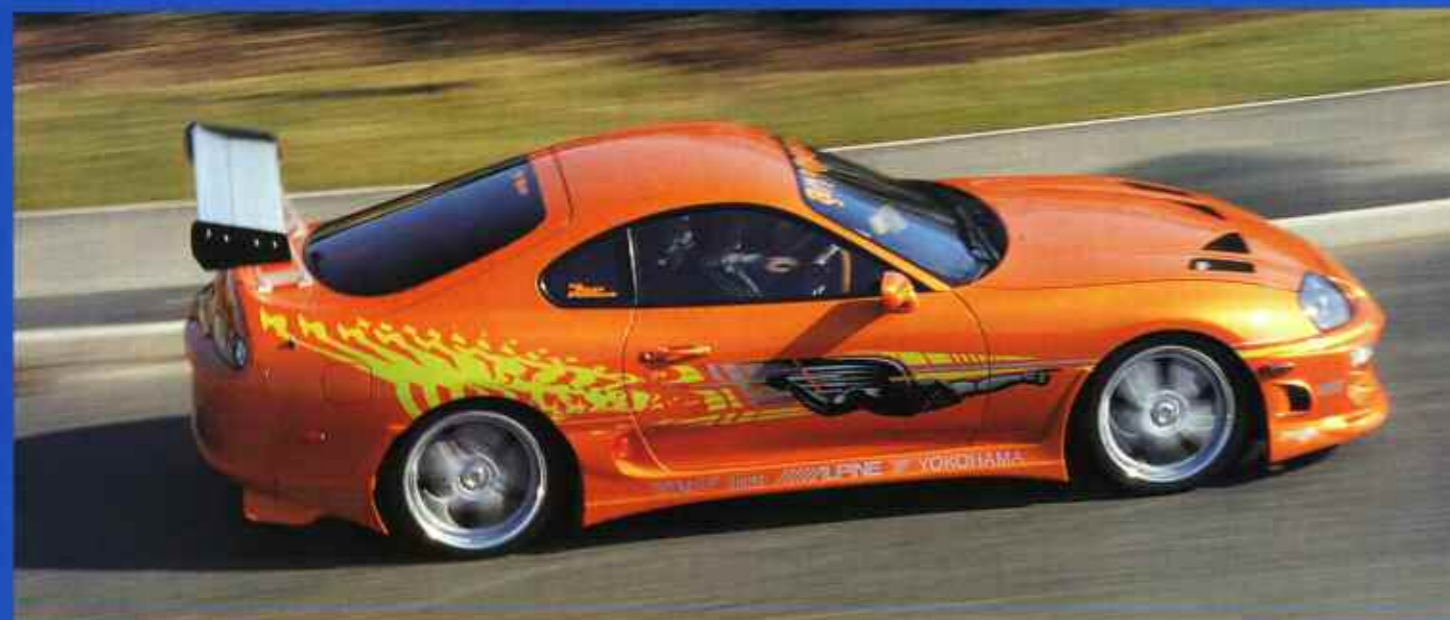
The work at Avon Customs took about six weeks and the result is superb. Mark chose this company because he'd seen their work at shows before, and they made him feel confident that they could do exactly what he wanted. Fitting the Bomex kit, TRD bonnet and APR rear spoiler, and then laying on the Diablo orange paint sorted the outside. Avon also retrimmed the headlining, steering wheel and door armrests in orange Alcantara.

Although Suprastore had told Mark that they were happy to sell him the bits to do his own replica, they also told him that the colour was 'a trade secret'. Hmm, not very helpful. Still, Mark and the guys at Avon went through magazines and photos of the real car and the closest match they could find was the Lamborghini colour, so that's what they used. Since then Mark has had the good fortune to park next to the real car at a show, and it emerged that the shades were fractionally different, but that his is a richer colour.

The graphics are another area where the



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real car and replica differ, but again you wouldn't know until you parked the two cars side by side. For some reason the decals that arrived from the US were a little shorter than they should have been, but a couple of additions to the back end have covered this up.

The Racing Hart wheels are exactly what are fitted to the film star and they look just as good on this one. They had to be imported from the US for the job, but the expense and the wait were worth it. The car sits nice and low over these, thanks to Tein coil-over suspension that is adjustable for ride height as well as damping.

The audio gear went in at Car Electronics in Leicester after the Supra returned from Avon Customs. It took them over two weeks to get the system fitted, and the woofer box that takes the place of the rear seats is a work of art. The enclosure holds a pair of JL Audio 12W7 woofers which have the ability to flex some boxes until they crack apart, so this one is particularly strong.

The other components in the front of the car were simple enough to fit, with the Alpine screen going into the dash section in front of the passenger. This is because the regular radio position has been taken over by the Racelogic traction control, Blitz Dual Solenoid boost controller and the Phoenix Gold Bass Cube control. Good job the Alpine head unit has a remote control.

The front mid-range speakers have been dropped into the original door apertures – not an easy job on a Supra – and colour-coded to go with the rest of the interior. The rear of the car holds the powerhouse of the system in the form of two Phoenix Gold ZEROPoint amps – one for the subs and one for the door speakers. The smaller ZPA0.3 produces around 150 watts for each pair of door speakers, while the ZPA0.5 kicks out the thick end of



1000 watts into the two subs.

It's an impressive set-up, and when the boot's open and the Xbox is going full tilt there's plenty to draw a crowd. If the games console doesn't have the desired effect, Mark can always call up a DVD from the Alpine autochanger that can play tunes or films with equal proficiency. Having a telly that's so big also helps to keep onlookers happy when the car's parked up at a show. And, if a certain film is showing, they can play 'Spot the Supra', too.

Under the bonnet there are plenty of bits for crowds to gawp at, even if they're not sure exactly what everything does. The main problem with buying a car from Japan that is already tuned is that you're always a bit unsure of what exactly has been done to the engine, and how well it's been carried out. The abuse the car has received on the strip seems to show that it was properly nailed together, but the exact spec is still emerging.

The most obvious change is that a stuffing great GReddy T88 single turbo and manifold have been fitted in place of the twin sequential Toyota turbos. There's also a bigger front-mounted HKS intercooler and a Blitz boost controller, plus an HKS exhaust system and induction system. The fuel injectors are larger 850cc units and the fuel pump gives a greater flow. Clearly, a great deal of the right type of mods have been carried out. Also, the fact that the car is proving to be reliable shows that the management ECU has been set up right, and the cylinder head certainly has a metal head gasket or it would have blown long ago with the cylinder pressures that the massive Greddy turbo can provide. But, if cams

As bought, this car was stripped-out inside except for the driver's seat. All new interior came from a write-off; it's now retrimmed, with plenty of colour to match the wild exterior bodywork



have been swapped or anything like head porting has been done, we won't know until Mark has the motor stripped down. There are a couple of mods on the cards soon, including a new exhaust system with a de-cat pipe and a decent dump valve.

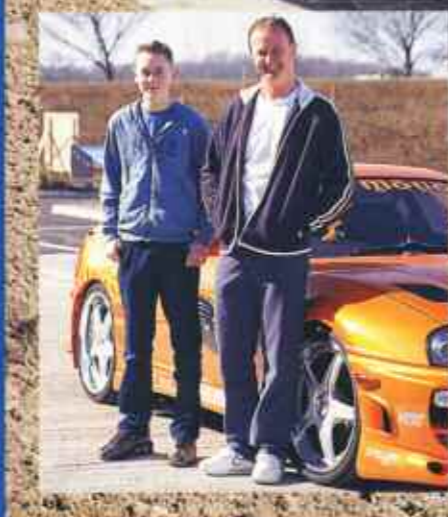
Apart from these planned additions, so far the Supra has benefited from Racelogic traction control and a turbo timer. Both items are very necessary on a car this powerful and, given that Mark wants to get to Ten Of The Best II this year, the traction control will come in very handy.

If you think that running a car that looks this awesome up the strip at Elvington is akin to madness, you haven't got onto Mark's wavelength. He thinks that a car like this needs lots of go to match the show, and then it should be thrashed at every given opportunity. It's quite refreshing that the car hasn't been tweaked and then turned into a trailer queen, and he drives it all over the country going to shows. Obviously, this isn't his only car, and it doesn't get used every day, but it's still racking up the miles.

Current plans centre on improving the car's speed. Mark has found Leon Green at JPS Motorsport in Milton Keynes to look after the Supra, so once they have the car running as well as possible in its current spec, they might begin some even more serious stuff.

For now, though, the car will be doing the rounds of as many shows as Mark can get to, and the big bash at Elvington to see what it will do at the top end. 'I'd like 200mph,' he says in a very matter-of-fact way, which is quite appropriate for a car that looks this fast standing still.

Having said all that, there is another car that Mark would swap this one for. And it would lend itself to the replica treatment, too. You see, when the sequel '2 Fast, 2 Furious' movie comes out, the new star is going to be an R34 Skyline GT-R, and one of those might just turn Mark's head. If that happens, we'll let you know. ●



SPECIFICATION

Mark Sawbridge's Toyota Supra turbo

ENGINE	2JZ-GTE three-litre, 24-valve, six-cylinder. Single GReddy T88 turbocharger and exhaust manifold, 650cc uprated injectors, HKS front mounted intercooler, uprated fuel pump, HKS Super Drager exhaust, Blitz Dual Solenoid boost controller, GReddy induction piping, HKS Super Power Flow air filter, turbo timer, Racelogic traction control
TRANSMISSION	Standard six-speed manual gearbox, uprated clutch
SUSPENSION	Twin fully-adjustable coil-overs
WHEELS AND TYRES	Racing Hart M5 alloy wheels 8x19 front, 9.5x19 rear, Yokohama tyres
BRAKES	Standard late-spec Supra brakes
EXTERIOR MODS	Bomex 'The Fast and The Furious' replica bodykit comprising front bumper, side skirts, rear lower corner extensions, TRD vented bonnet, APR Racing rear wing, late-spec headlights, smoothed side repeaters and tailgate, Lamborghini Diablo Orange paint job with Troy Lee Designs graphics, security film window tints
INTERIOR MODS	Leather retrimmed front seats, Alcantara accents through cabin and over audio install, colour-coded dash, re-trimmed Sparco steering wheel, Auto Meter rev counter with shift light
ICE	Alpine CVA-1006R motorised screen, Alpine DHA-S880P DVD player, Phoenix Gold ZEROPoint ZPA0.3 amplifier, ZEROPoint ZPA0.5 amplifier, Phoenix Gold PLD-1 line driver, Phoenix Gold Bass Cube, MB Quart OSD 216 front speakers, JL Audio T2W7 sub-woofers, Centurion 15-inch screen, Phoenix Gold Powercore, Microsoft Xbox games console, Optima Red Top battery



THANKS/CONTACTS

Kevin, Linda and Alex at Avon Customs (01934 830188) for the body and paintwork; Paul and Gilly at Car Electronics Leicester (0116 244 9844) for the stereo install; Leon at JPS Motorsport (01908 367100) for fettling the car and making it quicker; Suprastore (www.suprastore.com) for sorting the right bits for him.



The replica theme makes this Supra a real head-turner. Bomex bodykit is joined by a TRD bonnet panel and an APR Racing rear wing, with Troy Lee Design graphics and a paint shade from Lamborghini. ICE install by Car Electronics of Leicester is a work of art. Hardware is a mix of Alpine, Phoenix Gold and JL Audio with an Xbox games console and Alpine motorised screen