

WAS TRACK DAY

>> IMPORT MUSCLE EVERYWHERE

>> CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT

>> EXPERT DRIVING TIPS



Safe speeding



There is such a thing

Why are track days so damn good? For starters, there are no power poles, pedestrians, posted limits nor police to worry about



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 ●

GET IT WRONG HERE and it's a tyre wall not a brick wall your car might kiss.

● And rather than your mate 'egging you on' while you're out on
 ● the street, there's an experienced driving instructor next to you
 ● – helping you hone your car craft. Someone like long-time motor sport
 ● campaigner and Ian Luff Motivation Australia full-time instructor of
 ● nine years, John 'Bozzo' Boston.

● John B is here at his home track, Oran Park Raceway, for this
 ● well-attended Unique Auto Sports track day and has just hopped out
 ● of Jason Rubesa's done-up Honda (*above*). "She sure goes harder than stock," he says of the
 ● TODA Racing (Adrian Norton)-enhanced DC2 Integra Type-R, one among scores of hyped rides
 ● here on this windswept Sunday. Bozzo, or 'Hollywood' as he's known to his peers, reckons days
 ● like this are *priceless* when it comes to driver safety, because drivers are exploring crucial
 ● aspects of car control in what is essentially a controlled environment.

● "It's really just to improve on your skills as a driver; just trying to maybe fine-tune them.
 ● You might only find *tenths* of a second, whereas *some* people might actually find seconds.

● "Some people spend thousands of dollars trying to make their cars go faster and are not
 ● actually thinking about themselves. So we really work on the *mental* attitude: how you make
 ● it go, how you make it slow, and how you change direction. Three main, simple things, but if it
 ● was that easy, then why isn't everybody as good as the elite?" he stresses.

● I tell Bozzo that 'do-gooders' reckon such driver training is dangerous because they
 ● allege it gives drivers an 'artificial sense of invulnerability' once they're back out in traffic. >>





'It's perfect practice that makes perfect, otherwise you form bad habits. That's the whole idea of these track days – to have a lot of fun but also to develop good car control and control some of these high-performance cars'

– John Penlington, Unique Auto Sports



>> UAS TRACK DAY

"You're never going to change a minority; there are always going to be people like that," he says, matter-of-factly. "If you look at the people here, they're all enthusiasts and they're all wanting to improve on their skills even further. Most of them get their 'fix' out here and most of them end up driving more cautiously out on the

roads. They are more aware and they are safer drivers," Bozzo states for the record, and gets a concurring nod from the bloke who's organised the whole day, John Penlington of Unique Auto Sports (pictured on page 125).

John was a cop in Sydney's colourful Darlinghurst for nine years and is a staunch advocate of controlled environments when it comes to fast fangs. "It's about promoting high-speed driver training, improving your lines – your braking, your cornering – and being able to improve your times," he says of why so many participants want to attend and why there's pressure from them all to hold more days just like it.

"The edict these days is to get performance motoring enthusiasts off the streets. Instead of racing on the roads they've got an outlet. If it's too cost-prohibitive and restrictive – with excessive requirements, guidelines and 'red tape' – then they *will* just race on the streets," the retired police officer comments.

John points out that *his* track days are slightly more expensive than other types of track days because (a) they're held on a Sunday, (b) UAS ones don't have an excess number of cars circulating, so each participant not only gets more laps under their belt than other kinds



Track day participants rave about the experience and awareness they gain and how this helps them when they're back out on the road



John Penlington's highly-modified 300ZX race car (above), with its amazing-looking engine bay and aerodynamic aids, always attracts plenty of attention. "We aim for it to be the fastest all-round car in Australia and will throw-in drift for good measure," John tells *Fast Fours*



Rather than a bloody radar waiting for you 'round the corner there are only camera lenses pointing at your car

of circuit days, but also (c) there are no enforced pauses in proceedings, such as long lunch breaks, so participants can continue lapping the circuit to their heart's content.

"Plus you don't get C4-licensed professional racing drivers in the car with you and you don't get the proper timing equipment in the form of these transponders," he adds, motioning to the little red boxes drivers were busy cable-tying to their cars (see photo opposite page).

The Nissan specialist continues: "Some of them have *some* of what we have but none of them have *everything* that we do. Most track days are like, 'There's a track, away you go!' and sometimes you can develop bad habits and some of them can be dangerous. In these cases, practice does not necessarily make perfect. Here, you are shown how to brake, you are shown how to corner, accelerate...even how to hold a steering wheel.

"It's perfect practice that makes perfect, otherwise you form bad habits. That's the whole idea of these track days – to have a lot of fun but also to develop good car control and control some of these high-performance cars. You can have a high-performance road car and enjoy it at the track, away from the street."

First timer Matt Jones in his Series-II Mazda RX-7 says he reckons the UAS program is great, telling *FF* he'll learn *far* more about car control out here today than he ever would >>



Highly-experienced driver-trainers like John 'Bozzo' Boston (above, left) from Ian Luff Motivation Australia were on-hand at the UAS Track Day to help drivers hone their car control skills and fine-tune their awareness of braking distances in relation to speed



Richard Stahersky from the South Coast of New South Wales fronted with a white 1996 R33 Nissan Skyline GT-R with tame looks yet animal performance on-tap. "Jade Automotive and JEM Engine Management have helped me out, tuning the car for me, and it's put out 314 kilowatts at the rear wheels," he explains. "It's a car that matches your mood: You can drive it sedately or you can really hook in and it does everything nicely."



Carrera Cup and Porsche GT3 racing driver of three years Jonathon Webb, 21, was on-hand to help drivers polish their technique and concurs with John Penlington and John Boston about the UAS drive day philosophy. "You've got the road and you've got the track; they are two very different things. The good thing about track days like this is that people get the aggression out. They get the speed out of their system and hopefully settle down when they're out on the road because they don't quite need that buzz of adrenalin while they're out on the street; they've been sensible coming here and taking it out on the track. "John is doing an awesome job putting on as many as he can each year," he comments. At the time he was interviewed, Jonathon and his Yachting Unlimited / Tekno Autosports team were running third in the Wright Patton Shakespeare Carrera Cup competition behind last year's Michelin Rookie of the Year Fabian Coulthard (Greg Murphy Racing) and veteran racer Jim Richards (OAMPS Insurance Brokers). Jonathon has a 200SX S15 road car. John Penlington and Unique Auto Sports are helping him tune up



The JEM (Just Engine Management)-tuned R32 Nissan Skyline GT-R was arguably the most aggressive-sounding import out there with its single four-inch dump split into 2.5-inch duals out the sides. "It's got low compression, 25/40s turbos, HKS manifolds, HKS cams, rods and pistons, a HKS torque splitter...and it makes about 330 kilowatts at the wheels on about 17 pounds – that's about it," manages owner/driver Jason Lavis, 34, from inside his pit garage after bringing the weapon back in. Jason has had a few V8 Supercar races under his belt as a privateer and made it look easy out on the Oran Park circuit, drifting the white 32's tail wide and lighting up the back bags under throttle through select corners with the aid of his onboard torque splitter. Unfortunately, his Godzilla's RB26DETT snapped a rod, punching its way out of the block in the number one cylinder and embedding itself in the radiator! To add insult to drastic injury, his steering pump also failed, spewing fluid which then caught fire, melting a considerable section of his induction system (see photo p.125)



Want to book yourself in? Just head to the UAS website and download an application form. It's that easy. Here are some UAS Track Day Fast Facts:

- Cost is A\$195.00 per head
- It's a full-day track day (no enforced breaks)
- There is a transponder you can affix to your vehicle for accurate measure of your lap times (no need for stopwatches or beams; Natsoft-based lap time measurement accurate to 1000th's of a second; no need to put numbers on cars)
- There's an experienced Events Caller present
- There are trophies up for grabs
- Three or four professional racing drivers are on hand for expert tuition
- Days are run under a CAMS Driver Training Permit (people come out and have a run under training conditions)
- It's non competitive
- A Clerk of The Course is present
- Virtually unlimited laps (until your tyres/brakes go off!)
- Driver trainers on this particular day were all from Ian Luff Motivation Australia. John Boston from Ian Luff Motivation says the most common troubleshooting area where driver training is concerned is vision (most people not looking far enough ahead; not far enough through corners; looking where you want to go rather than where you don't want to go, eg. tyre wall, gutter etc.)
- Jeff Boulous, Manager, Oran Park Raceway, is a friendly, informative fella but please respect his direction and try and stay on his good side



Drifters got out and wowed the crowd all day, especially the gathering along pit wall down toward Turn One

with regular driving lessons. His view is shared by several by-standers who are all first-timers and are about to be taken 'round for a recce.

Toward the other end of the experience spectrum is New South Welshman Richard Stahersky, another of the more senior enthusiasts who've elected to take it off the street. He looks to be in his forties and is

standing next to a tidy-looking white 1996 R33 Nissan Skyline GT-R. "On the road it seems that you never get to the limit; it drives really easily. You put it on the track and you can start seeing the potential and the limitations of you and the car," he says. In his opinion, the instruction that's available to UAS track day participants also scores very highly.

"I'm probably a better driver for it. I have better anticipation, think more about the car and its capabilities – it's braking, the tyres, the handling – and sharper anticipation with respect to other motorists on the road, because you have to be very aware of that on the track. Plus these types of days are a lot of fun. So track days are definitely the place to take it," he concludes, ready to head back out.

And as we head toward Christmas and (thankfully) out of colder climates, bookmark www.uniqueautosports.com.au for your next UAS weekend track day opportunity. If you'd like to book yourself into some driver training, you might want to type www.ianluff.com.au into your Internet browser. Either way, you'll be joining some top people who elect to do their speeding safely. Catch you out there! 🏁



FAMILY OF FLAIR

- "My 19-year-old son David usually drives it out there and has fun kicking my arse with his string of 48's!"
- Gary Baxter (far right) says of his Ric Shaw-prepared Toyota MR2 racer.
- His 14-year-old daughter Allison is into racing too (that's her far left, in the green suit), and has participated in an advanced driver training course in a Mitsubishi Mirage.
- "I drove a Skyline on the skid pan and I was shaking. It was pretty scary!" she laughed, eyes bright.