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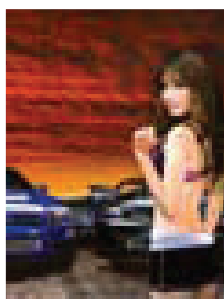
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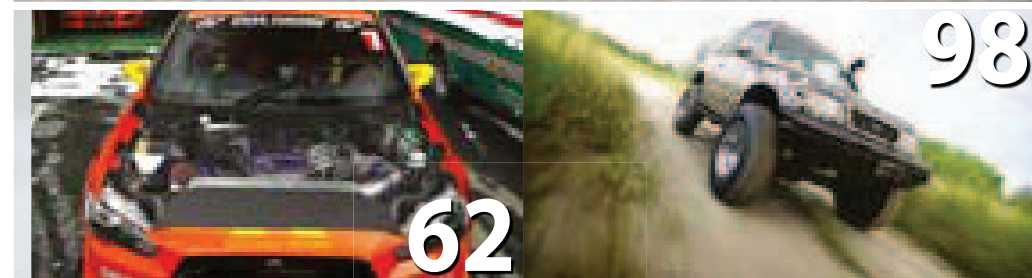
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### SPECIAL THANKS

Abarth & C. SPA, Scion USA, wrc.com/copyright McKlein,  
 Benjamin A. Ward/Rally Norway, Hayden Paddon & Team Green,  
 New Zealand, Porsche Asia Pacific, Motor Image Racing Team,  
 Rory Craig & Vahe Alaverdian/Art Center College of Design,  
 Benard Lim & SG Trackies, JQ Qiu & Exotic Tuner, Benny, Ng &  
 Dyno Technica, United International Pictures (Pte)

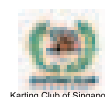
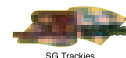
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HOTStu is published by MMX Publishing Pte Ltd of 53 Ubi Ave 1, #02-14 Paya Laya Industrial Park, Singapore 408534. e-mail: enquiry@mmxpl.com Tel: 6745 4410; Fax: 6748 4340. HOTStu is distributed by CarK6 (Far East) Pte Ltd. All material published remains the copyright of MMX Publishing Pte Ltd. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication covered by the copyright herein may be reproduced in any form or means - graphic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, taping, etc. without the written consent of the publisher. Published articles serve only as general information and should not be substituted for specific advice undertaken by readers. Featured car articles are written with information provided by each car owner. The opinions expressed by the writers, contributors or advertisers do not necessarily represent those of the magazine/the publisher. Under no circumstances whatsoever shall the magazine/the publisher be liable for any direct, indirect, special or consequential damages arising out of or in connection with the use of the information made available in the magazine. The magazine cannot accept responsibility for any unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or other materials.

MCA(P): 103/04(2008)  
 KODN: PPS1667/10/2008(02005)  
 ISSN: 0219-6239  
 PPS: 1667/10/2008(02005)

Official Magazine for:



# ALL-CARBON CHILD SEAT



**Student Rory Craig has designed a race-inspired carbon fiber prototype child seat for fathers who want to start their babies off in the fast lane.**

**W**hat started out as a fourth term product design assignment by Art Center College of Design student Rory Craig has turned into a design concept that has received massive attention from baby-seat manufacturers around the world thanks to the exposure by David Pitlyuk at carbonfiberglass.com. This really unique prototype baby seat, targeted at car enthusiast's fathers who want only the best seat in the car for their child, also incorporates a thoughtful 3-stage design that suits the needs of all three stages a child goes through when using a car seat. "My design is purely conceptual but I do hope Sparco likes it and manufactures it as part of its child seat retail lineup in the near future," said Rory Craig.

## THREESTAGEBABYSEAT

The WingMan's entire shell is made from wet carbon fiber over CNC-machined foam. Its straps are Sparco race harnesses and all plastic insert and parts were made using rapid prototyping machines. Its interior is fully padded and snaps out of its carbon shell for easy washing. Not only is it extremely lightweight and strong, but the WingMan has been designed to suit the needs of all three stages a child goes through when using a car seat. The first is a rear facing infant seat, the second and upright forward facing toddler seat, and third a youth booster seat. This car seat achieves this by having a central pivot that is not only adjustable but also removable to allow for these three different configurations. It also has many holes down the back of the seat allow for harness adjustment as the child grows. "By combining all these stages it allows the buyer to not have to purchase three different baby seats throughout the child's car seat years," explained Rory.

## DEVELOPMENTALCOSTS

The project was done for a fourth term product design class where the assignment was to design a soft good product. Here's some information from Rory regarding the development and cost of the WingMan Concept. "The class is 14 weeks long, however when we walk into the class we have no idea what we are going to design, I actually didn't know I was going to design a car seat until about the 5th week of class. I did lots of ideation and computer models for the next 4 to 5 weeks and then came up with a final design. Once I had completed the design on the computer I sent out the files to be CNC-ed, by a local company. It cost US\$2,300 just for the machining. I then met Matt Van Leeuwen at Cerritos College in LA to help me do a wet lay-up over the foam parts. He and I worked solid for the next 2-3 weeks, fiber-glassing first and then bondo, sanding making sure the surface was smooth. Then we applied the carbon, which was donated to me by Cerritos College. We finished the carbon with acrylic urethane and then brought it to Henkel's Upholstery in Pasadena for the final touches," explained Rory. "The grand total of the seat was around US\$4,000, a lot more than I wanted to spend, but the resulting presentation piece was well worth it."

## VERDICT

Ferrari and Lamborghini owners will be the first ones in line once Rory's WingMan carbon fiber child seat becomes a production reality. Meanwhile, we'll just have to make do with what Britax has to offer. **H**

