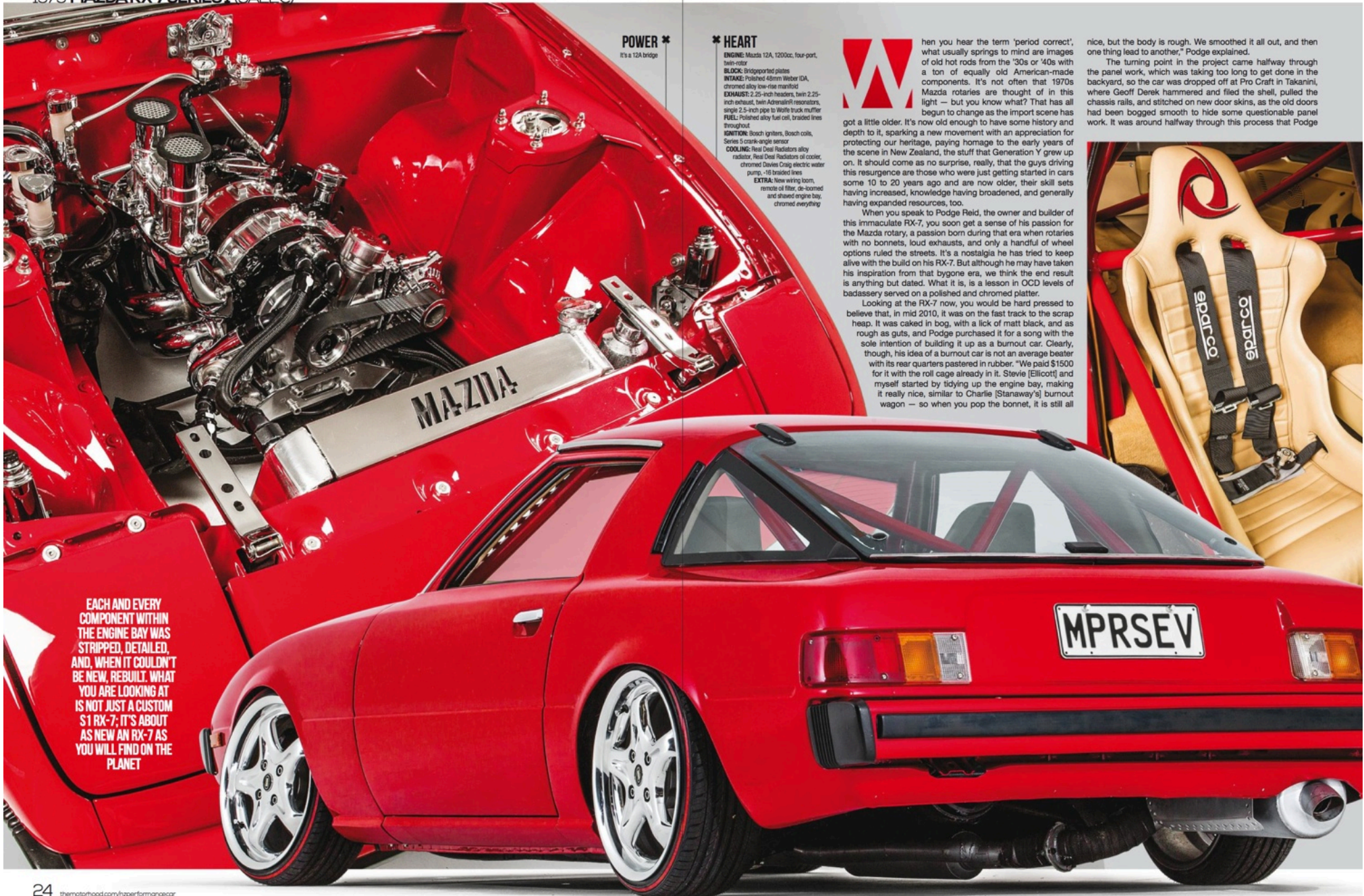




REDEMPTION

AFTER WRECKING HIS B1600 IN 2010, PODGE REID VOWED TO COME BACK BETTER THAN EVER. HIS SERIES 1 RX-7 HAS BECOME THE ULTIMATE REDEMPTION MACHINE, EMERGING AS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S CLEANEST RX BUILDS TO DATE



POWER *
It's a 12A bridge

*** HEART**

ENGINE: Mazda 12A, 1200cc, four-part, twin-rotor
BLOCK: Bridgported plates
INTAKE: Polished 48mm Weber DA, chromed alloy low-rise manifold
EXHAUST: 2.25-inch headers, twin 2.25-inch exhaust, twin AdrenalinR resonators, single 2.5-inch pipe to Wolfe truck muffler
FUEL: Polished alloy fuel cell, braided lines throughout
IGNITION: Bosch igniters, Bosch coils, Series 5 crank-angle sensor
COOLING: Real Deal Radiators alloy radiator, Real Deal Radiators alloy cooler, chromed Davies Crisp electric water pump, -18 braided lines
EXTRA: New wiring loom, remote oil filter, de-bored and shaved engine bay, chromed everything



When you hear the term 'period correct', what usually springs to mind are images of old hot rods from the '30s or '40s with a ton of equally old American-made components. It's not often that 1970s Mazda rotaries are thought of in this light — but you know what? That has all begun to change as the import scene has got a little older. It's now old enough to have some history and depth to it, sparking a new movement with an appreciation for protecting our heritage, paying homage to the early years of the scene in New Zealand, the stuff that Generation Y grew up on. It should come as no surprise, really, that the guys driving this resurgence are those who were just getting started in cars some 10 to 20 years ago and are now older, their skill sets having increased, knowledge having broadened, and generally having expanded resources, too.

When you speak to Podge Reid, the owner and builder of this immaculate RX-7, you soon get a sense of his passion for the Mazda rotary, a passion born during that era when rotaries with no bonnets, loud exhausts, and only a handful of wheel options ruled the streets. It's a nostalgia he has tried to keep alive with the build on his RX-7. But although he may have taken his inspiration from that bygone era, we think the end result is anything but dated. What it is, is a lesson in OCD levels of badassery served on a polished and chromed platter.

Looking at the RX-7 now, you would be hard pressed to believe that, in mid 2010, it was on the fast track to the scrap heap. It was caked in bog, with a lick of matt black, and as rough as guts, and Podge purchased it for a song with the sole intention of building it up as a burnout car. Clearly, though, his idea of a burnout car is not an average beater with its rear quarters pastured in rubber. "We paid \$1500 for it with the roll cage already in it. Stevie [Ellicott] and myself started by tidying up the engine bay, making it really nice, similar to Charlie [Stanaway's] burnout wagon — so when you pop the bonnet, it is still all

nice, but the body is rough. We smoothed it all out, and then one thing lead to another," Podge explained.

The turning point in the project came halfway through the panel work, which was taking too long to get done in the backyard, so the car was dropped off at Pro Craft in Takanini, where Geoff Derek hammered and filed the shell, pulled the chassis rails, and stitched on new door skins, as the old doors had been bogged smooth to hide some questionable panel work. It was around halfway through this process that Podge



EACH AND EVERY COMPONENT WITHIN THE ENGINE BAY WAS STRIPPED, DETAILED, AND, WHEN IT COULDN'T BE NEW, REBUILT. WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING AT IS NOT JUST A CUSTOM S1 RX-7; IT'S ABOUT AS NEW AN RX-7 AS YOU WILL FIND ON THE PLANET



CHROMED SEAT RAILS AND DOOR LATCHES — NOT A SINGLE DETAIL HAS BEEN LEFT OUT OF THE INTERIOR

*** INTERIOR**

SEATS: (F) Racepro custom upholstered in tan leather, Sparco four-point harnesses
STEERING WHEEL: Sparco
INSTRUMENTATION: Auto Meter tach, speed, oil-pressure, water-temp, and fuel-level gauges
EXTRA: Six-point roll cage, custom dash and centre console, Sparco floor plates, Sparco door pulls, Sparco pedals, Sparco handbrake cover

came to the realization that what he was building was going far beyond what a burnout car needed to be, and it was apparent he had the opportunity to build something special. All visions of a deadline were now erased, and the next five years would see the RX-7 become what you now see before you.

Podge began searching high and low for as many OEM (new-old-stock) parts as possible. Any Series 1 parts that Mazda still had in the far reaches of its Japan-based warehouse were soon on a boat to New Zealand, while anything it didn't have was sourced locally from all those slashes of Mazda parts lurking in people's sheds. The shell was then handed to South Suburban Motor Bodies, which undertook one last going over of the body before laying on that show-quality deep red gloss. The colour was very nearly going to be yellow but, at the eleventh hour, seeing seven factory yellow S1s on Trade Me prompted the change to the custom PPG red. "It's a 37-year-old car that will now last at least another 37 years. We didn't take any shortcuts and did everything right the first time," Podge said. It's a philosophy that

was adhered to throughout the build — nothing rushed, nothing half-arsed, and no set deadlines.

For Podge, it's been as much about the process of building the car as it's been about the finished product — in fact, probably more so: "It's the beers, the pizzas, those late nights in the shed till 10, 11, midnight, and the boys still in there working away. Without them, especially Stevie, it just would have never got to this stage; leaning off — and pushing — each other to take our builds to that next level." This is evident when you look at the crowning glory of this build, the engine bay. If you count the number of holes in the bay, you will have fingers spare on a single hand. But while the bay itself is flawless, it's the time and effort that has gone into detailing the engine hardware that has made all the difference. A cocktail of chrome, polish, and black was painstakingly put together — we are not just talking about a quick lick with some Autosol or a rattle can here; we are talking about each and every component being stripped bare and detailed. For the most part, these were new components, but when that was not possible, a full rebuild was carried out.

TO GET THE RX-7 LOW AND ALSO RETAIN ENOUGH TRAVEL, THE REAR SUSPENSION MOUNTS WERE RAISED IN THE BODY, WITH CUSTOM-LENGTH BILSTEIN COILOVERS IN PLACE

*** EXTERIOR**

PAINT: Custom PPG red sprayed by South Suburban Motor Bodies
ENHANCEMENTS: Panel work by Pui Craft and South Suburban Motor Bodies

*** DRIVELINE ***

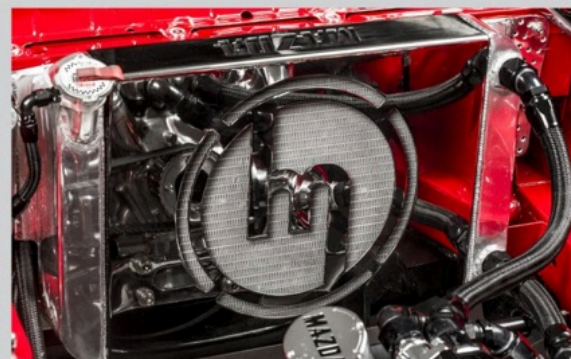
GEARBOX: Mazda RX-7 Series 3 five-speed
CLUTCH: Four-pk
FLYWHEEL: Ten pound
DIFF: Mazda RX-7 Series 2



TO KEEP THE ENGINE BAY AS UNCLUTTERED AND CLEAN AS POSSIBLE, THE ELECTRIC FANS HAVE BEEN MOUNTED IN FRONT OF THE RADIATOR AND THE REAR COVERED BY A CUSTOM MAZDA SHROUD. A CHROMED DAVIES CRAIG ELECTRIC WATER PUMP AND BRAIDED LINES CONTINUE THE CLEAN COOLING SET-UP

We hope you're now getting a sense of where those six years went; this is effectively a brand-new Series 1 RX-7.

At the heart of all this is a 12A bridgeport with 48mm IDA, the last and only remaining pieces of the vehicle that the RX-7 is serving as redemption for. Podge's old show-winning B1600, which he wrote off in 2010. By staying on the 12A route, the original driveline the RX-7 came with, the car has remained true to its roots, just how Podge intended it to: "I wanted it to still feel like an RX-7, with the 12A etc., but hot rodded." The pure simplicity of a carburetted 12A allows so much room in the engine bay that Podge



can stand in there to polish the motor. So, while it's not making headline power figures, it doesn't need to; if you have ever driven an S1 RX-7, you'll know they are fast in factory trim — it is, after all, a race car, with that sleek long bonnet and the swooping lines that made '70s Japanese sports cars so damn great.

The dance between show car and race car is complemented by the re-covered Racepro seats, a swag of Auto Meter and Sparco items, and the full cage the shell originally came with. A local auto trimmer handled the full re-trim in tan leather, with Podge getting the iconic PAC logo embossed in the doors and seats — it's a bit of

*** SUPPORT**

STRUTS: (F) Mazda 323 springs, RX-7 Series 3 inserts, Dohi springs, Toyshop camber plates; (R) Bilstein coilovers
BRACKES: braided lines; (F) Mazda RX-7 Series 6 calipers, Zirooli drilled and slotted rotors, race pads; (R) Mazda RX-7 Series 2 calipers and rotors
EXTRA: Holstare bushes throughout



PODGE HAS PICKED UP BEST RX-7 SERIES 1-5 TWO YEARS RUNNING AT THE V4GROTARY NATIONALS AND THIS YEAR HE ALSO TOOK HOME BEST MODIFIED INTERIOR

1979 MAZDA RX-7 SERIES1 (SA22C)



a homage to the trans-Tasman brotherhood that the rotary community feels, one Podge has been a good advocate for, schooling more than one Aussie RX-7 owner on how to get their S1 as low as his while still retaining suspension travel. This was one area that took a little trial and error to get right, but Podge is confident about the current set-up, with its raised rear strut towers – and yes, the whole package will be certified at this height.

It's been a long road to get to this point, but it's not one that Podge would change. He just hopes that it inspires and pushes the next generation to undertake more high-quality builds like the ones he and the rest of his mates have produced.

Meanwhile, he told us, "I want to enjoy it as much as I want to show it off for other people to enjoy. Part of it is showing the appreciation about the journey. Yeah, it's my car, and I have spent a lot of money, but there are mates [who] ... have given up their time; it's the appreciation of the effort they have put into it. It's those guys [who] ... push you to actually build cars like this. You have a few beers and start bouncing ideas off each other: what's next, what else can we do, what's next level, and how do we push boundaries?"

It's this sort of thinking that got the scene to where it is today – pushing hard to take things to the next level. So the real question is, who is ready to step up to the plate and take on Podge? Is it you?



DRIVER PROFILE

DRIVER/OWNER: Podge Reid
AGE: 29
LOCATION: South Auckland
OCCUPATION: Self-employed
BUILD TIME: Six years
LENGTH OF OWNERSHIP: Six years

THANKS: Thanks to all my family and friends who have supported me throughout the build. Special thanks to my partner Samara, Steve Elliott (LOROTA), Jared Rule (LORDLP), AJ Richards (REEPR), Re-Juan Kuris (HODWIN), Jason Treloar (MIZAS), Ryan Johnson (NSAINE), Mason (LOOSE) at MSM Racing, Ryley (FOXSDON), Aaron Warden (LUNGLAS), Brock McCarthy, Brendan Copeland (NOGAMS), Zac Wilkinson, Brent Crooke (SKIDNEY), Shyam Patel (BOSDOD), Troy Pimani, Charlie Stanaway (DVSIX), Driveshaft Specialists, Duncan Watson (MAYHAY), Dean Hobbie, Ryan Smith (BLUDZEY), Scott Warden, my previous girlfriends, Frank and Tony at South Suburban Motor Bodies, Steve at CSS Performance, Sub at Oahu Chrome Platers, Barry White Walls, Ted and Hayley at Insite Insurance, Oliver Spink, Nav Kumar, Rich Burnett, Toby at DOP Polishers, Pat at South Auckland Upholsterers, Steve at Staring Steves, Dennis Hall at EZ Glass, and Tony at Toyshop

SHOES

WHEELS: 17x7-inch ROH ZS
 TYRES: 185/25R17 Hankang NS2

WHEN IT CAME TO WHEEL OPTIONS, PODGE HAD TO KEEP IT OLD SCHOOL, ROCKING 17X7-INCH ROH ZSS, WHILE, BACK IN THE SHED, HE HAS A FEW OTHER OLD-SCHOOL OPTIONS WAITING, SO HE CAN CHANGE IT UP WHEN HE FEELS LIKE IT



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FAVOURITE CAR: 1967 Chev Impala
MY BEST FEATURE: My hair
FRONT SEAT OR BACK SEAT: Shotgun!
WHERE CAN MY FANS FIND ME:
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