



Aussie Racing Cars meets FW1

Former V8 Supercar Driver & Aussie Racing Cars Developer Phil Ward talks to Emma Lovett about cars, racing & FW1...

Aussie Racing Cars has been described as becoming Australia's most recognised form of motorsport. The cars hold one person, weigh 450 kilograms, can reach speeds of up to 230km/h and provide a 'buzz' for anyone who drives them.

When I arrived at Aussie Racing Cars (ARC) it certainly wasn't what I was expecting. A 3 hour journey from the other side of Sydney, a car, bus and train ride then a 20 minute walk from the station later and I was faced with a massive looking shed. (A good looking shed I might add). I hesitated outside for about 5 minutes wondering if I had the right address. When I made it to the door I was greeted by James Ward, son of Phil Ward. He proceeded to show me around the factory until Phil turned up.

10 minutes later I was greeted by Ward. I was surprised at how genuinely welcoming and friendly he was. He really is excited about the relationship between FW1 and Aussie Racing Cars. As we made our way upstairs to the workshop I asked him which good looking car outside was his. He answered; "Oh just the daggy Ute, I'm not really into cars."

This was followed by a confused looking expression on my part. So if Phil Ward wasn't exactly into cars what were we going to talk about for the next couple of hours?

62-year-old Ward is someone who loves his job. He is excited by what he does and wants to share his experiences with others. I was lucky enough to sit inside the new body shape Toyota Aurion, turn on the engine and give it a bit of a rev. The four different pedals plus the gear stick slightly threw me but I began to understand why people must get a thrill out of driving these machines. Phil puts people's enthusiasm

about the cars down to the fact that he understands what people want from their driving & also what a car needs to feel good.

"The good thing about the cars is that they're really good to drive, they're real racing cars, they do everything a proper racing car does and they give people a good experience. There are not many racing cars that you'll race that will feel as good as these to drive," he says.

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Aussie Racing Cars came to life after Ward decided he needed a change from Kart Blanche. Kart Blanche was developed

by Ward after a group of guys came to him and said that they wanted to hot up their cars and go racing. A few ruined cars later and he decided he would build some karts, look after them, take them to track and let the guys drive them. This continued every month for twenty years to the point where 100 people were turning up to watch his karts go around the track.

Ward went on to build some of the biggest indoor Go-Karting tracks in Australia. "It was fun but it kind of got a bit stale because the Go-Karting thing was everywhere. I built some indoor Go-Karting tracks. It went everywhere and everybody did it so it got a bit boring."

In the quest for something new Ward

The cars getting ready for Eastern Creek





Phil using FW1 to clean one of his cars

developed Aussie Racing Cars. Designed originally for the corporate market ARC has now grown into a full blown racing category with approximately 35 cars following them around the country to a wide array of different race tracks. “When I first started I just had a little shed and put cars together out the back one after another and then it just sort of built and built and built.”

Some well known drivers have also got on board to take on the latest craze sweeping Australia’s racing industry. Television commentator Neil Crompton has raved to Ward a number of times about how much he loves driving them. He once told Ward that the best experience he ever had at Bathurst was in an Aussie Racing Car.

The latest body shape to come on board to work with ARC is the Toyota Aurion. This could be one of the cars that FW1 may have at some of its event sites in the months to come. Recently a fellow Aussie Racing Car sponsor had one of their simulators at a local shopping mall which Ward says was really great.

“As soon as we dropped it everyone wanted to look at it. They got 100 direct orders for products over two days because the kids were all riding in the simulator and the parents are standing around twiddling their thumbs, so it’s a great opportunity for the guys to be selling their things. They did really well out of it.”

The next event coming up on the Aussie Racing Car calendar is the 2 plus 4 race meet at Eastern Creek from the 7th – 9th August. It involves the Australian Superbike Championships as well as ARC (hence two wheels plus four wheels). Ward says that this will be a big couple of days considering an event of this kind hasn’t happened in Australia since 1993. “The last time they did it at Eastern Creek it was called a triple challenge; bikes, cars and drag racing all at the same event. It will involve the top level of motorcycling in Australia so will be good fun.”

On top of preparations for the Eastern Creek race meet Ward and his team have also been busy developing the new two-seater Aussie Racing Car. They hope to have it completed within the next few months. “I’ve always wanted to do it but the body shape was never big enough to accommodate two people side by side. It’s going to be a real weapon & the engine that we’ve got has got 60 more horsepower. It will have really good acceleration and be a great experience for everyone,” Ward says. This design will also work well for competitions as people will be able to go

for joy rides in an ARC which Ward says will benefit FW1.

As our chat came to an end I was confident that the partnership between FW1 and Aussie Racing Cars was going to be a great one. Phil was excited, I was excited and last week Ty was almost jumping out of his skin with excitement.

“I’ve always been into racing. I’m not particularly into cars, it probably sounds stupid. I just enjoy driving.”

However, I do think that thanks must go out to the no-name B2B IC who once upon a time came knocking on the door of Aussie Racing Cars and sold them on it. “Someone came knocking on our door to sell us some FW1. He was very confident, the guy that was here. So I’m excited that we can have people with that type of confidence associated with our product. I think it’s a fantastic opportunity to develop a relationship.”

Whilst being driven back to the train station I was wondering about Phil’s earlier comment about the fact that he didn’t like cars. Just in case some of you are still wondering why the master of racing doesn’t like cars.... “I’ve always been into racing. I’m not particularly into cars, it probably sounds stupid. I just enjoy driving.”

By Emma Lovett

Come on Em, rev it more!!!

