



Sunset Cruiser

Text by **Giancarlo Pawelec** • Photos by **Warwick Patterson**

Rising out of the ashes like a phoenix, this 2002 Mazda Protégé5 brightens our pages with its Sunburst Yellow paint and extensive audio set-up. Hailing from the western coast of Canada's hot sport compact scene – Victoria, BC – Paul Smyth began this rolling project just over two years ago and the build has never slowed down.

For his daily grind, Smyth is a manager for Skytel Cellular where stress is part of the routine. One day during a walk through a mall with his wife Tricia, Smyth noticed a yellow Protégé5 (P5) showcased by a nearby Mazda dealership. At the time, his wife had her heart set on a minivan as plans to start a family were in the works. Fortunately, both Smyths immediately fell for the sport wagon.

After a few inquiries to the dealership in regards to modifications on the leased car, the go-ahead was given and Smyth headed to a favourite wheel / tire shop. Soon after, a kicking system started taking form. His wife was apprehensive at first as this vehicle was meant to be a people-mover for

the lil' ones, but after some campaigning, Smyth gave his installer free reign to build the ICE set-up.

The mastermind behind the installation is Chris Pimble of Victoria, BC. Pimble worked with a leading audio install shop in the West until he began doing projects such as this on his own. Up front, Smyth and Pimble agreed on the use of Clarion's ProAudio VRX-935VD flagship all-in-one head unit.

Juicing the component speakers and subwoofers are three JL Audio amplifiers hidden from view. Power to the midbass, midrange, high frequency and rear fill comes from JL's 300/4 amp while the bass is powered by a set of 500/1 amps. Making things go bump in the night are two JL Audio 10W7 subwoofers sealed in a custom-hand-made fibreglass enclosure painted to match the Sunburst Yellow Mazda.

For Smyth's component set, another array of JL goodness came into place. A pair of JL Audio XR component speakers handle the mid-range with an extra pair of tweeters. For the rear fill portion, JL Audio XR coaxials are tucked discretely in the interior body panels. Tying all these noise

makers together is a set of Phoenix Gold's Zero Point power wires and distribution blocks while a Batcap capacitor and Stinger ANL fuse holder assure consistent and strong power delivery during extended air-guitar sessions. Design Engineering Inc's (DEI) new sound deadening material, Boom Mat, was selected to improve audio acoustics to enhance Smyth's audio setup. Concluding the set-up is an Exide deep-cycle battery and a rewind OEM alternator for extra 12-volt oomph!

As this five-door hustler will also be a lil' people-mover when not tearing up the IASCA or dB Drag circuit, Smyth went ahead and installed Clarion LCD monitors in the headrests to keep things quiet during long cruises. However, as an audio competitor for over 10 years, nothing stays hushed for long as Smyth's highest SPL rating hit just over 143dB!

Moving onto the car's more athletic traits, as Mazda intended, Smyth went to his long-time friends at Mattic Motorsports in Vancouver.

In stock trim, this iron / aluminum engine produces 130hp at 6,000rpm, but force feeding



2002 Mazda Protegé5



air into the custom cold air intake system is a K&N filter. From there, air mixes with fuel and spark provided by RC Engineering 440cc injectors and NGK BKR6E-11 plugs mated to Nology ignition wires. A Vortech FMU fuel pressure regulator does its duty to ensure the fuel matches the new volumes of air.

A Garrett T3 / T4 turbo was the snail of choice and was mounted on a Spool tubular manifold. Exhaust gasses exit via a custom stainless steel turbo-back exhaust with a MagnaFlow tip. A Turbonetics Deltagate wastegate and GReddy Type RS blow-off valve ensure no boost spikes or leaks cause havoc during fun sessions. Cooling the charge from the boost level is a Spearco intercooler and custom piping while DEI's CryO² cooling system sprays the intercooler and intake for extra ponies. Last on the list of upgrades is a Halo grounding system for a more efficient electrical system.

As the family vehicle had to be reliable, Smyth had no option but to have the engine rebuilt stronger. The wrenches at Progressive Motorsports in Victoria, BC split the head and block apart and dropped in a set of Wiseco pistons and Pauter rods

to drop the compression and survive the boost. In the head, a set of MazdaSpeed intake and exhaust cams provide sufficient mid-to-top-end fury to carry the power onward. This mildly turbocharged modification creates a claimed 205whp and 215lb/ft of torque at 9psi.

The subtle exterior makeover consists of a Wings West front bumper and side skirts combined with a Buddy Club-style rear bumper installed by C1 Collision. Smyth chose to use a Gemini reverse cowl Kevlar hood painted to match the rest of the exterior. Key to note is the extensive fabrication / motorization of the rear bumper by Chris Pimble for the purpose of fitting an LCD screen and the two five-pound DEI tanks mounted in a fiberglass casing that drops down and pulls out. Finishing up the exterior portion is a yellow Varad under car LED kit that looks simply mean at night.

Completing the racer appeal is a set of Niche F-16 wheels sized at 18 by 7.5 inches and tightly wrapped in Kumho rubber. For stopping power, Smyth entrusted a set of cross-drilled and slotted rotors for the front and rear. The mean stance is thanks to a set of D2 Racing coil-overs and stiffening the package is a front strut bar from CP Racing.

The interior wasn't spared either, as all of the upholstery was done by Smyth himself. The stock seats were replaced with a set from a MazdaSpeed Protegé that are less expensive than most aftermarket perches and allow for the factory headrests (with LCD screens) to be mounted seamlessly. Other tid-bits in the cockpit include a gauge pod built by Smyth housing Dakota Digital gauges as well as a custom A-pillar pod housing a Blitz boost controller and turbo timer.

Without assistance, Smyth could not have made his (and his wife's) dream possible. Most notable mention goes to Chris Pimble for the custom audio, Troy Ostrinski of Progressive Motorsports, Kevin Jensen at BIG O Tire for the suspension and wheel / tire package, paint and body work thanks to John Chu at C1 Collision and Pacific Mazda for allowing the modifications to be done on a leased vehicle. Lastly, Smyth would like to thank Seattle area based Team Exotik for including a Canuck in their club.

With 12 Volts in his bloodstream and a Sunburst Yellow dream, Paul Smyth is not only one of the lucky few to have a sweet whip but also a father whose children will surely remember their childhood rides! **PAS**