

Your Sunday

HAVE YOUR SAY

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BRAD PUSHES ALL THE RIGHT BUTTONS



FILM OF THE WEEK

ALSO DVDS OF THE WEEK



SLY'S ON PRIZE



SYLVESTER Stallone's Bentley S1 is up for sale on eBay. The right-hook 1958, which has had a £30k cloth-of-gold restoration, has only done 58,000 miles and spent most of its life in California, so it's likely to be reasonably rust-free. Only problem is the price. Sylvester may be a top celeb, but nearly £25,000 sounds a bit strong to me.

Quentin

At your service

BARRY Cozens is looking for a supercar for a bit of luxury and fun. He's been looking at Maseratis and Aston Martins, but needs something that is reliable and user-friendly to use on a trip to the shops or a long drive. His budget is £20,000-£25,000. What should he go for?

QUENTIN SAYS: O lucky man. There's a cornucopia of cheap supercars out there. While I'd love to recommend a sleeky Maser Quattro or a genteel Aston DB7,

you'd have niggling reliability issues and high maintenance with both. For a supercar with VW Golf-like reliability, the choice is obvious. Get yourself a Porsche 911. You can have an 02-plate 996 Series 911 Carrera Coupe with 60,000 miles for around £20k. Unbelievable but true.



Monster recall for tiny Yaris

TOYOTA RECALLS 1.5M YARISES OVER SEAT BELT FIRE RISK

IF you own a 2006-2007 Toyota Yaris, you'd better get down to your Toyota dealer sharpish. One and a half million of the town toddlers are being recalled by the Japanese firm for a potential fire risk with the seat belt foam pad. For further info contact Toyota Customer Service on 0845 275 5555.



Phantom Mini duped droves of punters

Web scam alert for bargain hunters

THE Metropolitan Police stolen car squad boys tell me car e-scams are massively up, with buying and selling mags pulling thousands of dodgy ads from internet scammers.

These days crazy low prices have become

believable, enticing people to do daft things with their hard-earned through temptingly cheap ads for non-existent motors.

One fake ad for a 2002 Mini Cooper at £3,500 drew 600 naive punters.

They're told to send money by wire transfer or cheque, and promised a refund if they don't like the car when they see it.

Trouble is, there's no car and there's no refund. Be very, very careful out there.

CAMERAS UP, POLICE DOWN

A FREEDOM of Information request by Conservative MP Mark Field has revealed that speeding prosecutions rose 700 per cent in 10 years, from 262,000 in 1996 to nearly two million in 2006.

The number of traffic police on UK roads fell by 25 per cent in the same period, so Field wants a root-and-branch rethink on traffic policing that does more than raise revenue. Hear, hear.



BRAVE

IN A WORD Bid with your boots on

HERE are new cars out there for the same money as second-hand ones.

In a desperate bid to shift unsold metal, manufacturers are telling dealers to sell at cost and sometimes less.

Today it's routine to get up to 30 per cent discount without trying.

Walk into a showroom and you should easily expect up to £6,000 off a Ford Mondeo or Focus, and as much as 29 per cent or £9,245 off a Nissan 350Z GT Roadster.

Go really upmarket and the savings are massive, like up to £20k off a Bentley Arnage and up to £15,000 off an Audi A8.

All of which means the conventional wisdom of buying a nearly-new low-mileage used motor no longer applies. It makes more sense to buy a new one instead.

Carmakers are anxious not to start a price war, so you won't see these epic discounts advertised, but dealers tell me that in extreme cases on run-out models they'll even slash off as much as 40 per cent to clinch a sale.

Thrifty city cars like the Fiat 500, Mini and Citroen C1 are the only models that aren't enjoying such savage price cuts but nearly everything else is. Up to 23 per cent off a Peugeot 4007,

and as much as 28 per cent off a Vauxhall Zafira VXR Turbo. So don't bother with internet sites and shady car brokers. Go to your franchised dealer, sit down, smile and say you want to give them the business to support jobs in the British motor industry.

Tell them you'll buy today, as long as they use their sharpest pencils when they do the final numbers. You'll be enjoying the best buyer's market for decades and helping the finest car industry in the world.

I found a Zafira with 28pc off



Wilson

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£1,295 doesn't sound much for one of Bernie Ecclestone's cast-offs. Lurking on eBay is an 1989F BMW 535i SE once owned by the F1 supremo. It's done 167k miles, has air, leather and cross-spoke alloys and looks a proper old piece.



Q I AM looking to save money, and have seen some very reasonably-priced tyres made in China. Are they as good as European-made products or will they wear out more quickly? - *Keith Grant, Cheshire*

A THERE are a lot of Chinese and Taiwanese tyres on the net and they may be e-marked for safety, but they rarely get tested for severe weather and braking. Don't worry about whether they wear out faster, worry about how well they stop.

Autocar magazine did a test and found one Chinese brand needed an extra 10 metres of stopping distance in the wet. Scary.



£18k parking fine... on a £300 Uno

THE biggest parking fine ever, a whopping £18,650, was slapped on a three hundred quid Fiat Uno in Austria for staying in the same space for two years.

Complicated Austrian parking laws say cars not causing an obstruction can't be towed away.

The local council was forced to have the space designated a construction site to permit the unwanted Uno to be legally craned away.

Understandably, the owner, who has refused to pay the fine, is keeping his head well down.

Save our car industry now

THE recent car industry bailout package by the Government is pants. It's too cautious and too little.

There's a real danger our car industry will fall off a cliff if something isn't done soon. Germany's bonus of £2,500 for scrapping an old car has made 400,000 Germans buy new ones.

We need the same sort of incentive here. The Government also needs to guarantee car loans.

Three hundred thousand potential buyers were refused credit last year, so Mandelson's attentions should be focused on schemes to drive people into dealers by freeing up the car money supply, not on industry grants for green technologies. In the US you get a £2,500 tax credit if you buy a hybrid. Why don't we? The situation is now desperately serious. Unless something significant is done in the near future, we risk a million jobs and £10billion worth of UK investment.

THE NEW WORLD

NEW CARS FOR SECOND-HAND MONEY



Surrey dealer's offering
£9,245 off a Nissan 350Z

10

Numbers keep rising on plates

I KEEP expecting the cherished registration plate market to buckle, but it's holding up well.

This week 1 HRH sold for £113,815, although its new owner bought it because he wanted to "keep it in British hands" (doesn't he realise that British plates aren't legal in other countries?) 1 O romped to well over £200,000, with 3 S trailing behind at nearly £100k.

Given all the auction hysteria, you'd probably be better buying through one of the DVLA's sealed bid sales. If your name is Mr Pim, you could have had MRP 1M for £730, or the somewhat cheekier 800 SUX for £1,200 and TUF 1L for just £750. More details at www.dvla.registrations.co.uk.



Another dealer offers
23pc off a 4007