

Tread carefully with 'cheap' part-worn tyres



LOTS of motorists and bikers have been buying part-worn tyres to save cash. The advice from Birmingham Trading Standards and Tyresafe is: be very careful.

Their investigation found that nine out of 10 part-worns weren't legal, with embedded nails, exposed cords and damaged sidewalls. One tyre was an unbelievable 17 years old.

Tyresafe X-rayed the tyres and found signs of impact damage, fatigue and stress points, making them much more likely to suffer a blow-out. My advice? Don't.

Sanyo electrifies ..with a 25mph trickle charge



ELECTRONIC giant Sanyo has set a world record.

Using 17 drivers over 27 hours, an electric car fitted with a special lithium-ion battery managed 624 miles on a single charge. Only trouble is, constant speed was just 25mph.

It may be the world's longest electric car journey, but it's also the slowest.

Have you seen the day lights yet?

IF you fancy sexy LED daytime running lights for your car, Philips do a great set from £160.

They're easy to fit at home, meet all EU regs and live snugly under your front bumper. Daytime LEDs don't just look cool, they also make you much more visible on the road, particularly to pedestrians.

Details at www.led-drl.co.uk



Brussels to put the skids under White Van Man?



THE days of the white van being the fastest thing on the road are numbered.

A recent poll showed overwhelming support for EU plans to electronically limit the speed of vans to 75mph.

Brussels claims the idea is to cut emissions, but everybody knows the world would be a much safer place without a psychotic roofer in a Transit up your chuff at a ton.



Million dollar Mustang

MUSTANG RALLY

LAST week I told you that old Mustangs were hot. Well, now they're even hotter. This week a 1969 Boss 302, once campaigned by US race ace Dan Gurney, is up on eBay with a "Buy It Now" of £760,000. It may have an illustrious history, but such an atomic price will pull up values dramatically in the next six months. Don't say I didn't warn you.

Quentin



RAY Hutchings has an 06-plate Renault Grand Scenic 1.9 dCi. His local dealer says they can't regenerate the diesel particulate filter, and have quoted £1,500 for a replacement, offering to pay 20 per cent as a goodwill gesture. Ray has found a company who can turn off the DPF by reprogramming the engine management system. What should he do?

QUENTIN SAYS: I

get so many letters about this. If you can't regenerate your DPF by driving at 60 on a motorway for 30 minutes, then you'll have to replace, because it's completely clogged by soot. Bypassing the filter might not be a good idea, because it could affect your MoT emissions. Online automotive offer a replacement filter at a much more reasonable £351+VAT. Details at www.onlineautomotive.co.uk



DROP-TOP

BUY A MERC

WHO'D DRIVE IT
Shrew shoppers of chic

VERY occasionally weird things happen in the used car market when great cars are unfairly marked down when they are actually worth much more.

And here's one that, rather conveniently, is perfect for the summer.

Amazingly you can now buy a current shape Mercedes SL convertible, complete with electric folding metal roof, for fifteen grand.

That's right. For the price of a new Mazda MX-5, you can have a slinky, big-cred, boulevardier stiff with contemporary technology, which eight years ago had a new price of nearly £70k.

Leaf through the classifieds and you'll see loads of 2002 SL500s and 320s with 50k-60k miles and full MB histories for £15,000-£17,000.

Most have massive spec, like satnav, parking sensors, TV, electric-heated

massaging leather seats, panoramic roof, keyless go, cruise, air con, ABS and then some. Stick on a private plate and most clueless motoring duffers will think you've shelled out fifty grand.

The latest shape SL is still übercool - the sort of ride you'd see Jenson Button and Lewis Hamilton hooning around in.

Yet people are still paying £15k for old shape 70s and 80s SLs. I may be a classic fan, but the later car makes those old crocks seem wildly over-priced. Trust me - when it comes to used cabrios, MB's flagship is Britain's best value drop-top bar none.



Still a hot ride..

New-shape SL is a techno tour de force and endlessly reliable



Willson

SMI

**BRITAIN'S
NO.1 MOTORING
WRITER**



Got a problem?
Email me at
willson@sunday
mirror.co.uk

Murcielago meltdown



LAMBORGHINI is recalling 428 of its 2007-2008 Murcielagos in the US because of a fuel fire risk. If you've got a UK car, I'd whizz it over to your local dealer to avoid ending up like this bloke in Holland, who watched his Lambo slowly barbecue.



Q MY wife's nagging me about getting a cabrio this summer, something small and cheap to run. I've only got £3,500, and I don't want an MX-5, MGF or a Peugeot. What can I tell her? - *Darren, Hull*

A IF you're quick, before the weather really hots up, you might bag a Ford StreetKa convertible. They're undervalued at the moment - I'm looking at an ad for a 2003, 46,000 miles, private seller, £3,000. How cheap is that?

Flying the Jag flag?



Q I'VE a 2005 X-Type Jag, and have been quoted £1,500 to have it vinyl-wrapped in Union Jack colours. Will that affect its value? - *Steve Cross, by email*

A FORGIVE me for being unpatriotic, but nobody's going to want an X-Type in Union Jack colours, not even Austin Powers. You might as well put the £1,500 through the shredder. With respect, I think it might also make you look a little foolish...

DOOPER SL FOR JUST £15k

TECH FILE

ENGINE 4966CC V8
POWER 310BHP
0-60 5.8SECS
MAX 155MPH
PRICE: FROM £15,000
IN A WORD: SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE

Tangerine Dream...the Hulme CanAm



YOURS.. FOR ONLY £295k

UNBELIEVABLY, firms are still launching high-tab supercars. The latest is New Zealand's Hulme CanAm, a 592 bhp carbon fibre screamer, powered by a mid-mounted GM 7.0-litre V8 running through a six-speed manual box.

Only 20 well-heeled buyers will get the chance - a £10k deposit secures a private viewing and test-drive, before you stump up the necessary £295k plus VAT. Good luck.

Mini Moke to make a mark

BMW bosses are considering production of their cute Mini Moke concept.

Seen at last year's Detroit Show, it's an open-sided Countryman-based buggy that may be called the Mini Beachcomber when it rolls off the line in 2013. Looks like a monster hit to me.



Moke is no joke

Ever been ripped off?

IF you've been ripped off or unfairly treated by a garage or bodyshop, I'd like to hear from you. The British Standards Institution wants to raise professionalism by finding out the most common gripes consumers have with mechanical and body repairs. Please get in touch - you'll be helping to make the industry safer and better value.



No rear seats and insurance group 20, but at this money who cares?