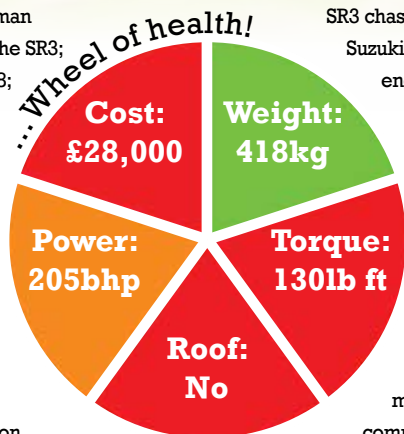


X-BOW CHALLENGE



When you have a track day special test you can't fail but include or talk about Radical Sportscars. Last year it quietly celebrated ten years of racing and the brand is stronger than ever before with cars built to cover the clubman competitor and enthusiast with the SR3; the experienced racer in the SR8; and the seasoned professional with its fabulous SR9 LMP 2. Although it has created road legal versions of its competition cars the (SR3 Turbo and SR8 have held 'Ring records between them) its main focus is permanently on racing.

It created the ClubSport in 1997 as the clubman's introduction to endurance racing at a fraction of the costs and boy did it work. The first few years witnessed a motor sport revolution



as the this country went Radical mad and before long the 1100cc ClubSport had sprouted wings and was known as the ProSport and also featured a Powertec tuned 1300cc Suzuki Hayabusa engine. Following this was the wider and longer SR3 chassis fitted with a Powertec 1500cc

Suzuki Hayabusa engine (the same engine that was turbocharged and thrown around the "Ring to capture the lap record in the capable hands of Phil Bennett) shortly replaced in 'King' status by the SR8.

As progression goes it was like looking at the power curve of its very own V8 engine - two 'Busa engines mated together by its sister company Powertec to create the acclaimed RP V8 - that propelled the SR8 into the 'Ring record books (this time courtesy of Michael Vergers) which

was almost as swiftly followed by the news of its Le Mans project: the SR9 LMP. Featuring a Judd 3.4-litre V8 the British manufacturer made one of the sport's most impressive Le Mans 24 Hours debuts for a very long time and during Audi's domination with its Diesel engine.

Impressive to say the least, I'm sure you'll agree, but after this roller coaster of ten years has Radical lost the plot when it comes to creating an entry level car? I'm happy to report that it hasn't, the guys feet are still firmly rooted into the British soil that has been so crucial in helping the company get to where it has. An example of this is staring back at you now, a car Radical went out of its way to build specially for us because the regular press car was unavailable. It seems quite clear to me that Radical is a manufacturer with its head firmly screwed on and not among the clouds...

This translates into its products,



The PR6 is in a different league to the other cars here in terms of pace

X-BOW RIVALS



RADICAL PR6

the subsequent expertise and wealth of knowledge extends with maturity through its entire range and doesn't escape the PR6 - its introduction to Radical ownership. On initial inspection it may seem like the companies old ClubSport or ProSport models but take a closer look and you'll discover a heavily developed chassis which now features a much more useful central driving position and multifarious new additions. As an example the car Radical supplied had the 1300cc Powertec Suzuki Hayabusa engine (1100cc through to 1500cc options are available) fitted with a high quality specification list which included a pneumatic, paddle-operated, semi-automatic gear shift system.

Noticeably the one thing that is predominantly advanced over the original variations is the quality of components and finish in general. In my opinion this far outweighed any of the

gadgets and gizmos piggy backed onto the PR6. From the driving seat the central driving position couldn't have felt any better - in fact so much so you have to ask yourself why it didn't do this earlier? Sure enough with the gear selector on paddles behind the steering wheel unquestionably make you feel more in control but the chassis does an equally bang-up job inspiring confidence, especially for a car that weighs an almost unimaginable 418kg. It's the lightest car in this group and almost half the weight of the X-Bow [790kg].

Being light is one thing but what the PR6 has over everything here is outright pace. It's not just fast, it's scarily fast and even more worrying is that it's as quick as you dare to push it. On the plus side this means in the competitive environment of the race track it's remarkably competitive among its rivals and its not uncommon to see a PR6 regularly out paces the SR3

Top: Patented 'Nik' suspension system is fully-adjustable and operates at the front and rear, featured here with quality InTrax remote damping. Middle: Central driving position is a joy. Bottom: Pneumatic, paddle-operated, semi-automatic gear shift system is as neat as it is fun to use

cars. But bearing in mind we're searching for a X-Bow alternative does that make it, dare I say, too specific for the track? If there is such a thing then maybe it will be physically too fast for the average Joe but from my experience the track day market is an inquisitive and challenging arena - one where its very much keen to learn new techniques in the search of the perfect lap.

The Radical PR6 certainly has the minerals to provide this and with exceptional brakes, breathtaking acceleration and an alarming amount of downforce and grip - there isn't a car among this group of track specials that comes close to delivering the same kind of thrill-seeking experience. It's perfectly balanced on the limit with unflappable stopping power so even the novice can get to grips with the PR6. It may demand more of you as a driver but get it right and the reward is driving nirvana...

