

Quote; "...Peter's big black Monaro is one of our all-time most admired feature cars."



Monaro Magnificence

A show standard Monaro with around 400RWkW, Harrop brakes and Whiteline's latest and greatest suspension - it's a ripper!

Words by Michael Knowling, Pix by Julian Edgar

At a glance...

- Almost 400kW at the wheels with total drivability
- Brilliant ride and handling
- Giant brakes
- Immaculately detailed body
- A brilliant package

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It muscles out almost 400kW at the wheels but, somehow, it gets its grunt to the road progressively and without fuss – no opposite-locking down a straight road or feathering the throttle to keep control.

This 400kW ATW monster just gets down to business – the business of boogin'!

Nail the loud pedal at rolling speed and Peter Conridge's Monaro snowballs with speed; the rear-end copes marvelously despite the massive accelerative load. The exhaust snarls, the supercharger whines and the world passes by at an exhilarating rate. It'd almost be boring if it weren't so fast!

And if this isn't impressive enough, the car rides better than the factory version and has fully adjustable handling thanks to its **Whiteline** 40mm struts. The Harrop brakes are also hugely impressive, providing awesome stopping power with good pedal feel.

On its mechanical credentials alone, Peter Conridge's Monaro is a killer machine. But don't just focus on its go-fast bits - this is one of the most immaculately presented vehicles we've ever seen. The subtle detail work is top-notch and the new paint job is 100 percent glitch-free.

Think of this as the perfect street, drag, circuit *and* show car.

Peter, a successful business owner, has owned a string of Holden V8s from VT to VX. His previous machine was a VX SS with a CAPA Vortech supercharger kit – a set-up good for 277kW at the wheels. However, when it came time to trade up, Peter ripped the blower out of the SS and slipped it into his new Monaro CV8.

The supercharger is a current-generation Vortech V2 which runs quieter than previous models. The blower is installed using CAPA mounts and pulleys, a CAPA front-mount air-to-air intercooler (which is an option for those people who want big power) and the supercharger's oil supply was custom routed from the engine.

Take a close look under the bonnet and you'll see Peter's Monaro has a few other modifications to the base CAPA kit. The induction pipe that leads into the compressor has been enlarged to a 4-incher with a gentle radius. This was made possible by relocating the ECU into the cabin and fabricating a custom windscreen water bottle. A large K&N air filter lives in the guard and protects the supercharger compressor from debris.

There are twin Bosch blow-off valves to avoid breaking serpentine belts when backing off sharply from full power and a BBK 80mm throttle body is the final mod to the inlet system.

Routing exhaust gasses away from the engine are CAPA 4>1 headers and a custom twin 2 ½ inch stainless system with high-flow cats. Note that the rear pipes are configured to provide an outlet on each side of the car - the standard tailpipe exits the passenger side only. Peter says this particular exhaust causes almost zero backpressure.

The twin outlet exhaust meant the standard fuel tank had to be removed and a custom 104 litre alloy tank fabricated to fit under the body and inside the spare wheel well. Peter says the standard spare wheel can't be used with his upsized brake set-up anyway, so he carries a small compressor and can of foam as a substitute. Interestingly, the fabricated alloy tank and exhaust layout weighs the same as the original arrangement (with the spare wheel left in place).

The ECU was originally sent off to CAPA for a reprogram, but Peter has recently enlisted Silverwater Automotive Services (SAS) to install a HSV GTS program configured to run MAP sensor load sensing. A set of 50lb injectors connect to modified fuel rails, while fuel pressure is controlled by a SARD regulator. A Bosch Motorsport pump and surge tanks can be found at the opposite end of the system. David Alexander from SAS performed the tuning.

With boost pressure peaking at 12 psi near the redline, Peter's beautiful Munro has a whole bunch of kilowatts to its name. Three hundred and eighty five to be exact (as measured on SAS's Dyno Dynamics chassis dyno). Not bad considering the internals are 100 percent stock - camshaft and all...

The under-bonnet appearance is unmistakably aftermarket, but Peter went for the OE look with his custom valve covers. Using GTO valve covers as the platform, Peter enlisted an engraving shop to cut out 'SUPERCHARGER' lettering and fitted these in the space normally reserved for the letters 'GTO'. A nice touch or what?!

The standard LS1 driveline is relatively strong so there are no concerns running the original 6 speed manual gearbox with street tyres. The only change to the driveline is a shorter 3.9:1 Holden LSD. We're told an aftermarket clutch will soon replace the tortured standard part.

If you've read the article [Holden Monaro CV8](#) you'll know that the standard Monaro from 2002 has an overly harsh ride that leads to handling issues on anything but a perfectly smooth road.

In Peter's words, "it felt like Skippy."

When Peter approached [Whiteline](#) a few months ago, they asked if he'd like to lend the car and test their new Group 4 adjustable struts. Peter agreed - and he's ever so glad that he did! Combined with adjustable front and rear swaybars, firmer Z bushes, camber and castor kits on the rear, the Monaro's ride is now so much more comfortable and controlled. The chassis is also better balanced and the back-end doesn't flick out under power while encountering bumps. It's just what you need in a 400kW ATW vehicle - [stability, predictability and controllability](#).

Further increased driver confidence comes from those sexy looking Harrop anchors. Peter purchased an off-the-shelf Harrop kit comprising 355mm front and 343mm rear slotted discs together with 4 pot calipers for each end. EBC Green Stuff pads are currently in service. Interestingly, these new brakes are installed without modification to the factory brake master cylinder yet provide factory-like brake pedal feel and progression. Stand on the brake pedal and the Monaro absolutely buries its nose as it grinds to a halt. The standard Holden ABS system ensures safe braking in all conditions.

When it came to cosmetic enhancement, Peter wanted to avoid overt bolt-ons - the flowing shape of the Monaro had to speak for itself.

To achieve this, Peter went for a Pontiac GTO nosecone. This required fitment of current-model Monaro headlights which were fitted together with GTS Coupe taillights. If you look closely, you'll also see Peter replaced the standard Pontiac fog lights with pencil-beam driving lights. Oh, and a custom 'BLOWN' badge has been attached where it normally says 'GTO'.

Once the new nose was installed, Peter decided to get the entire car re-sprayed to ensure colour consistency between panels - some existing hail damage helped prompt the move. Before being re-sprayed, the car was hand-filed to ensure smooth panels around the door handles and various other sections where the factory finish is below par. They're subtle touches, but ones that really do make a difference when sunlight is shining down the side. The colour is Base Black - different enough from any of the factory colours to attract a second glance. Extra glamour comes from inched-up Equip 18s with meaty 265/35 rear and 235/40 Falken tyres.

Peter optioned his CV8 Monaro with an electric sunroof which provides a pleasant ambience inside. The standard Monaro seats are very comfortable and attractive so there's been no need to throw their leather-lined goodness in the bin. The only changes to the cabin are a boost gauge and GTS shifter.

Peter says the comfy interior is part of the reason he's able to use his near-400kW ATW Monaro as a daily driver. Given its magnificent suspension composure and predictable on-road behavior, there's absolutely no reason to keep it parked in the shed for only weekend use.

[It is rare for this level of performance to meet street manners and show-standard presentation. It's for this reason Peter's big black Monaro is one of our all-time most admired feature cars.](#)

[And after featuring literally hundreds of modified cars, that's saying something!](#)

Update

Since our photo shoot, the original Monaro engine has split a cylinder bore.

The solution? Peter has dropped in a big-bore LS6 engine for greater all-round torque and about 20 - 25kW more at the wheels!

"It's now got more than enough," says Peter with a chuckle...

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Peter would like to thank Whiteline, CAPA and Tony's Prestige Smash Repairs.

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