

LUCKY TO BE ALIVE! JAPAN'S CRAZIEST STREET RACER

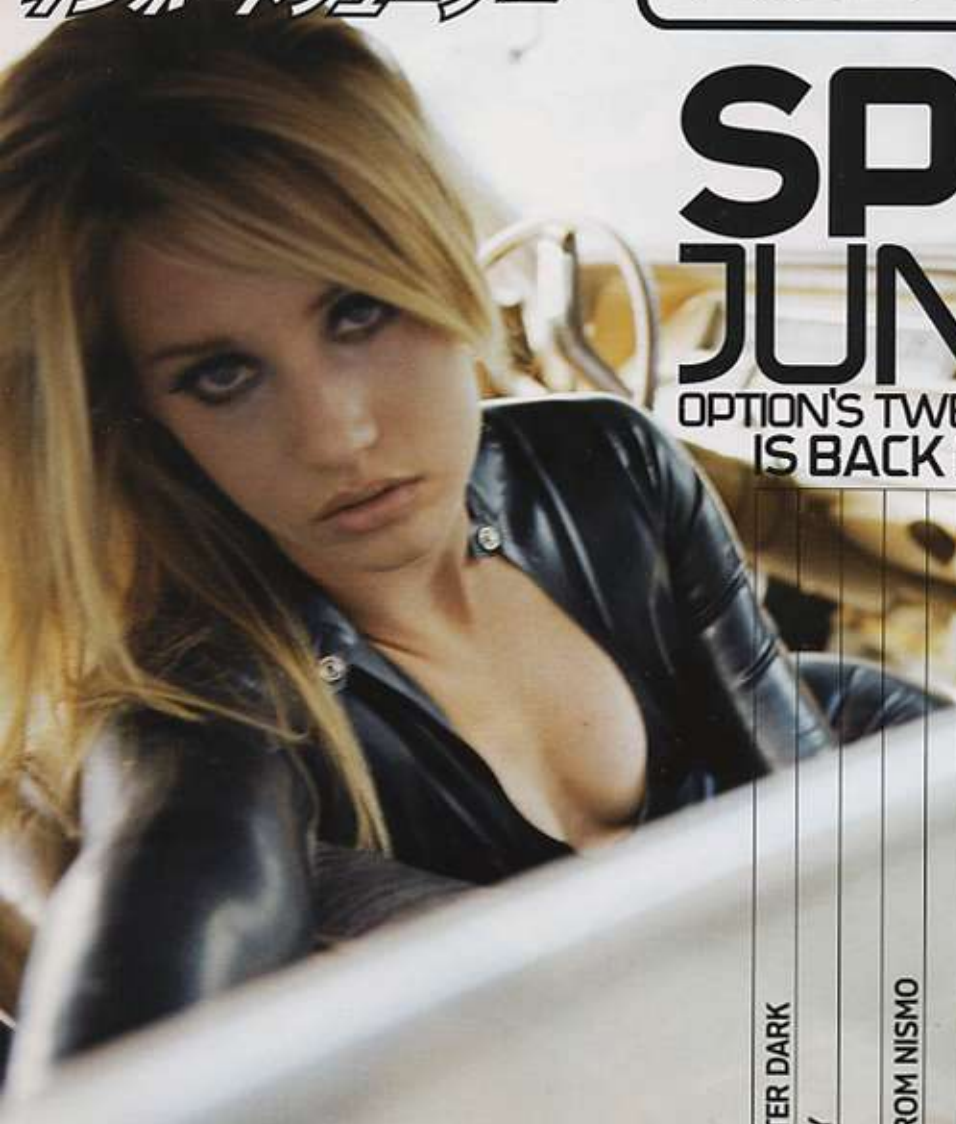


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JGTC SCORCHES TWIN RING MOTEGI

Nearly 51,000 rabid fans braved the rain and two-lane country roads to get to Honda's home circuit, Twin Ring Motegi, for Round Five of the 2004 JGTC race series. As the race unfolded, every single fan was glad they made the trip out. The race queens were looking hot in their skimpy vinyl attire despite the weather, the vendor area was massive, the selection of merchandise was outrageous (there was quite a few who purchased the *Girls Paradise* race queen photo book), and the rain soaked surface made for an absolutely wild race.

In the GT500 class, the #35 Yellow Hat Supra grabbed pole position and held the lead at the start, just ahead of the #1 Nismo Xanavi Z and the #6 Esso Ultraflo Supra. The #32 Epson NSX made an early charge back in the field, shooting from eighth up to fourth by only the third lap. On lap nine, Shigekazu Wakisaka and the Yellow Hat Supra spun off the track in the rain and gave the lead to Satoshi Motoyama in the Nismo Xanavi Z. In the midst of the action, Andre Lotterer took the #32 Epson NSX around to second place, slipping by Akira Iida and the Esso Ultraflo Supra. Within a lap, the Epson NSX had taken the lead away from the Z, and stayed ahead until the checkered flag dropped. Honda fans all pissed in their pants a little bit that day; the NSX's first season victory was at Honda's home track.

In the GT300 class, for the first time ever, a two-time consecutive race winner was crowned. Unknown to many Americans, the Garaiya is a space-pod-looking mid-engine rear-drive sports car produce by Autobacs. Yes, Autobacs as in the car parts store. Designed and sold for the Japanese market, the #43 ARTA Garaiya is raced on Sunday and sold just about every other damn day of the week. Having spun on the opening lap of the race, it seemed to be the end for the #43 Garaiya. The #52 Project Mu Celica lead the #16 M-Tec NSX and both ran away from the pack. But not all was well on the wet surface. The #52 Celica began to fade and the #16 NSX eventually passed in the rainy conditions for the lead. But Morio Nitta and the #43 ARTA Garaiya began to swallow up places as the race carried on, eventually securing the lead on Lap 20. Co-driver Shinichi Takagi jumped into the car at the mandatory pit stop change, and the Garaiya never looked back. Check it out at www.jgtc.net or www.jgtcusa.net.





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