



Will the Musclicar be Crushed?

Last Friday's Sunshine Coast Daily had the following front-page story:

\$50,000 muscle car may be crushed under hoon laws

A NAMBOUR man may be forced to watch his \$50,000 rare American muscle car being crushed or sold after he was caught allegedly doing burnouts for the second time - in front of police. Officers from the Road Policing Unit say they caught the 46-year-old man red-handed when he allegedly did a burnout in his 1969 Pontiac Firebird on Nambour Connection Road at the intersection with Cobbs Road. Little did he know that police officers also were waiting at the traffic lights, two cars behind. Police allege the man revved the engine, accelerated and performed a burnout where the vehicle had a "sustained loss of traction". Police made him forfeit the car on the spot because the incident on Monday was the second time the driver had been caught doing burnouts in a matter of weeks. The classic car enthusiast will face court on Thursday under the anti-hooning laws. New figures from the start of the year show Sunshine Coast police have impounded or confiscated the plates of 127 cars for a 90-day period. Steve Struyf, of Adults Only Car Shop at Warana, imports American muscle cars. He said the 1969 Pontiac Firebird would be one of only a handful in Queensland. "It would be a travesty if this car was crushed," Mr Struyf said. "What we need here on the Coast is somewhere for people to go, like Willowbank, where people can go to drag racing or even a burn-out pad somewhere where they can have burnout competitions."

The full story is at : <http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/news/50000-hoon-car-may-be-crushed/2415218/>

As is often the case, the story has been 'jazzed up' a bit. A 1969 Firebird is likely to be valued at between \$20000 and \$30000, and would probably recover around \$15000 to \$20000 at a police auction, in the current market. They are also not that 'rare' - 24 were registered in Queensland as at 30 June 2014. Nevertheless, it still deserves better than being crushed and would return a lot more than scrap value. One strange fact was why the car was on the road if it had been recently caught doing burnouts. The laws provide for an immediate 90 day impound for Type 1 offences. The car should have been serving this impound at the time of the second offence, which would have given the owner the time to consider his actions. He must have been let off with a warning, which clearly he did not heed. However, the issue we are looking at here is what happens now to the confiscated car.

Members of the QMSC made it clear during our car crushing survey earlier this year that they were opposed to this practice, instead preferring constructive reuse of forfeited vehicles, including sale for return to the roads, donation to training institutions or recycling for parts. On this basis, we will be seeking a positive outcome through our contacts in the Road Policing Command, and reporting to you on the result.

A further constructive idea would be for the Police to retain the vehicle and use it for liaison purposes in the car enthusiast community. Rather than further divide us through crushing, it could enable a positive bridge to be built. Many jurisdictions have adopted this idea e.g. in NSW :

<http://www.drive.com.au/motor-news/new-porsche-911-for-nsw-police-20140929-10neah.html> and one of many in the USA : <http://bluelineracing.ca/>



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