FAST & FURIOUS™

Build

BRIAN'S NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R

44



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BRIAN'S NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R

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CZECH REPUBLIC
Kontakt na zákaznické centrum SR:
Tel: 246 017 120
E-mail: zakaznicke.centrum@deagostini.cz

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Kontakt na zákaznické centrum SR:
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REVIVING THE 24 HOURS LE MANS CHALLENGE

By the mid-1990s, the premium class in the 24 Hours of Le Mans featured GT cars, which had taken over from the previously dominant Group C cars. Nissan then decided to return to Le Mans by developing a GT1 version of the Skyline GT-R (R33).

The Group A specification Skyline GT-R (R32) was the overall winner in the 1991 Spa-Francorchamps 24-hour race. In 1994, a Group A specification car was also entered in the 24 Hours of Daytona race in the United States.

Along with these two endurance races, the 24 Hours of Le Mans is the most famous 24-hour race in the world. Nissan had competed at Le Mans in the 1980s and '90s with Group C cars, but had never competed with the Skyline.

In 1995, Le Mans was the last remaining overseas 24-hour endurance race in which the Skyline GT-R could compete. It is not hard to imagine that the change in the main competition from the LMP1 class (prototype cars) to the GT1 class (modified production sports cars) also had an impact on the outcome of the race.

Who came up with the audacious plan to take on the 24 Hours of Le Mans in a Skyline GT-R (R33)? It was Kozo Watanabe, the Chief Product and Vehicle Engineer of the Skyline GT-R (R33).

Watanabe said in an interview at the time: "The All Japan Touring Car Championship for Group A cars ended in 1993 and some people in the company began to ask, 'Why build a Skyline GT-R if there are no more races to compete in?' From a car development point of view, the Skyline GT-R (R33) is the ultimate street car, and winning races is what it should be about. So I wanted to act on these opinions by entering the Skyline GT-R (R33) in the 24 Hours of Le Mans, where it had never raced before."

Compared to the Skyline GT-R (R32), which had a positive impact on fans on its revival after 16 years, the Skyline GT-R (R33) that followed

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was definitely at a disadvantage in terms of appeal and branding. The Le Mans challenge was intended to create a new legend and raise the status of the Skyline GT-R.

NEW ALL JAPAN GT CHAMPIONSHIP

The Le Mans project started around August 1994. At the time, there were many people within Nissan and NISMO who were passionate about Le Mans.

Watanabe, Chief Product and Vehicle Engineer of the Skyline GT-R, made serious efforts within the company, but the funding for the race was a difficult obstacle to overcome. Watanabe then consulted with Jiro Adachi, a senior of Watanabe, who was a president of NISMO at that time. Adachi suggested that, in addition to seeking sponsorship, Nissan could attract fans through the "Club Le Mans GT-R", an organization that would bring Nissan fans together. From then on, the Le Mans project accelerated rapidly.

Kazutoshi Mizuno, who would later become the Chief Product and Vehicle Engineer of the Nissan GT-R (R35), was responsible for developing the Le Mans GT1 specifications. During his time with Group C cars, Mizuno won numerous titles as chief designer and Nissan team manager, including the All Japan Sports Prototype Car Championship and overall victory in the 1992 24 Hours of Daytona.

However, he had a bitter experience at the 24 Hours of Le Mans when, in 1990, Nissan teams from Japan, the US, and Europe entered a total of five cars comprising four Nissan R90CK models and one Nissan R90CP. However, in the race, all the cars suffered mechanical problems and dropped back through the field, with the best-place finish being the Nissan R90CP – driven by Masahiro Hasemi, Kazuyoshi Hoshino, and Toshio Suzuki – that crossed the line in fifth place. Nissan's Group C car challenge at Le Mans also came to an end that year.

With the end of the Group C Sports Car World Championship (SWC) in 1992, races using GT cars modified from production sports cars were becoming mainstream in Europe and the United States. The classic 24 Hours of Le Mans race also followed this trend.

Domestic racing in Japan also saw some changes with the end of the All Japan Sports Prototype Championship (JSPC) for Group C cars in 1992, followed a year later by the conclusion of the All Japan Touring Car Championship (JTC) for Group A cars. In 1994,

In 1995, the team announced its participation in the 24 Hours of Le Mans with two NISMO GT-R LM models based on the Nissan Skyline GT-R (R33). Since the Group C era, winning this legendary endurance race had been a long-held dream of Nissan and NISMO.



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the latter series was renamed the All Japan GT Championship (JGTC), and the number of entries increased.

The Skyline GT-R (R32) models entered in the early JGTC races were mostly converted from Group A specification cars, fitted with over-fenders and spoilers as allowed by the regulations. The drive system was also divided into 4WD and 2WD depending on the team.

SUPER-QUICK DEVELOPMENT PERIOD

In the case of the new Skyline GT-R (R33), the NISMO GT-R LM for Le Mans GT1 and the Skyline GT-R for JGTC were created in a joint design to be able to compete in GT racing from the outset. The only difference between the two cars was that the version for Le Mans had brakes equipped with carbon rotors, as the Le Mans regulations allowed.

The only drive system was 2WD. The suspension was not

The Spa-Francrochamps 24 Hours was considered one of the three major 24-hour races in the world at the time, with Le Mans being the most iconic. Nissan secured the overall Title at Spa in 1991 with the Group A version of the Nissan Skyline GT-R (R32).



Nissan dropped out of the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1991, and to make up for the disappointment, it entered the 24 Hours of Daytona in 1992. It was a great decision – a Nissan R91CP was the overall winner.

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updated from the production car, but was changed to a four-wheel double wishbone suspension developed for GT cars, and the body panels were rebuilt in carbon. At the same time, in order to meet Le Mans' unique vehicle regulations, one production road-going car, the NISMO GT-R LM, was built and registered in the UK.

The designer, Mizuno, was given only eight months to develop the car, and he explains why he chose to use 2WD for the GT car: To be honest, the development time was short. 4WD requires a trained computer program to balance the front and rear torque distribution. Even the Group A Skyline GT-R (R32) took two-and-a-half years to develop, and there was not enough time to complete a 4WD GT car. We also wanted this Skyline GT-R (R33) to be bought by a private team to take on Le Mans. A 2WD car was the simple solution."

As in Group A, the engine was developed and built by Nissan Kohki REINIK. The engine was developed based on the RB26DETT that had won the Spa-Francorchamps 24-hour race. Later, the displacement was increased to 2.8L, but the displacement for the first year (1995) was the same 2.6L as the Group A machines. Even so, the car was designed for Le Mans and produced more than 600ps. The All Japan GT Championship specification was limited to 450ps due to air restrictor intake restrictions, so the RB26DETT engine for Le Mans was the most powerful at the time. Incidentally, this engine was installed in the "Clarion" colors car No.23, along with the X-Track sequential transmission. The other car, No.22, featured the "Keep The Dream Alive" colors – it was equipped with the proven N1 spec engine and H-pattern Nissan five-speed transmission, which was designed for durability rather than power.



In preparation for its entry into the 24 Hours of Le Mans in June 1995, NISMO rushed to develop a race-spec version of the NISMO GT-R LM during a short development period.

Within a limited timeframe, the two cars were completed at an unprecedented pace thanks to the tireless efforts of Nissan and NISMO staff. On June 13, 1995, the two NISMO GT-R LM cars were presented to the public at the Place Jacobin in Le Mans. ◆



The two NISMO GT-R LMs finally made their appearance at Place Jacobin. Car No.22, in traditional tricolor livery, and car No.23, in Clarion colors, drew a lot of attention.

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ARTURO BRAGA'S GANG

As the *Fast & Furious* saga progresses, Dom and his crew face bigger and bigger threats. In the fourth movie in the franchise, Dom's target is a dangerous drug-trafficker about whom he knows nothing – not even what he looks like.



Actor John Ortiz stars as Ramon Campos, the right-hand man of mysterious drug trafficker Arturo Braga, who allows Dom Toretto and Brian O'Connor to join his organization in his search for new drivers.

Fast & Furious doesn't reveal the identity of the villain, Arturo Braga, until the end of the film, something that had not been done in previous movies. Brian O'Conner, now working for the FBI in Los Angeles, investigates Braga's involvement in various criminal schemes. Dom is also on Braga's trail because he believes the drug-trafficker was responsible for the death of his beloved Letty and Dom wants vengeance. But neither Brian nor Dom knows exactly who they are looking for, as there are no photos and no fingerprints of Braga, nothing at all. He's like a ghost.

THE RIGHT-HAND MAN

Brian's and Dom's investigations eventually bear fruit. They become close to Braga's right-hand man, Ramón Campos, who wears large crucifixes on his chest and ostentatious bracelets on his wrists. Brian and Dom also come up with a plan to get inside Braga's organization as drivers, which brings them even closer to their objective.

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But the secrecy surrounding Arturo Braga's identity continues to be total. During a party, Brian tries to sound Campos out by asking what Braga is like. Campos smiles, but doesn't go into too many details. "You know, he's just one of us. Came up from the streets. Now he's a shot caller, the boss of bosses."

AN ABSOLUTE THUG

Always close to Campos is Fenix, a fearsome looking man and the main thug in Braga's organization. Huge and muscular, he has tattoos all over his body, a shaved-sides hairstyle, gold caps on his teeth, and scars on his face... undoubtedly souvenirs of violent fights. He rubs Dom up the wrong way as soon as he meets him and Dom's instinct does not let him down. Fenix reveals his involvement in Letty's death, making Dom's blood boil. However, as a good driver, Dom keeps a cool head until just the right moment, when he has to step on the accelerator.

Toward the end of the film, as a result of an FBI raid that doesn't go as planned, the truth is discovered: Braga had been posing as Ramón Campos, and manages to escape to Mexico with Fenix. In Mexico, Braga forgets all discretion. He feels safe, it's his territory. And he even makes some financial contributions to the community using the money obtained from his shady businesses. Of course, he can't imagine Dom and Brian will have enough guts to cross the border, find him, and force him to be held accountable before the American courts. But that's because he doesn't know Dom and his team well enough. ◆

THE ADVENTURES OF BRIAN O'CONNER

Face to face with evil

At the end of *2 Fast 2 Furious,* Brian's worst fears are confirmed: when he reaches the meeting place arranged by Carter Verone, he finds that the sophisticated criminal has discovered that Monica is an undercover agent, and Verone takes her onto his yacht with very bad intentions. Brian, accompanied by Roman, gets back behind the wheel of his Yenko Camaro and sees no other option than to streak toward a jetty and launch the car into the air onto the yacht itself. It is not a very orthodox way to arrest the bad guys, but it works!



After a disastrous FBI operation, Dom and Brian discover that Campos and Braga are the same person, so they decide to cross the border into Mexico to arrest him and bring him to justice.

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EXPANDING THE NISSAN RACING SCHOOL

With the growth in popularity of domestic racing in Japan, Nissan diversified its Racing School in the early 1990s. It went from being purely a training school for aspiring race drivers to also offering a new Sports Class to teach Nissan owners how to better handle their cars.



The Sports Class was held at the then MINE Circuit in May 1991. Pictured is a rare scene in which the lead car is a rally-spec Pulsar GTI-R NISMO.

The Nissan Racing School has been operating since the days of the Omori Works, before NISMO was established. It had built a reputation as a racing school for those who wanted to become serious racers, where they could receive direct instruction from the top works drivers of the day. This tradition was carried over to NISMO, which began holding the school in 1984, the year after NISMO was founded.

In 1989, when the Saurus Cup began using the Saurus, a formula car, the Nissan Racing School also started a more serious racing school – the Technical Class, which used the Saurus as the training car. The Saurus was equipped with a special data logger to analyze each student's



In the paddock, a simple course is used to teach driving maneuvers such as full braking and cornering. The course is also designed to familiarize participants with the basics of their cars.

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EXPANDING THE NISSAN RACING SCHOOL

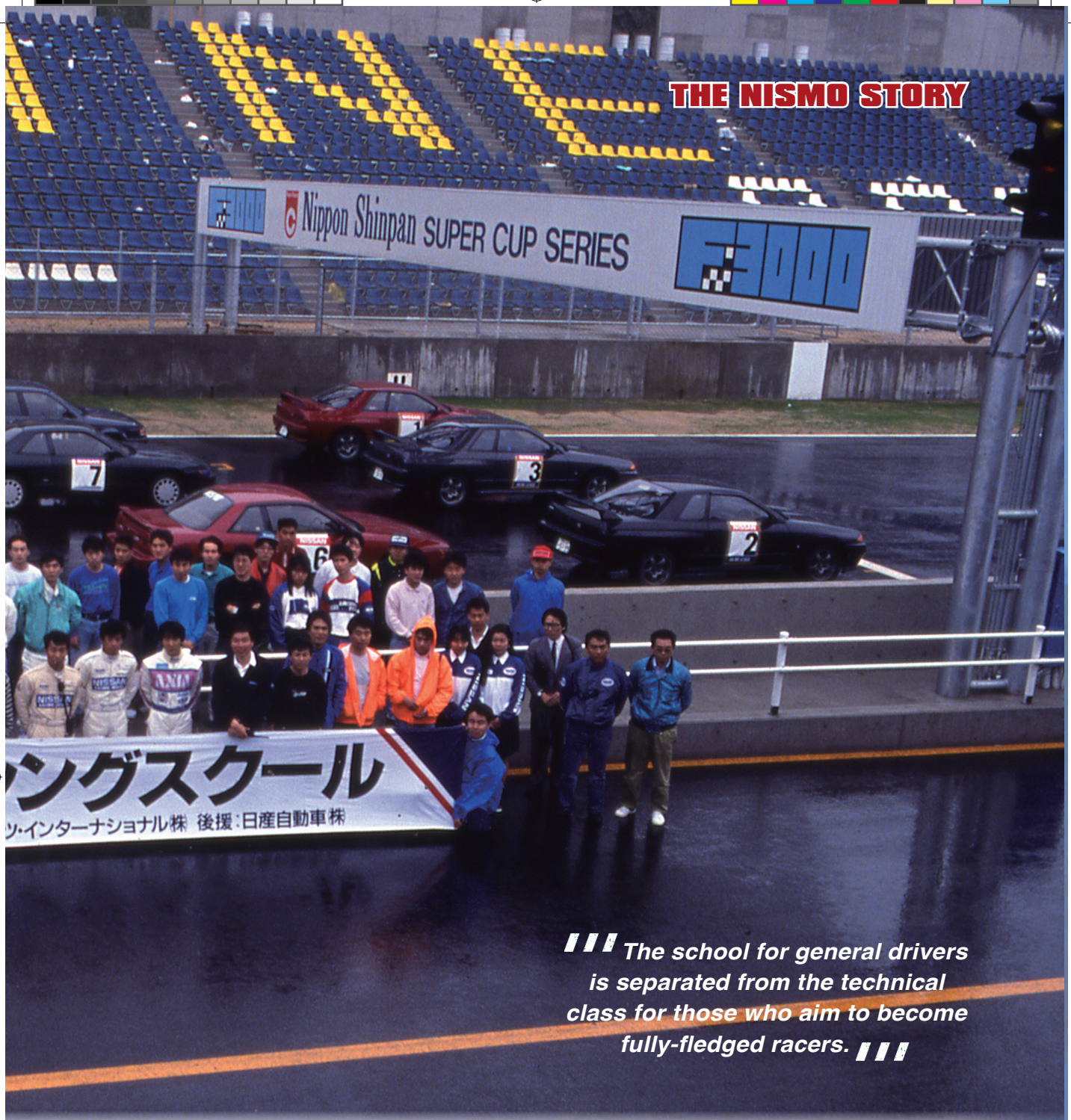


The participants ride with an instructor, and at the end of the session they drive on the track alone. This process has been carried over to the current NISMO-sponsored driving lessons.



The first testing session was held at Tsukuba Circuit on December 14, 1991, using a Group A specification Skyline GT-R.

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"The school for general drivers is separated from the technical class for those who aim to become fully-fledged racers."

braking, acceleration, steering, and other operations using a personal computer; it was a trend that was just starting to become popular.

By comparing a student's data with the instructor's exemplary data, the instructor was able to provide individualized guidance on the student's weaknesses, a practice that is still common today. In 1991, the first certification test was given to students in the technical classes. Passing this test opened the door to becoming a NISMO contract driver. In other words, many young people took up the challenge as a gateway to becoming a factory driver. The certification test was so rigorous that there were some years when no one passed.

In 1987, NISMO started to release "street" parts such as sporty shock absorbers and aero components. Two years later, NISMO added aluminum wheels and sport mufflers to its product line, and this was around the time that NISMO began its full-scale entry into selling after-market components.

In the 1990s, the number of people who enjoyed racing at various tracks increased, in addition to those who wanted to

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The testing session featured race cars with various drive systems such as midship, rear-wheel drive, and 4WD. The pit featured NISMO mechanics who prepared the cars.

become fully-fledged racers. In 1990, Nissan added the Nissan Racing School Sports Class to enable general drivers to learn more technical and safer sports driving. The Sports Class was open to any Nissan owner with their own car and was designed to teach the fundamentals of sports driving.

The instructors were, of course, factory drivers. After learning the basics on a gymkhana-like course in a large, open area, the students were given the opportunity to accompany an instructor on the track, then drive themselves with an instructor in the car, and finally enjoy free practice driving. The NISMO Driving Academy was the origin of the NISMO Driving Academy lessons that NISMO offers today.

By 1990, NISMO had established a strong position in the world of motorsports. At the same time, it was also making its presence felt in the world of "street" racing for the general public. ♦



Three drivers passed the first certification test in 1991. From the back: Eiji Yamada, Tomohiko Sunako, and Akira Iida, who all later became top drivers.

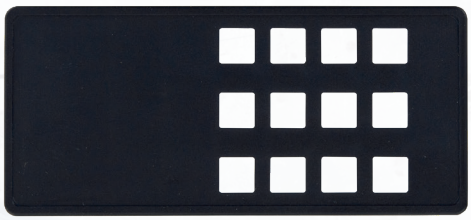
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STAGE 44
REMOTE CONTROL UNIT

In this issue, we will assemble the remote console that controls the lights and sound features of your Nissan Skyline GT-R.

PARTS

44A



44B



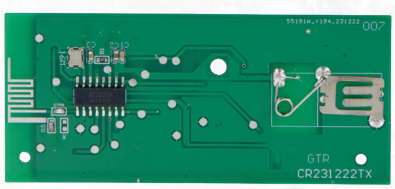
44C



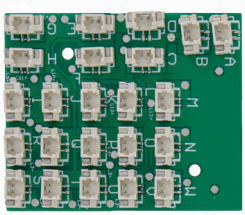
44D



44E



44F

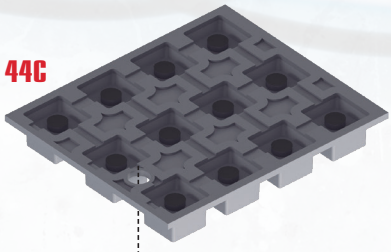


44A Remote control upper housing
44B Remote control lower housing
44C Keypad
44D Battery compartment
44E Printed circuit board (PCB) of the remote control
44F Printed circuit board (PCB) of the car

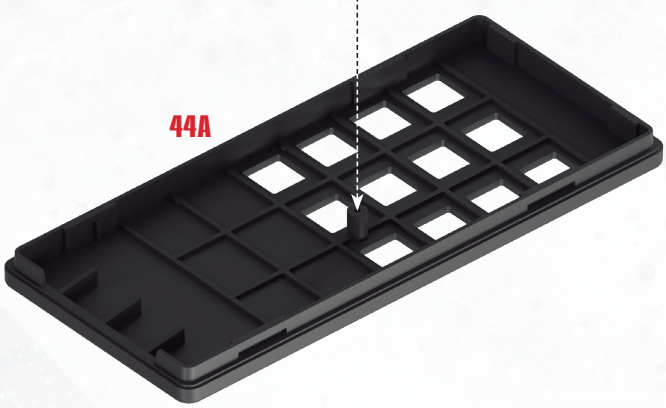
*Including spares

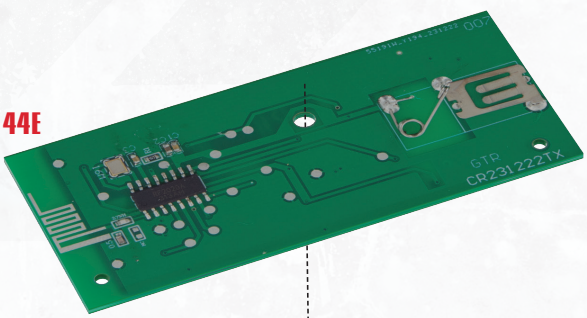
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44.01 Position the keypad **44C** inside the remote control upper housing **44A**, making sure that the parts are correctly aligned.

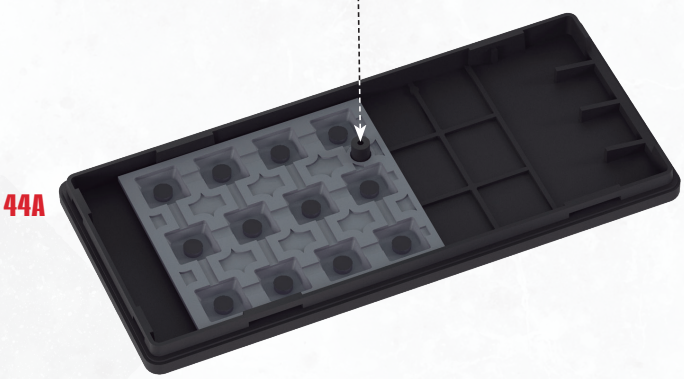








44.02 Refer to the image for the correct orientation of the parts. Then place the PCB of the remote control **44E** over the remote control upper housing **44A**.



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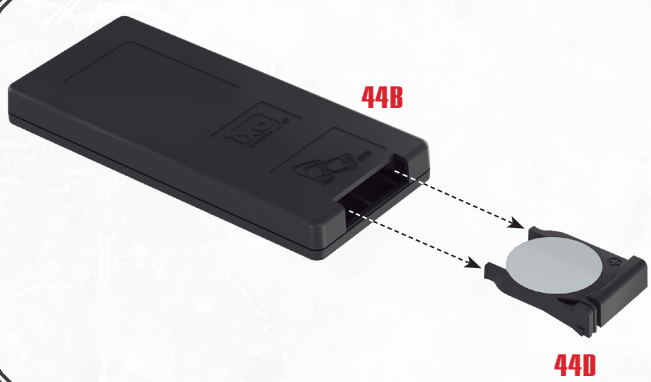
44.03 While holding the PCB of the remote control 44E, place the lower housing 44B over the upper housing 44A.



44.04 Insert a CR2032 battery (not supplied) into the battery compartment 44D, ensuring the correct polarity: check the markings in the enlarged image.







40.05 Finally, insert the battery compartment 44D into the bottom opening of the remote control lower housing 44B.

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REMOTE CONTROL UNIT

The functions of the remote control:

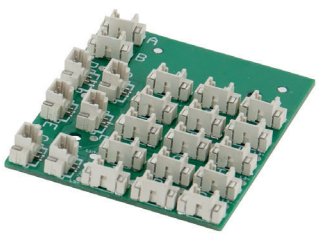


- Lights (position lights, dashboard, license plate, neon lights)
- Horn sound
- Engine sound
- Dipped headlights
- High beam headlights
- Rear fog lights
- Left turn signal
- Right turn signal
- Warning lights
- R Reversing lights
- Brake lights

Final assembly

Keep the PCB of the car 44F aside for a later stage of assembly.





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