FAST & FURIOUS™

Build
BRIAN'S NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R

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BRIAN'S NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R

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INTERVIEW WITH KOZO WATANABE – PART 1

Kozo Watanabe, known as the Chief Product and Vehicle Engineer of the R34 Skyline, led testing of the Skyline from the R31 through to the R32. He then became Chief Product and Vehicle Engineer for the Skyline R33 and R34. Having refined the Skyline GT-R over three generations, he recalls his first test run at the Nürburgring.

The first running tests of the Skyline GT-R (R32) were carried out at the Nürburgring in Germany. Mr. Kozo Watanabe was in charge of the driving tests as the main person overseeing the Skyline R32. The Nürburgring is the world's most grueling circuit, and is now widely known as the "holy grail of sports car development", but in the past, it was a circuit that only serious racing fans knew about.

"Of course, I had heard of the Nürburgring. The reason for this is that before Nissan cars were released in Europe, they were tested all over Europe, and after the final test run at Nürburgring, a final confirmation report would come in saying, 'There are no problems. We can release the car now.' So I knew that the cars were being tested at the Nürburgring. And because they said there were no problems after testing there, I thought, 'If they've finished it up properly, there won't be any problems.' At the time, there wasn't much detailed information available.

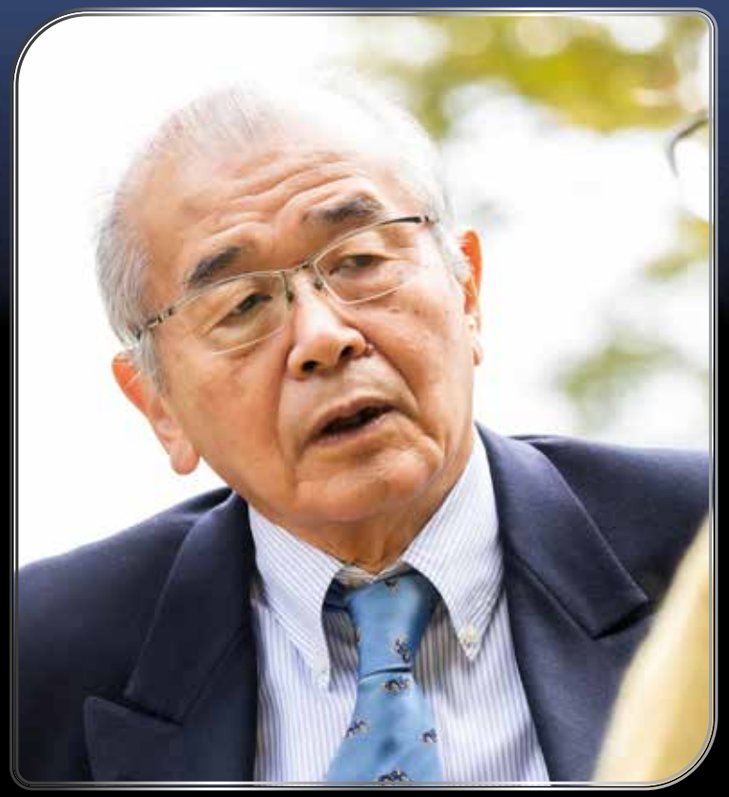
However, when I went there, there was more to it than what I expected. It has a lap length of 20.8km (12.9 miles) and a height difference of 300m (984ft), and it is a testing ground for high-performance car manufacturers and high-performance tires.

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Kozo Watanabe was the main person in charge of testing during the development of the R32 Skyline. He says that the full-scale testing at the Nürburgring, where everything was new to them, made them realize that "we were like frogs in a well". However, with the enthusiasm and efforts of the whole staff, they overcame their difficulties and the Skyline GT-R (R32) grew to become a car that was highly praised worldwide.

There is a separate industrial running time slot for professionals only, where you can drive at full throttle, so it's completely different from the general driving time slot for private cars and sightseeing buses.

The experimental reports for Europe in the past were the results of tests carried out in the general driving slot, not the grueling full-throttle driving in the industrial running slot at the Nürburgring [hereafter referred to as the 'Ring']"

In addition to the fact that Nissan was not carrying out development tests at the Ring, the 8th-generation Skyline (R32) was not intended for export, as it was for the Japanese domestic market. So, what was the background to the decision to carry out tests on the Skyline at the Ring?

"The reason why we decided to test it there was because we had a mandatory target for the Project 901 activity, which was to 'achieve the number one driving performance and the world's best driving performance in 1990'. So what is the world's best? Is it the world's best if it can accelerate from 0 to 400m (1,312ft) in under 10 seconds? There is no definition for the number-one driving performance.

When we were trying to figure out how to define the number-one driving performance, we saw a video from a certain tire manufacturer showing a Porsche 944 Turbo, which had a similar layout to the Skyline, running the Nürburgring in 8 minutes and 40 seconds. So we decided to see if we could do the Ring faster than the Porsche, and if we did, it would prove that we were in the top class. So that's why we decided to see how fast we could do the Ring in."

TESTING COMMENCES

In early October 1988, testing of the Skyline GT-R on the Nürburgring and the autobahn began. However, the first time the car was driven flat out on the Nürburgring, it put far more stress on the test vehicle than had been expected.

"I guess the heat and G-force levels were different when you drove flat out. The turbo broke after half a lap. There were all sorts of stories about how they had to go to Brussels in Belgium to get spare parts, or how they had to stay up all night to fix it... so, when you think of the Nürburgring, you think of all-nighters. We used to borrow the garage that Bridgestone used. We didn't have the same kind of facilities as we have now.

Also, the Nürburgring then was before the course was renovated, so the coefficient of friction of the road surface was quite low, and I think it was around 0.4 when it rained. At the time, BMW didn't drive there because it was dangerous when it rained. What's more, we went in the Fall, because it was not the high season, and with leaves on the road surface the conditions were even worse.

A coefficient of friction of 0.4 is equivalent to a slippery wet road surface or a snowy road. In addition to the high-speed corners and jumping spots where you can drive at over 200km/h (124mph), the Nürburgring is also a forest course, so most of the corners are blind corners where you can't see what's ahead. Furthermore, because it is located in the mountains, the weather is changeable. Moreover, in October, the temperature at the Nürburgring can drop and even when it is sunny, the road surface may be wet with night dew. The stress experienced by the development and evaluation drivers who drove the test vehicle must have been at a level never experienced before.

After experiencing the Nürburgring for the first time, I understood that Porsche and other manufacturers of high-performance cars and tire manufacturers do things like this at the Nürburgring. We were like frogs in a well, or rather, we were ignorant of the world, but witnessing this world made me feel a sense of awe towards those who came before us. That's why, although I was impatient to see Porsche come out and show us what it could do, I realized that the manufacturers and people who came before us were amazing."



An experimental Skyline GT-R (R32) running on the Nürburgring with the front resembling the Silvia (S13). At first, it received a painful baptism of fire on this course, which is said to be the most grueling in the world.

GATHERING DATA

The driving tests at the Nürburgring got off to a bad start, but the development team made improvements on site and drove a total of over 100 laps. The Skyline GT-R was refined based on the data obtained there.

"What got us through it was the potential of the hardware, and the efforts of the development and evaluation drivers, such as Hiroyoshi Kato, and the other members who went to the Nürburgring with us. I'd say it was more enthusiasm than effort.

The people working on the chassis and vehicle tests, etc., on site can't say how much a single car costs, but they have to drive these crazy expensive prototype cars for two weeks on the Nürburgring. No matter what happens during that time, they have to get results or it will affect the development schedule. They have a huge amount of enthusiasm for fixing whatever problems arise and getting the experimental data, no matter what, because the next department is waiting for them, and they never wreck the cars. They are trained to the point where they



A test Skyline GT-R (R32) being serviced in a garage borrowed from Bridgestone. At first, there were few facilities for work, and it is said that they had to work through the night on consecutive days at the Nürburgring.



After overcoming numerous difficulties, the staff all took a commemorative photo. The man in the second hat from the left in the front row is then-Chief Engineer Naganori Ito. Also in the front row, near the center, is Kozo Watanabe.

never go off the track. The driving tests at the Nürburgring were a success thanks to the hard work of these people. That's why I think Nissan's human resources are well trained and excellent.

Once the engineers and members on the ground understand the issues they need to address, they use their knowledge and experience to figure out how to respond to them."

In developing the Skyline GT-R, which aimed for world-class performance, it was necessary to set new testing standards that exceeded the conventional Nissan standards.

"We were doing whatever we could to make the GT-R capable of running at the Nürburgring. The design team would naturally object, saying, 'We're not making a race car!' We had to appease them and ask them to cooperate."

Was it not possible to take the design team to the Nürburgring development site?

"The design team didn't have the time to go... but some of them were there. The people who were in charge of liaising with what was termed the Skyline Group, the people who were in charge of the chassis design and engine design, etc., came. They helped us out. Because they saw the site, they understood the issues."

Through the Project 901 activities, a company-wide cooperative system was established that included the design department, and this became an important factor in the success of the development of the Skyline GT-R (R32). Based on this experience and the results achieved, the next R33 and R34 GT-Rs were developed with full-scale driving tests at the Nürburgring. And the person in charge of development was Mr. Kozo Watanabe, who was the Chief Product and Vehicle Engineer. ◆



The development and evaluation drivers for the Skyline GT-R (R32). From the left, Mr. Takao Matsumoto, Mr. Hiroyoshi Kato, and Mr. Yukio Kamiyama. After the GT-R was released, they also participated in the N1 Endurance Race. At this time, Mr. Kozo Watanabe was the Director.

THE REDEMPTION OF THE VILLAIN

In the world of *Fast & Furious,* all the villains have opportunities to redeem themselves. This produces some surprising twists in the storylines, as with Cipher in the tenth movie.

In the *Fast & Furious* franchise, nothing is what it seems, especially when it comes to the villains. Throughout the series, the line between good and evil is frequently blurred, and the antagonists find unexpected paths toward redemption. One of the most fascinating examples is that of Cipher, the Machiavellian cyber-terrorism expert played by Charlize Theron.



John Cena joined the saga in *F9: The Fast Saga* as Jakob Toretto.

FROM HATRED TO COMPASSION

Presented in *The Fate of the Furious* as the purest embodiment of evil seen up to then, Cipher manipulates Dom Toretto, forcing him to betray his family and, in an especially horrible sequence, orders the killing of Elena Neves, who she is holding prisoner. She returns in the ninth movie in the franchise, as arrogant and manipulative as ever, deceiving even those who think they are more villainous than she is.



Cipher's sinister actions place her at the top of the list of the most hated characters in the series; things change, however, in *Fast X* and it becomes clear that even she deserves compassion. At the start of the movie, she appears badly injured in the doorway of Dom's house to warn him of the existence of a new mortal enemy: Dante Reyes. Although her warning generates skepticism, this unexpected alliance marks the beginning of her redemption. Later, Cipher and Letty, two characters who couldn't be more different, find themselves forced to work together to escape from a secret base in the Antarctic; it is an extremely tense situation, but one of mutual respect too. Cipher then demonstrates that even in the most awkward moments she is able to sacrifice herself and make altruistic decisions.

UNEXPECTED ALLIES

Although Cipher's change of loyalties is startling, it is not something that has taken fans of the franchise completely by surprise. Transitions from adversary to ally have always been part of the DNA of

Gal Gadot in the role of Gisele Yashar, another member of the Toretto family.

Fast & Furious. Gisele Yashar was one of the first characters to take the step, joining Dom's team after betraying her former boss, drug-trafficker Arturo Braga, in *Fast & Furious.* Diplomatic Security Service Agent Luke Hobbs also gave up chasing the group and became another member of the "family." And even the vengeful Deckard Shaw, who in *Furious 7* was revealed as the Toretto family's most fearsome threat, eventually lining with the good guys, although he didn't change his tough guy ways. In the ninth movie too, it dawned on Jakob Toretto, the black sheep of the family, that it wouldn't be to his advantage to keep fighting on the side of the bad guys.

The case of Cipher, however, stands out because her change is not complete: she is still calculating, dangerous, and pursued by a murky past, but her actions hint at a more complex moral code than had been seen earlier. In any case, it is yet another demonstration that the villains in *Fast & Furious* are three-dimensional characters, with motives and past lives that force them to make their choices. Their redemption does not absolve them, but it does allow them to reveal other facets, breaking with the conventions of the action movie genre. ♦

After bursting onto the scene like a Machiavellian villain, Cipher ends up becoming an unexpected ally of Dom.

THE ADVENTURES OF BRIAN O'CONNER

The harpooner

Brian and Mia know their friends are in danger when they try to stop Owen Shaw's gigantic airplane from taking off, so they decide to turn back in the Alfa Romeo and join the fight. As the aircraft begins its take-off, Brian shoots twice at the aircraft's flaps with a harpoon, trapping it like it was an enormous metallic whale. Mia then accelerates, causing the airplane to crash onto the runway. The team thus prevents the mercenaries from getting away, although at a very high price. During the chase, Gisele sacrifices herself to save Han's life.



NISMO RELOCATES ITS HQ TO YOKOHAMA

Part 2: Moving to a brand-new facility

After several proposals to upgrade the original Omori building were put forward and rejected, NISMO confirmed that a new headquarters would be built. The building in Yokohama opened in February 2013 and featured a striking design with superb facilities.



At first, the idea of rebuilding the head office building was considered. However, it was discovered that the building could not be used as a factory facility if it was torn down and rebuilt due to zoning issues at the Omori head office.

As a result, a proposal to reinforce the building to make it more earthquake-resistant was also considered. Eventually it was decided to move the head office as it would be difficult to expand the business globally in the future at the Omori facility, which had become difficult to use.

From the beginning, Daikoku-cho in Yokohama was a candidate for the new location. Originally, the engine development department of Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. was located

During the Omori period, there were difficulties with bringing equipment in and out. At the new headquarters, it is possible to load cars onto a trailer indoors.

The workspace of the Omori factory. Many cars are maintained and tuned here. The facility is well-equipped with an alignment area and other facilities.



there. At the time, Nissan had already decided to move the engine development department to the Atsugi area sometime in the future. The idea was to move the NISMO headquarters to the site of the former engine development section.

After more than ten years of considering the relocation, the headquarters was finally moved to Daikoku-cho in February 2013. The design of the new headquarters building was intended to create a strong impression of the NISMO brand image. The internal workspace also became more suitable for a factory team, and it was something that could be shown off to visitors from overseas.

In addition, the engine test bench at the old Omori headquarters was old and could not be used for experiments on high-powered racing engines. When the engine development department was relocated to the Daikoku area, the latest test bench was introduced, and it was finally possible to develop racing engines in-house.

Furthermore, the showroom for general fans was also made larger to include an event space, and multiple racing cars were always on display. As the headquarters of Nissan's motorsports, fans from Japan and overseas began to gather there on weekends.



The name of the Omori factory, which catered to the tuning and maintenance needs of general users, was retained. In addition to parts, fashion goods are also sold.

The Omori factory, which carries out maintenance and tuning of user cars, retained its name even after the relocation, and continues to convey the history of NISMO to the present day. ♦

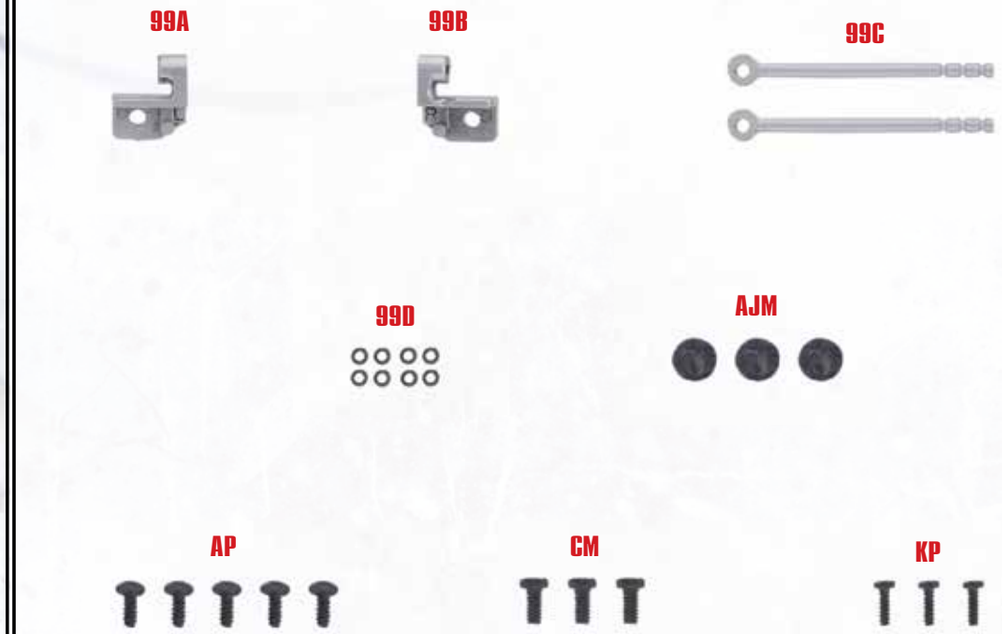


The showroom always has motorsports machines on display. From the latest race cars to competition and rally cars that were once active, there are displays depending on the season.

STAGE 99 ROLL CAGE (3) AND TRUNK

In this issue, we will attach the trunk lid and the interior of the trunk to the rear part of the body. We will also install the multimedia screen in the trunk and mount the roll cage rear bars.

PARTS



99A	Left (L) trunk lid strut support	AJM	Screws 2×3×5mm (×3*)
99B	Right (R) trunk lid strut support	AP	Screws 1.7×4mm (×5*)
99C	Trunk lid struts (×2)	CM	Screws 2×4mm (×3*)
99D	Strut washers (×8*)	KP	Screws 1.4×4mm (×3*)

*Including spares

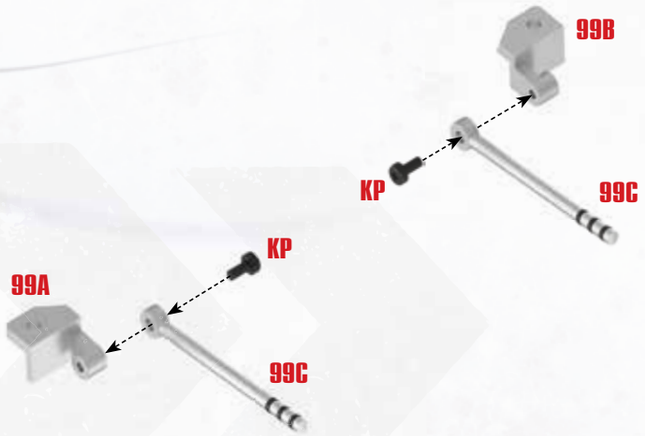
99.01

Using precision tweezers, place the strut washers 99D in the highlighted slots in the two trunk lid struts 99C – three washers on each strut. In case of an occasional breakage, you have two spare washers.



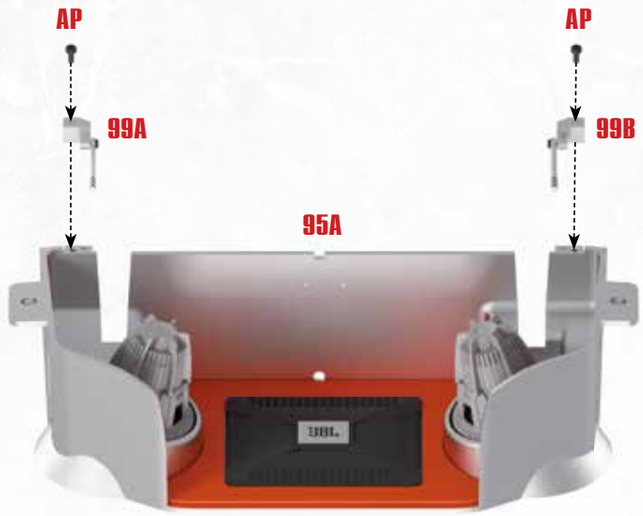
99.02

Align the left 99A and the right 99B trunk lid strut supports, marked with the letters L and R respectively, with the holes at the end of each strut 99C and secure each assembly with a KP screw.



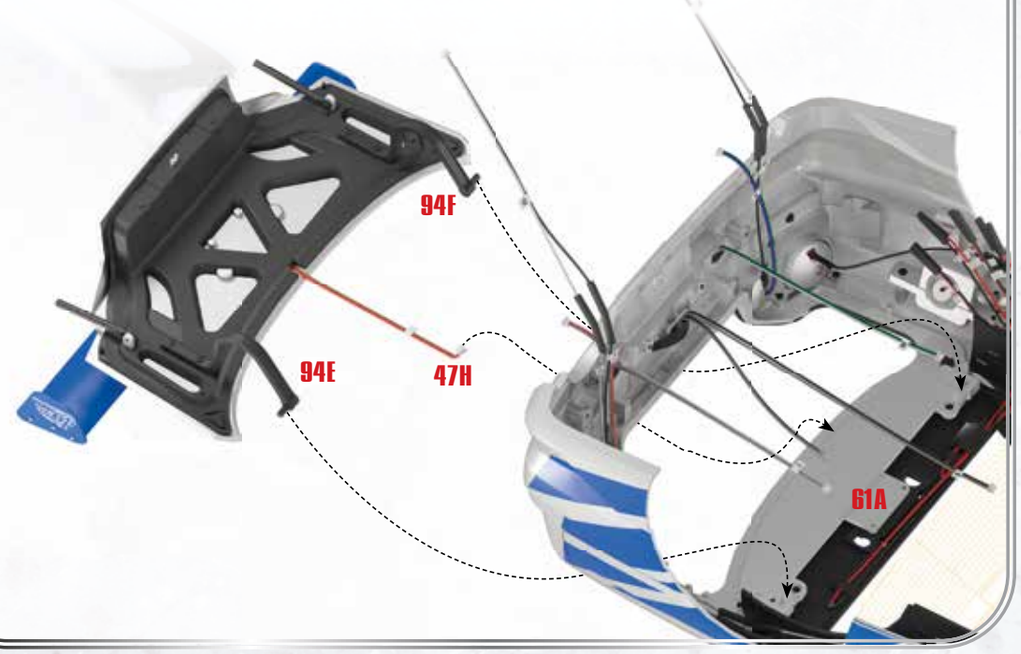
99.03

Place the left (L) and right (R) trunk lid strut supports, 99A and 99B, over the highlighted holes inside the trunk floor assembly 95A. Connect each support with an AP screw.



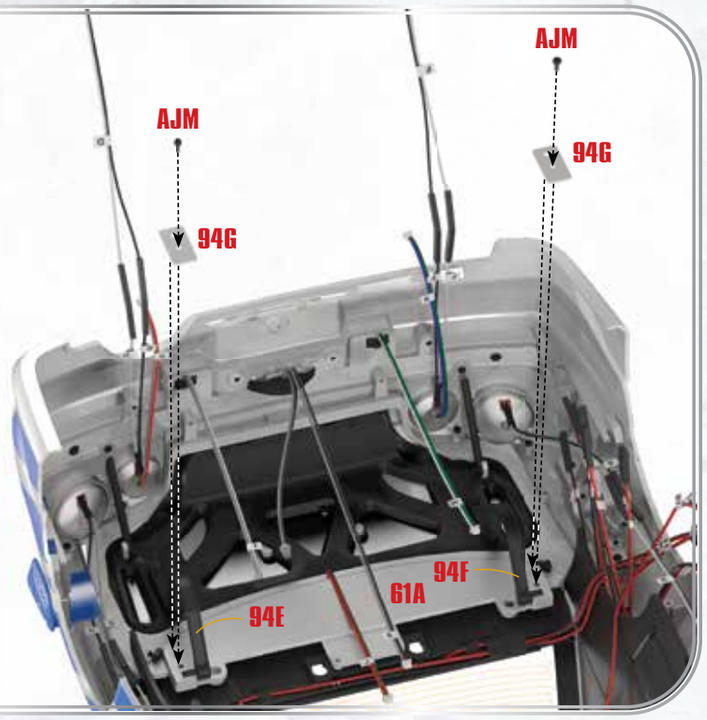
99.04

Retrieve the trunk lid and chassis assemblies. Insert the shafts at the ends of the left and right trunk hinges, 94E and 94F, into the highlighted slots in the body 61A. Note that you must guide the wire of the rear center brake lights (J) 47H inside the assembly.



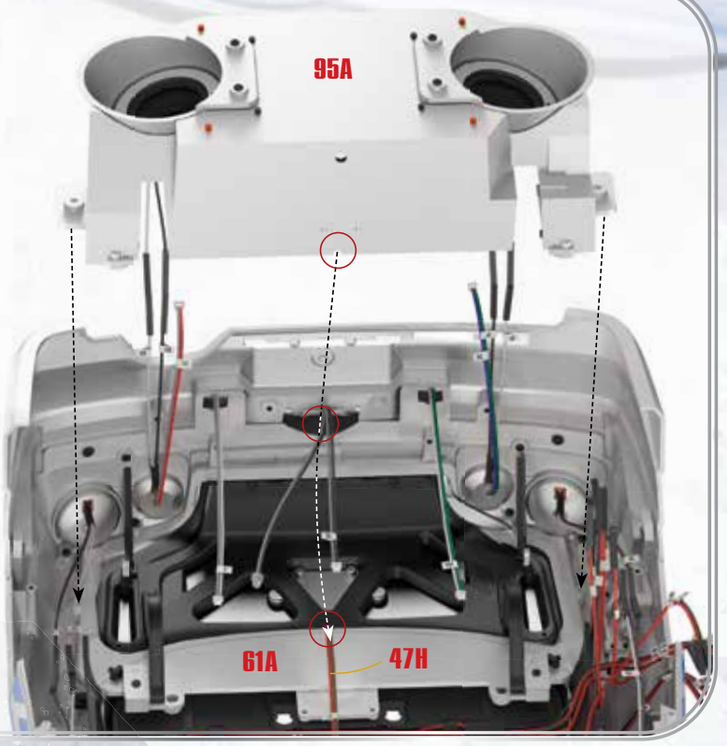
99.05

Retrieve the hinge plates 94G and place them on the left and right trunk hinge shafts, 94E and 94F. Attach each plate to the body 61A with an AJM screw.



99.06

Place the trunk floor assembly 95A on the rear part of the body 61A, taking care not to trap any of the wires and making sure that the wire of the rear center brake lights (J) 47H passes through the highlighted slot. Guide the other rear light wires so that they are facing upwards behind the trunk wall: 46G (S), 46K (C), 47E (H), 47F (K), 47I (W), 47J (I), 47N (D), 49D (E), 49F (F).



99.07

Check the groups of wires above the trunk. Insert the wire with the LED of the rear display light wire (S) 46G into the highlighted hole in the trunk floor 95A.



99.08

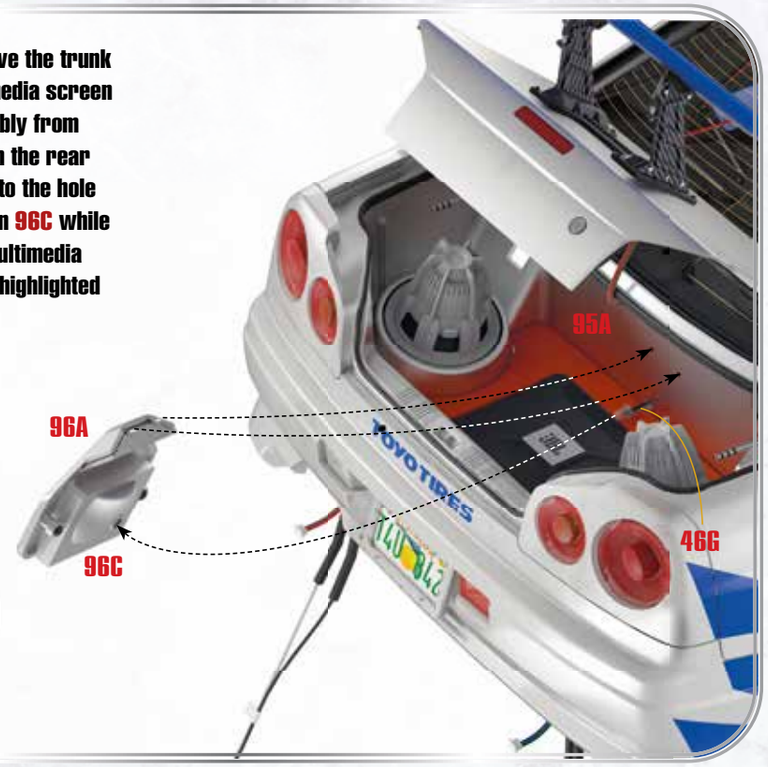
Turn the chassis assembly over and lift the trunk lid 93A.



99.09

Retrieve the trunk multimedia screen assembly from issue 96. Insert the LED from the rear display light wire (S) 46G into the hole in the rear part of the screen 96C while inserting the pivots on the multimedia screen housing 96A into the highlighted holes in the trunk floor 95A.

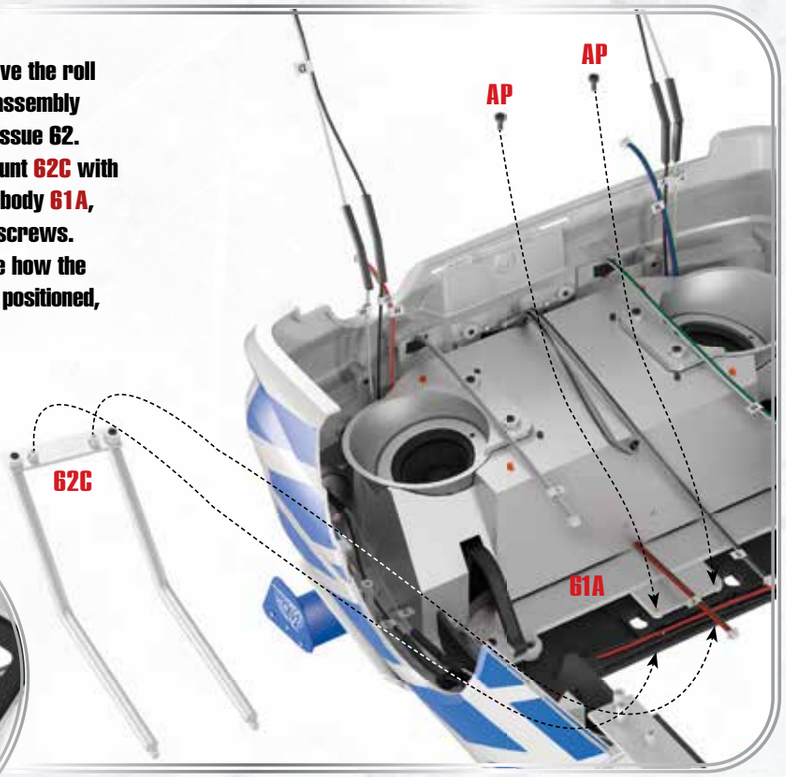




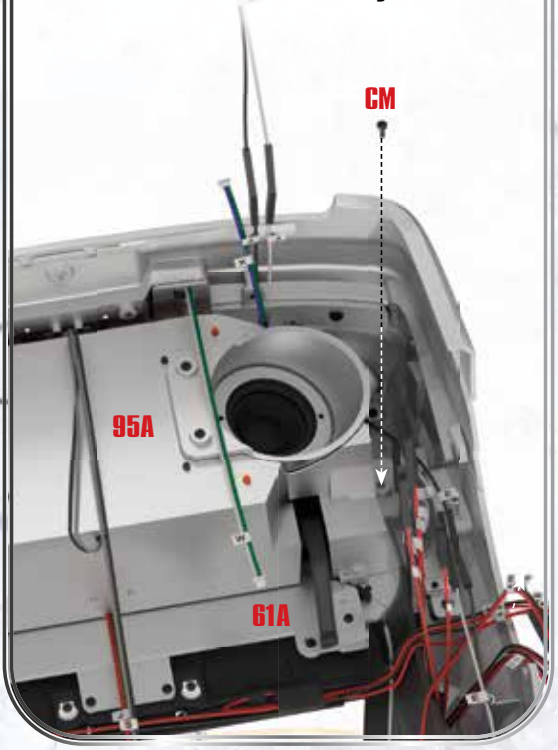
99.10

Retrieve the roll cage assembly from issue 62. Align the rear roll cage mount 62C with the highlighted holes in the body 61A, and secure it with two AP screws. In the detail image, observe how the rear part of the roll cage is positioned, as seen from above.

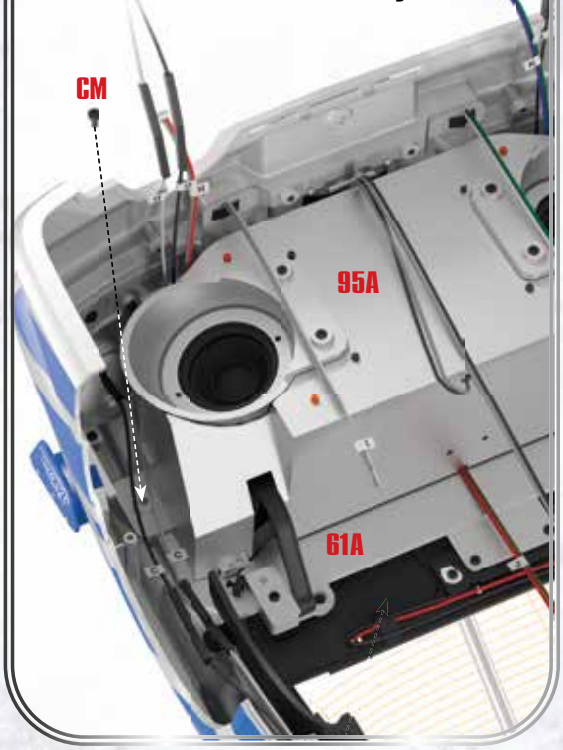




99.11 Use a CM screw to attach the right-hand tab of the trunk floor 95A to the body 61A.



99.12 Use another CM screw to secure the left-hand tab of the trunk floor 95A to the body 61A.



Final assembly



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