

# TUF

## THE ULTIMATE FINISH

ISSUE 36 November 2023

**AXALTA**  
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INTRODUCING AXALTA ACADEMY

WORLDSKILLS ON SHOW AT THE NATIONALS

MITCHELL'S MACHINES AT DOUBLE M

**Your Passion.**

**Our Coatings.**

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR



## Your Passion. Our Coatings.

In this final issue of 2023, we are thrilled to have presented you all with a year of an exciting array of stories, product features and technical articles. This issue features some customer projects and milestones which showcase passion using our Axalta coatings.

Our cover photo features a 'Golden Holden' Torana, which took up 3 years of downtime for the owners of distributor, Wallaby Crash Supplies. More photos are featured on pages 14-15, and they also celebrate a 30-year milestone of a team member on page 19.

Page 5 introduces you to the cutting-edge Axalta Academy, our advanced training hub. This platform offers a variety of online resources and training courses, with some eligible for I-CAR training points.

This edition also features a diverse selection of customer success stories, spanning from Al's Panel Shop in the NT (page 8) to Mt Roskill Collision Centre in Auckland, NZ (page 4).

Finally, on page 9, we attended the WorldSkills Australia National Championships in Melbourne in August, where Dylan Cleaver of NSW won Gold in the Automotive Refinishing Category. We congratulate Dylan and all the finalists during the 3-day competition!

If you would like to share your own stories, thoughts or suggestions with us, please email our team and we will get in touch with you for inclusion in our 2024 issues.

Enjoy the read, and have a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

**Steven Brett**  
Managing Director  
Axalta Coating Systems



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# MITCHELL'S MACHINES

## DOUBLE M TURNS UP THE REFURB ON HEAVY METAL

**DOUBLE M Heavy Machinery Refurbishing** was born two decades ago when business owner Mitchell Vella's father, Charlie, started a business detailing earthmovers. That grew into Double M - the name comes from 'Mitchell' and his wife 'Mel' - which now has a team of five in its Windsor, NSW workshop.

As distinct from a crash shop, Double M is focused on the refurbishment and custom painting of earthmovers, loaders, trucks and cranes. "We paint anything except cars," Mitchell grinned.

Mitchell in fact got his trade painting cars, but has only ever applied his craft to machinery: "I started with dad detailing when I was 15 and enrolled at TAFE at the same time," he said.

It's not all repair work, says Mitchell: "Some of them come to me brand new and they want to do their custom colours."

Mitchell's purpose-built workshop with XL spray booths, a large prep area and large wash bay, allows him to do such jobs as a recent two-tone respray of a customer's brand new 60-tonne crane. "The body was 25-metres long and took me 4 weeks to complete!" he said.

Double M's main customers are construction and crane companies, and business is booming. "It's crazy-busy; if I could find staff, I could hire 10 people tomorrow and have everyone flat-out," Mitchell said.

However, he says that urgent jobs do crop up regularly. "When a machine is smashed, it's not making money, so I have to repair it as quickly as possible."

Over his 15 years in the industry, Mitchell explains the big shift has been customers' willingness to spend. "Now, no-one is shy to spend money on painting their machine, which used to be looked at as a waste of money."



Above from left: Brad Carter, Melissa Vella, Mitchell Vella (Owner), Shane Gosper, Chris Pugliese and Charlie Vella

Motivations for Mitchell are a love of earthmovers and trucks, the rewards of working in a family business, and the satisfaction of a job well done. "It's a family-owned business so it feels good to carry on my father's work, and to work alongside him."

**"My customers' trucks are their pride and joy, so seeing the smile on their face when they pick up their finished machine is satisfying."**

Double M has big ambitions, including moving into a larger workshop, owning their own premises, and training up staff to work in this lucrative niche industry.

**Distributor: Wallaby Crash Supplies, NSW  
Paint System: Nason Industrial**





# FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO AUTOMOTIVE POWERHOUSE

## MT ROSKILL COLLISION CENTRE EXPANDS BUSINESS

**Mt Roskill Collision Centre, based in Auckland, New Zealand, has defied every obstacle put in its way over the past 30 years, only to emerge stronger and more resilient than ever. What started out as a small shop in Mt Roskill, has today evolved into a thriving business that has expanded its physical footprint beyond just smash repairs, to now include a mechanical arm to its operations too.**

This automotive powerhouse was originally founded by Brent Buckmaster, however in 2018 Hussain Al-Haddad who was also working in the business became a partner, which helped lead the charge in establishing Roskill Auto Mechanical in 2021.

*“Roskill Auto Mechanical unlocked a realm of possibilities and opened new doors for us,” said Hussain Al-Haddad. “Beyond our expertise in smash repairs, the expansion allowed us to offer comprehensive automotive solutions under one roof.”*

The mechanical business grew rapidly and as a result, they took on a mechanical apprentice, which now also includes three technicians and a workshop manager, to assist with the workload. In addition to the ongoing support from the major insurance companies such as IAG and AA Insurance, who supplied a steady stream of mechanical work in the early days.

In 2022, business growth continued, and workshop space started to get tight. Brent and Hussain went on to move their paint shop into an adjoining building with great success.

“A second rear building became vacant and given our exponential growth, we desperately needed more space, so we took over the building,” said Hussain. “The only challenge was that the building was a very odd shape, with structural support metal posts running through it.”

The pair had a plan to move their paint shop into this building, so with the expertise of spray booth specialist Seetal, a custom fit of the space saw two spray booths, a paint mixing room and lunchroom, all fitted around the structural pillars.

The partnership with Axalta New Zealand marked a turning point for Mt Roskill Collision Centre, with an introduction to New Zealand distributor, L J Smits - a move that was seen to breathe new life into operations. “Using the Spies Hecker system has significantly elevated our workflow,” said Hussain. He went on to say, “Our capacity to process work has surged, transforming our capabilities and output when it comes to speed and efficiency.”

The team at Mt Roskill Collision Centre is absolutely crucial, and their expertise and dedication ensure that every repair is carried out with the utmost precision and care.

As a business rooted in its humble beginnings, Mt Roskill Collision today stands strong as a successful, established automotive powerhouse, with a very promising future.

**Distributor: L J Smits NZ**

**Paint System: Spies Hecker Permahyd Hi-TEC**



The team at Mt Roskill Collision Centre



# WELCOME TO

As experts in refinish paints and technologies, Axalta has unparalleled refinishing knowledge to share. That's why we've set up Axalta Academy, a state-of-the-art training platform. It helps refinish professionals maintain and improve their competencies with top class training that fits the way they work.

With many flexible ways of training like face-to-face classes, remote learning, online courses and other digital knowledge resources, Axalta Academy makes learning not only convenient but effective too.

Whether you are a painter, bodyshop manager, apprentice or bodyshop owner, the Axalta Academy's unique approach and resources can help you realise your professional goals quicker.

We highly recommend you view the e-learning modules within the platform, as they cover off training on a range of products and topics related to automotive refinishing. Some of the on-line training modules are also eligible for I-CAR points.



To access the Axalta Academy, simply scan the QR code and login-in using your colour software credentials. Visit [axalta.au/academy](http://axalta.au/academy) or talk to your local Axalta representative.



# THE ACADEMY!

## WHAT PUTS THE AXALTA ACADEMY IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN?



### CONVENIENCE & ACCESSIBILITY

- Access unrivalled online and offline training resources wherever - training at home, at the bodyshop or in an Axalta facility. And whenever you want - on whatever device you want: Android, iOS, phone, tablet, laptop, desktop.
- One-stop-shop for all training and paint knowledge is available in several languages with more to come.
- User-friendly, dynamic and interactive training resources with info you can trust.

### BUSINESS FOCUS

- Improve skills and increase productivity.
- Maximise bodyshop profitability by using the latest refinish products, techniques and processes.
- Get the most value out of the products you use.

### CREDIBILITY

- In support of the latest advances in refinish products and technology.
- Backed by a world leader in refinishing systems. Developed by training professionals who know the challenges in automotive refinishing.
- Best know-how transfer between manufacturer and end-user, you benefit from our expertise.
- Training courses endorsed by OEMs.



## CRUZ RESTORATIONS'

# FRANKEN-FALCON

**The passion and craftsmanship showcased in each of Steve Bosilkovski's Ford Falcon GT restorations has seen his Wollongong based Cruz Restorations business develop an enviable following in the five years since it opened, drawing customers from all over Australia.**

The sensational Ford Falcon XW GT is typical of the superb quality that rolls from Steve's workshop, however the amount of work that went in was out of the ordinary.

All except one panel was replaced in the restoration and it's a testament to Steve's skill that you'd never pick that from looking at the finished car. "The only original part left was the roof turret; everything else we changed," Steve said. "We call it Frankenstein!"

The Falcon GT Nationals in Bathurst that took place in May provided further recognition that Steve's work is something very special. The countless hours he poured into studying and replicating the original vehicles well and truly paid off, with no less than three Cruz Restorations' GTs taking gold for Best Factory Restored Body and Paint.

These included an incredibly rare 'RPO' XA Falcon GT manual Coupe refinished in the original Wild Violet hue, which is striking against the factory white trim.

Also taking class wins for their respective model categories were a Cruz-restored Reef Green XW GT-HO Phase II and a Candy Apple Red XW GT Phase I.

## TECH TIPS MASTERING



**Multi-toning is becoming increasingly popular and involves blending and layering different shades of paint to create a seamless finish that matches the original factory coat or desired custom look.**

There are 2 process options when multi-toning using Axalta's waterborne basecoats.

**OPTION 1:** Apply the primary basecoat colour, then clear coat as usual (including bake and cure). Lightly sand in preparation for applying the next basecoat colour, followed by a clear coat over the entire panel.

In this scenario the basecoat does not need to be hardened.



*Having a perfect colour match for these iconic Australian muscle cars is a must for Steve who says that's a big reason why he loves the Spies Hecker system. "When I mix up a colour and check it against the original, it actually looks perfect, the way it came out of the factory."*

The XW GT is a case in point. It's finished in a Ford factory colour called 'Brambles Red' which is extremely sought after because many of the Bathurst race cars wore it in the 1970s.

Its story started when the vehicle owner phoned Steve and said he was unhappy with the supposedly restored car he'd bought a year earlier. "He'd driven it around and started noticing rust bubbles coming up." Steve began by sending the car to Super Roo Garage in Sydney who disassembled it and sent the shell for sandblasting. "Well, I got the car sandblasted and there was nothing left of it," Steve said.

Steve got to work chopping out the rusted original panels and welding in reproduction items, which are now readily available for 1970s Falcons.

When it finally came time to crack out the gun, Steve's go-to Spies Hecker products included 5310 Primers, 5340 Non-Sand Primer, the 293 Solvent Line, 8034 Clears, and his own 'secret mix' of 8030 Satin Black Clear.

"I know if I ever need anything, I can call my Axalta rep, Andrew Cutler, and he'll help me out with the right advice - he's a champion," Steve said.

"The 'Franken-Falcon' is the most challenging job Cruz Restorations has ever undertaken", says Steve, but after all the hard work he rates it as one of the shop's best-ever GT replicas.

**Distributor: Illawarra Toyota**

**Paint System: Spies Hecker Permahyd Hi-TEC**

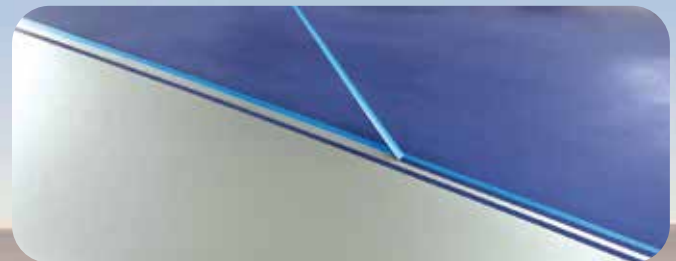


## MULTI-TONING

**OPTION 2:** Referred to as base-on-base, this option requires you to harden the first basecoat colour, apply and bake for 10mins @60°C. After cooling, mask and apply the second basecoat colour without hardening. Dry as normal and clear coat the entire panel.

**Here are some essential tips for multi-toning when using OPTION 2:**

- The waterborne basecoat needs to be stirred well prior to adding the dedicated basecoat hardener. Then apply the basecoat as normal, according to the TDS.
- Hardened or non-hardened, the basecoat must be overcoated with clear coat within 72 hours.



- Observe limited working times (pot life) when the hardener is added to the basecoat.
- Bake the basecoat to ensure full through cure. Hand-held air blowers are not recommended.
- There is also no limit to the number of layers that can be painted, just remember all layers need to be hardened apart from the last colour. Finally, clear coat over with a HS or VOC clear coat.

# A LEGACY OF *Excellence* IN THE NT

For more than three decades now, Al's Panel Shop has been servicing the top end region of the Northern Territory, delivering quality repairs at a high standard. At the helm of this second-generation family-owned and run business, is husband and wife, Greg and Alison Turnbull, who, along with their dedicated team, have earned a reputation for their commitment to excellence and a customer-focused approach.



***"We think of ourselves as a one-stop-shop and service our customers by managing all aspects of a repair - from mechanical, wheel alignments, interior detailing - required under an accident claim." said Alison Turnbull. "As specialists in crash repairs, we assist with all insurance repairs, including the management and lodgement process of submitting digital estimates and photographs online, to ensure a hassle-free claim."***

Like most repairers, they face their daily challenges. However, Darwin's tropical climate, with distinct wet and dry seasons, throws an extra consideration into the mix. Fortunately, in September last year they contacted distributor Automotive Paint Supplies in Darwin who introduced them to Spies Hecker's Permahyd Hi-TEC as it works well in the humidity.

"Having experienced ongoing challenges with a previous paint brand, we found that following a trial period with Spies Hecker, things turned around for us quickly, with incredible results and excellent ongoing support and training." said Alison.

She went on to say, "It was a natural transition for us and one we haven't regretted, as both the waterborne and solvent systems integrate seamlessly with our micro repair processes and produces the quality finish that we pride ourselves on."

In a business where employees are an integral part of the Al's Panel Shop 'family', many of whom have been with the business for 10 years, Greg and Alison are not afraid to invest in their crew. As part of building the team's capabilities, their two painters Liniel and Severino attended Spies Hecker training in Perth to master the processes around tinted and matt clears and other specialty colours. This ethos makes for a winning combination that sets this business up for ongoing, future success.

**Distributor: Automotive Paint Supplies, Darwin  
Paint System: Spies Hecker Permahyd Hi-TEC**





## SKILLS ON SHOW

**The WorldSkills Australia Automotive Refinishing national competition, held in Melbourne from 17-19 August, was fiercely contested by nine regional finalists.**

They were each put through a range of challenges using Standox products including:

**DAY 1:** Prepare and paint a new GM guard, using wet-on-wet primer and 3-layer white pearl colour then match and apply matt clear coat. The next task was to repair a small scratch on a new pre-painted guard, sand, prime, fill with a small blend.

**DAY 2:** Fix dent in a new GM door, use UV primer-filler, apply a wet-on-wet surfacer, basecoat and clear coat to the entire door, inside and out. After a short bake, the clear was sanded in preparation for the design work. Two separate designs were completed. To end the day, competitors applied the final coats of Xtreme clear to the doors.

**DAY 3:** Colour match two colours, repair a plastic part, mask up the side of a vehicle. They finished off Day 3 with buffing and detailing their door with the design work before final judging took place.

"As category sponsor, we are extremely proud of how each competitor excelled during the 3-day competition," said Paul Polverino, National Training Manager at Axalta.



*Top Left: Students matching two colours.*

*Above: Dylan Hoskin, Dylan Cleaver, Jake Twyford, with Axalta's Managing Director, Steven Brett.*

Prior to the start of Day 1, each competitor was presented with two brand new Sagola spray guns to keep and use throughout the competition, courtesy of Axalta. This certainly put a smile on their faces and helped settle any nerves!

**Dylan Cleaver from Forbes Smash Repairs (NSW Norther Rivers) took out first place.**

**GOLD: DYLAN CLEAVER (NSW)**

**SILVER: DYLAN HOSKIN (VIC)**

**BRONZE: JAKE TWYFORD (VIC)**



## THE STUART AISBETT AWARD

**At this year's competition Axalta presented the inaugural "Stuart Aisbett Award" to the competitor that demonstrated the most outstanding attitude, respect, support and work ethic. This was Jake Twyford from Central Victoria.**

*Stuart Aisbett was a former WorldSkills Skillaroo, bringing home a silver medal in Vehicle Painting from the International event in Japan (2007). Shortly after Stuart took up a position at Axalta, and went on to support many WorldSkills competitions and competitors over the years, always without hesitation and with a wonderful attitude that was infectious. Stuart passed away in June 2020 from Unexplained Cardiac Death.*

Unexplained Cardiac Death (UCD) is a sudden and unexpected cardiac arrest in young, healthy people. In many cases, there are no symptoms and there is little information on why it occurs. UCD is one of the biggest killers of Australians aged under 50 - men are five times more likely to be affected than women. It kills more young people than cancer and road accidents. For more information on UCD, visit: End UCD: [www.enducd.org](http://www.enducd.org)





# RESURRECTION OF AN ICON

Your Passion.  
Our Coatings.

## VINTAGE VW KOMBI RESTORED TO FORMER GLORY

The Panel Shop Mermaid, which started out as a small shop in Mermaid Beach, Queensland back in July 2015, has embarked on a journey of growth, which saw owner, Jason Polentas acquiring a larger premises in Nerang, Queensland, in 2020. His vision became a reality as, over the past seven years, The Panel Shop Mermaid has evolved into a thriving smash repair business, with a love for restoring vintage classics too.

The Panel Shop Mermaid, in addition to specialising in smash repairs, has extensive expertise in custom restorations and classic cars, which is somewhat of a passion point for Jason, who started out as an apprentice spray painter with an unwavering commitment and dedication to providing an exceptional, professional service. Over the past year he has

quite literally, 'breathed life' back into a vintage classic - a 1962 RHD VW Kombi 23 Window Rag Top, owned by his parents. "It was purchased as an unfinished restoration that simply needed to be painted," said Jason. "My parents fell in love with this van and asked if I'd take on the paint job, which of course I jumped at!" he said.





**“THE GREAT THING ABOUT THIS RESTORATION IS THAT IF YOU ASK ANY ENTHUSIAST, THEY WILL TELL YOU THAT OWNING AND RESTORING ONE OF THESE, IS NOT JUST ABOUT POSSESSING A CLASSIC VEHICLE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY ABOUT PRESERVING A SLICE OF HISTORY, WHICH MAKES THIS ALL THE MORE EXCITING.”**

The 1962 RHD VW Kombi 23 Window Rag Top, manufactured by Volkswagen, stands as a true icon when it comes to automotive history, capturing the essence of both utility and style, while transporting those who have ever been in one, straight back to a bygone era. Using Axalta's Spies Hecker basecoat and Permasolid HS Clear Coat 8034, the Kombi underwent a light sanding before being painted in a carefully chosen custom colour. "This was an absolute labour of love and one that I enjoyed restoring, especially for my parents." said Jason. "The quality and finish of Duxone and Spies Hecker products is second to none, and was an obvious choice for this restoration project."

Using Duxone's Automotive Paint Systems extensively across the business, along with Axalta's Spies Hecker products, The Panel Shop Mermaid offers a comprehensive range of services - from handling insurance claims and expert smash repairs, to precision spray painting. "Duxone is a great, affordable product that produces excellent, quality results for the workshop's everyday use." said Phil Hughes, General Manager at Oz Trade Supplies Queensland. As an Axalta distributor who also supplies The Panel Shop Mermaid with Spies Hecker paints, clears and primers, he went on to say, "I've known Jason for years, so transitioning over from a competitor brand, exclusively to Axalta, was a natural process and one that works incredibly well for his business."

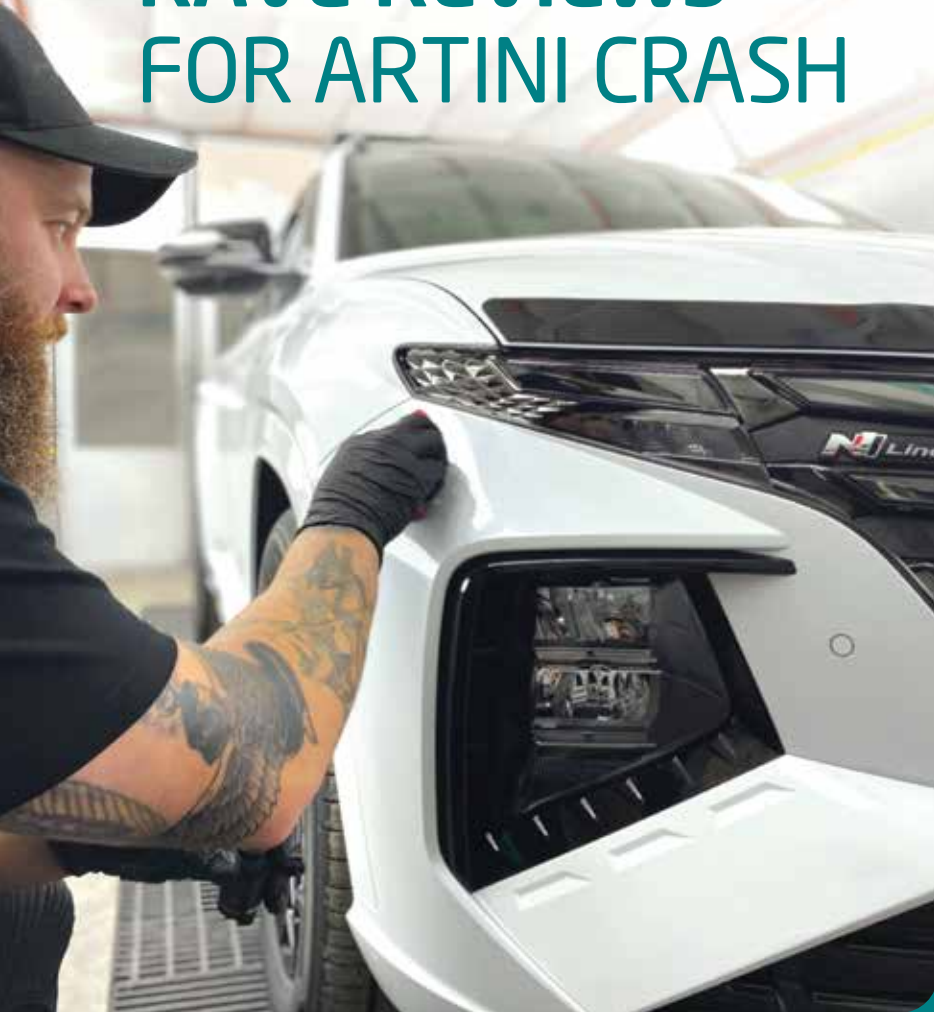
Jason and his dedicated team at The Panel Shop Mermaid are committed to providing a professional service, while delivering flawless results - every time.

**Distributor: Oz Trade Supplies**

**Paint System: Spies Hecker Permahyd Hi-TEC**



# RAVE REVIEWS FOR ARTINI CRASH



**ADELAIDE'S Artini Crash Repairs was established in 1995 by Joe Artini, who then handed the reins to his son Sam a decade ago. Artini Crash has thrived since, with SA Water, SA Power and SA Police among its high-profile clients.**

Working in the family business has always been a way of life for Sam. "I used to work for dad while I was at school; I'd ride from school which was only about eight kilometres up the road," he said.

It was a rapid rise for Sam after he joined Artini Crash full-time in his mid-20s. "I worked my way up quickly from panel beater to workshop floorman, to running estimating, and then managing the shop," he said.

***Central to the success of Artini Crash is its incredible team, who Sam says he 'treats like royalty'. "James, my manager, is really good online. He's built up more than 200 Google Reviews at 4.9-star ratings and developed our website and social media."***

Sam says the business has achieved this fantastic reputation by putting clients' needs above all else and by doing high-quality work, with the benefit of a 'three-stage quality check' as each vehicle progresses through the shop.

Having the best supplies are an integral part of the equation, according to Sam. "I swear by Spies Hecker - their products are so simple and easy to use for the paint technicians," he said.

"I believe the purchase price versus coverage is one of the best out there, and Spies Hecker's ongoing investment in technology to get products to dry and cover more quickly all help our profit margins."

In addition to that, Sam credits Axalta for helping him learn the ropes when starting out: "I did almost every Axalta seminar and training course for about three years and I still run everything by Axalta today," he said.

Recent renovations are the latest illustration of Sam Artini's drive to continually improve the business. The updates included a retiled and repainted paint mixing room featuring an additional computer and scales, to keep up with the shop's ever-increasing work volume, new quoting bays, which are now partitioned from the workshop, and updated offices.

With a fresh look and Sam's passion burning as strongly as ever, the future looks bright for Artini Crash Repairs.

**Distributor: Crash Supplies SA**

**Paint System: Spies Hecker Permahyd Hi-TEC**



## COACH'S CORNER WITH ROBIN TAYLOR

# MAXIMISING MY LABOUR GROSS PROFIT

In recent months, I have been on the road reviewing the end-of-year performance for a number of shops. Two of the key measures that are regularly discussed are the Panel Labour Gross Profit (GP) and Refinish Department Gross Profit (GP), as these are measures of labour efficiency.

### People often ask how do I increase the labour GP?

The first issue we discuss is how to maximise the value on the estimate. With many repairers still running batching or average cost repair models, increasing the value on the estimate will not help, except for "Out of Scope" jobs.

The focus instead should turn to how to maximise the productive time spent on the job. The starting point is the estimate, this needs to be a true reflection of what is required to do a safe and proper repair, detailing all the parts required.

### So how do we make employees more productive?

As a starting point, look at the time lost with technicians needing to ask unnecessary questions about the job or requesting more parts. Too often the additional parts are not identified until fit up, which stops the job. Every time somebody has to start and stop a job it creates downtime, especially if they then have to move onto another job.

The other key issue I see is the lack of organisation within the workshop. Often there is "mess" everywhere, with people working in driveways because there are no bays available due to the clutter. Our solution here is 5S and workshop optimisation.

5S is a methodology for establishing a visual workplace that uses 5 steps: **Sort, Shine, Set in Order, Standardise and Sustain** - to help employees achieve their tasks in the most efficient, effective and safest way. Through workplace organisation, not only do processes become streamlined and standardised, but productivity increases and waste reduces, ultimately strengthening business performance.



Above: Example of a point-of-use cart.

Too often shop managers or supervisors focus on the clean up, doing it for their staff, only to find things slip back to where they were very quickly. Staff need to be involved from the start, organising their own work area, including point-of-use carts specific to the processes being carried out.

Once the workplace has been optimised, it needs to be maintained - this is key! Critical to this is the understanding that the things we walk past is the standard we set. What this means in simple terms is if there are old parts left lying around and we do nothing about them, that is the standard we are happy with.

By focusing on the downtime and visual appearance within the work area, you should see a marked increase in productivity, which will ultimately lead to increased labour GP.

**If you need support or advice for your Bodyshop, please get in touch with our Drivus team at: [info-anz@axalta.com](mailto:info-anz@axalta.com)**



*Jim Crisp of  
Wallaby Crash Supplies*

## RAPTOR FOR HIGH TEMPS

It used to be that finding high-temperature paint in Australia was a bit of a mission. But now things have changed with the new U-POL RAPTOR High Temp aerosol range, formulated to perform in temperatures up to 1000°C. Easy to use, fast drying, and with an attractive smooth finish, there's a RAPTOR High Temp product for almost any job.

**RAPTOR Engine Enamel** and **RAPTOR Caliper Enamel** are engineered with unique ceramic technology. These coatings retain strength, flexibility, and colour in very high temperatures.

Professional quality **RAPTOR Wheel Paint** provides protection from impact, heat, stone chips, brake dust, and corrosion. Resistant to oils, traffic film, and temperatures up to 120 °C. Suitable for all primed metal wheels including steel, aluminium, and alloys.

**RRAPTOR Roll Bar & Chassis** is a self-priming coating that can be applied directly to most prepared metals. Heat resistant up to 120°C.

And for ultimate heat protection, there's **RAPTOR Flame Proof**. Heat resistant up to 1000°C. Ideal for use on exhaust manifolds, headers, and other areas that need protection from high heat.

# Golden Holden

## WALLABY CRASH SUPPLIES' TORANA SL/R 5000 TRIBUTE

Janelle Crisp of Wallaby Crash Supplies used downtime in the business during the pandemic to bring her love of Holden Toranas to life in the form of this striking SL/R 5000-style cruiser. "We're a husband and wife business and cars mean a lot to Janelle - she's always loved the Torana," says Jim Crisp of Wallaby Crash Supplies.

Janelle found the Torana - a beaten-up 1974 LH SL - on Facebook Marketplace in Maitland and gave Jim the job of driving up and haggling for it. The couple bought the Holden in August 2020 and their team spent three years transforming it into the showpiece you see.

*"It's a one-off colour based on a GM-H factory gold using Cromax 6000 with 3050 HS Clear over the top," Jim said. "In the shade it looks like the original colour but in the sun, you can see all the new metallics and lifters in it so it lights up like a Christmas tree!"*

AVZ Automotive Services in Wetherill Park NSW - Jim's mechanic of 30 years - bolted together a warm V8 for the 'Golden Holden'. "It's a 253 V8 with extractors and 900 Rochester carburetion, so it's got a good tone to it."

The project kept Wallaby's core technical staff busy through the COVID period. "Brad Tarrant did most of the heavy lifting, with a lot of help from Preston Clark and Graham Lucey, who has been with us for 32 years."

The project was undertaken at Trans Pacific Auto Body Repairs in Kirrawee NSW, and Jim and Janelle extend a huge thanks to the owner, Phil Maguire.

**Your Passion.**  
**Our Coatings.**



**NEW**

The RAPTOR High Temp range is available now at leading U-POL distributors or find out more at: [www.raptordiy.com.au](http://www.raptordiy.com.au)



## SETTING SIGHT ON GROWTH

When directors John Greenacre and Andy Preece purchased Spies Hecker Importer Smits Group early 2021, they had a strategic vision to provide a truly nationwide distribution network throughout New Zealand. Earlier this year, they took another step closer to achieving this ambition with the acquisition of Wellington-based Total Bodyshop Supplies, and its additional branches in the Hawkes Bay and Palmerston North.

"The purchase of Total Bodyshop Supplies was a great strategic fit for us," said John. "The additional 3 sites allow us significant coverage across the lower North Island and adds to our already highly experienced team that provides technical and product support to our customers."

Total Bodyshop Supplies, being a major regional supplier to the auto refinish market, has transitioned to the Spies Hecker product range – delivering top tier automotive paint systems that are precisely geared to the high-quality demands of today's bodyshops. Total Bodyshop will continue to be led by Kelvin Daly who started the business some 24 years ago, with all staff in all sites transitioning with the sale.

*"Spies Hecker is renowned for its innovation, always on the leading edge of refinish paint technology and is regarded as a benchmark in vehicle refinishing in New Zealand. It was the obvious choice to take to our new customers, and they were very receptive during the demonstrations."*

Gold Coast Panel & Paint was one customer that was pleased with the outcome. "We have no regrets changing over to Spies Hecker – the trial period was a breeze. The service is second-to-none, the team are always quick to respond and awesome to deal with. They also offer a great rewards system.

We have had nothing but positive feedback from our refinishers about the system and product."

One notable factor to the Smit's Group success is its Tradesaver program. The fully integrated e-commerce solution delivers premium products at maximum value via wholesale savings and a loyalty reward scheme. With thousands of active clients nationwide, it is industry tested and proven!

Having established 8 distribution points throughout New Zealand, John and Andy are currently exploring their next endeavour to further bolster the Smits Group's nationwide footprint.

## The Basis for a Perfect Finish

Sontara's range of high-quality wipes have been especially designed for the automotive repair market.

Manufactured through a unique hydroentangling process, Sontara wipes deliver super absorbency, excellent strength and durability, and are extremely low lint.

With a wipe for every stage of the refinish process, you can be sure to get the job done right the first time.

Available from your local Axalta distributor.

For more details visit [axalta.au/sontara](http://axalta.au/sontara) or call Axalta on 1800 292 582.



SOLVENT WASH  
& DRY CLOTH

DEGREASING CLOTH

PRIMARY TACK CLOTH

STATIC CONTROL WIPE

AEROSPACE WIPE



# A CAREER OF DEDICATION AND ACCOMPLISHMENT

Greg Mackenzie, Parts and Paint Manager at Axalta distributor partner, Illawarra Toyota, is bidding farewell to his illustrious career spanning 50 years.

**Throughout his professional journey, Greg has had the privilege of working for various Toyota distributorships in the Illawarra and Riverina regions of New South Wales, leaving behind a legacy of dedication and accomplishment.**

Greg's path in the automotive industry commenced at the tender age of 16 when he embarked on an entry-level position at a local Toyota dealership. Through his determination and several career advancements, he found himself in different Toyota dealerships and it was in the late 1980s that a golden opportunity presented itself - the chance to manage the Parts Department at the brand new Illawarra Toyota dealership.

Fast forward a few years to early 1993, where Greg's introduction to the Spies Hecker brand marked the beginning of a remarkable partnership. By mid-year, Illawarra Toyota was appointed as the distributorship for the region, beginning a 30-year strong bond with Axalta and the Spies Hecker brand. The testament to the exceptional service provided by Greg and his team can be witnessed through their enduring relationship with their first Spies Hecker installation at JJ's Performance, who are still a loyal customer to this day.

**Reflecting on his career highlights, Greg is quick to acknowledge the outstanding individuals he has worked with, along with the strong reputation of brands such as Toyota and Spies Hecker that have made his job immensely enjoyable.**



Above: Steven Brett (Axalta MD), Greg Mackenzie (Illawarra Toyota), Anthony Thrift (Axalta Territory Business Manager NSW/ACT).

50  
YEARS



Above: Greg Mackenzie hard at work with colleague, Joe Telechea at Illawarra Toyota.

Being associated with a Toyota dealership also offered him numerous opportunities to embark on exciting ventures, including a memorable trip to Japan during Cherry Blossom season as a winner in a Toyota genuine accessories promotion. Of course, there were challenging times as well. Greg vividly remembers being the first dealership to implement the "Revolution" management system amidst the Y2K hype.

As he took a trip down memory lane, Greg muses on the transformations the industry has undergone. When he began his career, the area boasted approximately 120 panel beaters, whereas today, that number has dwindled to a mere 20. Gone are the days when panel beaters could be found on every corner due to the prevalent issue of rust, especially in the coastal region. In the past, cars were fish-oiled to combat rust, and the notion of paint protection was unheard of. Nowadays, the industry is marked by cut-throat competition, rare loyalty, the prevalence of parallel imports, and shifting IT systems that prioritise price over other factors.

**In retirement, Greg eagerly anticipates indulging in his passion for golf and spending quality time with his grandchildren, including a few planned fishing trips. We wish Greg a very happy retirement and express our thanks for his unwavering dedication to promoting the Spies Hecker brand over the past three decades.**

30  
YEARS

## 30 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

**Wayne Marschall Crash Repairs, a prominent name in the automotive repair industry, celebrated a remarkable milestone this year, with three decades of dedicated service to the Nuriootpa community in South Australia. Wayne Marschall, the driving force behind this successful venture, started his journey as a young apprentice in 1976 and has continued to grow the business over the years.**

Wayne's apprenticeship began at the very premises where his business stands today. Little did he know that his early days would lay the foundation for a thriving success story, as fate would have it that Wayne would take over the business in April 1993, when the previous owner decided to retire. "To think that I started out as an apprentice with absolutely no vision of ever owning my own business," said Wayne.

Being a local, Wayne grew up just a kilometre away from the workshop, and recalls how he used to cycle to work. Today, he manages a resolute team of over thirteen skilled staff - several of whom have worked for Wayne Marschall Crash Repairs for over 20 years. This is a great testament to Wayne's leadership, work ethic and the work environment he has fostered.

Wayne Marschall Crash Repairs has built a reputation for its versatile services, catering to both insurance and private repair work, and a hallmark of the business is its commitment to delivering exceptional, quality work. Throughout this journey, Axalta's Spies Hecker products have been an unwavering companion for their reliability, value and outstanding quality, something Wayne will attest to, having used Spies Hecker products for the past 30 years.

***"Because we've used the product for so long, we know it inside out. We know it is going to work well with exceptional output, and we know its capabilities," said Wayne. He went on to say, "I always laugh when a rep tries to convince me to change brands, because once they hear that we use Spies Hecker, they know it's never going to happen, and that in itself speaks volumes."***



*Above: Axalta's SA/WA Territory Business Manager, Peter Kingsley-Rowe, presenting Wayne with his 30 year award.*

Reflecting on the road ahead, Wayne contemplates the balance between business and personal pursuits. Amid the playful chuckles that ensue when the topic of retirement comes up, he acknowledges that he will continue to steer the business for a while longer yet. His aspirations include dedicating more time to his personal passion - restoring Holden cars.

With Wayne's passion and dedication driving his business, Wayne Marschall Crash Repairs is poised to continue its legacy as a pillar of excellence in the Nuriootpa automotive industry.

**Distributor: Crash Supplies SA  
Paint System: Spies Hecker**

## BY THE INDUSTRY, FOR THE INDUSTRY

**Have you heard of the ACIA?**

The Australian Collision Industry Alliance (ACIA) is a not-for-profit entity established to promote rewarding career paths and ensure the sustainability of an important industry: Collision Repair.

Through funding and support from a wide range of industry stakeholders, the ACIA strives to develop and drive innovative programs to attract and retain people for the industry.

**Axalta is proud to be supporting the ACIA as an industry partner. If you are interested in signing up or for more information, email: [info@theacia.com.au](mailto:info@theacia.com.au)**



# RECOGNITION AWARDS

35  
YEARS

## SPIES HECKER

**Eastern Shore Bodyworks** MORNINGTON TAS

**Erin Panel Works** ERINA NSW

25  
YEARS

## STANDOX

**Mick Young's Smash Repairs** KALLANGUR QLD

## SPIES HECKER

**Romano's Smash Repairs** CANNING VALE WA

20  
YEARS

## SPIES HECKER

**Albion Park Smash Repairs** ALBION PARK RAIL NSW

15  
YEARS

## CROMAX

**Connors Welding Works** GRACEMERE QLD

## NASON INDUSTRIAL

**Highgate Engineers** ROCHEDALE QLD

10  
YEARS

## STANDOX

**Col's Body Shop** WEST RYDE NSW

**MJ Auto Repairs** WEST AUBURN NSW

**Nu-Life Panel & Paint** GERALDTON WA

## SPIES HECKER

**Apex Auto Group** MILTON QLD

**Hinterland Motors** WEST NERANG QLD

**Mick Cramer Spray Painter & Smash Repair** HORSHAM VIC

**Thompson & Robinson Smash Repairs** WOLLONGONG NSW

## CROMAX

**Humpty's Perfect Panels** UNDERWOOD QLD

**Polo Smash Repairs** MONA VALE NSW



## CELEBRATING 30 YEARS WITH WALLABY CRASH SUPPLIES

**WALLABY** Crash Supplies owner Jim Crisp says his long-term staff are the cornerstones of the business, and among them is Domenic Donofrio, who celebrated 30 years recently.

Domenic met Jim - a paint rep at the time - while he was working as a spray painter and they developed a good rapport. "Years down the track, Jim opened Wallaby and asked me to come along, and here I am," Domenic said.

Wallaby Crash Supplies employed Domenic as a technical representative in November 1992 and his role has evolved over the years to include being sales representative and demonstrator, culminating in his present role as purchasing manager.

According to Domenic, Wallaby's secret to keeping so many of its staff long term is simply that Jim and his wife Janelle are easy to work with. "Jim gave me a platform as a spray painter to build my career through his business and in turn I've been loyal to him and given my all as if it's my own business," he said.

Domenic's commitment and hard work are certainly not taken for granted, commented Jim. "Staff make you or break you, so you've got to have good people, and I've been blessed to have good people such as Domenic around me."

Domenic says he loves his job because it's a 'people job' that sees him communicating with everyone from customers to suppliers each day.

**He is grateful for all the lifelong friends he has made and says his three decades at Wallaby Crash Supplies have flown by!**



Drivus

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# WE ARE NOW DRIVUS

## YOUR PARTNER IN BUILDING A STRONGER BUSINESS

Our renowned Axalta Services program is now known as Drivus - all the help you need to make your bodyshop future fit.

Are you maximising the profit potential of your bodyshop? Drivus can help. It is a suite of innovative services, programs and tailored expert consultancy designed to improve efficiency in every aspect of your business. The result? Higher business productivity. Better performance. And more profitability.

Find out more at [axalta.au/drivus](https://axalta.au/drivus) or phone **1800 292 582**.



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