



Featured Car Blog



Name	Joe Wilde
Car	Ford Fiesta ST (mk6) MR200.
Ownership Length	From May 2012, 5 years.
BHP / Torque	211bhp / 164lb-ft
Favourite Modification	MR200 + Recaro Sportster CS Seats
Favourite Road / Route	A537, Cat and Fiddle
Favourite Track	Curborough and Donington
What would you do differently?	Nothing
What have you learned through the ownership?	"If you look after it, it's bulletproof. Not had a single mechanical issue during my ownership".
Future plans	"Use it more, possibly roll cage"
Recommended Suppliers / Parts	Suppliers: Mountune, Jamsport, A&K Motorsport. Parts: Quaife ATB Differential.

The whole reason I ended up with this car is due to the unfortunate way my old ST ended up. I won't go into details but the car was a write off. This left me with a bit of a dilemma on my hands as with the write off on my insurance history, I thought there would be no way I would be able to afford to buy another ST, never mind be able to insure one as well.

I spent a good few days looking at possible cars I could replace it with but there was nothing that took my fancy that was both affordable and insurable. This got me looking at STs again and after getting an insurance quote, I was quite surprised that the price wasn't too bad. I went online and found a few nearby that I decided to go and look at. After owning a ST for two years, I knew the common problems and things to look out for.

The first one I went to look at wasn't in a good way so it was quickly decided to move on to the next one. The next one was completely standard and in mint condition along with four new tyres. A deposit was soon put down but I was still waiting on the insurance pay out before I could afford to pay the rest. Luckily for me, the garage were more than happy to hold the car for me so two weeks after putting the deposit down, I was able to go and collect my second ST.

I told myself, along with my parents and everyone else, that this one would remain standard. I'd only done a few things to my white ST and having it taken away just like that had really put me off modding. This didn't last too long with the Climair wind deflectors from the white car making their way onto this car. The car stayed standard other than the wind deflectors for about 2 months before I missed the induction noise from the K&N cone filter. I didn't want to buy exactly the same mods again so I decided to spend a bit more and go for the Mountune CAIS. This turned out to be a crucial decision in determining the cars future.

I'd had the rear windows tinted in the white ST and driving this one without tinted rear windows felt weird so they had to be done. I got in touch with the place that did it last time and got the car booked in. The car looked so much better for having them done!

The next thing I missed from my previous car was how it looked being lowered. The white car was lowered on Eibach Pro lowering springs and while it looked good, I decided to look into other suspension options. I eventually settled on the Bilstein B12 kit and found a deal on them through Demon Tweaks so made the journey of the Wrexham to have them fitted and the alignment done. The car looked much better and the ride was even better with the upgraded shocks and springs than it was on the standard suspension.

I'd also decided to purchase a cat-back exhaust as the standard was just too quiet for my liking. After messaging Jacksons Ford and waiting on stock to come in to them from Mountune, the car was now sounding a lot nicer thanks to the Mountune cat-back to go with the Mountune CAIS I already had fitted.

I was a bit strapped for spare cash having done all these mods so the next few things I did had to be relatively cheap. I decided to bite the bullet and attempt the de-tango my front and rear lights. The rears were nice and easy, just being a bulb swap. The fronts were a bit more tricky. I didn't want to split the lights so decided to break the plastic lens through the bulb holder using two pliers. It wasn't the easiest thing I've done and it took a while but it looked so much better when done! I also ordered a pair of black and chrome Ford gel badges from DMB as they were still making them at the time. They finished the front and rear of the car off nicely yet remaining extremely subtle.

Next up was some 12.5mm rear axle spacers to get the standard wheels on the rear out from under the arches. I'd had 20.5mm ones on my previous ST and decided they were a bit too much, hence the reason I chose the thinner ones. After cutting out the part for the ABS sensor, I ended up getting a local garage to fit them as I didn't have anywhere suitable to fit them. Another nice subtle mod that will go unnoticed by most but does actually make a huge difference to the way the car looks and handles.

The next upgrade was quite a big one. After spending many hours online reading through forums and watching videos on YouTube, I'd decided what the next step was going to be for the car. I had again been in touch with Jacksons Ford but this time it was regarding the Mountune MP165 kit and short shifter as Mountune were doing a deal on them. The car was quickly booked in and after a morning of waiting around and exploring the village, the car was ready for the drive back home. The short shifter felt strange at first but it soon felt natural. As the exhaust now the sports cat and manifold had been added along with a remap, the car sounded fantastic!

Having spent quite a bit of money on the MP165 kit, I was again back to small, cheaper mods. These came in the form of club stickers, a faux leather gearstick gaiter, a black ST inlay, LED number plate bulbs and a OMP front strut brace finished in Anthracite that I managed to get through a group buy on FiestaSTOC.

The next big update came in the form of some wheels. I'd been considering getting my standard alloys referred and getting new tyres put on at the same time but after looking online and being gently persuaded by a few mates, I ended up buying some brand new alloys with new tyres on them. I went for 16"x7" Anthracite Speedline Turinis. These changed the look of the car significantly and went well with the colour of the unpainted bumper plastics.

I'd also bought a set of Mondeo front calipers off eBay. These were larger and allowed me to fit 300mm front discs off a Focus ST170. I fitted these but later found out all wasn't well, but I'll go into that later on.

The car stayed like this for a few months until I went to Ford Fair. I wasn't on a stand but made the mistake of visiting the headline sponsors stand, Mountune. I ended up buying some Mountune car mats as well as some yellow Mountune HT leads to help add a bit of yellow to the engine bay.

It was also just before Ford Fair this that I found out Mountune were making the last batch of their inlet manifolds. I made the mistake of emailing Doug at Mountune and after a few email exchanges and a phone call, I had put my name and deposit down for inlet number 22 of 25 from the last batch.

The next month or so was the longest of my life. When I found out the inlets were finished, I was straight on the phone to Doug to get the car booked in at Mountune HQ. I had to wait about a week and a half before I could get my car in which gave me some time to look into hotels nearby so I wouldn't have to head down to Essex at stupid o'clock on the morning. The day the car was booked in for its MR200 conversion was possibly the longest day of my life. Not only was I waiting in the infamous waiting room for the best part of 8 hours, I was stuck in traffic the whole way home!

Anyway, the moment I got taken outside and shown my all new car made the whole day worthwhile! Doug lifted the bonnet to show me the new look engine bay and to prove they had actually carried out the work. He then handed me the key and told me the words I'd been waiting to hear.

"Go on then. Start it up."

The noise the car now made was like nothing I'd ever heard before. It sounded more like a Subaru than a little Fiesta. The lumpy cams combined with the new inlet made the car sound amazing!

As I mentioned earlier, the drive home was pretty much rush hour traffic the whole way so I didn't get any chance to stretch the fresh legs. I did however get plenty of looks of people in other cars wondering why all the noise was coming from something as innocent as a Fiesta. Their faces made all the traffic and aching left leg well worth it!

At this point I should probably note, I had the MR200 kit fitted at the time Mountune were offering 0% finance. I had the money to pay for it if needed but figured I'd see if I could get it using the Interest free credit as it was available. Luckily, Doug went through the application process with me and I was accepted. Little did I know it, but this would turn out to be a very good thing for the car!

Using part of the money I was going to spend on the MR200 kit, I ended up buying a Whittling rear antiroll bar on the recommendation of a friend who had recently fitted one to his car. He ended up helping me fit it and it definitely made a positive difference to the feel of the back end of the car. It felt a lot more planted and I was able to throw the cars into bends with a lot more confidence.

Nothing was done to the car for a while as I was having way too much fun enjoying the car now it had been completely transformed. The noise was even more addictive that when it was first done and seeing people look around trying to work out where the noise was coming from before realising it was a Fiesta was just as satisfying.

Anyway, I was at work one day when I got a Facebook notification. 'Mitch has tagged you in a post'.

I opened Facebook and looked at the notification. Someone was selling a set of Recaro Sportster CS seats with Fiesta specific subframes that I'd been searching for nine months. It was too good to pass on, especially as I still had the money that was going to be spent on the MR200 conversion. I messaged the person selling them and we quickly agreed on a deal. Unfortunately he wasn't around for me to go and collect them that weekend so I had to wait until the following weekend. He very generously offered to help me put the seats in while I was there as I had to wait the extra week for them.

It took about 90 minutes to swap both front seats over and the 2 and a half hour drive home was definitely worth it! Not only were they extremely comfortable, they looked awesome in the car!

After the seats, I was back to having little spare cash. I started looking in power steering coolers as boiling the fluid is a common problem on STs. I almost went with the Mountune PAS cooler from TCH in Burton but after looking into it a bit more, realised I could make a custom setup using a 10 row oil cooler for just a bit less. When all the bits had arrived, I went over to a mates house and we managed to get it fitted along with a PAS fluid change. It sits nicely behind the lower grill and doesn't stand out so it keeps well with the understated look of the car. I also bought a Mountune leather gear gaiter in the '12 Days of Mountune' sale so that was fitted to add a bit of yellow to the interior.

After having the MR200 kit on for a few months, the lumpy cams had managed to destroy the bushes in the lower torque mount. I got in touch with Jam-Sport and got the car booked in to have the bushes changed to Powerflex bushes. Turning the engine on for the first time after having the bush fitted, the difference was immediately apparent. There was a bit more shaking of the car but the banging noise that had started to occur was completely gone.

The next update isn't a good one. Driving home one day, I got rear ended by a young lad in a Corsa. It ended up going through insurance and it was close to being a write off. Luckily, the spare wheel stopped the boot floor from being bent beyond repair and luckily the car was fully repaired with the help of Neil from Greenlight Insurance.

A few months later, after getting my car back I decided to upgrade all the suspension bushes to Powerflex bushes. I knew how good the bushes would be after reading reviews online and having the engine mount done so was excited to see just how much of a difference they made. On the drive home, the car felt a lot tighter and more responsive and they are well worth the money.

If you remember earlier, I mentioned the Mondeo brakes weren't quite perfect. It turns out the front offside caliper was seized. I got in touch with Ford and they quoted me over £400 for a brand new! Fiesta caliper. I tried to explain it was a Mondeo one but that just seemed to confuse them. I got looking into caliper refurbishment and it turned out there is a place less than a mile from me that does them. I ended up getting all 4 of my callipers refurbished and professionally sprayed for a little bit more than Ford wanted for one new caliper.

The next update is one I'd been wanting for a while, ever since upgrading to the MR200 kit. I got in touch with JamSport again and got the car booked in for a Quaife ATB diff to be fitted as well as a new standard clutch while they had the gearbox out of the car. It was a long day of waiting around but just under 8 hours after dropping the car off, I got the call to say it was finished. I gave it a good test on the few roundabouts on the way home and the feeling of the diff working is a strange one. Instead of the car understeering when you put the power on while going round a bend, the front end now gets pulled into the corner.

Nothing happened for about 6 months; I was just running the car and enjoying it as it was. It was during this time that I decided the car was going to become a track day car. This meant the rear seats and spare wheel had to come out. Unfortunately, because of the suspension setup i was running being designed for more weight in the back, the rear ride height looked pretty much standard while the front looked ok. This meant I had to invest in some decent coilovers. After reading plenty of reviews online, I decided on BC Racing coilovers with damper and camber adjustment. These were again fitted and set up for me by the guys at JamSport and improved the car no end. They were even relatively comfortable for coilovers!

As I was going down a more track orientated route now, I decided to get looking for another set of wheels that I could use for track tyres. Luck came my way in the form of someone local wanting standard ST alloys as a straight sway for Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.2s. They did need a refurb but as I wasn't paying anything for them, that didn't bother me.

I also ordered some yellow TRS 4 point harnesses but due to the next update, wouldn't be able to fit them for a good few months.

Now for another not so good update. As I was on my way home from work one day in the wet, I lost the back end coming off a roundabout. I didn't manage to correct it and ended up spinning into a crash barrier. The whole front end needed replacing and it was only thanks to the efforts of Neil at Greenlight that my car was repaired and not wrote off. With it being an MR200, I was not willing to let the car get wrote off so I can't thank Neil enough for all the work he put in for me.

Since getting the car back, not much has changed. I have put the harnesses in and I have got some custom lower subframes put in for my Recaros. The 1.2s have had semi slicks put on them while the Turinis remain wrapped in road tyres for the winter months.

The car hasn't seen anywhere near as much track action as I would have liked but I've had to prioritise money elsewhere recently. It has been on three days at Curborough with The Chequered Flag and other than a small issue with my power steering fluid at the first, it has performed faultlessly. Got a few trackday's lined up later this year at Silverstone, Donington and Bedford and who knows what else the future holds for it after that.

