

Report: Sydney Swapmeet Sunday 6 March 2022

We managed to get the annual Sydney swapmeet successfully run and enjoyed by about 125 people. We had the threat of heavy rain affecting the easy running of the event for the preceding 3 or 4 days resulting in the first time the Committee had to think about the hall's wet weather arrangements in 5 years. This included how to keep attendees dry in the queue before opening if the rain came.

And as going to bed Saturday night there was a very unhelpful extreme weather warning posted at 11pm for northern Sydney, including Hornsby. At least we had comfort we had planned for this.

Waking at 6am Sunday thankfully saw the weather warning softened but the rain itself seemed to have other ideas, amongst the heaviest I have experienced in Sydney for years. Upon arrival at the hall there was an concerning small stream running down the street in front of the hall and I happily sat in my car drinking my takeaway coffee with extra shot.

Fortunately, at about 8am the rain eased and just before 8am we posted to the Club Facebook page that the event was definitely on, the hall setup had commenced and we were looking forward to doors opening at 10am. There was never any real doubt as the hall is well built, well placed and secure.



We had 17 separate sellers and 29 seller tables on the day so it was great they were setup and trading amongst themselves for a half hour or so before doors opened to all. An early look saw some bargains as well as some highly in demand, super rare items. Scalextric always dominates but every brand seemed to be covered across the sellers.

These two mint unbuilt kits, the CK1 AC Cobra and CK2 Porsche 904 GTS, were on Martin's table and making a return to the swapmeet after being bought by Martin about 7 or 8 years ago at the swapmeet!

At 9.45am the queue was a bit too easy to manage which was a little concerning, being no more than a dozen people.

Then the wave of people joining the queue started and 10am couldn't come quickly enough.

John, Rod and Roland on the front door did a sterling job. They got 2022 Member cards to Members, collected the \$5 entry from non-members and handed out flyers with

event info and map on it. They also managed the mandatory masks aspect which every attendee was good about as we had experienced by 99% of attendees last year. They also got 60 people quickly into the hall at 10am.

The social aspect returned after the basic 2021 event with lots of hellos and chat amongst sellers before doors opened. That first hour to 90 minutes from 10am once buyers get in is a blur as always, the social aspect takes a backseat to finding that car or item!

With Nick the Chef having hot food and soft drinks available that got my attention close to 11am as things started to settle down and we became fairly confident would stay a dry day.

Not often featured in photos in Club Lines, this is to demonstrate the Covid compliant eating as well as how good were the egg and bacon sandwiches!

We also had Eddie and Maria with a well-staffed Slot Shop table that offered a comprehensive selection of in stock sets, cars, spare parts and accessories. as well as ability to pre-order.



Below are Sloting Plus spares and the Scalextric Spark Plug from Slot Shop's impressive three table stand.



There were a few notable stories. A long-term Club Member wanted a particular Aussie Scalextric Ford release and asked me prior to the event if I had one. I gave that car salesman-style answer "no, but I know where you can find one but not sure on the price". So soon after 10am I was introducing a seller and Club Member to let them haggle over a car. They did a deal but apparently a few dollars ended up in the pocket of the seller not buyer!

Another regular swapmeet attendee had asked before the event about another hard to get but more recent Holden release. In this case I said I have that and it's yours if get to the swapmeet. At about 10.30am I spotted the person and was about to ask them to come over anytime for the car but then I spotted that car under their arm. Sadly for me, wasn't from my table as another seller had it mint but \$30 less, a clear bargain. This smart buyer had the option to get with me but didn't need it. That's the luck of the swapmeet.

Another long-term member but first-time swapmeet attendee had a chat upon joining the queue just before 10am. As I walked the queue we spoke and he shared with sellers already in the hall I think I'll get a table next year.

About midday, the halfway mark we had that quieter lull and I finally found time to say hellos to Members and also buy and swap a few cars. I was fortunate to have Mark helping on my seller table again (thank you Mark as always) which freed me up to occasionally shop but mostly do Club activity.

We had the raffle of two Club Cars being scheduled to be drawn at 1pm so the selling of tickets was all happening by Hugo and Roger in the hour prior.

With many tickets sold we thought the draw at 1pm would be the final highlight for the day but there was a new for 2022 surprise that delayed the raffle draw. At about 12.54pm unbeknown to most people, including me, one seller had organised a half-price sale of what he had left. Rod was on the microphone all day providing information to attendees but this was his most important message. The response was a masked-up pile-on at that sellers table by about 15 people as you can see below.



Buyers on the outside, other sellers on the inside, anywhere you could look and grab a car. I took the option at that time to take a seat and chat to a good friend over a soft drink in the hope that in 10 minutes the feast would have quietened down and I might still get a car or three. I was also starting to run on empty and thinking of the early morning nine hour drive home so the chill time was welcome. And I was pleasantly surprised I did get a few cars later.

The delayed raffle was eventually drawn around 1.20pm, thank you Kerry as guest drawer, with the winners Member and swapmeet helper RodC as well as Kylie, a mum who attended with young son after a 90 minute drive.

And with the raffle drawn, that half price sale done and the threat of the weather turning wet again, the big day ended a little early which was okay.

I would like to end the article with thanks to all the Members who attended as volunteers, buyers and/or sellers. There were about 50 members in total and this included a few first timers despite being long term members. I'd also like to thank all the Committee and volunteers who helped put on another annual Sydney swapmeet. Some regular members were absent and for a few we know it was sadly due to the awful wet weather and some flooding.

We do hope things have been okay for all Club Members and we hope to see many of you at the Member Auction in August.

Cheers Dominic (and Pete)