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## Celica and Supra

### Toyota restyles its sporty coupes for '82

FUJI INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY, JAPAN

Unfortunately, the rainy season and I both arrived in Japan on the same day. But the gloomy weather couldn't hide the new and distinctively different styling of Toyota's redesigned Celica (below, left) and Supra (below, right) here at Japan's grand prix race course, on the slopes of Mt. Fuji. Nor could the generally damp-to-wet track conditions mask the mechanical improvements to both cars.

For the first time, each car has its own styling, but the same body types are retained: two-door hatchback and notchback for Celica, two-door hatchback for Supra. Both

have substantially wider tracks front and rear, but the big suspension news is that Supra has four-wheel independent suspension for the first time.

Under the hood, Celica will continue with the same 2.4-liter engine, but Supra will have an all-new 2.8-liter twin-cam engine with electronic fuel injection. It develops 29 hp more than the old 2.8 and is quite responsive.

There's more head and leg room up front in both cars, and almost anyone should be able to get comfortable. Optional (and expensive) sport seats may be the finest in the world. They have 16 adjustments, including three air bladders for fine-tuning lumbar support.

Allowing for the smooth and damp track, I found both cars well balanced and easy to drive, with only moderate understeer. With its added power and new suspension, the Supra was far more enjoyable—and impressive. Just how impressive? Well, comparing it with some of the cars I have tested recently, I'd say that in one giant leap Toyota has passed the Datsun 280-ZX and is knocking on the 280-ZX Turbo's door.—*Ed Jacobs*



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