

PERFORMANCE

Imports

TOP 10 TOYOTA ENGINES REVEALED



**In the Pits +
On the Track
ACTION!**

88041111 032 11

World's Most Challenging

06



82330 01319 5

No. 142
A\$9.95 (inc. GST)
NZ\$10.95 (inc. GST)
US\$9.95 / CAN\$9.95



www.hpi.com.au

690HP NSX
540HP DRIFT SILVIA
670HP WIDE-BODY SKYLINE



ROCKY AUTO S/C
440HP EVO RAC
E85 FUEL TESTED

**THE 'Z IS UP FOR SALE
FOR THE MODEST SUM OF
¥13,545,000, OR
AUD \$174,250**



THE KING OF THE CREATIVE, ROCKY AUTO RAISES EYEBROWS WITH ITS SUPERCHARGED, STROKED 240Z

Words and pics: Dino Dalle Carbonare

Rocky Auto is a name that has cemented itself in the world of Japanese classics. It's a place where things are done differently, where no limits and restrictions are placed, where ideas can flow to help churn out original and unique vintage rides every year.

As Watanabe-san, the man behind it all says, "What's the point of building something that has already been done before?" He certainly has a point, which is why we are once again standing in front of a great one-off creation, a car that was built to wow crowds at this year's Tokyo Auto Salon. Now the 'Z is up for sale for the modest sum of ¥13,545,000, or AUD \$174,250.

For a price like that you get nothing but pure uniqueness, starting off with the actual car this project has been based on. Not content with just any regular Fairlady Z from Japan, Watanabe-san sourced a US-spec car, a left-hand-drive 1972 Datsun 240Z.

After close to 40 years on the road the S30 chassis underwent a full restoration job, stripped down to the bare metal and ridged of all rust spots. Fresh paint followed inside and out, along with refurbished chrome window frames and rubber seals.

The body was treated to a few bespoke carbon-fibre items like the whole front lower lip spoiler, bumper and, of course, the lightweight aero bonnet. More carbon is used at the rear around the taillights and the bumper



VITALS

ENGINE: 3L L28 six-cylinder

POWER: 320hp

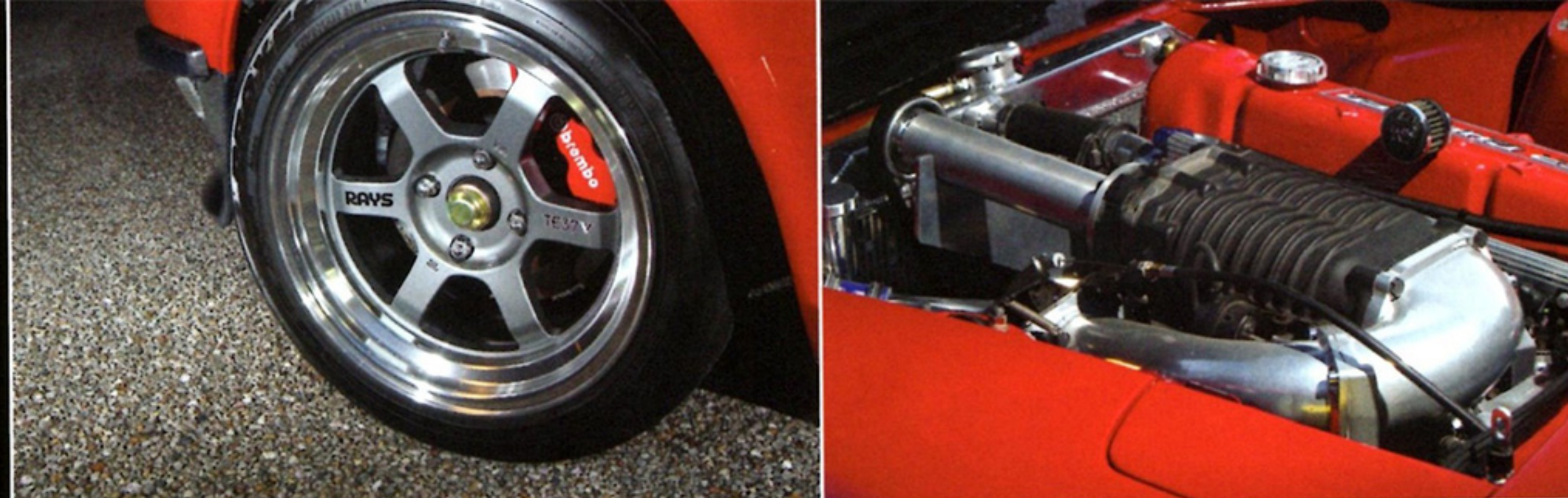
POWER FROM FACTORY: 151hp (L24)

POWER TO WEIGHT: 0.22kW/kg

ENGINE HARDWARE: L28 base engine, Kameari 89mm forged pistons and connecting rods, LD crank (3L), Rocky Auto 282° camshaft, headers and stainless steel exhaust system, custom-mounted Eaton supercharger, custom intake pipe, Rocky Auto cone filter, custom throttle, FJ20 fuel pump, Rocky Auto fuel rail, adjustable FPR, Skyline GT-R injectors, custom head cover, racing radiator, electric extractor fan, K&N head breather filter, Optima battery, MoTeC ECU

DRIVETRAIN: Upgraded clutch, 71C five-speed transmission, R200 LSD

BRAKES/SUSPENSION: Brembo four-pot front calipers with two-piece discs, Wilwood four-pot rear calipers with cross-drilled rotors, Rocky Auto suspension kit



itself, while the custom twin-exit exhaust has been made to pop out of the bodywork in modern supercar style.

A lot of effort went into tightening up the handling, starting off by replacing the tired old bushes with new and stiffer items. A Rocky Auto suspension kit takes care of the rest with specially valved dampers and lower, firmer springs.

One of the biggest let downs on classic cars is always the brakes, but this S30 will reward any prod of the middle pedal with almost racecar-like bite and performance. That's thanks to four-pot Brembo calipers and slotted discs up front, and compact four-pot Wilwood biters at the rear mated to cross-drilled rotors. This top-of-the-line braking system lives inside 15in Volk Racing TE37Vs, 7.5in wide up front and slightly bigger 8in for the rear. Toyo Proxes serve up excellent levels of grip to help this S30 put all of its power to the ground.

When it came to the engine, Watanabe decided to take a different approach to his usual RB or SR swaps. So, replacing the stock L24 straight six is a slightly

bigger L28, stroked to 3L thanks to Kameari forged pistons, conrods and a Nissan LD crank. The single-cam head was then ported and polished and fitted with a Rocky Auto 282° bump-stick.

A stroked L28 would be an optimal match for a relatively light S30 like this, but Watanabe wanted to go a little further, which is where the supercharger idea came into it. An Eaton blower would not only add additional power but give this 240Z the kind of character Rocky Auto cars are so well known for.

All brackets and pulleys were built in house, and thanks to the vast engine bay, the whole set-up fits in snugly. Feeding the blower is a K&N cone filter sitting right behind the grille thanks to a long custom intake pipe.

With boost comes thirst for more fuel, and keeping things topped up is an FJ20 fuel pump feeding RB26 injectors mounted on a Rocky Auto fuel rail. Everything is controlled by a custom wired MoTeC ECU, mapped for reliability since this whole project was built to create a

reliable and useable street car. Still, with conservative tuning the boosted L28 is able to crank out 320hp and thanks to the stroked capacity there is always plenty of torque at any RPM to shoot you out of corners or provide instant acceleration when overtaking.

Thanks to the large-core radiator, there won't ever be any cooling issues, even if the car is given a good workout on track.

79



Watanabe made sure that the driveline would cope with all the engine can throw at it, dropping in a '71-series five-speed transmission, one of the strongest Nissan gearboxes from the '70s and '80s. This is joined by an upgraded clutch disc and a much stronger R200 LSD borrowed from a 300ZX.

Open the heavily weighted driver side door and you are confronted with a clean, unmolested classic interior. All carpeting and trim has been left intact and in some places either restored or replaced. Along with the reupholstered leather seats it looks like the car has just rolled off the production line. The odd upgrade adds to the sense of uniqueness, like the billet shift knob, Momo steering wheel and the Auto Meter white-faced dials that replace the stock instrumentation.

With the car having had great response at all the major shows this year, it has further demonstrated the impressive work Rocky Auto can do. Watanabe tells us that with almost everything having been tried out before it is getting harder and harder to come up with original and unique projects, but he reckons next year he will really shock everyone with something he has already started working on. We are pretty sure it has something to do with the pair of VR38DETTs sitting in the Rocky Auto showroom...●

WATANABE MADE SURE THAT THE DRIVELINE WOULD COPE, DROPPING IN A '71-SERIES FIVE-SPEED, ONE OF THE STRONGEST NISSAN GEARBOXES FROM THE '70S AND '80S

WHEELS/TYRES: 16x7.5in front and 16x8in rear Rays TE37V wheels. 205/50 front and 225/45 rear Toyo Proxes T1R tyres

BODYWORK: Rocky Auto: front carbon bumper, front chin spoiler, carbon bonnet (supercharger type), carbon side LED mirrors, carbon rear bumper, carbon-fibre finisher panel, exhaust outlets, rear hatch spoiler, HID headlight conversion

INTERIOR: Momo steering wheel, Rocky Auto billet shift knob, all new dashboard, Auto Meter speedo and RPM gauge, Rocky Auto white-faced gauge conversion, Sony CD head-unit

80

