

Old School

ISSUE

Too Perfect?

JARED CULLOP'S DEFINITIVE 240Z BUILD IS SO CLEAN AND SO PERFECT THAT IT JUST MIGHT BE TOO GOOD TO DRIVE.

Story **Dave Pratte** Photos **Kyle McManus**



Perfection can be a dangerous thing to strive for, given its ever-elusive nature. But for car enthusiasts passionate (and crazy) enough to pursue perfection, the end results can be pretty astounding. The credit card bills are usually just as mind-blowing, though, because the type of craftsmanship required to build a flawless machine is only attainable from people who've dedicated their lives to their craft, and that type of work doesn't come cheap.

Jared Cullop, a Tennessee native now living the dream in Northern California as a strategic marketing guru, has built what many in the Z community consider the finest 240Z on the planet, and it only took him 14 tries to get there. That's right, Jared has owned 13 classic Zs prior to building this Lime Green beauty, having restored and sold or parted out all of them as part of his lifelong love affair with Z cars (not to mention as a way of putting himself through college).

Jared's introduction to classic Zs started earlier than most: he rode home from the delivery ward in his parent's 260Z. Sixteen years later, his parents further cemented Jared's destiny with these timeless Japanese sports cars by buying him a 280Z 2+2 as a birthday present. Fast-forward to 2006 when Jared decided to go in search of the cleanest 240Z he could find as the basis for what would be his ultimate Z-car project.

According to Jared, "This one's a no-expense-spared, best interpretation of what a classic Z can be. I wanted to honor the 240Z for all that it is, while bringing its performance up to date. I didn't want to cram an engine in the car that doesn't have the same priorities and personality as the original. I didn't want to put flares on the fenders or do anything else that wasn't true to the car. I didn't even want to modify the interior at all. But I did want to make it perfect. Totally, undeniably perfect."

Specs & Details **'72 DATSUN 240Z**

Engine '02 Nissan 2-liter SR20DET turbocharged inline-4
Engine Modifications Mahle 86mm 8.5:1 pistons; Eagle H-beam rods; ARP rod bolts, main studs & cylinder head studs; ACL "race" rod & main bearings; Cometic head gasket; Brian Crower 264/264 camshafts, valvesprings & Ti retainers; Tomei rocker arm stoppers; GReddy short runner intake manifold & fuel rail; Max Bore throttle body; McKinney Motorsports engine mounts, radiator, rad shroud & intercooler; National Speed Inc. custom turbo kit (Garrett GT3071R, Peak Boost manifold, TiAL 4mm wastegate & 50mm BOV), oil & coolant feed lines, 3" downpipe & exhaust, 4" intake, 2.5" hot side chargepipes, 3" cold side chargepipes, vacuum & boost reference lines, aluminum coil cover, turbo heat shield, crankcase & valve cover breather systems, coolant overflow reservoir, coolant hard pipes & windshield washer reservoir; Aeromotive A1000 fuel pump, FPR & fuel filters; Precision 780cc fuel injectors

Engine Management AEM EMS, UEGO, boost control solenoid, IAT sensor & 3.5 bar MAP sensor; custom National Speed Inc. low/high boost switch

Drivetrain Nissan Silvia S14 5-speed transmission; Competition Clutch Stage IV clutch & lightweight flywheel; Nismo R-200 LSD; 300ZX half shafts; Arizona Z Cars billet diff mount

Suspension Arizona Z Cars Track-Pak coilovers (375 in-lb springs), billet control arms, billet steering knuckles & camber plates; Momentum custom camber plate covers; ST sway bars

Special Thanks My dad for kindling my love for cars; with him, the passion isn't about being showy, but about understanding the car, troubleshooting issues & fixing it the right way – & always putting tools back exactly where you found them!



Interior Miller Brothers Hot Rod Barn complete restoration (including brand-new OE dash); Classic Datsun Motorsports restored steering wheel & horn button; National Speed center console "power switch"; Wilwood brake proportioning valve



Exterior Miller Brothers Hot Rod Barn complete restoration, modified bumpers (converted from 3-piece to 1-piece & moved 0.50" closer to the body)





Jared's search for the cleanest possible Z took almost two years, which was made even more difficult given his desire to find one in the rare Lime Green color like his uncle had once owned. Having finally found, bought and shipped the car from San Francisco to North Carolina (where Jared was living at the time), the project really got rolling once he dropped it off at the Miller Brothers Hot Rod Barn in North Wilkesboro, NC. This shop is world famous for building mega-dollar hot rods of the absolute highest quality, so when they stripped the Z down to bare metal you shouldn't be surprised to learn they laser-measured the chassis for straightness and ran magnets over every inch of it in search of even the smallest spot of rust.

As you'd expect from a shop like the Hot Rod Barn, the car was then sprayed with a flawless coat of the original Lime Green paint, brought to a mirror shine and then every single nut, bolt and trim piece was replaced with brand-new OE parts or refurbished by the Miller Brothers to higher than OE standards. "Every bolt that came out of the car was heated

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up until it was glowing and then cleaned and nickel-plated," Jared explains. "Everything on the car was done to this level of detail, thanks to Guy Reid [the man at MBHRB responsible for the relentless pursuit of perfection on this project]. Even stuff you can't see, like the mechanisms inside the doors, were stripped, dipped and plated."

With the Concours-quality restoration complete, Jared met with Jordan at National Speed Inc. in nearby Wilmington, NC, and requested three separate proposals for the drivetrain.



According to Jared, “The SR20DET swap was the cheapest of the options, but that didn’t influence my decision. I knew that it would be easy to overdo the power and weight of the drivetrain [and thus the decision to pass on the RB26 proposal], and I felt that the SR would give me the power I wanted while keeping the car much lighter.”

Jared also wanted an engine that could really spin – like a S2000 engine but with more grunt – so the team at National Speed kept the stock stroke from the donor ‘02 S15 SR20DET. They did, however, replace all the internals with much stronger aftermarket goodies like Mahle pistons, Eagle rods and a full Brian Crower head package. McKinney Motorsports mounts were used to hang the SR in the Z’s engine bay, and the craftsmen at National Speed finished off all the details with custom work, including crankcase and valve cover breather systems, coolant reservoir and overflow tank, not to mention the intake, exhaust and turbo system built around a Garrett GT3071R. Once National Speed finished tuning the AEM EMS, Jared had a low-boost tune good for 320 ponies at the rear wheels and a high-boost tune (available with the flip of a switch) good for an extra 117 whp.

Helping put all this SR power to the ground is a very rare piece of Datsun motorsports history: a ‘71 BRE R-200 LSD-equipped rear differential used by Peter Brock on his famous white, blue and red Datsun 240Z race car. Not an easy mod to spot even for the most diehard of Z-car fans, but the 5-lug conversion is a dead giveaway that the running gear on Jared’s car is out of the ordinary. This is part of a complete Track-Pak built by Arizona Z Car for ‘70-’78 Zs, a kit that includes a coilover suspension, Wilwood calipers and two-piece rotors on the aforementioned 5-lug hubs, as well as a full complement of fully adjustable billet aluminum control arms. This kit even includes a new e-brake, plus Jared added

Wheels, Tires & Brakes

CCW 17x9” Classic 3-piece wheels; Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 205/50ZR17 tires; Wilwood 6-piston (f) & 2-piston (r) brakes

in AZC’s billet aluminum steering knuckles and diff mount. Having previously built a supercharged Porsche 911 (that won an *Excellence* magazine shootout), Jared had this to say about AZC’s products: “This stuff fits better than the high-end German stuff for Porsches. Fitment was absolutely perfect. You just bolt it up and it works.”

Finding the perfect set of wheels for a project like this is no simple task, either, but Jared was extremely impressed by the customer service he got from John at CCW Wheels when ordering his custom set of 17-inch Classic three-piece rollers. “John had Guy Reid at the Hot Rod Barn taking measurements and dropping plum bob lines to make sure fitment would be perfect,” Jared says. “I was actually in Thailand at the time and ended up on a four-way phone call with Guy, John and Dave from AZC making sure we got the fit just right. It’s not often you find that kind of customer service.”

Having only just broken in the engine with about 1,000 miles of street use, Jared recently parted ways with his beyond-perfect Z. When we asked Jared if he regrets selling it, he responded, “I built it to keep it, not sell it, so yes, I regret selling it every day. As much as I loved sitting there and staring at it, I knew it was time to let it go when I was too paranoid to drive it even though I had it insured for full value [\$120K]. I wanted a car I could abuse at the racetrack, and this one was just too nice to treat that way.”

It’s a touch ironic that Jared’s quest to build the perfect Z resulted in a car that’s simply too perfect to abuse in the manner he’d intended, but you’ve still got to admire the quality of the machine and the vision it took to build it. ■

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