



INTERIOR: Autopower Street-Sport half-cage, Bride Brix II front seats, MoMo Corse steering wheel, GReddy counterweighted gearknob, AEM wideband gauge, GReddy boost gauge, an Type S boost controller, custom seat brackets, Takata five-point harness, C's short shifter, Broadview rear-view mirror, Nismo carbon-fibre horn button, Mazda MX-5 A-pillar dual-gauge pod, swapped black interior

WHEELS/TYRES: 17x7.5in +30 front and 17x8in +37 rear SSR GP-Omega wheels, aluminium forged tuner lugs, 215/45 front and 225/45 rear BF Goodrich tyres

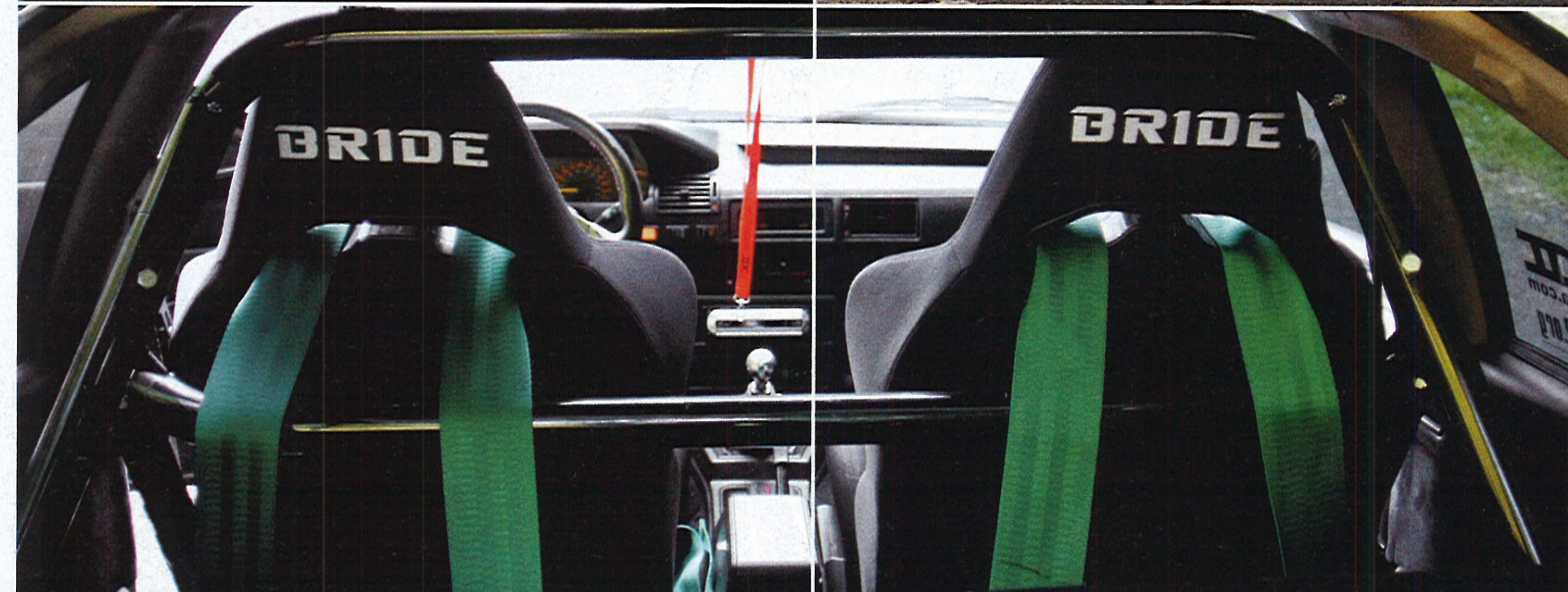
To find the last S12 we featured I'd have to go down to a place we call at PI HQ 'the dungeon' and delve deep, very deep, into the archives. You see, S12s don't pop up often, but when we find examples such as this, packing the heart of Gojira no less, we have no choice but to bring them to the people.

The owner is 28-year-old Colin Masterson, a student from Tacoma USA. This was actually his first car, but since then he's sold or parted 11 — yep, 11 — S12s with everything from 1.8Ts, 2.0s to VG30Es, CA18s, KA24Es and more. There's also been a KA S13 in there, as well as the oddballs — a 1984 Porsche 944 and current RX-7 FC daily. Like the best things in life, and indeed Colin himself, they're all beamed direct from the '80s bar the FC. Killer wedges FTW...

Tells Colin of the initial S12 purchase, "I was not actively looking for this chassis. I knew the style of car I wanted and so was biased towards this car. The long bonnet and sloping boot was prominent in my head since childhood. It goes back to my older brother. He was in high school in the '80s and wanted a Z31. Coupled with Knight Rider being on TV at the time, how could I have forgotten?"

A TRULY INTERNATIONAL EFFORT THAT'S A MASTER MIX OF PARTS, COLIN'S RB26 S12 IS HEADING OUT ONTO THE WORLD STAGE

Words: Jason Round Pics: Shawn McManus



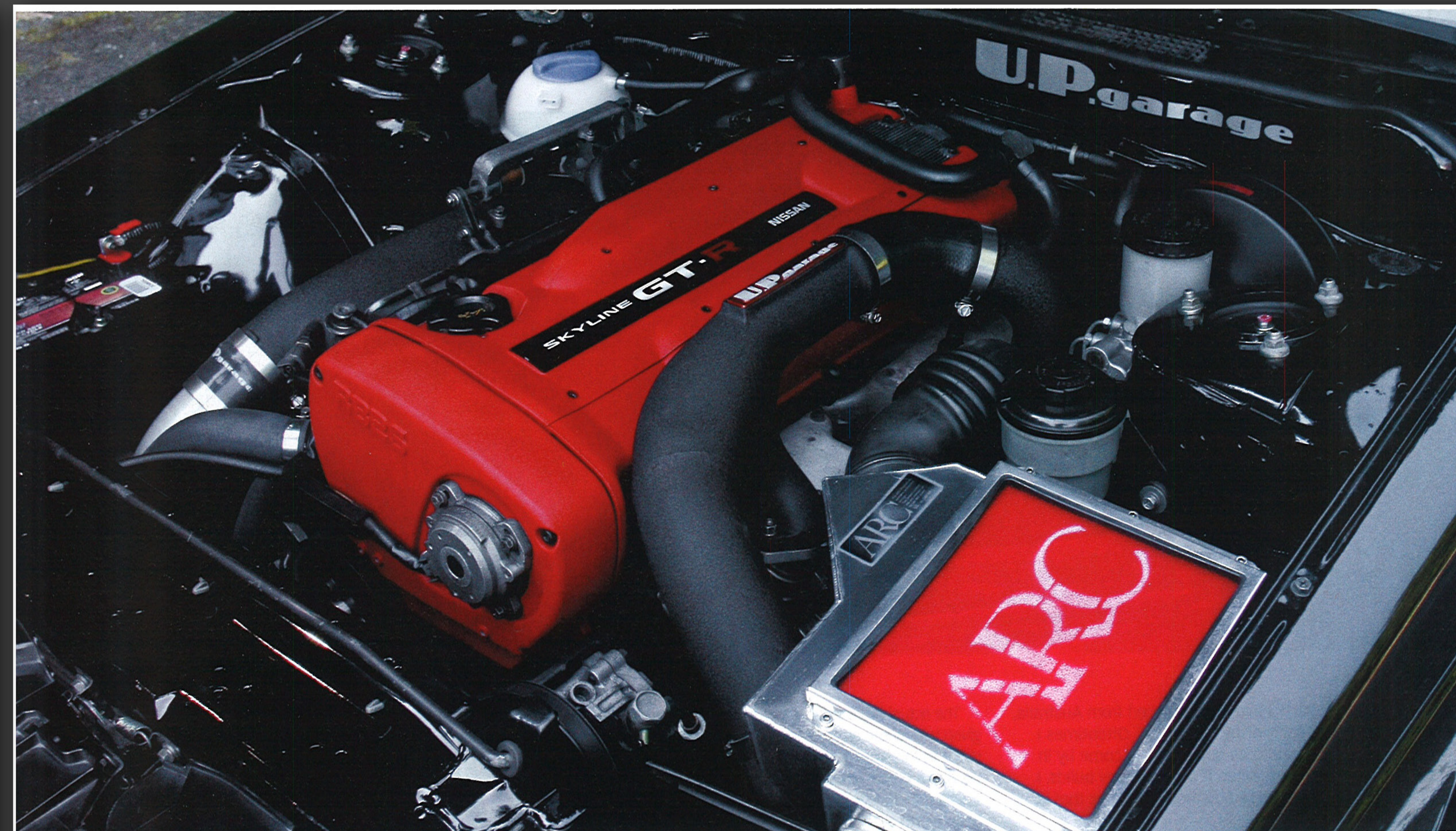
ENGINE: 2.6L RB26DETT six-cylinder twin-turbo

POWER: 355rwhp

POWER FROM FACTORY: 280hp (RB26)

POWER TO WEIGHT: 0.24kW/kg

ENGINE HARDWARE: Custom PRC aluminium dual-core dual-flow radiator, custom UP Garage USA aluminium fan shroud and electric fan set-up, custom self-pressurised self-contained coolant system, ARC induction box with custom intake, 28x6x3.5in front-mount UP Garage USA intercooler, 3in intercooler piping, 3in aluminium charge piping with six-layer silicone couplers, Walbro in-tank 255L/h fuel pump, Z32 fuel filter with S15 fuel filter bracket, Vi-PEC EMS, SplitFire coils, race high-flow cat, mandrel-bent exhaust system (aluminium turbo-cat, stainless cat-back) with HKS Carbon-Ti muffler, R34 GT-R engine garnish plate, crinkle-coated components, Gates Racing timing belt, S13 throttle cable, custom engine mounts, UP Garage USA RB26 oil sump/pan adaptor plate for RWD conversion



“AUSTRALIANS ARE FAR AHEAD OF THE MAINSTREAM KNOWLEDGE THAT IS IN THE STATES” — COLIN

“Fast forward 15 years or so to ‘04 and one of my closest friends, Micah, had a ‘90 RX-7 FC. I fell in love with it and attempted to buy one. However, the cost of the car and maintenance was more than I could afford. I was beginning to think I had to settle for some unexciting car when another friend of mine, Sean, found this particular S12 in the newspaper.

“At the time, it was haggard in comparison to what it is now. It was beige, housed a VG30E, both suspension and brakes were going, and some unforeseen superficial body damage existed. I did not know anything about cars, so for the most part it all escaped my attention.”

There were three original goals: 300rwhp, a feature in a mag and to win a trophy at a car show. As Colin notes, in the States the S12 chassis, until late, has largely been ignored. Most think the Silvia lineage stems from the S13, God bless ‘em.

Continues Colin, “The S12 is outstandingly ‘80’s in both feel and appearance. The pop-up headlights, long bonnet and fastback/hatchback I love.”

So, drum-roll, why an RB and not an SR? Colin explains, “My S12 was the SE model, which in the US housed the VG30E. I thought about rebuilding and adding a turbo to my VG, but the cost was not favourable. I had seen a picture online of one guy who had done a VGDETT swap in his S12. It was by every means a very tight fit.

“At the time, the VQ was a bit more expensive than it is now and was out of my budget. It came down to the RB. It was still a six-cylinder, but an inline. That meant the maintenance would be easier in terms of accessing the sides of the engine.

“I could not afford one of the higher-model RBs, but knew that if I set myself up for one I could either upgrade the RB20 or just move onto either a ‘25 or ‘26. In the end, that seemed much more viable as my desires for a larger more powerful engine grew. Therefore, I went with an RB20 and loved it for what it was. It was a great motor with so much potential, but finally gave way to the current ‘26.”

Given the S12 chassis is 27 now (23 at the youngest), parts are hard to find. They’re plentiful in the States, true, but sometimes it was easier, and cheaper, to simply import. Slowly, Euro flavour started to creep in, too, even though Colin admits he had a very firm idea of what he wanted from the outset. He’s happy to plug ‘us Aussies’ (say it like Oprah) as well...

“Australians are far ahead of the mainstream knowledge that is in the States, especially at the time I was pursuing my RB20DET build. I found myself constantly visiting Australian forums such as SkylinesAustralia.com, SkylinesDownUnder.com, NissanSilvia.com and S12Silvia.com (which was then Aus12org).



"Most of my parts have been sourced from Australia, either by private party or by a business. Oftentimes I found things that would be quite hard to come by in the States, nor as fast. When it comes to my builds, I have been quite impressed by the knowledge that is housed in Australia."

Colin's first S12 swap in '05 was a stock VG30E. He admits he knew squat about cars at the time, but worked through it with fellow S12 owner Randy, gradually expanding his knowledge bank. As time went on, Colin was practically a permanent fixture in his shop. Now he's a walking S12 encyclopaedia set.

Given the 'freak factor', attention is usually pretty good for an S12 like this in the States, but in the past year curious onlookers have become true fanboys. Colin's on the forefront of exposing what a good base S12s can be, and his five trophies attest to it. They're from all over the US as well, not only from his resident state but of a local event in California and even a national venue. In fact, the S12 won Best '80s Datsun Category in the Japanese Classic Car Show, which had participants from all over the US and Canada.

Says Colin, "After years of work, research and much trials to get the car to where I want, my S12 has reached a point where not only does it fit all my goals and style, but also has been accepted by many despite being in many ways unorthodox to the current trends in the States."

The actual RB26 swap, though, was challenging, especially given he wanted an OEM feel to the bay with no cuts or mods to the firewall. His S12 was also a USDM/LHD S12 that housed a VG30E (cross-member designed for a V6, not the traditional four-cylinder). Almost everything is custom, but it's been worth all the Tylenol and sleepless nights.

"To be able to say I have a car that is truly unique is rare these days," says Colin. "It took a lot of research and working with those who have more technical knowledge than me to obtain the car I have wanted for so long."

Yes, for a build like this there is always a core support team, so thanks go to Doug Smith, Erik Rittscher and Randy Sisler, UP Garage USA (01 253 565 9823), in Oz Matt Castle and the Adelaide crew, Gerry B, Brian Campbell, Vlad Pavlov and countless others who have helped Colin in the past five years. In Denmark, thanks to Omer Can Kucukyrdiz. Also thanks to Peter Mather, Andy Neil, Michael Wheeler in the UK, Vitaliy Polyakov in the Ukraine, Mandelier Sébastien in France, plus Micah/Leilani Adams, Kenneth Johnson, Travis Bollenbecker and Sean Sirriani in the US. For inspiration, cheers to Keith Locklear (US), Ben D (Aus) and Markus Martelius (Finland).

Improving the suspension and replacing the twins is next before the S12 is off to the track. Then, who knows, maybe international stardom will follow. After all, as those damn-awful Disney animatronics keep singing, it's a small world after all. ☉

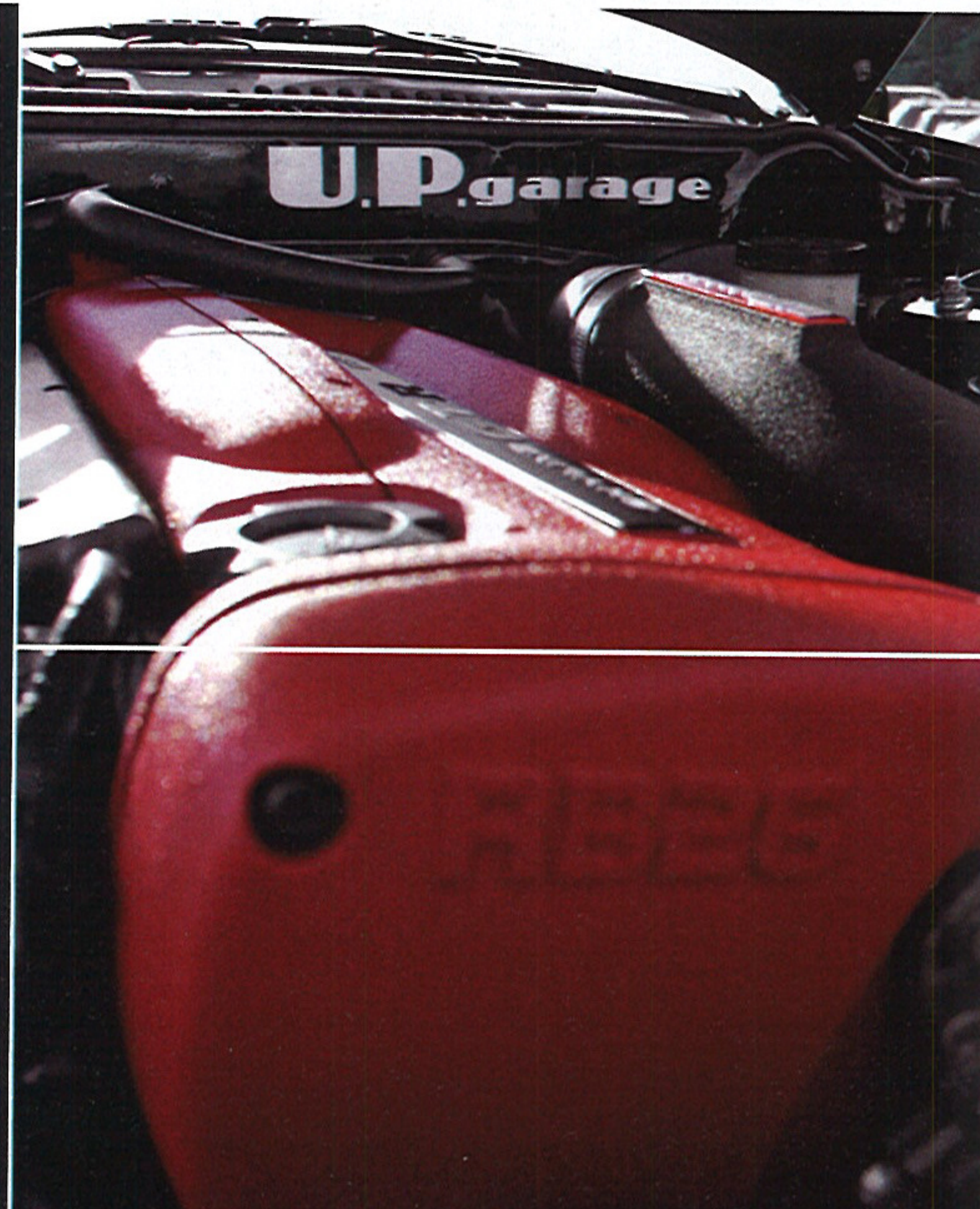
COLIN'S SOLD OR PARTED 11 S12S WITH EVERYTHING FROM 1.8TS, 2.0S TO VG30ES, CA18S, KA24ES AND MORE



DRIVETRAIN: R32 manual gearbox, custom one-piece driveshaft, Z31 MkII Nissan axles, OEM R200 S12 diff (3.7:1)

BRAKES/SUSPENSION: '87 Z31 rear calipers, custom cross-drilled and vented rotors, S13 brake booster, Posi-Quiet brake pads, stainless steel braided brake lines, front Tokico S130 (280SX) and rear Koni Z31 struts, Canuck Motorsports lowering springs, Addco Z31 rear swaybar, Nissan S14 tension-rod brackets, S13 Kazama adjustable tension rods

BODYWORK: OEM S12 SE lip, rear spoiler, mudflap pods, side skirts and bonnet, RS-X grille, E46 BMW M3 fender indicators, Infiniti M30 clear front turn signals, JDM parker lights, UK-spec rear lights, metal garnish, numberplate frame, Euro-spec headlamp guards



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