

## 1JZ S15

Built with the sole intention of providing him with the most sideways thrills possible at local drift days, Nico's single-turbo, 1JZ-swapped S15 shows how having a little focus can get you a long way...

Words: Sam Preston Photos: Jonathan Fleetwood

**J**ack of all trades, master of none' – a phrase used to illustrate the curious effects versatility and compromise often have against one another. Put it this way: it might keep you warm and help you look cool throughout an entire day's work, but you probably wouldn't don your favourite hoodie when attempting to scale Mt Everest, right?

Sometimes, there's no getting around the fact that it takes some seriously specialist

equipment to perform a particular task, and the car world is no exception to this rule. The humble motor vehicle is naturally designed to perform a wide range of jobs, which is why it's so refreshing to see the rather uncompromised approach Bournemouth-based Nico here clearly held when building up his latest project car: this rather impressive Nissan Silvia. Developed with the main aim of performing well as a drift car, and with everything else put lower down his list of requirements, his single-track outlook has

left him with a precision tool which performs the job it's designed to better than perhaps anything else could.

This isn't young business owner and student Nico's first foray into modified car ownership, with his first big venture down this path weighing in in the form of a GC8 Impreza STI a couple of years back. "It was developed from stock to a very good spec," he modestly explains, telling us how the car was transformed by himself and some friends over the course of two years so it successfully

sat low while still going like stink.

As hilariously capable as this 4WD brute most definitely was, something began niggling away in the back of Nico's head that he just couldn't ignore. "I owned an E30 BMW 3-Series at the time as a daily, but couldn't stop myself from modifying that too, which really got me into RWD cars," he reveals. Naturally he was soon found himself diving head-first into the magical world of drifting.

Keen to stop himself from going too far with his ageing Beemer, before it was too



# SINGLE MINDED

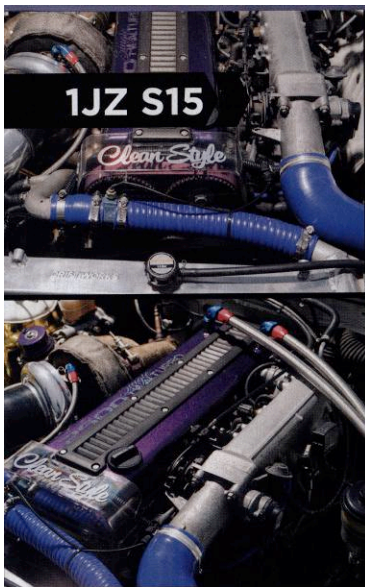


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late, Nico sensibly decided to part ways with his beloved Scooby to free up some cash for something a little more drift-focused in his life. And for someone who clearly likes a well-thought out plan, you probably won't be too surprised to hear there were some big ideas afoot once he'd snapped up this S15 Spec R a few days later...

"I love S-chassis cars but wasn't keen on building an SR20-based project as I had some big power goals in mind further down the line," he lays it out, citing one of the main reasons he'd bought this car in the first place was because the previous owner had recently scrapped the car's standard four-cylinder engine and replaced it with something a little heftier. Yes, this white JDM coupé could be found a few weeks previously at Watford-based drifting specialist Garage-D, where the task of adding a much more tuneable 1JZ motor from the Toyota Supra was carried

out using the firm's very own line of custom engine and transmission mounts.

With the gruelling task of swapping over the engine out of the way and the new lump sitting pretty, as if it was always designed to be there from day one, Nico was confident the rest of the work he had planned could be performed by himself on his driveway. First on his list was something that is a vital component on any self-respecting drift car: a decent suspension setup, which came in the form of some HSD Monopro coilovers that feature specially selected spring rates to compensate the extra weight now present over the front axle, as well as plenty of other bits and pieces from firms such as Team Hangin' Loose and Redneck Garage. "The car was a bit lazy and spongy when I bought it, but after polybushing and solid mounting most things and with the Team Hangin' Loose drop knuckles added, the turn-in

and stability of the car is incredible... it's so aggressive and direct."

"The single turbo conversion took a lot longer than I expected due to me deciding to perform it all on my gravel driveway, but the fact it started first time made it all worth it!" Nico grins, ditching the car's duo of smaller standard turbos and replacing them with a much larger Holset HX35 unit that promised to offer up much more power when mixed with some other breathing mods under the bonnet. Another unexpected hurdle came in the shape of relocating the car's bulky fuse box away from the engine bay to offer up more room to play with – a time-consuming task which saw the entire loom being painstakingly stripped down and put back together in its new location.

With the 1JZ's five-speed gearbox strengthened with a Stage 3 clutch and mated to an S15 Nismo two-way LSD thanks

to a custom propshaft, a very formidable and promising drivetrain was slowly forming under the car's smooth white body. Nico next added his focused, careful touches to the way the thing looked, enhancing on the charm of those genuine DMAX wide aches that had already been applied by whipping out the Dremel and making sure the whole thing would be able to accommodate his crazy offset and camber preferences on his choice of 9.5-inch-wide alloys. Keeping the body styling rare and JDM, some Vertex bumpers add to the aggression while never crossing the line. "To me, drift cars need to look as good as they go; it's all about the style..."

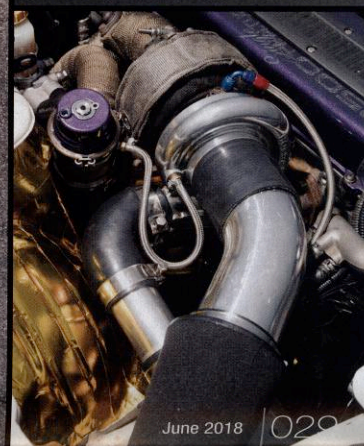
Keeping things suitably classy inside, some of the very best Recaro paws were ordered up, complementing the minimal look Nico's opted for throughout the cabin with touches like integrating the extra gauges into the car's standard dash board apertures to keep things



Unless you start to look into expensive forged internals, the SR20DET engine can often be all but out of puff by the time you approach the 400bhp mark. It's why Nico has future-proofed his drivetrain by going straight for a 1JZ engine swap.

This infamous boosted straight six Toyota lump is well known for being able to take a whole lot more, even with stock internals, with Nico's car currently pushing out an impressive 450bhp at an extremely reserved level of boost.

As well as that Holset turbocharger, the engine also benefits from a custom top-mounted manifold to house it on, a GReddy front-mounted intercooler and uprated fuel pumps. Nico's attention to detail has shone through with the likes of Aeroquip fittings and braided lines being used throughout, with the rocker cover also finished up in that powder-coated purple hue meaning the entire bay is a sight to behold.





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as uncluttered as possible. Even little things like getting the new engine to read the correct displays through the standard S15 gauges is something many would overlook, it's things like this that set this stunner apart from your more run-of-the-mill drift cars out there.

Of course, throughout the development process, Nico's been treating himself to optimum seat time at some of the fantastic drift days various UK circuits host throughout the year, with each session giving him vital

feedback about what needs addressing next and ultimately leaving such a rewarding machine at his disposal. "The most recent session was the Spring Drift Matsuri... the car performed outstandingly and I drove it home hassle-free after a full weekend of constant drifting," he beams. "I'd eventually like to take part in the Drift Cup in it." And if things carry on improving at the rate they are, we certainly won't be surprised to see Nico tearing up the competitive drift circuit in the near future. 🏆



### TECHSPEC

**ENGINE:** 1JZ-GTE (non-W/T) six-cylinder 24v DOHC engine conversion, custom Garage-D engine mounts, Holset HX35 turbocharger with polished compressor housing and 55mm V-band wastegate, custom top-mount manifold, 4" aluminium turbo inlet, GReddy front-mount intercooler, custom 3" stainless steel turbo-back exhaust system, Driftworks SuperCool radiator with twin fans, GReddy thermostat, SuperSparks coil pack, NGK iridium spark plugs, HKS timing belt, uprated fuel pump, loom and fuse box removed from bay, full silicone and aluminium piping throughout, Aeroquip AN aluminium fittings and steel braided hoses throughout, all fuel lines replaced with braided hoses and relocated, modified rocker cover to accommodate oil breather fittings, rocker cover and wastegate powder-coated in Starburst Purple heat wrap, R154 five-speed manual gearbox, Exedy Hyper Stage 3 clutch, custom Garage-D gearbox mounts, remote shifter, Nismo two-way LSD, custom CNC propshaft

**CHASSIS:** 9.5x18-inch alloy wheels, 225/40/18 Federal 595 RS-R semi-slick tyres (front) and 235/40/18 budget tyres (rear), HSD Monopro coilovers with custom spring weights, Team Hangin' Loose (THL) DMAX and Japspeed arms, THL drop knuckles, fully polybushed, factory S15 disc brakes with relocated braided lines

**EXTERIOR:** Vertex Japan Lang body kit (with canards), DMAX D1-spec +30mm wide arches (front), DMAX +50mm blended wide arches (rear), DMAX vented bonnet, DMAX rear LED lights, LED bulbs in headlights, rear wiper delete with tinted glass bungs, wing-less boot lid, Aerocatch bonnet locks, quick-release bumpers

**INTERIOR:** Recaro Polo Position fixed-back bucket seats, stripped rear, all S15 equipment adjusted to correctly deliver 1JZ engine readings, Takata DRIFT III harnesses, Nardi perforated leather steering wheel, Dafi gauges (oil temperature, oil pressure, boost and water temperature) with controller unit, AEM Wideband AFR X-Series

**THANKS:** "Matt from Team Hangin' Loose, Freddy from Redneck Garage, Garage-D and 'everyone who helped with the single turbo swap.'"



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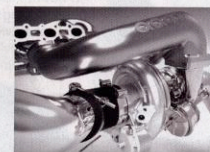
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