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PROJECT CAR



JDM Rolla

Toyota Corolla 100

Log onto any classifieds site and look for a particular car: the AE100 Corolla. One of the most successful models ever sold by Toyota, it offers exceptional resale value, associated with a parts availability which is still unmatched to this day, more than 20 years on.

A Corolla 100 in good condition with an average level of spec will cost you from 5.5 to 7 lakh taka, which is good news for both the buyer and the seller. It might even be turned into a popular saying, that “You never make a loss on a Corolla 100”. Maintain your early 90’s Corolla with proper, loving care and you can run it for decades without any major trouble, and maintenance is surprisingly affordable for such an old car.

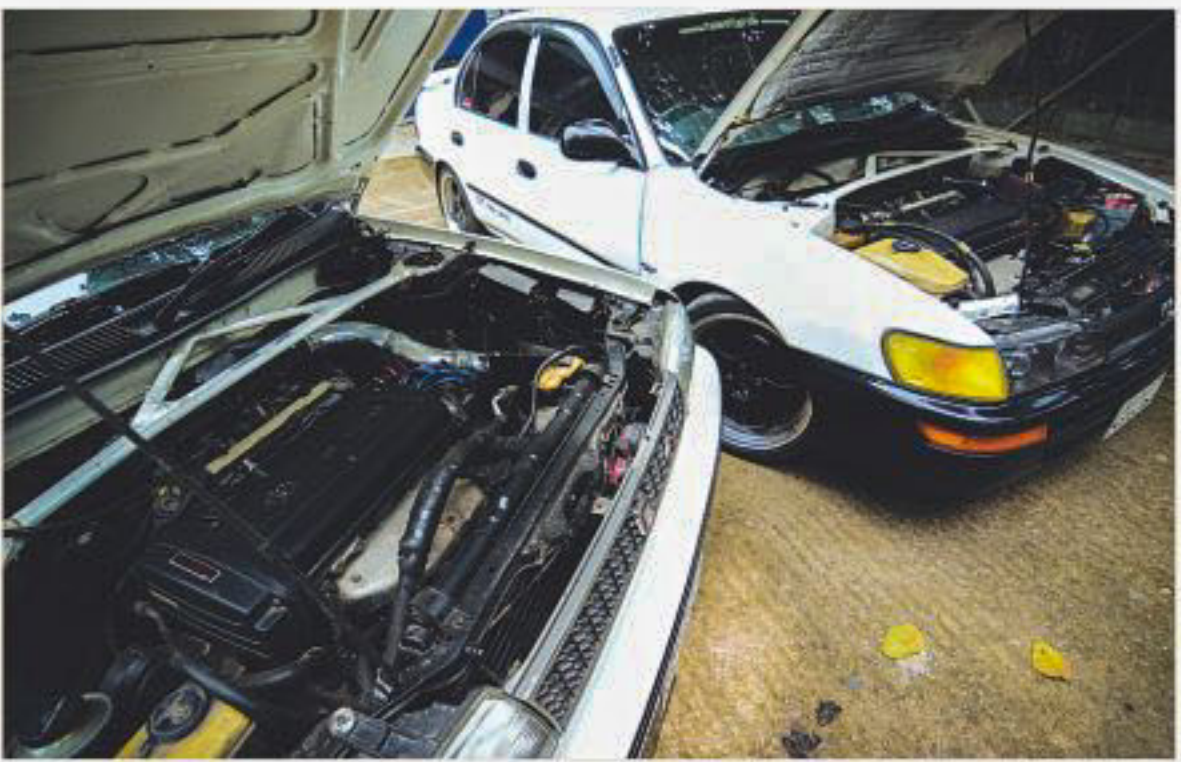
Our feature car today is a base model Corolla DX. Imran Masud Ov, the owner, is a doctor by profession, and uses the 100 as a daily driver. Now, what’s so surprising about a Corolla 100 being daily driven?

Imran’s Corolla is a bit special. It started life as the cheapest, most basic Corolla in the range, without power options like windows and mirrors. To open a window you reach for the wind-down knobs on each door, while the doorcards themselves are basic and spartan, a theme reflected around the interior. It didn’t have an RPM meter, and was powered by a small 1.3 liter 4EFE engine. It was a fuel efficient, reliable little car, faithfully performing all the duties asked of it with a rabid enthusiasm and fervour usually attributed to a tireless pet. Imran, following in the footsteps of Shahid Arman, his dear friend and doctor colleague (owner of the sublime, stanced EE90 Corolla featured in this issue), he set about making the 100 nicer to look at and drive.



Last year in mid-2013, the humble Corolla DX received a heart transplant. The 1.3 4EFE was thrown out in favour of the ultimate go-to engine for Bangladeshi performance upgrades: a blacktop 4AGE. Twin cam, 20 valves, quad throttles, and a high compression ratio extract around 160 horsepower from a relatively small 1.6 liter 4 cylinder block, giving a great compromise between power, engine response, and relative fuel efficiency. An Aerospeed crank pulley lightens up the pulley system, offering better engine response and higher load capability, while an aftermarket air intake frees up the engine’s breathing. Since the car was always going to be for daily driving, the transmission choice was obvious: an automatic.

Next up was the stance. Again, daily driving could not be sacrificed, so with that in mind, a set of ZerOne springs was used to lower the car just enough to get the wheels to sit almost flush with the fenders. The wheel choice goes perfectly with the overall appearance of the



car. The white body and black bumpers contrast brilliantly with the black wheels and polished lips, and the amber signal lights with blacked out headlight housings give it a distinctive OEM+ look, a style of car customization extremely popular in Europe and parts of Japan.

Whether you want to liven up the performance and appearance of a Corolla or just want a car that is extremely reliable, cheap to maintain and fuel efficient to boot, its hard to ignore the Corolla 100. In recent years prices have begun falling as the later model 110 and 111 Corollas flooded the used car market, but that’s good news. While everyone else is looking for a newer, more expensive car, why not go for an older car with so many plus points?

WORDS: SHAER REAZ

PHOTOS: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM



Blood brother

Toyota Corolla 90

Finding ways to improve on a recipe cooked almost 20 plus years ago is a bit difficult. When it comes to cars, and pseudo classics at that, its best to keep it simple, clean and classy. Shahid Arman may not own the most powerful or the most aggressive E90 Corolla in town, but when you consider the subtlety and finesse with which this project car was built, you have to rank it as one of the best.

Cleanliness is hard to pull off, although some might think its easy. Its all about finding all the right parts, and keeping a sharp eye out for parts that will enhance the flavor of the original car, as opposed to sticking on the first things you find on the hunt for parts. Its all exemplified in the way the E90 looks and feels.

The appearance was kept as stock as possible. A Sprinter X90 front bumper cleaned up the face of the car, giving it a square edged, handsome look that you

will not find in other 90 Corollas. It’s a simple, yet very effective modification, and it goes a long way in refreshing an old car. The paint, a glossy white, is of a very high standard, smoothly laid out over the surprisingly straight but aging body panels. Combine that with the eye opening stance and wheel setup, and you have a killer 90 which turns heads but leaves the non-car guys scratching their heads as to why they find this unassuming Corolla so alluring.

ZerOne springs lower the car aggressively over the wheels, which are genuine 15inch Enkei items shod in high profile Yokohama rubber. The wheel and tire setup, combined with the slightly staggered and lowered suspension give the Corolla a distinct Touring Car look. To match the road racer looks is an engine and gearbox conversion that is quite popular, because it has been tried and tested so many times. Under the

hood is a Blacktop 4AGE, with Aerospeed crank pulley, air intake, oil cooler, NGK plugs and wires all added for a little extra oomph. Getting the power to the ground is a 6 speed manual gearbox, with an Exedy organic clutch and pressure plate.

A doctor by profession, Shahid Arman’s love for old Corollas know no bounds. Its an affordable way to get your fix of performance and tuned cars without blowing all your money on Evolutions and Imprezas. It’s also a resounding testament to the fact that no matter how many new cars enter the market, there will always be a certain section of the car scene continuing these old workhorses and refreshing them with tasteful modifications and proper maintenance. Like the 100 Corolla featured in today’s issue, the 90 Corolla is a very good option if you think newer cars are not really worth the price you pay for them. What do you get if you choose this alternative? Boatloads of presence, character, and faithful reliability.



PHOTOS: NABIN KHAN

SHIFT ZONE

Everyone is upgrading to a newer model these days. Cars, too, although less frequently than phones or laptops, obviously. While we run reviews and test drives of brand new and reconditioned cars quite often to appease the car buying crowd, once in a while, we have to force our readers to look at blasts from the past. The two Corollas featured in today’s issue are undoubtedly cool, and as an added benefit, they’re both very good consumer options if you’re on a budget. Dhaka is filled with people who can’t afford anything beyond an old car, so we bring you two of the most reliable ones, and how to make them cool and hip at the same time. Solid consumer advice, this.

- Shaer Reaz, Sub-editor, Shift.

Corrigendum

Last week we ran a comparison between the new Toyota Yaris and Honda City. We mistakenly stated the gasoline-only Yaris sold by Navana has a CVT transmission, although it doesn’t. This was a mixup with another Yaris we test drove - the 1.3 hybrid. Only the hybrid has a CVT, not the regular gasoline model on sale in Bangladesh.



We posted a few spotting of SUVs this week on our fan page, with a wide range of subjects. A Y60 Nissan Patrol with a striking colour combo, a blacked out Audi Q7, the

all new Range Rover, and a hulking Lexus LX brought in a torrent of likes.

On the other end of the spectrum, our fans had a love/hate relationship with the Alfa Romeo MiTo, a small, sporty, funky hatchback which divided opinions on its looks. Some said it looked like a mouse, that it was



horrendous looking, while others said it was a beautiful piece of Italian (albeit faulty) engineering. Come join the fun on our official Facebook page!

facebook.com/thedailystar.shift

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