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PROJECT CARS



Little RED monster 1998 Toyota Levin XZ

I'll admit. I have a soft spot. I love red shiny cars. But then again, who doesn't? Sure it's no fire-breathing Ferrari, but it is one of the finest cars to roll off the Toyota factories. Us folk here at Shift love our Levins. We previously featured the Ae91 Levin GT, and today's issue is its very own nephew, the AE 111 platform Levin XZ.

Let's rewind and shed some light on the history of this car. Toyota started production of this line of cars back in 1972. Two door lightweight coupes sold well; everyone wanted them, and thanks to brilliant cost-effective Japanese engineering, people all over could afford them. A lot of them made a perilous journey overseas and made it to our land of red and green.

What you see here today is a Levin XZ, with a near-complete Levin BZR transformation. That is what makes it all that more interesting. Now the difference between those two models lies in the engineering, and the modeling. The XZ has a boring exterior, while the BZR came with a facelift and sleek front bumpers and sides. The engines too, are worlds apart. The XZ comes with your daily driver 4A-FE, while the BZR has a beefier 4A-GE Black Top, with a Limited Slip Differential and uprated suspension.

The car came in as a factory stock Levin XZ, the boring one. But Rafael Mahbub wasn't happy with that. He went to every length to transform his car into a BZR-XZ cross breed.

Let me walk you through the whole make-over.



Exterior

The owner ripped out the boring XZ front bumper and replaced them with a factory BZR front end and put in the grill and head light, all procured from a BZR half-cut. An OEM front lip was installed, with side skirts and an impressive rear kit, the car gleaming in its



Milano-Red paint. He installed Advan Racing light weight 17" rims with 205/40/R17 tyres, good for almost all kinds of weather. He even has the rare BZR tail lights to complete the look.

Interior

Open the doors and you have a proper race-car cockpit. Recaro bucket seats hold you in place when

you take corners at blistering speeds. It has after market gauges for battery voltage, vacuum pressure and water temperature. The gauge cluster from a BZR was installed, with a 9000RPM redline. A TRD Shift knob (6-speed) completes it. You have a 12" sub in the boot if you want to crank up the music real loud.

Performance

Motor and Drive Train: 4A-GE 20V Black Top with C160 (6 speed) LSD transmission with complete wiring, complemented with an ECU and other sensors



all of which were gratefully donated by a Levin BZR half cut. The drive axles and shafts are stock as these are the same in XZs and BZRs. The Levin has a K&N Cold air intake, Ultra Racing 3-point front strut bar for better handling coupled with Eibach Pro-Kit 1.5 inch drop lowering springs. The suspension items are genuine Toyota, again, ransacked from a BZR. The exhaust system comprises stock blacktop headers, a

SHIFT ZONE

Corollas. Families love them, dads love them even more because they make a smaller dent on the wallet over the years. When it comes to hot cars, most people wouldn't think "Corolla". To prove them wrong, we bring you a hot, enthusiast bred Corolla Levin, as well as a 1.8 Axio station wagon, which can go as fast as it can swallow up your family's grocery shopping; both of them in sporting red, one of which you can buy right after reading this.

Visit our site, www.thedailystar.net/shift for hi-res photos of our featured cars. We also have a lively Facebook page where we bring you daily spotting of cool cars. Want more of Shift? Come by our official page.

- Shaer Reaz, Sub-editor, Shift.

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2.25 inch free flow pipe, catalytic converter removed, and Revolution aftermarket 2.25 inch in/out end box.

The only thing left on Rafael Mahbub's bucket list is the rear disc-brake conversion, and after that he's done.

Anybody with the right amount of cash can tune a car, and make it go fast. But only a handful of enthusiasts will go to these lengths to build a timeless coupe. At times not even the cash helps. You have to wait months to find the right parts, and you might not be find most of them. This car wasn't born over night.

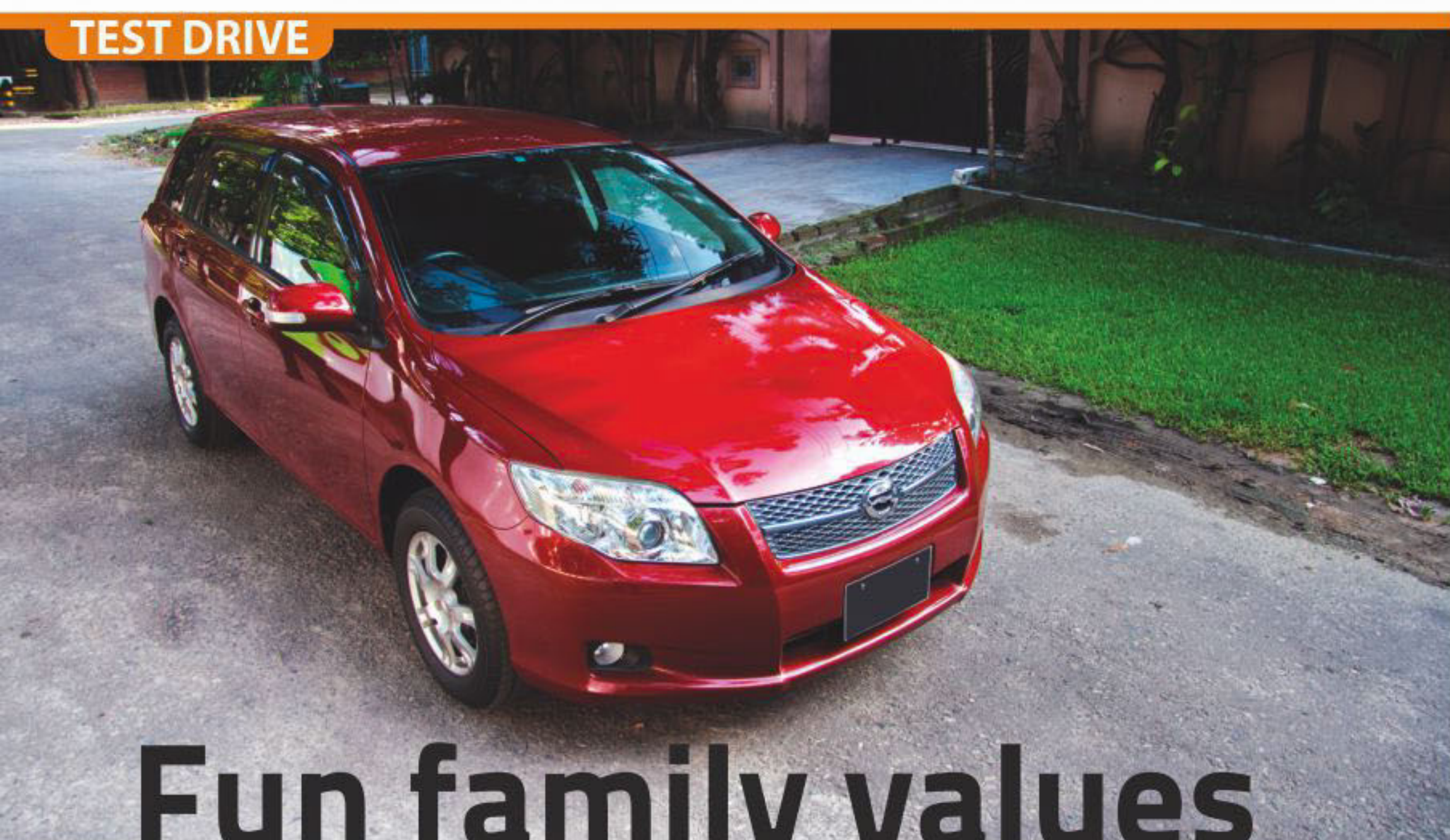


Months of mod-hours went into it. At the very end this proud owner has a one of a kind monster.

We'll be following Rafael Mahbub's build closely so follow our Facebook page.

WORDS: MOHAMMAD AKIB NEWAZ
PHOTOS: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM

TEST DRIVE



Fun family values 2011 Toyota Axio Fielder 1.8s

We at Shift love our wagons, even in the case of a mere Corolla. As you may already know from the staggering numbers of these on the road, this is the Corolla Fielder i.e. the Axio in wagon form. The two cars are similarly priced with a slight premium on the Fielder's tag, but for a very small price increase you get a boot that's three times larger, a more spacious cabin, a smoother ride and seemingly better overall build quality. On top of being a wagon, this particular Fielder is a bit more special. It's 2ZR-FAE engine is displaced at 1800 cc's (up from the usual 1500), now pumping out 148 horsepower instead of 107.

Dressed in a dense shade of fiery, orange-ish red, there are no visual changes on the exterior to tell it apart, except for a 1.8S badge on the trunk hatch. The exterior is stock and sober with potential to make it look good with a few smart modifications. High end options such as Bi Xenon HID, Projectors, LED tail and fog lights are all installed from factory, with the interior graced with glossy

black fake-wood, leather-stitched steering wheel and gear knob and DVD Sat-Nav system. An independent rear suspension paired with better sound insulation and thick tyre walls also makes for a ride quality much better than I expected and experienced in other variants of this car.



The first thing you notice behind the wheel is the deeper, rich exhaust note, very different from the 1500cc engine most of us are used to. I found myself pressing down on the throttle more often than not. Despite being just a Corolla, it does put a smile on your face going past the gazillion other lunchboxes in the city

knowing you have a bigger engine (ahem) than they do. It isn't all that much powerful, just a bit more oomph spread across the rev range with the fuel efficiency of smaller engines thanks to its Dual VVT-i Valve Matic technology. A second-generation Super CVT-i gearbox ensures maximum efficiency with 5 speed manumatic shifting for occasional fun, an option not present on the usual 1.5 liter variants. It can also cope up to the after effects of CNG conversion unlike regular Axios that tend to fail often.

If you are someone looking to get a new Corolla for yourself to daily-drive, haul passengers and luggage and also go hard on the throttle at the sight of an empty stretch of road, this is the car you really should be looking for. Head over to Car House Limited where it is on display at a massive bargain price tag of just 21 lacs. They say it is a one time deal so grab it while it lasts.

WORDS AND PHOTOS
AADNAN ZAMAN

TATA MOTORS

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