



SHIFT

AUTOMOTIVE PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

PROJECT CARS



BUNNY FROM HELL

ROCKET-BUNNY KITTED TOYOTA GT86

The Toyota GT86 is a car that doesn't really give a damn about the concept of having a billion horsepower engine. It's a car that's focused on the driver, on how it makes you feel, and if you thought it looks good stock, take a look at this one.

I suppose the stance of this car is the automotive equivalent of Christina Hendricks in her signature red dress in Mad Men. The wide-body just works for this car, and the owner didn't care to mould them to the body to hide the screw holes either, and it just looks better for it. The car rides on Greddy coil-overs, and although its very stiff, its a small compromise for a car that drives and looks as good as this. But don't make the mistake of thinking all the owner cares about are aesthetics. The engine is force-fed by means of a HKS Supercharger boosting the engine output from 200 to around 250 bhp; no, not the silly bottle of

air that decoration shops sell, this is the real deal.

Rolling stock consists of TEN inch wide, 18-inch diameter BBS deep dish alloys, and the increased track is accommodated well by the widebody fenders. A front splitter and a rear diffuser to finish off the look. It's clean, simple and comes together beautifully. Despite the puffed up bits and pieces, this car doesn't come off as "in-your-face" or as brash as you might think, upon first glance, you'd just stare and admire how pretty it is just the way you'd admire your high-school crush. Only difference being the car won't think you're a creep.

Despite being an automatic, this car likes to shift frequently. A slight nudge on the pedal and you're off, the response is just instant and you get loads of low-end torque. While taking a U-turn, the owner

stepped on it a little more than he should have and immediately those immensely wide tires struggled to find grip and transmit all those boosted horses to the ground.

The owner, Ishfaq Rubab, obviously has a thing for widebody kits, a quick look around his parking lot and we found his other car, a matte red APR kitted Mitsubishi Evolution 7 hiding at the back. I asked him why he got the GT86 in this guise and his reply was: "I wanted a GT86, so I started searching for what sort of body kits were available for it. It didn't take me long to settle on the Rocket Bunny kit, and hence I ordered it. I also wanted a fast car, and as a result I ended up ordering the HKS Supercharger kit as well."

WORDS: ZAER ZUBAB AHMED
PHOTOS: TASDID HOSSAIN



Supercharged GT86 is a whole new ball-game.



The Rocketbunny kit lends a strikingly wide stance to the Gt86's classic sports car shape.

The British lightweight track car phenomenon

The British obsession with lightweight track focused cars can be traced back to one man and his undying love for motorsport. Colin Chapman, the man and the mind behind Lotus success in Formula 1, took his fascination for power-to-weight ratios and the beneficial effects of weight savings from the race track and onto the road in the form of the Lotus 7. The original 7 was a sign of the times, as Britain reeled from post-world war era financial troubles that forced engineers and designers to opt for simple and easily rewarding designs. The times have changed, but in the pursuit of the ultimate performance vehicle, the principles have largely remained the same. Now, we take a look at the best of the lightweight superstars that have graced the automotive world with their presence.

ARIEL ATOM

The first Ariel Atom, powered by a screaming K20Z4 2.0 liter VTEC 4-cylinder engine sourced from Honda and suspension tuned by the gurus at Lotus, shocked the world with its appearance in the mid-2000s. Jeremy Clarkson's face gained a hundred new wrinkles when he test drove the open top, windscreen-less track weapon on Top Gear, and that was with a 300 bhp engine. A few years later, the Atom V8, powered by a 3.0 liter, 500 bhp engine, would literally wet the pants of automotive journalists. Niki Smart, the designer, is apparently pretty smart.



CATERHAM R600 SUPERLIGHT

Caterham got the rights to manufacture the Lotus 7 after 1972, and ever since it has undergone a continuous evolution, slowly modernized and adapted. What that has resulted in is a fine sports car and an extremely capable track car, providing the thrills no matter what the power figures are across the range of models. There have been hardcore versions as well, as the R600 Superlight demonstrates.



BAC MONO

The BAC Mono is a single-seat racecar for the road, with FIA spec carbon-composite construction and 2.3-liter 285bhp engine sourced from Ford and fettled by Cosworth. That much horsepower and a 540kg kerb weight translates to incredible cornering and acceleration characteristics. Its also the second fastest car to go around the Top Gear test track, edged out by the Pagani Huayra.



KTM X-BOW

It happens to be Austrian, but the singularly rabid track car from a company that usually makes competition beating off-road and on-road motorbikes has taken a thoroughly British concept and used it to square off against the British themselves. While that sort of appropriation may not be as respectable as building something on your own, the fact is that the KTM X-Bow is an incredible machine that can swing punches hard.



SHAHER REAZ

LOTUS 3-ELEVEN

First there was the mental Lotus Eleven racecar of the 50's, followed by, well, 2-Eleven of the mid-2000s. The latest, the 3-Eleven, takes the "race car for the road" concept to a whole new level. Powered by a supercharged V6 developing 450bhp, the 3-Eleven sprints to 60mph in under 3 seconds and has a top speed of 180mph. While that may not seem like much next to the bajillion mph supercars of today, keep in mind this is an open-top, windshield-less, 900kg car. It also happens to be the most expensive road car by Lotus.



COLLECTIBLES



Vanishing Point's Challenger

This week's highlighted scale model rolls our way courtesy of Rubab Momen and his crazy fascination for classic Dodge Challengers. The car is a 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T, with a 440 cubic-inch V-8. It was the star of the movie Vanishing Point, where majority of the screen time was focused on the rubber and metal character. Greenlight's 1:18 version of the classic features openable hood, trunk and doors with an intricately detailed interior and engine. Head on to our Collectibles section on the Shift website (www.thedailystar.net/shift) this weekend for more pictures and a full feature.

WORDS AND PHOTO: E.R. RONNY

Mustang Apollo Edition



Ford has kept up its tradition of building one off, aircraft inspired custom editions of Mustangs for the past eight years. It's part of a programme to benefit the Experimental Aircraft Association youth education programs.

This year, they've come up with the Apollo Edition Mustang, a throwback to the Apollo missions run by NASA, which ultimately landed a man on the moon and the efforts of which gave the US a distinctive foothold as the leader of global technological advancements. The Mustang is therefore a perfect basis for a patriotic themed muscle car.

With a distinctive paintjob and livery reminiscent of early Apollo mission spacecrafts, the custom Mustang goes to great lengths to make a visual connection with the theme, both inside and out. The rocket-ship thrust is there as well, thanks to a supercharged V8 putting out a thunderous 627 HP and 540 lb-ft of torque. The Apollo edition also has six piston Brembo brakes and sport tuned suspension. Atmospheric re-entry parachute comes as an optional extra.

Watch out for a gallery of the past aircraft-inspired Ford Mustangs in our online edition at www.thedailystar.net/shift.