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Legendary Japanese Cars

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NISSAN SKYLINE 2000GT-R 1973

NISSAN SKYLINE 2000GT-R

Model	KPGC110
Engine Name	S20
Displacement	1989cc
Maximum Output	160ps/7000rpm
Maximum Torque	18.0kg-m/5600rpm
Overall Length	4460mm
Overall Width	1695mm
Overall Height	1380mm
Wheelbase	2610mm
Vehicle Weight	1145kg



The 2000GT-R transformed into a dynamic and bold style, characterized by its large front and rear overfenders.



The large radiator grille is a feature exclusive to the GT-R.



As a result of pursuing stability, a urethane rear spoiler, which was rare at the time, was equipped as standard.





Amid its continued popularity, the full model change sparked a buzz with the 'Ken and Mary' campaign

The Skyline, which became the first under the Nissan brand, successfully attracted a new customer base, partly due to the addition of a stylish 2-door hardtop. The C10 series, also known by its catchphrase "The Love Skyline," continued to be popular even towards the end of its model cycle. However, it was common at the time for models to undergo a full change every four years. Therefore, in September 1972, the Skyline underwent its third full model change.

The fourth generation was given the model code "C110," and after much discussion, the catchphrase "Ken and Mary's Skyline" was chosen.

This name was adopted because of its appealing sound, and the commercial featuring a young couple named Ken and Mary traveling in the Skyline became a massive hit. Additionally, Ken and Mary-themed T-shirts sold exceptionally well, and the novelty goods distributed at dealer sales fairs on weekends were also highly popular. The commercial's theme song sold over 300,000 copies, and related merchandise became a social phenomenon.

The long-awaited 2000GT-R debuts, transformed with a stylish body!

The fourth generation offered a wide range of variations, with numerous body types and engines available, which was one of the reasons for its broad appeal. For the first time, the 4-door sedan and 2-door hardtop were simultaneously released, along with uniquely designed wagon and van models.

The engine lineup was also diverse. The standard body models were equipped with the G16 and G18 series of inline 4-cylinder SOHC engines inherited from the former Prince Motors. The 2000GT, with its long nose, was powered by the inline 6-cylinder SOHC L20 engine, and only the 2000GT-X featured an SU twin-carburetor setup. However, the flagship model of the previous Skyline, the 2000GT-R, which had been the image leader, was not unveiled as of September. The 2000GT-R made its debut one month after the 2000GT, at Nissan's booth during the 19th Tokyo Motor Show. On the turntable, under the spotlight, was the GT-R Racing Concept, with its moss green body color accented by gold. The base model featured a long nose with a wedge-shaped 2-door hardtop. The dynamic form

was complemented by sharply angled eye-line windows. The show car had a fully blacked-out grille, prominent fender flares, and wide tires on all four wheels, along with front and rear spoilers.

The production version of the GT-R concept, which stole the spotlight at the show, was finally unveiled in January 1973, under the model designation "KPGC110" as the second-generation 2000GT-R. The front fascia featured a unique design with the traditional dual headlights paired with a striking mesh grille, and the GT-R emblem was prominently displayed in a two-tiered arrangement on the left side of the grille.

The side view was highlighted by riveted overfenders, which were installed not only at the rear but also at the front, a first for the 2000GT-R. The iconic rear surfing line of the Skyline was interrupted by these overfenders. The GT badge on the rear fenders, a proud red emblem, carried on the legacy from the GT-B.

The seat area is designed with circuit driving in mind

The car was fitted with 175HR14 radial tires. In addition to the front wheels, the rear wheels also featured servo-assisted disc brakes. The revival of round tail lamps was



A spaciouly designed engine bay. The well-regarded S20 engine, which had been popular since the previous generation 2000GT-R, was installed.



The tail lamps were transformed from square to sporty round shapes. This quad round lamp design has been carried forward in subsequent GT-R models.

another noteworthy update, and a rear spoiler was installed at the rear end.

The interior design followed that of the 2000GT, but the panel surrounding the angled meters was made of dull-finished aluminum, emitting a subtle glow. To the right, an ammeter was placed, next to which were a large speedometer marked up to 240 km/h and a tachometer with a 10,000 RPM range. On the left side, oil pressure, water temperature, and fuel gauges were aligned towards the driver. The clock on the far left was offered as an option.

The steering wheel, wrapped in leather and equipped with a tilt mechanism, featured an 'S' mark embedded in the horn section, while the shift pattern displayed on the 5-speed manual transmission's knob shared the same red base as the emblem. The front bucket seats had evolved, with the passenger seat now equipped with a headrest. However, similar to the first generation, a reclining mechanism was not included. Considering circuit driving, the car was equipped with standard 3-point seat belts, and the accelerator pedal was designed as an organ type for easy heel-and-toe operation.

Building on the mechanisms of the previous model while enhancing usability

The power unit inherits the S20-type inline 6-cylinder DOHC 4-valve engine directly from the racing engine of the first-generation GT-R. With a bore of 82.0 mm, a stroke of 62.8 mm, and a total displacement of 1989 cc, it features a specially designed stainless steel exhaust manifold and intake air ducts, and is fueled by three Solex 40PHH carburetors. The premium gasoline version produces a maximum output of 160ps at 7000rpm and a maximum torque of 18.0 kg-m at 5600 rpm. A regular gasoline version with a compression ratio reduced from 9.5 to 9.0 is also available, offering 155ps and 17.6 kg-m of torque. The fuel tank is a standard 55-liter tank, instead of the 100-liter tank used in the previous model.

The transmission is a 5-speed MT with modified gear ratios, using Porsche synchro gears. These changes enhance its character as a grand touring car, making it more user-friendly for city driving. However, it still provides excellent acceleration on the track, and the engine sound beyond 5000 rpm is pleasing to the ear. The GT-R stands out with its exceptional driving

pleasure and the strong attachment it fosters once you master it.

The suspension setup includes MacPherson strut/coil spring at the front and semi-trailing arm/coil spring at the rear. The shocks and other components have been reinforced compared to the 2000GT, with an additional rear stabilizer to reduce roll. The wheelbase is extended by 40 mm from the previous hardtop model, but it maintains nimble handling and ease of hitting the desired line.

Additionally, the brake pedal effort has been reduced, enhancing overall drivability.

Though short-lived, it remains a model with a strong fan following

The second-generation 2000GT-R, which appeared with great fanfare, was featured extensively in many automotive magazines. The next curiosity for fans was when the second chapter of the circuit mythology, involving race participation, would begin. Given that the racing version had been announced earlier, this anticipation was natural. However, among all the GT-R models, only the Ken and Mary version never appeared on the circuit and is remembered as the only GT-R not to have participated in



Both the driver's and passenger's seats were equipped with large bucket seats, providing stability even during cornering.



By folding the front seat forward, it was possible to access the rear seat. The passenger seat could also be operated from the driver's side.

aces.

The Ken and Mary GT-R was discontinued just four months after its release, primarily due to the intense focus on emissions regulations. The second-generation model became known as the "phantom GT-R" because its production was limited to around 200 units. While it is said that 199 units were made, including 2 prototype vehicles and 197 production models, it seems that slightly more were actually produced. Approximately two-thirds of them were white, and one-third were silver, with an extremely limited number in red—only a single-digit number of which have been confirmed.

The Ken and Mary Skyline frequently surpassed 10,000 units

sold per month, making it the bestselling Skyline model among all generations, with over 670,000 units produced before passing the baton to the fifth generation. Skylines were ubiquitous throughout Japan.

However, Ken and Mary GT-Rs are rarely seen. Their rarity has increased their value, and the number of fans pursuing the Ken and Mary GT-R continues to grow. The KPGC110 GT-R, beloved by its name "Ken and Mary GT-R," stands out as a particularly special presence among the solitary GT-Rs.



The non-reflective meters were used, and the switches were mounted on the steering column for effortless operation even when the seatbelt is fastened.

As a measure against air pollution, an evaporation suppression device that prevents gasoline from evaporating from the carburetor and fuel tank into the atmosphere was adopted, but unfortunately, it could not meet the exhaust emissions regulations.



The previous model used a divided front grille, but in the KPGC110 model, it was redesigned to enhance cooling air intake efficiency.





The interior is based on the Skyline Hardtop 2000GT, which underwent a full model change the previous year. The design aims for a sporty image by keeping it simple with an all-black color scheme.



The iconic red badge, which is synonymous with the GT-R, remains intact. Compared to the previous model's red badge, it has changed to a more elongated shape.



This is an image sketch created during the full model change. It can be observed that round taillights were already envisioned at this stage.

The "Nissan Restoration Club" reviving legendary cars

Nissan has been deeply involved in the world of motorsports from an early stage, honing its technologies and incorporating them into mass-production models through the experience gained in races and rallies. However, there are very few opportunities to experience Nissan's legendary cars, which have brilliantly colored the history of Japanese automobiles. Even the cars that played active roles in motorsports are often left in a deteriorated state. Concerned by this situation, car enthusiasts within Nissan took the initiative to preserve these classic cars in running condition, leading to the creation of the "Nissan Restoration Club." The club began its activities in the spring of 2006 as a circle composed of car enthusiasts from the development department at Nissan's Technical Center in Kanagawa Prefecture. The club's goal is to preserve Nissan's historic vehicles in running condition, as they were at the time. The restoration process allows members to learn about the craftsmanship, technical ingenuity, and philosophies of their predecessors, attracting many participants. The activities are conducted outside

of working hours, mostly on company holidays.

The first project the club undertook was the restoration of the Nissan 240RS, which competed in the World Rally Championship (WRC) and participated in the Monte Carlo Rally in 1983. Following this, in 2007, they restored the Skyline 2000GT-R, a reference exhibit at the 1972 Tokyo Motor Show, featured in this special article. The Skyline is the most frequently restored model by the club, including the Skyline GT that competed in the 1964 Japanese Grand Prix, the NISMO LM GT-R that challenged the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1995, and the endurance-spec R32 Skyline GT-R.

Although the Nissan Restoration Club often restores motorsports vehicles, they have also worked on other Nissan models. These include the Tama electric car, a battery EV active in the immediate postwar era, and the Datsun Baby used at Kodomo no Kuni. The restoration work of these historic cars progresses at a pace of about one vehicle per year. The completed cars are showcased at internal events, the NISMO Festival, and other opportunities,

where fans and the press can see them. If lucky, you might even get to hear the engine sounds of these classic cars and see them in action.



The Skyline 2000GT-R exhibited at the 1972 Motor Show bore a "73" in anticipation of racing in 1973. However, it never made it to the actual race, eventually showcasing its performance at the NISMO Festival in 2007.