



Remember last issue when we interviewed Mike Unger, owner and racer of the beautiful 'stock' zed? Well here is the opposite side of the coin that I promised. Alan Giles has taken some beautiful liberties with his 'modified' zed. Serious engine mods, fibreglass parts, lots of suspension details. Check it out! At a distance as a spectator both Mike and Alan's cars look similar – the fine zed body line, the beautiful deep fire-engine-red colour, smooth, fast and perfect driving lines... but look closer! I was lucky enough to get the up-close and personal paddock view. I'm in the process of trying to convince both of them to come and race Mosport for next year's VARAC International Vintage Racing Festival. I'll keep my fingers crossed that they will both make it and Ontario Z Car fans will get a chance to see the cars in person!



Name: Alan Giles "DrSideways"
Occupation: House Husband
Hometown: Winston-Salem, North Carolina

DD: Hi there and welcome to 'Trackside' the bi-monthly column for racing news in Ontario Z Car Association's Zedline publication. I took particular interest to the 'other two z cars' racing at the VIR Historic Gold Cup races and knew that our readers would love to hear more details. So here we go! ...

AG: Well uh... Thank you ... Thank you very much....

DD: How long have you been racing?

AG: I got my first trophy in a car in 1977. Does that sound like a long time ago?

DD: How did you get into racing?

AG: Hmmm..... I was always being told by others "I should do that type of driving on the track." I was always told by the family that I should just not drive like that ... especially on a track. Hell, they didn't want me to have my first unicycle.

DD: What is your current racecar? (Year/Model etc.)

AG: Right now and for the past 15 or so years it has been a 1978 Datsun Z Car. But the year and model is subject to change according to what the event organizers want to print in the program.

DD: What are your Z car's specifications in the following areas – are they any configurations you'd recommend, stock vs. modified, specific enhancements/preparations that really worked for you – or any that you wish you hadn't done?

AG: Nothing like a loaded question.....

DD: Suspension?

AG: Right now - We have Carrera coil over springs and camber plates. Koni single adjustable shocks. We also use custom tubular control arms and NASCAR type sway bars. The rear one stays disconnected for the most part. Would like to have – same spring type deal but with the Penske double adjustable from Eric Messley @ EMI. Then get the whole package to where the rear bar could be effective.

DD: Tires/Wheels?

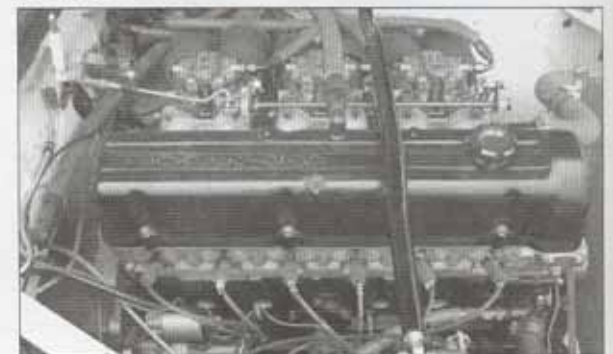
AG: Right now – We have Panasport C 10 three-piece wheels in 16" x 10". Would like to have – one more set of these. Really would like to have a couple pairs of 16" x 12" for the rear of an IMSA G Nose type body set-up.

DD: Brakes?

AG: Right now – We have the Arizona Z Wilwood 11 _" set-up. Would like to have – 12 _" rotor set-up with some 6 pot AP calipers up front and 4 pot AP units in the rear.

DD: Engine?

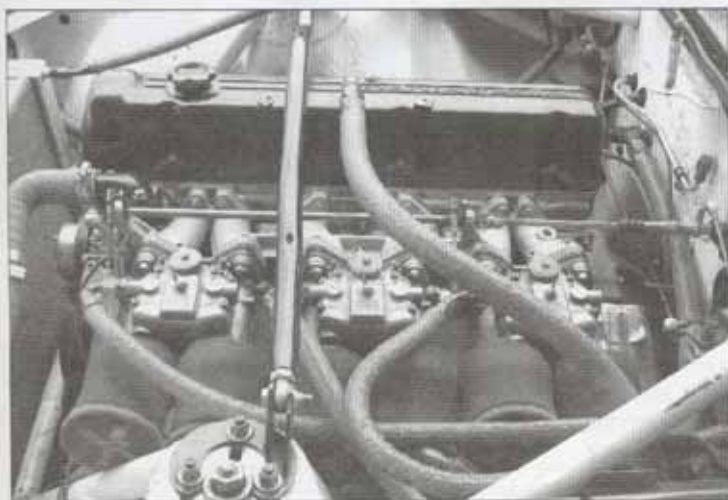
AG: Right now – We have a .040" over 2.8 litre making for 2824cc. It has a Moldex billet crankshaft. Carillo rods. JE pistons. 14 + compression. E31 head with larger valves. Most all of the standard goodies ... except a dry sump system. Would like to have – Dry Sump system and a bit more power. Maybe a billet crank based 3.0.



by Diane Dale

DD: Carburetors?

AG: Right now – We have a set of 44mm Mikunis on a very early factory long intake. Would like to have – Motec fool infestation of course.



DD: Body?

AG: Right now – Your basic small flare body with a BRE type front spoiler. Steel fenders and quarters with some carbon and fibreglass hear and there. Would like to have – I really would like to put together a full IMSA G Nose body in carbon for durability (right). The real cool thing would be to have a 1970 model in steel to run with Mike and then the G Nose also.

DD: Interior?

AG: Right now – Not too much. Cage, seat and steering wheel. Mechanical gauges except for the tack to keep the wires to an absolute minimum. Would like to have – Hmm. This is one area on the car that I would not change too much. However I would change two things. #1. I would loose about 40-60 Lbs. to fit better and make the whole package lighter. The other would be to change to a RaceTech seat like in the factory Vipers.

DD: Roll Cage?

AG: Right now – It has a cage that we made from a 1/16" scale brass model of a complete floor pan and strut towers. (Brass Cad) We kept adding triangles until there was no flex in the flimsy brass pan mock up. It works in the car too. Would like to have – Tube frame I guess.



Zedline October 2004

DD: Other?

AG: I think we have covered that part. There really is not too much "other."

DD: What racecars have been in your past?

AG: Pontiac Astra (Vega with a cast iron engine), Cosworth Vega Twin Cam, 1973 Datsun Z Car, 1978 Datsun Z Car

DD: And in the future?

AG: Maybe another Z Car and a 510. I would really like to make it to the Vintage races with one Z for a DOT tire class, one for SVRA Group 10, and the 510 to also run in a DOT type class. No boredom with that program, plus it would take a cool truck and trailer.

DD: What motivates you to race?

AG: Good question as I question the sense of doing it quite frequently. I guess it is one thing that comes easy for me and I tend to either do well or look like I am trying to real hard. It could also be that I got my ass kicked on the playground as a kid too.....who knows. I know one thing for sure. While I am at the track, I enjoy the whole deal. Track time, fun with folks, and fun tinkering with the machines. Then I get to run the pee out of my car.

DD: Why the passion for Z cars?

AG: Getting to all of these deep questions here aren't we..... A 1970 Z Car was one of the first cars I drove while in the 6th or 7th grade. Jim Fitzgerald lived close to my hometown and I got to work with him while in college. During that time I got to be a part of his semi factory team. I found out what could really be done if you had the desire and watched the budget. In between I just felt comfortable around the cars. Working on them came easy as they are pretty simple until you mod them out too much. I like sitting right on top of the rear tire when "Sideways."

DD: What's your favourite Z car, and why?

AG: If I could only have one type it would be several rust free 1969-70 240 Z Cars. Why? Because that is the lightest base from which any cool unit can be built. Of course it would take a minimum of three. Two race cars and one street unit.

DD: Tell us about some events that you have been involved in that you've felt were significant or just plain fun or memorable?

AG: The legal ones? Most every time I get in my car there is a story about to happen. Mine or anyone else's for that matter. I guess out running the whole Winston-Salem rush hour was one. We started downtown in thick traffic and by the time we got out to the outskirts of town there was NO traffic. Another could be the time my wife and I were coming back with the '73 from the Walter Mitty Vintage event (before HSR). I got in a race on I-85 North with a Ferrari 512. She needed to pee. I said "just hold it until one more exit and I'll have him whipped." It was times like those that made my wife buy the truck, trailer, and all of the other stuff so I could get on track. I can't really get in too much trouble on the street in a one-ton dually. "Street tags for the Z Car.....of course not ... are you nuts?"

How about a legal one or two....

During my first Walter Mitty at Road Atlanta I tested a Z Car for my good friend Alan Poindexter. I got up onto the back straight and went to high gear and on my way to revving out to 7400rpm. At about 130mph I was feeling pretty cool about the whole deal. Just a



split second after that I was split by a Porsche 935 and a Ferrari 512 LeMans 24 hr. racer. So much for that "cool" feeling.

This past Gold Cup was pretty darn good. Out running a whole field of big bore cars to be on the pole. Too bad I tripped over a MGB GT V8 in the Sunday morning warm up.

DD: And your racing plans for 2004? Where can we find you the rest of this season?

AG: I plan to run the upcoming HSR event at VIR July 8-12. Then teach a few schools. In October I will be back in the Z Car for the SVRA event also at VIR. Overall for the past three or four years I have spent four or more days a month on track at VIR. With students and my cars I have racked up quite an amount of mileage. I enjoy the racing. I really enjoy teaching the schools. In both instances I get to be directly involved with folks living out their true dreams in life. Vintage racers for the most part are not trying to be famous or get a resume together for future PRO efforts. They want to have a good time playing in one hell of a sand box.

The students are in their own cars and just so happy to be at the track, on the track, close to the track. When you surround yourself with an environment like that it is tough not to have a terrific time. Whoops got off of the subject.....

One more thing though. Doing what I do for a living One would think that a racing program would not be a big part of my life. However I am one of the most fortunate folks you will ever meet. I have a great wife that understands and supports my need for speed. My daughter is now seventeen and will be a senior in high school this coming year. Both of them help out and make general sacrifices to make my time at the track safe and competitive. Thanks to them I am able to make the most of my Z Car time.



DD: Thanks Alan for sharing all the details with us - we just hope we can convince you to make it up to Mosport next year so I can show all my friends your car up close!!! It's one of those - you have to see it to believe it!!



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