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Build

BRIAN'S NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R

72

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SKYLINE 2000GT-R RACING – PART 1

The first race for the Skyline 2000GT-R, which was developed as a winning machine for touring car racing, was a bittersweet victory. Development of the TS race-spec car started even before the production car was announced. Various problems were ironed-out and the expected lap times were achieved. However, the JAF Grand Prix TS race regulations did not allow the participation of works drivers with proven track records, putting the Nissan team in a difficult situation.

The Skyline 2000GT-R (PGC10) was launched on February 21, 1969, but development of a race-specification touring car had already begun long before that.

According to a book written by Yasuo Aochi, who was the Nissan's team manager, the first time the race-spec Skyline 2000GT-R competed at the Fuji Speedway was on December 11, 1968. Although the car was almost stock, with only race tires and suspension modifications, it set a time in the 2 minutes and 20 seconds range, which was equivalent to the conventional Skyline 2000GT-B race-spec car (S54CR). However, there were a number of problems that needed to be addressed on the first run, such as the valve lifter of the S20 engine seizing up.

The debut race was set to be the JAF Grand Prix TS (Special Touring Car) event in May 1969. From that year, the JAF Grand Prix, mainly for formula cars, was to be held in the spring, while the Japanese Grand Prix – for conventional prototype sports cars – was to be held in the fall. The Nissan team had to work hard to concurrently develop the Skyline 2000GT-R for the JAF Grand Prix and the Nissan R382 for the Japanese Grand Prix.

The development period for the Skyline 2000GT-R race-spec car was actually only four months, and included the New Year holidays. The prototype parts were ordered in December 1968. The base car was to be completed on the production line at the Murayama plant in January or February, and then delivered to the team.

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The Skyline 2000GT-R undergoing tests at Fuji Speedway. Perhaps because it was based on a prototype, the front fenders protruded, and the fender mirrors were different.

The TS category is based on a production car, but the scope of modification is relatively wide. The hood, trunk lid, and doors could be replaced with FRP parts to reduce weight – it meant that all parts except the windshield could be replaced with acrylic or other plastic materials. In addition, over-fenders and front and rear spoilers could be installed, and the aerodynamic performance could be tuned.

The TS Race Specification 2000GT-R was fitted with over-fenders on the front to cover the wide racing tires. The rear bumper, headlamps, and front grille were removed to reduce weight, but the front and rear spoilers were not yet installed.

The S20 engine now featured a Weber carburetor in place of the production-spec Solex unit. The exhaust manifold was changed to one with improved exhaust efficiency, and the length of the carburetor air funnel was carefully chosen to match the exhaust system. Titanium connecting rods were also incorporated inside the engine. The power was said to have already reached 200ps compared to the stock 160ps, but there was a torque trough between 5,200 and 5,600rpm, which made it difficult to handle.

The Nissan team set a target time of 2 minutes 10 seconds for the Skyline 2000GT-R race-spec car at Fuji Speedway. The previous year's winning car, a Toyota 1600GT (RT55), had qualified in 2 minutes, 17.14 seconds, so even if Toyota improved its time further, Nissan expected to be able to beat it by running in the 2 minutes, 10-second range. The completion of the newly built race-spec car was delayed, and full-scale testing did not begin until February. After that, the problems with the Skyline 2000GT-R were corrected and, by mid-March, the car was able to reach the 2:10 mark.

COMPETING AGAINST THE TOYOTA 1600GT

However, an unexpected problem arose: the JAF Grand Prix rulebook released in late March announced the regulations for drivers competing in TS races. Those who fell into any of the following categories were not allowed to compete:

1. A top-6 overall finisher in any race of the 1st or 2nd Japanese Grand Prix;
2. A top-3 overall finisher in any race of the 3rd, 4th, or preliminary races of the 1968 Japanese Grand Prix;
3. A competitor in the 3rd, 4th, or 1968 Japanese Grand Prix who had driven a prescribed number of laps of the race distance in the race.

In contrast to the main JAF Grand Prix race, the TS race – the so-called front-runner race – was set up to give amateur drivers an opportunity, with the stipulation that works drivers with a proven track record could not participate. This was a shock to the Nissan team, which had planned to have a Nissan works driver at the wheel of the Skyline 2000GT-R for the first time.



The Skyline 2000GT-R at Fuji Speedway for its debut race. The oil cooler was still inside the front grille and the bumper remained

Number 39 was the winning Skyline 2000GT-R of amateur driver Takamichi Shinohara, and although it was his debut win, it was a victory with mixed feelings.

The team held a hurried selection committee for the drivers and chose Koji Fujita, Yutaka Hagiwara, Takamichi Shinohara, Robert Reagan, and Mizuomi Nagamura to compete in the race. The five amateurs must have felt a great sense of excitement and pressure, as it was a rare chance for amateur drivers to race state-of-the-art Nissan works cars.

In April, the participants underwent training at Fuji Speedway with Nissan works drivers, and although they improved their times to the 2:13 range, there was still a 2- to 3-second gap between them and the works drivers. There was not much time left before the race.

On May 3, 1969, the day of the JAF Grand Prix, the morning paper featured an advertisement by Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. announcing that the new Skyline 2000GT-R would be competing in a race for the first time. The headline read: "Today, the much-anticipated Skyline makes its debut in the GP."





A replica of Shinohara's winning No.39 car, which is held in the Nissan Heritage Collection in Zama City, Kanagawa Prefecture.

The TS race final was held in front of a large crowd. Koji Fujita's Skyline 2000GT-R took pole position with a time of 2 minutes, 13.42 seconds in the qualifying session held the day before. The front row of the grid featured three Skyline 2000GT-Rs and Harukuni Takahashi's Toyota 1600GT, which qualified with a time of 2 minutes and 14.91 seconds. Takahashi was an up-and-coming works driver who had been selected to compete in the Japanese Grand Prix in the fall in a Toyota 7, but he had risen rapidly from an amateur to meet the qualifications of a TS race entry driver.

The Nissan Skyline 2000GT-R, which was more than a second ahead of the Toyota 1600GT in qualifying, should have easily won the race. However, the difference in ability between the amateur drivers and the young works drivers was noticeable.

At the start of the race, the Nissans were far behind. They were easily outpaced by the Toyota 1600GT, and even the Corolla with a smaller displacement was ahead of the Nissans. The engine of the Nissan Skyline 2000GT-R had a characteristic that made it difficult to handle due to the torque trough in the mid-range of rpm. In addition, the transmission was set to a gear ratio that would allow the car to go around the hairpin in first gear, prioritizing lap time; it meant that the car was sluggish from a standing start. This would not be a problem for a Nissan works driver, but for an amateur driver, it was a major issue.

The Skyline 2000GT-R drivers struggled and dropped out one after another due to spins and machine trouble after falling behind at the start. The race became a head-to-head battle between Takahashi in the Toyota 1600GT and Takamichi Shinohara in the Skyline 2000GT-R. However, the Skyline 2000GT-R, which had more power than the Toyota 1600GT, could not get past the Toyota 1600GT. The skill of the amateur driver, who was just getting used to the car, affected the maximum speed on the straight depending on how he drove the final corner, and he could not even increase the speed on the 30-degree bank from the straight to the first corner. As a result, the speed was not much different from that of the Toyota 1600GT, and it was difficult to get ahead on the straight.

Takahashi's Toyota 1600GT was able to fend off Shinohara's pursuing Skyline 2000GT-R – which had the advantage in terms of performance – with his skilful driving technique. Zig-zagging left and right along the long home straight, he was able to drive to the finish line. However, a course official claimed that Takahashi was obstructing Shinohara and, after deliberation, one lap was deducted from Takahashi's Toyota 1600GT. The official result was that Shinohara's Skyline 2000GT-R won the race. Nevertheless, it was viewed that "he won the battle but lost the war". The first of the Skyline 2000GT-R's 50 wins was a bittersweet victory. ◆

MOSE JAKANDE, A THREAT IN THE SHADOWS

Accustomed to action, this mercenary always works for the highest bidder. And his icy gaze indicates he is prepared to go beyond any and all limits to achieve his objectives.



In an electrifying cross-country chase, Dom Toretto faces a deadly rival named Mose Jakande, who will stop at nothing to achieve his goals.

In *Furious 7,* Dom does not confront just one adversary, as in other films. While the vengeful Deckard Shaw appears to be the main threat to the Toretto family from the start of the movie, an African mercenary emerges from the shadows to cause serious problems for Dom's entire team. His name is Mose Jakande.

ALLIES EVEN ON THE ROAD TO HELL

The boss of a private military company, Jakande leads criminals trained with military precision, as his dangerous right-hand man – Louis Kiet – clearly demonstrates. In the criminal underworld, Jakande has earned a name for himself as a professional terrorist. Those hiring him know that, no matter their request, the mercenary will do whatever it takes to achieve the agreed-upon objective.

Jakande's current employer is a mysterious cyber-terrorist called Cipher, who wants him to secure the powerful God's Eye tracker for her by kidnapping the device's creator, Megan Ramsey. Mr. Nobody, however, wants to prevent this device from falling into Cipher's hands at all costs, and he asks Dom and his team to intervene and stop Jakande.

Dom's team first runs into Jakande and his men in the Caucasus Mountains. They successfully escape after rescuing Ramsey, but later, things get complicated when they travel to Abu Dhabi to find the God's Eye. They discover that Jakande has joined forces with the lethal Shaw in his attempt to destroy Dom and his buddies.



LEAVING NO LOOSE ENDS

To play the part of Mose Jakande, the creators of the series auditioned a long list of candidates before choosing Djimon Hounsou, an actor discovered by Steven Spielberg for the film *Amistad* (1997). Since then, Hounsou has appeared in movies such as *Gladiator* (2000), *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), *A Quiet Place* (2018), and *Rebel Moon* (2023). Producer Neal H. Moritz was fascinated by Djimon's intimidating presence. The actor was proud to join the franchise and immediately found himself absorbed in an intense role that required him to take part in exciting chases, on the road and in the sky.

Jakande seizes the God's Eye after laying an ambush for Dom and his men in the capital of the United Arab Emirates. Dom, Brian, and Mr. Nobody must leave the device behind when they escape. But the mercenary is not completely satisfied; so long as Ramsey is still alive there is the possibility that she will disable the tracker. Jakande follows Shaw to Los Angeles and, activating the God's Eye, lifts off in a stealth helicopter to find Ramsey and eliminate her. He's not expecting it when Dom crosses his path again for a third time. This will be the last time. ◆

Dom's upgraded Dodge Charger is built to roll through the rugged Caucasus Mountains, but not so much to withstand the constant onslaught of Jakande's mercenaries.

THE ADVENTURES OF BRIAN O'CONNER

Where's the money?

When Brian, Dom, and the rest of the team start robbing Hernán Reyes' drug-trafficking money caches scattered all over Rio de Janeiro, the influential criminal puts the rest of his ill-gotten gains in a safer place. After intense surveillance, Dom's men discover that Reyes has moved what's left of his fortune into a police station. Dom doesn't believe this changes anything, but Roman thinks it's crazy to try to steal the remaining money. Brian convinces his old friend to continue with them in this dangerous plan.

THE 1995 24 HOURS OF LE MANS

Many manufacturers including Nissan invested time and resources in the Group A category of the World Rally Championship (WRC), but NISMO also supported private teams competing in Group N racing. This comprised cars that were only slightly different from production models.



One of the perks of membership was the opportunity to watch domestic GT Championship races. Drivers and NISMO staff were on hand to guide the fans, allowing them to really feel part of the event.

In 1995, NISMO entered the 24 Hours of Le Mans with a GT-specification race car based on the Skyline GT-R (BCNR33). This was the first time that NISMO had entered a Group C car in Le Mans since 1990.

NISMO had been postponing its participation in the race due to regulation changes. However, the new GT car rules introduced in 1994 resulted in the Skyline GT-R (BCNR33) being modified to GT specifications and entered in the race.

The participation of the Skyline GT-R in the 24 Hours of Le Mans was an epoch-making event, but the organization of a supporters' club of Nissan and Skyline fans – which had never existed in works activities before – was also a groundbreaking event. In general, works activities were aimed at achieving top results in order to im-



The Club Le Mans GT-R membership card was made from aluminum. Its benefits included a members-only newsletter, discounts on NISMO parts, and preferential treatment at various events.



Club Le Mans members were also able to attend events such as the unveiling of the car that would compete at Le Mans. This type of event was usually reserved for related parties and the media.



The NISMO GT-R LM at Sportsland Sugo during pre-race testing, with the Club Le Mans logo where the main sponsor sticker would normally be.

prove the company's technical capabilities, but with the Skyline the approach changed to "the dream of driving the Skyline GT-R at Le Mans and winning at Le Mans" along with the fans.

In fact, when competing at Le Mans, the Supporters' Club members were in charge of catering, doctors, public relations, tire polishing, and other activities. It was truly a racing activity in which NISMO worked together with the fans.

In 1993, Japan's professional soccer league, known as the J-League, was established. Jiro Adachi, then president of NISMO, was a key figure in the creation of the Yokohama Marinos soccer team. With his experience, it is

"A fan club such as that found in the J-League was established, and this is the origin of the Nissan fan group that continues to this day."



not surprising that he thought of bringing the positive aspects of the professional soccer world – including supporters' clubs that were organized by fans – to the motor-racing world.

NISMO organized a supporters' club called Club Le Mans GT-R – which has since changed its name to the current Club NISMO – with more than 10,000 members to support the Skyline GT-R in its Le Mans challenge. Club Le Mans attracted attention as a club that provided enthusiastic support even in the Super GT series.

The challenge at Le Mans was a three-year plan. In 1995, the first year, two Skyline GT-Rs were brought to Le Mans. In the event, car #23 retired due to a transmission problem. However, Car #22 completed the race in 10th place overall, with an emotional finish by driver Masahiko Kondo.

Another scene from the test, with car #23 on the left and car #22 on the right. Car #23, was equipped with an X-Track transmission, while car #22 was stock.

At this time, the car developed to meet GT car regulations had been converted from the 4WD production car to a front-engine, rear-wheel drive model. Although the monocoque was based on the production car, the front and rear fenders were enlarged and larger tires could be used on the drive wheels, so there was no need for 4WD. The car was then officially named the NISMO GT-R LM.

Its rivals at the time were supersports cars such as the McLaren F1 GTR and Ferrari. The GT-R, which used a steel monocoque based on a production car, stood out from the crowd with its high roof. It was reminiscent of the battle between the Skyline GT and the Porsche 904 in the 2nd Japanese Grand Prix in 1964. ♦

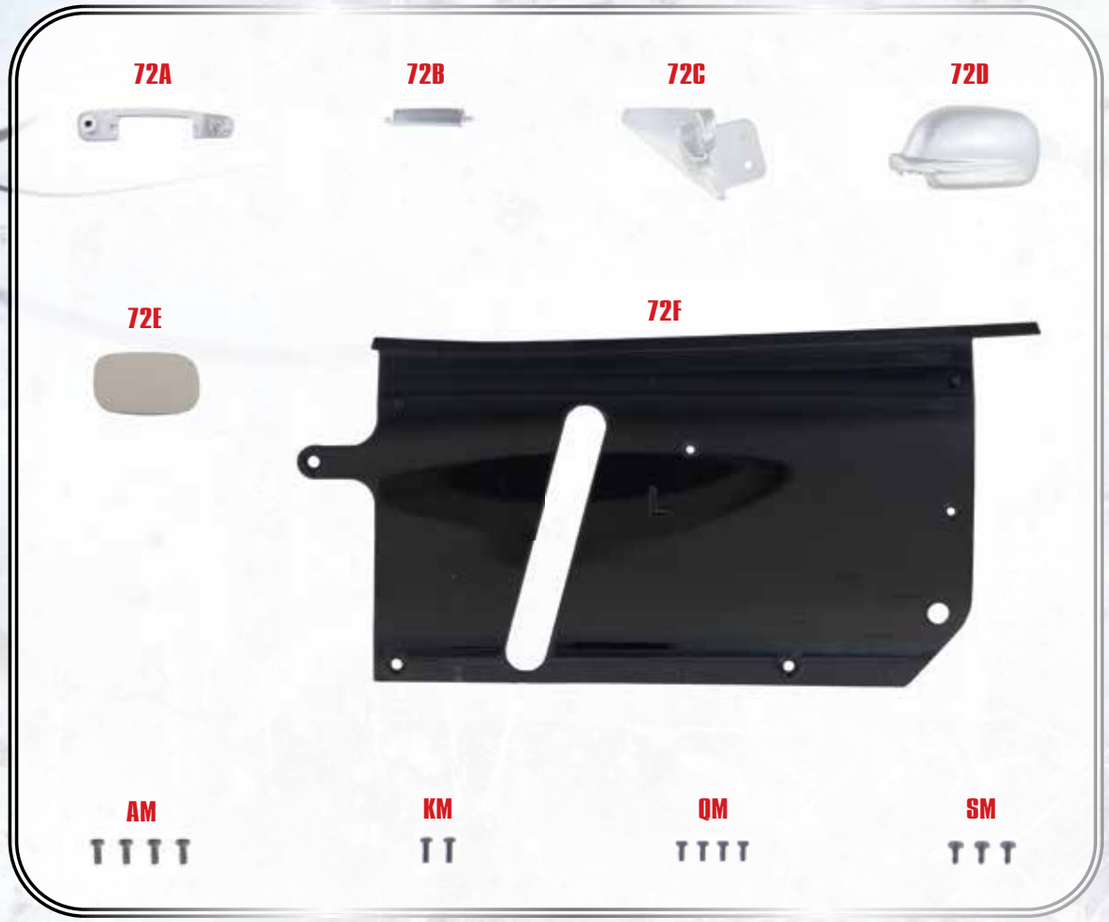
The Nissan Cheering Squad has become a feature of today's Super GT. It is a fully organized cheering team of fans in the domestic racing scene and they still support the team with great enthusiasm.



STAGE 72
LEFT DOOR (2)

In this issue, we will mount the left door inner panel, the handle, and the wing mirror.

PARTS

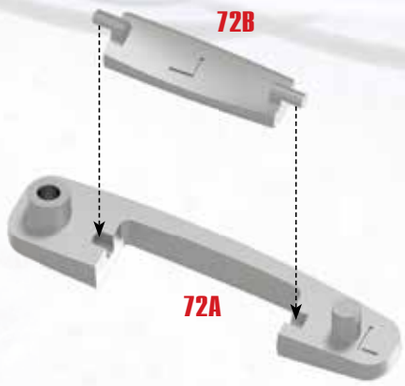


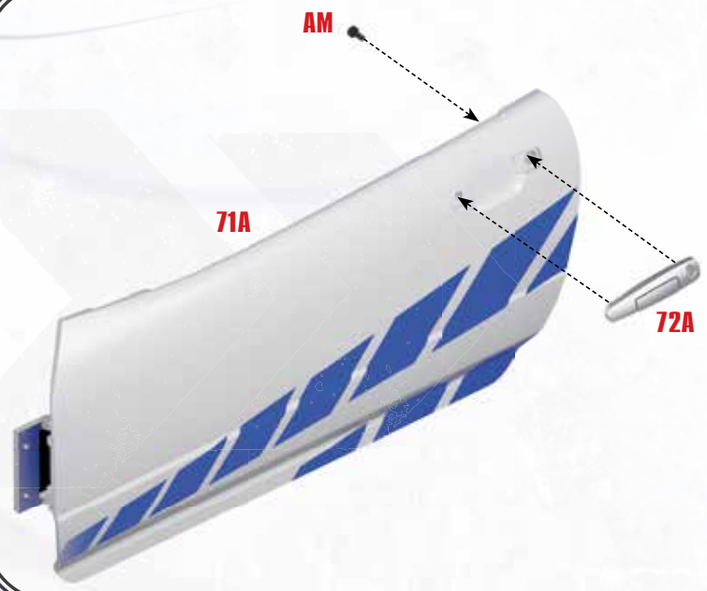
72A	Exterior left door handle	72F	Left door inner panel
72B	Central part of the door handle	AM	Screws 1.7×4mm (×4*)
72C	Left wing mirror base	KM	Screws 1.4×4mm (×2*)
72D	Left wing mirror housing	QM	Screws 1.4×3mm (×4*)
72E	Left wing mirror	SM	Screws 1.7×3mm (×3*)

*Including spares

72.01

Place the central part of the door handle 72B into the grooves of the exterior left door handle 72A.



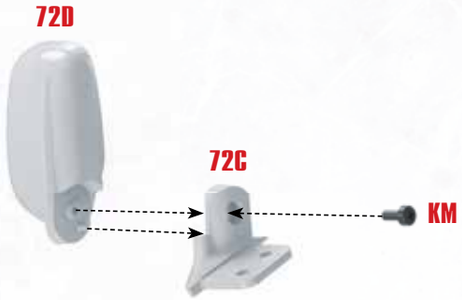


72.02

Fit the exterior left door handle 72A in the two highlighted holes of the left door 71A. Attach it from the inside with an AM screw.

72.03

Join the left wing mirror base 72C to the left wing mirror housing 72D and secure both parts with a KM screw.



72.04

Remove the protective layer from the left wing mirror 72E. You can use gloves to avoid leaving finger smudges on its surface.



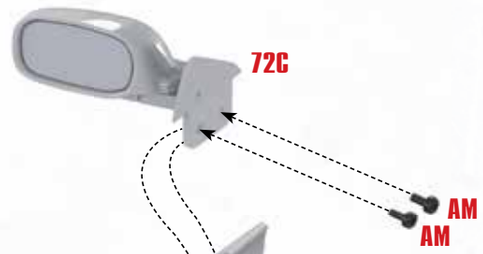
72.05

Position the left wing mirror 72E on the left wing mirror housing 72D.



72.06

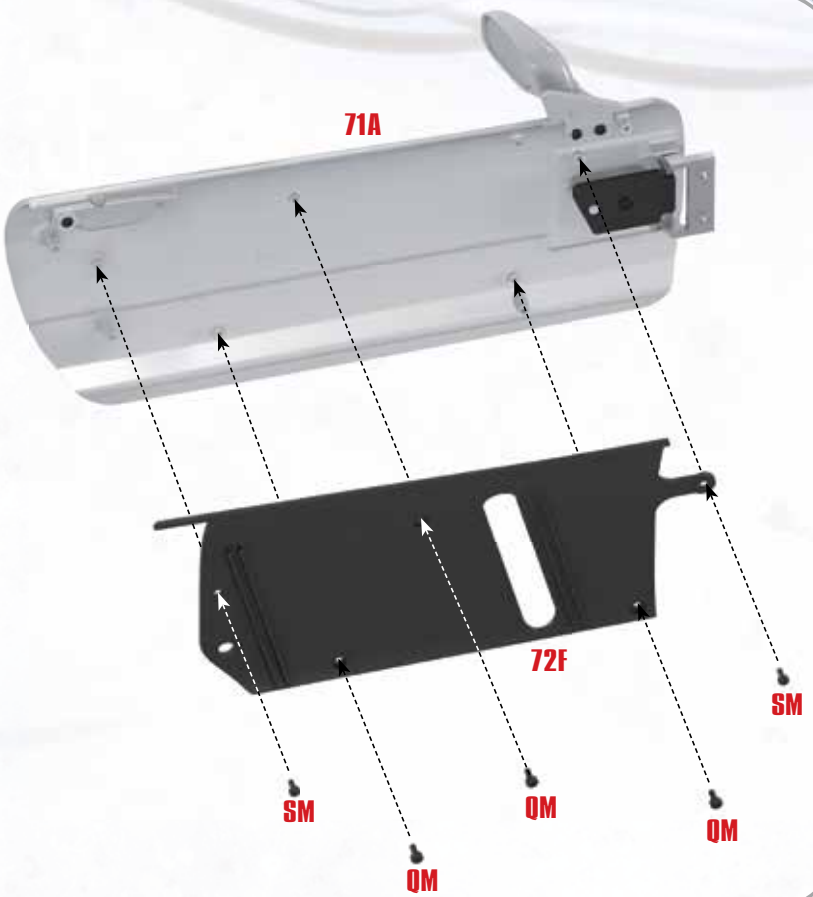
Position the left wing mirror base 72C over the two highlighted holes on the inside of the left door 71A and secure it with two AM screws.





72.07

Position the left inner door panel 72F over the left door 71A and secure it with two SM and three QM screws, observing the location of each screw type in the picture.



Final assembly



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