



Different Drummer Racing

IMSA GTU Datsun 260Z

Driver: Greg Sorrentino

Built by: Ron Fournier

Chassis # RLS30-000024 is a July 1973 pre-production Datsun 260Z chassis that was sold by the factory for one dollar in 1975 to Different Drummer Racing, owned by Greg Sorrentino of Troy, Michigan. It was one of the very first Datsun 260Z chassis and was built by the legendary American fabricator, Ron Fournier. This Z car has been consistently raced for the last 40+ years in IMSA GTU, SCCA Trans-Am, and C-Production/GT-2 classes.

In 1975, the Datsun Competition Department agreed to support Greg Sorrentino's IMSA GTU racing efforts by providing him a pre-production Datsun 260Z. Shortly after, the car was picked up directly from the factory in Los Angeles, California by the original founder of Different Drummer Racing, close friend, and renowned editorialist, Gary Witzenberg. Witzenberg hauled the car across the country to the SCCA National Runoffs held at Road Atlanta that year to deliver the car to Sorrentino. Once in Sorrentino's hands, it was left to his all-star lineup of builders to help him build a frighteningly fast IMSA GTU car.

All the chassis preparation was left to the skilled hands of none other than the legendary metal fabricator, Ron Fournier. Fournier met Sorrentino through racing and was also a fellow Michigan local. Fournier's impressive resume included Holman and Moody, Kar Kraft, Roger Penske and A.J. Foyt, none of whom are known for fielding losing race cars. Fournier personally constructed the Trans-Am series-winning Camaro and Javelin sedans for the late Mark Donohue, prepared

and developed unlimited Can-Am machinery, long distance road racing cars for Penske Racing, and built a pair of Indy racers for Foyt that finished third and sixth in 1971.

Suspension duties were left to Mac Tilton. Tilton utilized his vast racing and machining experience, most notably as Crew Chief for the 1971 & 1972 Trans Am championship winning Brock Racing Enterprises (BRE) team, to develop the suspension setup on the car.

John Knepp of Electramotive Engineering built the motors for Different Drummer Racing. Under Knepp's engine building program, Electramotive Engineering would go on to win the IMSA GTU Championship in 1979 with a Datsun 280ZX, followed by winning the GTO Championship in 1982.

Greg Sorrentino and these master craftsmen spent a meticulous two years to finish the build, before racing it at Mid-Ohio, Road Atlanta, and Pocono Raceway in the 1977 IMSA season. Throughout his ownership, Sorrentino raced against the likes of Al Holbert, David Hobbs, Sam Posey, John Paul Jr., Walt Maas, Brad Friselle, and Dick Barbour. After successfully competing in several SCCA and IMSA races, Greg decided to make the move into professional Can-Am racing. In 1979, Greg Sorrentino listed the car for sale in Competition Press and sold it to Loren St. Lawrence of Salem, Oregon.

Loren St. Lawrence was already an established and gifted Datsun racer from the Northwest Pacific. St. Lawrence, sponsored by VIPS Restaurant, was consistently the top C-Production driver in the Northwest Pacific region for most of the mid-1970s. St. Lawrence, coming off a 1978 trip to the National Runoffs, was ready to take the next step into IMSA GTU and the SCCA Trans-Am Series. He would further refine the car and take multiple wins at tracks like Portland International Raceway, Seattle Raceway, and Westwood Motorsports Park. One of his most notable races came at his home track of Portland International Raceway. In this IMSA GTU race, St. Lawrence would finish 8th, after a hard-fought battle with the likes of eventual GTU champion Don Devendorf, Yoshimi Katayama, Jeff Kline, Sam Posey, Dennis Aase, Frank Leary, Casey Mollett, and Joel Anderson.

St. Lawrence would eventually move onto a bigger Trans-Am car and sell the car in late 1980 to local Roger Burpee. Burpee raced the car with crew chief Chuck Duda from 1980 to 1982 in SCCA C-Production and IMSA GTU. Burpee won one SCCA Regional Championship with the car. During a double-header weekend, Burpee offered the car to his crew chief Chuck, insisting that if he could qualify in the car, he could race it. Duda would qualify 2nd and subsequently win the race! In 1983, the car was sold to Ron Emmerson in 1983. Ron Emmerson successfully campaigned the car from 1983 to 1991, competing and winning in many National and Regional races. Emmerson raced the car in the SCCA GT2 and IMSA GTU classes at tracks like Firebird Raceway in Phoenix, Sears Point, Laguna Seca, Portland, Seattle and at Road Atlanta for the 1984 Runoffs. A successful 1984 season led to Emmerson being crowned the 1984 SCCA Northern Pacific Regional Champion, and paved the way to the Runoffs at Road Atlanta. Emmerson would finish 10th after starting from 15th place. The car was even part an

unreleased commercial! The advertising company wanted to advertise Neil DeAtley's race team and Ron Emmerson's car was conveniently located at a nearby shop. A camera crew from New York and several individuals from Los Angeles flew into Portland in 1988 to shoot the commercial after an IMSA race. Unfortunately, the cars were putting out too much electronic interference from the ignition, causing the cameras to not work properly. As a result, the commercial was never released.

Emmerson sold the car in 1991 to Ed Humphrey, who raced the car in the Northwest Pacific International Conference of Sports Car Clubs (ICSCC) until 2008. Ed Humphrey would go on to win the 1999 ICSCC GT2 Championship with the car. Humphrey sold the car to Terry Miller of Keizer, Oregon in 2008. The car had gone full circle, as Terry Miller was a student of Loren St. Lawrence, who served as a high school counselor in the 1970's. Miller decided to strip the car, preparing it for a full restoration. The project was never finished and was sold to West Coast racer, Glenn Chiou. In Chiou's ownership, the car was reunited with its sister car, the ex-Loren St. Lawrence VIPs Restaurant Datsun 240Z. Chiou, an avid Datsun vintage racer and historian, now races both cars on the West Coast.

Owned by:

1977 - 1979:	Greg Sorrentino (Different Drummer Racing) - IMSA GTU
1979 - 1980:	Loren St. Lawrence - IMSA GTU, SCCA Trans-Am
1980 - 1982:	Roger Burpee (Chuck Duda) - IMSA GTU, SCCA Trans-Am
1983 - 1991:	Ron Emmerson - 1984 SCCA Northern Pacific Regional Champion
1991 - 2008:	Ed Humphrey - 1999 ICSCC GT2 Champion
2008 - 2015:	Terry Miller
2015 - Present:	Glenn Chiou