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PERFORMANCE

VAUXHALL



MOVING ON...

After four years and four months working on *Performance Vauxhall* the time has come for me to pass the reigns on to someone else... I've really enjoyed working on the magazine, and feel privileged to have carried on the legacy in what is a niche, but very dedicated market. I've met many great people, all with a passion for the marque, and have worked alongside some properly talented individuals over the last few years.

I'm delighted to announce that my successor, and the new Editor of *Performance Vauxhall* is Dan Furr. Dan is certainly no stranger to the magazine, having been a regular contributor for many years, and I've absolutely no doubt that he'll do a superb job, and I expect his existing 'fleet' of Vauxhalls to carry on growing!

But before I move aside and let him sit in the captain's chair I've got one final issue to deliver to you. In it you'll find a selection of VXR flavoured cars that we know you love, plus some remarkable, quirky and downright unusual motors including a Chevette with a Honda S2000 engine, and an Ascona with a Volvo turbo powerplant! I've said it before, and this time I say it with a tinge of sadness, but I really hope you enjoy the mag. I also hope you'll continue to support both the magazine and Mr Furr, and see what exciting features and ideas he has in store for you all. It's been a blast, see you around...

Don

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FOR DETAILS

MEET THE TEAM

The people who bring you *Performance Vauxhall*, and what we've been up to this month...



DAN WHITE
EDITOR

Packing up my desk and preparing for new adventure!



JULIAN JEFFERSON
ART EDITOR

House move to West Wales should be complete by the time you read this. At last!



JAMIE ARKLE
CONTRIBUTOR

Upping sticks and moving to a new city has kinda got in the way of any car progress!



DAN FURR
CONTRIBUTOR

Got a little carried away cleaning my Cavalier Turbo's engine bay... the car is now missing many of its internal organs!



DAVE REID
CONTRIBUTOR

Continuing to poke holes in the Cavalier... at this rate I'll just Hoover up what's left and be done with it!

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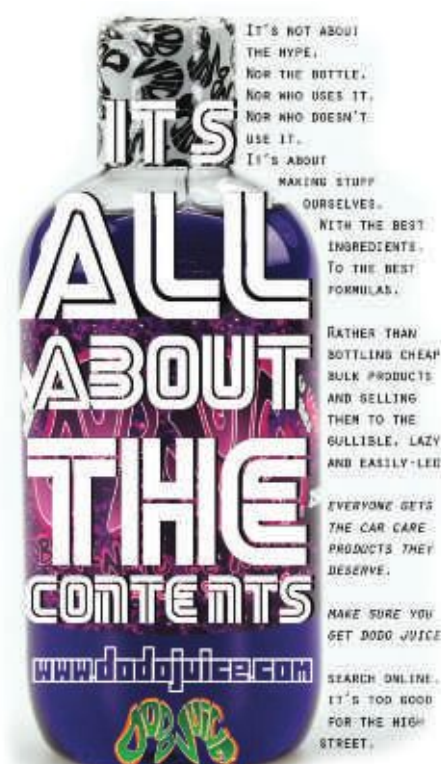
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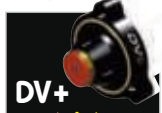
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ASTRAVAN

SWEDE SENSATION

Saab engines aren't exactly a secret these days, but that doesn't mean that we're not still impressed by their power potential, and few are more impressive than the B204 in Steven Thomson's Mk4 van

WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Steve McCann



FAST FACTS

- ★ Rebuilt Saab B204 with custom cams and OEM bottom end
- ★ Garrett GT3582R on tubular manifold with 3in turbo-back exhaust system
- ★ F23 with Qualife LSD
- ★ 40x17in (front) and 9x17in (rear) Azev A alloys
- ★ Custom livery



ASTRAVAN



Cast your mind back ten or so years to the middle of the last decade, back when Vectra B GSis were still a common sight on our roads, Cavalier Turbos could still be picked up for less than two grand (if you hunted hard), and the Nova was still the de facto entry level hatch for any young, self respecting Vauxhall fan. It was a very different world, and one ruled by the C20LET and XE. Now, that's still partially true of course, but it's also true to say that something happened about ten years ago that massively widened the appeal of fast Vauxhalls and made big power, forced induction performance an attainable goal for near enough everyone, the Saab

revolution. The news that the common, cheap-as-chips B204 could be slung between the wings of various Vauxhalls was nothing short of a revelation, and within months scabby goos were being eyed with interest by hundreds of die-hard Vauxhalls fans across the UK.

The passage of time may have served to dilute the rarity of the 'Saab Swap' but it certainly hasn't lessened its impact; B204-shod Vauxhalls are now part of the very fabric of the UK tuning world, with countless converts to the cause each and every year. None of this escaped the attention of Stevie Thomson, the owner of this Mk4 van. Having evidently decided that all out mechanical warfare is the best route to a big-power Vauxhall, he's spent the last half decade refining and re-mixing

"THIS IS THE SECOND SAAB-POWERED VAUXHALL I'VE BUILT, THE FIRST WAS A MK3 ASTRAVAN BACK IN 2007"



OWNER STEVEN THOMSON

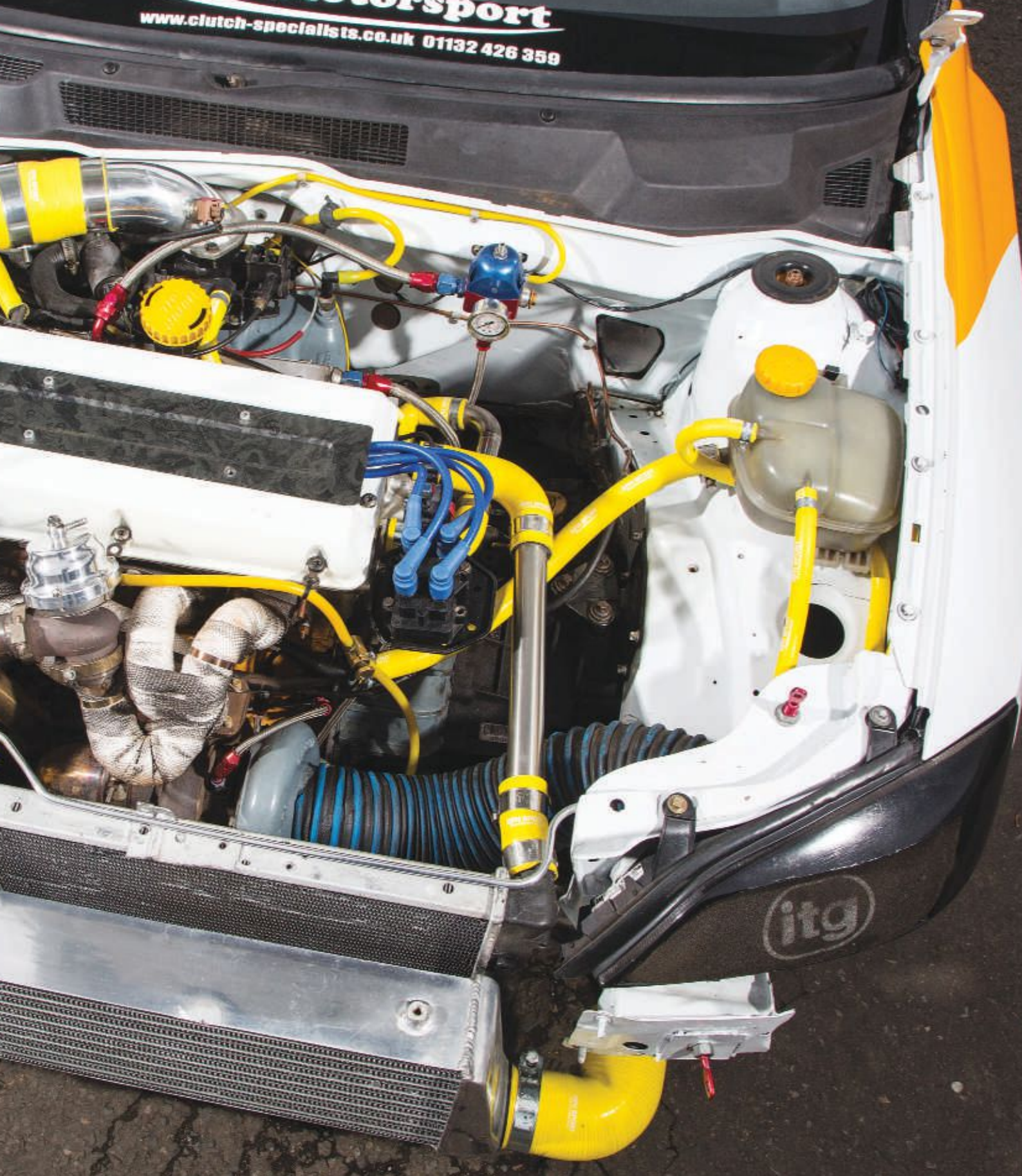
AGE 44

OCCUPATION Digger driver

FIRST VAUXHALL A Nova. It started out as a 1.2, then I fitted a 2.0 8v, before it finally rotted away.

WORST BIT OF THE BUILD Doing the Garret turbo swap hours before PVS!

BEST OF THE BUILD Getting it to PVS last year and setting that 11.2.



the Saab-Vauxhall formula, and he's now at the point where he can start to reap the rewards.

"This is the second Saab-powered Vauxhall I've built, the first being a Mk3 Astravan back in 2007," Stevie recalls. "Back then Saab swaps were a trickier undertaking as there was so little information around, and what was there was fairly basic and could be a little conflicting. It was very much a

case of diving in and working it out as you went along."

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

A fairly innocuous, low key starting point, then, but one which swiftly gave way to power politics and the need to wring every last ounce of performance from the engine in question. The Mk3 remained (and indeed remains) as a daily driver, Stevie instead buying a

Mk4 van with a knackered diesel lump for a mere £100. It was every inch the builder's van, with tired paint, a collection of scratches on most panels, and steels at all four corners, but it could be made to accommodate a B204 and, as far as Stevie was concerned that's all that mattered. His time spent learning the ropes with the Mk3 enabled Stevie to dive right in with the swap, and within a few months he'd

liberated a Saab 900 of its engine, ripped out the dead oil burner and replaced it with a B204. This was swiftly joined by GT30 hanging off a tubular manifold, a suitably beefed up fuel system, an intercooler and a few other bits and pieces, plus an 'off the peg' Saab ECU. It was cheap, cheerful and more than a little 'suck it and see' in its appearance, but it was tough and effective, allowing the

van to make 330bhp on its first dyno run and to run a none-too-shabby 12.7 on its first Santa Pod trip.

"One of the engine mounts broke halfway through the first run, but it was still great fun and I was happy with the time, particularly as it was still a largely unproven ex-builder's van!"

It's important to point out that this has always been a very grounded build; Stevie's never had an open cheque book to buy parts, all components that could be built at home have been, a strict budget has always been stuck to. Indeed, that's part of the fun for Stevie, who enjoys getting every last drop of performance from the basic building blocks of his Saab-Vauxhall hybrid. This approach has resulted in one or two mechanical hiccups along the way, the most fraught undoubtedly being a last-minute engine rebuild 48 hours before PVS 2014.

"The van was on the rollers at SOS Motorsport, we were re-mapping it to get the most out of the GT30," explains Stevie. "It was going fine until the turbo decided to shred itself and spit its bearings out!"

Many would've simply called it a day and written the show off, but not Stevie. Instead he got the van back home, gathered round some close mates (including previous feature car

owner Chrissy Nailen), put the kettle on and set to work. He'd been saving a GT35 for use later in the season but reasoned that it may as well be used there and then, and everyone involved set to work preparing the engine for its new blower. They worked through the night to get it ready for another session on the dyno the following morning, strapped it down with bleary eyes and aching hands, then stood back and hoped for the best.

WEIRD SCIENCE

"We'd made up a DIY exhaust manifold to be able to fit the turbo into place, so it was very much an experimental build. In the end we were all pleased with the results, as it made 507bhp."

The setup has been carefully refined since then, with a more sophisticated fuel system and management being among the most prominent changes, but the block is still totally stock, still retains its factory-fitted internals and has shown no signs of throwing in the towel any time soon.

"It was running 589bhp for most of last year and meant I set a personal best of 11.2, but I've since fitted custom cams and tweaked the map a tad, so I'm looking for 640bhp or so for this year," he explains. "I'm also used to hearing people say that I

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Saab B204 H-series with OE bottom pistons, rods and crank, cleaned head ports, custom profile cams, Vernier pulleys, custom top hat with 3in boost pipes, tubular exhaust manifold and custom 3in turbo-back stainless steel exhaust system, Tial 44mm external wastegate, Garrett GT3582R, 875cc injectors, twin Bosch 044 fuel pumps with fuel cell and list pump to swirl pot, 3 bar map sensor, KMS management

POWER

589bhp

TRANSMISSION

F23 five-speed with Quaife Limited Slip Differential, Saab equal length driveshafts

SUSPENSION

Gaz coilovers all, OE ARBs

BRAKES

Front: 308mm discs and with two-pot calipers
Rear: OE

WHEELS AND TYRES

Front: 10x17in Azev As
Rear: 9x17in Azev As

INTERIOR

Partially stripped with Cobra Evolution bucket seat, alloy fuel tank, flocked dash, remote fuel, engine and battery shut-offs, Stack boost gauge

EXTERIOR

Mk4 Astra van with custom black and yellow vinyl livery, custom front wings with rolled, pulled and re-welded arches for widened front wheels, bonnet raisers, modified fibreglass Astra GSi front bumper

THANKS

Chrissy Nailen for building the Saab engine, Dave Cormack for all his help with the build and mapping, and Rab the painter, AKA 'Top Gun', for spending so long sorting the paint and bodywork.



Stevie keeps his packed lunch in a colour coded box



Any car that has 'for racing use only' switches in it gets our vote



Jacked up stance more than hints
at this Astra's drag racing purpose



"PUSHING THIS ONE TO BREAKING POINT, WHATEVER THAT POINT
TURNS OUT TO BE, ISN'T REALLY AN ISSUE"





should fit a steel bottom end, but I'm not so sure... part of me likes pushing things as far as I can."

That 589bhp is sent through a F23 with stock Saab shafts, the exact same setup it's had for five years. It's never broken, never needed to be rebuilt and Stevie's never snapped or twisted a shaft. In fact the only change he's made to the transmission has been the addition of a Quaife LSD.

VINYL COUNTDOWN

Exterior changes? Well they largely fall into the 'function over form' category, those bonnet raisers being a case in point. Not only do they help get a touch more air into the red hot engine bay, they allow Stevie to run a custom top hat arrangement. The livery, one that blends Opel's classic 70s colours with 90s 'flying chips' undertones, is one that Stevie admits to having wanted on a Vauxhall for years, though actually getting it on the van involved a surprising amount of hassle.

"I've been through half a dozen different vinyl graphics firms in an effort to get the colour scheme just right, but for some reason or another they kept letting me down. I'm glad it's finally done and on the van!"

2015 was spent trying to get to grips with the van and its new found power, with the aforementioned 11.2 being the best time to date. This means that 2016 is the year when the gloves well and truly come off; Stevie's pushing for a mid-10 second time once he's further fettled the Saab lump and coaxed it into making a good 650bhp or so, with the stated aim of taking part in TOTB. After that? Well, we'll let Stevie field that.

"As I say, I'm not adverse to being a guinea pig here. I've dozens of Saab engines lying around my workshop, so pushing this one to breaking point, whatever that point turns out to be, isn't really an issue. I'm going to see how much power the standard bottom end can take!"

Panel gaps aren't high on Stevie's list of priorities



"Your headlamp aim's out sir"



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NEWSFEED

All the latest from the world of Vauxhall/GM/Opel

COOL CONCEPT

IS THIS THE FUTURE OF SPORTING VAUXHALLS? GM RELEASE DETAILS OF THEIR GROUNDBREAKING CONCEPT CAR...

It's no surprise that the latest concept car to emerge from the GM stable offers a huge amount of tech. The GT Concept's flagship feature is what GM call the Human Machine Interface (HMI), which means the car is operated purely by voice control and a central touchpad, making it button-less. It also has a self learning system which recognises the driver's habits and needs. So it will choose the right music, the correct route, or even the correct temperature for any given situation. GM proudly claim that the "HMI could even recognise whether passengers want to listen to hip-hop or chill-out music". It's primarily operated by voice control but there's also a large touchpad on the centre console for manual inputting of commands.

Style wise there's definitely echoes of the classic Opel GT, with unusual side window treatment and rather funky red tyres. As ever with these kind of cars they're a long way from a production reality, but it's always interesting to see what the future holds and it's not unusual for concept car tech to filter down into normal models, albeit not straight away. We don't know about you, but we'd happily own one!

Groovy coloured tyres. Are they the future, or just concept car folly?



NEWS > SHORTS

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Mokka gets a mild makeover

THE X-FACTOR

The latest incarnation of Vauxhall's impressive 'soft roader'

► Also revealed at Geneva will be this, the Mokka X – the X being the newly adopted signifier for all future SUV, or 'crossover' vehicles. The styling has been refreshed with a new front end treatment and signature double wing LED daytime ruling lights. The interior

too has received a makeover, with a similar treatment to the new Astra, giving a simple, more elegant cockpit. A large touchscreen is now the dominant interior feature which incorporates a new generation infotainment system, controlling more of the car's function, meaning

a less cluttered dash and a more intuitive functionality.

Engine-wise the existing 1.6-litre 'Whisper Diesel' engine is retained, and has been joined by a new generation 1.4-litre Di Turbo petrol unit (as found in the Astra) giving a credible 152PS. The all-wheel drive

technology is both efficient and intelligent, delivering 100% of the power to the front wheels, but with the ability to transmit up to half through the rears depending on the road conditions. New colours including 'Amber Orange' and 'Lava Red' will be available.



Love 'em or loathe 'em, electric cars are increasingly popular



SHOCK TREATMENT

► After the less than successful Ampera was pulled from dealerships GM have gone back to the drawing board and conjured up this, the all new five-door, five-seat Ampera-e. It's designed to go head-to-head with the likes of the Audi A3 e-tron, e-Golf and BMW i3, and is claimed to have a longer range than most electric cars. It's expected that it will share a drivetrain with the Chevrolet Bolt which features a 197bhp, 266lb/ft electric motor with a range of around 200 miles. It should be pretty swift too as the Bolt can hit

60 in less than 7 seconds.

The Ampera-e is just one of the 29 new models GM are planning to release between now and 2020. The jury's still out as to whether electric cars really are the future, and it's not been confirmed whether the 'e' will even come to the UK, presumably after the original Ampera's lukewarm reception. One thing's for sure we're going to see a lot more vehicles which aren't reliant on fossil-fuel derived methods of propulsion over the coming years.

*TOTB CONFIRMED

We're pleased to announce that the Team Vauxhall have once again chosen PVS to be the venue for their qualifying round for Ten Of The Best. The quickest Vauxhalls in the country will blast down the Santa Pod strip in a bid to set a time worthy of getting into the team, and representing the Griffin at TOTB 2016. We're looking forward to seeing boundaries pushed, and new records being set.

*TOURER

The Astra Sports Tourer is now on sale priced from £16,585. The all new range features a choice of the 1.0 three cylinder, 1.6 110PS diesel, and the 1.6 BiTurbo – capable of 137mph and 0-60 in 8.4 seconds. It's packed with tech, and comes complete with Vauxhall's "ground-breaking" OnStar connectivity system.



GEAR

More great products and deals that we've tracked down for you.



ASTRA J VXR TURBO

Turbo Dynamics have been working with WG Motorworks to create a new turbo for the Astra J VXR. The MDX614 hybrid allows the J to deliver around 100bhp over standard when fitted along with supporting mods. Utilising this turbo WG Motorworks have created what they call their Level 4 package, from which they have seen 370-385bhp with seamless power right up to the new 7200rpm limiter. It's perfect for those looking to extract loads more power from their VXR without requiring excessive levels of boost. Contact Turbo Dynamics for pricing.

PRICE POA

CONTACT SALES@TURBODYNAMICS.CO.UK,
WWW.TURBODYNAMICS.CO.UK

MOMO STEERING WHEEL

Aftermarket steering wheels fell out of favour in recent years with the advent of standard fit airbags – but it seems that an increasing number of people are ditching the in-car-explosive in favour of cool wheels such as this Momo Dark Fighter. Made in Italy, the 350mm wheel features leather and Alcantara and mounting bosses are available separately.

PRICE £239.99 **CONTACT** WWW.B-GDIRECT.COM



HEAT INDUCTION TOOL

Here's a simple, but very clever gadget if you're the kind of person who frequently comes across stubborn bolts – it's more for pros than DIYers as it's a costly affair – but it could make your life a lot easier. We all know that heating recalcitrant fixings is the way to loosen them, and that using a naked flame isn't really a sensible option most of the time. This device from SIP comes with heating elements that reach over 800 degrees C in seconds. The elements are replaceable, and can be bent or moulded into different shapes, depending on access. One of our colleagues on *Retro Cars* magazine (John-Joe) has used one and reckons it's "brilliant" and he certainly knows more than most about fiddling with rusty nuts!

PRICE £576

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RACEPAK DIGI DASH

How cool is this? You definitely don't have to be a hardcore race nut to hanker after a spot of that glowing blue action. The clincher is that it's ridiculously easy to fit too. We've not seen that in a full-on digital cluster before. What the electronics wizards at Racepak have done is to engineer their IQ3 display to work directly from your car's OBDII port. As you can imagine that makes this one totally plug and play and gives it easy access to all the essential info through your car's built-in sensors. You can program up to 28 of them to display on 4 selectable, user-defined pages. It also comes with all the usual bells and whistles like shift lights, flashing warning text and alarms to let you know of any imminent catastrophic engine failure, which is always handy. Of course you can manually wire it in if you feel the need but the fact that all cars now come with a diagnostic port makes that notion redundant on anything manufactured after about 2001. In other words it's the future.

PRICE £670

CONTACT WWW.RACEPAK.COM

CHEVETTE DAMPERS

The Vauxhall Chevette is becoming increasingly rare today, but that hasn't stopped GAZ from offering improved damping for those that remain. GAZ fully adjustable GT dampers enable the bump and rebound rate to be adjusted via an easily accessible knob on the side of the units. GAZ can set the dampers up for general road use and they will also be suitable for the occasional track or sprint use, or alternatively they can be set up for serious racing use if you wish. The GAZ GT dampers number GT6-2182 (Front) and GT6-2298 (Rear) will fit Chevette hatchbacks, vans and estates made from 1975 to 1984 (Except the HS2300) and retail at £73.50 and £63.64 each respectively. Chevette Saloons use the same front dampers but require GT7-2183 for the rear retailing at £73.25 each.

PRICE VARIOUS

CONTACT WWW.GAZSHOCKS.COM



ENERGIZER JUMP PACK

Is it just us or are jump packs getting smaller and smaller every day? This new offering from Energizer looks exactly like one of those slim line portable power packs you use when your phone runs out of juice, and I suppose it is, but the key thing here is it's also able to start anything up to a 2-litre motor several times from a single charge. You then simply re-charge it from your fag lighter (or the mains) when you're up and on your way. As it's small enough to keep in your glove box and packing a long-lasting 5600mAh Lithium-Polymer cell battery, one of these could prove to be a genuine lifesaver. Want one? Of course you do so click on the world's longest ever domain name below.

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plastic fantastic

WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Stephen Colbran

An HSR-kitted Chevette with a DTV suspension setup, pinch-point brakes and the small matter of a worked-over Honda F20C VTEC screaming away – what's not to love?



Any Vauxhall fan with even a passing interest in club-level motorsport will have noticed that though Vauxhalls themselves can be a fairly rare sight (depending on the nature of the discipline of course), Griffin-badged engines most certainly are not.

There's a reason that half the rallying Escorts in the UK run the venerable C20XE and their owners pick said engine over the Ford Zetec, and that's because even after all these years it's still a potent and tunable lump that's utterly suited to motorsport, largely because it was designed with it in mind. Of course it just occasionally works the other way, with the result being a Vauxhall with a decidedly odd

engine under the bonnet, one from another part of the world and another manufacturer entirely. An engine that has earned its stripes in the rallying world of late is the VTEC, specifically the one that was fitted to the firm's S2000 sports car. We actually featured a Corsa C with this setup a good few years ago, and today's feature car, while being vastly different in almost every respect,

is powered by the same, screaming, high-revving engine.

We're getting ahead of ourselves though, and we should probably wind back, take stock and explain a little more about the car in question, its owner and his reasons for shoe-horning a Honda engine into a late '70s Vauxhall hatchback.

"My dad was a successful touring car racer in the '70s





FAST FACTS

- ★ Honda F20C DOHC 16v VTEC
- ★ Quaife-Ford 'rocket box'
- ★ ZF LSD
- ★ Custom propshaft
- ★ Fibreglass HSR kit

VTEC CHEVETTE

and even competed against Gerry Marshall, so cars have always been a big part of my life,” recalls it’s owner, Oliver Chatham. “I remember we were at the NEC Classic Car Show about fifteen years ago and he pointed to a Chevette HS and mentioned that it was the best handling car he ever driven.”

High praise indeed, and it evidently struck a chord with Oliver as a few years later he found himself handing over cash for this car, albeit in a vastly different guise. It’d already been prepared for competition and had had its wheezy factory OHV 1300 replaced by a Ford Pinto, plus a Type 9 gearbox and Manta axle. This setup proved enough to keep Oliver entertained for a while, but the urge for greater power was always there, something made all the more acute as he knew the car could certainly handle it. This eventually culminated in the obvious step up the Ford engine range, Oliver swapping the Pinto for a dry-sumped 2.1 YB and a Quaife four-speed ‘rocket box.’ This particular YB had been built for club circuit racing and had therefore been converted to naturally aspirated guise, with a quartet of Weber 48 carbs slung over the side and a suitably high compression ratio.

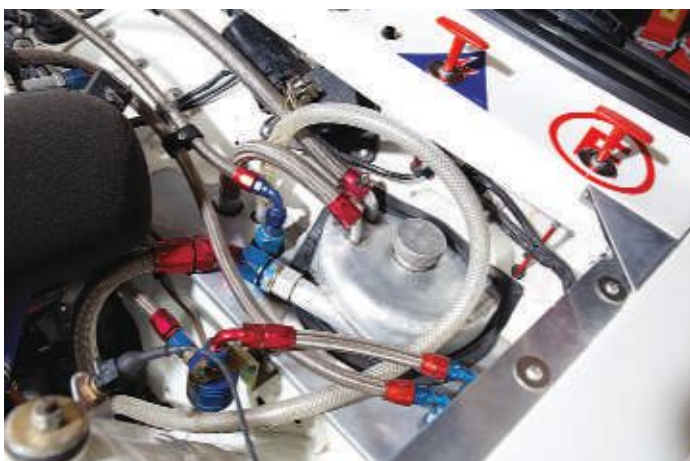
HANGING OUT

“It was certainly quick and changed the car for the better, but the YB’s turbocharged origins were always there; we could never get the compression as high as we’d have ideally liked, for example,” explains Oliver. “That engine eventually died in spectacular fashion, it shot a rod right out of the block while doing well over a ton down Silverstone’s Hanger Straight. I’ve still got the block hanging up on my garage wall...”

So it was that Oliver once again found himself in the market for a new power plant, and number of different options were actively considered. The XE, darling of the club motorsport scene, was evaluated before being



H&S manifold is automotive sculpture



Some pictures need no caption!



OWNER OLIVER CHATHAM

AGE 34
OCCUPATION Self-employed
FIRST VAUXHALL A 1.2 Corsa B; life had to get better!
WORST PART OF THE BUILD Getting the fibreglass kit to fit correctly
BEST PART OF THE BUILD Doing almost 160mph down the Hangar Straight in fourth gear!
WHAT'S NEXT More track time



rejected, Oliver deciding that it would need too much investment to be able to handle the power he wanted in anything approaching a reliable fashion. Attention eventually fell on the Honda VTEC, with the S2000's F20C being the obvious choice thanks to its excellent design and light weight. It's also an engine that

“IT’S JUST AMAZINGLY BALANCED AND THE ENGINE...
THE ENGINE IS JUST SENSATIONAL”





Definitely not an engine you expect to see propelling a Chevette!

It may have an 'alien' engine, but there's no denying the heritage



"IT REVS PAST 9000RPM, HAS LOADS OF POWER AND SOUNDS INSANE"

pumps out a very handy 240bhp, can rev to almost 9000rpm and (thanks to its all alloy construction) weighs next to nothing. Say what you want about the more prosaic offerings found in lowly, road going Civics, Honda well and truly nailed it when they designed the F20C.

"I got the engine from a breakers, then set about working out how to fit it into the car without sacrificing the Quaife 'rocket box.' I was able to get some Escort-VTEC mounts from YukuSpeed and made them fit in the Chevette's engine bay, but I still needed to find a way of mating the Ford gearbox to the Honda engine."

A solution was soon found by way of a bell-housing conversion plate from Race Engine Design (the same firm also supplied a dry sump kit), a stunningly engineered part that allowed Oliver to connect the Dagenham-sourced 'box to the Hamamatsu-built engine. A lightweight flywheel and a Tilton competition clutch complete the setup, with a custom single-piece prop (with a correspondingly enlarged tunnel) snaking its way to a ZF LSD differential. Internal modifications have been forgone in favour of proven induction

and exhaust work, the former handled by Jenvey throttle bodies (controlled by Omex management), the latter by a stunning H&S tubular manifold and system. The result? Well, we'll let Oliver fill you in.

"Put it this way, I wholeheartedly agree with my dad's assessment of the Chevette. It's just amazingly balanced and the engine... the engine is just sensational. It revs past 9000rpm, has loads of power and sounds insane at the same time."

WEIGHT WATCHER

We should also stress just how comically light this car is, tipping the scales at approximately 750kg, possibly a tad less now that the all alloy Honda lump has been installed. Not only does that make it fun to drive, it makes it devastatingly effective when being used in anger. Indeed, the list of cars that Oliver's out-driven on some of the UK's most famous circuits is deeply impressive, with Lola T70 and Ferrari 250SWB drivers all having had to have made way for the 'plastic fantastic' Chevette, though it should also be noted that the implosion of the YB happened whilst Oliver was chasing

down the latter car!

Weight is only a partial factor in this car's sensational handling though, and its chassis certainly plays a major part as well. Oliver struck up a friendship with Gerry Johnstone early on in the build, and the DTV engineering whiz wasted no time in furnishing him with colourful stories and incredibly detailed suspension and brake setup information. The four-linked-Watts linkage rear end is a case in point, with Oliver's car now sporting an arrangement that's as close as it's realistically possible to get to the one used by the works HSRs



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Rebuilt 1997cc Honda F20C with 11.0:1 CR and 87x84mm bore x stroke, RED dry sump kit, Honda gaskets, Jenvey throttle bodies with Omex 710 management, H&S tubular manifold and stainless steel system, T1R crank pulley, alloy Pace radiator with silicone coolant and fluid hoses, Demon Tweaks air box, Mocal oil cooler, NGK spark plugs, custom engine mounts, modified crossmember and relocated steering rack, high pressure fuel pump

POWER

265bhp

TRANSMISSION

Close ratio Quaife 'rocket box,' RED bell-housing conversion plate, Tilton competition clutch, Moss clutch cylinder, competition clutch release bearing, custom one-piece propshaft from Northwest Propshafts, ZF LSD with uprated half-shafts, enlarged transmission recesses

SUSPENSION

Front: Spax adjustable dampers and uprated lowering springs, Superflex polyurethane bushes, rose-jointed TCAs

Rear: Spax coilovers, Rally Design four-linked rear end with Watts Linkage, Superflex polyurethane bushes, rose-jointed lower arms

BRAKES

Front: BRT alloy hubs, Wilwood four-pot calipers and Girling discs, high friction pads, braided lines, Tilton top-mounted bias pedal box
Rear: BRT alloy hubs, Wilwood two-pot calipers and Girling discs, high friction pads, braided lines, Rally Design fly-off handbrake

WHEELS AND TYRES

7x13in Minilite alloys with Dunlop Sport tyres

INTERIOR

Safety Devices bolt-in roll cage, Mugen FIA-compliant bucket seat, plumbed in Lifeline fire suppression system, alloy fuel cell, remote fuel and engine shut-offs, Momo pedals,

EXTERIOR

Chevette hatchback with fibreglass HSR kit, fibreglass bonnet, boot and spoilers, bonnet pins, livery

THANKS

Interpro Automotive, Race Engine Design, Competition Supplies, Bruce at Tilton Silverstone, Northwest Propshafts, Dave at Quaife, Demon Tweaks, TJ Motorsport, Gerry Johnstone for all his help and advice, Rally Design, TTV Racing, Merlin Motorsport



The build is one of impeccable quality



This is a truly single minded car, built with one purpose – to go fast!



Everywhere you look there are neat details

VTEC CHEVETTE



We bet this surprises a few challengers!



'back in the day.'

"Gerry said that they gained over a second off the line by playing around with the lengths and location of the top-links, and he gave me the old DTV drawings and blueprints to work from," he enthuses. "I followed the plans as closely as I could when locating the top-links and the rear axle, and the result is that it's now near enough spot on."

FIXTURES & FITTINGS

Competition cars can often be excused for being a tad 'rough around the edges' as they're very much the embodiment of function over form. This doesn't apply to Oliver's Chevette though, with each and every aspect having been painstakingly planned, designed and applied. He also admits to having something of a thing for stainless steel, and the material can be found dotted throughout the car – often in areas completely invisible to anyone not lying under it with a spanner and a torch!

"I'm a big fan of it yeah," Oliver chuckles. "I spend way too much time and money sourcing and buying stainless fasteners and fixings, but I love it; it's strong, looks amazing and never rusts."

The sum-total of all this work and obsessive attention to detail is a simply stunning Vauxhall competition car, one that manages to blend some very disparate elements in a manner that



There could only be one choice of wheel for this out-and-out racer



never feels forced. A modern, high-revving 2.0 from a Japanese sports car in a simple looking Vauxhall hatchback? It really shouldn't work, not in a million years. Yet it does, in a perfect and effortless fashion. Partly that's down to the lightweight and charismatic nature of the F2oC itself (it harks back to the very charms that made the original HSR such a phenomenal success in the first place), but the way all the elements have been combined also plays a part. Oliver's pulled off quite the trick here, and his reward is a Chevette that's capable of decimating almost anything you care to mention on some of Britain's most daunting and challenging circuits. ○

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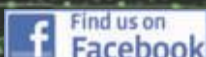
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SM TUNING



Ultimate Stance

The Telford International Centre played host to an event dedicated to those who worship at the altar of stance! **WORDS & PHOTOS** Ade Brannan



Shaun Mint's Nova demonstrating that it's not the amount of mods that matter, it's what you do with them that counts



Belly scraping rides are the order of the day at Ultimate Stance



It may have been darkest winter, and the inevitable paint chipping and metal eating gritters may have been terrorising our roads, but the boldest and shiniest celebration of all that is wild went ahead! Yes Ultimate Stance's year two was one hell of an event. An event still in its infancy, but one which has swaggered in and already made itself a 'must see' show.

The Wheel Whores stand took centre

stage with its infamous pink carpet and 16ft trophy – it's clear this lot aren't holding back! With the entire centre filled with the UK's finest, and a fair share of Europe's best too it was a packed event. And it's really one for everyone, as if you like low cars on cool wheels (who doesn't?) you'll struggle to fail to be entertained here. There's everything ranging from blatant show divas aired out on the deck, to hard used drifters, to cars which have seen

more than their fair share of speedhump dramas.

It's not just good for the visitors, if you're an exhibitor it's a top weekend too. Set up on the Saturday starts with getting your road filth washed off in the hose and bucket filled area, you're then directed inside where you're parked in your spot ready for some serious buftying. After a few hours there a mass exodus to the nearby restaurants on site, followed by a party in the on

site hotel which can be booked for exhibitors by the organisers. No camping/slumming it here! Top notch hotel treatment keeps the hangovers a bit more bearable for the chaos that comes the next day; and it sure does when the bassline kicks in and the public flood in in their thousands all ready to Instagram your ride! There were obviously all manner of crazy motors on show but we've picked out the best Vauxhalls on display. Enjoy!



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It's refreshing to see a 5-door being given the full treatment

CORSA B MATTHEW LAMLEY

After moving on from his previous slammed MK3 Astra, Matthew decided to go for a quite unloved version of the ubiquitous Corsa B. Yes a humble 5-door, and even an example which was previously covered in huge daisy stickers! After many hours of peeling, the Corsa was run as a daily on a heavy static drop until temptation got the better of him. Yes the one time shopping trolley is now home to an elaborate Air Lift Performance kit running V2 Management. You only have to peek in the boot to see how well finished the DIY install is. Inside the meticulous theme continues with a

plush retrim by Inspire Automotive. Matthew is keen to point out that this was one of the few farmed out jobs on the car, as he even did the paintjob himself! Wheel-wise we have a classic set of 15in rebuilt BBS RMs which were most likely the mod which meant the car was parked up on the hallowed Wheel Whores Pink Carpet for the duration of the show!

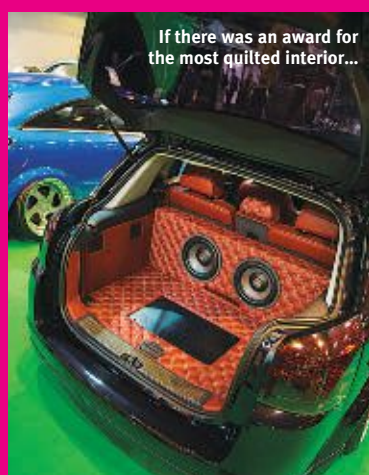
In the future Matthew is looking to fit an old school 1.7TD lump for equal measures of smoke and poke. We just hope he keeps the tailpipe pointed firmly away from the other show cars and fancy show-hall carpets at the next event!



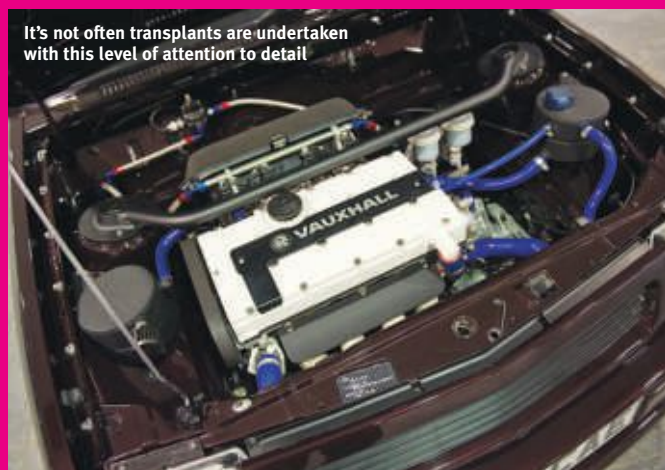
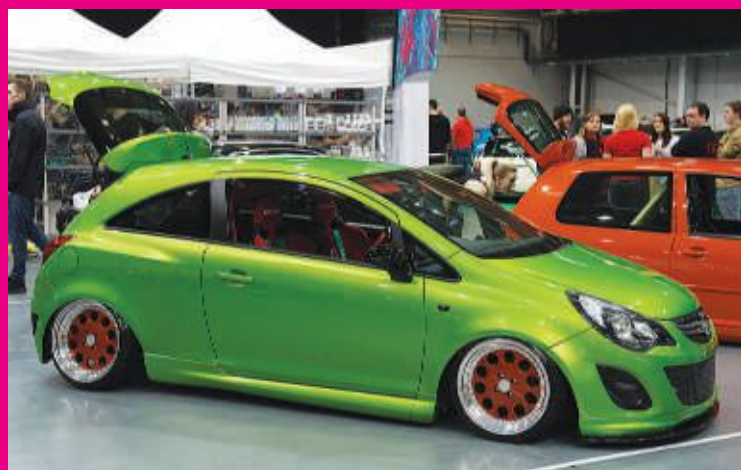
ULTIMATE STANCE SHOW



Aaron Taylors' stunning Signum was looking as cool as ever



If there was an award for the most quilted interior...



It's not often transplants are undertaken with this level of attention to detail



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26 th Mar	Blyton Park	£149
28 th Mar	Blyton Park	£149
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2 nd Apr	Donington Park	£189
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7 th Apr	Spa Francorchamps	£295
9 th Apr	Blyton Park	£149
12 th Apr	Oulton Park	£179
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17 th Apr	Croft (105dba)	£189
17 th Apr	Blyton Park	£149
18 th Apr	Donington Park	£189
18 th Apr	Castle Combe	£179
20 th Apr	Croft (105dba)	£159
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24 th Apr	Anglesey (GP & Coastal)	£159
25 th Apr	Bedford Autodrome GT	£149
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ASCONA A



SEASONS IN THE SUN

Christoffer Åström wanted a fresh retro track toy for the summer. Fortunately, he had oodles of winter in which to work on it...

WORDS Dan Bevis **PHOTOS** Mattias Johlsson Olsson



FAST FACTS

- ★ Volvo B23 engine with Garrett GT30
- ★ BMW ZF 5-speed gearbox
- ★ deCarbon/Bilstein dampers, cut springs
- ★ 15in Compomotive alloys with Toyo tyres
- ★ Fully caged & Cobra Monaco seats

ASCONA A

They put something in the water in Scandinavia. They must do. Something mind-altering, something to stimulate and spur on, to help its inhabitants push through the harsh and lengthy winters. It's a unique quirk to the inhabitants of Sweden, Denmark and Norway that as soon as the denser snow starts to elbow its way into their scenic vistas, they roll their cars into the garage, light up the paraffin stove, stick the kettle on, and hoik up their sleeves. They sequester themselves away for the biting winter months and emerge blinking into the spring sunlight with an entirely transformed car. What was once rusty will now be pristine. And then next winter, what was originally Opel-powered will now be running a sodding great Volvo turbo motor. And next year... well, you get the idea. The clichéd perception of the petrolhead Swede, disappearing for months and then tearing out of the garage sideways and heading straight to Gatebil, must have some grounding in reality.

Christoffer Åström certainly makes a strong case for the theory. Better known as Coffa, he's a man unaverse to knuckling down and weaving genuine automotive magic in his cosy garage. "I've built a number of different cars over the years," he explains, with casual modesty and a whisper of understatement. "There was a '74 Opel Kadett C with a 2.0 16v engine from a Calibra, 5-speed gearbox, Manta GT/E LSD rear axle and Nissan Skyline brakes. Then there was the complete renovation of a '67 Pontiac GTO, and also a really hard-tuned Skyline with over 550bhp on the rollers. And a number of others." This, then, is a man of varied tastes. And he's doing much to dispel our caricaturised perception that the default Swedish mode is 'stick a Volvo engine in it'.





It's incredibly strong, and getting big power is simple – it's easy to see why Volvo turbo engines are the Scandinavian's weapon of choice

“THIS SUMMER WE’LL LET THE BOOST FLOW AND HOPE FOR 450-500HP AT THE REAR WHEELS”

Then again, clichés exist for a reason. Spoiler alert: this turquoise Ascona has a Volvo engine in it. And that's a very good thing. But before we get ahead of ourselves, what prompted Coffa to play with an Ascona A in the first place?

“Well, it was more of a coincidence than anything that I chose this car,” he admits. “I have a '75 Kadett GT/E that I'm restoring, but it's so much work and very hard to find the right parts, so I bought the Ascona to have something

that I could use as a fun car on weekends and track days. I bought the car from a friend who had grown tired of it as a project – I just called him and we talked and came up with a price.”

POOR STARTER

So far, so simple – but this wasn't a case of blowing off the steam of an involved resto project by acquiring a ready-to-go track car and having some laughs. No, the new addition to the fleet ended up being quite a resto

project of its own...

“It was in really poor condition,” Coffa recalls. “The body was very rusty and in need of repair and a new paint job, the engine didn't run as it should, it was all just horribly bad.” Thank goodness for those long winters in the Arctic Circle, eh? When the barometer slips into the ‘seriously, stay put and find another pair of longjohns’ zone, there's plenty of time for refreshing old Opels. And so Coffa set to work.

“I have to admit that when I bought

the car, I was perhaps a little too hasty in my inspection, and I didn't even test-drive it – I just trailered it up and brought it home,” he says. “I gave it a thorough inspection when I got back and, well... it was a lot worse than I first thought. The body was shot, the engine refused to run properly – I had no choice but to strip it all down and start from scratch.” A daunting prospect for some, but Coffa is a veteran in such matters. It's also important to remember that this kind of

ASCONA A

Initially disheartening realisation can in fact be quite liberating. You know that there'll be no sticking plasters in the build, you can start with a solid base and be sure that everything's done right. Particularly when you're taking on someone else's old project.

"I fixed up the body, then painted the shell dark grey at first," he continues. "But then I changed my mind as I wanted more of a retro racer look, so I painted it turquoise and added some matte black stripes, as well as painting the bonnet black. I also shortened the rear Volvo axle, as I wanted to make room for my Compomotive wheels." These, you've probably spotted, are very cool indeed; 15in FH500s that Coffa's stripped down and rebuilt with huge shiny lips, boasting an 8.5in girth up front and 9.5in at the rear. And, of course, if you want to run that sort of footprint on an unarched Ascona, you need a fair bit of chopping, grinding and lateral thinking to squeeze everything in.

SWEDISH CHEF

You'll have noted a reference to the Volvo axle there. In fact, the Swedish drivetrain was in situ when Coffa bought the car, from the LSD rear and onward to the sturdy redblock engine up front; this Ascona SR was actually a reasonably well-known 1990s drag car, although it was far from ready to play in the state that he found it. There were gremlins that needed chasing out, demons to be exorcised. "I changed the turbo, fitted new pressure pipes, and generally started to troubleshoot the

motor to see what was what," says Coffa. "It had been built on a Garrett GT30R ball-bearing turbo with a TiAL 44mm dump valve and a 3in exhaust system, but it wouldn't run right – it turned out that the wastegate was leaking, which was why the turbo wouldn't boost as it should. I fixed the leak and tried again with a 50mm dump valve and a Turbosmart Hyper-Gate 45mm wastegate, and it was all working great... but then the gearbox broke after five minutes! So I switched to another Volvo M45 gearbox, which lasted all of two days – that was the point at which I decided to swap to a BMW ZF 'box with a hydraulic clutch. That seems to be working alright so far!"

With the engine running sweetly, the transmission beefed up and the axle rebuilt, it was time to optimise the chassis. 'Power is nothing without control,' as Pirelli were so keen to tell us in the nineties, and there's no point throwing oodles of power into something with weak brakes and sagging suspension.

After much consideration and headscratching, the final decision was to run with de Carbon struts up front and Bilsteins at the rear, with cut springs all round (a controversial choice; some of you will swear by them, others will think they're the devil's work, but they're doing the job here with gusto), in conjunction with rear ladder bars and a Panhard rod. Where the brakes are concerned, we're looking at discs all round – Volvos out back, with the front setup coming from an Opel Rekord.

OPEN THE TAPS

So, let's talk power. "The car was tuned at Motor-Nord, who adjusted it to 302bhp at the wheels on low boost," says Coffa with a glint of deserved pride. "This summer we'll let the boost flow and hope for 450-500bhp at the rear wheels..." You see how he's talking in terms of seasons again? That's very much the Swedish way, allowing the year's chronological divisions to call the shots. A symbiotic approach; man, machine, nature.

"I built the car to be used, it's not a high-end show car," he explains, although you'd be forgiven if the flawless aesthetics had you fooled. "It's been built to be driven hard, to be a fun car to drive on track, or just cruise around the city. I've received great reactions from people young and old. I didn't expect it, but I'm very grateful!"

An over-riding vision in Coffa's head throughout the build was to create something that looked as if it had been modified in the 1980s, and the loud paint, old-school Compomotives and rakish side-stripes fulfil this image admirably. The way the things sits is just a joy – hunkered-down and motorsport aggressive – and that track-oriented vibe is further augmented by the modest period aero mods. But while the Ascona shouts out 'retro' with sonorous clarity, there's another term that's vying for position at the loud-hailer's mouthpiece: 'quality'. Coffa claims that it wasn't built as a show car, which makes its looks more impressive; in crafting a bulletproof track car, he's apparently ended up with a faultless and pristine showpiece by accident.



Hardcore interior still has traces of its drag racing past

And we can thank the Swedish winter for that – all those hours with no place to be but the warmth of the garage, tinkering, honing, refining... there truly is something in the water over there. It's pure melted snow, breeding ambition and inspiring excellence as the months creak by. Slow time, fast cars. That's the Scandinavian way. ○

"I WANTED A RETRO RACER LOOK, SO I PAINTED IT TURQUOISE AND ADDED MATTE BLACK STRIPES"





TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Volvo B23 redblock, Garrett GT3075R turbo, Turbosmart Hyper-Gate 45mm wastegate, TIAL 50mm dump valve, balanced rotating assembly with forged pistons, H-profile con rods, uprated crankshaft, ARP bolts, ported 398 cylinder head, cut ring head gasket, stiffer valve springs, KLR S/T5 cams, custom exhaust manifold by Robert Ajden, BMC air filter, MegaSquirt 2V3 engine management with launch control, Precision 1000cc injectors, Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator, Bosch 044 fuel pump

TRANSMISSION

BMW ZF 5-speed, lightened flywheel, Sachs 618 reinforced pressure plate with 240mm sintered clutch, 30mm-shortened Volvo 1031 rear axle with clutch-type LSD, modified rear hubs for 4x100 PCD

SUSPENSION

de Carbon shocks (front), Bilstein shocks (rear), cut springs, rear ladder bar, adjustable Panhard rod

BRAKES

Opel Rekord front calipers and ventilated discs, Volvo rear discs

WHEELS & TYRES

8.5x15in (front) and 9.5x15in (rear) Compomotive FH500 – converted to 4x100 and rebuilt with 3in front and 3.5in rear lips, 195/45 (front) and 205/45 (rear) Toyo Proxes T1-R

INTERIOR

Full rollcage, Cobra Monaco Pro seats, Bad Motherf*cker steering wheel, custom gauge cluster, aftermarket gauges, modified handbrake lever

EXTERIOR

Turquoise paint, matte black stripes, matte black bonnet, Kamei-style front spoiler, custom rear spoiler

THANKS

“Mattias at Dub-sofine.com, Roger at Motornord, Johan “Maas”, Alexander



Are there any wheels in existence that would suit this Ascona better?



ASTRA VXR

on the right

WORDS Dan Furr **PHOTOS** Ashley Cashfield

TRACK

Jason Anthony's track-focused 331bhp Mk5 Astra VXR has been breathed on by both legendary Vauxhall touring car builder, Triple Eight Race Engineering, and celebrated Griffin tuning firm, Courtenay Sport...





FAST FACTS

- ★ 331bhp Z20LEH engine
- ★ Quaife limited-slip differential
- ★ KW Clubsport coilovers
- ★ VXRacing four-pot brakes
- ★ Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.2 wheels

can't talk right now. I'm trying to fix the gearbox of an Aston Martin V8 Vantage track car before it goes racing tomorrow!" When these words fall out of the mouth of a *Performance Vauxhall* feature car owner, it's safe to assume that his Griffin of choice is gonna be something spicy. Indeed, when we eventually manage to pin down motorsport mechanic, Jason Anthony, he reveals to us that the VXR-badged Astra that he's been in possession of for the past four years is one of the few production Mk5s that passed through the doors of Triple Eight Race Engineering's famous 'Vauxhall

Performance Centre'.

"I bought the car in 2012 when it was a Stage 3 VXR that had been treated to an EDS map, VXRacing-branded AP Racing four-piston front brakes, a large intercooler, Team Dynamics Triple Eight alloys, Eibach lowering springs and an enlarged Remus exhaust system," explains the spanner-wizard from Norwich. "I'd owned V6 Vectra Bs and a modified Mk3 Cavalier SRi 8-valve before the Astra, but a desire for a newer Vauxhall with plenty of power drew me to the VXR range," he says.

Designated the upgrade identification number '000027' by

Triple Eight engineers, Jason's Astra was packing power-enhancing equipment that had been added with Vauxhall's seal of approval; Triple Eight was responsible for producing the manufacturer's British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) chariots from 1997 right up until 2009, and the Banbury firm was the 'go to' outfit if you wanted dealer-approved aftermarket parts added to your VXR without voiding its factory warranty.

"My Astra was chucking out 295bhp when I first got hold of it," continues Jason. "I was quite happy with that level of power from a car that I had bought to use as a daily



“A DESIRE FOR A NEWER VAUXHALL WITH PLENTY OF POWER DREW ME TO THE VXR RANGE”

driver. I did want to lift its appearance though, resulting in the purchase of a set of Revolution Millennium six-spokes, and when a bunch of my fellow VXR-owning mates decided that a trip to the Nürburgring was in order, I decided to remove the cool-running thermostat that was present beneath my car's bonnet before fitting a large-core Courtenay Sport alloy radiator that promised to be more effective at keeping toasty temperatures at bay during time spent at the track,” he tells us.

OFF WITH HIS HEAD

Unfortunately, the removal of the 'stat resulted in disaster when the bolts holding it to the VXR's cylinder head refused to budge. Worse still, when one of the troublemakers did finally shift, it managed to take a corner of the head with it. With just nine days to go before the planned jaunt to Germany, Jason found himself in charge of a seriously disabled Astra!

“The head had to come off,” he groans. Thankfully, his days spent building bonkers-spec Aston Martins and Lotus Evora GT4s for championship-winning racing team, Stratton Motorsport, meant that he was



OWNER JASON ANTHONY

AGE 37

JOB Motorsport mechanic

FAVOURITE VAUXHALL Cavalier Turbo 4x4

BEST THING ABOUT THE CAR Its KW Clubsport suspension

WHAT'S NEXT? A six-piston AP Racing brake upgrade

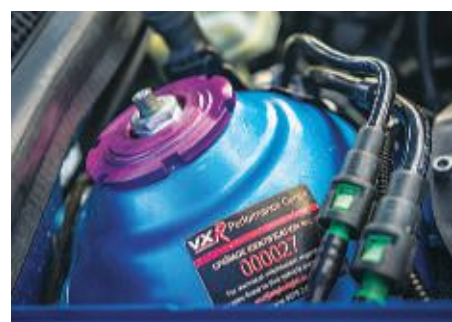
KW Clubsports are Jason's favourite modification



Courtenay 'Sprint' badging is a sign that this is a pukka motor



Brakes get a proper pounding on track



well placed when it came to righting his Astra's wrongs. "TIG-welded repair work, drilling and re-tapping returned the head to an 'as good as new' state, and I attempted to turn my bad luck into a positive experience by subjecting the rest of the engine to upgrades and a rebuild while the corrective head work was taking place," he admits.

PEC H-beam steel connecting rods, a new oil pump, new gaskets and bearings, a Ko6 turbocharger (essentially a Ko4 with an uprated bearing, a cut-back exhaust wheel and a larger compressor wheel) from Owen Developments, a Klasen Motors high-flow inlet manifold, an Aeromotive fuel pump, a Courtenay Sport VXRacing intercooler kit and a Piper three-inch stainless steel exhaust

ASTRA VXR

system joined new valve stem seals and spring shims that were applied to the refreshed cylinder head following its return from repair. Powerflex 'Black Series' track-oriented bushes and Vibra-Technics engine and transmission mounts stiffened the Arden Astra's suspension, while its six-speed M32 transmission was bolstered by a Quaife limited-slip differential, a Helix/Sachs hybrid clutch kit and a lightened flywheel.

A trip to Courtenay Sport's Norfolk headquarters saw the VXR's factory ECU updated with a custom map designed to take full advantage of the

new gear that Jason had installed. "I was pleased with the 331bhp and 357lb/ft of torque that a day on Courtenay's rollers had achieved, and I was even happier when the work was completed well in advance of the 'Ring trip that I was at risk of missing out on!" he smiles.

Sure enough, the car attacked the Green Hell as planned, and Jason was so delighted with his VXR's performance at the world-famous racing circuit that he began to draw up a list of track-inspired apparatus that he could fit to the car as soon as he was back home. KW Clubsport

coilovers, a Safety Devices roll cage, Recaro Profi SP-G buckets and TRS safety harnesses were just some of the items that he bought, with efforts to make the car lighter coming in the form of a full air bag deletion and the removal of heavy soundproofing material.

Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.2s also contributed to the proceedings by replacing the bulkier Revolution rims. A fixture of BTCC cars for years, the anthracite multi-spokes work well tucked under each corner of the VXR's aggressive factory body kit. The only other notable exterior updates are

absent fog lights that have made way for brake cooling ducts, and Courtenay Sport 'Sprint' stickers (one of which has been applied to the car's colour-coded boot strip before being preserved beneath a layer of clear coat).

SPRINT FINISH

"Courtenay won't dish out Sprint stickers unless company boss, Jon Shield, and his trusted employees are satisfied that the car you've built matches or exceeds the quality and specification of the firm's own Sprint-badged Astras," beams Jason. He can

"I WAS PLEASED WITH THE 331BHP AND 357LB/FT THAT A DAY ON COURTENAY'S ROLLERS HAD ACHIEVED"



Hardcore cage is an essential for full on trips to the 'Ring



be rightly proud of his achievement, especially when his VXR's 'daily driver' status has been kept intact while the car fulfils its role as a track toy at weekends.

"Snetterton Circuit is just two miles away from my house, and I'm a regular at the motorsport venue's open track days," he confirms. It's this continued attack of the asphalt (not to mention a forthcoming return trip to the Nurburgring) that has encouraged the latest batch of upgrades destined for the Arden Blue belter: AP Racing six-piston anchors, 355mm fully floating discs, a dedicated transmission cooler

and a bank of dash-mounted gauges are all on order, although if the lead-footed pilot of the Aston Martin that Jason has recently fixed has any say, none of these performance parts will be bolted into place any time soon.

"The V8 Vantage gearbox that I've just finished repairing has been damaged again. It's in need of some serious work if it's going to be ready for another day at the races!" he laughs. On that note, we leave him be, and we hope that he's able to find the time to equip his excellent Astra with its new toys in the not-too-distant future! ○



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc Z20LEH 16-valve DOHC, Vibra-Technics engine mounts, factory pistons, PEC H-beam steel rods with ARP fasteners, valve stem oil retainers and spring shims, CDTi air box conversion with direct cold air feed, Courtenay Sport enlarged top hat, Klasen Motors high-flow inlet manifold, thermal inlet gasket, Owen Developments Ko6 hybrid turbocharger, Courtenay Sport VXRacing intercooler kit, Piper 3in turbo-back exhaust system, twin exhaust silencers and sports catalytic convertor, Courtney Sport alloy radiator, Courtenay Sport Klasen Stage 4 map on factory ECU, NGK Iridium spark plugs, Aeromotive 340 Stealth fuel pump, VX220 air conditioning deletion kit, black silicone hoses

POWER

331bhp, 357lb/ft torque

TRANSMISSION

Front-wheel drive, factory M32 six-speed manual gearbox, lightweight flywheel, Helix clutch disc with Sachs Racing cover, Quaife limited-slip differential, Vibra-Technics transmission mounts, Courtenay Sport front gearbox mount insert, Powerflex top gearbox mount insert, Courtenay Sport gearbox breather kit, Amsoil fully synthetic gearbox oil, M-Tech short shifter

SUSPENSION

KW Clubsport coilovers (with bump and rebound adjustment), solid top mounts, powdercoated subframes, fast road/track geometry calibration, Powerflex 'Black Series' bushes throughout

BRAKES

VXRacing four-piston AP Racing front calipers with 345mm two-piece discs and Pagid RS29 pads, Vectra VXR rear calipers with 292mm vented discs and EBC RedStuff pads, braided hoses, Motul RBF600 brake fluid, wishbone-mounted front air deflectors

WHEELS & TYRES

Road use: 8x18in Team Dynamics Pro Race 1.2 wheels painted anthracite, Michelin Pilot Sport 3 225/40x18 tyres
Track use: 8x18in Team Dynamics 888 wheels painted anthracite, Yokohama Advan Neova ADO8R semi-slick tyres

BODY

2006 Mk5 Astra VXR, factory Arden Blue paintwork and VXR styling package, brake cooling ducts in place of fog lights, painted boot strip, colour-coded sill covers, Courtenay Sport stickers

INTERIOR

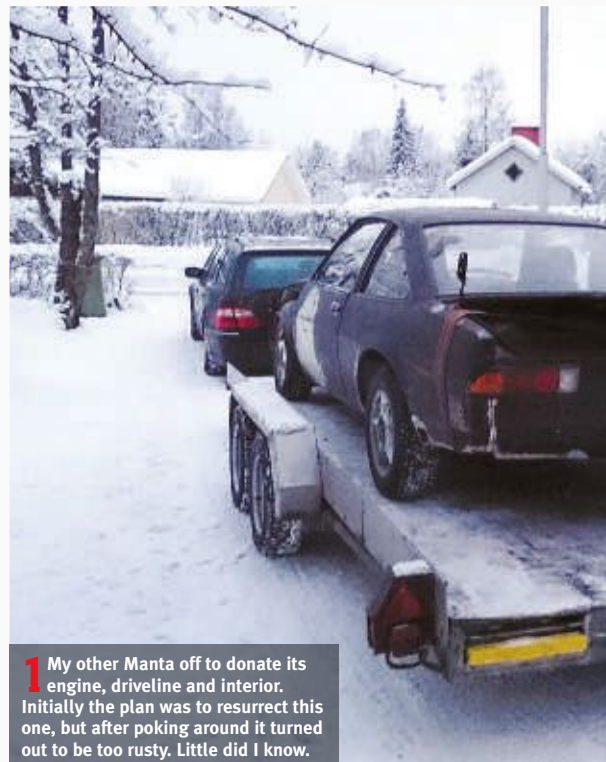
Recaro Profi SP-G front seats, TRS four-point safety harnesses, Safety Devices roll cage, air bags removed, rear sound deadening material removed, flocked dashboard, Piano Black dash trim, white surface-mount diode (SMD) conversion, factory satellite navigation system

THANKS

Lorraine for putting up with me and the car, Tim and Aaron for their ongoing help, Angus for assistance with the roll cage, Kirk at Kirk's Custom Coatings for flocking the dashboard, all at Courtenay Sport

READER RESTO

We do love a Manta, and so does Mikko Kukkonen. Here he takes us through his fantastic restoration.



1 My other Manta off to donate its engine, driveline and interior. Initially the plan was to resurrect this one, but after poking around it turned out to be too rusty. Little did I know.

I've fiddled with all kinds of old cars and motorcycles over the years, but mainly American GM products and RWD Opels. In late 2014 I decided that it was time to concentrate on one thing only and that was to be my first automotive love, the Manta B.

I bought a supposedly rust free shell from a serial-Opel-nut of a friend and used my old Manta as a donor car for the running gear and interior. You guessed it, the shell wasn't so rust free and the findings

almost completely destroyed my motivation.

Then I had a reality check, rolled up my sleeves and got to work with the help of the aforementioned friend. The project came together fairly quickly, as we were both fabricating repair panels and welding at the same time. Other stuff included sourcing a lot of parts, sand blasting, painting etc.

The fast pace almost took its toll on my mental health and even my boss got worried a

couple of times, as I turned up to work straight from the lock up, after working on the car for 24 hours without sleep. The car was successfully MoT'd in the summer of 2015.

I couldn't be more proud of the end product and I'm happy that I went head first into the project. I met some great, like-minded people on the way too. A huge thanks goes to Mikko Nurminen and my father for helping with the project and my girlfriend Linda for her understanding!

3 Here's the 2.4 litre CIH engine and Getrag 240 gearbox coming off a donor Manta, along with the front axle. That lift saved us a lot of trouble along the way.



6 From here the project got out of hand. I wasn't prepared to go this far with the car, but eventually I'm glad I did. I decided to go all out with the rust repairs, rather than just fixing the major problems.



7 Both sills got new repair panels and we spent a whole week fabricating new sheet metal patches around the whole body from the waist line down. There was a lot to do, but having four hands on the job at all times got the project flying! Here's all the rust repairs done and the underside is ready for paint.



8 I first laid several coats of epoxy primer on the underside, applied the seam sealer and then sprayed the urethane top coat. This project had me wielding the spray gun for the first time.



2 The hero of the story. I bought the shell off a friend, who had the car sitting for ten years. We tore it down, put it on the rotisserie and got on with the welding.



4 Manta on the rotisserie and my retired father, reliving his rally car building days by helping me with the exhausting job of stripping the underside down to bare metal.



5 The first major downer during the project. I had already found more rust and botched repairs than I had hoped for. I was really disappointed to find this filler-surprise here. This was the find that almost killed the whole project and I took some time to re-evaluate my goals.



9 The floor got the same treatment of epoxy and urethane. Here's just the primer applied.



11 I had several front wings to choose from, but almost all of them had some kind of damage to attend to. I chose the one that was the easiest to repair and to my surprise it eventually fit much better than the original GM repair panel that I installed on the driver's side.



10 I got the axles sand blasted and then painted them myself. The urethane top coat on the axles is graphite gray as opposed to the gloss black top coat on the underside of the car. This was done to achieve a subtle colour contrast, which came out looking really good!



12 At the painters. The car had a spotless coat of paint on it before the project started, but due to the extensive repairs I had to have a new coat applied on major parts of the car.

READER RESTO

13 The assembly stage begins. I chose to retain the original rubber bushes on the axles as they were in superb condition. I assembled the front axle in its entirety on the floor, and before installing it on the car we bolted the engine with the gearbox onto it.



14 Right from the beginning I was set on the ATS Cups as THE wheels for the Manta. I bought a set of the rarer ET25 Cups that were in horrible condition and had them blasted with crushed glass. I followed that with sanding and polishing them by hand. It took me three hours per wheel to get them looking like this.



16 Time to attend to the creature comforts. I'm no expert when it comes to sound proofing, but I thought that at least plastering the critical areas with some kind of sound deadening material would help with the noise.



19 There was a time when I thought the rear window louvres were hideous, but then something clicked and I came to love the look of it on a Manta. Installing one with the old rear window seal introduced some water leaks. I'm on the fence whether to install the louvres again with a new seal I'll fit on the car soon.



20 At the start of the project, I had a picture of a perfect Manta in my mind and it came fitted with the front spoiler. That was one of the parts that really finished off the look and I'm happy that I was able to source a genuine GM spoiler instead of a fibreglass reproduction.

21 This is the Manta on its first outing after the rebuild.





15 This stage was a major boost to morale, as all the hard work manifested itself in something that started to look like a car again. I was on top of the world at this point!



17 The engine bay at its final stages. I sourced the GT-valve cover from a German eBay seller and polished it to a respectable shine. I have plans to have the head massaged in the future and swap in a healthier cam. The intake is a cut down inline six CIH manifold.



18 Fitting the fuel pump in its original place, on the underside of the car was not an option. I didn't want the pump to be exposed to the elements, so I installed it inside the boot.



22 But it's never finished. Over the winter season and I hit the ground running. I ordered a new headlining from Germany and sent the Recaro seats off to get upholstered. Will it ever end!?



CORSA SRi

POWER STRUGGLE

WORDS Dan Furr PHOTOS Ashley Cashfield

Jack Scott's 321bhp metallic black Corsa C SRi features a combination of track and fast-road modifications based around a Mk4 Astra GSi Z20LET powerplant tuned by Courtenay Sport...



FAST FACTS

- ★ 321bhp Z20LET engine
- ★ Astra VXR turbo and injectors
- ★ Courtenay Sport custom map
- ★ GAZ Gold coilovers
- ★ Compomotive Mo5 wheels





Trying to squeeze the engine, transmission and wiring from one of Vauxhall's performance models into a lower-spec Griffin can often prove to be a headache. Of course, the end result makes any trouble and strife absolutely worth the effort, but imagine how much simpler life would be if there was an off-the-shelf installation kit available for you to

take advantage of when dropping, say, the powerplant and five-speed manual gearbox of a Mk4 Astra GSi into the guts of a Corsa C.

If that sounds like the answer to your prayers, then you're in luck! Yup, the ever-helpful folk down at Leicestershire-based Vauxhall parts specialist, LMF, now sell a conversion kit that comes complete with mounts, tensioners, driveshafts, hubs, wiring diagrams and a whole host of other equipment designed specifically for

Corsa C owners who want to equip their cars with Z20LET power. Job's a good 'un!

"My Dad and I decided to replace the 1.8-litre lump in my Corsa C SRi with a two-litre Mk4 Astra GSi engine and a matching F23 five-speed manual gearbox," recalls Great Yarmouth inhabitant, Jack Scott. "Dad has spent over two decades as a master technician at a BMW garage, and his enthusiasm for modifying classic Minis means that he has bags of experience



JACK SCOTT

AGE 20
JOB Electrician
FAVOURITE VAUXHALL VXR8
BEST THING ABOUT THE CAR
The engine!
WHAT'S NEXT? A front end respray

"I SET MYSELF A TARGET OF 300BHP – A FIGURE THAT SEEMED PERFECTLY DOABLE"



Z20LET is packing a strong and reliable 321bhp



As it's a track car, Comps are the natural choice

when it comes to swapping engines between vehicles. Even so, he was more than surprised at how straightforward the Z20LET job promised to be after he spent a while sifting through the big box of parts sent to me by LMF!" he adds.

You'd be forgiven for thinking that this stroke of good fortune sounds too good to be true, and while it's fair to say that the installation of the Astra's nuts and bolts was an uncomplicated affair, problems surfaced with the condition of the mechanical components themselves.

BROKEN BREAKER

"I'd bought the donor engine, gearbox, turbocharger, wiring loom, ECU, gearstick, key, chip and transponder as a complete package from a well-known breaker of performance Vauxhalls,"

continues Jack. "I had everything that I needed for the job at hand and booked a week off work so that Dad and I could tackle the swap with help from a supporting cast of my mates. We had to create a bespoke loom using the original Corsa wiring spliced into the GSi harness, fabricate new fuel lines and delete the Astra's air conditioning system, but it wasn't until the first turn of the key that I realised things weren't going to be as plain sailing as I had first hoped!" he sighs.

Lumpy idle, rev hunting and an engine that seemed to like cutting out for fun provided the first cause for concern. A process of trial and error suggested that the car's new MAF sensor was at fault. Fortunately, the installation of an 80mm equivalent part seemed to fix the problem. It didn't, however, do much about

the billowing blue smoke pumping out of the Corsa's rear end!

"Clouds blinded road users behind me every time I put my foot down!" laughs Jack. His initial thoughts were that the Z20LET's turbocharger oil seals had failed, leading to a conversation with Norfolk's number one Vauxhall tuning outfit, Courtenay Sport, and the purchase of a brand new Astra VXR Ko4 turbo. Supplied with an actuator adjusted for GSi power, the unit was installed without hassle, but once again blue smoke could be seen in Jack's wake every time he tapped the throttle.

With the turbo ruled out as being at fault, the culprit was assumed to be knackered valve stem seals. Jack and his Dad rightly recognised the fact that a litre of oil being burned every fifty miles was certainly not a complaint that could be ignored, and the pair invested in a kit that enabled the required valve work to be carried out with the engine in situ. Finally, after much in the way of expense, frustration and despair, the Corsa was fault-free and the modding could begin!

RING PEACE

"I wasn't convinced that I'd be able to get the best out of the car on the road," explains Scott Jnr. "An invitation to join a few mates for a blast around the Nürburgring provided the opportunity to see what GSi power could do at the track, and while I was pleasantly surprised at the pace that I was able to achieve, I was horrified when the car's brakes cooked themselves!" he chuckles.

A set of Mk4 Astra GSi front calipers were quickly bolted into place with Meriva VXR carriers, Mintex discs, Ferodo pads, Goodridge braided hoses and AP Racing Dot 5.1 fluid following the Corsa's return to Blighty. Now able to bring his pride and joy to a halt with confidence, Jack attacked the quarter-mile strip at Santa Pod at last summer's Performance Vauxhall Show. What he hadn't anticipated was the blistering pace of his mate's 1.6-litre Corsa D VXR – a car that was pitched against the SRI at the famous motorsport venue's starting line.

Beaten fairly and squarely by VXR power, the twenty-year-old electrician vowed to turn his Corsa into a monster, and it was the boys at Courtenay Sport that he turned to when it came to doing so. "I set myself a target of 300bhp – a figure that seemed perfectly doable if bolstering the car's new turbocharger with VXR fuel injectors, a higher-flowing fuel rail and pump, an enlarged



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc Z20LET 16-valve DOHC, standard connecting rods and pistons, reground and polished crankshaft, lightened crank pulley, balancer shaft deletion, valve stem oil retainers, thermal inlet gasket, standard camshafts, RAM air filter, Klasen Motors inlet manifold, TX Autosport top hat, 80mm MAF sensor, Turbosmart recirculation valve and actuator, Astra VXR Ko4 turbocharger, front-mounted intercooler, TX Autosport 3in intercooler pipes, custom 3in stainless steel exhaust system, 100-cell catalytic converter, NGK Iridium spark plugs, Astra VXR fuel injectors and fuel rail, Walbro high-flow fuel pump, Courtenay Sport custom map on Z20LET ECU, custom wiring loom, air condition system deletion, slimline electric radiator fan, MTC Motorsport and Courtenay Sport silicone hoses

POWER

321bhp @ 6000rpm, 340lb/ft torque @ 3600rpm

TRANSMISSION

Front-wheel drive, F23 five-speed manual gearbox, reground and polished input shaft, Quaife limited-slip differential, uprated organic clutch, lightened flywheel

SUSPENSION

GAZ Gold coilovers

BRAKES

Mk4 Astra GSi calipers with Meriva VXR carriers, Mintex drilled and grooved 308mm discs, Ferodo FS2500 pads, Goodridge braided hoses, AP Racing Dot 5.1 brake fluid

WHEELS & TYRES

Road: 7.5x16in Compomotive MO5 wheels painted grey, Continental ContiSportContact 195/45x16 tyres. Track: 6.5x16in factory SRI wheels painted black, Toyo Proxes R888 205/50x16 tyres

BODY

2005 Corsa C SRI, factory Z20R metallic black paintwork, Irmischer grille, Morette headlights (modified to accept cold air intake), HID lighting

INTERIOR

Fully stripped interior, Cobra Monaco Pro bucket seats, Luke safety harnesses, MOMO deep dish steering wheel, MOMO steering wheel boss, Pioneer AVH-X5800 DAB double DIN head unit, Hertz Hi-Energy HSK 163 three-way door speakers, Rainbow iPaul four-channel amplifier, 10in Diamond D3 subwoofer

THANKS

Kevin Scott for building the car with me, Glenn for spending many hours making my modifications fit, Brad, Mike and Wombat for giving up their free time to help make my car what it is today, Courtenay Sport for technical advice and the map



Subtle looks hide a potent package

stainless steel exhaust system and a Courtenay Sport custom map," he tells us.

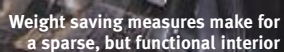
A lightened crank pulley, a large front-mounted intercooler, a TX Autosport top hat and boost pipes, a thermal inlet gasket, a Turbosmart actuator, a new diverter valve, a 100-cell sports cat and a Klasen Motors inlet manifold also joined the party, as did GAZ Gold coilovers and a Quaife limited-slip differential that improves handling and helps to reduce torque steer. Jack intended to fit the parts himself, but a punishing work schedule coupled with limited downtime restricted his ability to do so, leaving Courtenay Sport to pull together the performance-oriented pieces on his behalf.

The Corsa spent a week at the

tuning firm's North Walsham workshop during which the new power upgrades were applied, but difficulties arose when it came to deleting the Z20LET's balancer shaft; apparent wear on the end of the engine's crankshaft demanded that the part was reground and polished with the addition of all new bearings, and the car's gearbox input shaft was in a similar condition, therefore requiring the same treatment.

BREAK THE BANK

Shelling out for work through necessity rather than choice isn't exactly the most pleasing of wallet-emptying pursuits. With that in mind, Jack treated himself to a set of Compomotive MO5 rims that he could use on his car for show and road use, leaving its factory wheels to handle abuse



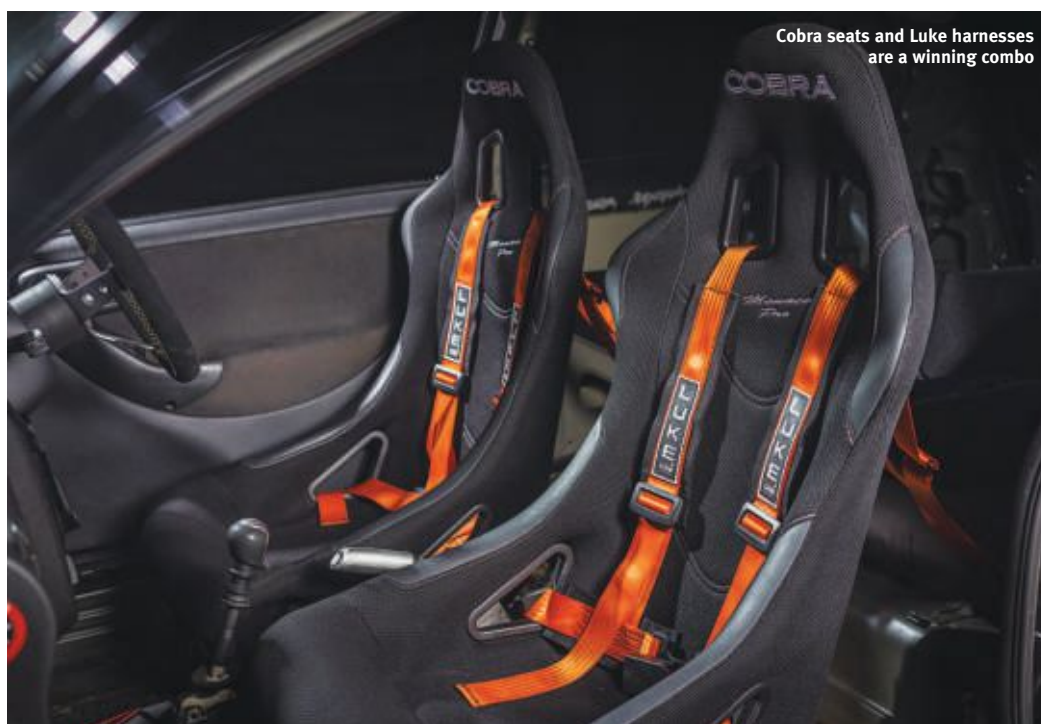
CORSA SRi



at the track. Better still, the smile slapped across his face as a consequence of buying the Comps was soon spreading from ear to ear thanks to positive news from North Walsham. "I was over the moon when Jon at Courtney Sport told me that my 300bhp target had been smashed," he grins. Indeed, a solid power output of 321bhp and 340lb/ft of torque had been dialled into the SRi, complete with pops, bangs and flames in place of the clouds of blue smoke that had once emanated from the Vauxhall's backside!

ICE ICE BABY

Jack's cool Corsa continues to be modified due to his intention to make the car as track-friendly as possible while keeping it suitable for everyday road use. To that end, he has stripped its interior, installed Cobra Monaco buckets, Luke safety harnesses and a MOMO deep dish steering wheel, but he's kept creature comforts that include an in-car entertainment system comprising a Pioneer double DIN head unit, Hertz speakers, a Rainbow iPaul amp and a 10in subwoofer. Similarly, the exterior of his hot hatch remains a free of clutter, with an Irmscher grille, Morette headlights and a soon-to-be installed splitter just about the only



Cobra seats and Luke harnesses are a winning combo

alterations to speak of.

Not that he's finished tweaking just yet: "I'm looking forward to this year's Performance Vauxhall Show, by which

time I hope to have fitted a Safety Devices roll cage, Hi-Spec four-pots and Ford RS bonnet vents," he grins. We look forward to this cracking Corsa's

return to Santa Pod. In the meantime, who wants to make an off-the-shelf kit designed to fit an LS-series V8 into an MV6?! ○

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ASK THE EXPERTS

DAB RADIO

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

This month we corner the guys behind DABmotion to get the lowdown on digital radio... **WORDS** Midge

So what actually is DAB then?

DAB is Digital Audio Broadcasting, and it's transmitted throughout the UK and in selected countries around the world. It was actually developed in Norway as far back as 1981 and the first station broadcast in 1995.

Why is DAB so much better than Analogue radio?

Digital radio has much more choice and is transmitted at a higher bit rate than analogue radio. That means better sound quality – as you'd expect

with anything digital. You get annoying interference, hiss and crackle from AM/FM/MW radio stations but you don't have that problem with digital radio, certainly not through DABmotion.

Will they turn off analogue radio like they did with the telly?

Yes, analogue (AM/FM) will eventually be switched off. We expect an announcement on the switchover late next year. Unlike TV (which was switched over regionally) DAB is national so it has to be done all at once. The people who did the TV

switchover are now in charge of radio switchover – they know their stuff. The Government will sell the frequencies spectrums left by turning off AM/FM, this is what happened after TV switchover.

If it's digital is it the same as MP3 streaming?

No, digital radio is just your radio but in digital. Most stations use a bit rate of 128 kbits/s or less with the MP2 audio codec so that's where people confuse the MP3 thing.

What sort of stuff can it pick up, is it just music?



There is a lot more than just music channels on DAB, it also has a huge amount of talk and sport channels available. Talk Sport and Five Live are particularly popular as you can listen to them without the hiss and crackle.

What are the main features?

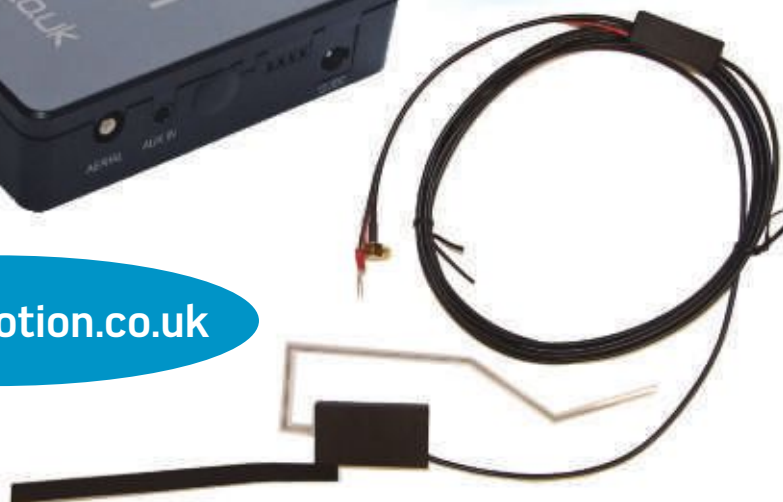
In nearly all DAB products stations are shown by name, in alphabetical order, so long gone are the days of having to search for ages through random numbers on your radio's display only to find a weird pirate station or music you don't like. Most, like DABmotion, have pre-sets so once you've have found your stations you can save them and never have to search again.

What's the different between DAB and DAB+?

DAB+ will give you a better sound quality as it is twice as efficient because it uses the AAC+ audio codec and a bit rate as low as 64Kbits/s.

How good is the DAB coverage in the UK?

The roll out of 164 national DAB transmitters is now underway, bringing coverage up to 97-percent (FM equivalence). This roll out will be complete by the end of 2016, adding an extra 2.5 million listeners. The plan for the roll out of nearly 200 local DAB



www.dabmotion.co.uk



transmitters has been finalised and this will add 3.7m additional households and 6,700km of major road coverage over the next 2 years.

What's the difference between my DAB in the car and at home?

Nothing, the actual broadcasting. Most people listen to radio in the car so it is important that everyone knows how easy and affordable it is to upgrade their system.

Is a DAB product an easy thing to fit?

DAB products can vary in degrees of difficulty, DABmotion for example can be an easy DIY install but we always recommend using an IMI approved installer. Digital Radio UK will be launching an Approved Installers 'tick



mark' later in the year – so the best thing is to ensure you always buy product with a tick mark and have it installed by a qualified, approved installer.

I've just bought a new car and I don't want to rip out my stereo because of the dash display. The dealer reckons I can't have DAB – do I need to sell my car?

The simple answer is no. With our product for example you do not have to remove the stereo as it communicates wirelessly. When a main dealer tells you DAB upgrade isn't possible, they tend to mean it isn't possible their way – visit your local independent audio specialist and they will be able to advise the best solution for you.



[illegible]

A photograph of a silver Ford Mustang driving on a road lined with bare trees. The car is angled towards the viewer, and its headlights are on. The license plate reads 'WXE 266M'. The background shows a line of trees and a clear sky.

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OPEL MANTA GT

Oh for a time machine! Imagine getting a pristine, show room fresh Manta for £7,600. You wouldn't even get a brand new Kia Picanto for that kind of money these days. According to the advert a base model GT was nearly a grand cheaper than that too! Oh how times have changed.

And as for handling, both the front

(Perfect for rallying you may think, and we'd have to agree. After all, the GTZ

And inside there are Roman fountains, which are

OPEL MANTA GT

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HALL of FAME

Some top readers' cars to feast your eyes on!

SEAN MITCHELL

ASTRA CDTi

There are few cars that look as good 'on the floor' as the Astra Mk5. We know that there are some of you who shudder at the thought of cars running on air suspension – but it's worth reminding yourself that the beauty of it is that you can raise it to a more normal, useable height. It's something that Sean Mitchell, the owner of this Astra CDTi 100 puts to great use. Sean has added full Airlift suspension, coupled to V2 Autopilot management. This allows the lovely Bola ZZR 19s to sit well inside the full VXR Kit. Shaun's also given the small capacity diesel engine a boost thanks to a Stage 2 remap.



DYLAN NOBLE VECTRA SXi

Honestly we didn't set out to fill these pages with cars 'on air' we just get a lot sent in! This is another stunner, this time in Vectra flavour. Dylan's pride and joy is a 1.8SXi rocking a set of 18in Snowflakes, an XP2 bodykit and a selection of nicely chosen tweaks. Dylan proudly boasts that it took him a mere 12 months to get it to this condition, and it's pretty obviously on air ride! He's a big fan of car cleaning, and the paintwork is properly shiny, so shiny that he got his mate Ben Pass from GR Photographer, to take these great pictures of it.

SASCHA FASE

OPEL ASTRA TWIN TOP

There aren't a great deal of tweaked Twin Tops in the UK (cue a flood of angry emails from all the Twin Top owners out there) but when they can look as good as Sascha's example we're surprised there aren't many more. The bodywork is a mixture of a Lumma grille, and Reiger sideskirts, all covered in fairly subtle flip paint that Sascha calls "Shifting Carbon". It rides on MB Design 8.5x19in alloys, but it's the interior that has the biggest wow factor! Many a cow was sacrificed so that Sascha could cruise around, top down, basking in the resplendent red glow from the retrimmed Recaros. It's yet another car to have turned to the 'air side' and it looks fantastic, without being too excessive... well apart from the interior!



JOHN-PAUL DAVISON

KADETT C COUPE

If you've had enough of this air suspension nuttiness, then here's something resolutely old-school to keep you sane. John-Paul's Kadett C has been fully restored, and looks the part with 8x15in Powertech alloys. As you read this John-Paul has set about altering the classic lines in keeping with his taste, with some custom fabrication to the front end, thinner classic Mini bumpers fitted flush to the body, and a full respray. We're hoping we'll get to see some pictures when it's complete, as it sounds intriguing! It's currently a 1.2, but there are rumours of a 1.6T, in keeping with a previously owned Mk2 Cav that he converted.





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CAVALIER V6

RETRORID



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- ★ 60mm drop with uprated dampers
- ★ 17in Momo Arrows

ER



Some cars look dated because that's what they are, but Alex McLaughlin's Cav V6 deliberately wears its retro suit with pride... **WORDS** Dave Reid **PHOTOS** Ade Brannan

Ok, cards on the table... I'm sat here at my desk on a Sunday afternoon, tasked with writing Alex's feature and I'm struggling. I've surrounded myself with numerous previous issues of the mag featuring everything from Monty's epic RWD Turbo to that mental fibre glass bodied drag car and Deek Wood's outstanding standard GSizoo plus everything else in between. I've got Cavalier models on the shelf. I've got two

wings and a Turbo alloy wheel beside me. I've got Tom Wilson rattling the windows, I've watched reruns of the 1995 BTCC season on Youtube and I've owned about 17 of the bloody things and yet I can't figure out what to write... See the problem is, I've known this car since it arrived in Edinburgh as a standard V6 with velour seats and sea sick inducing suspension. I watched it get the Turbo kitted fitted and end up being a Jewish Racing Gold turbo replica and my brain couldn't quite get round that one being the purist that I am. I then watched

as Alan Scott bought it, dropped it on 17in Team Dynamics alloys and fitted a Laguna splitter. At that point it made sense again, it was exactly how a Cavalier should be... subtle, low and on nice, tucked 17in wheels. Then Alex bought it and it emerged a few months later and my brain melted.

Now, even by my standards, I fully appreciate this is a random start to a feature and sit down, it's about to get even more random. Think of it as your ideal woman (or man, let's be open about this) you know, just... 'nice'. Then the surgery



CAVALIER V6

Nope, there's no LET under here,
just a good old beefy V6



OWNER

ALEX MCLAUGHLIN

OCCUPATION Metal fabricator /
sheet cladder

FIRST CAR I had a Nova van with a
1.7 turbo diesel fitted. It had GTE
seats and Speedline alloys.

VAUXHALL MAN Pretty much. I've
had Astra and Cavalier GS's and
then latterly, a Mk5 Astra CDTi then
I got the Cavalier V6.

WHAT'S NEXT The interior was
done just after the shoot and from
here on, looking forward to some
shows and some sun!

**"THE V6 SUITS IT PERFECTLY,
STICKING IT IN FIFTH, SITTING
BACK, LETTING THE TORQUE PULL
IT ALONG AT A STEADY PACE"**



CAVALIER V6



“THE PAINT IS CRYSTAL CLEAR, THE DOOR SKINS ARE LIKE GLASS AND THERE’S NOT ONE ROUGH EDGE IN SIGHT. IT’S GOOD. IT’S DAMN GOOD”

starts and you're like "dear God almighty" as you turn away in horror and you proclaim there was nothing wrong in the first place. It's ruined and it's just not natural. Then, the bandages come off and you suddenly realise that perfect just got even better. It's fundamentally still the same thing, there's nothing drastic happened but all those little nips, tucks and enhancements have all come together and the finished result is well, there's no other word for it... it's pretty awesome. The surgeons tasked with transforming the Cavalier in this case were Jay and Martyn at Ace Bodyshop in Glasgow and they've certainly lived up to the name as the body is flawless. As in it's utterly flawless and I'm usually a properly anally retentive arse when it comes to Cavaliers and their bodywork. I'll be on my soap box banging on about how there's no such thing as 'mint' when it comes to a twenty year old Vauxhall but as we're standing



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

C25XE, 2498cc, quad cam, 24v. Fully rebuilt with ported, polished and skimmed cylinder heads, 3 litre cams, enlarged throttle body, Omega lower inlet divider, 3.8bar fuel pressure regulator, 3 litre injectors, chipped ECU, K&N panel filter, Roose Motorsport silicone hoses, custom made stainless exhaust system, powder coated strut tops, bonnet stay and catch, chrome bonnet lifters.

GEARBOX

Standard F25 gearbox with uprated clutch kit

SUSPENSION & STEERING

Lowered 60mm with uprated shock absorbers, rear beam and front struts powder coated.

BRAKES

Front: 284mm drilled and grooved discs with fast road pads. Rear: 260mm drilled and grooved discs with standard pads. HEL braided brake hoses and new cooper brake lines front to rear. Calipers powder coated.

WHEELS AND TYRES

17in Momo Arrow alloys with 205/40x17 tyres

EXTERIOR

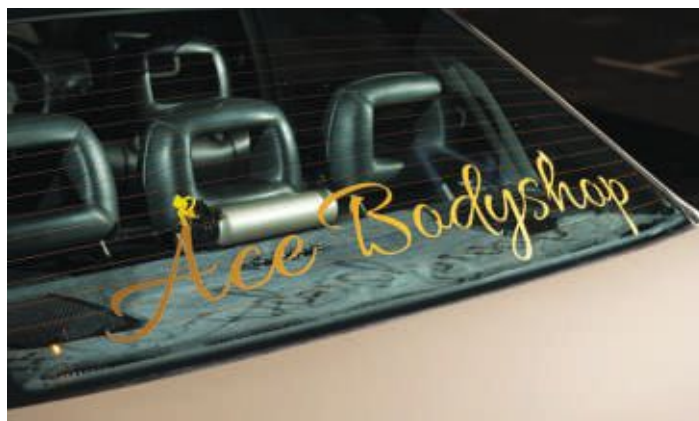
1995 Cavalier V6 saloon shell, full bare shell respray in original colour, Cavalier GSi rear light units, Cavalier Turbo front and rear bumpers, door moulding and boot lid spoiler, fully smoothed with swage lines, indicators, badge recesses, aerial and boot spoiler, fuel filler cap door smoothed, Cool Louvres bonnet vents, Renault Laguna front splitter, delocked with Vectra B door handles, FK front grille, tinted headlights, headlight covers, Team Heko wind deflectors, Floorpan stripped and resealed.

INTERIOR

Retrimmed Cavalier Turbo front and rear seats, doors cards and gear / handbrake gaiters, 3 headrest conversion, new headlining, retrimmed A pillar covers, Cavalier GSi dash with V6 clocks, 280mm Momo steering wheel, TVR indicator stalks, LED dash illumination.

THANKS

My wife Nicole and my boys, Jason and Martyn at Ace Bodyshop, Scotland, Chrissy Nailen at NHP Motorsport, Gary Gunning @ G Motor Tech, Simon at Simons Custom Exhausts



Classic Momo Arrows set this Cav off perfectly



under the Kingston Bridge in Glasgow city centre on a typically Baltic Scottish evening, Ade snapping away furiously, I conceded... there is such a thing as mint. Define mint – well... in this instance the car just looks absolutely spot-on as it sits in the gloom, picked out by street lights and the flash of the camera. The paint is crystal clear, the door skins are like glass and there's not one rough edge in sight. It's good. It's damn good. In fact it's perfect.

LONG HAUL

The paint and bodywork took almost six months from start to finish and like most builds, it started off a simple respray to right a few wrongs and then evolved in to something a little more special. "I never planned on this," laughs Alex, "it just went in and we started talking about a few wee ideas and it just went from there." Those wee ideas may well have been wee but collectively they all added up.

Smoothed badge recesses, smoothed swage lines, repeaters and washer jets removed, spoiler blended seamlessly into the boot lid and then hours and hours and hours of blocking to get the panels perfect followed by litres of painting flattening and polishing resulted in the Cavalier's stunning bodywork. There was always the option to go one step further and smooth off the Turbo kit and blend the door mouldings but Alex was keen to retain some of the standard features on the bodykit. Same applies to the rear lights and plinth. They should be 1995 spec but instead they were replaced with GSi clusters and a matching plinth and it works well. At the other end the car has '95 spec facelift lights and grille, and they too work well, especially with tinted glass and the vented bonnet.

Make no mistake, this car isn't all about the paintwork and the presentation – Alex is a veteran of the Vauxhall scene and as a

CAVALIER V6



The term 'retro' is oft overused, but in this instance it's spot on

fabricator by trade, he's not averse to some manual labour, and nine months of late nights, weekends and holidays is what it took to bring the car up to this standard. Having searched for several years for the perfect base to start with, the Cavalier was rolled straight into the garage and stripped back to nigh on a bare shell. Hours of painstaking scraping, ruined nails and chronic back pain followed as the floor was stripped, treated and resealed before the freshly powder coated running gear was fitted along with new brakes, spring, struts, bearings, bushes, bolts... if it could be removed, replaced or repainted than it was. Meanwhile the standard C25XE was out and was in the capable hands of ex-feature car builder Chrissy Nailen who stripped the engine to its

component parts before rebuilding it with all new seals, gaskets, bearings and a smattering of 3 litre parts before being mated to a customer-built stainless exhaust. Love it or hate it, the Vauxhall V6 engines do give a decent amount of power with the right modifications and sound superb. Should the car have a C20XE on throttle bodies, should it have a C20LET and 350bhp... no, it shouldn't because that's not what it's all about. It's not a car to be driven on the edge and it doesn't need outrageous power. The V6 suits it perfectly, sticking it in fifth, sitting back, letting the torque pull it along at a steady pace and listening to the exhaust burbling away is what this car is all about and that's no bad thing.

On the subject of rolling along, the younger readers may be asking if those

are the same wheels that Julius Caesar had on his chariot back in the good old days and you wouldn't be far wrong. Correct me if my facts are off the pace here but these must have been launched in the late 90s, maybe 1997... I digress however one way or another, needless to say they took some effort to find and eventually came over from Ireland before being reshaped, refurbished and fitted with just enough tyre stretch to get them tucked up into the arches. In a world where we've become accustomed to Mk3s running 17s and 18s, the size is nothing new but they buck the norm by sitting the extra few millimetres out, giving the car a pretty purposeful stance. I tried to avoid using that word but I couldn't think of another. Either way, they're the cherry on the cake as far as the exterior

is concerned. Chrome, dished efforts would be too Euro and anything motorsport derived just wouldn't work with the 90's spec smoothed bodywork. We did put pressure on Alex to source a set of TSW Venoms for the show season but rumour has it the last remaining set are in the National Museum of Scotland getting carbon dated. The pièce de résistance for you 90's aficionados is the Laguna splitter. Again younger readers may struggle to remember them but basically Alain Menu used one to bully John Cleland and Rickard Rydell in various BTCC races, all of them died out about 15 years ago and ironically all that remains are their splitters. None of which are attached to Lagunas.

RETRO RAMBLE

So, I now find myself sitting here having rambled on a bit while watching numerous Cleland vs Soper battles and giving myself tinnitus thanks to the extended QFX and Scooter playlists since noon. At this stage I should wrap it up and point out that whilst all Mk3 Cavaliers are as 90s as pair of Nike Air Max Classics, Alex really has managed to bring together elements of the best Cavalier models ever created – GSi lights and body kit, Turbo leather interior, the oh-so-silky smooth V6 and wrapped it all up in bodywork that remains true to the original concept but just, better. Much better. Smoother, cleaned, lower and all done with an astounding attention to detail shown by all involved from the engine rebuild to the stainless exhaust, to the flawless bodywork and the perfectly restored interior and not to mention the countless hours that Alex has personally invested in the car. I think you'll agree, it's one of the best yet. I think you'll agree, the boy done good. Really good. ○



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DYNO

On the rolling road this month...

HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHEST
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LOWEST
112 BHP



SW VAUXHALL OWNERS CLUB

PHOTOS Calum Dyer

Vauxhall fanatics from the South West converge to put their cars to the test...

The members of the South West Vauxhall Owners Club are used to holding monthly meets to fill in the gaps between shows, and it was only a matter of time before one of those meets was a rolling road day!

One of the admins Lee Miller booked a Dyno meet at Power Crazy Motorsport at Cullompton in Devon. They were happy to host the event, and even showed off their road and forest rally Astra GTE which made an appearance on the rollers!

Unfortunately the weather wasn't on their side and was a wet and windy day, but that didn't put off the members who turned up from all over the South West. The day didn't go without its hiccups with Richard Marshall's Nova arriving on a car dolly and Sterl Benson's Zafira GSi having fuelling issues, which combined with a blowing exhaust only made 115bhp!



Power Crazy Motorsport's Josh Edmond was happy to put the Astra GTE that he competes in on the rollers, and it made a healthy 168bhp from its 2.0 8v. As they were packing up Tom Draper-Smith arrived in the nick of time and ended up stealing the show as well

as snatching the best power of the day with his Astra SRI Turbo which made a strong 294bhp. South West Vauxhalls are in their sixth year covering all of the South West and welcoming Vauxhalls regardless of model, spec and condition.

CONTACT

www.southwestvauxhalls.co.uk

Power Crazy Motorsport
www.powercrazy.co.uk



TOP COMMENT

"Proper job! Chuffed to bits"



12th JAMES AYLESBURY | 112BHP | CORSA SPORT



ENGINE 1.4, OPD Inlet, stainless exhaust, manifold
CLAIMED 92bhp
ACTUAL 112bhp & 86lb/ft
OPERATOR Good for car with few mods. Very healthy
REACTION Good run!



11th RICHARD MARSHALL | 112BHP | NOVA 1.4



ENGINE X14XE, manifold & exhaust
CLAIMED 100bhp
ACTUAL 112.1bhp & 80.8lb/ft
OPERATOR Really good 1.4 power, slight mixture issue
REACTION Proper job, chuffed to bits



10th STERL BENSON | 116BHP | ZAFIRA GSi



ENGINE 3in exhaust, sports cat
CLAIMED 189bhp
ACTUAL 115.5bhp & 154lb/ft
OPERATOR Exhaust blow and bad fuelling
REACTION Blow between turbo and downpipe so incorrect mixture reading



9th MATT KENT | 140BHP | CALIBRA 16V



ENGINE Air filter, K&N
CLAIMED 136bhp
ACTUAL 139.9bhp & 138lb/ft
OPERATOR Really good for standard car
REACTION Happy, healthy engine



8th MALCOLM HORN | 154BHP | CORSA XE



ENGINE XE, Omex, ported head etc
CLAIMED ?bhp
ACTUAL 154.4bhp & 150.6lb/ft
OPERATOR! Good for engine that's not set up. Lots of potential
REACTION Not mapped or jetted yet



7th JOSH EDMOND | 168BHP | ASTRA GTE 8V



ENGINE Kent cam, ported, Superchip, ARPs
CLAIMED 168bhp
ACTUAL 168bhp & 146lb/ft
OPERATOR Used for tarmac and forest rallies
REACTION Happy, needs new rings though



6th DARRYL BENSON | 177BHP | CORSA VXR



ENGINE Panel filter, de-restricted air filter
CLAIMED 205bhp
ACTUAL 177bhp & 194lb/ft
OPERATOR Fuelling issues at top of the rev range
REACTION Dissappointed



5th LEE MILLER | 205BHP | VECTRA V6



ENGINE 3.2, Dbilas flowmeter, cat back
CLAIMED 211bhp
ACTUAL 204.6bhp & 204.7lb/ft
OPERATOR Surprising. Fuelling issues at 4500-6000rpm
REACTION Happy for a high mileage ex-police car



4th MALCOLM HORN | 210BHP | ZAFIRA GSi



ENGINE Airfilter, decat exhaust, Ko4
CLAIMED 200bhp
ACTUAL 209.8bhp & 213.9lb/ft
OPERATOR ABS/TC cut in. More than expected
REACTION Due for remap, it's a daily work horse



3rd GARY DYER | 222BHP | ASTRA SRI



ENGINE Stage 1 remap, direct route airbox
CLAIMED 200bhp
ACTUAL 222.2bhp & 271.9lb/ft
OPERATOR Good run, good torque
REACTION Very happy





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back from the **BRINK**

After lusting after his mate's tired GSi Dennis Wermelskirchen did what any self respecting Mk3 fan would do – buy it off him and transform it...



WORDS & PHOTOS Olivier Fourcade



FAST FACTS

- ★ C20LET Calibra engine swap
- ★ Frontera intercooler
- ★ Eibach/Koni suspension set up
- ★ 17in ATS DTM alloys
- ★ Lamborghini Grigio paint

OPEL ASTRA GSi



ATS DTMs are 17in flavour

LET once called a Calibra home, but left for a new life in this Mk3's tidy bay



We make no secret of the fact that we have a soft spot for the good old Mk3 here at *Performance Vauxhall* despite its failings. If we're honest, Vauxhall kinda got carried away with the power games they were having with their competitors at the time, and sort of forgot to make the chassis as capable as the cracking engine. Road tests at the time pointed out that there was a distinct gap between the car's ability to go fast in a straight line, and its ability to do the same around corners. But there's no denying it's a great looking car, with the right mods it can be made to handle really well, and – with the addition of the old faithful C20LET – becomes a proper little weapon.

But, as with so many models in the Vauxhall range, there's a slow and steady decline in numbers. If you believe howmanyleft.co.uk there are less than 150 16V models on the roads, and incredibly, just fourteen 8 valvers left tearing up the tarmac! The slightly more positive news, depending on your perspective, is that there are more SORN'd than are on the road – so let's just hope that there are many undergoing restorative surgery, waiting to appear once again transformed and ready to take on all comers, cars like this cracking example owned by German Dennis Wermelskirchen.

Dennis has been a lifelong lover of the Opel marque having owned a variety of sporting, and not-so-sporting examples, and had long had his eye on this particular GSi. It was owned by a

good mate of his, and he watched on helplessly as his pal used and abused the LET-swapped Astra to the point where he'd pretty much killed it. The turbo had seen better days, and when the gearbox internals decided to leave home, his mate had had enough, and Dennis saw his chance to swoop in and grab himself a deal.

BARGAIN PUNT

It turned out that it wasn't quite such a bargain after all, as not only were the engine and 'box in need of repair, the loom was also shot after a succession of clumsy bodes throughout its life. Dennis got it up and running and blasted round in it for a couple of months, before deciding that there was no point in hobbling around in a compromised car, one that could go pop at any moment. Which is



Interior is largely standard GSi fare





“...BUT WITH A FOLLOWING WIND IT'S KNOCKING ON THE DOOR OF 300BHP”



OPEL ASTRA GSi

It's a cracking example of a Mk3 GSi – it's a shame we see them so infrequently



When he made the decision to ship the sickly Opel over to NAG Performance to rectify the many issues, including fitting a new harness and new turbo.

While they were wielding the spanners it made sense to beef up the ex-Calibra engine with an uprated pump and injectors, a Frontera intercooler, and a custom remap. It's not a massively powerful package, so Dennis doesn't spend the weekend chasing down supercars, but with a following wind it's knocking on the door of 300bhp, so is certainly pretty swift. Although with standard internals Dennis does have to keep an eye on the additional gauges to prevent unwanted piston escape attempts!

COLOUR ME BAD

With everything mechanically tip-top, it was understandable that before long Dennis felt the exterior let the car down somewhat. It was clean, but tired. But what colour? Go for the standard Flame Red? No, too obvious... a cheeky Arden Blue respray? Nah, not on a Mk3... instead Dennis opted for a very contemporary and very cool shade of grey from the Lamborghini colour catalogue. Neatly complemented with a set of black 17in ATS alloys, and a smoked headlight/indicator combo it really looks the part. There's a modern freshness to it now, without it compromising the Mk3's rounded retroness. We're big fans of the colour, and it's understandable why it's increasing in popularity in the Vauxhall, and other scenes.

For now Dennis is happy with his Astra, and has no plans to do much other than use and enjoy it, and who can blame him.

So if you're one of those Mk3 owners with a SORN'd GSi stashed away in your garage/workshop/barn/garden use this car as your inspiration, your proof that a nail can be turned into a masterpiece, get the spanners out and get your Astra back on the road! ○



“...DENNIS OPTED FOR A CONTEMPORARY AND COOL SHADE OF GREY FROM THE LAMBORGHINI CATALOGUE”

Frederick Motorsport exhaust liberates a few ponies



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

C20LET, uprated injectors, uprated fuel pump, Frontera intercooler, Frederick Motorsport stainless 3in exhaust system and 200 cell sports cat, remap, Samco boost hoses

SUSPENSION

Eibach Sport springs with Koni dampers, strut brace

BRAKES

Factory discs, uprated pads

WHEELS/TYRES

7.5x17 ATS DTM alloys with 205/40x17 Hankook tyres

INTERIOR

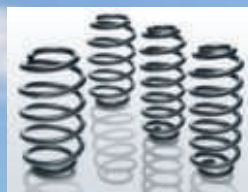
Factory dash and seats, additional gauges for boost, oil pressure and Lambda

EXTERIOR

1995 Opel Astra, full respray in Lamborghini Grigio Telesto, smoked headlights, clear side repeaters, delocked handles,

THANKS

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ASTRA ESTATE

FAST FACTS

- ★ Z20LEH Conversion
- ★ 19in Nurburgring alloys
- ★ Chilli orange respray
- ★ Leather Nurburgring Recaro interior
- ★ Full VXR suspension



WORDS Dan Bevis PHOTOS Chris Frosin

RING OF FIRE

The Astra VXR is a tantalising proposition, and a very versatile machine. But what if you have a lot of stuff to carry around? What if Arden Blue doesn't flick your switch? Fear not, there are options...

The Nürburgring is such a ubiquitous and obvious automotive reference point these days, it's almost become a cliché. Manufacturers love to tout their 'Ring times, despite the glaring plot holes in the way they're measured and the differences between the cars on the forecourt and the one they've strapped the timing gear to. The track has been an integral part of the upbringing of a generation of gamers, too – if you're anything like me, you'll have frittered away countless hours pounding the Green Hell in Gran Turismo, driving a variety of hopped-up, aspirational machinery, shaving tenths here, clipping apices there, occasionally cocking it up, taking off and spanging into the barriers at full tilt. When I actually came to drive the 'Ring for real for the first time, it was quite eerie – everything was very familiar, the crests, the cambers... but I wasn't the fastest one there any more. I wasn't able to take my own lines through corners, as I was being swamped by an endless stream of locals in diesel Golfs. It turns out that the fastest car



ASTRA ESTATE



Wheels and brakes came from the donor car

on the Nürburgring in pretty much any situation is a local in a diesel Golf. It's humbling.

But such is the magic of that serpentine ribbon of undulating tarmac that Vauxhall saw fit to emblazon its legend across a particularly special variant of the Astra VXR. From time immemorial our motorsport heroes had been leaping and jinking through the Eifel mountains and, with the importance of lap times at this venue spiralling into an arms race, it was an easy win for the marketing men. With a few choice tweaks to the oh-so-eighties-inspired white-on-white hot hatch, they smashed in a time of 8:35 (well, they didn't actually – that time

was set in a stock Astra OPC some years previously, but don't let something as trivial as a fact get in the way of a good story), then set about selling 835 special edition cars to celebrate. The chosen few of the clamouring public were treated to chequerboard decals and stylised 'Ring logos, but more significantly a shouty centre-exit Remus pipe, lighter wheels, and a certain implacable dynamic frisson. It worked, too – the Astra VXR Nürburgring cost a hefty £1,575 more than the standard VXR, but they shifted every one.

All-out high-octane hot-hatchery, however, can be a conflicted beast. The car is indisputably a good one, but

Makes you wonder why Vauxhall didn't build a Burg estate...

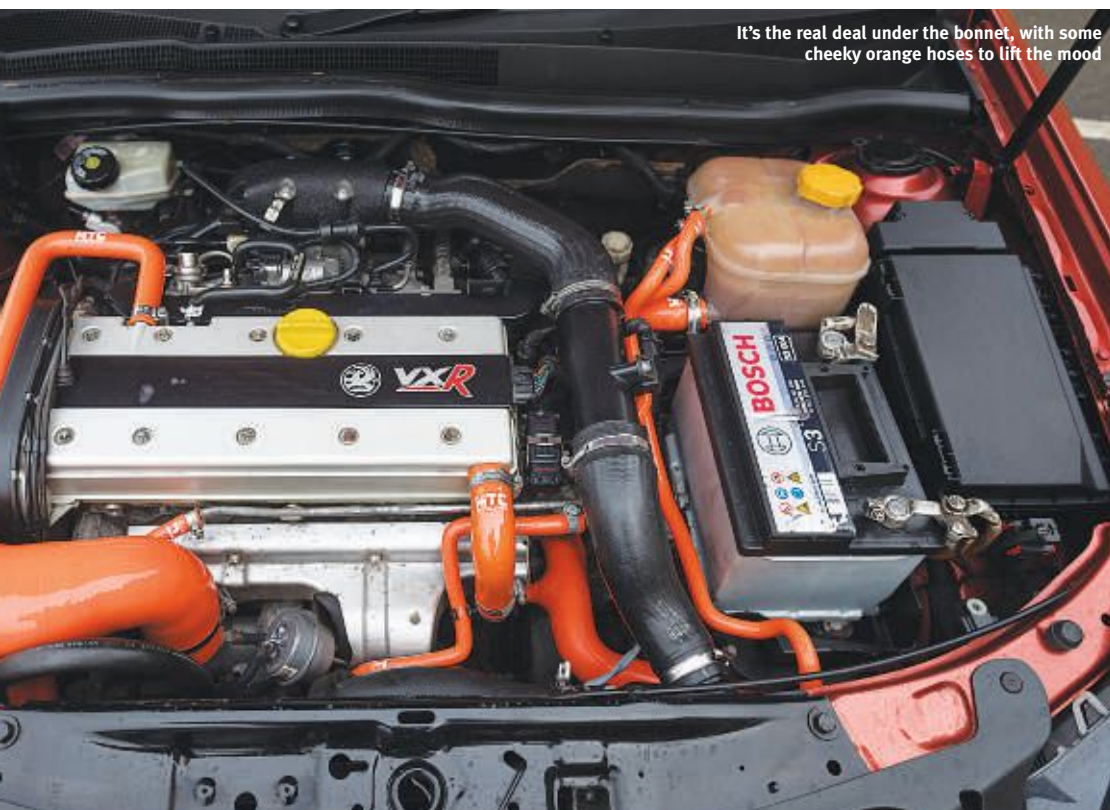


Rear bumper is rather daring and not to everyone's tastes





“THE NÜRBURGRING COST A HEFTY £1,575 MORE THAN THE STANDARD VXR, BUT THEY SHIFTED EVERY ONE”



It's the real deal under the bonnet, with some cheeky orange hoses to lift the mood

what if there's more to your day-to-day life than simply driving as fast as you physically can at all times? Tricky to imagine for some of you, I know, but there are people out there who occasionally need to ramp down the fury a little – they have to take the hedge clippings to the tip, or cram a family of five plus all its luggage inside in order to leap across a continent for a camping holiday, they have dogs or wardrobes to transport... in these instances a mid-sized hatchback just won't cut the mustard. So what does one do in this situation? Buy a boggo diesel estate and accept that life has confined you to the realms of unimaginative beige-ness and dreary unfulfilment? Well, yeah, if you're a defeatist... but there is another way. And, assuming that your eyes have irresistibly flitted to the photos and the spec box, you already know what it is.

WHIP IT UP

That's right, we're talking about the ever-so modern concept of fusion cooking. Take your figurative whisk, whip up a stiff base of firm Astra estate, then stir and fold in the deliciously naughty, marshmallowy whimsy of a top-



“THE SORT OF THING THAT WOULD HAVE ROLLED OUT OF THE FACTORY IF VAUXHALL HAD THE FORESIGHT TO BUILD THEIR ÜBER-HATCH IN WAGON FORM.”



flight VXR. Allow the two things to meld into one. Dip in a finger and give it a suck. Mm-mmm, that's good Astra.

We caught up with owner Ashley Sebborn, although the fella who wielded the spanners and actually put the thing together was a craftsman by the name of Paul Tallo. And it's since been, er, sold to another owner. But don't concern yourself with these fripperies, the name on the V5 isn't important – this is a car that serves as inspiration; a conceptual art piece for the ages. It shows us all what's possible, and that's the main thing to focus on.

CHANGING VROOMS

“Paul and I have both owned a lot of Vauxhalls, and done a lot of conversions on them,” Ashley explains. “Many of them have been Mk4 GSis! And Paul had built an Arden Blue MkIV GSi estate around seven years ago, and he fancied having a go at a Mk5 estate.”

That's as simple as the concept

needs to be, really – an enthusiasm for building hot, weird Vauxhalls, and a decision to craft something offbeat just for the hell of it. So a base for the project was sourced in the form of an unexciting but fundamentally solid Astra wagon, and Paul found a trashed VXR Nürburgring to transplant into it.

“There were quite a few parts missing from the salvage car,” Ashley explains, the extent of its crunchy demise presumably having been quite savage and all-encompassing. “One major factor was that the gearbox was damaged, so Paul opted to rebuild another faulty 'box in order to complete the Nürburgring drivetrain.” This naturally necessitated sourcing a six-speeder with the all-important LSD – because if you're going to use a special edition for your transplant, it really should have all the correct special edition features, otherwise the exercise is inherently flawed.

What resulted from Paul's eager workshop antics is, exactly as you might hope, the sort of thing that would have rolled out of the factory if

Heated Recaro leather – Nice!



Vauxhall had ever had the foresight to build their über-hatch in wagon form. Under the bonnet you'll spot the VXR Z20LEH 2.0-litre turbo motor, resplendent in colour-coded orange pipework, and in a fairly stock state of tune save for a fancy exhaust system with a sports cat and deleted precat.

Gets the thing singing a bit more sonorously, doesn't it? And it's vital to retain that mischievous Remus centre-exit tail of course, which you can see peeping through the custom rear bumper. Oh, and you can hear it popping and crackling too, which is an essential part of its character.

Chassis-wise it's all VXR-spec as well, throughout the suspension setup and braking system, which must make for an entertaining steer when the cavernous boot's full of bric-a-brac from the local jumble sale. It's all about incongruity, this – about subverting expectations and irritating the establishment. That's why it's Chilli Orange, not Arden Blue; it's the sort of colour that says ‘Screw you, I went mad with the St. Tropez. Deal with it.’

As the colour swap demands, this is obviously no sleeper. Sure, that would have been an interesting approach, all banded steels and rust scabs, but this is an altogether more considered undertaking. It would have been too much of a pastiche to paint it white and add the chequerboards, so instead



Paul cherry-picked the choicest visual accoutrements to make the estate more VXR-like: the donor car gave up its racy front bumper and grille, the side skirts were liberated from an SRI XP estate, and the rear bumper is a custom job to house the reworked exhaust. It all works brilliantly cohesively, as if it had been made by Vauxhall themselves. This is further reinforced by the interior, which has

been swapped out for the full heated leather VXR affair with its embossed Nürburgring emblems. What else would you expect?

Ashley is sanguine in his outlook for the future, his tenure as the estate's custodian having slipped into the ether. "Oh, we'll most probably build others," he grins enigmatically. "In fact, Paul's already talking about building a van in the same Chilli Orange..."

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Z20LEH 2.0-litre turbo, orange hoses, crossover delete, custom exhaust with sports cat, precat delete and Nürburgring Remus backbox

TRANSMISSION

6-speed gearbox with LSD

SUSPENSION

VXR Nürburgring suspension

BRAKES

VXR Nürburgring brakes

WHEELS & TYRES

19in VXR Nürburgring alloys, painted black, with 235/45 Hankook Ventus V12 Evo

INTERIOR

Full heated leather VXR Nürburgring Recaro interior, keyless entry, piano black console with push-button start, double-DIN Sony head unit

EXTERIOR

Chilli Orange, VXR front bumper and grille, SRI XP estate side skirts, custom rear bumper, tinted front and rear lights, black roof with silver rails



Much of the scrapped 'Burg was transplanted into the estate



USEFUL INFO

DIFFICULTY
RATING 4/5



TIME TAKEN
One day



ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Universal centering tool

Angle gauge

Trolley jack

Engine crane

MK4 ASTRA TURBO FLYWHEEL UPGRADE

A stronger clutch and a lighter flywheel are better for coping with extra torque and better acceleration from power upgrades. **WORDS AND PHOTOS** Martyn Williams

Lighter flywheels are guaranteed to put some extra zing into any engine by reducing its rotating mass. The easiest way to imagine the role of this component is to think for a moment about the opposite effect. What would happen if an Astra flywheel was doubled from its standard 9.6kg to nearly 20 kg? The result would be a sluggish engine response as it drags the flywheel up to speed. Inertia on the overrun would also take all the snap out of the downshifts.

Courtenay Sport have come up with a popular flywheel upgrade for the Zafira GSi Turbo, Astra Mk4 GSi Turbo, SRi Turbo, and Coupe Turbo models (the Astra here is a Stage 4 Triple 8). The replacement flywheel is around 5 kgs lighter at 4.25kg and is machined from billet steel and plated for extra durability. It costs £255 and with more power to tame, goes together well with

a Courtenay fast road clutch assembly (cover and plate) at £199.95. This is good for outputs up to 300 bhp, but beyond that, an uprated competition type clutch is best at £432. Clutch life under normal use tends to be good, so it's worth making sure that other components will perform reliably over the same period of time by splashing out on a new hydraulic slave cylinder. This is £119.95 from Courtenay with the clutch.

Removing the gearbox and fitting a new flywheel and clutch is an advanced DIY task but it's mainly a nut-and-bolt job that includes disconnecting cabling, gear linkages and the driveshafts. The two important tasks are supporting the engine and dropping the engine bed. Most critical is making sure that this subframe – which has about 10 mm of movement in the captive nuts – is properly aligned when it goes back.

Aligning the frame without using a

jig needs careful preparation before removal. It will need some reference points marked between the body and frame, ideally with a metal scribe and steel ruler for maximum accuracy. If there are any doubts about how accurately it's been screwed back, it's always possible to have it checked with a jig later. This is worth doing anyway, because there is no way of telling if the bed was previously misaligned. Keeping the engine in a raised position while the frame is dropped is done professionally using a supporting beam that locates in the wing channels. A DIY solution is to use an engine crane. Alternatively, it's not rocket science to cobble up a home-made steel beam assembly using a bolt with chain attached to the engine to keep it in position. If this all sounds like a lot of work, it's worth knowing that Courtenay normally charge about £324 for fitting a supplied flywheel and clutch providing no other

problems crop up along the way.

Reassembly of the flywheel and clutch includes centring the friction plate with the cover to allow the gearbox splined input shaft to glide into place as it's replaced. One way to be sure of an accurate result is to use a universal centring tool. A basic tool can be bought for as little as £15. Cheaper alternatives include an old gearbox first motion shaft, or a piece of pipe or even an old jack handle that is the right size to fit perfectly into the friction plate. Then while the cover is only just nipped up – allowing for the friction plate to be moved – the plate can hopefully be centred by eye, but this can be a bit hit and miss. Once everything is back in its place, one of the final jobs will be filling the gearbox with oil. It's not advisable to re-use the original oil even if the gearbox has only done low mileage because it is probably not synthetic.

FLYWHEEL UPGRADE



1

Before the column pinch bolt is removed, make sure the column is locked, which should ensure that (if the rack is not disturbed), it will slot into the same position when reassembled. It also prevents the wheel from over-rotating, which can damage airbag wiring.



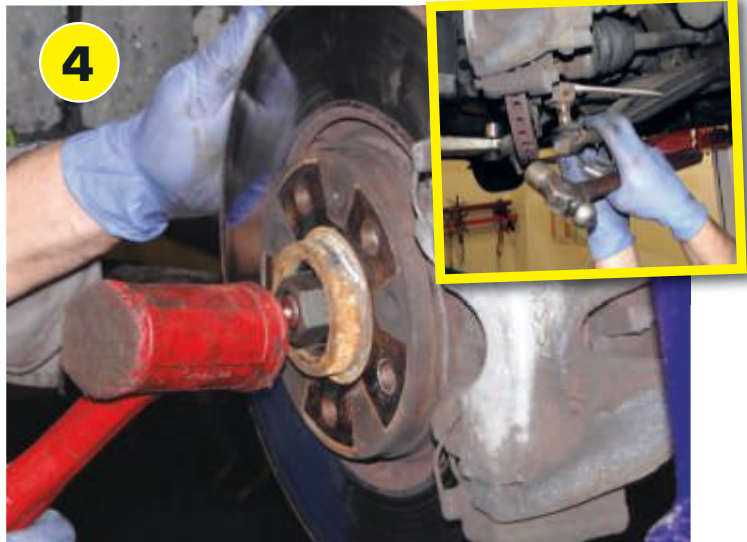
2

The Lambda sensor plug lurks here. Disconnect this and thread the Lambda lead down and tuck it back near the sensor. The downpipe/front section of the exhaust is removed.



3

The anti-roll bar linkage, steering knuckle and the bottom joint pinch bolt need to be detached to allow room for the CV joint to come out of the hub. The pinch bolt clamp usually needs to be gently opened up with a chisel.



4

Run the nut up flush to the top to protect the threads before tapping the CV joint free in its splines.



5

Clamp the flexible hydraulic hose to the clutch. Push the connector banjo down to take the pressure off the small wire clip sticking out of the side. Pull the clip out and also remove the seal shown. It has a tendency to fall out so should be stashed for refitting later.



6

The wiring to the steering motor has to be dropped down to avoid it snagging. Slide out the purple fuse and disconnect the connector plug shown. There is also an earth lead to disconnect which goes directly to the battery terminal to the motor.



Once the battery and its tray are removed, the three bolts retaining the engine mount bracket can be removed.



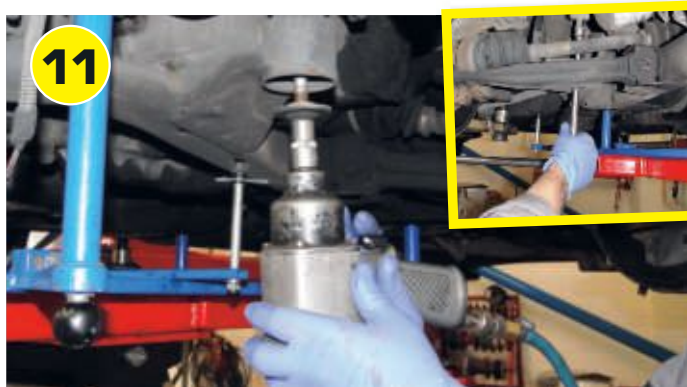
The engine support jig is fairly simple in its construction and wouldn't be difficult to replicate. The other DIY solution is to use an engine crane.



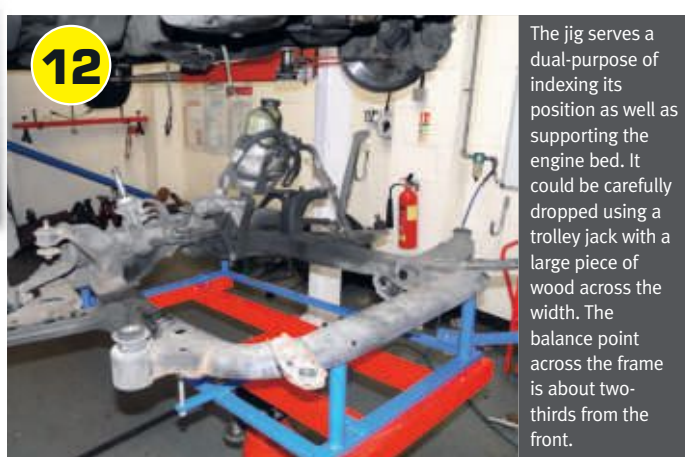
Easy removal of the front engine mounting bolt is assisted by jacking up the end of the mounting – a light touch is usually all that's needed to take the pressure off.



The rear engine-mount bracket is released at both ends, the back end being attached to the diff.



Once the engine bed is supported, shown here using the correct Vauxhall jig, the four main retaining bolts can be removed.



The jig serves a dual-purpose of indexing its position as well as supporting the engine bed. It could be carefully dropped using a trolley jack with a large piece of wood across the width. The balance point across the frame is about two-thirds from the front.



No prizes for spotting the oil leak. It turned out to be a simple cam cover gasket problem. Everything is now ready for the gearbox removal.



Oil needs to be drained from the gearbox before removing the driveshafts.

FLYWHEEL UPGRADE



15

The CV joint is retained by an expansion clip on its splined shaft and only needs a strong flat-ended bar to lever it out.



16

The jack shaft can be pulled from the diff after removing the three bolts from the bearing cap to loosen it off before releasing the bearing bracket.



17

After detaching the auxiliary water pump bracket, it's recommended that it's fastened out of the way with a tie wrap to the fan housing (see inset).



18

The gear change cable ball-joints have sprung-loaded clips which means they only need careful levering to remove. The bracket retaining the end of the cable is held by two bolts.



19

As with all wiring around the engine bed, it's best to disconnect the oil pressure sensor plug and tuck it out of the way before removing the driveshaft.



20

The last couple of gearbox bell housing bolts to be removed should be at the top. Some of the bolts face towards the gearbox and screw into the housing on the engine/sump side.



21

Here the gearbox is being supported on a jack with a special frame. If the cup of a trolley jack is carefully placed it should perform the same function, ideally with two pairs of hands supporting it.



22

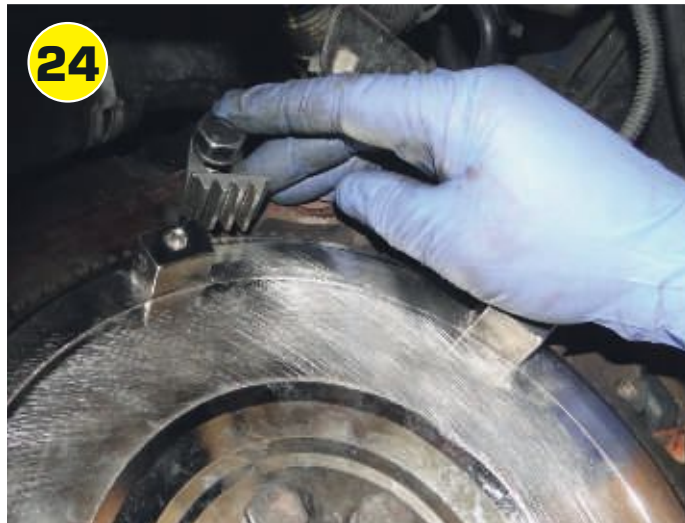
The clutch cover is loosened evenly and removed. Flywheel bolts are tight and may need a tap with a hammer on the end of the spanner to get them loose.

23



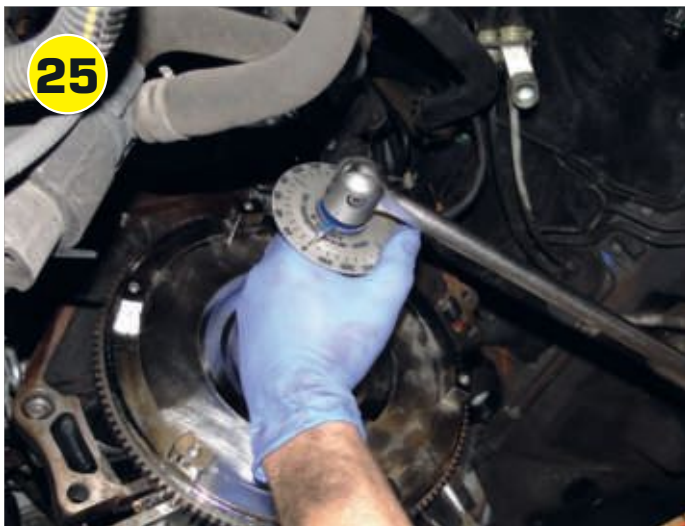
The new lightened flywheel is plated and therefore needs to be scored to make sure it grips the friction plate OK. Use about 80 grade metal oxide paper or a similar abrasive pad.

24



Vauxhall specialists use a locking tool as shown. A steel bar or large screwdriver can be wedged between the ring gear and a strengthening rib where the housing face is close to the flywheel.

25



The flywheel is fastened with stretch bolts, so they need to be renewed. The tightening angle is best done with a gauge but a piece of cardboard marked using a protractor is one way round it.

26



The clutch friction plate needs to be centred with the cover. A universal centering tool can be bought for less than £15.00.

27



The flywheel features studs and lock nuts. Open the holes out on the clutch cover to fit the M8 studs. Tighten lock nuts down evenly, working on opposite bolts across the flywheel.

28



Once the driveshafts are refitted, both the filler and level plugs can be removed and the gearbox filled until it starts to dribble out of the level hole near the diff at the back. The car needs to be level to fill accurately.

THANKS

Our thanks go to Courtenay Sport's Jon and Mark and the dedicated team, and to Dave for twirling the spanners. Courtenay are based in North Walsham in East Anglia, not far from Norwich. Visit their website at www.courtenaysport.co.uk or call them on 01692 404313.

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ASTRA COUPE

Built to celebrate success in the BTCC, the 888 Astra is one of Vauxhall's rarest models with only 100 examples ever made. **WORDS** Dan Williamson **PHOTOS** Chris Wallbank

When Vauxhall decided to celebrate success in the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC), the result was something remarkable. Rather than the regular practice of placing adverts in tabloids and tossing trophies into cabinets, Vauxhall opted to use its 2001 BTCC crown as an excuse to build a proper motorsport inspired road car – complete with competition-bred parts fitted by genuine race mechanics. It was called the Astra Coupe 888.

Developed during 2001 by Vauxhall alongside its works BTCC team Triple Eight Race Engineering, the Astra Coupe 888 was a very limited edition based on the existing Coupe Turbo.

An outline brief – including allowable mechanical modifications and price tag – was planned by Vauxhall, and drawings were penned by French artist Stefan Valdant. The Triple Eight crew were then told to turn the paperwork into metal.

A prototype was put together for 5,000 miles of testing components on

road and track – where racing driver Mark Ticehurst tweaked the settings. Triple Eight engineered a scaled-down version of the BTCC bodykit (including front splitter, wheelarches, skirts and wing), wind tunnel-checked for aerodynamics – achieving a 0.09 reduction in rear lift and front-end drop to zero. Meanwhile, a specification was devised, incorporating quality kit from brands found on real BTCC machines.

Under the wheelarches sat a set of anthracite 8x17in OZ alloys running 35 mm offset, wrapped in specially selected 235/40x17 Michelin Pilot Sport tyres. They were suspended from Triple Eight dampers and Eibach lowering springs. Between the standard Turbo brake calipers were special Ferodo pads wearing 888 logos. Under the Coupe 888's bonnet was a standard Z20LET, pushing out 189bhp that peaked at 152mph and was capable of 60 mph

in seven seconds. There was a Ramair panel filter inside a derestricted airbox and Milltek exhaust back box with an 888 tailpipe. However, the major modifications thought up by Triple Eight were rejected by Vauxhall. The need for type approval and a three year factory warranty meant a power hike was impractical. The sturdy, regular F23 five-speed transmission remained in place, improved with a quick-shift mechanism.

Inside the Astra Coupe 888 was almost as dramatic as its exterior, boasting racy Sparco front seats in blue and black Alcantara, 888 steering

wheel and pedals, blue centre console and 888 gearknob. In January 2002 the first Coupe 888s hit the showrooms, priced at a premium above the Coupe Turbo. Production continued for several months at Triple Eight's Silverstone premises alongside the BTCC machines.

All 888s were built from complete, factory-fresh Coupe Turbos shipped there from Bertone. All were painted Europa Blue – a mainstream Vauxhall shade chosen over the in-your-face red that was originally planned. A total of 100 Coupe 888s were made, although



BUYING AN ASTRA COUPE 888

IDENTITY

Sadly, the Astra Coupe 888 came with no special chassis code, no individually numbered plaque, and not even a piece of paper declaring its provenance.

The car's V5 logbook usually refers to an 'Astra T8', and its VIN tag should be that of an Astra Coupe Turbo in Europa Blue. The chassis number can be found on a sticker on the offside B-pillar, stamped into the

floorpan under a flap next to the driver's seat and along the top of the nearside dashboard. All should tally with what's on the V5.

The most obvious way to ensure you're viewing a genuine 888 is to check the trim matches with what was fitted as standard. Enlist the help of an expert – any of the popular Astra owners' groups will offer strong advice.

Some time ago, you even had to

produce your V5 to buy 888 parts, but that's no longer the case. Sadly many 888-specific parts are no longer available (rear spoilers, splitters, exhaust rear boxes, springs, to name but a few) so in some instances you may have to resort to cannibalising spares cars for the components you need. Bear this in mind if you're looking at one in need of work, or one missing some 888 parts.

888

it's rumoured there were really 102. Most were identical, but Triple Eight offered a tailored upgrade programme for owners seeking greater performance.

Today, survival rates are low. According to the DVLA's figures, there are just 53 still registered, with 25 SORN'd. Prices reflect the model's rarity, which guarantees its place in Vauxhall's hall of fame. An 888's value could double that of a normal Coupe Turbo, but it's a machine that will always see strong demand.

The Z20LET fitted to 888 Astra produced 189 bhp



BUYING

ENGINE

Under the bonnet of an Astra Coupe 888 was a standard 1998 cc Z20LET engine, featuring a few minor changes. The airbox internals were derestricted and a Ramair panel filter was fitted inside – it had an 888 logo sprayed on, and you can buy replicas on the 'net. There was also a Milltek exhaust backbox with unique 888-logoed tailpipe, which should hopefully be in place on any potential purchase. Problems to watch out for are the same as any Z20LET powered Astra or Zafira, with issues mainly centred on misfires and poor performance.

The biggest worry is turbo failure. This commonly occurs around 60k miles on the factory KKK unit, especially if the engine oil's not been changed regularly (ideally every 5,000 to 10,000 miles, although Vauxhall recommendations are 20k service intervals). For signs of turbo trouble, check for blue smoke from the exhaust and lack of power under throttle. Also look for cracks around the wastegate housing, especially if the engine's been modified.

If the Z20LET isn't holding boost

pressure, it could be down to a variety of causes. If there's an aftermarket dump valve, that could be to blame – it needs to be tee'd into the vacuum feed to the fuel pressure regulator. This could also cause poor running, along with illuminated engine management and traction control lights. Boost control solenoids are also prone to failure, resulting in boost fluctuation above 4,000 rpm. There's one switch above the turbo and one at the back of the inlet manifold. The pipe that links them can chafe, especially under the airbox. Likewise, all the Z20LET's vacuum pipes can fail (making the engine run lean). Boost pipes split when they've been saturated with oil from a blown turbo.

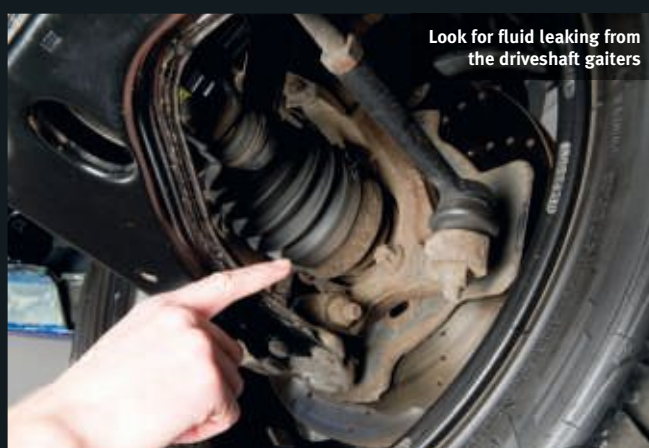
MAF (airflow) meters are particularly weak, causing misfires, low boost, sluggish performance, backfiring and sometimes the engine management light to come on. Induction kits can aggravate the problem, as can oiled air filters. Plan for a lifespan as low as 20,000 miles (usually no more than 60k), and keep a genuine Vauxhall replacement as a spare – the



worst case scenario can lead to complete engine failure. Dodgy coil packs and iffy spark plugs can also cause misfires, with iridium plugs the recommended replacements. Map sensors show their fair share of troubles (erratic boost and a glowing engine management light), while sensors and throttle bodies are worth checking in case of poor running or starting.

Unless the ZzoLET you're buying has proof of a recent service, a cam belt and accompanying water pump change should be a high priority. Cam belts are due at 40,000 mile intervals. Water pumps are fragile, and prone to growling bearings heard from around the cam belt cover. Finally, check for oil leaks. They're probably coming from the rocker cover gasket, which is a simple fix. Sumps often drip too.

The ZzoLET is an (inherently strong) engine which tends to get driven hard. Modified examples need careful examination, and any Astra 888 should be test-driven to verify all is well. Nasty noises (especially the bottom end, but even the tappets on a ZzoLET should stay quiet), a smoky exhaust uneven idling, overheating, low power and water in the oil should all ring major alarm bells.



Look for fluid leaking from the driveshaft gaiters

TRANSMISSION

The F23 five-speed manual gearbox was fitted on the Astra Coupe 888, in essentially standard form but featured a quickshift arrangement. The linkage base was modified to reduce lateral throw by 25%, while the lever was raised 16mm closer to the steering wheel. The difference is obvious when comparing an 888 to a normal Astra. If the quickshift is not there now, ask why not. The gearbox itself is nothing special but should feature a relatively fuss free operation. If there's any baulking or crunching when changing gear (especially on third or fourth), you could be witnessing a worn linkage or even worse, a potentially

knackered synchro, which unfortunately mean it's time for a gearbox rebuild. It's also worth asking if the gear oil has been changed recently, because it can sludge up and make for a sticky change.

Listen for a noisy release bearing with the car at idle, which can be a sign of gearbox failure. Check for leaks from the gearbox casing as they could potentially point to a blown slave cylinder, which may also contaminate the clutch. Look, too, for fluid seeping from driveshaft gaiters – they're not a major worry but can be fiddly to fix.

BUYING ONE

So you've decided you really want a slice of rare 888 action... your first problem is going to be finding one that's for sale.

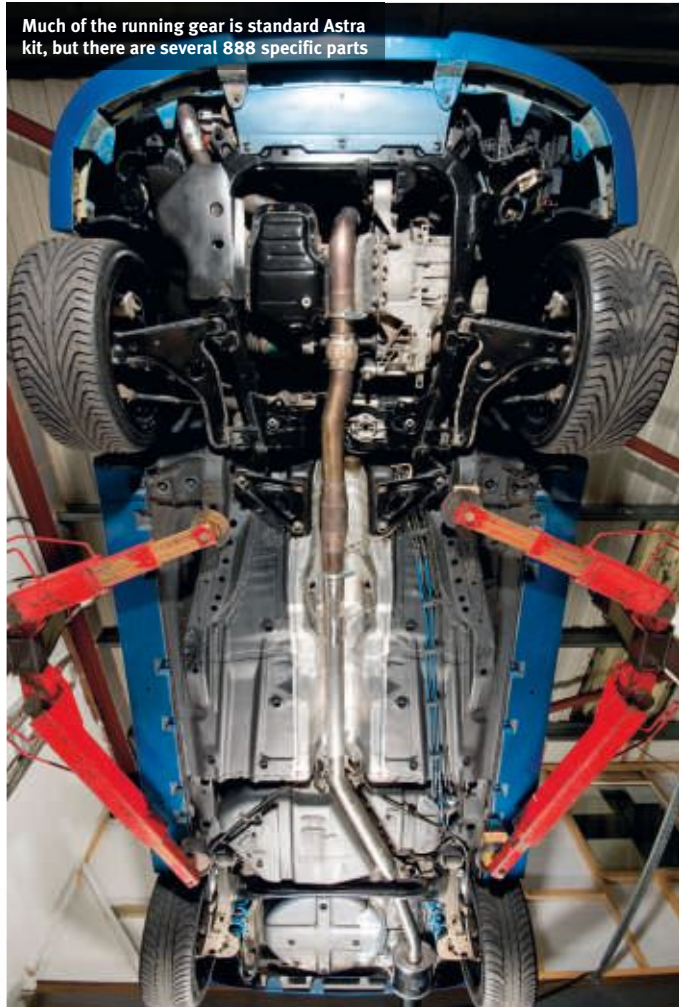
At the time of writing we were unable to find a single one up for grabs. There were several old links to cars that were for sale, which could be worth revisiting, but one thing's for sure – you're not exactly going to be spoilt for choice. Many have some form of modification, so if you want originality, then the search is going to be even more difficult.

They do come up from time to time, but there are so few left, and the owners are a generally loyal bunch, so you may have to play the waiting game. Our advice would be to set up alerts on the usual sites – Pistonheads, Autotrader and eBay and get the word out that you're looking for one on www.migweb.co.uk, www.astraownersnetwork.co.uk, and www.astraownersclub.com and sit tight.

Will they go up in value? Owners certainly hope so, but the lack of spares availability is going to put many people off, so it's likely that they'll hold their value, rather than appreciate. So ultimately buy one because you want one, not because you hope you'll be able to turn a tidy profit on it in years to come!



Much of the running gear is standard Astra kit, but there are several 888 specific parts



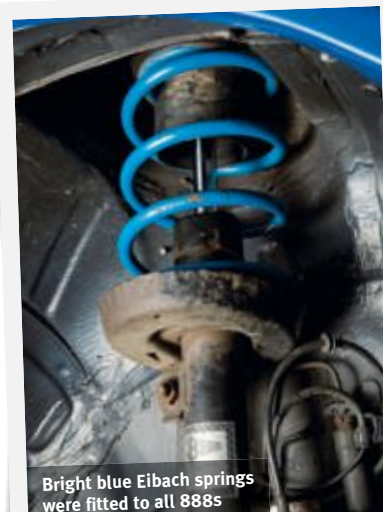
BUYING

SUSPENSION

Most of the 888's underpinnings were standard Mk4 Astra kit. The only alterations were bright blue Eibach springs (30mm lowered on the front and 35mm at the back), along with allegedly tuned dampers; maybe they were custom made for Triple Eight, perhaps they were Bilstein B4s, or possibly stock Coupe Turbo parts – we don't know. Needless to say, the usual Astra buying advice applies. At the front, jack up the car and jiggle the wheels from left to right, checking for excessive movement from the track rod ends, which wear out with high mileage. Rock each wheel and listen for knocking noises or free play, which point to broken suspension top mounts.

Replacements are standard Astra parts, but mean dismantling the suspension to fit. Ensure the anti-roll bar links are in order by feeling for shake through the steering column or clonking while taking a road test. Any creaking over bumps will probably be the fault of failed anti-roll bar bushes, which are again tricky to replace.

Pay particular attention to any



Bright blue Eibach springs were fitted to all 888s

rumbling noises, which will most likely be down to worn wheel bearings. The 888's wide rims won't help, so don't be surprised if they're growling on a low mileage car. A complete hub is the best cure.

Any Coupe 888 should feel tight on the road, and you should expect a harsh ride. Don't be alarmed if there's a tendency to tramline over bumpy surfaces. The ET35 offset 8x17in OZ alloys were optimised for track use over road use.

BUYING

PRICE GUIDE

So how much should you pay? Well that's really up to you, as exclusivity has kept prices very strong in comparison to the standard Astra Coupe. You can expect to pay upwards of £3500 for a rough one,

around £6-7000 for a minter and £8K+ for a really nice low mileage example. But at the top of the price range they can understandably sit on the market for quite some time. Set your budget and stick to it.





BUYING

INTERIOR

Again, most of the 888's cabin came straight from the Coupé Turbo, so it's durable and easy to replace. Make sure all the controls work properly, in particular the air conditioning. If you don't hear it cut in with the engine running and the button pressed, chances are the condenser has failed. If it works but smells, a clogged pollen filter is probably the cause.

Coupé windows can give grief, usually getting to the top before jumping back down – a common regulator fault. Bulbs are also prone to failure, especially within the multi-info display and milometer. Cruise control should function correctly; if not, look at the electronic clutch switch. Meanwhile, make sure the central locking works from the key. That's all standard Astra stuff, but parts unique



The blue Alcantara interior wears with high mileage, especially on steering wheels

BUYING

BRAKES

There's nothing much to worry about with the Coupé 888's anchors, although it's very rare to find one with authentic brake pads. They were said to be developed specially for the car by Ferodo, and wore 888 logos visible through the wheel spokes. The front had Turbo 308mm discs and calipers, which tend to work well. The back featured regular

Astra 264mm rear discs and Bosch calipers, which are prone to seizing up as a result of the handbrake cable binding on the bracket. Make sure to jack up the back and ensure the wheels turn freely, or the car could need a new caliper. It's normal to see rusty brake lines under any Astra of this age, especially around the fuel tank and rear axle, which can result in

MoT failure.

You should also make sure the ABS warning light illuminates on the dashboard and goes out after initial start-up (some people will sneakily remove the bulb). If it doesn't, the chances are an ABS sensor has gone down – they're built into the hubs, so a bill for replacement could be high.

Ferodo brake pads with 888 branding were fitted when new



BUYING

BODY

Unlike most Mk4 Astras, the 888 could be hiding serious rust. Yes, the Coupé body was galvanised, but the wheelarches were ground away during conversion and painted with anti-corrosion sealer. In some cases, it hasn't worked. Rot in any other spot should be a cause for concern, pointing to poorly repaired accident damage. It's vital to check the inner wings, underside and boot area for signs of creasing or overspray. Windscreen wipers can fail to park after use, which can mean a new





to the 888 are a different matter. The blue Alcantara trimmed Sparco bucket seats wear around the bolsters, and even the back seat can look tired.

The same material was used on the 888's steering wheel, which tends to go smooth with high mileage and wear through altogether. It's not unusual to see an 888 fitted with a normal Astra or GSi steering wheel. On any potential purchase, make sure the rare bits are still in place. Check for a blue centre console, polished 888 gearknob, blue Alcantara handbrake and gearstick gaiters and 888 alloy pedals with footrest.



motor is required. Excessive squeaking or only one arm working will most likely be a worn out linkage. Headlights tend to go yellow along the tops, suffer from internal condensation and deep scratches. They're just normal Coupe components so are easily replaced.

In contrast, many parts are unique to the 888. Front splitters are prone to damage and can be difficult to source. Front bumpers never fit properly (there are always gaps where the wing mountings have been removed to accept the wheelarch extensions), side skirts can crack, and the boot lid could be dented around the spoiler legs, where it's been used as a handle or leaning platform.

A smattering of 888 badges found their way around the car, including the boot lid but not the grille – only the original press car received this part, adapted from an Irmscher emblem. Thankfully, 888 badges are still available from internet outlets.

Look for dings and scratches around the bootlid and spoiler



MODIFYING AN ASTRA COUPE 888

ENGINE

Having a ZzoLET heart makes the Coupe 888 extremely tunable, with the only limitation being the size of your wallet. Some buyers will pay more for a standard car, so money spent on modifications could be wasted. They'd probably be OK with aftermarket options offered by Triple Eight, which included three stages of upgrades. The first was an ECU remap, de-cat front pipe, air filter and spark plug upgrade, raising power to 245bhp. Level two featured a bigger intercooler, exhaust centre section

and switchable boost control, with an increase to 260bhp. Triple Eight's third stage added an uprated turbo and revised cam, for a very respectable 290bhp.

Similar steps can be carried out by other tuners. No ZzoLET should be without a decent remap, which ups power and greatly aids driveability as does the de-cat, sports exhaust (retaining the 888 tailpipe) and iridium spark plugs, but a standard panel filter works fine. Even more power would involve fitting a front-mounted

intercooler followed by Astra VXR turbo, injectors, MAF and pipe-work and a high-rate fuel system. This will have you getting about 300bhp.

Beyond that, of course, a full ZzoLEH Astra VXR engine transplant makes the most sense, or even a forged bottom end, flowed cylinder head, high-lift cams, big injectors and roller bearing turbo – which can bring 500 bhp or more, even on Vauxhall engine management. That should make an Astra 888 quicker than the BTCC cars it emulated.

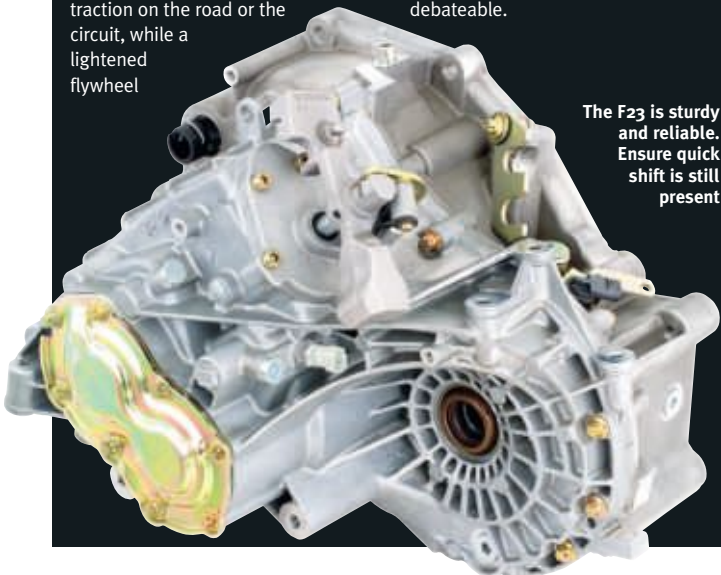


The ZzoLET is easy to tune with only real limitation being your budget. Or you can always drop in a ZzoLEH like we did

TRANSMISSION

The Coupe 888's stock F23 five-speed gearbox can cope with almost any mod you'll throw at it, but an uprated clutch is recommended for any proper power increase. A Quaife ATB limited-slip differential will help traction on the road or the circuit, while a lightened flywheel

should improve engine response. An Astra VXR M32 six-speed gearbox is also a possible swap, along with driveshafts, mounts and linkage etc. One or two 888s are already running this setup, although the benefits are debateable.



The F23 is sturdy and reliable. Ensure quick shift is still present

SUSPENSION

Although the 888 came with uprated suspension as standard, improvements can obviously be made. We'd leave the Eibach lowering springs in place and swap the shock absorbers for yellow Bilsteins or Konis. A Whiteline rear anti-roll bar is

reckoned to be of great benefit, while poly bushes should tighten up the front end. For cars used on track, coilover suspension is the obvious choice. The best quality kit comes at a premium price.



Big brake kits are recommended for frequent track use

BRAKES

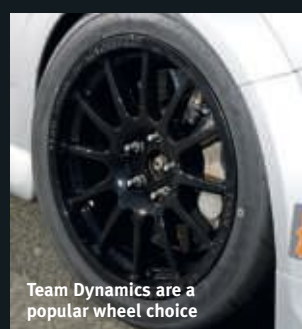
Standard stoppers on an Astra 888 came from the Coupe Turbo, with 308mm front discs and 264mm rears, along with Ferodo pads. They're pretty good but can be beefed up by using grooved discs and higher-spec pads like EBC Yellowstuff, which are still fine for road use. Want more? An Astra VXR brake conversion is the obvious choice, providing 322mm

discs and bigger calipers, which easily replace the stock setup, the rears will fit too. Track fans may prefer to go the whole hog with aftermarket calipers similar to those offered as an upgrade by Triple Eight. 335mm discs and blue four-pot calipers, with an increased diameter with solid discs on the back; they still fit behind standard 888 alloys.

STYLING

Altering an Astra 888's appearance would defeat the object of owning one, although some owners don't get on with the ostentatious rear wing and replace it with a regular Coupe item. In contrast, taller wing supports were offered by Triple Eight to raise its height for an even wilder style. Some 888s have been chopped around, but most go no further than

an Irmscher grille. Inside an Astra 888 it's well worth having the back seat and door cards trimmed in blue Alcantara to match the fronts – which really completes the look. Triple Eight offered carbon-backed race seats, harnesses and roll cage, but if you're going to such an extent you'd probably be better off using a regular Astra Coupe as your starting point.



Team Dynamics are a popular wheel choice

WHEELS AND TYRES

The 888's OZ Racing 8x17inch alloys suited its styling, so the obvious upgrade is a set of Team Dynamics Pro Race rims in a similar colour scheme. Fitting 8x18 inch versions in ET35 offset guarantees you'll not be affecting the geometry. Track type tyres (surely these cars are crying out for Toyo R888s) will bring serious grip.



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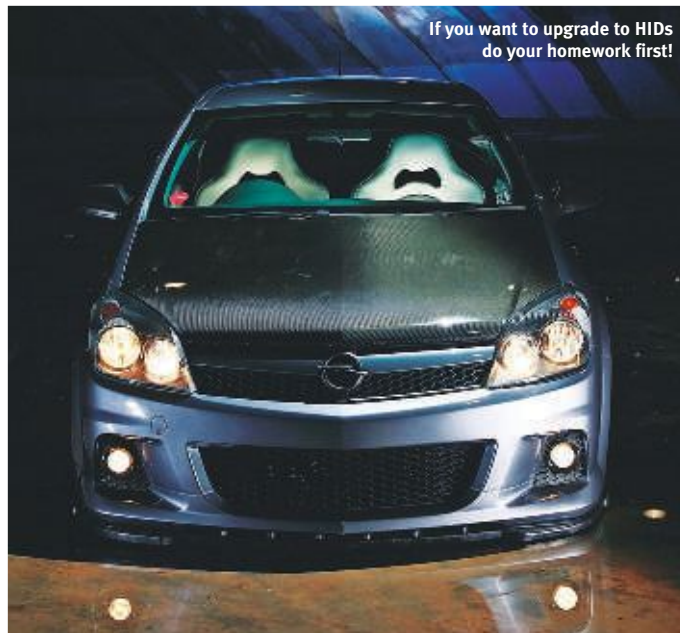
LIGHT WEIGHT

@ I've got a 2005 Astra SRI CDTi which has had a few chassis tweeks and a big brake kit fitted so it's quite good for a bit of sport on the back roads but that's all pointless as my lights are crap! I've been looking at upgrades and I don't know whether to get HIDs or maybe fit higher power bulbs? My mate reckoned a couple of Cibie Oscars but that's overkill! Cheers. Paul.

A As light technology in new cars progresses, older cars are left looking like they have a couple of Ikea tea lights flickering away. Like all upgrades, there's no point spending huge money on some miracle part when the rest is a bit tired and worn out. On that basis, first thing we'd do is clean the headlights, as in properly clean... a machine polisher and abrasive compound is best to get the clarity back. This applies to cars with

plastic headlights only, cars with glass units... in their case, make sure the reflectors aren't discoloured. If they are, replace the units for new ones.

Bulb wise, not only are higher wattage bulbs potentially illegal but you run the risk of overloading the wiring so we'd avoid that. Bulbs like Osram Nightbreakers are an improvement over standard and give a crisper, white light rather than the yellow tinge standard bulbs give and can be had for around £15 a pair. We'd also get the headlamp aim checked as that too can make a massive difference and is often overlooked. If all that doesn't improve matters then yes, an HID kit would be the next step but avoid cheap kits as they can cause issues, and bear in mind HID equipped cars are subject to pretty strict MoT guidelines regarding the beam pattern, aim and light colour, so do plenty of homework before buying a set.



If you want to upgrade to HIDs do your homework first!

STOP IT

@ Hi there. I've got a 2004 Astra GSi Turbo and I want to upgrade the brakes as it's now running about 300bhp and the standard ones are definitely struggling! It's still got the standard 17in wheels on it and I won't change them, so I'm a bit limited as to what I can fit. I'm also a bit limited by

price. I only have £300 to spend so what's available that will make the biggest difference for this sort of money – I'd love a massive 6 pot kit but just can't afford it at present! Debbie.

A Brake upgrades are like any upgrades – there really is no hard

and fast rule to what is best. Some people would say get the biggest disc/caliper you can whereas some would say upgrade the standard fit parts to fast road spec. First up, if your discs and pads are totally shot then replacing them with anything will be an improvement. In that respect, of course those fast road pads are miles

better because the original stuff was so knackered, a couple of bits of MDF and a cardboard disc would probably be better! Our thoughts, and taking the budget in to consideration, would be to fit good quality OEM discs along with slightly uprated compound pads from the likes of Mintex or EBC and then overhaul the calipers, change the fluid and fit braided lines.

We always recommend upgrading the entire system equally rather than spend a huge sum on massive calipers and yet the rears are barely working. This way you're overhauling and improving the entire system including the forever neglected fluid and all in, that should make a dramatic difference. Alternatively, you could source a set of second hand 321mm discs and calipers from the Astra VXR, but again we'd factor in the cost of new discs and pads (not forgetting the rear) Uprated friction material for the front of the VXR will come in around £150 so you can see how quickly the £300 budget is swallowed. Ultimately, a good condition standard set up with mild tweaks to the pad compound, fluid and lines will be capable of coping with the power. Bigger is not always the best.



Uprating the brakes is a great idea – but don't neglect the rear!

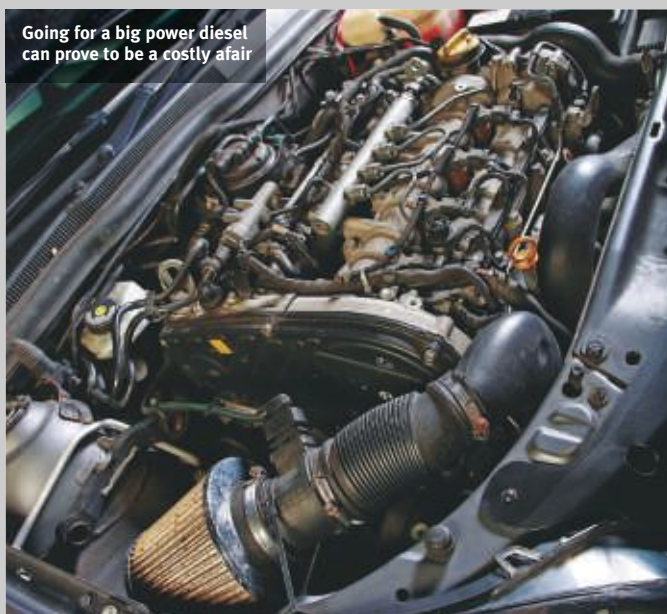
DIESEL DO NICELY

@ I've just bought a Astra Mk5 CDTi 150bhp with the X-Pack, black leather interior, two lady owners, it's really fast and can keep up with new VXR's. How do you get it up to 240bhp like 888 diesels?
Michael

A Good choice of car and they have loads of potential, plus are still capable of returning excellent MPG figures and reliability if looked after. It could be argued that the decision to borrow these lumps off the Italians was one of Vauxhall's best decisions. They do go well, however a new VXR would make it look very silly indeed so we'll opt for the default "he wasn't trying" response as the new VXR is a very quick car. To put it in perspective, the CDTi will hit 60 in 8.4secs, the new VXR will do it in 5.9secs. The CDTi will do 130mph flat out, the VXR is 155mph on paper and reputed to be good for 160 and more... it's one of the quickest in its class.

Taking a CDTi to 240bhp like the 888 diesels is also a bit far-fetched. For a start the 888 CDTi was 200bhp, not 240bhp and getting a diesel to 240bhp, whilst possible, is neither

Going for a big power diesel can prove to be a costly affair



cheap nor easy. A remap, intercooler, exhaust, hybrid turbo and even at that you may just crack 200bhp. There was always talk of redesigned manifolds and such like but ultimately, the M32 boxes aren't too keen on the huge torque figures such modifications bring. Many have tried and some have

succeeded but getting 240bhp from the CDTi unit is not an easy task. A reliable 180bhp to 200bhp along with chassis and brake upgrades would be the better package. That said, a new VXR would still tear it a new one... and that's before anybody mentions tuning packages.

BANG IT OUT

@ Can anyone help with my Mk4 Astra 1.6 2002. I'm trying to get it to pop and bang. I have a full Powerflow exhaust system, it pops now and again in second on gear change but I want to get it to pop and crackle all the time. Someone told me that I should

remove the O2 sensor so that it runs rich and it will bang. I have tried this and still no popping or banging. I don't really want spend loads on it as it's had too much money on it already. Thanks in advance. PS the O2 sensor is now back in.
Steven.

A Not quite sure where to start with this one to be honest... yes, some cars will naturally pop and bang, and with highly tuned, aggressively mapped cars it comes with the territory. There are a few reasons why a car will do it but it's more commonly attributed to unburnt fuel, valve overlap, mapping and an unsilenced exhaust system. Some big power engines will pop and bang as they will be fuelling heavily at the top end to match but thus can't back the fuelling off enough on closed throttle, so tend to 'bang' as the excess fuel exits the chambers through the hot manifold. It sounds incredible on your Wortec equipped Monaro VXR or highly strung XE on throttle bodies.

However, on a 1.6 Astra... less incredible and the fact some generic maps are offered that actually over-fuel the car on purpose, purely to try and impress Chantelle outside Maccy D's, is a bit worrying. Disconnecting X, Y or Z is a terrible idea... not only will the fuel economy suffer, but unburnt fuel burns catalysts, gums up the fuel system and also reduces power. It's right up there with fake brake discs as far as good ideas are concerned so we don't condone such antics and would instead suggest money is spent elsewhere. Normally aspirated, small capacity engines that were designed for reliability and economy need not pop and bang.



Want 'pops and bangs' from a small capacity N/A engine... look elsewhere

Quick fixes

Q I've just bought an enlarged top hat for my Astra VXR but unsure what the bolts' torque settings should be, or if there should be a gasket supplied? Cheers,
Josh.

A There is a gasket between the throttle body and top hat so yes, replace it (they are available from Vauxhall) and a smear of sealant would help as would making sure all surfaces are clean first. The four 10mm nuts should be tightened equally, finger tight and a half turn is sufficient.

Q I'm wanting to put a manual boost controller on my CzoLET Corsa. Any thoughts on which is the best one and what power I'll get?
Dean

A MBCs have their place but are a bit crude and can be the reason for many a bent rod or melted piston. Without knowing the spec, or your reason for wanting one, we'd say don't until you've done some research first such as a chip set, or stronger actuator.

Q I've just had new tyres fitted to my Zafira GSi and was wondering what the front camber should be as it's also been lowered 30mm. My local garage isn't sure. Thanks.
Stan.

A The lower you go, the more negative camber you'll get so yes, it needs adjusting to avoid excess tyre wear. A decent four wheel laser alignment centre will have the factory figures but you could tweak these, however we wouldn't go more than -1.0deg all round or your tyres will suffer.

Q I've just fitted fast road pads to the front of my Vectra GSi and they squeal like mad when they're hot. It's driving me mental. It can't be normal surely?
Ally

A Harder compound pads can be a bit noisy but it's more likely there's some debris on the braking surface. A strip down, clean up, chamfering the edges slightly and rebuild with plenty of opper slip might help. Worth doing, especially in the current crappy weather.

FAULT FINDING

@ I have a 2004 Corsa SRi 1.8 16v with 135,000 miles on the clock and it's developed a bit of a running issue. It won't idle that well and will occasionally cut out. It always restarts and it drives fine but can sometimes feel a bit underpowered and unresponsive at times too. I've had the filters replaced and had it checked on a diagnostic machine but there are no fault codes. Any ideas?
Max

A There are a number of well documented reasons as to why an Eco-Tec can and will run badly, but not bring any management lights on. More often than not it will be throttle body / EGR related as a sensor failure (air flow meter, cam sensor etc) will generally bring the light on and store a fault code. At this age and mileage, the EGR and electronic throttle body will no doubt be clogged up so removing them both and thoroughly cleaning them out with brake / carb cleaner and also ensuring the small breather holes in the throttle body

are clear (they clog with carbonised oil residue) would be the first step whilst also checking all the intake trunking and vacuum pipes for any signs of splits or perishing.

If this doesn't help, it could be a sign the throttle body itself is failing. On this engine (and most engines since) the throttle flap is controlled by an electric motor via signals from the ECU and the throttle potentiometer. Any mismatched communication between the components can create issues. The pedal potentiometer can be checked via Tech 2 or a decent OBDII scan tool, to ensure the resistance changes progressively. If this is fine, chances are the throttle body is to blame. New parts are expensive but second hand, expect to pay £20. Replacement is simple; remove the inlet trunking, vacuum pipes, two



Running issues without fault codes can be difficult to diagnose

coolant feeds and then undo the four Torx bolts. Just remember to replace the gasket or run a smear of silicone sealant round the throttle body/inlet mounting faces when refitting. If the fault lies within the ECU or wiring, it won't be a DIY repair unless you're very proficient in the field.

PLUG AND PLAY

@ I'm having problems with my 1997 Astra 2.0 16v Sport and hope you can help. It keeps bringing the management light on and when it does, it becomes very erratic to drive and also it's hard to start – it seems to crank over for a long time then will eventually catch. It's just been serviced with new plugs, leads and all the filters and I've also had the throttle body and idle valve cleaned out. I've been told to get the ECU read for faults but nobody seems to be able to plug into the car as it's the old type of plug – though I'm not actually sure what that means. I don't know if it makes a difference but I've just fitted a Lexmaul manifold, a stainless exhaust and a cone filter.
Brad.

A The first port of call for any management light related issue is to check the fault codes stored in the ECU. From the late 90s, all cars were OBDII, which means they had a common multi-plug design and all give generic codes. The likes of the Calibra, Mk3 Astra, Cavalier and so on are OBDI – they can still be read but the multi-plug is a different shape and due to their age now, very few people still have access to these code readers. Vauxhall used Tech 1 (Tech 2 is for later, OBDII cars) but these are few and far between. You can read the codes though, it's a case of bridging out two pins on the diagnostic port multi-plug, this then flashes the management light

in sequences to tell you what fault code is stored. There's loads of info online and guides on how to do this so get reading.

Once you have your code/s then this will give you the area in which the issue lies but remember, they are just guidelines so don't always assume if it says "Air flow mismatch" it's the air flow meter, it merely means there is something causing the air flow meter to send a fault – could be the meter, could be an air leak, could be wiring. In your case, we'd be very surprised if it wasn't camshaft or crankshaft sensor related. Both are prone to failure but

again just check the wiring for damage, make sure the sensors aren't loose and that the multi-plugs are clean and corrosion free. Both sensors are inexpensive and readily available but just ensure you get the correct one as there are several variations on the Ecotec engine – it's not one size fits all despite the engine being the same in several models. Given you've just fitted a manifold, we'd double check you haven't caught, trapped or damaged the crank sensor wiring down the front of the block as it can get very fragile with age and doesn't take too kindly to rough handling. Worth checking first?



Reading fault codes with OBDI equipped cars can be a little tricky

Quick fixes

Q I've just had the intake apart on my Vectra CDTi 150 and it's pretty oily in the pipes and a dribble of oil came out of the intercooler. Is it going to die soon?
Chrissy.

A Not necessarily... the intakes on CDTi's do get a bit of oil mist in them which can pool over time at the lowest points. A proper puddle would be cause for concern though and could suggest underlying turbo issues.

Q I have a 2012 Insignia SRi Tourer and it leaks water in to the boot. It looks like it's dripping from the top seal but I can't see from where exactly. Any idea what could be wrong?
Steven

A We spoke to our man and there are no 'known' issues so the advice would be to run water over it from a hose to try and pin-point the issue. It's more than likely to be a damaged or badly fitted tailgate seal but water does tend to travel so the source could be further away.

Q Random one but any ideas how to clean my front mounted intercooler? It used to be quite shiny but it's gone dull over winter and looks like it's stained. Thanks,
Jaz

A Metal cleaner or any mildly abrasive polish will clean up the alloy and an air duster or even a power washer is the better option to clean the core but take care not to damage the fins as they are quite fragile.



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STAFF CARS

What we've done with our cars this month

THE TV FLEET/THIS ISSUE

DAN FURR **IRMSCHER MV6**

BOUGHT 2014
STATUS Progressing nicely, soon to be on the road we hope!



DAN FURR **CAVALIER TURBO**

BOUGHT 2015
STATUS A quick clean up resulted in a full-on strip down. Oh dear.



JAMIE **CARLTON**

BOUGHT 2012
STATUS Nothing to report this month sadly. He's not given up on it, it will return!



DAN FURR **VECTRA VXR**

BOUGHT 2016
STATUS Dan's bagged himself a tidy fully specced Vectra, let the mods commence!



DAN FURR **VECTRA VXR**

ARDEN FAST

I'd been toying with the idea of getting rid of my Saab 95 Aero HOT estate for some time, and while it's true to say that the 250bhp Swede provided a seemingly unrivalled amount of bang per buck, the car was getting a little long in the tooth, leading me to weigh up the pros and cons of various newer motors that might do an even better job of providing plenty of smiles to the mile.

Time and time again I returned to the notion of owning a Vectra VXR. With its 2.8-litre turbocharged V6, blistering pace, stunning styling, six-speed transmission, huge tuning potential, large luggage area and an ability to happily munch through the squillions of miles that I'm likely to throw at it, I was convinced that the growling Griffin

ticked all the right boxes.

eBay threw up a gorgeous Arden Blue example that was collecting dust in North Yorkshire. This particular VXR was packing full-colour integrated factory satnav, 19in Ronals that had been painted anthracite, half-leather Recaros with the VXR logo stitched into them and various pieces of carbon-wrapped interior trim. With the exception of an expansion tank overflow pipe that was enthusiastically pissing coolant when the engine was up to temperature (after a somewhat 'spirited' test drive!), the car was perfect. Needless to say, I was driving it home a short while later.

The leaky pipe turned out to be a simple fix – an examination of the expansion tank's filler cap highlighted



Scangauge is a great gadget, providing real time data on the move



Tech 2 was employed to ensure the VXR had a clean bill of health



rubber seals that were as flat as a pancake. I replaced the cap with a new part before filling up with fresh coolant, and I can confirm that the troublesome pipe has been bone dry ever since. Job done. I also plugged in my genuine dealer-spec Tech 2 diagnostic machine and can confirm that there are no worrying trouble codes to speak of, although I have changed the service interval schedule programmed into the car's ECU to reflect my preferred value of 5k miles. Running oil for the manufacturer's recommended 20k seems to me to be asking for trouble.

Wanting to know more about what was happening under the bonnet of the car during varying driving conditions – but not wanting to clutter my new ride's dashboard with extra dials – I invested

in a Scangauge II digital scan and gauge control module. Plugging directly into the VXR's OBDII port, the compact, programmable unit provides live data relating to rpm, mpg, speed, fuel and oil pressure, coolant temperature, boost values, and a wide range of additional information including the display of trouble codes as soon as they're generated. It also features a comprehensive trip computer and a backlight that you can colour code to the host vehicle. Ardentastic!

I've also bought a new set of factory mats and a K&N high-flow air filter that promises to improve the 280bhp V6's breathing while providing the car's Remus twin-exit exhaust system with even more of a bark than it is currently generating. Pop, bang, roar!



Knackered cap was the cause of a coolant leak. New cap fixed it!



The staggered Ronal wheels are being refurbished and painted by The Wheel Genie and will replace the axle stands very soon



DAN FURR **MV6**

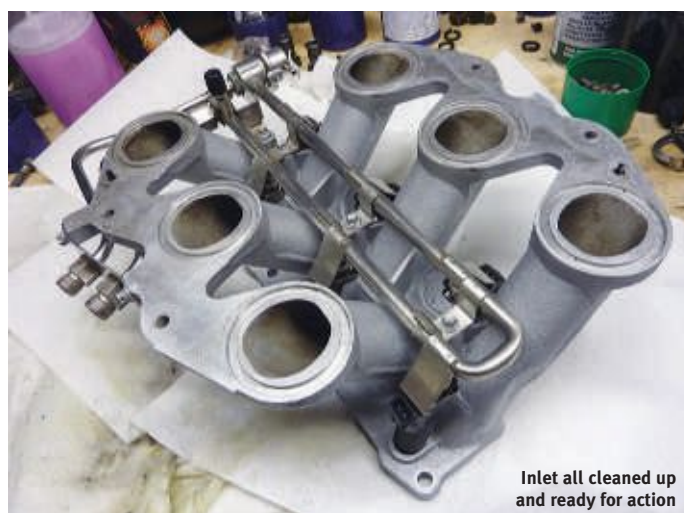
SHINY HAPPY V6

My mission to rebuild and restore virtually every Y32SE engine component heading into the 'bay of my MV6 continues (the fruits of my labour are laid bare on the pages before you!). The engine that I've been building is a Frankenstein-like hybrid of parts lifted from the car's original powerplant and the low-mileage donor V6 that I bought to replace it.

Both six-shooters were filthy, but the surprising number of new genuine engine parts that the car's previous owner forked out for shortly before moving on to automotive pastures new was difficult to ignore, leading me to use them on the newer V6 alongside a full set of 'G' camshafts, a brand new genuine oil cooler kit, a new timing belt

kit (not a job I want to repeat any time soon!), a new water pump, a Courtenay Sport cool-running thermostat with a new GM housing, new multi-layer steel head gaskets, new valve stem seals, refurbished hydraulic lifters, a new coolant transfer pipe, new head bolts, o-rings, sealants and a VAG 4bar fuel pressure regulator.

Every nut, bolt, mount and exposed surface has been scrubbed clean before being painted or polished. It's taken an incredibly long time, but the 'before and after' shots that accompany this project update should go some way towards demonstrating the results that I've been able to achieve using a combination of carb cleaner, degreasers, a selection of coarse sponges and good old-fashioned

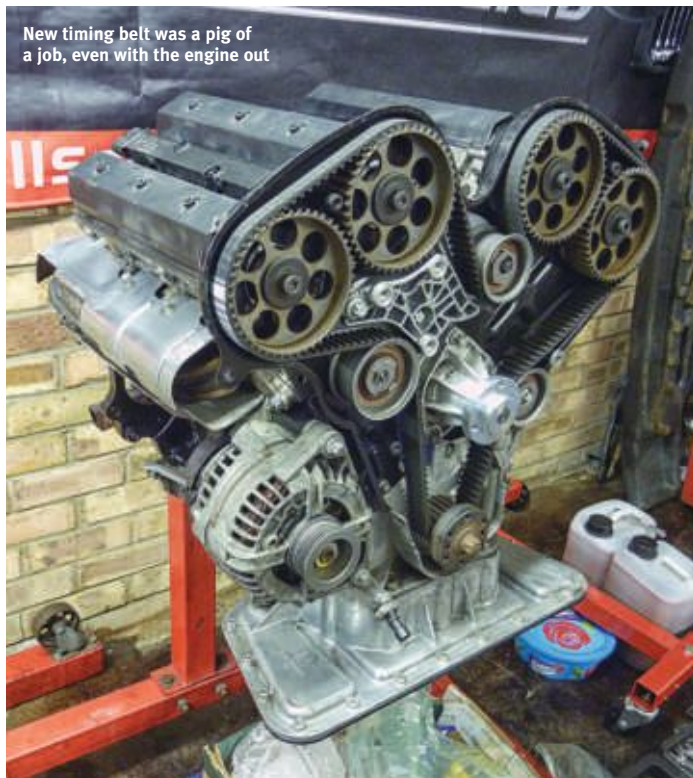


Inlet all cleaned up and ready for action





New timing belt was a pig of a job, even with the engine out



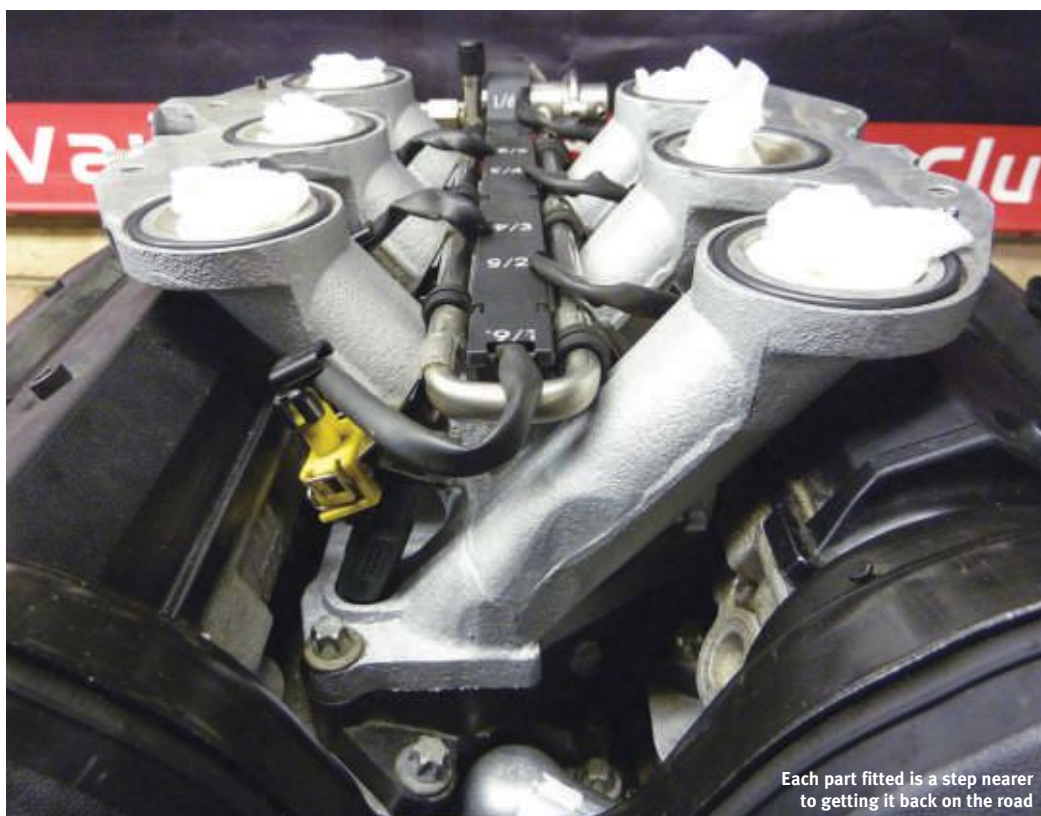
Set of 'G' camshafts came as part of the deal when Dan bought the MV6



Hammerite.

Regrettably, I massively underestimated the number of hours that I needed to spend getting the engine up to this standard, and who knows how long it will stay nice and clean?! Whatever the answer, I think I'm gonna send my Cavalier Turbo's grime-caked components to be acid-dipped, media blasted and powdercoated when the time comes. I can do without going through this lark all over again!

In other news, I've cleaned the MV6's air box and equipped it with a K&N panel filter, and Huntingdon-based rim specialist, The Wheel Genie, is in the process of transforming the staggered 18in Ronal Irmischer Sport Star alloys that I bought for the car by finishing each wheel in a stunning coat



Each part fitted is a step nearer to getting it back on the road

of BMW E39 M5 'Chrome Shadow'. Stripped, dipped and smoothed before being powdercoated black, each wheel is then baked under heat in order to create a durable base layer. Once fully cured, a thin layer of application-specific silver paint is then sprayed over the powdercoated surface before clear coat. The end result is a three-dimensional finish with serious depth. I can't wait to show you pictures of

the car with its better-than-factory wheels in place!

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DAN FURR **CAVALIER TURBO 4X4**

SNOW BUSINESS

Time spent tinkering with my recently-purchased VXR and my long-suffering MV6 had left my Cavalier Turbo looking a little sorry for itself and in need of a damn good clean. Truth be told, it was filthy on the outside and a complete wreck under the bonnet! I'll take full responsibility for the former (dirt caused by exposure to the elements as a consequence of sustained use in all weather

conditions), but the state of the engine bay was a feature that I inherited when I originally bought the car.

Ridding the Satin Red road rocket's body panels of muck was easy enough thanks to the arsenal of Autobrite Direct detailing products that I had at my disposal; pre-wash chemicals, snow foam, shampoo, acid-free wheel cleaner, tar remover, glass cleaner, clay and quick detailer all played their part

in getting rid of scuz. Cleaning the aforementioned engine bay, however, called for an attack of oil and grease removers lifted from Autobrite's celebrated 'Hellshine' range.

Sadly, I didn't get that far! Reasoning that removal of various C20LET engine components would give me better access to those 'hard to reach' areas, I unbolted the car's air box. And its headlights. And its grille. In fact, by the

end of the afternoon, I had a mountain of parts on the driveway that included turbocharger, intercooler, manifold, exhaust, ignition system, wiring loom, radiator, fan, fluid reservoirs, seats, carpets, underlay, clocks and dash trim! Phew! Allow me to explain...

Part way through my mission to remove the grime and grease that seemed to be covering everything in sight, the focus of my attention shifted



Never let it be said that Dan does things in half measures!





Replacement seats ready to be refurbished and refitted

towards the endless stream of wires, control units, horns and proximity sensors of long-redundant security systems that were inhabiting every corner of the car. Cables weaving their way through the bulkhead, behind the dash, beneath carpets, through doors and along sills demanded the application of a heavy hand, and that's

exactly what they got. Oops!

I'm now facing something of a dilemma: do I carry on stripping the car until it is a bare shell whereupon I can treat it to all new genuine Cavalier Turbo body panels and a fresh lick of paint, or do I start a 'dry build' of all the parts that I have stockpiled to ensure that every modification runs without

fault before any cosmetic alterations take place? Perhaps you can tweet me your thoughts @DanFurr.

Whatever direction the project ends up heading in during the short term, that parts pile keeps a-growin' – replacement Turbo leather is my latest acquisition, with the car's utterly ropey Recaros (complete with bolsters held

together with cloth tape!) being punted on in favour of a near-mint set of seats. Yup, I told you that I'd bought a Cavalier in need of a serious amount of work!

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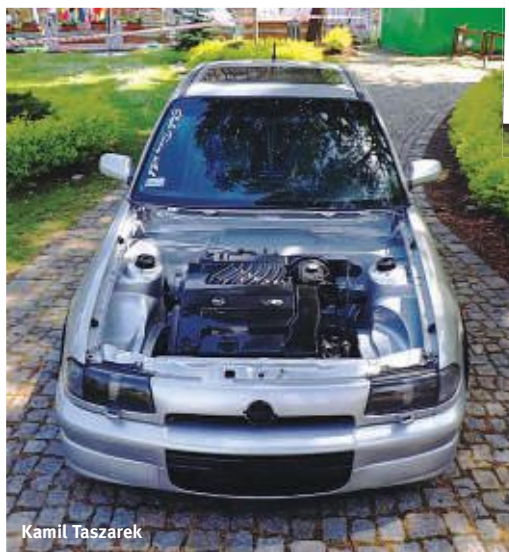
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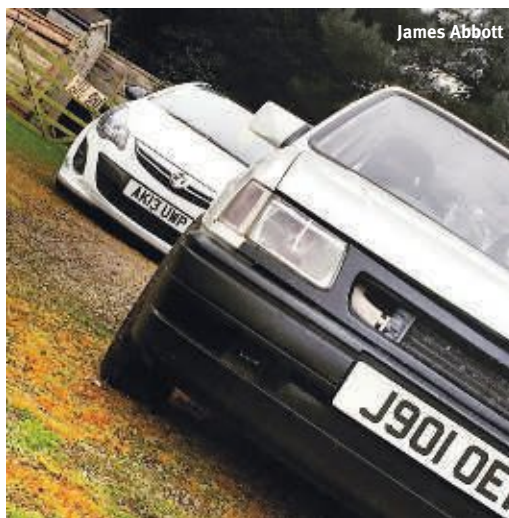
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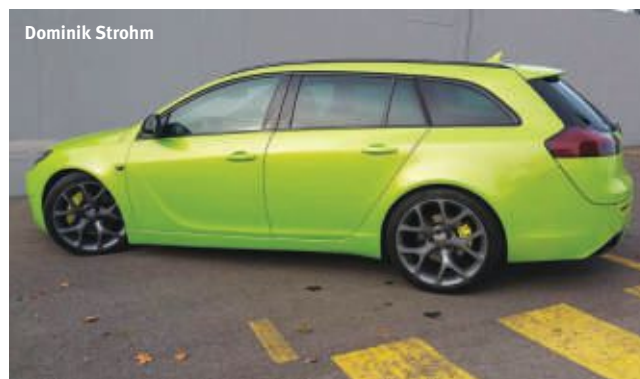
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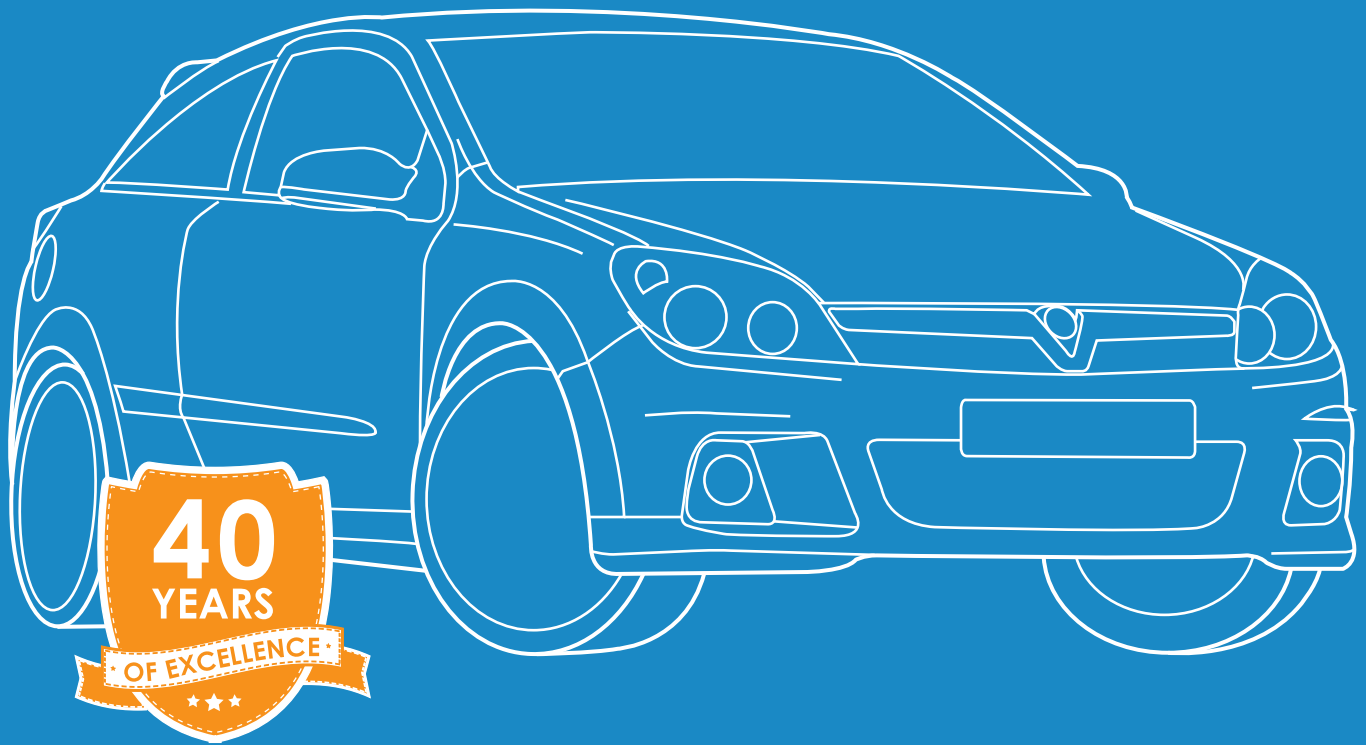


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- Telephone numbers starting '070' are usually from our affiliate website carandclassic.co.uk. If you get a message which says 'invalid' this usually means the item is no longer for sale.



Astra

ASTRA



2003, 26,000 miles, £2,895 ono. MoT till November 2016, just had full service including timing belt and water pump. Wax oiled ready for winter front snow tyres to keep you safe. Electric windows, central locking, factory stereo with fingertip controls, clean unmarked velour seats, ice cold air con, beautiful condition inside and outruns and drives smooth. Derbyshire. 07966 707393 (HP)

ASTRA 1200S MK1

1984, £1,200. New brakes fitted, new battery, new interior, needs 2 new rear wheel arches 2-3 small patches on wings rest of the body is good. Starts and runs okay. Bargain. Lincolnshire. 01507 601344

ASTRA GTE 16V



1991, 112,000 miles, £4,500. Silk violet gte 16v. It has escort cosworth seats fitted that do suit the car and are in very good condition- no tears and minimal wear. Arches / sills floors / bulk head are very good. Engine oil has been changed every thousand miles in my ownership and is always golden. Has a alloy twin core radiator recently fitted as the original broke. Yorkshire. 07871 547224 (HP)

ASTRA GTE PICKUP



1989, £4,495. This car turns heads wherever it goes. The quality of the conversion and condition inside and out is excellent as is the engine and gearbox etc, the sound and acceleration is thrilling. 1.8 8V Kent Cam GTE Engine. Originally a Astra Estate which was professionally converted to a pick up some years ago. A real eye catcher & regular show winner. Scotland. 07795 600983 (HP)

ASTRA MK2 SXI



116,500 miles, £1,500 ono. Reg-14/11/1990. Part history MoT till end October 2016. Bodywork very good apart from couple minor areas. Interior sound apart from drivers seat bolster. Drives a1, new radiator. 07884 438334 (SN)

Carlton

CARLTON



1993, 126,000 miles, £3,650. Manual. 10 months MoT. Good solid tidy genuine car. Tidy Half black gsi leather interior. Analogue dash. Engine, gearbox and diff 100%. Recently serviced including new flywheel and clutch. Car drives perfectly. Stainless steel power flow exhaust. Car has new break pads, discs and hand break cables. Whole underside and wheel arches have been sealed and painted black. Northern Ireland. 07745 720367 (HP)

CARLTON LIMOUSINE



1994, 76,000 miles, £1,600. 4 door limousine in grey. With ice bucket and glasses. OCC seats took out, coloured lights in floor, 2 DVD screens, tinted windows. This car has had £4,000 spent on re paint and refit. MoT June, 2 litre with overdrive. 01942 810292

Cavalier

CAVALIER



1985, £POA. These cars are very rare and much admired at car shows, looking for older classic, I like Morris M.O.S. in grey, car tested Feb 16, very nice car, hood needs repair. Lancashire. 07934 157700

CAVALIER



1994, 77,000 miles, £1,500. Lady Owner over 14 years. Full MoT, timing Belt and water pump renewed. Every MoT certificate available. TSW alloys and stainless steel exhaust. Radio, cassette and 6 CD changer. Original wheels, trims and radio available (in storage) immaculate condition inside and out. No better example - worth viewing. 0114 232 5616 (HR)

CAVALIER

1994, 75,000 miles, £1,000. 1.8LS hatchback, never welded, wax oiled, full MoT, new tyres, just serviced, last owned for 20 years, garaged, L reg and drives perfect. Cambs. 07904 028763 (HR)

CAVALIER

£3,000 ono. New wishbones, new wheel bolts, Cavalier V6 rear box mount (have F28 too), suspension - Eibach springs with Koni adjustable shocks. I haven't MoT'd the car yet, was planning to soon but obviously with it making a noise I don't want to drive it anywhere and the vehicle is SORNed. Car must be viewed, it needs a good. Buckinghamshire. 07740 087373 (HP)

CAVALIER 1.8 LS

1994, 75,000 miles, £950. L reg, last owner for 20 years, never welded, very nice condition throughout, full MoT. Cambs. 07904 028763 or 01945 583367

CAVALIER COMMANDER

1986, 73,000 miles, £1,400. Silver. Current MoT. 1598cc petrol engine, Sun roof, always garaged and meticulously looked after. Regularly serviced and hardly used in recent years but still drives beautifully. Two owners only. Reasonable offers sought in region of £1400- no time wasters please. Kent. 07733 196656 (HP)

Chevette

CHEVETTE SPECIAL



1980, 71,000 miles, £1,500. MoT 11 months, good condition, driven regularly, present owner 12 years, full service history plus some spares. South Yorks. 07752 189449

Corsa

CORSA



1996, 71,100 miles, £1,500 ono. Rare opportunity to purchase a Corsa convertible. The car have been reliably used up to Aug this year. Upgrade suspension, alloy wheels, new roof. Hertfordshire. 07894 872376 (SN)

CORSA B



1995, 15,000 miles, £POA. R1 bike carbs. Stage 2 head and kent fast road cam. Full custom leather interior. Complete one-off. Fully rebuilt engine. MOT until May 16. Surrey. 07915 697069 (HR)

CORSA COMBI VAN



1994, 112,000 miles, £595. Early example 1.7 Diesel, 9 months MoT. Some history very clean condition, Isuzu engine. youngcaro1@btinternet.com. Kent. 07980 112391 (HR)

Cresta

CRESTA

1960, £6,995. Mid series, in the progress of restoration. Most of the work is done, will make beautiful car. Will take small classic, investment. Hampshire. 02380 617132 / 07580 027468 (SN)

CRESTA E SERIES



1955, 55,000 miles, £15,750. Full car is in mint condition, its life from 1977 was in Portugal where it was a show car speedo. Original reg no UKD 920, only 4 owners 2262 cc, straight 6 cyl. Merseyside. 01514 267709 (SN)

Frontera

FRONTERA

1995, £600. 4x4, long wheelbase, 5 doors, 2.4 petrol engine, dark green, large offroad tyres, runs well, good condition for year, needs some TLC, a bargain, long MoT. Bedfordshire. 01582 611290

Nova

NOVA



1986, £4,000. Spanish import which are called Opel Corsa 1300 GT. This car has has a full coat of paint. Totally standard and totally mint. Car must be viewed to be appreciated. Northern Ireland. 07881 614000/ 02887 748918 (HP)

NOVA 1.2 L



1986, 41,000 miles, £2,150. 3 door, blue, MoT March 2016 excellent original example never been welded - wheel arches, sills, bottoms of doors, battery tray all are fine, car comes with the original bill of sale and a load of receipts from throughout the years - serious enquiries only please. Northern Ireland. 07763 764881 (HP)

NOVA GTE



1988, £5,000 ono. 11 months MoT. I have spent thousands on this car, respray sourcing original parts etc. New clutch and cable all new brake and fuel pipes front to back. It is lowered on sports springs and shocks and all the rubber bushes have been replaced with uprated poly bushes. Interior is fully standard dash board is in mint condition no cracks etc. Cleveland. 07863 696961 (HP)



Omega

OMEGA

2002, 93,000 miles, £400 ono. Manual, good runner, body & interior usual refinements, 600 miles since last MoT on Sorn. Denbighshire. 01745 332692

Senator

SENATOR



1989, 41,850 miles, £2,000. 2.5i manual. Absolute "time warp", good condition bodywork and cloth interior. Solid reliable cruiser. New battery, tyres all round. Main service March 2015, MoT to July 2016. Cleveland. 07581 442625 (RB)

Vectra

VECTRA 2.6 GSI

£Offers invited. 4 door saloon. Black, low mileage. Excellent condition. New tyres. Completely standard. Beautiful car. Very rare. Owned last 6 years. Shropshire. 07582 885159 (RB)

Viscount

CRESTA



1969, 40,000 miles, £7,000. Burgundy with a Pageant Red coach line. 60s & 70s Fords are my thing so I have reluctantly decided to sell the Viscount. MoT & Taxed until August 2016. Power steering, 4 electric windows, 2 speed powerglide auto gear box. Well presented car and drives like a dream. Tyne And Wear. 07899 957403 (HP)

Viva

VIVA HA

1968, £1,400. Blue door and good condition. Low mileage needs windscreen and TLC. Lovely drive used. Cardiff. 029 2025 9728 (HR)

Wyvern

WYVERN

1953, £3,800. For spares or repair. Good condition, running. Restoration. Tax and MoT free. Would consider exchange for 1930-38 Austin restoration project and cash either way. Middlesex. 01895 237820 (RB)

Combo

COMBO VAN

1999, 121,000 miles, £700 ono. Clean van, white, 3 owners, MoT October 2016, no rips in seats, had had plastic load liner in rear from new, 1.7D Isuzu engine. 07906 209224

VEHICLES WANTED

ALL VAUXHALL BRAVA TRUCKS AND ISUZU TRUCKS



Wanted. Any year clean or rusty we are very good buyers. (T). 07775 998628 (JW)

FORD SIERRA

Wanted. Diesel or Ford Granada, diesel or Vauxhall Victor F-type. Herefordshire. 07528 642560 (PB)

MIXED CLASSIC VEHICLE

Wanted. Like an Austin Mini, Sprite MKIV, XR2, MGB Midget, Traveller, van, pick-up, Rover Mini, Suzuki Cappuccino, Herald conv, Stag, PA Cresta, MX-5 conv, Golf conv, runner or project, local please Cardiff. South Wales. 029 2062 6711

OPEL MANTA COUPE

Wanted. Or Opel Ascona. Anything Considered. Cash Waiting. 07901 993292)

PARTS FOR SALE

ATE BRAKE PAD CLIP SET

£Various + P&P. Vauxhall / Opel 127 1 set £3, girling brake pad tool ti 1081 rover p6 £5, Girling brake shoe return springs 1 set SR524 BMC Mini 1959/64 £3. Unipart front wheel bearings GHB 1288129 Austin A35, A40 Sprite 1959/68 etc £5. 01306 884449 (SN)

AUTOJUMBLE PARTS & ACCESSORIES

£POA. 13 heavy duty industrial plastic crates 18"x12"x28" ideal for jumbler or emmergrating £10 each trailer 3 foot x4 foot with hinged lid on 10" mini wheels includes spare £200 empty o/s head lamp Peugeot 309 1989/ £10, head lamp o/s Vauxhall Astra mk 1 £10, o/s head lamp proton 1990 £20, lucas alternator LRA475 Nissan Micra, sunny, cherry 1982/88 £25, alternator Lucas LRA819 VauxhallCorsa gte, Vectra £25, Acdelco alternator Opel Kadett 1969/78 £25, plus boxes of other parts please phone. 01306 884449

BRAKE PADS GENUINE RENAULT

£5 each plus p&p. 7701204066 (Girling type C) super 5, Clio, Express,R9, R11, R18, Fuego, R19,R21,R25 V6 & V6 Turbo front. AP LOCKHEED LUP 56 front Renault R51972/1975,R6 1970on, R12 1970on 351" Ford Fiesta 8/1983on. Mintex MDB 1141AF front Vauxhall/Opel ascona, corsa, kadett, manta 1978on, omega, rekord, vectra range 1977on,vauxhall astra, belmont, carlton,1978on & cavalier range 1975on. DIRECT 3/93 front Fiat 131 mirafiori/Uno 1982on, Panda, Regata 1983/1991& Strada, Ritmo.1982/1988,Tempira 1990on. ALL items £5 each plus p&p. 01306 884449

MANTZEL FLOWMASTER

£300. Brand new, never used. The buyer must collect. West Midlands. 01543 378719

VARIOUS

£POA. Acclaim O/S/R door VG. Beetle engine cover (late). 3 Vauxhall Nova wheels and tyres, unused. Bedfordshire. 01234 213871 (RB)

VAUXALL VECTRA



£65 ono. Sri 150 alloys very clean, just need a wash but hardly any marks. Leicestershire. 07847 500631 (HP)

VAUXHALL CALIBRA

£25. Sunroof. Driver's seat, black leather, £25. Boot cover, £15. Lancashire. 07870 123623 (RB)

VAUXHALL HA SERIES

£15. Training manual, transmission propshaft, rear axle. Plus £5 p&p. Fife. 01383 735721

WHEEL HUB BEARING KITS

£5 each plus postage & packing. Quentin Hazall QWB 417 Opel Vauxhall Astra,Corsa, Kadett etc x1, QWB 425 Austin Allegro, Mini, Metro, 1100 & 1300 etc x1, QWB 302 Renault 4/6 1965/75 x1 QWB 629 (unknown) x2, QWB 110c Hillman, Singer, Sunbeam, model setc x1, qwb 562 Austin Montego 1985/ x3, QWB 526, Vauxhall Carlton 1982/86 x1, QWB 155c Vauxhall Cavalier x1, QWB 107c Lotus Reliant, Triumph x1, QWB 300 Renault QWB 291 Peugeot. 01306 884449 (SN)

WHEELS



£195. Set of four Astra Coupe turbo alloys with tyres. 215/40/17 good condition. Manchester. 07886 625191 (SN)

PARTS WANTED

FORD FIESTA MK3 SEATS

Wanted. Consider complete car if it is automatic, not too far from London. London. 02083 613711 / 07770 119915 (RB)

MARCHAL AMPLILUX OPTIQUE 7IN HEADLAMPS

Wanted. Sealed beam, iodine bulbs. 2 bulbs plus side light. Part No.139568/222 TG on rear of lens. Yorkshire. 07973 417585 (RB)

REAR AXLE FOR A VAUXHALL VISCOUNT

Wanted. In good condition, Isle of Man. 07624 451359

VAUXHALL ASTRA

£POA, **Wanted.** Rear Irmischer boot spoiler. 07419 125908

VAUXHALL VELOX E

1954, **Wanted.** Spares wanted such as brake shoes, front wheel bearings, oil fitter and slave cylinder. Oxfordshire. 01865 340323 (HR)

MISCELLANEOUS

2 RAFA BADGES



£60 pair. Royal Air Forces Association, both bar fixing. Nice condition. Free postage. West Sussex. 07398 015688 (RB)

858101

£Serious offers over £3,750. Private registration plate on Nissan Primera. South Yorkshire. 07970 782251 (RB)

BANTAM CAR TRAILER

£995 ono. Bed length 3m, bed width 1.7m. Load capacity 1 ton. Winch hitch lock. Auto reverse system. Good condition. Cheshire. 07796 094894 (RB)

CAR HANDBOOKS

£POA. From 1948 to late 1960s. 28 in all. 1912 bulb type horn, brass. Offers. Staffordshire. 01543 375132 (RB)

ESSO VITRIOUS ENAMEL SIGN



1960, £40. Steel, not tin. 12in x 8in. MNF by Burnham, London. Post free. Essex. 07794 775973 (RB)

INSTRUCTION BOOKS

£Various, Avenger £5, Maxi £5,Transit £5, MG 1100 £5, Olyslanger manual. Vauxhall 101 £6, Austin A46-55 £6,Pitmans book of Wolseley £6, BMC 1300- 1100 £5, all plus postage. North Sommerset. 01934 517081

METAL CLASSIC CAR MODELS

£POA. Nine, 10in, Italian made and one 8in Jaguar XK 120 1948 coupe, few need wheels, need seeing for offers for the lot. Dorset. 01305 826905

MIKE HAWTHORN VOICE



£40. On this 45rpm vinyl record. British Grand Prix, Silverstone, 1958. Interview by John Bolster. Also Mike Collins Sound Stories. Surrey. 020 8399 7541 (RB)

MINERVA CAR MASCOT



1930, £850 ono. Signed P Desoete, Dutch. Used on all series on cap. Nice condition. Cornwall. 07905 135288 (RB)

NUMBER PLATE

£425. G10 MJA, including plates themselves. Ready for transfer. Devon. 01297 552746 (RB)

NUMBER PLATE

£1,750 ovno. Registration M400 CAT. Presently on a Jaguar XK8. But now held on a DVLA retention form. Cornwood. 07804 828494 (PB)

PERFORMANCE

VAUXHALL

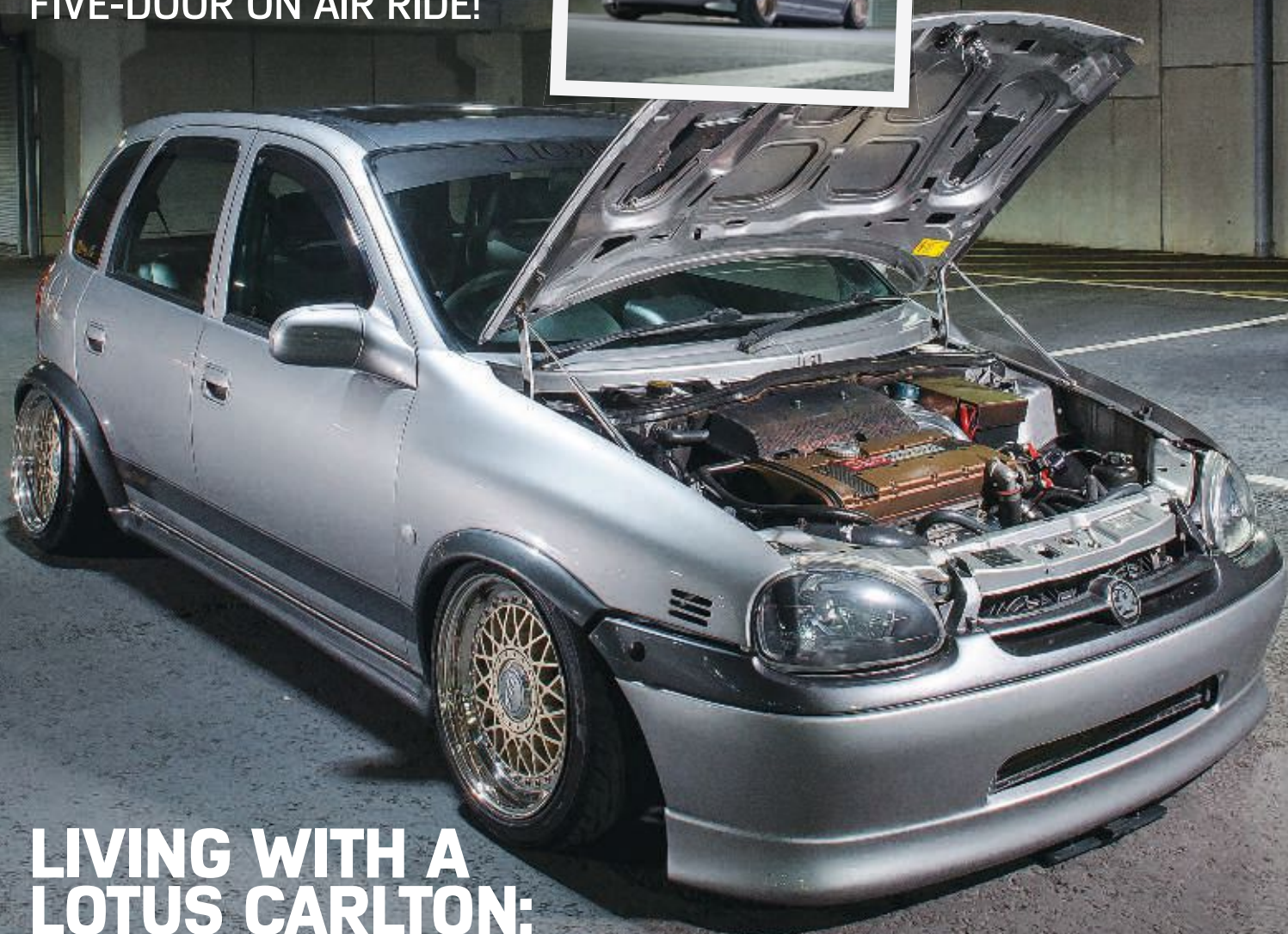
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