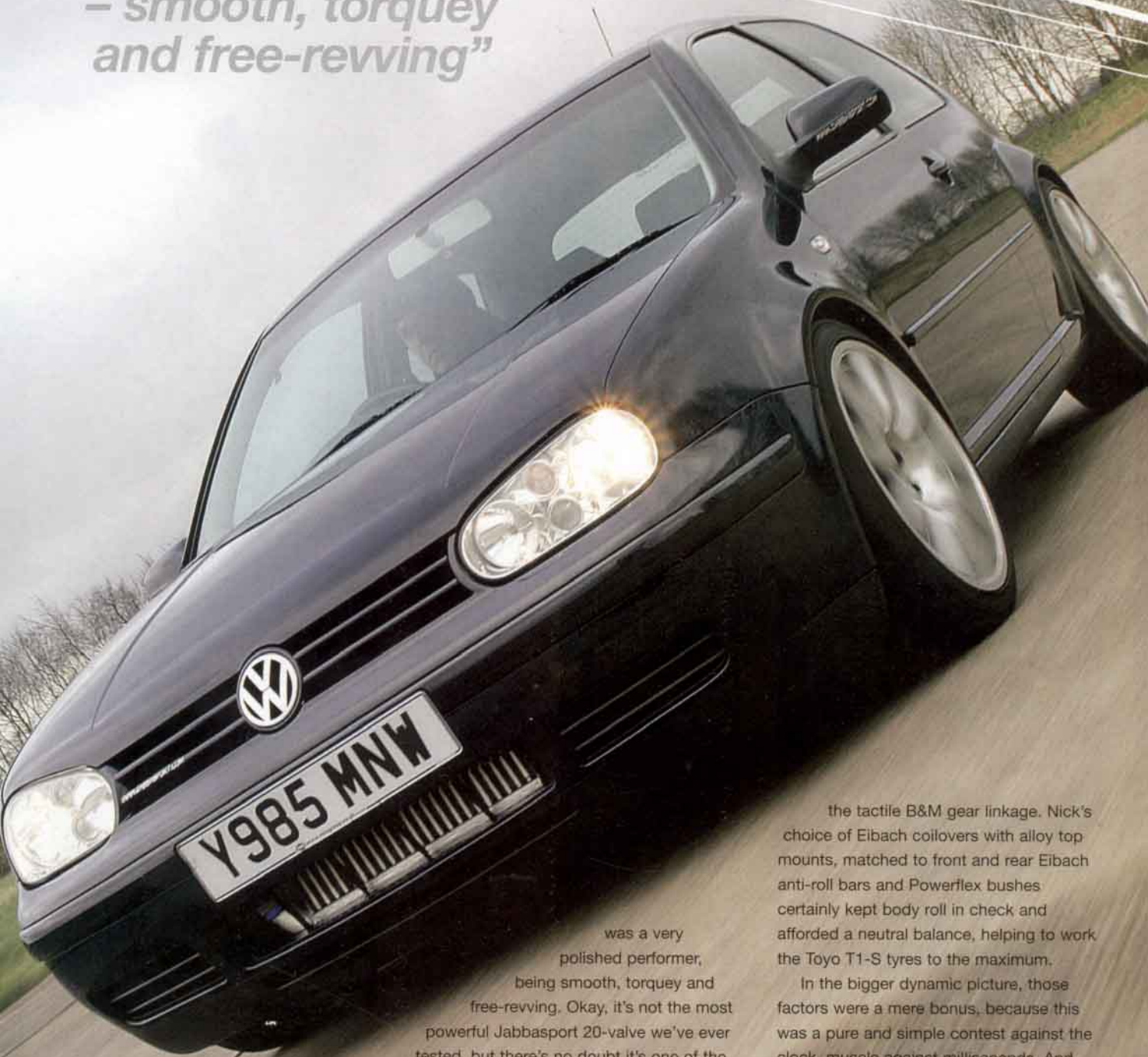


*“The petrol contender was a polished performer – smooth, torquey and free-revving”*



replacement in the not too distant future.

Even so, he needn't be ashamed of this petrol Golf's output. Missing engine cover aside, it's a storming example of the ready tuning potential of the turbocharged 20-valve petrol engine, which should easily see 220bhp. It also should be packing around 230lb.ft of torque.

Behind the wheel, this petrol contender

was a very polished performer, being smooth, torquey and free-revving. Okay, it's not the most powerful Jabbasport 20-valve we've ever tested, but there's no doubt it's one of the sweetest, boosting nicely from around 2000rpm, all the way up to nearly 7000rpm. Peddling it around the test track's sweeps was great fun, exploiting the petrol engine's willing mid-range pull, enjoying the strong tug as the rev-counter swept higher, backed by an exciting, stimulating soundtrack – part induction, part exhaust. Pleasingly cog-swapping in the five speed box was a real joy, thanks to

the tactile B&M gear linkage. Nick's choice of Eibach coilovers with alloy top mounts, matched to front and rear Eibach anti-roll bars and Powerflex bushes certainly kept body roll in check and afforded a neutral balance, helping to work the Toyo T1-S tyres to the maximum.

In the bigger dynamic picture, those factors were a mere bonus, because this was a pure and simple contest against the clock, muscle against milliseconds. And when Nick's car stepped up to the pedestal, it delivered nicely, easily recording a 0-60mph dash in 6.91secs, a massive step forward from VW's quoted 8.5sec time. Thanks to the progressive power delivery, launching the car at 3500rpm seemed best to balance acceleration against wheelspin as you fed more power in and snatched a gear just as 60mph was reached. Nick's car clocked a