



Below: mid-range pull meant taking the petrol Mk4 through sweeping bends was a joy



respectable standing quarter mile time of 15.5secs, an excellent figure and a testimony to the quality of Jabbasport's engine work.

In-gear acceleration times were going to be very interesting, as we felt that these would be the benchmark for the diesel to beat. On a 3rd gear 30-70mph acceleration test the Golf took 15.4 secs, then clocking a 11.9 secs for a 40-90mph 4th gear trial.

On the flat-out, full bore run, it clocked 134mph, which considering that Nick's car cost around £1800 to get to this state of tune, tops a very decent set of figures which back up a very solid, impressive package. Thing is, would it beat the diesel?

Petrol Mk4 figures

0-60 mph:6.91 sec
Standing quarter:15.5 sec
30-70mph 3rd gear:15.4 sec
40-90mph 4th gear:11.9 sec
Top speed:134.01mph

Diesel power:

Allard Mk4 PD130 1.9 TDI

Aurally it's no contest, because the diesel's soundtrack still conjures up images of taxis, farmyard tractors and smoky Inter-City 125 trains. Round one to the petrol car. Still, once you've got over the shock of the muted clatter that's present once you've let the glowplug light flick out and twisted the key, the interior of the Allard PD130 is a mighty nice place to be, with leather, climate control and heated seats.

Externally the Allard Golf is a real sleeper, running on stock suspension, brakes and wheels, aside from a set of the latest Toyo Proxes T1-R rubber. Eagle eyed readers may spot the biggest clue to this Mk4's performance – that large alloy intercooler nestling behind the bumper.

Pop the bonnet and the game becomes very clear. The bespoke carbon fibre engine cover hints at the potential lurking in the engine bay, as does the silicon hose plumbing. That's only half the story, because the juiciest parts of the Allard Golf don't grab your eyeballs at first. So it's only after enquiry that we learn it's actually in 'Phase 3' tune, running a bigger development AMC 275VNT turbo, originally destined for a 2.5-litre Audi turbo-diesel motor and capable of handling up to 275bhp. Remapped to provide up to 1.75 Bar of boost with fuelling to match, this mounts onto a free flow exhaust manifold, which hooks up to a big bore turbo downpipe, linked to a 63mm big bore stainless steel exhaust system.

The engine inhales through one of Allard's massive intercoolers via a K&N filter equipped airbox and the results are approximately 200bhp at 4350rpm, coupled to over 310lb.ft of torque at 2850rpm. That's enough torque to wilt the standard clutch, so wisely the car uses an uprated Helix pressure plate. With a slightly more aggressive map Allard claims this is quick enough to see off the new Mk5 2.0-



litre petrol GTI, which sounds ambitious, but we were about to find out. Immediate impressions are very, very promising, yet the experience is surreally different to the petrol 1.8T. There's less fuss, less revs, less drama, just a mighty dose of serious performance, although unlike some diesels, the power delivery produced by a development ECU map does take a little getting used to. As such