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WM *motoring*

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SPECIAL FEATURE:

Lombard  **rally**



● MILLION MILE BEETLE

● TESTS: UVA FUGITIVE, KARMANN GIPSY

GOLF

DAVE POLLARD visits David Sutton Motorsport and discovers that, however standard it may look, a Group A Golf GTi 16V is anything but.

Kenneth Eriksson's Group A Golf in action on the Trentham Gardens Special Stage (below) and with the David Sutton mechanics at a service point (left).



RALLY

Special

crash helmet mounts for driver and navigator, and alongside is the short wave radio unit.

In the front is the usual vast array of instruments and controls. An on-board computer can be connected to a printer to reveal how many 1/100ths of a second has been spent in each 1000rpm rev band. This provides invaluable information about engine performance. It can also be used to check up on what the driver tells you!

The rev counter is calibrated in an unusual manner, for the first graduation covers the first 5000rpm. If you're doing less than that you ain't trying!

On the navigation side, the rally computer gives distances with an accuracy of 1/100th of a mile. In the centre console, a line of circuit breakers are used instead of fuses, for ease of access and resetting. Similarly the relays are mounted beneath them for convenience.

A master cut-out switch on the console stops all power immediately, except the supply to the radio. The fire extinguisher system has its own separate supply.

The brake discs are about an inch larger in diameter and slightly thicker than standard. Stopping power is assisted by two-pot racing calipers. Special lock stops in the steering rack prevent the excess use of power on full lock, which helps preserve driveshafts.

In the engine compartment a lightweight battery is used, while the alternator is a heavy duty model throwing out some 150amps. On top of the engine sits an oil/air separator to help it breathe, and the fuel head is taken directly from a Porsche Turbo!

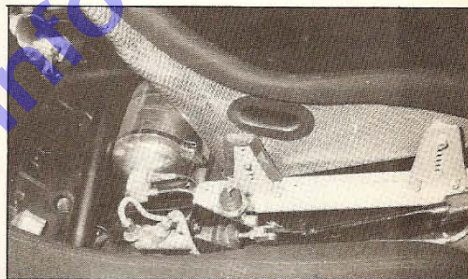
As it is, the engine is expected to produce around 200bhp. The gearbox is 5-speed, close ratio with a limited slip diff and 4.64 final drive.

The massive roll cage is multi-point fixed and comes through into the engine compartment to the top of the suspension struts. The theory is that road shocks (and there's plenty of those on the RAC!) are carried through the cage and out at the back, thus easing the pressure on the shell.

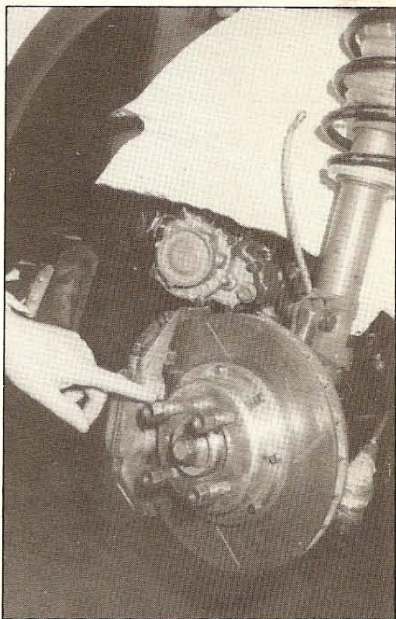
My special thanks go to David Nicholson, for despite the obvious pressures of an impending RAC rally, David managed to spare me a great deal of his time and took great care to make sure that no points, however small, were missed. It is surely this kind of professionalism and attention to detail that have made David Sutton Motorsport the rallying success of the '80s. □ We take a further look at David Sutton's detailed preparation of this car in the February issue.



Although it looks like the real thing, this Golf is a practice car.



Absolutely vital in a modern race/rally car: the large cylinder at the rear of the driver's seat (LHD remember) is one of the two 'plumbed in' fire extinguisher systems which can be operated inside or outside the car.



Above: The ventilated brakes are larger and thicker than standard and are operated by massive twin-pot racing calipers. The suspension is adjustable. Right: A view from the co-driver's side showing a curious mixture of standard fitments. Note lack of ignition lock—the car is started via a press button to the left of the driver.

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he Lombard RAC Rally is Britain's biggest sporting event, attracting an attendance of over five million spectators. Apart from the BBC *Top Gear* coverage, however, it is largely ignored by the TV companies, who prefer to concentrate on sparsely attended cricket matches, in obscure corners of the globe. (Having got that personal vendetta off my chest, I will continue . . .)

Three weeks before the Rally I took a trip to Daventry, home of David Sutton Motorsport where, as you can imagine, things were pretty hectic in the large, well-equipped workshop. At any one time there were at least seven competitors' cars being prepared, from quattros downwards, not to mention various customers' vehicles!

Along one side of the workshop was a row of 16V Golfs. The purposeful-looking machine at the end was being prepared for none other than Kenneth Eriksson, winner of the Group A world driver's championship in 1986.

This year he drove a similar car to overall victory in the Ivory Coast Rally, although this was marred somewhat by the tragic deaths of Nigel Harris and Henry Liddon in a plane crash.

The Sutton car is their 'hire-drive' (!) vehicle and Mr Eriksson chose it to compete in Britain's most prestigious rally. David Nicholson, Sutton's motorsport co-ordinator, took me on a guided tour.

Starting at the back, a special fuel tank has been fabricated and the spare wheel is strapped to it. Wheels are Speedline 6J x 15 shod with Michelin tyres of varying sizes and types, depending on the surfaces of the individual stages.

The uprated suspension has rose joints at top and bottom for greater accuracy of adjustment. Where the rear seat should be, are moulded foam

