



AUTO BILD SPORTSCARS was exclusively able to discover the difference between the B12 Sportline and the series suspension of the Golf GTI at the ATP Papenburg test premises

DRIVING REPORT - B12 SPORTS SUSPENSION ON THE GOLF GTI

Driving fun²

The first product of the new partnership between Eibach and Bilstein is the B12 Sportline. Does it really make the Golf GTI even sportier?

■ When two professionals from the suspension sector get together, it can only mean good things. This is what happened a few months ago. Bilstein and Eibach met up and decided to merge some of their products together. We are of course talking about sports springs from Eibach and shock absorbers from Bilstein. It goes without saying that this marriage should not yield new suspension and shock absorber characteristics, but give customers new, affordable suspension solutions. The first release from the new alliance is the B12 Sportline. AUTO BILD SPORTSCARS was allowed to test the first product from this partnership on the Golf GTI and compare it with the series standard version. So what does B12 Sportline now mean?



Two brands for plenty of suspension fun: Klaus Lepenies (Bilstein, left) and Stephan Stöcker (Eibach) completing the new B12 Sportline

„B12“ stands for the type of shock absorber from Bilstein, while „Sportline“ stands for the springs from Eibach. Both have been meticulously fine-tuned to each other. We found out whether this works and whether it can beat the original GTI suspension at the test premises of ATP Papenburg. There we put together a route which comprised a race track, bad roads, country roads and motorways. After all it is not just about the best time, but about a sports set-up which is compatible with everyday use. The first laps should show how good the basis is. Like at the previous SPORTSCARS tests the long-time favourite Golf GTI drove really safely, sporty yet comfortably. Of course the Golf buckled sometimes on the race



For the comparison, standard and B12 suspensions were mounted



In the steep turn of the test premises the GTI had to show, at over 200 km/h, how well balanced the B12 suspension is



Bad road conditions showed that the comfort remains unchanged



The B12 equipped GTI flew faster through the slalom course



The B12 Sportline is available for many popular types of vehicles



The BMW 3-Series impresses with the B12 Pro-Kit (less suspension lowering and more comfort). On the race track the GTI with the B12 Sportline was a few seconds faster than the series-standard car



SPECIAL MODEL Luxury Mini

■ The Mini "Inspired by Goodwood" radiates British club atmosphere with a whiff of Rolls-Royce. The coating and design ideas for the interior come from the luxury brand. Here, instead of fabric and plastic there is a mix of wood and leather. The limited edition luxury mini, of which there are just 1000 units, costs 47,000 Euros.



TUNING Royal GT 740

■ Hofele Design has given the current VW Touareg a more sporty design. The Royal GT 740 conversion kit is equipped with fender extension and extremely sporty spoilers. In addition there is more power, a lower centre of gravity and wider wheels for the diesel. **Contact details:** Tel. 0 71 62-91 23 90, www.hofele.com



TUNING Vmax package

■ Jaguar tuner Arden offers an exclusive „Vmax package“ for all 4.2 and 5.0 super-charged engines. In addition to a Vmax removal there is also a special speedometer for up to 320 km/h. Including instrument colour of choice the package costs 5355 Euros. **Contact details:** Tel.: 0 21 51-37 23-0, www.arden.de

track, but in general it drove on tautly at all times and through the corners. The car was then modified with the B12 Sportline. On the first few kilometres the suspension already considerably reduced the sideways tilting of the bodywork compared to the series-standard car. The Golf took corners eagerly on the Hockenheim circuit, and load changes were minimal. Despite the lowering of the centre of gravity by 30 millimetres at the front and 25 millimetres at the back there is still enough residual spring travel. „The B12 shock absorber is equipped with the latest upside-down technology and corresponds to the status of our top suspensions. Apart from the height adjustment the B12 is absolutely comparable with the coil-over“,

says Klaus Lepenies, driving test manager at Bilstein. Stephan Stöcker from Eibach goes even further: „At first glance our springs only provide a lowering of the centre of gravity. But with the right spring characteristics we provide a large share of driving fun.“ Once more we raced through the marked-out course with the GTI. The Golf acted neutral. In extreme load-change corners the rear did not once fall out of line. On the stony and uneven comfort course you glide along just as smoothly as with the standard suspension. Meanwhile the car is much faster on the race track. In the reproduced Sachs corner the grey GTI drives as though it is on rails.

CONCLUSION



EIBACH + BILSTEIN B12 Sportline

Eibach Part No. E95-85-022-03-22

Bilstein Part No. 46-188069

Lowering (front/rear) 30/25 mm

www.performance2.info

■ Not every alliance has worked as well from the start as the partnership between Eibach and Bilstein. With their first joint collaboration, the B12 Sportline, the suspension experts have given the Golf GTI a much more sporty handling.

Guido Naumann

Fotos: S. Krüger