

TWIN TEST VW LUPO GTi vs GOLF MK1 GTi

♦ that it still had the skills to create a truly impressive driving experience. The Lupo GTi was merely the car that happened to come along at the same time.

Whatever the truth of it, it was with a rare spring in my step that I slipped behind the wheel of Tim Votier's Golf and set off after the Lupo. I doubt there is a better Mk1 Golf GTi in the country than this. It is an original and immaculate example of one of the last of the breed, coming out just before it was visually and dynamically spoiled by horrid Pirelli-styled wheels and worse Pirelli P6 tyres.

Like all such late Mk1 Golfs it has an 1800cc, single cam, 8-valve engine producing an unstressed 112bhp. But with a kerb weight of just 975kg its power-to-weight ratio is surprisingly close to the 125bhp, twin-cam, 16-valve Lupo's, despite being a full four-seater with a big boot. The rear of the Lupo, by contrast, is for small children on short journeys, while its boot is minute.

Mechanical fuel injection – remember this car dates from the time when most fast affordable cars were happy with a

**“You can
revel in
clear, fun
reactions”**



Twin pipes hint at Lupo's power

twin-choke carburettor – means the Golf fires as soon as the key turns; it idles as silently and smoothly as the Lupo. The gearbox is a little awkward, decisive action being needed to slot into first and fifth, but soon we're bowling through the lanes, chasing the Lupo's stubby central tailpipes.

I'd forgotten how quick these cars are: today's 2.0-litre Golf GTi with three more horsepower but a stack more weight would be left standing. More than this, however, the Mk1's engine is smoother than I remembered. And it has torque, from idle to 6000rpm. And while power tails off here, it stays smooth all the way to its 6750rpm limit.

Back in 1982, we got one to 60mph from rest in 8.3sec (quicker, even, than the turbocharged version of today's Golf GTi), while its modest 113mph top speed spoke more of laughable aerodynamics than any want of shove.

Its handling is rather different from the

**25 years separate
these cars, yet the
Golf is far from
embarrassed**



**Fast, fluent cars
from VW? You'd
better believe it**

