

GTI Clubsport takes on Big Three

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

12 Jul 2016

The VW Golf GTI, the benchmark against which all hot hatches are measured, has just upped the pace once again with the introduction of a sizzling Clubsport edition which the German carmaker says will blitz the 0-100km/h sprint in 5.9 seconds and has a top speed of 249km/h.



The special edition develops 195kW and 350Nm which can be boosted to 213kW and 380Nm with a single sharp jab of the accelerator pedal. The Clubsport will outrun most of the standard GTI pack and is just a split second slower than the top dog Golf R. The latest scorcher in the GTI family looks the part too with racing style front bumper and a rear spoiler and diffuser similar to those of a race car, new side sills and attractive forged alloy wheels. But these are not just eye candy, but designed to improve the car's overall dynamic performance.

Agility and precision

The 1,984cc TSI engine is technically based on the same power factory as that of the Golf R with turbocharger that is integrated in the cylinder head and variable valve timing with dual camshaft adjustment. But, unlike the Golf R which pushes out power the front and rear wheels, the Clubsport channels its power entirely to the front wheels.

The DSG version is equipped with launch control for extra grip out of the starting stalls and it is extremely effective as I found during quarter-mile sprint sessions on the Killarney race track. The car's set-up and overall handling has also been perked up with a lowered sport chassis, suspension upgrades, a front diff lock, progressive steering, a new spring layout as well as newly tuned dampers – all designed to provide high levels of agility and steering precision as well as maximum grip for fast driving and to provide extra cling through the corners. Although standard kit includes 18-inch wheels, 19-inch alloys are optional.



Attractive furnishings

In addition to the fancy body trim and clever oily bits the Clubsport's living quarters are also attractively furnished with Vienna leather seats with red decorative stitching (sport bucket seats are optional). Piano black accents decorate the dash and door trim panels, smartly matched with a velour trimmed sport steering wheel (with GTI emblem, red stitching and a 12-o'clock mark), as well as customised floor mats with red piping

The Clubsport has all the standard features already found on the 'ordinary' GTI fleet including ambient lighting, multi-function steering wheel, two-zone auto climate control and 6.5-inch composition media infotainment system. Extras exclusive to the Clubsport include dual-branch exhaust tailpipes, LED daytime running lights, smoked LED rear lights, prominent CLUBSPORT lettering above the side sills, and gloss black mirror housings. If all this isn't fancy enough there is also an additional long list of optional extras including satnav, upgraded range sound system, Park Distance Control (rear) and more.

Head of the pack

The new Clubsport takes the throne as head of the GTI pack as the fastest GTI yet produced and it raises the crossbar to the level where it competes with the Mercedes-Benz A250 Sport Auto and BMW i25 – a good few notches up from the usual GTI competitors such as the Honda Civic Type R and the Renault Megane Trophy. It is a tough ask but then the Clubsport elevates the GTI package to a level of performance, class, looks, quality and price that it is difficult to match.

The Clubsport's price of R540,200 includes a five-year/90,000km service plan and a three-year/120,000km warranty.



VW SA is not sure how many Clubsport cars will come this way from the production line at Wolfsburg, Germany but says it will sell as many as it can get, with an initial target of 400 sales for 2016. Interestingly, about 145 GTI versions are sold in South Africa per month and GTI and Golf R models account for 56% of the total sales of the entire Golf range. Golf GTI went on sale in 1976 with a planned production of 5,000 units. Four decades later more than two million have been sold worldwide, 62,000 of those in South Africa. The Clubsport marks the GTI's 40th anniversary.

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

Henrie Geyser joined the online publishing industry through iafrica.com where he worked for five years as news editor and editor. He now freelances for a variety of print and online publications, on the subjects of cars, food, and travel, among others; and is a member of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists. henrieg@iafrica.com

- Lexus F-Sport: Winning hearts and wallets - 13 Mar 2018
- Kia Sportage gains Extra appeal - 20 Feb 2018
- Jaguar F-Type thrills with topless fun - 9 Feb 2018
- Elegant but pricey Discovery - 31 Jan 2018
- Sexy Aygo goes topless - 27 Nov 2017

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>