



VARIATIONS ON A THEME

GMP's Project Volkswagens

By Mike Collins

Over the years we've profiled many unique and sporty project cars from the tuning firm of GMP of Charlotte, North Carolina, a company renowned for manufacturing and selling high quality performance and cosmetic equipment for water-cooled Volkswagens. Not content to rest on their laurels however, GMP has put together an impressive collection of 1985 edition VW's, profiled here for your perusal.

GMP chose to build these three project cars to separate levels of finish, using different schools of thought for each machine. The Scirocco represents GMP's idea of the ultimate in aftermarket customizing, with extensive body and interior modifications. Their GTI is essentially a research and development vehicle, a rolling test-bed for new generation Golf and Jetta products. The Cabriolet, finally, was designed as an easy-to-do project, utilizing simple, bolt-on modifications.

One of GMP's goals in this series of

projects was to develop products that are feasible for owners of US-spec cars (too many European-made components require extensive modifications to work on US-spec VW's). To that end, all of GMP's equipment used on the vehicles fit correctly while also keeping intact the US-model safety features (bumpers, door beams, etc.).

To duplicate the results achieved in the Project Scirocco, a qualified body shop will be needed to carry out the installation of the body panels. The first step to this car's construction was removal of all interior trim as well as exterior bumpers, moldings and side marker lights. The fender lips must then be cut out and re-welded to clear the new bodywork, which serves to contain the car's lowered suspension and larger wheels and tires. Step three involves the fitting of the body panels to the car and the detail work that assures proper fit and finish. In step

four, the painting and all finishing work on the body is completed and the car's components reassembled.

Special components used in this build-up include GMP's stress bars and sway bars, Sachs shocks/struts, and Zender 7x15-inch wheels shod with Goodyear Eagle GT radials, size 195/50x15. The interior benefits from GMP's new line of Rennsport seats, fully adjustable and available in either soft velour or leather. As an added touch of class, the rear bench seat as well as the rear area parcel lid were finished in the same material as the front buckets. Topping off the modifications are a Momo steering wheel (with red stitching to match the upholstery) and the Blaupunkt Aspen sound system.

The first development plan with the Project GTI was to explore and improve the aerodynamics of the car, testing the various Zender applications on the US-spec GTI. Aerodynamics have come a long way in the past 10



Full-tilt Scirocco features full Zender body kit, 15x7-inch alloy wheels and 195/50/15 Goodyear Eagles. GMP designs their body components correctly for a proper fit.

Cabriolet's interior sports new-design Rennsport seats, finished in supple velour upholstery.



years, from the first fiberglass airdams to the ABS plastic pieces, to the new highly durable PU rim material used on today's aerodynamic applications. Every Zender piece available for the new Golf and Jetta models is made of this high quality material, ensuring that the cars will maintain the quality custom look over the years. These components come primed from the factory with a special flexible coating, greatly reducing the preparation time in painting the pieces to match the car.

The GTI was fitted with an airdam, sideskirt kit, fender flares, rear apron and rear spoiler, while underneath, 7x15-inch Zender wheels with 195/50/15 Yokohama A-008 rubber keeps 'er glued to the road. Every

reasonable combination of tire/wheel sizes from 6x13-inch wheels with 205/60/13 tires to 7x15 wheels with 205/50/15 radials were tested on the GTI, looking for the best handling characteristics without interference with the body components. Likewise, several different combinations of springs and shocks were fitted, ultimately choosing the most efficient combination of spring rates and ride height. For the driver who demands the ultimate in handling stability, GMP also developed upper, lower and rear stress bars, emphasizing strength and ease of installation as their design goals.


The Cabriolet was conceived as an easy-to-do project for owners who like performing the modifications them-

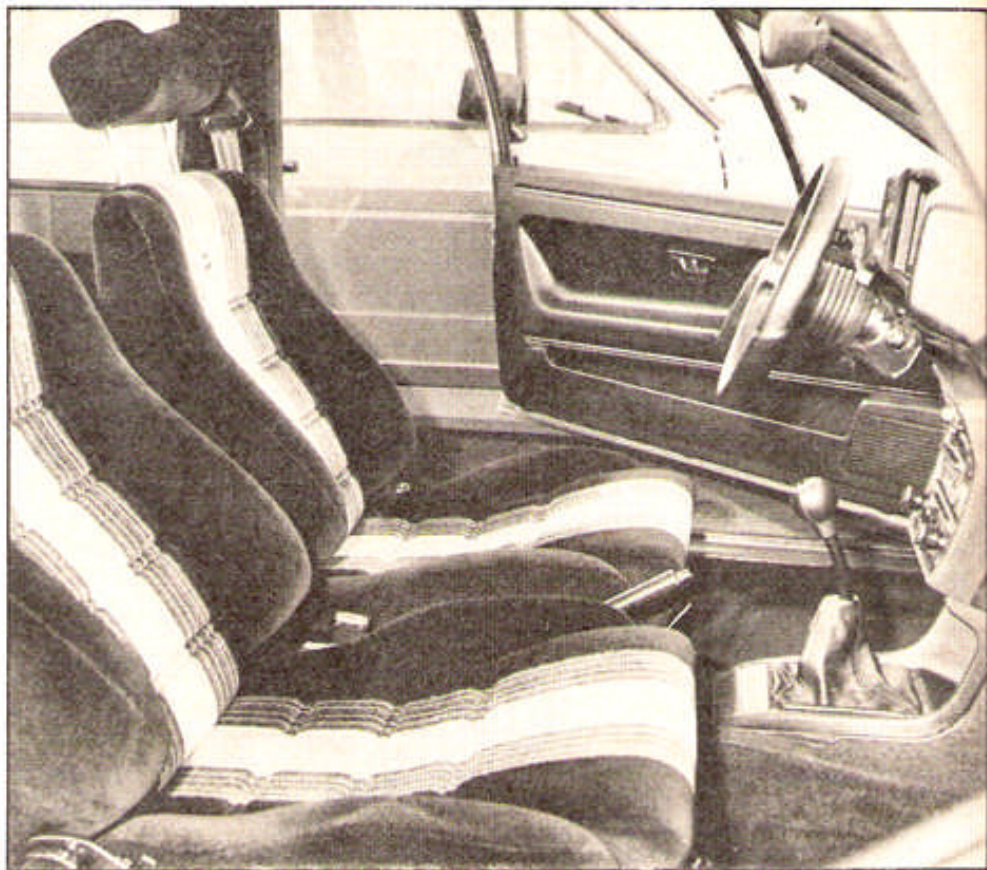
Visually exciting GTI and Cabriolet by GMP feature fender flares, side skirts, plus suspension goodies and performance wheels and tires.



selves. Even the body kit is a simple bolt-on application for ease of installation by the car's owner.

To begin the Cabriolet project, the car's grille, light brackets and rocker panel moldings were removed. All new body components were fitted to the car, then removed for painting. While the components were being painted, stress bars, larger diameter swaybars and shorter springs were installed, along with revised-rate Bilstein shocks and struts. With the suspension taken care of and the color-matched body pieces re-installed, attention was turned to the interior. GMP's Rennsport seats were slid into place, with matching rear bench upholstery added for aesthetics, while a Blaupunkt sound system was wired up for top-down cruising pleasure. Finally, a custom tonneau cover was fabricated to allow a range of use: complete cover; an opening for driver only; front seats open and rear closed. Crowning the exterior's appearance are 6x15-inch wheels wrapped with 195/50/15 Good-year Eagles.

These vehicles represent the latest in technology from GMP, a company with a full line of performance accessories for new generation Volkswagens. Contact them at P.O. Box 240008, Dept. VWP, Charlotte, NC 28224; (704) 525-0941. 



Scirocco interior likewise features Rennsport fully adjustable seats, with matching upholstery for the rear bench seat and storage area cover. High quality Blaupunkt Aspen sound system adds to the surrounds.



Slick bumper-mounted fog lights are a nice touch, and a relatively easy customizing job that would work well on any GTI or Rabbit.



Zender side valances not only improve the car's aerodynamics, but help to cure the age-old problem of road spray and mud being splashed on the sides of the car.

GMP's Project GTI looks aggressive with combination of Zender body pieces, ATS wheels with BFG Comp T/A's, and GMP's suspension system that lowers the car a full inch.

GMP PROJECT 1984 GTI

BY JAMES SLY

Although you've just seen GMP's new 1985 project car lineup, it doesn't mean that the older model VW's have been forgotten. GMP is a tuning firm that has been around since the very beginning for the second generation Volkswagens, and they continue to offer the latest in parts for each of the water-cooled VW's. Featured here is another GMP GTI project car, based on a 1984 model GTI.

As is normally the case with GMP's project cars, this car is not intended to be an extension of the GTI to its limit. Instead, this GTI is a development platform for the many components that GMP imports, manufactures, and sells. This means that for the average owner this would be an easy project to duplicate, but it doesn't mean that it isn't an exciting car to look at . . . or to drive!

When we recently visited GMP's new larger location in Charlotte, we were barely able to pull owner Joe Klitzsch away from his freshly installed computer system long enough to get a driving impression of this project car. That's what happens when a company grows from a part-time business in a garage to one of the biggest Volkswagen high-performance importers in the U.S. As the company has grown, however, Joe has taken a lot of steps to assure the



Tall Scirocco rear spoiler complements the aggressive look of the car's body panels. GTI sits more demurely, with lowered stance and wide rubber.



GMP PROJECT '84 GTI FACT SHEET

ENGINE MODIFICATION:	
GMP Billet Cam	\$149.95
GMP special throttle body	\$139.95
Gillet Power Sound exhaust	\$499.95
TRANSMISSION:	
Factory 5-speed gear box with modified 5th gear to drop 1500 rpm between 4th/5th	Cost to change \$600.00
WHEELS:	
ATS black polish wheels 6x15, special locking center caps	set of 4 \$559.80
TIRES:	
B.F. Goodrich Comp T/A 195/50x15	set of 4 \$552.00
SUSPENSION:	
GMP SUSPENSION PACKAGE to lower car one inch	
GMP front sway bar 19mm	\$ 99.95
GMP rear sway bar 22mm	\$ 99.95
both sway bars are designed for OEM mnt. points	
SACHS rear shocks special valving—rear shocks with adjustable ride height	\$149.95
SACHS front struts special valving	\$299.95
GMP springs progressive coil wire	\$209.95
GMP stress bar adjustable top	\$ 99.95
GMP stress bar adjustable bottom	\$ 99.95
EXTERIOR:	
ZENDER front spoiler	\$ 73.90
ZENDER rear spoiler	\$118.95
ZENDER side skirt kit	\$184.95
INTERIOR:	
RECARO KRX seat, driver side	\$495.95
RECARO KR seat, passenger side	\$395.95
RECARO NET headrest, front & rear	\$172.00
matching rear bench kit	\$340.00
INDIANAPOLIS CORSA steering wheel	\$152.95
SOUND SYSTEM:	
KENWOOD KRC 512 AM/FM stereo with tape player, automatic seek tuning—10-channel memory—four KENWOOD SPEAKERS—cost including installation, approx.	\$440.00

quality and fit of the products that GMP offers has grown as well.

This GTI is an attractive car. The few external differences are simple, but striking. The first thing that you notice is the impressive ATS wheels shod with B.F. Goodrich Comp T/A's. These 6x15-inch wheels are head-turners, with sleek aerodynamic shape and flush-fitting locking lug covers.

The front spoiler, side valances, and rear spoiler are all manufactured by Zender, and combine to reduce the drag coefficient more than 10 percent, according to the German T.U.F. registration supplied with the pieces. That's impressive.

We have always found that Zender body pieces are among the best fitting parts available. The side valances bolt up easily, and cure a major problem on GTI's with wider tires—mud, rock chips and spray kicked up onto the body work. It's a good combination of clean styling, easy installation, and significant aerodynamic improvement.

Under the hood, GMP chose a few time-proven products for quick and easy installation as well as significant results. The stock GTI camshaft was swapped for the GMP billet cam, a GMP special two-stage throttle body was added, and the European GTI cast iron manifold, twin-tube downpipe and Gillet Power-

sound exhaust replaced the restrictive stock exhaust system. This is an exhaust system proven time and time again in dyno tests to be the best street exhaust available, giving significantly more power and less hassles than the breakage-prone short-tube headers. These few changes make a noticeable difference, turning the already torquey GTI 1800 into a free-revving engine with significantly more high-end power, but at little or no compromise in driveability.

To give the GTI a little bit longer legs, the stock close ratio 5-speed was modified with a taller fifth gear, a much-needed improvement. The new gear ratio gives a 1500 rpm drop between fourth and fifth.

The suspension package offered by GMP includes a stiffer front anti-roll bar, up to 19mm from the stock 16mm, and a stiffer rear anti-roll bar, up to 22mm from a stock 19mm. Importantly, both of these are designed to use the stock mounting points. This makes for both an easy installation (no hole drilling required), and the confidence of knowing that the mounting points are properly engineered.

Specially valved GMP-Sachs shocks are used both front and rear, with the rears featuring adjustable ride height. The stock springs were replaced with GMP's tapered wire, progressive rate springs. The complete suspension setup

lowers the car one inch.

GMP adjustable stress bars are fitted at the front on both upper and lower suspension pick-up points. The adjustable design is one of many improvements that GMP has made over the years, and assures that manufacturing variations in the cars will not keep the stress bars from fitting properly.

The ride of the car on the big B.F. Goodrich Comp T/A's is sportingly firm, and the body lean in hard cornering is reduced. The comfort level is minimally affected.

In the driver's compartment, a high-bolster Recaro KRX seat for the driver, and a lower, KR model for the passenger provide improved lateral support to match the GMP GTI's improved cornering ability. The rear seat not only features matching Recaro upholstery, but Recaro open net headrests for the rear passengers as well! An Indianapolis Corsa steering wheel replaces the stock GTI steering wheel, and tunes are provided by a Kenwood 512 sound system.

Yes, but what about those slick driving lights in the bumper? Are they available from GMP as well? The lights are available, but the innovative mounting would be a bit expensive, unless you lived pretty close to Charlotte. It's a worthwhile modification though, a nice touch to GMP's very nice GTI.