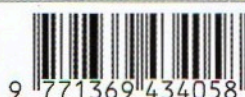




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## FULL ROAD TEST



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**SRG A5**  
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- Test: A1 Sportback 1.6 TDI Sport
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# Diesel head

Words and Pictures  
by Paul Cowland

Funny how the derv-equivalent of 'petrolhead' has never quite made the common vernacular, isn't it? The latest A5 enhancement package from the STaSIS Revo Group (SRG) might just help to change all that, though.





ONCE UPON a time, it all used to be so easy. Want crisp and satisfying performance? Then plump for a petrol engine, my friend. Want the smug satisfaction of polar-bear friendly economy, and don't mind a slightly agricultural soundtrack? Then, without doubt, diesel is for you.

These days, of course, manufacturers have blurred the lines somewhat. Diesel is no longer the devil's fuel, and thanks to huge leaps in development and a rapid succession of ever-better oil burners, diesels are now up there in performance and enjoyment terms. Well, nearly...

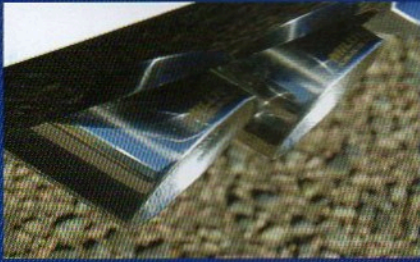
Keen to offer a package to suit its burgeoning clientele of black-pump devotees, SRG has released a complete raft of upgrades for the latest incarnation of Audi's 2.0-litre diesel A5. Although every part of the 'Motorsports Edition' pack can be fitted in one fell swoop to give a dramatic transformation, each improvement can also be added piecemeal to spread the cost of the conversion and allow the efficacy of each upgrade to be measured individually.

We were invited to try a completed car, based in this case on an automatic S Line model – and with the sun making a rare January appearance, it felt rude to refuse. Starting with the exterior first, aesthetically, you have to say it all hangs together well. Sensibly not adding too much to the already attractive S Line specification, the purposeful looking 20-inch STASIS wheels, complete with 285/30-20 Dunlop SP Sport Maxx tyres certainly look the part. The springs, which are from the Eibach Sportline range, also do a great deal to give the car a more aggressive air. Lowering the chassis by around 45 mm, they ensure that those substantial boots are fully filling the arches. Eibach is also the manufacturer which SRG has relied on to provide a more substantial rear

anti-roll bar for the A5, the idea being to gift it with a little more grip and precision, creating a more neutral package. With Eibach being the technical partner to Ingolstadt's factory-backed AudiSport competition department, you would have to say that this lineage is not going to hurt.

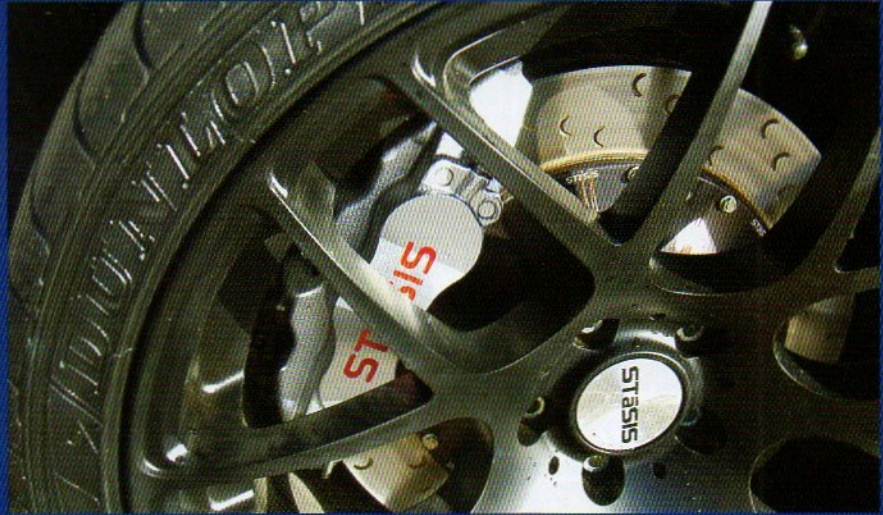
The heart of the conversion, however, is the work undertaken to the already peppy common-rail diesel engine. Delivering a respectable 177 PS and 350 Nm (260 lb.ft.) in stock trim, this has been caressed to deliver a far more entertaining 210 PS and 446 Nm (330 b.ft.) at the hand of Revo's software engineers. Allied to an attractive cat-back stainless-steel exhaust system from extraction maestro Milltek, this capable pairing makes a compelling argument

**'Thanks to huge leaps in development and a rapid succession of ever-better oil burners, diesels are now up there in performance and enjoyment terms...'**



for the joys of diesel ownership. The exhaust has a nice 'OEM+' demeanour from the outside with a pleasing note under load. Nobody ever bought a diesel car for the way it sounded, but it's always good to see the aftermarket making a bit of an effort to put a little aural delight back into proceedings.

Software tweaks aren't solely limited to the engine, either. Proving that no code is beyond their reach, Revo's white-coated boffins have also brought the A5's automatic transmission to heel, making sure its shift behaviour perfectly matches the new delivery characteristics of the beefier engine output. This is a particularly nice part of the conversion, and a revealing indicator of the level of detail which SRG has gone into to give the whole conversion a decidedly 'factory-esque' feel. It's not often you can put the words 'diesel', 'automatic' and 'excitement' into the same sentence,



but the work done here makes mixing all manner of superlatives to describe this car an easy task.

With all this extra shove on tap, SRG has also sensibly augmented the braking package to ensure that getting out of trouble is as easy as getting into it. The succinct engineering solution here is a bespoke brake upgrade featuring a 2-piece semi-floating 370 mm disc and bell combination with a smart 6-pot monobloc caliper and road-friendly pad compound. Having coped with two days of unfeasible abuse on a recent Nordschleife test session, it's probably

fair to say that these will be more than up to the task of arresting your heroics on the Stoke bypass.

This impressive spec-sheet certainly looks good on paper, but how does it all work as a homogenous whole? 'Very well' would have to be short and simple answer to that. The engine conversion is a revelation, with huge reserves of crisply delivered power and torque from very low down the rev range. Like all diesel cars, this one suffers from running out of revs far too soon, but that's a fault of the genre, rather than the package. The good news is, once



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option extra).....£1,237.50

Software .....£399.00

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### Contacts

[www.revotechnik.com](http://www.revotechnik.com)

[www.stasisengineering.com](http://www.stasisengineering.com)

**'It's a very well-engineered package which performs way above the sum of its considerable parts'**



you have recalibrated your shift pattern (if stirring the box) to maximise the power delivery, progress is swift, smooth and entertaining, with a really rather decent engine note from inside the cabin. As diesels go, it's a very sonorous affair!

The chassis is also an excellent improvement over the standard fare. The ride is surprisingly compliant given the incredibly low profile and width of the rubber, and the stock dampers seem to work very well with the lower Eibach springs, offering plenty of feedback and feel through the drivetrain without the harshness

one might expect. The outstanding feature is the brake package, however. It doesn't seem to matter at what speed you ask them to stop from, or indeed, with what frequency. They are always there, with perfect pedal modulation and a consistent biting point. Although our short 'B' road test could hardly be called scientific, the sheer unflappability of these stoppers under any and all requirements makes them a stand-out upgrade.

In short, it's a very well-engineered package which performs way above the sum of its considerable parts. Being truly picky, I would opt for the 19-inch

wheel package on a car that will see regular 'B' road abuse. Although it's hard to argue with the look and style of the 20-inch package, I think an extra half inch of rubber all round would make the car even more obedient and involving to drive at speed. Thankfully, there is a 19-inch option for those looking for the perfect compromise between looks and ability, and it will also save you a few bob, too!

So, will there ever be such a thing as a 'dieselhead'? Only time will tell, but if SR.G can keep turning out beltlers like this, it might enter common parlance sooner than you think! 