

VW raises the bar with 4Motion

Continued from page 1 | Modular Transverse Matrix (MQB) architecture.

While many North American buyers are rushing to buy compact and intermediate CUVs, this is still a very large market for a station wagon.

It offers similar cargo space as a CUV, but outwardly it takes up less space in a garage or, more to point, a single car driveway or underground condo parking space.

However one thing on the Golf wagon was missing and that was 4Motion, but that has been rectified with the 2017 model, with four versions of the Golf SportWagen (now spelled with a capital W), the Comfort, Trendline, Highline and now the Alltrack.

With the first three models you can now add 4Motion. With the Alltrack model it is standard, but it sits 15 mm higher and is recognized externally by model-specific 18-inch alloy wheels, a reshaped front bumper and underbody protection guard.

Power comes from a 1.8-litre turbo, direct injection inline four-cylinder with 170 and 184 lb/ft of torque. With 4Motion comes a six-speed dual clutch automatic transmission and centre differential.

The latest version of 4Motion is able to activate before wheel spin starts, and virtu-

ally quells traction loss as a control unit monitors when and how much torque needs to go to the rear.

In normal operation, the SportWagen is driven by the front wheels and rears are decoupled, which has the bonus of saving fuel.

When traction is needed at the rear, 4Motion starts in a fraction of second through the differential that can send a maximum of 50 per cent torque to the rear.

Besides the main differential, the SportWagen benefits from electronic differential locks (EDL) that are a function of the electronic stability control system.

Simply puts, EDL can brake a wheel that is slipping and send power to the opposite wheel.

As part of the press introduction in Seattle, VW found a quite rugged logging trail with exposed rocks protruding from the clear-cut surroundings.

There is an off-road mode that is selected by a button on the centre console. Cycle to it, engage and you're on your way.

We were on normal street tires, not big-lugged off-road boots, yet it was not an issue in this vehicle, as we covered the track with no problems including steep declines with the downhill descent control working overtime.

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