

Volkswagen Golf GTI a joy to drive

• from VOLKSWAGEN on page B22

adjustable sport seats with lumbar support, Bi-Xenon headlamps with Adaptive Front Light System, Bluetooth connectivity, climate control, cruise control, a Premium 8 AM/FM audio system with six-disc CD changer, an SD card input, eight speakers and integrated SIRIUS satellite radio.

Most importantly, it comes with an award-winning 2.0-litre TSI direct fuel-injection inline four-cylinder 16-valve engine that produces 200 hp and 207 lbs-ft of continuous torque from a low 1,700 rpm all the way to 5,000 rpm.

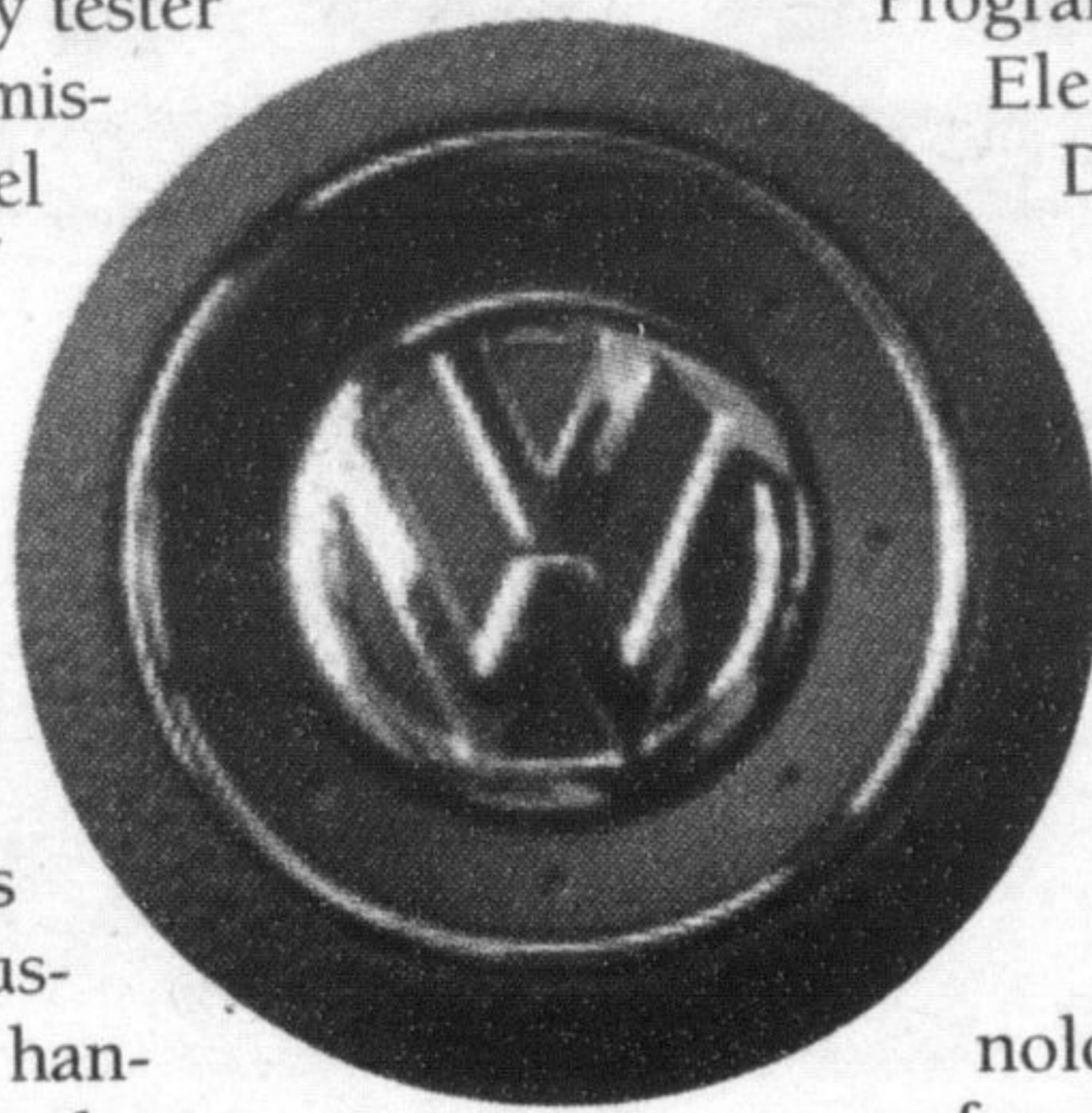
An optional Audi-inspired dual-clutch DSG six-speed automatic transmission is available for \$1,400.

It adds paddle-shifters to the spokes of

the leather-wrapped steering wheel and its lightning-fast gear changes help accelerate the GTI from 0-100 km/h in 6.9 seconds.

The DSG automatic on my tester was also the thrifter transmission of the two, with a fuel economy rating of 8.7/6.3L/100km (city/hwy). My more enthusiastic- real world results were 9.9L/100km (combined).

Engine power is never the last word in performance and the GTI benefits from a lightweight sport suspension and a full suite of handling technologies that keep the car shiny side up.



They include ABS braking, Anti-Slip Regulation (ASR), Electronic Differential Lock (EDL), Electronic Stabilization Program (ESP), and the all-new Electronic Transverse Differential Lock System (XDS). Developed from VW's racing experience, XDS monitors input from the wheel sensors to transfer torque to the wheel with the most traction under heavy cornering.

The sum of those technologies is the kind of thrilling performance that takes you to the edge of excitement but never quite beyond,

a predictable, "toss-able" quality that makes the GTI such a joy to drive.

Thinking back to that AJAC Car of the Year testing session I mentioned earlier, that's why, despite the scientific seriousness of the judges, the 2010 VW Golf GTI seemed to be the one car almost consistently out on the track for, ahem, "re-testing".

And it's also why, as a result, it wound up winning its category as Best New Sport Performance Car under \$50,000 and garnering one of the finalist positions for overall "Car of the Year".

The 2010 VW Golf GTI.

I'm not sure whether it will win Car of the Year. But it got my vote regardless.



B23 • Thursday, June 3, 2010 MILTON CHAMPION • www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

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2010 Passat Wagon



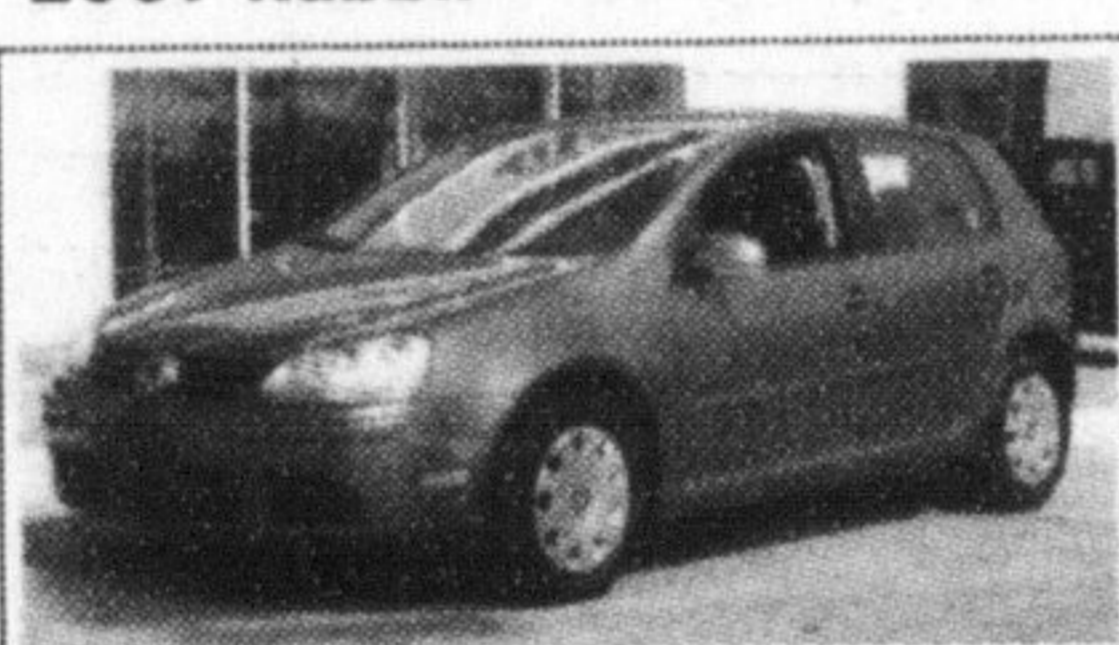
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2009 GTI



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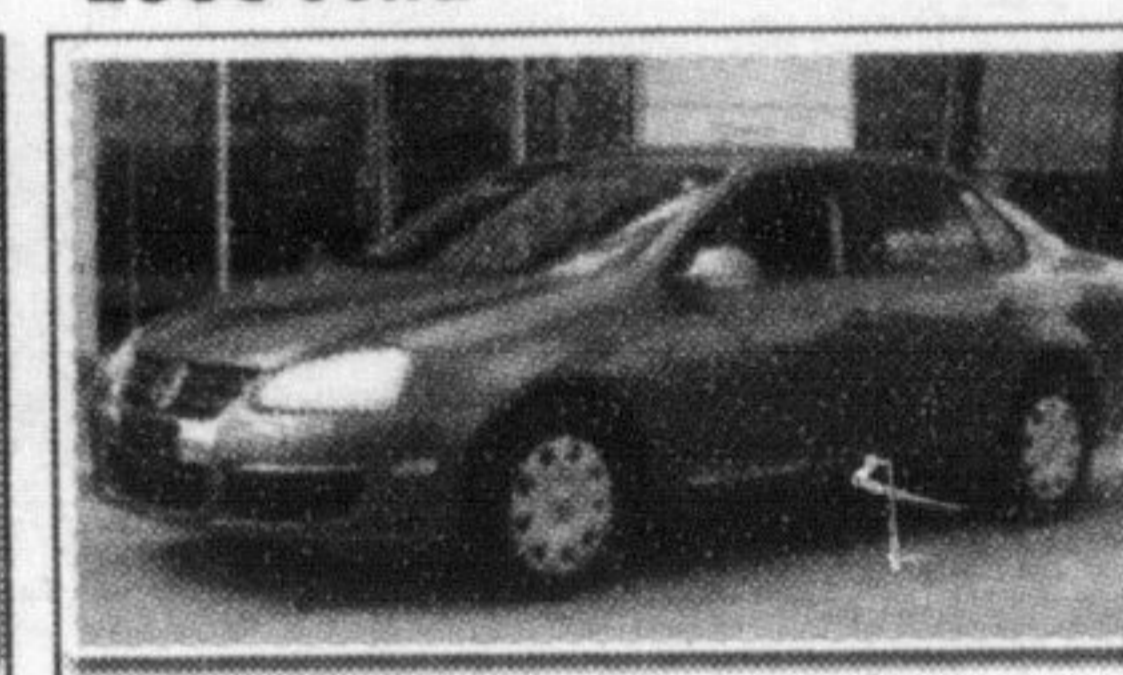
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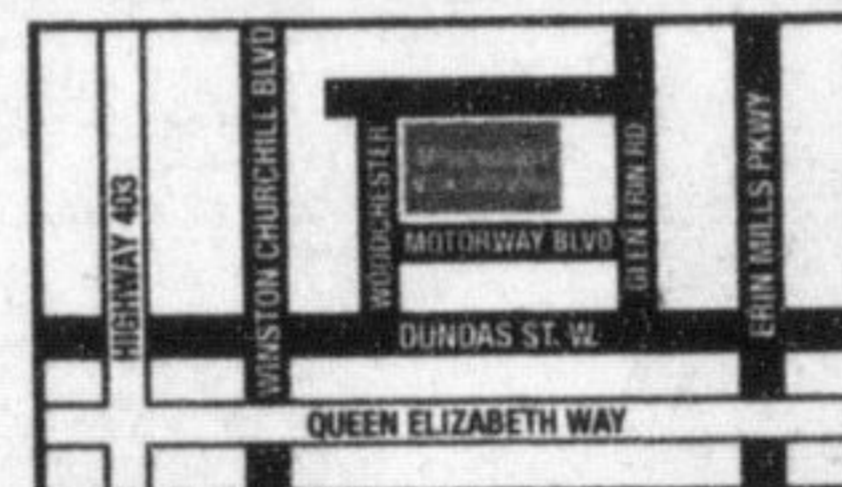


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