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## 205

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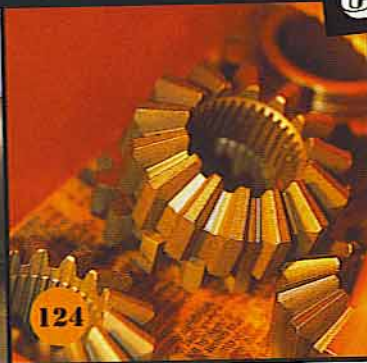
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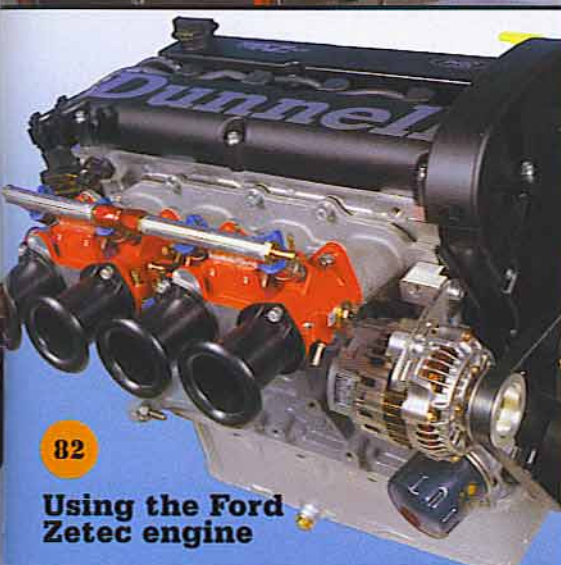
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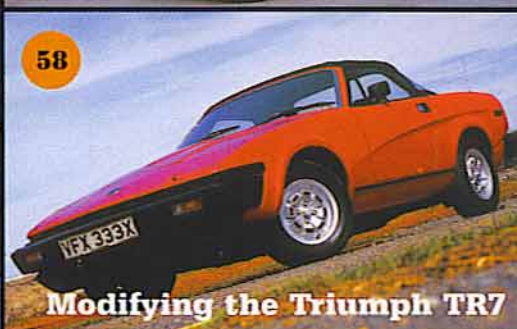
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**It's 1984 and you're looking good** in freshly pressed chinos. Depeche Mode's latest hit is on your Walkman and you're on the way to watch *Beverly Hills Cop* at the pictures. Life under Thatcher is good (unless you're Denis), but there's one problem: your best mate's just bought himself a brand-new MkIII Capri Laser. It's the 2-litre as well — not your lowly 1600 — so he's gonna be getting all the ladies down at the disco. Or at least, that's what he thinks... until you turn up in your brand-new cherry-red 1.6 Peugeot GTi.

Launched with a squeal of front-drive hot hatch fury onto an unsuspecting public in 1984 (since when did Peugeot make sporty hatchbacks?), the 1600 205 GTi was a revolution. Taking on the collective might of the Golf GTi, then

moving in to the slightly larger MkII shape, Escort XR3i and Astra GTE, the hot Pug's 105 bhp 1580cc XU5J engine — delivering power through a BE-1 five-speed gearbox — was good, but not quite good enough. Or at least it wouldn't have been, if it weren't for the car's razor sharp chassis and lightweight frame.

## **“Launched onto an unsuspecting public the GTi was a revolution”**

Utilising a fairly mundane MacPherson strut with anti-roll bar front-end set-up, the GTi also had a nifty rear configuration, using a cross-tube with trailing arms, torsion and anti-roll bars, plus 30 degree-inclined dampers. All in all this, especially with a fairly long wheelbase compared to the car's overall dimen-

sions, added up to a precise, nimble ride. All that stuff about lift-off oversteer snapping the unwary

into oncoming traffic has been blown out of all proportion, although the early cars were a little bit on the firm side.

Body-wise, the three-door hatch weighed just over 850 kg, making for an impressive power-to-weight ratio of around 120 bhp. And it looked pretty good too. ➤







# 205 GTi

**Iconic, manic, and just a little bit sexy — when most cars get to 20 years old they start to show their age, but the king of Pugs is still awesome.**

Words Steve Phillips  
Photos Tom Wood





GTi's interior went through many changes over its production — the biggest of which was a new dash fascia in 1988.



1.6 GTi's XU5J motor came with 105 bhp; the 1.9's XU9J came with 130. The later catalyst-equipped engine had just 122 bhp.



Modelled on the T16's rims, the GTi came with a set of 12-hole Speedline alloys notoriously difficult to balance due to the lack of a centre hole, which came wrapped in either Michelin MXVs or Pirelli P600 tyres. The model's dis-

graphite grey, also came with its own badged-up inserts in the C-panels.

So, having stumped up £6245 for the first run of a brand-new GTi (something that 1874 members of the UK public did by the end of 1984), you got quite a

## "GT's 'i' came from Bosche LE2-Jetronic injection system"



tinctive bodykit featured a deeper front spoiler than the rest of the range, complete with twin long-range driving lamps. Side body mouldings — a continuation of the front and rear bumper that also cover the tops of the wheelarches — came in grey plastic and contained bright red insert strips. And the GTi, available in white, red, black, silver and

clever little car for you cash. Including entry to the 'i' club with the GTi running a Bosche LE2-Jetronic injection system — before which the best you could hope for







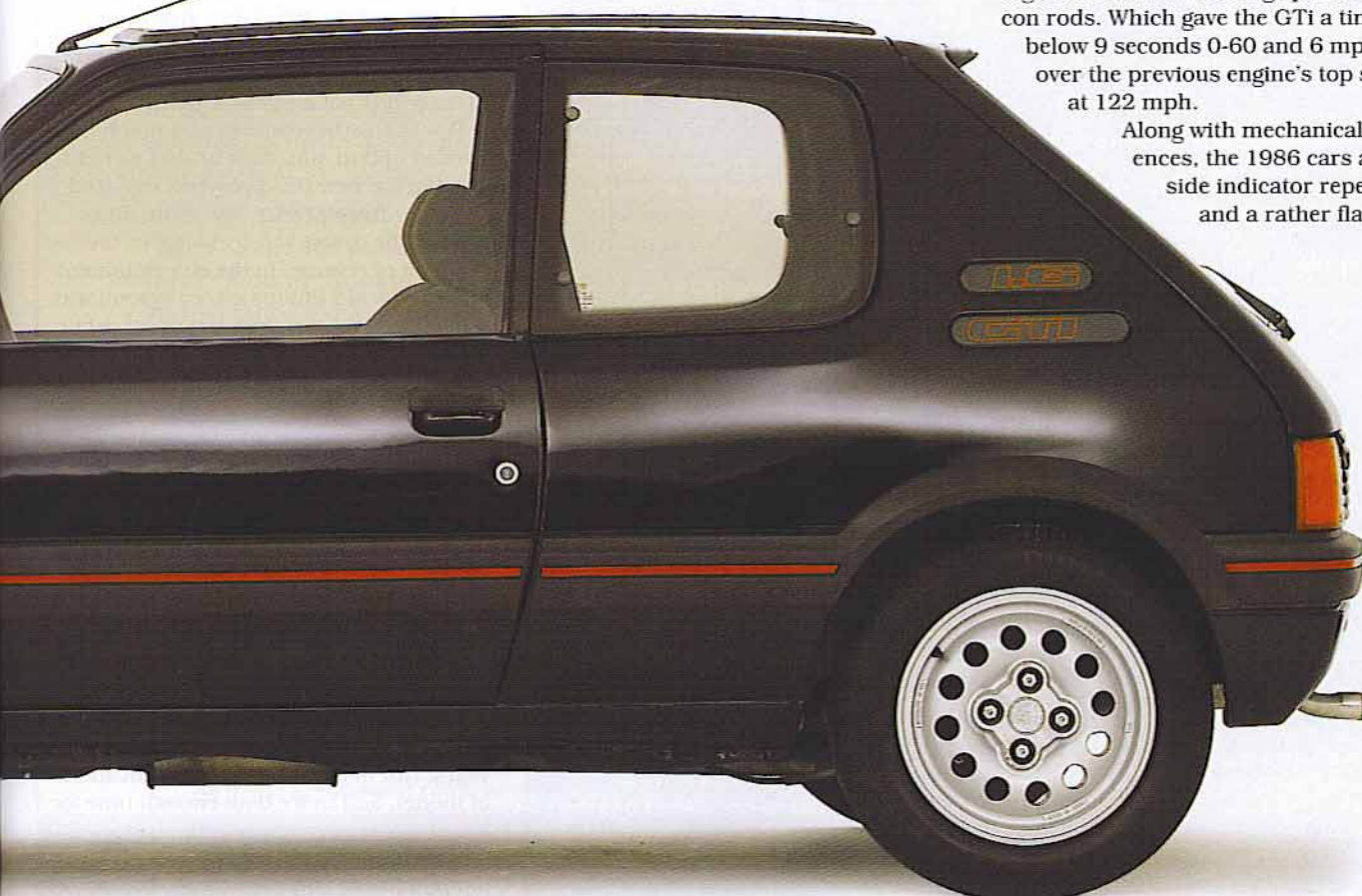
was the 205 GT running a 1360cc carb engine for just 79 bhp.

By 1985 the GTi was well established as a leading weapon in the '80s hot-hatch wars, which

the Renault 5 GT Turbo, Uno Turbo and the Visa GTi had recently joined. It had also had its suspension softened up slightly, although this had a negligible effect on handling. The first major change didn't come until

1986 when the 105 bhp XU5J motor was upgraded to the 115 bhp XU5JA. Changes including revisions to the cylinder head, new cam — giving increased lift and overlap — larger valves, thinner block liners to take the extra grunt, new big end and main bearings plus stronger con rods. Which gave the GTi a time below 9 seconds 0-60 and 6 mph extra over the previous engine's top speed at 122 mph.

Along with mechanical differences, the 1986 cars also got side indicator repeaters and a rather flash







## Limited Edition

The GTi came in for a few limited edition models over its 10-year production. Some were cool and some were, er...

### 1990: Miami Blue and Sorrento Green LEs

1200 cars, half blue/half green with each run of these colours split into 1.6 and 1.9 GTis. Came with electric windows, central locking, sunroof and power steering. Grey leather seats were also added along with an upgraded Clarion four-speaker stereo system.

### 1990: Griffé

This one never made it to the UK, being only available in France. The Griffé (meaning claw in French and therefore tying in with the Peugeot lion) came in a slightly gaudy Laser Green, with anodised dark grey alloys. The bumper inserts were also changed to grey and a neat Griffé motif replaced the usual GTi badge on the C-pillars. The inside was the most impressive bit though, with swanky full black leather upholstery and black carpets.

### 1992: Gentry

Released at the same time as the 309 GTi Goodwood, the Gentry was a bit weak to say the least — an auto box (the HP14 four-speeder) attached to the 1900 catalysed XU9J1/Z engine (that's just 105 brake) just isn't GTi material. But, inside you could get either tan or black full leather with a leather-trimmed steering wheel, plus polished-wood inserts, velour mats and, wait for it, electrically heated wing mirrors.

### 1992: GTi Automatic

The Gentry wasn't the only GTi to get an auto box. Due to a cancelled order from Japan, 200 205 GTis (along with the same number of 309 GTis) fitted with the lacklustre four-speed auto box were sold in Europe. They were sold as used, but came with air-con as standard.

### 1992: GTi 1 FM

For the 25th anniversary of Radio One, Peugeot banged out just 25 205 GTi 1 FM models — making them the rarest of the GTi LEs. Costing £17K each, they weren't cheap (although £5K of that went to charity), but the spec was the highest ever seen on a GTi. Anodised dark grey rims, special badging and a black paintjob from the outside. Luxury carpet mats, full black leather, air con, PAS, anti-lock brakes and sunroof on the inside. And a remote control CD player with six-disc changer Clarion stereo system. Under the bonnet, there was still the strangled 122 bhp catalysed 1.9 GTi motor though.

leather-bound steering wheel. These were accompanied by a redesigned steering column switchgear, the rear washer system getting its own water bottle mounted in the boot, larger wing mirrors and, due to ever-more stringent safety laws, seatbelts on the back seats. However, all of these changes faded into the background with the advent of the new 1.9-litre GTi in December 1986.

Unlike its smaller 1600 sibling, the 130 bhp 1905cc XU9JA-powered Pug had little competition in its weight class. There were still the Escort RS Turbo and 16-valve MkII Golf GTi to contend with, but both of these had a much higher price tag than the French machine.

The larger-engined GTi also came with a more impressive spec list. A set of 15 inch Speedlines (as opposed to the 1.6's 14s) in a new notch-edged design, sat under each arch. Electric windows and central locking were standard and half-leather seats added a touch of cowhide class to proceedings.

As far as the chassis went, the same handling values that made the 1600 so potent remained, but with the need for solid disc brakes at the rear as opposed to the 1.6's drums. An upgrade that you were glad of if you got into trouble at the car's 127 mph top speed (0-60 mph was a rapid 7.6 seconds).

After the 1.9's introduction, a lot remained the same on the two GTi models until 1990 (besides a new dashboard in 1988 and the £350 option to have your Pug fitted with a catalytic converter in 1989). Come the '90s though, the French flyer got a few new gadgets.

Power steering came in as a much-needed option, anti-lock brakes were fitted and the new BE-3 gearbox replaced the older five-speeder. The main difference to the driver was a change in the position of reverse. In the entertainment stakes, the old Philips stereo system was ousted in favour of the Clarion kit, while on the exterior a boat-load of modifications — including black body mouldings, clear front indicators, new rear light clusters and darker interior plastic — were bought in.

Unfortunately, even a new choice of Sorrento Green, Miami Blue and Steel-Grey Metallic wasn't enough to prolong the life of the 1600 GTi past 1992. And after the original had gone, the 1.9 battled on with the restricted catalysed 122 bhp engine until 1994, with the last few reaching an M-plate.

By the time the GTi was six-feet under, it had been in production for a solid 10 years. Not bad for a single classification of model, and more than enough time for the 205 GTi to go down in the history books as one of, if not the, coolest retro hot hatches of all time.



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The pinnacle of 205  
engineering came with  
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mid-mounted engine  
and turbo. Sit back  
and enjoy the boost.

Words Steve Phillips  
Photos David Wigmore

# THUNDER CATS





**Bang, whoosh, hiss, squeal...** bang, hiss, squeal, whoosh... hiss, bang, whoosh, roar. You can stick your R 'n' B, hip hop, rock 'n' roll or whatever you shove in your retro car's head unit, the only track worth listening to today is the massive melody of hardcore sound effects you only get from a Group B machine. And as far as Group B cars go, they don't come much more raw than the Peugeot 205 T16.

To honour this god of a retro car and pay homage to the ultimate 205, we bowed down to two of the finest examples of the rally and road going homologation

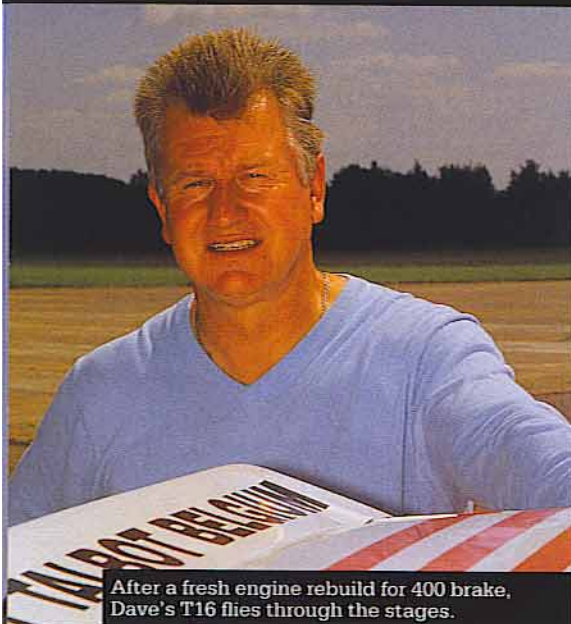
cars in the UK. There aren't any words invented to describe just how cool these machines are — but we'll do our best.

Being introduced to the public at the same time as the GTi, the T16 made its Group B debut during the Rally of Corsica back in 1984. Its first appearance was in a French one-day event in 1983 during its development, but it needed a bit more work, it got beaten by a Visa 1000.

Originally conceived to take the World Rally Championship fight to the Germans and the (then) all







After a fresh engine rebuild for 400 brake, Dave's T16 flies through the stages.

powerful Audi Quattro, the heavyweight Pug was conceived, designed and built with just one aim — winning. At the time the front-engined Quattro behemoth was in its shortened wheelbase, Quattro Sport stage. However, having enough power to move small planets courtesy of a boost-crazed straight-five is one thing, being able to use it is another. And that's where the T16 crushed the Quattro under its Michelin rubber.

Driven by Ari Vatanen and Timo Salonen, the first two events saw the T16 lead before dropping down or out. However, the 205 blasted through nine successive Group B victories, giving Peugeot the 1985 WRC manufacturers' crown, and Salonen the WRC drivers' title.

The pinnacle of the 205 model's success was simple and came from three main areas. Firstly the car's 1775cc XU8T engine (classified as having a capacity of 2.5-litres due to Group B's 1.4 turbo multiplication factor) pushed out a stage ripping 340 bhp (initially), with the aid of a KKK turbocharger and a 16-valve head — hence the Turbo 16 bit. The technology behind the car's turbocharging actually came from Formula One, when Peugeot tempted away one of the Renault F1 team's top guys.

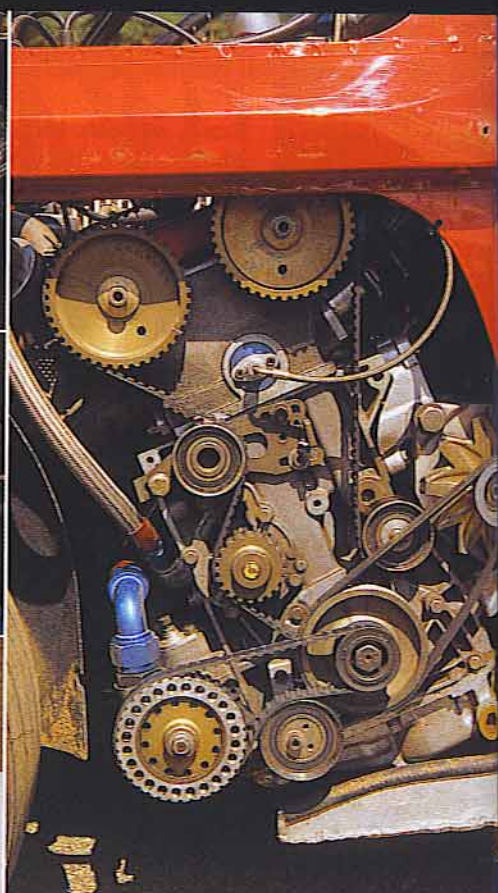
Secondly, with this tight powerplant mounted in the centre of the car's wheelbase, the Pug's chassis was perfectly balanced — Peugeot chose to mount the engine transversely so the 205's dimensions could be kept as they were.

Finally, with all four wheels being driven, grip and handling were second to none, especially with the Kevlar panelled, part spaceframe steel-chassis Pug weighing just 940 kg (910 kg for the Evo 2).

Following the Turbo 16's success in the 1984 season, Peugeot put all its efforts into defending its hard fought crown. And a year after the T16's debut they brought out the big guns — the 205 T16 Evo 2.



Mid-mounted XU unit was fitted transversely in 205 T16 for improved weight balance.







Four-wheel drive traction and a mid-mounted turbo'd engine made for the ultimate Group B set-up, and resulted in the T16's domination of the WRC series.

**"The T16 goes like stink, and is the ultimate Group B car"**

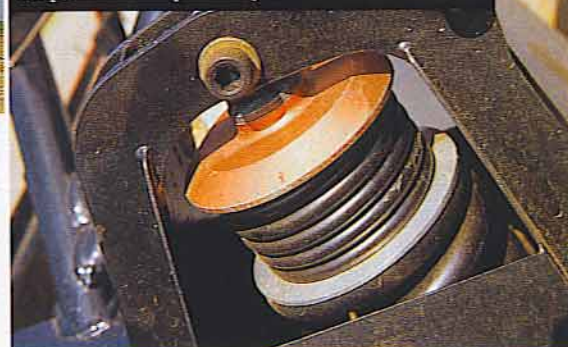


Kick starting its career at the 1985 Rally of Corsica, the Evo 2 soon made the rest of the field feel inadequate. Thumping to the tune of 450 bhp (by the end of its Group B career it would be getting on for 600 bhp) it was kitted out with a host of new aerodynamic high-speed stability devices, with the large black rear roof spoiler being the most notable. A 40-50 per cent increase in the car's torsional rigidity also served to improve handling, making the T16 the superpower in Group B rallying.

Unfortunately, that year one of the car's negative tendencies showed up, nearly killing one of the team's top drivers. After a jump on the Rally of Argentina, Ari Vatanen's 205 landed



Rally T16 features fully adjustable, heavy-duty suspension componentry to take on all surfaces.



nose first at around 130 mph — a result of the 16-valve engine being mounted transversely was that the torque would rotate the car mid-air, tipping the front end down. Despite this the Pug had the 1985 season in the bag, giving Peugeot its second manufacturers' title and Juha Kankkunen the WRC drivers' title.

For the 1986 season the rest of the field must've been getting pretty marked at ➤





T16 interior: cramped, hot and focused on the task in hand.

Group B made leaps and bounds for rallying, leading to advances in electronic systems.



the thought of another season being dominated by the French. The reaction was big, rapid and just downright scary. Lancia responded with the Delta S4, turbo and supercharged for 450 bhp. While Audi rolled out its last incarnation of the hallowed Quattro in the form of the Evo 2 packing a monstrous 550 horses. It didn't make any difference, the T16 ran rampant through the WRC stages and up the points charts.

Unfortunately, 1986 saw the end of the most exciting rally championship ever, with Group B competition being shut down after Henri Toivonen and co-driver Sergio Cresto were killed when their Delta S4 crashed in Corsica. But it wasn't the end of the 205 T16, or its ability to take home the silverware.

Africa was the new target for Peugeot's 205 stage stormer, taking on the continent's Rallye Raid events. Re-engineered specifically for the task with a foot longer wheelbase, a larger long-distance fuel

tank and other modifications to allow the car to take on the gruelling African landscape, the next incarnation of the T16 was the 205 Turbo 16 Grand Raid.

Racing in bright yellow Camel Racing Services livery, the souped-up Pug took first place in the 8000 mile Paris-Dakar and second in the hardcore Pikes Peak event at its first attempt. Taking the Paris-Dakar again the following year (this time sporting a blue and white Pioneer paintjob), and firsts in the Tunisia and Atlas rallies, it was then replaced by the 405 T16 — the car that won Pikes Peak on its first attempt.

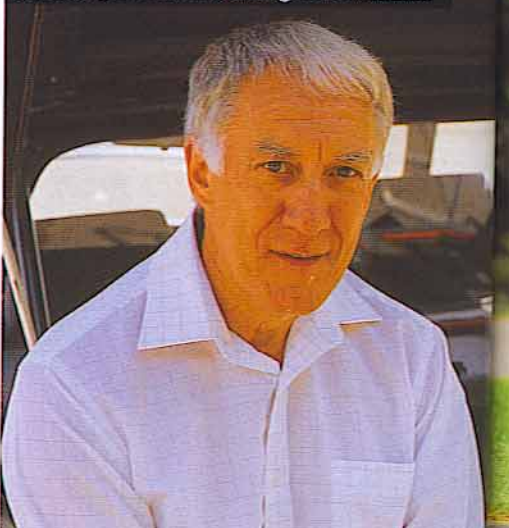
## Rally T16

After a quick — and we mean very quick — passenger ride in Dave Bramwell's rally car we seriously start to appreciate the rawness of the T16. Fresh back from another European rally — bearing dents and scratches from an intimate meeting with some Armco — the Bastos-coloured Pug is a heavyweight piece of kit. Especially as it's just had an engine rebuild by master mechanic Will Gollop and is now good for over 400 bhp.

"It absolutely flew in Germany," grins Dave, "we had a bit of a bash though, the guys were working on it 24-seven to get it back together for the photoshoot."

Keith Dickens of KD Motorsport (01925 730578) is the lucky guy who gets to look after the 205, and he's kept busy too, with Dave using the car for what it was

Alec Davies' road 205 T16 is a rare beast, especially in this kind of original condition.



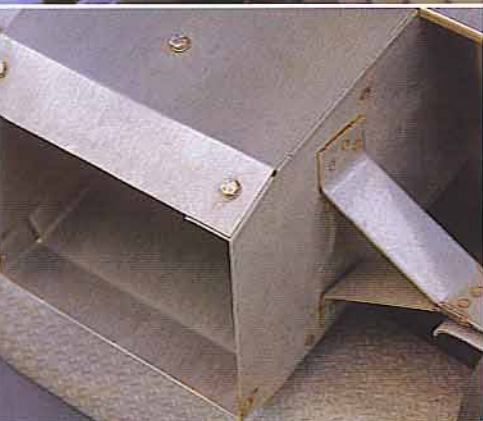




The XU engine, seen in the Citroën BX, and 305 GT, spawned the T16's XU8T.



With the back end up you can tell this is no body-kitted GTi. KKK turbo'd engine comes with 16-valve head pushing two thirds of the power to the rear.



**"This mint example has led a pampered life"**



intended. Although, if he doesn't use the Turbo 16, there's always his RS200, as seen in the March 2004 Group B feature, tucked away in the back of the garage as back up. "Out of the two the Ford is nicer to drive, it just feels better and more balanced," says Dave, "but the T16 goes like stink, and it's the ultimate Group B car."

As far as the history of Dave's stage stormer goes, it's a bit unclear. We know that the car competed in the French National Rally Championship, wearing Kodak colours for three years, before being kept in a Kodak showroom for around 10 years, but not a lot else. Dave came across it after a massive Internet-based search two years ago, when the car was in Marseilles.

By far the best bit about Dave's rally 205 is that — although rare — it's worth a small fortune and is a bona fide retro icon. It still kicks rally ass, with Dave using its four-wheel drive, mid-engined turbo engineering in the way it was intended — as well as doing doughnuts on the Bruntingthorpe tarmac for us.

## Road T16

Take a good long look at Alec Davies' immaculate road-spec 205 T16, 'cos you're not likely to see one again. "It's





the only one I know of in this country that's on the road," smiles Alec, "so you don't see them everyday."

It's a miracle that there are any of these brutish Group B homologation specials around at all. Originally just 200 were needed to satisfy WRC regs, but the end total produced was more like 241 — Alec's is 179. Out of this figure most were modified by rally privateers, or overhauled to compete in rallycross. And inevitably over the years a fair few have also been killed in action on the road — usually involving a wet bend, a hedge and some form of solid structure.

Luckily for us Alec's mint example has led a pampered life, covering just a measly 8000 km (it's French remember) and not having been anywhere near any dangerous solid structures other than Alec's garage.

"You could use it everyday, it's refined enough," Alec enthuses. "It's just that the parts are so hard to get hold of, so I take it to shows every now and then, and it comes out on dry weekends."



Road T16 only came as left hooker with the two seater car's cabin being quite claustrophobic.

Now, looking at this pristine example of a road-going 205 T16 here today, you may think that the model nicked a lot of design ideas from the GTi, well it ain't so. The T16 was designed by Peugeot before the GTi came into being, meaning that the more humble hot hatch inherited plenty of stuff from the Group B machine, such as the interior trim, Speedline rims etc.

Other than that, what the two cars have in common is minimal. Parts of the roof, the doors, mirrors, grille, headlights and driving lamps, plus the front and rear indicators are all shared, but apart from that the T16 and the GTi are totally different beasts — hence the reason why parts are so hard to come by. ★

## Peugeot 205 T16 Tech Spec

### BODY

Two-door shell, tubular and sheet steel chassis with Kevlar/plastic panels, extra aerodynamic aids on Evo 2.

### ENGINE

XU8T 1775cc four-cylinder, 16-valve head, KKK turbo charger, mid-engined, transversely mounted, 350 bhp, 450 bhp Evo 2.

### TRANSMISSION

Five or six-speed (Evo 2-spec) gearbox, four-wheel-drive.

### SUSPENSION

Front and rear double wishbone with struts, anti-roll bar.