

COTSWOLD WESTFIELD – 2015 CAR HEALTHCHECKS

A healthy turnout of 13 members and friends include a wide selection of cars at PowerStation in Tewkesbury who are Subaru specialists but have both a rolling road dyno and two high-tech suspension alignment bays. They advertise their dyno as having 1,000 bhp capacity –we felt that would be enough!

Quite a few members had driven from Bristol and beyond but first up Rob Proffitt and son from Gloucester arrived in “Lottee” their Westfield XI Lotus replica: a beautiful car in wonderful period condition. The dyno run was disappointing until a missing cylinder/oily plug was corrected. Suspension set-up was tricky to measure and even removing front and rear bodywork only partly helped – a slight rear axle mis-alignment was suspected.

From Swindon and beyond the team of Dom Osman, Stuart Orr, Dave McGrath and Rich Brookes all aimed for track-day fitness. Rich Brookes was first up and ran well on the dyno. Dave’s 2.0 VX produced 175bhp and some suspension issues surfaced. Dom’s 1.8 MX5 showed 175bhp – he reckons to go turbo this summer. Stuart’s 2.0 VX showed a very healthy 215bhp but he feels his gearing (60 mph in first) needs improving – the car is a Northampton Motor Sport build. Dave Brock’s recently acquired yellow 2.0 VX surprised himself and us all with 222 bhp (he thought it was quick!) but dropped an engine-to-bellhousing bolt in the dyno bay. Donna and Malc’s amazingly camouflage-finished Blackbird BEC wound itself up to 10,500 rpm and 156 bhp in a wonderful howl – we were interested to see if the dyno would take it.

Tim Hardisty’s 2.0 Zetec with only 2,500 miles on the clock showed 140bhp and the need for carb tuning – this he discussed with Gary Packer about converting to Gary’s style of bike carbs. Gary had dropped in on the off-chance with his 2.0 Zetec and as usual this gave a strong 185 bhp without fuss.

John Wilkinson’s 180 Zetec showed 140bhp – the front suspension was fine but the rear end needs attention.

Welcome visitors included Andy Couchman, organiser of the local Lotus/Caterham club – his veteran 1700 X-Flow Caterham produced a healthy 150bhp but suspension mis-alignments suggested another visit may be required.

Newcomer Matt Sprason brought his highly polished Robin Hood EXMO with 1.6 Pinto – he’d been worried about suspension alignment but it wasn’t that bad. Finally AO Andrew’s 2.0 Zetec showed that at 190bhp some horses have died since last year and revealed an unexplained sag in the power curve graph – Oh dear a re-map might be needed!

THOUGHTS

- Overall it was a really useful day with participants from a wide geographic area learning what they need to make their cars really road and track worthy.
- PowerStation’s suspension rig is amazingly accurate –I thought that my set-up was good but it showed up room for improvements.
- Having Dyno and Suspension checks at the same session saves time and was good value at £50 all in.
- The social scene -- in the waiting times members exchanged views and ideas so we all came away a bit wiser. I now think Westfield’s nosecone ducting could be a good thing!

- Thanks to PowerStation staff Andy in the dyno bay and Jerry on the suspension rig who did their job professionally and most pleasantly.

Andrew Reeves
Cotswold AO