



No supercharger (as per the Cooper S) here. Just hard graft down the old fashioned head, cam, throttle body, exhaust and filter route for this MINI One; very retro. Unlike the uber cool C21st styling statements made by young guns in the MINI tuning world, Lohen. Note driver-focused interior



and rampantly high 8,000rpm redline (which I am encouraged to hit hard in each gear). It's a buzz of a car to drive, encouraging fun.

And this jovial driving experience is enhanced greatly by the superb Sparco race seats and harnesses, which put you right at the heart of the car's feedback. The lost weight helps too.

As do the Lohen suspension and brake modifications. The brakes are not in AP Racing territory (of course), but are solid, with good pedal feel. And the additional chassis stiffening effect (much needed with a One) of the braces is obvious behind the wheel. The Eibach coilovers are good too – firm, but fair. And this all creates a MINI One that's playful, characterful, communicative, chuckable and, crucially for a hot hatch, big fun.

Turn-in is as sharp as a Savile Row suit (way too fast for the back to keep up in fact) and grip levels are excellent, allowing you to exploit all the available grunt (150bhp/160lb ft) – which sounds great at full chat, bringing a grin to both testers' faces.

As does the slightly rear bias wheel alignment, although the rear end still has a mind of its own, thanks to the inertia created by body roll (no ARB here to help, but maybe different

geometry/ride height/bushes could remedy?). There is also some gentle understeer to drive around if you enter a bend too fast, but the MINI handles with aplomb and doesn't suffer any of the torque steer its rivals offer in droves. Ideal power to grip ratio, meaning you can really commit to the twisties. Very Mini.

Add the fun, connected drive to Lohen's subtle style statements with the car's exterior and interior, and this really is a great little package; for a fun-filled daily driver or for surprising a few folk at track days. Superb stuff, Lohen.

Fellow tester, Jim Cameron adds: 'I really enjoyed this little MINI. It took me by surprise on the handling course and was a lot of fun. Obviously the slowest in a straight line, but not in the twisty stuff. Great package.'

