

regularly passed into the low 13s (even 12s on a sticky surface) at over 110mph terminal speed. Time after time, after time, proving the specification is reliable, as well as potent.

Launching off the line is always a bit of a nightmare for front wheel drive cars. It's all wrong. Power should be behind you pushing, not pulling. Anyway, this Civic, thanks to its diff and the super-slick Honda gear change, is a delight to launch. You still can't expect to bury the loud pedal (and it is V loud) in first or second and not expect wheel slip or torque steer but, crucially, this is now much more controllable, aided by the revability of the engine, now equipped with a lightweight flywheel.

Controllable, he says – then spins lifting off throttle just before the first, big, fast right hander. Doh. Seems this car needs taking by the scruff of the neck. Back to the sniggering start line. Revs

Be warned, this is not a car for those expecting it to do all the driving for you. Hairy chest only

up. Clutch dump. Away cleanly, and rapidly this time. Impressive.

I then turn, razor sharp into the first sweeper and hard back on the throttle. God this is quick. No lift, but a dab of left foot braking for the fast right this time. See apex. Nail throttle. Superb.

This is where the Civic, even with a fair amount of disconcerting body roll impresses most, hanging on for dear life, the diff finding miraculous grip and accelerating fast. The nose does not push wide, as with the Astra and Focus, forcing a lift. Instead, you can nail it into the next series of bends, round the long 180, patiently on the rev limiter in second (sounds awesome), then tap back into the linear wave of torque, feeding frantic Vtec redline through third and into fourth for the return to pit. Brakes are starting to feel hot and tired now. Shame. Round the last fast left flat in third (tail dancing behind) and another hit from the charger and the Civic flies over the finish line at full chat. Fast, frantic and fun.

Using this car as just a straight line dragster is a waste. With a little bit of chassis fine tuning to iron out the body roll, some

Specification	
HONDA CIVIC TYPE R	
■ ENGINE	Two-litre, 16V, DOHC Vtec engine with CPL spec camshafts, uprated valve springs and retainers, enlarged throttle body and inlet manifold, Jackson Racing CPL supercharger kit, full stainless steel JR manifold and 2.5-inch stainless steel exhaust system, CPL Racing AEM cold air induction system, Hondata ECU
■ TRANSMISSION	Standard Honda Civic Type R gearbox with Quaife ATB LSD and Group N Clutchmaster FX-300 clutch and lightweight flywheel
■ BODY	Standard Honda Civic Type R, with CPL livery
■ INTERIOR	Standard Honda Civic Type R
■ CHASSIS	Standard Honda Civic Type R, OE 17in wheels with Federal tyres
■ POWER	310bhp/211lbft, 236bhp at the wheels
■ PRICE	£5985 for all as above
■ OVERALL MARK:	■■■■■■■■■■■

decent, sticky rubber and beefy brakes, this would be a ballistic, tail happy track toy, and mad man's Q-car. But, be warned, this is not a car for those expecting it to do the driving. Hairy chests only.

Jim adds: 'It shows what a great car the Honda Civic Type R is that these simple modifications make 300bhp, and it handles with such a non-FWD feel. The tail is so active, it is a real laugh to drive.'

