THE MK3’S TWO-SLOW NICKNAME IS WELL EARNED, BUT BAHN BRENNER AIMS TO ERADICATE THIS SLUR WITH AN AFFORDABLE SUPERCHARGER.

“IT’s the only car I’ve been driving since ‘04,” began John Betz, owner of Bahn Brenner Motorsport (BBM). “I beat the crap out of it, yet still it runs every time flawlessly!”

For over three years, John has driven his ’96 GTI daily to work in Bend, OR. Under the hood rests a 2.0 8v motor with a base of 115hp and 135 lb/ft. But the engine is far from factory stock. It’s equipped with BBM’s latest stage 3 supercharger kit, which has been dynoed at 216whp and 223wtq.

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BBM offers three stages for its supercharger kits, which are as easy to manage as they are effective, as John has demonstrated with his GTI. “These are real world kits that somebody can drive on a daily basis. It incorporates power, mileage and reliability.” He stated. “If you look at cost-to-performance, you’re going to have performance rivaling $30k cars.”

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Supercharger Selection

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Before developing the product, BBM experimented with several different blowers in search for the ideal combination of off-idle torque and top-end power. It’s generally considered there are three types of superchargers: roots, centrifugal and twin-screw. The centrifugal blower is similar to a turbo, in the sense that as rpm rises, so does the boost. Although all blowers are typically rpm-dependent, centrifugal chargers produce the boost. Although all blowers are typically rpm-dependent, centrifugal chargers produce the boost.

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With the right set up, both centrifugal and roots units can make considerable power, but BBM opted for the twin-screw. This design has greater internal tolerances, making it more efficient. The clearance between the screws is basically the width of two human hairs, allowing instantaneous boost and less waste, continuing to build boost up to 20psi.

Power Stages

MK3 2.0v owners aren’t expected to throw a great deal of money at the car, since the book value is around $3-3.5. However, the BBM supercharger kit means Mk3 owners can have the power of a car that costs three times more.

Stage 1 – This non-intercooled kit costs $2399 and includes all the installation hardware as well as 22# injectors and BBM software. The kit produces 8-10psi and provides a little over 150whp.

Stage 2 – Costing $549 extra, power rises to over 180whp thanks to a 268/260\° cam. 9.5:1 low compression head gasket spacer and head bolt set. The upgrade also includes a smaller 63mm pulley compared to stage 1’s 75mm, raising boost to 12psi.

Stage 3 – Costs a total of $4647, including a front-mount intercooler, new software and a 53mm pulley capable of over 15psi. This gives a reliable 215whp, taking the two slow far from its stock base output. Torque is also notably higher, with the dyno exceeding 220twq.

The kit fits any Mk3 2.0v including the Golf, Jetta, Cabrio and Passat. “We spent countless hours on the dyno refining and testing the kit, especially the software,” explained John. “It’s now like OEM. You can even maintain your gas mileage if you’re not using the horsepower on the freeway because we use a bypass valve. Yet power is on tap whenever you need it.”

One of the benefits of BBM’s supercharger is that it’s oil-fed. It draws fuel from the oil filter housing and returns it to the pan after first feeding the helical-cut gears. This increases supercharger longevity, allowing the bearings and gears to be properly lubricated.

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