

# Three of a kind

Three Mk1s, three totally different driving experiences. DAVID CORFIELD visits Historic Motorsport and finds a trio of top Golfs



The interior of Historic Motorsport's Golf Cabriolet is in mint condition. And those Rabbit floor mats? The car is for sale at offers starting at £6,000. Interested?

**T**HE YEAR IS 1986. On the telly Miami Vice is showing and A-Ha are top of the charts. The eighties had a lot going for it, and dodgy cop shows and questionable Norwegian music notwithstanding, the Volkswagen Golf cabriolet was in its heyday.

One of the most individual of these cars was, and still is, owned by Jill Sutton, wife of Historic Motorsport's David Sutton. When David and his team were charging about in Audi quattros winning lots of silverware for Audi Sport UK in the mid-eighties, Jill was cruising the streets of LA in this splendidly unique ragtop.

Customised with a Kamei bodykit and 15in alloys, the all-white campaign car was one of the first to be fitted with power steering, and came with the highly unusual extra of air-conditioning.

Owned by Jill since new, the car has led a sheltered life, recording a mere 15,000 miles in the 16 years it's been in her possession.

"It was a retirement present from David Sutton Motorsport," she tells me, "and I used it in the USA when we had a house there."

There was never a better car for scooting about the Californian highways, and with the wind-in-the-hair fun afforded by the open-



Classic line-up? Three Mk1s, all very different, but all sharing the same pedigree. Which one takes your fancy? Colin Shoobridge from David Sutton's garage owns the Mk1 in the foreground.



It's only a lowly 1.4 model, but thanks to a rorty exhaust Sutton's Mk1 Golf rally car sounds the business and looks stunning!





topped Golf Jill was a big fan. When a house move brought the family back to the UK, the car came with her, and now resides in the museum attached to the David Sutton Cars workshop.

"I've no real use for the car now," she tells me, "and the time has come to find the Golf a new home. I will be sad to see it go, because it's a fun little car and so well built it still amazes me. The roof is a perfect fit and doesn't let in a single drop of water and, although not powered like later cabriolet models, is nevertheless very easy to put up and take down."

Jill carries on talking to me as I struggle to get into a factory-built Mk1 Golf rally car. Called the Citi Golf and built in South Africa, the car is one of the cheapest brand-new rally cars you can buy. "To publicise the Citi Golf, VW South Africa run a couple of them alongside their normal Mk4 rally

**The Mk1 Golf rally car is only a 1.4-litre model, but looks superb decked out in VW South African livery. Only rallied once, for sale at £8500!**



Although sharing the same basic floorpan, these three Golfs have very different personalities! From rally charger to Los Angeles street cruiser, these cars are built for fun!

cars. They are very cheap (a standard car is only £5,000) and a full rally car like this can be bought for under £10,000. "This car in particular was the South African team's car and we bought it at the end of the 2001 season. The cars are still available from us, either as a road car or as a rally car. This one here costs £8,500."

OK, so it's only got a 1400cc engine, but it sounds great and looks the business. Take care on roundabouts, though, with those knobbly gravel tyres, as it drifts wide although is perfectly set-up.

As the camera whirred I am greeted by Colin Shoobridge, one of Sutton's mechanics, and owner of a Mk1 GTI. In need of some TLC, it's getting in bucketfuls from Colin. Together, all three cars look fantastic and share the same floorpan of a car that started off a cult following, nearly 30 years ago. Oh, and if you are serious about that cabrio, call 01327 300677.

