

NEWS

WA's class of vintage whine

Now the meek Magna has some real supercharged muscle, writes **NEIL DOWLING**

THE whistle gives it away. The supercharger whine is subtle at first, but rises as fast as the tachometer needle turns to become almost tuneful, finally changing its note to climb to a scream as the revs hit the red line.

The muscular music is addictive and is one audiences traditionally pay a lot of money to hear because it comes in concert with the thrill of numbingly quick acceleration. But not any more.

Entry to supercharged power within the conservative facade of a Mitsubishi Magna is relatively inexpensive.

In designing, building, testing and now marketing a supercharged Magna, WA-based Sprintex Superchargers — part of Australian Auto

motive Components — has made a boosted family sedan available for about \$7600 on top of the car's basic price. And the kit is available through any Mitsubishi dealer.

The supercharger is designed for all 3.5-litre Magnas in front-drive and all-wheel-drive format, on cars as fresh as factory direct or as a retro-fit proposition.

Buyers get a Sprintex twin-scroll supercharger that sits within the hollow of the V6's banked cylinders, and a 0-100km/h rush cuts 1.5 seconds from the standard model's time, bringing up the ton in 7 secs.

"I'll stress that Mitsubishi does not endorse or has been directly involved in this project," Sprintex managing director Tony Hamilton says. "But they are aware of what we're doing and the product is fully ADR compliant."

Sprintex's enhancement of the standard engine raises power to 226kW from 158 and torque to 422Nm from 330. More importantly, the performance arrives without touching the tacho's red line.



Magna force: Sprintex Superchargers' Mitsubishi Magna sedan costs about \$7600 on top of the car's basic price.



Power peaks at 5200 revs and torque at 4000 revs.

Apart from the supercharger, which sits flat and appears factory-fitted under the bonnet, Sprintex adds a cold-air intake that sucks fresh air from beneath the front spoiler, then changes the engine mapping and fuel delivery. The five-

speed Tiptronic box has slightly different pick-up points and a transmission oil cooler.

"We can supply this car, as it is, for less than \$55,000. That puts it, in performance terms at least, up against all-wheel rivals such as the Audi A4 turbo-quattro series, Volvo S60 AWD and even the all-wheel-drive HSV Coupe," Hamilton says.

"The fact that the Magna AWD will cost \$30,000 less gives it a lot of interest. You'd be battling to find a similar package."

Sprintex and AAC have had other forays, including the one-off 320kW 4.6-litre V8-engined and supercharged Ford Falcon AU Coupe, and its four-door 300+ sister, and are finalising a supercharged Harley-Davidson V-Rod.

MAGNA'S HOTTIE

■ THE supercharged, all-wheel-drive Magna will be one of the stars of the Melbourne Motor Show next month.

The car, the first supercharged Magna, is the model's last shot at Aussie street cred as it awaits replacement this year.

