

## GROUP TEST: SPORTS HATCHBACKS



You can't buy Renault's hot R5 GT Turbo in Britain – yet. But in France it's been on sale for nearly a year. We went to Paris with some tough opposition – Fiat's Uno Turbo ie and Peugeot's 205 GTI – to put the new 120 mph Renault through its paces. It was a classic confrontation



# RED HOT!

Round One saw us pitting it against Ford's XR2 and the MG Metro Turbo. A year later it faced two further challengers in Honda's Civic GT and the front-drive Toyota Corolla GT. In each case it finished on top as the convincing test victor, having successfully seen off two very worthy opponents along the way. The car in question? What else but Peugeot's highly-acclaimed 205 GTI.

Such is the dominance of the 205 GTI in its class that it's rapidly become *the* sports hatchback to beat, the yardstick by which all others are judged. Not only does it score high marks for exhilarating driving manners, it's also good looking and practical to run. It's a car that's done wonders for Peugeot's image and profitability.

However that's not to say that others in the market place are content to sit back and let Peugeot have things all their own way. On the contrary. The 205 GTI has a host of rivals threatening its number one position. Two of the newest ones are shown here, lined up alongside the baby Peugeot; Fiat's potent Uno Turbo ie and the Renault 5 GT Turbo, a car that's due to appear in Britain within the next few months.

British buyers have had to wait quite some while for the hot edition of the new Five from Renault. By the time it arrives in the UK showrooms, it will have been on sale in France for the best part of a year. But the new car should be worth the wait, for in just about every respect it's a big improvement on the old Gordini Turbo. Faster, lighter, more economical and better to drive, Renault's newcomer is also roomier and more stylishly equipped. Better still, it promises to be refined – something the old car definitely wasn't.



Just as the latest R5 draws heavily on technology from the larger R11 hatchback, so the new 5 GT Turbo relies on ideas already applied to the blown, top-of-the-range R11. The familiar Renault 1397 cc engine thus sits transversely driving the front wheels through a five-speed gearbox (as fitted to the original Gordini, the iron block 1400 was mounted north-south), and quoted power is an impressive 115 bhp at 5750 rpm.

For the 5 GT Turbo, Renault have gained an extra 5 bhp by significantly raising the boost pressure, adding an air/air intercooler and modifying the turbo control system.

Now the Garrett turbo 'blows' instead of 'sucks' through a twin-choke carburettor. The result is greater power at lower revs and masses of extra torque – 121 lb ft at 3000 rpm (instead of 108 lb ft at 4000 rpm). Performance is improved too: Renault are claiming 125 mph and 0-62 mph in 8.0 secs for the new Five.

In contrast to the Renault which hasn't yet arrived in Britain, Fiat's highly publicised Uno Turbo ie is already here. It's Fiat's entry into the performance supermini class and a head-on competitor for the 205 GTI in more ways than one. Priced £6889, it has been shrewdly positioned to sit

just behind the £7145 Peugeot in the listings. Furthermore, if prices in France are any guide, then it should undercut the 5 GT Turbo as well, for in price order it's Peugeot first, Renault second and Fiat third. But in Italy, it's a different story: There, the Renault is fractionally the cheapest of the three. A likely UK price for the R5 however is £7000.

The Fiat's 1299 cc engine is, despite its modest capacity, one of the hottest engines of its type. Based loosely on the original XI/9 unit, it's been comprehensively reworked from top to bottom to accept turbo-charging and thus very much a 'special'. At 105 bhp, it has easily the power of a less highly tuned 1600, such as that fitted to the XR3i – and torque of 108 lb ft achieved at 3200 rpm is excellent too. Lifting the bonnet reveals Bosch LE2 electronic fuel injection, an intercooler for the water-cooled turbo, complex Marelli Microplex 'mapped' ignition for optimum engine tune and an oil cooler.

Performance claims for the five-speed Uno Turbo include a 125 mph maximum and 8.0 secs 0-60 mph time, so theoretically, it's right on a par with the Renault. Peugeot's factory figures for the 205 GTI are more conservative, quoting 118 mph and 9.5 secs for the 0-62 mph run. But according to the simulated Government fuel tests, it's the less highly-stressed Peugeot that just takes the honours, the Renault coming a close second, the Fiat just behind. However there's very little in it.

With the benefit of the 1580 cc, all-alloy engine that also appears in the Citroen BX and Peugeot 305 GT, the 205 GTI equals the Fiat Uno on two counts: it also produces 105 bhp (albeit at a rather high 6250 rpm) and has Bosch LE2 injection. Torque

FIAT UNO TURBO ie, PEUGEOT 205 GTI, RENAULT 5 GT TURBO



## GROUP TEST: SPORTS HATCHBACKS

though is less impressive, the bigger engined Peugeot managing 99 lb ft at 4000 rpm.

Peugeot's 205 GTI, like the Fiat and Renault, is being sold as a smartly-dressed three-door hatchback running on special alloy wheels shod with low profile, 60-section tyres. However on balance, it's the Peugeot that's probably the most tastefully presented – the Fiat suffering from garish 'turbo' side decals, the Renault from unsubtle plastic bumpers and wheelarch trims. Under the skin it's the Uno and R5 that are the most highly modified, both having special steering and sports suspension settings: the Peugeot too has stiffened springs and joints but those of the other pair are more heavily revised.

All three have rack and pinion steering and vented front disc brakes. Only the Peugeot has drums at the back. Suspension sees a common policy of MacPherson struts supported by roll bars at the front and trailing arm geometry at the rear. There, the Peugeot and Renault have torsion bars, the Fiat coil springs. The Renault system is unusual though, being a semi-rigid '4-bar' type with a transverse torsion bar used for both springing and anti-roll bar control.

The dimensions chart shows there to be little to choose between the three in terms of size: the Peugeot is the longest, the Renault the widest. All are near enough the same height and weight. Yet it's the Uno that shines brightest in the wind tunnel with its trend-setting 0.33 cd.

### PERFORMANCE

UNO	●●●●●
PEUGEOT	●●●●●
RENAULT	●●●●●

If it's smooth, crisp, urgent power that you want, the Uno is the car that delivers.

Its engine is a real gem, revving sweetly and willingly right to the red line. Maybe it's a touch shrill at the top end but that's hardly much to worry about. All-round, it's a highly impressive performer.

The sophisticated, state-of-the-art turbo installation of the Uno provides the kind of acceleration that makes headlines: we saw 0-60 mph in 7.9 secs and standstill to 100 mph well inside 24 secs. In any company those are remarkable figures – and yet remember the Uno is a mere 1300 with no fancy double overhead cams or four valves per cylinder. The Fiat's top speed seems even more sensational: Fiat claim 'around 125 mph' but we clocked our test car as having a best two-way time of 123 mph – quite some going for a production supermini and better even than the rorty two-litre, twin cam Strada Abarth 130 TC can manage.

Couple this searing pace with a

turbo boost that's progressive and unhampered by discernible lag (the Uno is on full boost at 2500 rpm but well before then the turbo has already come into play) and it's clear the Uno is both fast and refined. There's no transmission fight to contend with either: the Uno's front wheels put the power down evenly and smoothly.

Transmission takes in a Strada Abarth five-speed box. Gearshift movements are thankfully a long way removed from those of lesser Fiats which all too often are rubbery and obstructive. With the Uno Turbo, the changes are far smoother, the lever shifting easily between ratios.

A check on the performance times actually sees the R5 GT Turbo outgun the Fiat away from the line. Its extra power and lower close-set ratios give it the edge up to the 80 mph mark (the Uno's gearing is wider spread) and 0-60 mph comes up in an amazing 7.5 secs. That's a considerable advance on the old Gordini Turbo's 8.7 secs time and certainly the new yardstick for the class. Fiat out, we achieved 122 mph with the Renault which again underlines the potency of the R5. On full song, it's very quick.

Renault have greatly improved the refinement of the 1.4 engine too. The thrashiness of the earlier unit has been fully ironed out, the push-rod engine now sounding quieter and better behaved. However it still doesn't have the marvellous power delivery of the Fiat.

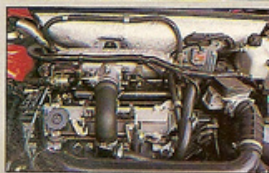
Turbo lag was a depressing short-coming of the first generation Renault turbo. Now the boost is far smoother and more progressive but, even so, snapping the throttle open can still see a momentary delay in turbo pick-up. Gearchange and clutch action on the other hand are both light years away from those of old. Now the engine/gearbox is transverse, the R5's clutch is light, the stout, R11-style gearlever precise and satisfying to use.

The third, fourth and fifth gear overtaking times demonstrate the vivid pulling power of the two turbo cars. In third there's little to choose (both manage 30-50 mph in a very fast 3.7 secs). But in the top two ratios, the Renault isn't quite as quick on the uptake overall as the Fiat; this is especially so in fifth, the French car having higher gearing and less rapid turbo action.

The 205 GTI has no turbo shortcomings, merely an extremely well developed 'normally aspirated' engine that's a delight in every sense. Previously we've praised its wonderfully eager nature and excellent refinement: this time round, nothing has changed. It still has perfect response and masses of usable torque.

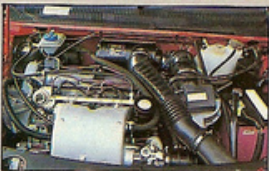
The Peugeot feels quick off the mark and indeed, a 8.6 secs 0-60

### FIAT UNO TURBO ie



In turbo trim, Fiat's Uno sports stiffened, lowered suspension, special Abarth wheels and plastic tail spoiler. Turbo side stripes are not to everyone's taste. Interior packaging is tasteful and comprehensive, the trim being especially smart. Highly sophisticated 1.3-litre engine manages 105 bhp thanks to injection and intercooled turbocharging. Performance is vivid

### PEUGEOT 205 GTI



Arguably the prettiest of the current sports hatches, Peugeot's 205 GTI rates as a terrific fun car. Agility is second to none and performance from smooth revving 1580 cc engine is both willing and refined. Interior is comfortable but poor ventilation is a day-to-day flaw. The dashboard could be improved too. Nevertheless the Peugeot's dynamic style draws plenty of admirers

### RENAULT 5 GT TURBO



Left-hand-drive only at present (but due in UK soon), new R5 GT Turbo is powerful, improved version of earlier Gordini Turbo. Power is up to 115 bhp from revised 1.4-litre engine and special suspension provides excellent ride and handling. Storming acceleration will delight enthusiasts: seating is comfortable, supportive but dashboard plasticky. UK price has yet to be announced

## FIAT UNO TURBO ie, PEUGEOT 205 GTI, RENAULT 5 GT TURBO



mph time shows it to be so. Though that may look a little tame compared to the resounding achievement of the hi-tech turbo pair, the 205 is far from outclassed. Its effortless, free-revving character sees to that. A set of five, evenly-spread ratios coupled with a faultless gearchange merit high marks too, allowing a useful flow of power at all times. Pick-up is especially brisk. A 120 mph maximum is no disgrace either.

### HANDLING AND RIDE

PEUGEOT	●●●●●
RENAULT	●●●●●
UNO	●●●●●

The 205 GTI's agility has to be experienced to be believed. It's uncannily responsive in the way it performs: the steering, though heavy on the arms when parking, soon lightens up on the move and contributes a great deal to the Peugeot's pin-sharp road behaviour. In fact, such is the accuracy of its rack and pinion system that the Peugeot can be steered merely with slight wrist movements at motorway speeds. This, coupled with accurate turn-in and excellent grip makes the Peugeot fantastic fun to drive. It's a car that feels right straight from the word go.

But while the Peugeot revels in hard cornering, staying tightly on line unless the driver suddenly backs off in mid-bend (whereupon the tail can swing out), ride comfort isn't a strong suit. Over most roads the Peugeot feels comfortable and secure but small ridges and bumps can catch it out, making the ride that's firm at the best of times become more than a little unsettled.

Here the Renault is much better. Despite raised suspension settings and low profile tyres, the Turbo's ride feels little different to that of a more humble R5.

Uneven surfaces can cause some mild pitching and a degree of bounciness but there's none of the Peugeot's juddering to be felt. Considering our test car wore optional ultra-low profile tyres, this excellent suspension control seems all the more impressive.

Indeed, the Renault's ride/handling compromise is probably the best of its class. Roadholding is good too, the fat Michelins gripping strongly whatever the weather. Like the Peugeot, the Renault corners crisply and stably but right on the limit, there's still some of the old-style R5 twitchiness to overcome: lifting off while committed to a fast cornering line can see the back end snap smartly out of shape – and catching it with a touch of opposite lock sometimes requires quick reflexes. However while the Renault doesn't have quite the lightning reactions of the 205 GTI (and neither, for that matter does the Fiat) it's still

a tight handler, the roly-poly cornering antics of the old Gordini having completely vanished.

Steering feels dead and weighty at low, town speeds. But as the pace quickens it comes alive, responding instantly to small inputs. Here again, the latest R5 improves over its predecessor. The brakes have a short-travel action but stop the car quickly and efficiently.

It's a shame the Uno's handling and ride characteristics don't match the quality of its fabulous turbo engine. The steering in particular lets the car down. Not only is it heavily weighted for parking, it's also vague and lifeless around the central position. It has a stiff, self-centring action and is occasionally susceptible to kickback from small road bumps. Unfortunately, it's just not in the same league as the 205 and R5 systems. All-disc braking though, is powerful and progressive.

Handling brings better news. The Uno takes corners in spirited fashion, with minimal roll and reassuring grip. It's not an easy car to unstick and, as we have said, the Uno shell and drivetrain are both easily capable of handling the turbo's power. But if the driver is in a real hurry, then the Fiat tends to drift wide with tyre-scrubbing understeer if the power is kept on through a bend (more so than the Peugeot and Renault). Yet it's easily controllable: partially releasing the throttle invariably restores the status quo.

The Uno's ride is uncompromisingly hard and at times seems to let every ripple and bump through to the cabin. Although there's no suspension crashing, the Fiat makes hard work of dips and potholes, occasionally bouncing the front passengers right out of their seats. On the motorway, the suspension is noticeably busy and the Uno isn't the most relaxed of cars to drive – especially if one takes advantage of its stunning performance.

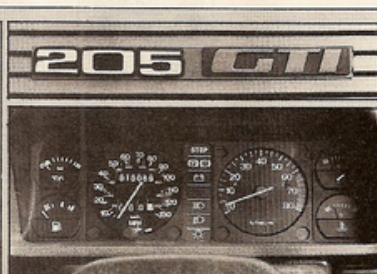
### ACCOMMODATION

PEUGEOT	●●●●●
RENAULT	●●●●●
UNO	●●●●●

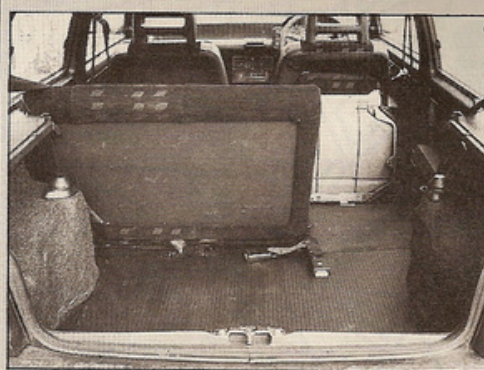
Both Peugeot and Renault have excellent driving positions, their steering wheels set at just the right angle, the pedals evenly spread. Seating sees first rate support in each case but the Renault's sports seat has extra padding for the side of the back and thighs. Lumbar support is perfect. We found the Renault seating just right in every respect but a large-limbed driver may find the shoulder padding a little tight.

The Uno's seating is noticeably firmer and higher-mounted. For the driver, this means a good view of the road ahead but also less headroom that one might expect. Even average-sized passengers will find their

## GROUP TEST: SPORTS HATCHBACKS



Peugeot boot is both practical and large, with 50/50 seat fold split and flat floor. Instruments (above) are numerous but disappointing in their presentation; rest of dashboard fails to match standard of other cars



Taller, narrower Uno boot has asymmetric seat fold but less width than Peugeot's. Stylish instrument display features turbo boost gauge in centre plus oil pressure and temperature needles



Renault 5 boot area is again practical, with low sill and unobstructed access. Seats split halfway, though rear belts are not standard on UK Renaults. French market instrument pack comprises turbo boost and oil pressure gauges

heads brushing the roof in the front. Tall members of our test team complained they couldn't get comfortable behind the wheel of the Uno at all, there being no height adjustment for the base and seemingly less legroom than in an 'ordinary' Uno. Nevertheless the Fiat offers good back and shoulder support and plenty of comfort. Of these three, only the Renault has front seat height adjustment, it being the slide/tilt monorail type with its unusual rocking motion.

Entry to the back of the Uno and R5 is easy thanks to the front seats' parallelogram swing action. With the

Peugeot, the complete seat tips forward. In the rear the Fiat feels subjectively the roomiest of the three, the car's tall upright shape affording generous headroom and a glassy cabin. However there's very little in it. The tape measure shows the Peugeot to have the best kneespace, the Renault the most shoulder room. In fact Renault have somehow managed to find several extra inches of passenger space in back of the R5 for, compared to our recent test R5 TSE, the 5 GT Turbo was clearly roomier. However there's still a cramped feel behind the Renault's front seats: the Peugeot

and Fiat, in contrast, seem to offer extra passenger room in the rear.

All three have split backrests that fold forward for versatility. The Peugeot's are arranged 50-50 while those of the Renault are 60-40. The Fiat's are 70-30. The rear seat bases of the 205 and Uno tilt forward thus making a flat loading platform. But the Renault's rear seat can be unhinged altogether and removed if necessary.

With seats folded, the Peugeot wins the boot capacity contest, its makers claiming a 42.4 cu ft load area (to the Fiat's 35 and Renault's 32.4 cu ft). Yet with the seats upright,

it's the Fiat that comes first with a 9.0 cu ft capacity. In each case the luggage area is usefully shaped, low-silled and served by a wide-opening tailgate. Of the three only the Fiat has the luxury of a remote tailgate release—a useful day-to-day feature for shoppers.

### LIVING WITH THE CARS

PEUGEOT	● ● ● ●
UNO	● ● ● ●
RENAULT	● ● ● ●

There's little to choose between the three here. All are fun to drive, smartly presented and chic to own. However on balance, the Peugeot's easy-going nature and dynamic road behaviour perhaps give it the edge. Then of course there are its curvaceous good looks to be taken into account. It's very easy to be seduced by those.

Inside, the Peugeot isn't quite so stylish, even though the small steering wheel is good to use and the seats and instrument pack are suitably sporting. It's the centre console that looks so out of place, having a Christmas tree look to it, and being spoiled by messy heater controls. Ventilation in fact is one of the Peugeot's real weak points: it's hard, if not impossible, to achieve a proper fresh air flow even when the noisy fan is working. In wet weather, demisting the windows is tricky too.

Switchgear is standard 205 fare in that two column stalks govern wipers and indicators lights. All the controls are sensibly positioned and simple to assimilate. Equipment levels see electric windows/central locking listed as an option package and rear seat belts at last fitted as standard. A sliding glass sunroof is a £170 option but showroom spec includes a good quality four speaker radio cassette system.

One of the few day-to-day annoyances with the 205 GTI concerns the tip-up seat arrangement for entry to the back. The lever to raise the seat is fiddly to operate, needing to be manually re-positioned each time the seat returns to its normal position. It's a small point, but on most modern hatchbacks this occurs automatically.

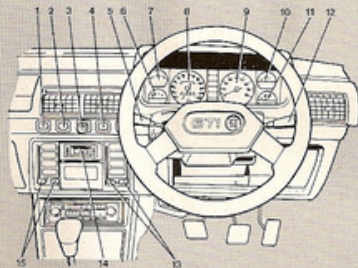
Accept that the Fiat is an overtly sporting hatchback with very firm suspension and high noise levels at speed and it's a good car to live with. In other words, it's not the quietest of cars on the motorway (the low fifth gear is mostly responsible for that, keeping the revs up for quick top-end acceleration) nor the most restful car for a long journey—but it is smartly appointed, practically designed and a rewarding car to buzz around the lanes.

Furnished predominantly in black (but with red carpets), the Uno interior looks good. The stylised Fiat logos on the seats and door trim

## FIAT UNO TURBO ie, PEUGEOT 205 GTI, RENAULT 5 GT TURBO

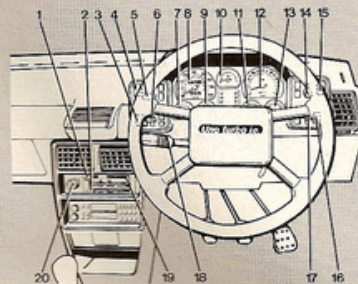
### PEUGEOT 205GTi

1. Hazard warning
2. Heated rear window
3. Lighter
4. Rear fog
5. Indicators/dip flash/horn
6. Fuel
7. Oil temperature
8. Speedometer
9. Rev counter
10. Oil pressure
11. Temperature
12. Wipers
13. Heater controls
14. Clock
15. Fan



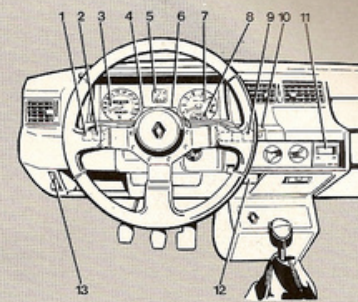
### FIAT UNO TURBO

1. Fan
2. Temperature
3. Rear fog
4. Hazard warning
5. Dip flash
6. Lights
7. Fuel
8. Speedometer
9. Temperature
10. Boost
11. Oil temperature
12. Rev counter
13. Oil pressure
14. Wipers
15. Heated rear screen
16. Rear wash
17. Front fog
18. Indicators/horn
19. Air distribution
20. Lighter



### RENAULT 5 GT TURBO

1. Heated rear screen
2. Front fog
3. Speedometer
4. Temperature
5. Fuel
6. Oil pressure
7. Rev counter
8. Boost
9. Rear fog
10. Rear wash
11. Clock
12. Hazard warning
13. Choke



aren't too loud and fit and finish throughout the cabin is to a high standard. As tested, the Uno had the full seven-dial instrument pack with gauges for oil temperature and pressure, coolant temperature and fuel along the bottom, supporting the turbo boost gauge, speedo and rev counter. At least no-one can complain about lack of information, and an electronic display is planned for next year's cars.

The turbo has a slide/tilt sunroof as standard, a stereo radio cassette player and rear belts. But central locking and electric windows are not available in Britain. We weren't so

happy with the sunroof which rattled and rumbled continuously, nor with the Uno's courtesy lights which were too dim. Heating and ventilation on the other hand are effective (there's a good fresh air supply) and the Uno's engine, despite its high state of tune, never missed a beat, starting promptly on each turn of the key and running smoothly and powerfully thereafter.

A manual choke on a sports hatchback is something of a novelty these days - but the R5 GT Turbo has one linked to its twin choke carburettor. It's only needed for cold starts, though. Elsewhere, the



Renault sports a chunky three-spoke steering wheel and an attractive (but plasticky) dashboard package lifted straight from the R5 TSE. Unfortunately, the wheel obscures some of the R5's piano key switchgear and also the flimsy stalks for lights and wipers. One further gripe: why not a constant rear wash/wipe setting? On a wet day it's irritating to have to keep pressing the switch to clear the rear screen.

The Renault's easy-to-regulate heater is able to channel fresh air separately from its hot air output. Day-to-day, it's a less demanding car to drive than the Uno, but as standard it's not that well equipped. In France, there's no radio, central locking nor electric windows. Maybe when the Renault comes to Britain it will have these things.

#### COSTS

UNO	●●●●
RENAULT	●●●●
PEUGEOT	●●●●

We're not able to draw a totally accurate assessment of the R5 GT Turbo's running costs programme since Renault UK, understandably, haven't yet announced any parts prices nor even confirmed the cost of the car itself. Having said that, it is possible to fit certain pieces into the jigsaw of the new car's costs.

Servicing should theoretically be reasonably priced if the car follows Renault's latest workshop schedule, involving major attention at 30,000 mile intervals only. However the car will still have to go to the garage every 6000 miles for a short check-up. It remains to be seen whether Renault adopt Fiat's policy of including a precautionary oil change into the schedule in deference to the turbo engine. In the case of the Uno, this takes place irritatingly often at every 4500 miles. Thereafter, intermediate check-ups happen every 6000 miles, with the first main service occurring at 12,000 miles (and lasting 2.2 hours).

Peugeot adopt a much simpler policy for the 205 GTI. There's a major service every 12,000 miles -

the first such inspection takes 1.65 hours - and a short service check at each 6000 mile half way point.

On parts prices and fitting times, the Uno looks to be the best economy bet. Renault's parts are likely to be a little more costly, with the Peugeot the dearest of the three in the repair bay. Insurance grouping sees both Fiat and Peugeot pegged at group five: the Renault is likely to be the same.

There's little to choose between the three where warranty cover is concerned. But while Renault offer five years' anti corrosion protection, Peugeot and Fiat both go to six.

The prize for the best economy goes to the Peugeot which achieved a 28.4 mpg average in our hands. Next came the remarkably consistent Fiat with 27.6 mpg, the 25.9 mpg Renault bringing up the rear. The R5's thirst (at worst, it recorded 21.1 mpg) was at odds with its showing in the simulated Government fuel cycles where, like the Peugeot, it 'manages' 50.4 mpg at a steady 56 mph. The best we could manage in this instance was 30.5 mpg and that was registered after a steady 124-mile run which saw plenty of gentle driving. Curiously, 30.5 mpg was the Peugeot's top average too.

Following performance testing, the Uno gave 24.3 mpg but we found 30 mpg well within reach, the Italian car achieving nearly 36 mpg with a light foot. From past tests we know the 205 can average 32-33 mpg given favourable conditions.

#### VERDICT

PEUGEOT	●●●●
RENAULT	●●●●
UNO	●●●●

Another test, another victory for the crackerjack 205 GTI. But the verdict is a close one: the Renault and Fiat are neck and neck with the Peugeot in some quarters, and even ever so slightly ahead in others.

The Uno starts with an immediate advantage - it's less expensive to buy than the 205 and hence better value. Then there's its sophisticated turbo engine that provides such

# GROUP TEST: SPORTS HATCHBACKS FIAT UNO TURBO ie, PEUGEOT 205 GTI, RENAULT 5 GT TURBO

## HOW THE CARS COMPARE

CAR	FIAT UNO TURBO	PEUGEOT 205 GTI	RENAULT 5GT TURBO
PRICE	£6889	£7145	£6999*
Other models	6 h/back	11 h/back	9 h/back
Price span	£3990-£6889	£4196-£7145	£4095-£6200

## PERFORMANCE

Max in 5th (mph)	123	120	122
Max in 4th (mph)	106	99	92
Max in 3rd (mph)	75	78	69
Max in 2nd (mph)	50	57	49
Max in 1st (mph)	27	32	30
0-30 (sec)	3.0	2.9	2.8
0-40 (sec)	4.2	4.5	4.1
0-50 (sec)	5.8	6.2	5.5
0-70 (sec)	7.9	8.6	7.5
0-80 (sec)	10.2	11.4	9.9
0-90 (sec)	13.4	15.2	13.6
0-100 (sec)	17.7	20.2	18.4
0-100 (sec)	23.3	29.5	23.3
0-400 metres (sec)	16.0	16.6	15.9
Terminal speed (mph)	86	83	86
30-50 in 3rd/4th/5th (sec)	3.7/5.9/8.6	4.6/6.5/8.5	3.7/6.3/11.2
40-60 in 3rd/4th/5th (sec)	3.8/5.5/7.4	5.0/6.6/9.0	3.7/5.4/9.2
50-70 in 3rd/4th/5th (sec)	4.3/5.7/7.8	5.3/7.1/9.4	4.2/6.1/9.0
60-80 in 3rd/4th/5th (sec)	—/6.2/8.6	—/7.9/10.8	—/7.1/10.6

## SPECIFICATIONS

Cylinders/capacity (cc)	4/1299	4/1580	4/1397
Bore x stroke (mm)	80.5/63.9	83/73	76/77
Valve gear	ohc	ohc	ohv
Compression ratio	8.1	10.2:1	7.9:1
Fuel system	injection	injection	carburettor
Power/rpm (bhp)	105/5750	105/6250	115/5750
Torque/rpm (lbs/ft)	108/3200	99/4000	121/3000
Steering	rack/pin	rack/pin	rack/pin
Turning circle (ft)/turns	30.8/3.4	32.6/3.8	36.4/3.25
Brakes	Di(v)	Di(v)	Di(v)
Suspension front	I/McP/AR	I/McP/AR	I/McP/AR
Suspension rear	I/TA/C	I/TA/TOR/AR	I/TA/Tor/AR
Tyres	175/60 HR13	185/HR60	175/60 R13

## COSTS

Test average	27.6	28.4	25.9
Test mpg	24.3-35.8	26.7-30.5	21.1-30.5
Govt mpg City/56/75	31.7/48.7/37.2	32.5/50.4/38.7	32.5/50.4/36.7
Tank galls (grade)	10.9 (4)	11.0 (4)	11.0 (4)
Major service miles (hrs)	12,000 (2.2)	12,000 (1.65)	30,000 (—)
<b>Parts costs (fitting hours)</b>			
Front wing	£21.50 (4.75)	£41.75 (2.8)	parts prices not yet available
Front bumper	£55.24 (0.35)	£53.00 (0.3)	
Headlamp unit	£27.04 (0.2)	£41.50 (0.5)	
Rear light lens	£7.27 (0.1)	£9.60 (0.2)	
Front brake pads	£29.83 (0.45)	£22.20 (1.0)	
Shock absorber	£28.93 (0.66)	£38.50 (2.0)	
Windscreen	£85.21 (0.8)	£79.50 (2.0)	
Exhaust system	£137.40 (0.9)	£94.25 (1.0)	
Clutch unit	£59.47 (3.4)	£75.05 (2.8)	
Alternator	£50.80 (0.9)	£135.00 (0.5)	
Insurance group	5	5	5*
Warranty	12/UL	12/UL	12/UL
Anti-rust	6 yrs	6 yrs	5 yrs

## EQUIPMENT

Alloy wheels	yes	yes	yes
Automatic choke	yes	yes	no
Split rear seats	70-30	50-50	60-40
Rear seat belts	yes	no	yes
Central locking	—	£3441	no
Electric windows	—	£3441	no
Sunroof	yes	£170	opt
Driving lights	yes	yes	yes
Sound system	—	rad/cass	pre-radio

## DIMENSIONS

Front headroom (ins)	34.5	37	35.5
Front legroom (ins)	31-38	34-41	34-39
Steering-wheel-seat (ins)	12-19	13-20	13.5-19
Rear headroom (ins)	34	33	34
Rear knee room (ins)	25-31.5	26-34	24-30
Length (ins)	143.0	145.9	141.3
Wheelbase (ins)	92.9	95.3	94.8
Height (ins)	54	53.7	53.8
Boot load height (ins)	26	24	25
Overall width (ins)	61.4	61.9	62.6
Int. width (ins)	52.9	52	53.5
Weight (cwt)	16.5	16.7	16.3
Boot capacity (cu ft)	9/35	7.6/42.4	8.2/32.4

**KEY:** Valve gear: ohc, overhead camshaft; ohv, overhead valve. Steering: rack/pin, rack and pinion. Brakes: Di (v), ventilated discs; Di, discs; Dr, drums; S, servo assistance. Suspension: I, independent; AR, anti-roll bar; C, coil springs; McP, MacPherson struts; Ta, trailing arms; Tor, torsion bar springs. \*estimate. †option package



fabulous performance. There's nothing around to touch it for smooth-revving urgency and quick-fire turbo response. The car is stylishly presented (inside especially) and has all the space and practicality of lesser Unos.

But the Uno Turbo, good though it is, is a car of uneven character. It's fast but it's bumpy; it's exhilarating to drive but noisy. We would like to see sharper steering, tighter cornering and a more compliant ride as well as a lower driving position. Then the Uno would realise its full potential.

Compared with the first generation Gordini Turbo, Renault's new hotshot Five is a total transformation. Virtually every weakness of the old car has been systematically ironed out: gone for instance are the thrashy engine, heavy steering, high noise levels and lurchy handling. Now the Renault combines power with refinement, vastly improved driving behaviour with better use of space. Furthermore any car in its class that can out-drag the Uno has to be quick — and that the R5 most certainly is. Better still, it drives in such an unfussed manner with good ride comfort, the seats in particular being excellent in their design.

On the debit side, it has inherited the Superfive's plasticky dashboard: despite the engine revisions, there's still some slight turbo lag to overcome and handling on the limit still needs care. Other than that the Renault is very good indeed. But what's it going to cost? Only time will tell where it fits in the marketplace.

As we said in the beginning, the 205 GTI ranks as the standard setter. Somehow Peugeot have contrived to combine looks, performance, character and top quality road behaviour in one very desirable package. The GTI has its faults, of course, but taken overall, it's a winner all the way.

Criticisms of the 205 include (as they did when we first met the car) its firm ride and poor ventilation. A tidier dashboard would add to its appeal too. And at £7145, it's beginning to look just a little costly. But as we have said on more than one occasion in the past, it's the satisfaction derived from driving the Peugeot that counts the most. It's still in a league of its own in that respect even though the competition is becoming fiercer all the time. Uno, Renault or Peugeot? For us, the GTI still gets the vote but by the slenderest margin.