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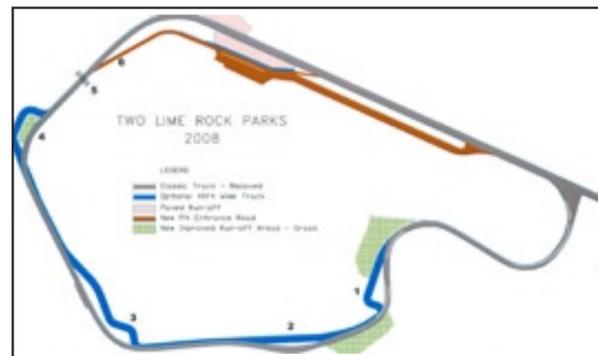


Paving the way to Lime Rock's future

Lakeville, CT – A new chapter in the history of Lime Rock Park was written today as the track celebrated its Groundbreaking of "two Lime Rock Parks." A press conference was held to announce the multi-million dollar track upgrades, the repaving schedule and officially release the Lime Rock Park track(s) map.

"When The Club at Lime Rock Park was announced last July, we committed to spending the full capital raised on the facility," said Lime Rock President Skip Barber. "This capital plus the 'I Helped Save the Park' campaign and track rental fee surcharges all contribute to this effort. The plan was to make the track safer, smoother with repaving and slow it down a little, particularly the downhill, without changing its character. We're going to do better than that."

The new plan will incorporate two parts: 1) Classic Lime Rock - unchanged in fifty years and unchanged going forward, the fastest road course in North



America, will be completely repaved and have significantly improved runoff areas; 2) the new or "Optional" Lime Rock substitutes three wide and slower corners with increased overtaking opportunities, along with a wider and straighter Back Straight, additional upgraded runoff areas and will be a moderate speed track.

These represent permanent changes – no chicanes – with the "Optional Lime Rock Park." Rather, it is a layout for the present - for the fast, high tech American Le Mans series car - and for any other group that chooses it. It is also a layout for the future as cars and tires continue to develop. With the

new optional corners there are actually eight, but there are configurations. It will be easy to switch from one course to another.

In addition to repaving "Classic Lime Rock," adding three optional corners and a new back straight, plans call for a longer and safer pit lane providing more pit boxes. The track is closing on 27 May – 2 July to complete all of this work.

In March a lot of work was done on the drive-over bridge that crosses the track. The bridge was raised 6.5 feet and now meets the F.I.A. specifications of being four meters above the track. New bridge abutments were built and are wide enough to accommodate a pedestrian bridge in the future.

Wagon Ways with Jetta SportWagen



Washington DC: While Americans have journeyed through the minivan and SUV eras, and are now considered to be in the crossover world, some manufacturers have never abandoned an old, stalwart friend, the station wagon.

Did you know that for years, the VW Microbus was marketed here in the U. S. as the VW station wagon? Can you remember the 1968 air-cooled Type III Squareback with standard fuel injection? How about the Type IV, the Dasher and the Quantum wagons? Maybe the 1988-90 Fox two door wagon brought you to grammar school, or perhaps you had/have a four, six or eight cylinder Passat wagon?

Well, the ever-popular Golf and its be-trunked sibling, the Jetta are now joined by the latest member of the family, the 2009 Jetta SportWagen. A



group of autojournalists gathered in our nation's capital to experience the cargo-hauling goodness available in the latest Jetta wagon.

Well, to tell the truth, we never did test the 32.8 cubic foot cargo hold of this vehicle. Nor did we fold down the joy seat and experience the joy of loading 66.9 cubic feet of groceries, gardening supplies, or what have you into the spacious rear of the Jetta.

We did have the opportunity to hear a marketing/technical presentation and to drive a pair of Jettas around DC city streets, plus Virginia highways and back country roads. The Jetta SportWagen holds true to the family business of providing driving pleasure for folks at affordable prices. The tariffs for these 2009 models have not been set yet, but expect a modest increase over the previous generation Jetta prices.

We tested both a five speed manual and a six speed automatic Jetta both of which had the 2.5-liter in-line five cylinder engine. This motor makes 170-hp and 177 lb-ft of torque. There was not a huge amount of torque at the bottom, nor copious horsepower at the upper end of the RPM range. But there was plenty of mid-range torque. We found the automatic's gear ratios allowed us to take better advantage of the engine's pulling power.

While this will be the only power plant available initially,

within a few months you'll also be able to select VW's marvelous 2.0-liter turbo. With 200-hp and 207 lb-ft of torque, this is the engine choice for the enthusiast. It does not disappoint. You might even want to pick the DSG (Direct Sequential Gearbox) transmission of its a whole big bunch of fun.

A lot of folks might want to wait for the arrival of the 50-state 140 horsepower is the lowest figure of the three engines, the torque figure will be 236 lb-ft. Couple that with extraordinary fuel mileage in the mid-forties mpg city and mid-fifties highway range and you have an eminently practical family vehicle.

We found our Jetta SportWagen to be comfortable, quiet and fun to drive. No one would mistake the handling for that of a GTI, but it struck a very nice ride/handling compromise for the family end of the market. The four-wheel disc ABS-equipped brakes were very good, and the list of safety equipment is quite extensive.

Overall I'm looking forward to the opportunity to bring you a full road test story of all three of the Jetta SportWagen variants. I'm curious to see which one becomes my favorite; the bargain-priced 2.0T, or the mileage champ diesel.

Mike Covello lives in Bolton, CT

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