
HB Coupé: Classic Driver reveals technical specs

03 February 2012 | Joe Breeze

This car may bear a passing resemblance to the Aston Martin DB4 GT Zagato, but it's a very different beast indeed. In fact, it's the Huet Brothers Coupé taking shape - not only in terms of form, but in terms of the technical specification that Classic Driver can now reveal.

Long-standing readers of *Classic Driver* may remember the [HB Special](#): a limited-numbers Barchetta for gentleman drivers - and racers - which married classic, Aston DBR1-esque lines with modern technology and materials.

Now, Paul and Tino Huet - a.k.a. the Huet Brothers - are readying their latest project: the HB Coupé. The new car draws inspiration from the HB Special of 2006, but the Barchetta body has been sacrificed for a safer and more practical coupé shape.

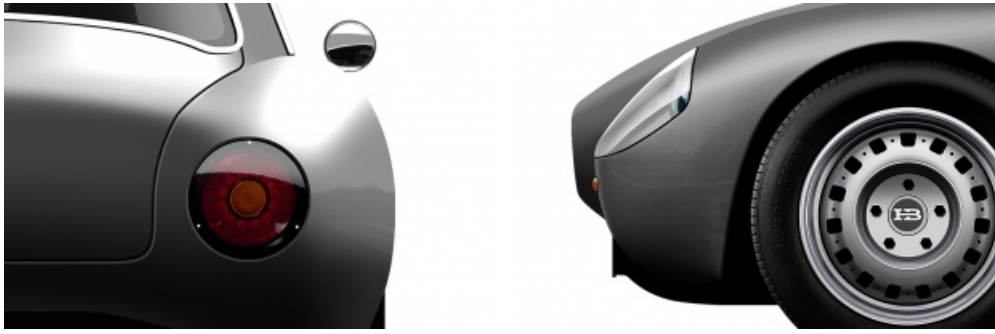


Classic, redefined

In Coupé form, the Huet Brothers' car seems not only to have taken inspiration from its roadster sibling, but also the Aston DB4 GT Zagato – that's no bad thing, though: as we know, the DB4 Zag is one of the most beautiful GTs in the history of the motor car. The HB Coupé exudes the same extreme rarity, elegance and athleticism as its lookalike (though admittedly not on *quite* the same level), while also offering many of the benefits of modern car ownership.



The HB Coupé may have been a long time in development (around 6 years), but a look at the very particular design brief the brothers set themselves serves as the reason. “We want a sports coupé, for rain and sunny weather, with modern-day comforts, with classic lines, which doesn't rust, which can carry our bags, which can handle mountain roads as well as traffic jams, which can be serviced at any garage, which will put a smile on our faces every day and, not to be forgotten, can drive to the Swiss Alps from Amsterdam on 48 litres.” If you were wondering, that requires a fuel consumption figure of above 70mpg.



That's a figure that many superminis yearn to achieve, but don't expect small performance here. In order to appeal to gentleman drivers (the demographic that the brothers are keenest to attract), the Coupé needs the appropriate performance and driving characteristics. To this end, the car offers the traditional driving thrills associated with the lightweight racing cars of yesteryear, along with a 0-62mph sprint of under 6 seconds.

Three versions: Coupé, Coupé RR & Coupé RR M

To cater for what HB has identified as its main consumer groups (gentleman drivers, road racers and pure racers), there will be three different versions of the car. And *Classic Driver* can exclusively reveal that all of them will be powered by the latest generation BMW engines: a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder diesel or a 3.0-litre, straight-six petrol.



In the standard Coupé, the diesel produces around 200bhp and 300lb ft of torque, which means the 1121kg car is good for a 0-62mph sprint of around 5.6 seconds. The slightly heavier (1159kg) petrol-engined standard car has a similar twist figure, but cranks up the power to 300bhp - thus reducing the sprint to 62mph from standstill to just 4.3 seconds.



But HB hasn't stopped there; it's also creating more performance-focused RR and RR M versions, duly sacrificing comfort – and thus weight – to prioritise racing capabilities. In RR spec, the diesel car now develops around 220bhp and weighs 1046kg, equating to a reduction of the standard sprint time by 0.3 seconds. Meanwhile, the petrol RR gains no more power over the standard car, but a drop in weight down to 1082kg should ensure a sprint time of four seconds flat. RR M configuration boosts the 3.0-litre petrol engine's output to around 330bhp, giving the 1099kg racing car a 3.8-second 0-62mph time.



As with other versions, the RR M gets an electronically limited 155mph speed ceiling (175mph would otherwise be possible) and a six-speed manual transmission as standard – the eight-speed automatic (diesel) or seven-speed dual-clutch 'box (petrol) offer alternative options.

It remains to be seen whether the project has a realistic chance of implementation. Tino Huet told Classic Driver: "We first want to see how much interest there is in the HB Coupé. For production, we

need about 20 to 50 concrete orders to secure the financing of production.” He expects the final price of the finished vehicles to be between the Artega GT and Wiesmann GT, two other small-series sports cars made in Central Europe. “We want to start at around 80,000 euros for the base model, rising to 150,000-160,000 euros for the top model.” To us that sounds fair - especially when you consider the exclusivity offered, not to mention *those* looks.

Photos: Huet Brothers

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