



# 330

## into X does go!

By Zlatko Mulabegovic

Fancy more power on your new street toy? It's dead easy bro, just hop over to the Mitsubishi dealer and get your 330hp upgrade that doesn't void your warranty. We take the reflashed SST 330 for a spin.



If you are into performance cars and especially EVOs, chances are that you've heard of the FQ versions offered in the UK. FQ probably stands for Freakin' Quick, but most importantly Mitsubishi offers sweet dealer-installed high-power packages where you get to keep your precious warranty, something not so easy to attain in case you decide to modify the new EVO yourself. In case you didn't already know, the company is being overly strict these days

regarding warranty issues, that even the installation of their own line of Ralliart products automatically voids it. The FQ packages consist of real tuner stuff, including an ECU re-map along with the addition of a high-performance exhaust and downpipe, an intercooler piping kit, racing suction pipe, and a sport cat. Tempting!

Al Habtoor Motors, the authorized Mitsubishi dealer in Dubai are not going the whole nine yards, yet they are

offering the ECUTEK ecu reflash that brings the horsepower count up to 327 ponies, to be precise. A buyer of a new EVO X can currently choose between a discount on the price or the 330 hp package included in the current price, options that are available on both the manual and the SST models.

#### The car

Now then, the EVO X is the latest edition of one of the world's most popular sport sedans. Whilst the three models preceding the X had shared lots of common components including the legendary 4G63

turbocharged 2.0

liter engine, the new model is a complete departure from the popular body styling, and is powered by a totally new engine codenamed B11 that features an aluminum block and packs plenty of innovations. Starting from a clean sheet, Mitsubishi worked on a more grown-up car with refined

styling, dropping the boy-racer image and attitude to try and appeal to a broader client base.

#### Not the first one

One of the novelties of the latest model is the availability of the twin clutch, 6-speed SST transmis-

ion, dropping the boy-racer image and attitude to try and appeal to a broader client base. everyday driving tool for less hardcore enthusiasts. The GT-A was powered by the turbo 2.0-litre engine that was tweaked to produce slightly less power, 272hp at 6,000rpm, but generated its peak torque across a wide rpm range, giving better low-speed

response and a virtually lag-free delivery. Thanks to its CVT-like auto tranny, the EVO VII GT-A was good for a 5.5 second sprint from 0-100 km/h and was capable of delivering that all day long. Even the looks were de-tuned, using a smaller rear wing, no bonnet vents and a more comfy interior.

#### The drive

Top Performance already published the test drive story of the manual EVO X a few months ago and this was our first opportunity to experience the twin clutch SST model on UAE roads, something we were looking forward to for a while now. Even better was the fact that the car in question was the 330hp re-flashed version, promising a more exciting experience.

sion, one in essence similar to the DSG tranny used on the VW and Audi cars. Truth be told, this is not the first time the Mitsubishi Evolution has ventured into non-manual territory; back in 2003, they had released a model called the Evolution VII GT-A that promised to offer a more refined,



*Evo VII GT-A used an automated manual in 2003, accompanied by slightly less power but a wider torque curve. The wild track-refugee looks were toned down a bit too.*



*Not as racy as previous Evos, the current generation Mitsu hot-rod still boasts a mean streak, and attempts to reach out to a wider audience*



And exciting it was. Although not a great fan of auto boxes, I must admit that the SST is one hell of a serious setup and can be adapted for all kinds of usage. If the SST knob is left in Normal mode, the EVO X is still damn quick, but very civilized, smooth and docile around town. And, once you've dropped the family home, it's time to engage the Sport mode that brings about sharper throttle response, more aggressive fueling maps and lightning



quick shifts that now happen at higher engine revolutions. Finally, the S-Sport mode extends the cut-off point even further to 6,500 rpm and you get automatic throttle blips on downshifts.

The standard SST felt a bit sluggish on takeoff, with a power dip in first gear, probably a safety feature aimed at prolonging the life of the transmission. With the ECUTEK ecu reflash, the SST launches hard and keeps accelerating even harder for as long as your right foot is planted. Shame that the engine and tranny noises aren't equally exciting, as the new EVO sounds very much like the DSG-equipped Golf; this should not come as a surprise though, since the same company supplies VW, Audi and Mitsubishi with their twin clutch boxes.

The SST setup means that you can have both your hands on the steering wheel all the time and concentrate on



*Superb Brembos hiding behind the 18" Enkei rims make quick work of shedding speed and help bring things back in line*

the cornering while shifting via the paddle shifters. The new EVO X is, despite being more comfy, a great handling car and, in essence, begs to be driven hard. Tight corners are swallowed with unseen ease and high levels of grip, while in the fast sweepers the car tends to show some understeer as the front end starts to feel "lighter".