Specification
GGR FORD FOCUS ST 300

ENGINE	2.5-litre, five-cylinder, 20V Duratec turbo with GGR (unless stated) cold air induction system, 3.0-inch free flow downpipe, 3.0-inch sports cat centre section and Magnex cat back twin exhausts, Radtech uprated intercooler, silicone hose kit, Bluefin 535 ECU remap, blow off valve re-location kit, custom header tanks, C-F covers, re-located ECU
TRANSMISSION	Standard six speed
BODY	GGR ST300 badging, sun-screen
INTERIOR	Standard with three-gauge pod, Bluefin ECU mapping tool
CHASSIS	Eibach 25mm lowering springs, OE dampers, GGR AP Racing 362mm x 32mm (front) big brake kit with six-pot calliper, Ferodo DS2500 pads, Goodridge braided lines, Sparco 19-inch split rims with 235/35x19 Toyo Proxes T1-R tyres
POWER (CLAIMED)	303bhp and 303lbft
PRICE	GGR £2395 full ST300 engine conversion + £1593 brake kit + £147 per wheel and tyre + £318 Eibach/Alignment
OVERALL MARK:	■■■■■■■□□□

GGR's (1.3bar flash overboost and 1.0bar held) boost hit certainly helps make things more interesting and, looking at the figures, the car is undeniably rapid. But I do not feel part of the experience, and the quarter mile time is as underwhelming as it feels behind the wheel. Is Ford's ST all about style over substance? A fashion statement and not a true hot hatch?

Let's throw a bend or two at it, see if that changes things...

Sadly not. The handling circuit just re-confirms what a fight GGR have had on their hands trying to get the over-weight Volvo, sorry Ford, to handle neutrally. Launching off the line involves either rampant wheelspin (no ESP), or a criminally dull, slow take-off (with ESP). That's what you get trying to channel 300bhp through the front wheels though! Turn-in is not half as sharp as I was expecting (mostly down to lack of steering feedback) and mid-bend, you are met with a wave of safe, predictable, boring understeer – and an early tyre limit, with squeaky soundtrack. Especially if you try and drive it 'too hard.' The nose just runs wide.

Even going in too fast and lifting doesn't seem to bring the tail into play, making the fun factor relatively low, with 300bhp to play with. The Duratec's Quattro-like five cylinder howl is the best bit.

It's Volvo safety first with this car, which is such a shame when you think how raw, challenging and aggro the Focus RS was.

It's not all bad news though. Some mods, like the absolutely incredible AP Racing brakes are perfect. Totally fade free. 100% confidence inspiring. Pure class. These stoppers alone made for a rapid lap time, proving power is not everything.

Well done GGR, for trying to make a dull car fun. You almost did it and I'll bet it is a lovely road car and folk are impressed, in an orange, Volvo-y kind of way.

It's no track day hero though.

Fellow tester, Jim Cameron adds: 'I really wanted to love this car, but the experience of driving it quickly has sucked all the love away. It's way too heavy, safe and, well, boring. But it looks fabulous, and GGR's finish is superb.'

GGR ST300 is great to look at, with a proper hot hatch 'bad lad' image. And GGR's package workmanship is superb. Their conversion does a lot for the ST, but, sadly, Ford (or rather Volvo) have forgotten about the engineering principle of inertia reduction. Or a decent driving position. Big shame