



# T5 TO DIE FOR!

Camper comrades creation

Martin "Marty" Brewer is a car mechanic and has been since leaving school. However, more than just a job, working on vehicles is in his blood and this magnificent T5 project has come about with the help of a few favours called in from tradesmen he has used during his professional life.

Stuart Crombie of FOUR MASTER, Accutek near Winchester alerted me to the existence of this vehicle. Stuey is a VW nutcase and travels to all kinds of VW meets around the country in the summer in his fabulously appointed T25 that we featured in Issue IV (still available for download from our website!). So it seems, is Marty who has lovingly restored his VW Beetle not once but twice taking inspiration from the shows and meets he goes to. It was never really on his agenda to purchase a camper van but he finally decided that when staying over at shows, a "comfortable space" could make these events more fun. Once the idea had bedded in, Marty took a week off work to look for a suitable vehicle. He always intended to do his own conversion and upgrade work and so the builder's van with 150,000 miles



on the clock he tracked down was just the ticket. Other retired commercial T5's of a similar age had far more miles and also Marty wanted to be picky about the engine. He ended up with a 2.5 Diesel - "A man's engine" is how the extremely affable and quite talkative Marty described it.

Marty gave me the full £10 tour of the vehicle to which he has done so much it could fill an entire magazine. The bonnet has been seamlessly modified for instance and a front bumper and grille from a Caravelle fitted to give the front-end a "bad boy" look. The front has also had the VW badge removed to add further mystery. But, Driving Sounds is a car audio magazine and I am therefore compelled to focus on this aspect of the many upgrades he has undertaken.

As the van is not Marty's daily driver, he was in the luxurious position of being able to completely strip the vehicle out in order to treat all accessible panels with Skinz sound deadening. For added noise suppression as well as much needed thermal insulation, the vehicle was also plastered in Skinz 6mm panel liner, a heavy-duty rubber membrane which makes the interior of this vehicle eerily quiet when combined with Skinz sound deadening. When it came to specifying the audio for the vehicle, Marty put many of the decisions in Stuey's capable hands. Marty told me; "I have known Stuey for many years as the company I work for always uses Accutek for radio repairs, recodes and occasional install work. As we have travelled to VW meets together on numerous occasions, he knows all about my musical taste; heavy metal influenced, 80's hard rock. Stuey isn't a big fan, but I completely trusted him to work to my budget and deliver a system that would excite me! He recommended a Hertz install with an Alpine double-DIN head unit to drive it. The audio in this vehicle as standard is absolutely diabolical and the standard single-DIN head unit feels cheap and nasty!"



I knew Stuey had a well-used method of accommodating a Double-DIN unit in the dash-board as it is a hot topic of conversation on forums and at owners' meetings.

"I have heard many of Stuey's installs and really like the punch and energy of Hertz amplifiers and speakers and was delighted when Stuey presented a system design based around HCP amplifiers, High Energy components and Energy for the rear tailgate. I made one modification to his plan. He originally designed the bass around a single High Energy 10" subwoofer but I wanted loads of bass so I doubled the number of subs and added an extra amplifier so I have dedicated monoblocks driving each subwoofer."

It would be remiss of me to completely overlook some of the many impressive styling and equipment notes that have been added to the vehicle. The BBS alloy wheels have Kawasaki Lime green centres. This is picked up on a vinyl coach line that runs along both sides low down and incorporates a VW logo. The roof has also been sprayed by Marty's own fair hand in the same colour, which explained the green hue that adorned the ceiling of Accutek's spotless workshop. The rear bumper and light clusters have been changed while the internal kitchen and storage cabinets

**"The balance across the entire frequency range was impeccable and the dynamics were outstanding"**

were a bargain ebay purchase which once again, Marty installed with a little help from his father. The bed is a triumph of engineering. Marty wanted a rear facing bench seat he could recline on while reflecting on whatever view he has when parked-up. This cunningly lies down flat and becomes part of the expansive double bed. The front-facing bench seat in the rear is engineered around a heavy-duty steel frame. The subwoofer enclosure takes up all of the space underneath and the vanity panel in front tips a nod to the famous Hertz "H". While installing this aspect of the build, Marty decided that he would need some help to actually pull the bed into shape and put it away in the morning and so he sourced a cunning hydraulic ram. However, this meant Stuey had to radically modify the bass enclosure to accommodate it. This is a bigger job than you might imagine as the enclosure is built to exact air capacity

requirements in order to get the best out of the subwoofers. Stuey is the type of seasoned professional who would not even raise an ironic eyebrow at this modification and the result certainly looks the business and works very well as you can see in the video footage that accompanies this article (scan QR code at the foot of this article).

Due to the generous amounts of sound deadening and panel liner, the quiet interior, despite being quite voluminous, is relatively easy to fill with sound. The HCP 4 runs both the Hertz High energy 6.5" component speakers in the front factory positions and the Hertz Energy coaxial pair mounted in the tailgate. I was slightly worried looking at the detail of the install, that bass would overwhelm the whole vehicle. After all, each of the Hertz HCP 1D monoblocks will run at 320 Watts RMS all day and Marty had employed two of these class D beasts to run the formidable 10" High Energy subwoofers. The HCP 4 runs at 55 Watts RMS per channel into 4 Ohms and although sub bass is always much more power hungry than full-range there did seem to be a specification imbalance.

I climbed into the drivers seat in front of the Golf MK IV steering wheel that has been recovered and hand stitched by Marty's dad. I could have sat in the passenger seat, as the system has been set up for two seat listening. I always like to get a flavour of the kind of music a system is used to playing and so I enjoyed a three-minute burst of the title track of "Infest" by Papa Roach. I think this could be described as "heavy" however at low level it sounded pretty well-balanced and I felt I could hear everything. I turned the level up and as I suspected, the sub bass began to overwhelm the other elements of the track. I threw on "Cinnamon Girl" from Neil Young and Crazy Horse's "Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere" album. In its day, this was considered to be pretty heavy however, the sounds are comparatively raw and natural rather than the heavily produced guitars found in modern heavy music. In fact, I happen to know that Cinnamon Girl was essentially recorded live with just a few vocal overdubs added. Again, at high-level the sub bass seemed to swamp the bass and mid frequencies and so a quick look at the settings on the head unit led to some rather coarse adjustment of subwoofer level and invoking of the "flat" eq curve. Important to remember that during my test the vehicle was stationary. Once tweaked appropriately, I could better appreciate the attack that I was expecting. The image was a little confused though so I switched off the rear speakers and hi-fi was once again restored!

I wondered how the system would handle a lighter track and reached for Ed Sheeran's, "Thinking Out Loud". The naked guitar at the beginning is layered with expansive, lush reverb and every nuance was articulated with outstanding accuracy. This is a large vehicle and without a sound processor other than that built into the Alpine head unit, establishing a solid sound stage was always going to be a tough ask. It is achieved really well here. Finally, I tried "Naïve Melody" a Talking Heads track from the "Stop Making Sense" album. This ticked all of the boxes and won out as the best thing I listened to in this vehicle. The balance across the entire frequency range was impeccable and the dynamics were outstanding. It is extremely hard to balance a system to this degree without sophisticated sound processing but I think a combination of excellent sound treatment mixed with the exuberant performance of the Hertz equipment coupled with Stuey's expert skills has given Marty a hugely exciting system that handles many musical genres and will expand his listening tastes. He has already professed his appreciation of Stevie Wonder alongside a number of other artists you wouldn't find at a "Monsters of Rock" festival – Keep it up Marty! □

**CONTACT Accutek:**  
01962 886900, [www.accutek.co.uk](http://www.accutek.co.uk)



Scan the QR code to bring this article to life!



**Copperhead Road**  
Steve Earle

**Follow You Follow Me**  
Genesis

**Fortunate Son**  
Creedence Clearwater Revival

**Estranged**  
Guns N Roses

**Nothing But A Good Time**  
Poison