

Press Release

Sep 18, 2003 | ID: 1042

Volvo S60 R: Unique performance car unveiled in Paris

For immediate release

World gets first look at active chassis "Four-C" technology

The new Volvo S60 R, a limited-production, high-performance sedan inspired by the technology and performance of Volvo's renowned Performance Concept Car, had its world premiere Sept. 26 at the Paris Auto Show.

As well as inheriting the dramatic good looks of the Performance Concept Car (PCC), the S60 R also adopts most of the technology, including one of the world's most advanced active suspension systems, a 300-horsepower, turbocharged engine, 6-speed manual gearbox and an electronically controlled all-wheel-drive system.

A V70 R wagon, also PCC inspired, was unveiled at the same time.

Volvo is billing the new S60 R and V70 R as true performance cars, designed for the ultimate driving experience without compromising the intelligent functionality that is the hallmark of Volvo.

"In the R car, you can feel like a racing driver, but you don't have to be one to control it," says Hans Nilsson, Car Line Manager R, Volvo Car Corporation.

Topping the S60 R and V70 R's list of technological breakthroughs is what is probably the world's most advanced active performance chassis with Four-C Technology (Continuously Controlled Chassis Concept). Four-C allows Volvo's R cars to offer both the uncompromising road holding of the extreme sports car with the comfort essential in a family car.

Four-C differs from other chassis concepts in its ability to process enormous amounts of information from sensors throughout the chassis. The sensors send signals to the microprocessor in Four-C, which computes the motions of the car and adjusts the stiffness of the shock absorbers so that the car is always parallel to the road surface.

The shock absorbers are updated with new information 500 times a second. This is made possible by a totally new technology, the first in the world of cars, developed jointly with Öhlins Racing AB, one of the world's leading developers of high-tech shock absorber systems, and shock absorber manufacturer Monroe.

The driver, too, has considerable control over how his or her R car will handle. With just the touch of a finger, the driver has three chassis-setting options available through three control buttons in the middle of the instrument panel - Comfort, Sport and Advanced Sport.

In the Sport setting, which is also the default setting, the chassis is optimized for ordinary driving on winding roads and at high speeds. In this setting, the R-chassis will offer the driver a well-balanced mix of driving pleasure, body control and travelling comfort.

Pressing the Comfort button increases the softness of the chassis and insulates the body from

irregularities in the road. This is the ideal setting for urban traffic and the family holiday. It is especially adept at handling slippery surfaces, where a "softer" car is easier to drive and more compliant.

When the driver presses the Advanced Sport button, the Volvo S60 R or V70 R is transformed into a pure sports car. The chassis is optimized for maximum road holding in all situations, including the racetrack.

The R cars' electronically controlled all-wheel drive (AWD) system works in concert with the Four-C suspension to optimize road holding and stability. With its extremely short engagement and disengagement time, the AWD system can react immediately to the throttle position and the torque of the engine.

Under the hood lurks the most powerful engine in the Volvo range. The five-cylinder, 2.5-litre, in-line turbocharged engine pumps out 300 horsepower (220 kW) at 5200 rpm and 295 ft.-lbs. of torque at 1950 rpm. Top speed is electronically limited to 250 km/h and the S60 R accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 5.7 seconds with a manual gearbox (V70 R 5.9 seconds).

The new six-speed manual gearbox was developed to handle the high torque delivered by the engine. Gearshift travel is short, making for fast, positive changes.

The five-speed Geartronic automatic transmission offers the best of both worlds: the gearbox takes care of all gear changes completely automatically; or the driver can change gears manually, but without a clutch.

The automatic transmission is also adaptive. In other words, it monitors the driver's driving style and adapts the gear-changing pattern accordingly. It also has a "Sport" mode selector in which the automatic transmission changes gears at a higher speed and downshifts faster.

As for emissions, the R-engine satisfies the American LEV I requirements and conforms to the European Euro 4 standard.

The brakes of the Volvo S60 R employ four-piston aluminum Brembo brake calipers on 330 mm discs, stopping the car from 100 km/h in a distance of 36 metres.

The styling of the new cars represents a subtle change in Volvo's tradition when it comes to performance-car design.

"The previous R models' major signatures were their colour and their wheels. Changes to the body, however, were limited," says Peter Horbury, Executive Director of Design, Premier Automotive Group (PAG). "This time, we have increased the differentiation by giving both cars a totally new front. Compared to the Volvo S60 and Volvo V70, the new R cars are distinctive enough to radiate the exclusive sportiness of these performance cars."

The R cars feature an aerodynamically tuned front. The grille has a frame in satin silver, the spoiler has been extended and the lower air intake is larger to provide increased airflow and more efficient cooling.

At the back, the Volvo S60 R has a thin spoiler, expressing very clearly that the R concept philosophy is all about optimization.

"The spoiler on the S60 R is just the right size to give minimized rear-end lift in this car. We don't believe in adding enormous pieces of plastic just to signal that we can build fast cars," Horbury says.

The interior is designed to radiate exclusive sportiness - and the driver is firmly in focus. The sport seats have increased side support. They are available in three colours: Dark Blue, Gold Beige and Aniline Leather, all with unique stitching. The leather carries a strong visual link with Scandinavian furniture design.

Scheduled to start production in early 2003, the S60 R will be built at Volvo Car's factory in Ghent, Belgium. Volumes will be limited. The V70 R will be built at the Torslanda plant in Sweden. Prices have not been announced.

Volvo expects to sell 7,000 R cars a year, and the five largest markets are the United States, the

United Kingdom, Germany, Japan and Sweden.

Volvo Cars of Canada is part of the Volvo Car Corporation of Göteborg, Sweden. The company provides marketing, sales, parts, service, technology and training support to the 43 Volvo automobile retailers across the country. The 2003 Volvo automobile line includes the flagship S80 luxury sedan, new XC90 sport utility vehicle, versatile V70 wagon and rugged XC70, exotic C70 convertible, the sporty S60 sedan and compact S40 and V40 models.

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Photos: Digital images of the Volvo S60 R are available on the Volvo PR website below. Photos will also be supplied by Cathy Cole at (905) 331-5875 or cathy.cole@sympatico.ca.

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09/02

Keywords:

Old S60, V70 (2007), Press Releases, 2002, 2003, 2004, Product News

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