

Tyre and suspension changes key to improved cornering speeds



ROAD VERSUS MODIFIED

The difference between a road car and a modified track car may not be immediately obvious – until you drive them both. And that, says Edd Straw, is RSRNurburg's USP

Ever wondered how different the kind of off-the-shelf production car you drive every day to work or on the school run differs from a real track car? You may be surprised at just how far apart two similar-looking cars can be. That's exactly the premise behind RSRNurburg's 'Standard vs. Modified' track-day packages – albeit using cars that are at the 'hot' end of the day-to-day-use scale to start with.

Nurburgring-based RSRNurburg, which can trace its roots back to 1995, specialises in track days. Run by experienced racer and test driver Ron Simons, the racing school has operated since 2002.

It's at another legendary circuit, Spa-Francorchamps, that individual customers

or corporate groups have the chance to compare a production car with an upgraded version. For those wanting something a little less racy, there's also the chance to do the back-to-back test on public roads.

The premise is simple: six laps behind the wheel of the standard car, then six in the modified machine. Those taking the road option get up to three hours behind the wheel, but at a rather more sedate pace.

The improvement simply from a better set of tyres and high-specification suspension will come as a surprise to those without track or high-performance driving experience. With so much road-car focus on straightline speed and acceleration, it's actually in the corners where laptime can really be found

in a way that the driver can enjoy.

"When you look at an exhaust, you don't hear it," says Simons. "When you look at a spring or a shock, you can't get excited about it no matter how nice and shiny it looks – you have to test them to understand them.

"All these things that you can buy mean nothing until you can test them. And what's even better is if you test them back to back with the standard car. That's the whole idea behind this."

Taking the BMW M3 as an example, the switch to the modified version improves lap times by several seconds, with suspension, wheels and cut-slick tyres among the upgrades – as well as an Akrapovic exhaust that helps the engine breathe a little easier, increases