

Less truly is more in GT supercharger

by Mark_Maynard

If 306 horsepower isn't enough for your Nissan 350Z, Infiniti G35 coupe or FX35 crossover, how about 354?

HKS USA Inc. has engineered a bolt-on supercharger that adds 48.3 horsepower to Nissan's 3.5-liter V-6. The compact unit is more powerful, smaller, lighter and quieter than traditional blower designs.

SUPER, CHARGED - The HKS USA supercharger design is more powerful, smaller, lighter and quieter than traditional blower designs. Initial applications are for the Nissan-Infiniti 3.5 liter V-6 engine. CNS Photo. The HKS GT Supercharger is a centrifugal system with torque response traction drive rather than the typical gear-driven superchargers. The belt-driven design allows more pulley revolutions per compressor-wheel revolutions. It uses rollers instead of gears, or twin screws to eliminate the gear noise common in the other designs. And even if the belt breaks, the engine still works.

The compact size of the supercharger makes it possible to be mounted without modifications to the engine bay, HKS USA President Rick Lafferty said.

Initial applications are for Nissan and Infiniti, but other applications will follow, the company said. And a motor-sports-only GT Supercharger Pro Kit is in development.

The complete GT Supercharger kit is \$6,495, which includes all parts for installation, an HKS engine management program and a one-year limited warranty. For maximum power ratings, the company recommends the HKS Dual Hi-Power Ti exhaust system, which costs \$1,795.

Kits will be sold only through select HKS-authorized installers and HKS certified pro dealers.

HKS USA is celebrating its 35th anniversary this month.

Information: hksusa.com.

TOYO NO. 1

Toyo Tires has again been ranked the No. 1 overall brand for consumer and commercial tires in Tire Review magazine's annual Tire Brand Study of North American tire dealers.

The survey, conducted by Babcox Research for 15 years, measures dealer opinions and perceptions about the brands they carry and sell.

Toyo has received top honors seven of the past eight years for consumer products (passenger, performance and light truck/SUV) and four of six years for commercial products (medium truck).

Other categories in which Toyo was ranked first include sales reps, merchandising support and adjustment policy.

Information: toyo.com. Toyo Tires also announced a three-year deal to sponsor the Pac-10 men's basketball season and conference tournament, which will be telecasted on Fox Sports Network.

The sponsorship includes 30-second commercials televised nationally during regular season and Pacific Life Pac-10 tournament games. Additional exposure will be on-court rotational signage at the Staples Center during the tournament, in-tournament video spots and online banners at www.pac-10.org.

FIVE STARS FOR SILVERADO/SIERRA

The 2008 Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra 1500 series pickups have received the federal government's highest side-impact crash rating. They are the only full-size pickups to have earned five stars.

Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's New Car Assessment Program. Go to safercar.gov.

TREAD LIGHTLY

Yokohama Tire Corp. has launched www.ecotreadsetters.com, an online environmental social network that offers daily green news and forums, how-to guides for protecting the planet, interviews and weekly prizes, including a grand-prize eco-trip to Costa Rica.

The site doubles as a social network, like MySpace, said Fred Koplun, YTC director of marketing communications.

As an example, he said the site will be receiving online reports from four recent college grads making a 40,000-mile road trip from southern California to the tip of South America to promote green living and a sustainable lifestyle.

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