

I IS FOR I4

Get even more from the RS2000's powerplant.

Words: Stewart Sanderson

When produced: 1991-1996

Found in: Escort RS2000

Capacity: 1998cc

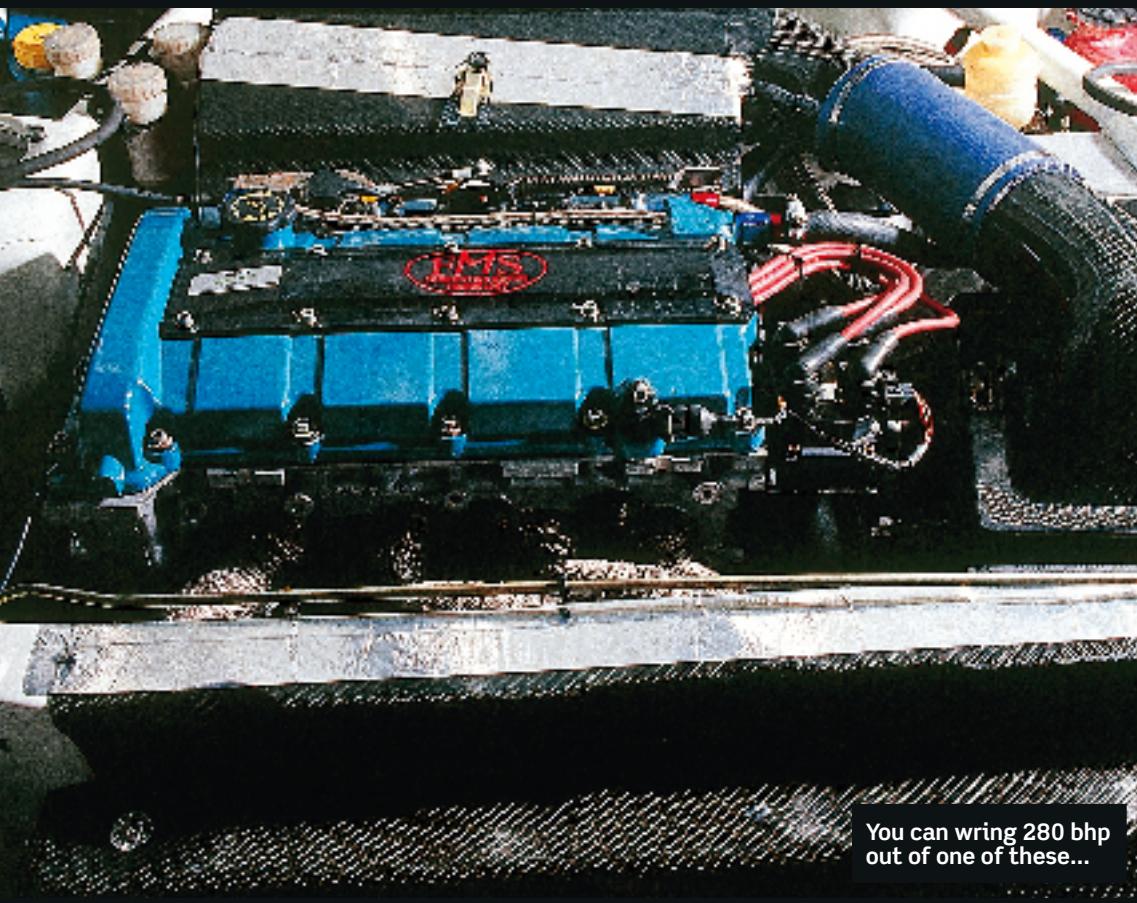
Layout: four-cylinder, double overhead camshafts, 16 valves with hydraulic actuation

Power output: 150 bhp

Good points: the cylinder head flows very well on the I4 engine, but its port sizes and shapes are aimed primarily at mid-range torque. The crankshaft and block

are very strong indeed and the valvetrain is driven by a chain, which is good both for longevity and running costs

Bad points: a distinct lack of tuning available for it!



You can wring 280 bhp out of one of these...

TUNING

Not an engine that has had a great deal of following where tuning is concerned, and this is largely due to the fact it wasn't fitted to many models and so are quite rare. However, as with all fast Fords, it can be made a little faster.

STAGE 1

The normal chip, air filter and exhaust are the best starting points here, with this combination normally seeing you with around 10 bhp. **Cost: £600**

STAGE 2

Removing the air pulse system from the exhaust manifold and adding a pair of Fast Road camshafts is the next popular stage and is worth around another 10 bhp. **Cost: £190**

STAGE 3

Removing the standard inlet system and bolting on throttle bodies is a popular next step and will free the engine up to release around 200 bhp. **Cost: £2000**

STAGE 4

Removing and fitting or rebuilding the engine as a 2.3-litre unit as seen in the Ford Galaxy is a conversion getting more and more popular nowadays and will reward you with a lot more mid-range torque. **Cost: £600**

STAGE 5

Over 300 bhp is available if you want to go the turbocharged route, but beware as it is not a cheap engine to turbo charge properly as you need to strip and decompress the bottom end by adding good quality forged pistons, fabricate an exhaust manifold that will take a turbocharger, buy new management and have it all mapped safely so it doesn't destroy itself. But the rewards can be worthwhile. **Cost: £4000**

J IS FOR JAPAN

Don't knock it 'till you've tried it.

There's more to the Japanese tuning scene than Fast & Furious-style spoilers and graphics. And while diehard fast Ford fans may begrudge the Japanese Grey Import invasion that hit our shores in the late '90s seriously challenging the Cosworth's

position as top dog, it's done more good than harm, giving us such delights as electronic boost controllers and advanced engine management systems. Plus, as the saying goes, competition improves the breed.



The Japanese love of gadgetry has filtered through to the fast Ford world