



Zündfolge

February 1994



***BMW Buys
Rover Group***

***More on the
American M3***

***Interview with
Pischetsrieder***

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Cover:
The BMW M3
Convertible.

Zündfolge

Volume 24 Number 2 February 1994

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Boilerplate

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Calendar

February 27 Deadline for March *Zundfolge*.

March 3 Board Meeting hosted by Greg Mierz.

March 6 **Ski Day** at Crystal Mountain. See the article in last month's *Zundfolge*. Call Dan Alvis at 582-0803 for more information. Another registration form is in this issue.

May 28 **Swap Meet and Go-Kart Day** at Pt. Defiance Park in Tacoma. Load up that extra stuff in the garage you need to get rid of.

July 31 **Concours d'Elegance** at Columbia Winery in Woodinville. Put this on your long-range calendar.

BMW ACA events are partially supported by a generous grant from BMW of North America, Inc.

1994 Driving Events

By Dan Alvis

Greetings, what a nice sunny day! (At least some of you will see sunshine the day you read this.) Well, on nice days like this my mind tends to wander to the wanting ways of the track and track events. As one of my good friends often repeats (every time I talk to him), "I need a race." Now you may not share our enthusiasm for the high speed drama of racing but I'm sure most of you enjoy driving . . . I mean really driving your car. Feeling the suspension working the tires talking the engine roaring all with a synergy of man and machine which is almost poetic. After it is over there is a satisfying warm feeling of triumph and joy from knowing you own a car designed for just such occasions and you have aspired to a level of driving expertise that symbolizes control. Well you might have guessed that it is time to start planning for the club track events.

This year the club has scheduled four track days. June 1st a Wednesday nighter, July 6th a Wednesday nighter, Sunday August 14th all day drivers school, and August 24th a Wednesday nighter. All these events will be at Seattle International Raceway. However these are not your only opportunities to explore your driving bravado. The Portland area Chapter BMW ACA has several dates scheduled at Portland International Raceway. The days are as follows: March 5th, June 4th (all club day), October 22nd and November 12th. The cost of the Portland events are a mere \$50 and an additional \$10 for a second driver. Contact the Portland Chapter at 503-284-0530. Now this is still not all there is. If you still need more dates to narrow the tread life of your tires, the International Conference of Sports Car Clubs (ICSCC) has numerous driver schools at SIR and PIR. These ICSCC schools are not unlike the BMW schools in that you can drive your own car. All you really need is a "Snell 1987" approved helmet. The dates for the SIR events are: March 12th & 19th, April 15th, June 3rd, October 8th and November 5th. By the next issue I will have the phone numbers for the ICSCC schools so you can make your reservation.

As you can see plenty of time to hone your skills. Now, let me make a suggestion. This track time is a great way to have fun and learn to be a better driver. What comes to my mind is my kids who

are now becoming drivers. I will insist that my kids go to at least two drivers schools because, what you learn there can save your life and property. What kids? You say. Well how about your wife? The object of our school and most of the BMW schools is to make a safer driver not a speed demon. Knowing when to threshold brake when to swerve, when to accelerate out of a situation, and when to sacrifice sheet metal of one car (yours) to prevent possible damage to several cars and possible injury to one or more persons are the kind of things I have taken from the schools I have attended. I plan to give back a little that I have gained by instructing at our schools.

Which brings me to my next point. Instructors! At every school we seek the help of competent drivers who have had loads of experience at the track and have attended many of the driving events themselves. This year will be no different but what we will do is have an instructor clinic to make sure we all are teaching the same thing. Not that this has ever been a problem (yah right!). But it seems to me that just because you can drive well, it does not mean you can teach someone to drive well. The point of the instructor clinic will be to insure that the person who gets in the car with you is armed with all the tools and information possible to make sure you are safe, informed and having fun (fun being the most important). Details on the time and place of the instructor clinic will be forth-coming.

iX Registry

A new special interest registry has been formed. The iX Registry is for owners of BMW 325iX automobiles and other enthusiasts who appreciate the unique capabilities of this model BMW. The registry provides members a method to exchange technical information on servicing, parts and modifications, and to share their iX driving experiences. "The iXchange" newsletter will be published periodically by the registry coordinator as material is available. Four issues of "The iXchange" cost only \$5. To join the iX Registry send a check to: Gordon Haines, 11375 E. Vassar Dr., Aurora, CO. 80014. Or call Gordon at (303) 750-9045.

Auto Gear is Outta Here, . . . Almost

A local treasure is about to be lost. *Zundfolge* advertiser Auto Gear is going out of business. It's a shame because Auto Gear stocked a huge inventory of car books, models and other good stuff. Their supply of books is getting a little thin, but they've got lots of models still. It will take a couple of months for them to liquidate their stock, but when that's gone, it's over. The only good thing is that during their liquidation sale, everything in the store is 25% off.

A couple of model BMWs are to be recommended. They have a 507 in a couple of colors, with both the top up and down, that are beautiful. They also have an E1, the little concept car, in two colors. Both models are in 1/43 scale.

- David Lightfoot

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BMW ACA; Attn. BMW Ski Day; P.O. Box 1259, Bellevue, WA 98009.



Stalls

by Thomas B. Nast

Rover Reporting

By now you should have heard about the Rover purchase by BMW, for a reported 800 million pounds. Rover is the largest producer of Japanese cars in Europe, in particular Honda, which owns 20% of Rover and is saying at press time that it does not want to sell its share, despite BMW buying the other 80% from British Aerospace. (Honda offered to buy another 27.5% before the BMW deal was concluded.) No doubt you remember Sterling, the Rover iteration of the Legend imported here, which was widely praised for its lavish use of leather (but for little else).

Rover has a long tradition, much of which involves tall radiators, tall skinny wheels, running boards, wooden floors and other features against which we successfully rebelled as colonists. My first exposure was to the 2000TC (b. 1964, d. 1969), which a college friend owned. Coming as I did from a German tradition, I thought this a rather eccentric car. Inboard disk brakes? Carbs with oil in them? Horizontal front coil springs running the length of the fender? A part-time electrical system? But the thing was built like a tank; it was probably one of the safest cars on the road at the time, and was surprisingly spritely.

Rover also built the 3500S (b. 1970) shortly thereafter, which used the same aluminum V-8 found in the Triumph Stag, Morgan Plus 8 and MGC GT. This engine can also be found in some '61 Buicks, as it was GM-designed and GM-tooled; GM, in yet another act of foresight for which it has become justly famous, sold the engine to British Motor Corporation (at least I think that's what it was in the early '60s, before it became British Leyland, or Jaguar Rover Triumph, Inc., or Austin Rover, Inc., or whatever it is this week. Nobody ever told them that changing the name does not necessarily improve the product). It's actually a pretty good engine, but

can't be tuned for over about 200 hp due to flexing of the engine block. The original 3500S was replaced by a swoopier hatchback model in 1980; this, too, sold about as well as Renaults in this country; I still see a BRG colored one from time to time in Pioneer Square.

Rover's current U.S. presence can be recounted briefly: the Range Rover, which is a grossly overpriced, underconstructed utility vehicle (using the aforementioned V-8) for people with too much money to be seen in a Wagoneer; and Defender (soon to be Die Fender?), which is merely an overpriced utility vehicle for people who can't afford a Range Rover, don't want to be seen in a Wagoneer and who own a set of Whitworth wrenches. No doubt these masterpieces will soon be sold by BMW dealers worldwide, solving much of the unemployment crisis, as mechanics, parts people and warranty processors are hired in flocks. If we're lucky, BMW will drop its own engines into the Rover products — this would make them more interesting, but would not solve the brake, suspension, exhaust and fit-and-finish problems.

Most interesting will be the relationship between Honda and BMW. The idea of BMW building Hondas in England under the Rover nameplate seems quite strange to me, and probably to the boys in Munich as well. This could change, but not quickly, as so much of Rover's product line is based on Honda-

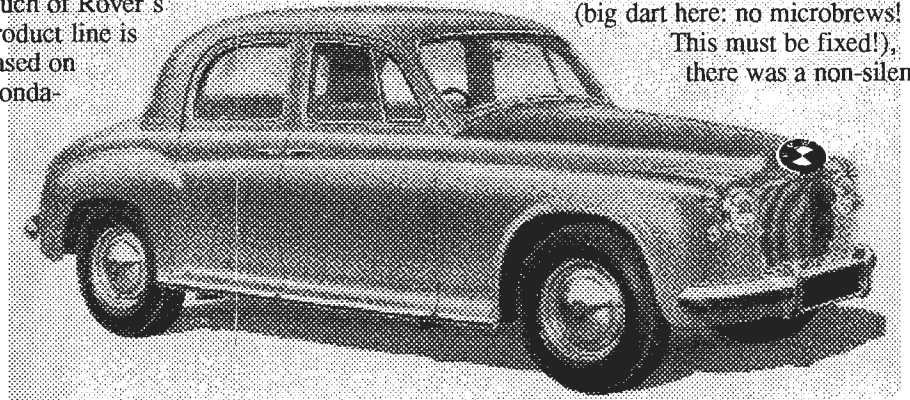
licensed vehicles. Honda may want to keep a Rover presence, as BMW could really ramp up marketing of the Honda-based vehicles on the Continent (if it wants to). Could this relationship catalyze a technology exchange between Honda and BMW? BMW seems to have just bought a big chunk of Honda technology; I'm not so sure BMW plans on transferring any back to Honda.

Looking ahead, I predict that Honda will sell its 20% share of Rover, either to BMW or someone else. I will also go on record that the American-built BMWs will eventually be brought into England, either as BMWs or as Rovers, where they will be well received. I will not predict the future course of the Rover line, though BMW certainly made decisions on this before acquiring the company. The last enigma is whether BMW is still interested in buying Rolls Royce. It would be quite a complement to the Rover purchase.

Banquet

About four or five years passed since I last went to a club banquet; but I was promised that banquets are now organized to the point that if you prepay, you actually have a seat at table, and such was indeed the case. An auspicious beginning.

After comparing gray hairs with fellow attendees, examining silent auction items and visiting the open bar (big dart here: no microbrews! This must be fixed!), there was a non-silent



auction. This auction featured a sound system borrowed from the Grateful Dead, who are not presently on tour. Both Jerry Garcia and I were relieved when the last autographed Danny Sullivan photo was sold, and the PA system could be returned to its rightful owner.

David Hobbs had a somewhat different view about what should be done with those Danny Sullivan photos, which he expressed from time to time, in particular before the auction, during the auction, during dinner and during his talk. It need not be repeated here. I have never been a student of the racing circuit, but Mr. Hobbs gives it the depth and detail that make it stimulating (much like Roger Angell does with baseball). Most interesting are the drivers' views on the pioneering (and often unreliable) technology in the cars, and of course the eccentricities of the other drivers and their handlers. Given sufficient wine, one gets an almost anatomical view of the sport from Mr. Hobbs.

He did drive against virtually all the greats of his era, though some, like Jackie Stewart, moved on to Formula One and out of Mr. Hobb's circuit. It was surprising that we did not hear of Mr. Stewart during the talk (I asked about him afterward); and I remain curious whether Mr. Hobbs knows Nick Mason, the Pink Floyd drummer who is a devoted motorhead in the Midlands.

The banquet was a success. Next year, keep some microbrews on tap and turn down the sound about 20 db and the makings of perfection are there. Nominations are being taken for next year's speaker (leave me out of it); if either of my readers has a suggestion, let the board know. I'd vote for Nick Mason, but his sound system is even louder than the Dead's.

Welcome New Members

Dick Brown Strictly BMW
('85 M6; '79 528i)
Hector Beltran ('87 325i)
Mark & Michelle Potvin BMW Seattle
('86 635 CSi)
Mark Lakefish ('81 528i) Autosport
Mel Taylor ('85 735i)
Brian & Lori Richards BMW Seattle
('93 525i)
Jason West ('76 2002)
Alex Spearman ('91 325ic)
Arnold Thurston BMW Seattle
('77 630CSi)

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Zundfolge Changes

You'll note we have modified our *Zundfolge* format this issue. The previous format was designed in 1986 by member Jim Peacock. It was time for a change, although it's not a big one.

Our goals were to keep the readability while updating the design. We hope you like it.

The catalyst for the change was Sam Riser who made a number of suggestions. Input was made by all the magazine staff. Final design was done by Bill Linder and Dave Lightfoot.

We will continue to make changes; this is not a static publication. In fact, we're plotting other changes right now. Stay tuned.

- The Editors

BMW AG Plans to Purchase Rover Group Holdings Ltd.

BMW AG announced that it has made a purchase offer to British Aerospace plc, London for their 100% share in Rover Group Holdings Ltd. An agreement to this effect indicates a purchase price of \$1.2 billion. The document was signed by BMW and British Aerospace on January 29, 1994. The Board of British Aerospace has advised its shareholders to approve this transaction.

Rover Group Holdings Ltd holds 80% of the shares in Rover Cars, Birmingham, and the rights in various marques with a long tradition, including Rover, Land Rover, MG, Triumph, and Austin. The Group also holds 20% of the shares in Honda UK Manufacturing Ltd. Honda Motor Europe Ltd, in turn, holds 20% of Rover Cars. In 1993, Rover Cars produced and sold 430,000 automobiles and employed 33,000 persons worldwide. Together BMW and the Rover Group's sales amount to some 1 million automobiles and more than 100,000 employees.

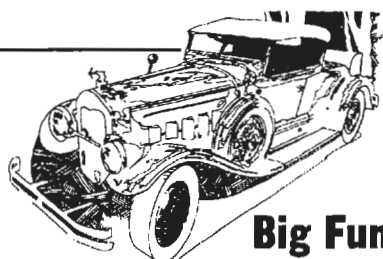
Commenting on the bid in London, Bernd Pischetsrieder, Chairman of the Board of BMW AG, noted: "The Rover and BMW model ranges complement each other well. Our differing regional

strengths provide a powerful synergy. Now it is our objective to guide two independent and strong automobile manufacturers on a common route in a competitive world market." He added: "Building on the long heritage of both companies, we are laying the cornerstone for an even more successful future for both partners in the international market."

Dr. Helmut Panke, Chairman and CEO of BMW (US) Holding Corp. asserted: "BMW's acquisition of the Rover Group will not change existing plans for, nor products to be manufactured in, our U.S. plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Plant construction and the hiring of production associates continues to be on schedule. The first BMWs made in Spartanburg and destined for world markets will roll off the line later this year."

BMW AG also reported that Rover Cars will fulfill its contractual obligations with existing partners. Accordingly, Rover Cars will continue to build automobiles in Great Britain in cooperation with Honda.

- BMW NA Press Release



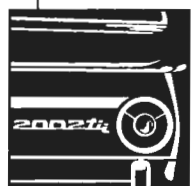
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AN INTERVIEW WITH BMW CEO BERND PISCHESTRIEDER

Q) BMW is faring quite well during the current auto sales crisis. How has this been achieved?

A) A business is like a hot air balloon, it grows in diameter. The antidote is a lean management and the method is to control this growth so that only "value added" items are kept, all others pushed back.

Q) Except for the Japanese, is the biggest challenge to reduce the time it takes to produce a car?

A) In our U.S. factory we forecast using even more direct work hours per car than in a comparable German factory, even so our manufacturing costs will be less due to fewer employees and much greater flexibility.

Q) What have you learned from the Japanese?

A) We have studied Japanese manufacturing in the U.S. for five years and found that the comparable costs are only half as high as in Munich. Based on these most important findings, we began to build our American factory immediately.

Q) What are the 50% reduction in costs attributed to, wages or?

A) A third is due to the cost of doing business in Germany. An additional third is due to the influence of a better work organization. The last third is that we will have the flexibility to build many model variations, "Individual" cars, unlike the Japanese who only build two variations.

Q) For these "Individual" cars you can charge higher prices from your customers?

A) True.

Q) Toyota is currently reducing their model variety. Why is BMW going the other way?

A) It is BMW's philosophy that BMW builds cars to the wishes of the customer, naturally we could save considerably if we built cars like Henry Ford — one model and one color.

Q) Are the Koreans a threat?

A) The Koreans are like the Japanese were in the past. The home market is isolated from competitors to determine a baseline for costs/profits/techniques.

Then they pursue the world market. I don't think this will work for them, considering the lessons we've learned from the past.

Q) You are pursuing a small 3-series hatchback in the VW Golf class and are thinking about a sub-compact.

Will BMW become a mass producer?

A) BMW will never be a mass producer. Our 3-series hatchback is not in the same market as the Golf — it is simply the same size as a Golf; in comfort and safety, it is in another class.

Q) The price will be in the same range as the Golf?

A) No — we'd have to build 2500 - 4000 cars a day. It will be only a fraction of that.



BMW CEO Bernd Pischetsrieder, 45.

Q) Will the E1 be coming in addition to the hatch?

A) If we decide to build it, there will be even fewer built. (Than 3-series hatch).

Q) What role do emotions play for BMW's business?

A) BMW sees itself as in a very emotional business. But we must also give objective criteria to our customers so as not to only buy a car to impress the neighbors. With emotions alone you can't sell cars, but without emotions there wouldn't be a BMW.

Q) Do you believe that people will believe that driving a car will be "fun" in the future again?

A) I believe this will come again.

Q) On what grounds do you base this?

A) I believe a large portion of the population has a hedonistic instead of a calvinistic "vein" in their body.

Q) Is the current movement towards small cars with BMW and Mercedes a "blind alley" you're getting into?

A) Cars have to get smaller. The pursuers of this, that really believe in it, will see their "dream" come true. In order to achieve an efficient, ideal car we don't have to drive a "sheet metal box" and sacrifice comfort and safety.

Q) Will you offer something like this from BMW?

A) We have to offer something with the same comfort/security as the current 5-series, but in a smaller size. That's the gap in the market.

Q) Does this mean that an E1 has the same passive security/safety as a large car?

A) Yes — if this wouldn't be possible, we wouldn't offer it. It's very complicated and costly, but possible.

Q) Will BMW, like Mercedes go back to Formula 1 racing?

A) We've been thinking it over ever since we got out, about 10 years. But in the near future we don't see it. We have to consider this and it's possible in the future. Motorsports belongs to the BMW image.

Q) Why don't you get into Formula 1 immediately?

A) We can't spend 150 million marks on motorsports and at the same time tell our workers we have to save money.

Q) Is Indy car racing in the U.S. a possibility now that BMW has a U.S. plant?

A) No possibility.

Q) What about a return to the German touring car championship?

A) We will be running in the class II (2.0 liter) of the series.

- Auto Motor und Sport

(Thanks to Andy Kueblbeck for providing the translation from German on this article.)

THE SECOND GENERATION M3 MAKES U.S. DEBUT

by David Lightfoot

As previously reported in *Zundfolge*, the U.S. will get its own version of the M3. The U.S. spec M3 debuted at the 1994 North American Auto Show in Detroit in January.

This was also the debut of BMW M, the subsidiary formerly called BMW Motorsport. Motorsport becomes a division of BMW M. The renaming of the company indicates a broadening of company scope. Another division of BMW M will provide BMW Individual models. These are specially equipped and finished cars.

BMW sees the new M3 as a cross between the old M3 and the old M6.

Individual cars will be built in both Germany and in South Carolina. The new factory's flexibility will allow Individual cars to be built on the production line.

The original M3 was offered from 1988 through 1991. At its heart was the 2.3 liter, DOHC engine derived from the old Formula 1 racing engine. It also featured a stiff suspension, by factory standards, and boy

racer looks.

During the same era, BMW offered the M6. The M6 was much more refined, sophisticated — and expensive. BMW sees the new M3 as a cross between the old M3 and the old M6.

The new M3 is, of course, based on the 325is coupe. This is quite a base to begin from. The 325is is generally recognized as one of the world's best cars. The base 325is already begins with a DOHC engine, four valves per cylinder and variable valve timing. Power output is close to the original M3.

The European M3 features an induction system with an individual throttle for each of the six cylinders. This boosts power primarily at very high speeds and combined with much hand assembly, is very expensive. BMW M decided to develop a special engine for the U.S. that would hold the cost down and "deliver true BMW M performance in the context of U.S. driving conditions."

The engine's displacement goes from 2.5 liters to 3.0 liters by way of a 2 mm increase in bore and 10.8 mm increase in stroke. The increased stroke provides plenty of torque. To increase top end power, the variable valve timing gear of the 325i is

tweaked. The final change is a new approach to rpm limiting first used in the 850CSi. The rev limiter allows higher rpms in first and second gears to optimize acceleration.

Horsepower was first advertised as 235 for the U.S. M3. Actual figures have come in at 240, which is 27% higher than the 325is. Torque is 225 pounds-feet, an increase of 24%.

Acceleration, as measured by *Car & Driver*, is 0-60 mph in 6.1 seconds. This matches the old M6 and beats the old M3 by 0.8 seconds.

The U.S. M3's suspension is identical to the European car. The whole suspension system has been lowered by more than an inch and firmed up. This firming up includes recalibrated springs, new bushings, larger anti-roll bars, stronger hub carriers and revised geometry. The wheels are specific to the M3. They are larger than the 325is at 17 x 7.5 inches with a ten spoke, starlike pattern. Tires are 235/40 ZR-17. For the lunatic fringe, the aftermarket already has 18 inch wheels available for the 3-series.

All this results in skidpad cornering capability of about 1.0g. This is supercar territory and far beyond the old M3.



The 1995 M3 is the product of BMW's subsidiary, BMW M GmbH.



The original M3's racer looks were for real — the car was homologated for Group A competition.

And this car stops too. Front brake disks on the 325is are 11.3 inches and ventilated; rears are 11.0 inches and solid. The M3's disks are ventilated at all four corners and are 12.4 inches in front, 12.3 in back. The ABS system is revised.

Even the steering was revised by BMW M. Two approaches were combined: **variable assist** which provide more low-speed assist to help with parking while not over-assisting at road speeds, and **variable ratio** which varies the ratio between steering wheel movements and road wheel movements.

The exterior changes on the new M3 are restrained and much less aggressive than

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handling, more luxury,
better acceleration, more
everything.**

the old M3. The front spoiler is the biggest change with a screened air intake. The mirrors are patterned after the racing M3 GTR's. Rocker panels are slightly revised and a rear spoiler is optional. Subtle M badges are sprinkled over the exterior.

M-car identification is found in the interior on the seats, steering wheel and instruments. Special sports seats use the same Nappa leather found on the 7 and 8-series. A no cost option is to order special

M3 cloth (in BMW M colors) and Amaretta suede in place of the standard leather.

The M3 has all the usual BMW features that we may take for granted, but are still remarkable. Just a few of the features are windshield wipers that vary with vehicle speed, a new anti-theft system, microfilter ventilation, and antenna system with no mast (to break off) and on and on.

But the new M3's best feature is value. BMWs in general and M-cars in particular have never been great values, but this car may change that notion. The base price of \$35,800 is just about the same as the old M3. But this is four years later (it's a '95 model) and offers more of everything. More power, more handling, more luxury, better acceleration, more *everything*. It's a remarkable achievement, especially when you remember the 325is has a base price of \$32,200. That \$3,600 buys a lot.

One last item. The U.S. specific engine is suited to use of an automatic transmission, while the Euro engine is not. While many might consider an M3 with an autobox a sacrilege, keep in mind the realities of day-to-day driving in America. And of convincing the significant other about how *practical* an M3 would be. While current plans are for all M3s to come with five speeds, BMW NA has said that, "If demand is indicated, an M3 with automatic will be offered later."

M3 Convertible

The new M3 Convertible was introduced at the Brussels Motor Show in late January. Customer deliveries begin in May 1994. The price in Germany is DM 91,300, or about \$53,000.

The M3 Convertible features the usual M3 performance: 286 horsepower from a 3.0 liter six cylinder engine resulting in 0-62 mph in 6.2 seconds. This is slightly slower than the coupe since the convertible is slightly heavier. Top speed is electronically limited to 155 mph.

Of course, the owner of the M3 Convertible also enjoys the benefits of open air motoring in this very civilized machine.

Although there are no plans to bring this car to the U.S., a convertible version of the U.S. spec M3 would be a simple thing to accomplish. I'd suggest they make the pop-up rollbars standard equipment.

.....

Canadian M3

Those lucky Canadians will be getting the Euro version of the M3. Because Canada is a party to the Stockholm Agreement, and because Switzerland has already approved the M3, no further testing is needed for entry to Canada. BMW Canada, Inc. will be bringing in a handful of full Euro spec M3s.

Many of the cars will come without the usual luxury options. It seems that Canadians prefer their cars a bit more spartan. This will hold the price down somewhat.

Some Americans are already trying to figure a way to get a Canadian M3 across the 49th parallel. That 286 hp is attractive. Good luck guys. It will be tough to do — legally.

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David Hobbs Entertains at Banquet

By Tom Williams

The twinkling lights of Lake Union, Capitol Hill, and moving traffic along I-5 served as the perfect backdrop for one of the best events in recent club history: the annual banquet held at the Kayak Grill on Lake Union on January 22.

Many of those attending (138, a record) were drawn by the evening's speaker, the estimable and eloquent David Hobbs. Mr. Hobbs kept the large crowd entertained throughout the evening with his humorous stories, anecdotes, and observations on a wide variety of events, people, and places. Among the more memorable were how he first came to appreciate BMW engines (attached to a Dornier bomber flying over England during World War II) and a notable discussion with BMW Motorsport officials concerning the unruly handling on an early 320i turbo (Motorsport's position: "ze car does not haff ze rear svaybar because it does not need vun").

In response to audience questions, Hobbs offered his views on the greatest race driver of his era (Mario Andretti—Danny Sullivan fared somewhat less well in Hobbs' estimation), the best tracks (the old Nurburgring in Europe and Watkins Glen in the US, although Sears Point came in for some praise as a good driver's course) and of course, BMW's current cars (the 540i is his favorite.) By the way, for those of the round taillight persuasion, Mr. Hobbs let it be known that he knew of a certain 2002 tii for sale which could be had for a pittance. You might have to travel a bit, and the car is right-hand drive, but it is an tii, right? And one with a pedigree no less.

While Mr. Hobbs was certainly the main attraction, he was not the only one. The silent auction provided the opportunity to pick up some great items and services at good prices. The oral auction was entertaining as always. And the banquet room itself was laid out beautifully, and the aforementioned backdrop was breathtaking.

An event like this doesn't come together by accident. Al and Bea Lancaster, Mary Lee Helton, Steve Niver, David and Lucetta Lightfoot, as well as Lucetta's sister Michelle and her husband Brad all pitched in a big way when the event chair, Dan Alvis, was unable to continue when he was called

out of the country. Without the efforts of these folks, the banquet would never have been the event it turned out to be.

Thanks also to all the firms who donated items to the silent and oral auctions. A special thanks to BMW Seattle, who donated a CD player to the winner of the membership contest drawing, David Chenaar. Also, thanks to club supporters Bellevue BMW, BMW Seattle, BMW Northwest, Strictly BMW, and Exeter Detail for coming to the banquet. Last but not least, thanks to all those thoughtful folks who donated items to Northwest Harvest at the front door.

A great event; most everybody seemed to enjoy themselves immensely. Somehow, though, I don't think Mr. Hobbs will be getting on Danny Sullivan's Christmas card list anytime soon.

In response to many who asked: those fabulous macadamia nut pies in the auction were donated by Finales Gourmet Desserts in Lynnwood, 778-0606.



David Hobbs entertains the group.

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Photo of M3 Race Car

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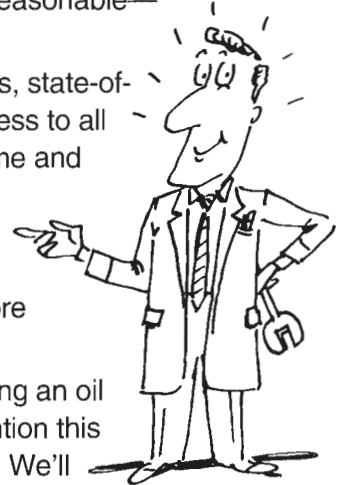
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...from the editors **formation**

The Vision Thing

Mercedes-Benz will introduce their small, urban car as a 1997 model. Based on the Vision A concept car, the car will probably become the A-Class (slotted below the C-Class with room to slip in a B-Class). The A-Class will be primarily a European vehicle but may be sold in some of the large American cities. Initial planned volume is 20,000. (*AutoWeek*)

➤ Porsche hasn't absolutely committed to building the new Boxster, but the body sourcing has been bid out and BMW's Eisenach facility won the contract. (*Sports Car International*)

➤ During the first half of 1993, BMW NA spent \$38.5 million on advertising. They were the 79th largest spender on ads in the U.S. (*AutoWeek*)

Fiat's comeback in the coupe market was penned by an American, Chris Bangle. Bangle is a graduate of the Art Center College of Design and defeated Pininfarina in a 1990 challenge for the commission. Bangle has been a designer at BMW since 1992. (*AutoWeek*)

Almost 100,000 people have applied for the first 400 jobs at the new BMW plant under construction in South Carolina. State employees are screening the applicants for BMW. The plant is scheduled to start limited production of the 3-series sedan in September. (*Road & Track*)

Mercedes-Benz has moved up the introduction of its face-lifted S-class by almost a year to beat the arrival of competitors Audi A8 and BMW 7-series, in March and May, respectively. (*AutoWeek*)

➤ Hans Riedel, who in the past has been the U.S. and European sales chief for BMW, is now executive vice president of sales at Porsche AG. (*AutoWeek*)

BMW's marketing chief has lost his board position. Under heavy pressure, Robert Buchelhofer has resigned. The leading candidates to replace him on the board are Karl Gerlinger, formerly President of BMW of North America, and Heinrich Heitmann, Sales Manager for Europe. (*Auto Motor und Sport*)

Road & Track had a comparison test of the 318is against the Honda Accord EX Coupe. Sounds absurd, but the cars are now priced about equally, and the Honda is really a fine car. The BMW won in terms of design and performance, the Honda won for comfort and value. The 318is was the overall winner.

Stinkpots

Diesels have been a way of life for decades in European countries, but it has taken BMW to get them accepted by the enthusiast crowd. The oil-burning BMW 325td and 325tds and their 5-series counterparts have had the kind of rave reviews in the British motoring press that used to be reserved for high-performance sports models.

The U.S., with cheap and plentiful gasoline, seems unlikely to share the new enthusiasm for diesels. But they said that about Britain. Five years ago, diesels had four percent of the new car market. At the end of 1993, one in five new cars sold in Britain was a diesel. Who would have thought that a buff book like *Autocar & Motor* would conclude its test of the BMW 325tds with the following: "This isn't just the best diesel car in the world but one of the best cars outright." (*Car & Driver*)

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LITER VERSIONS
OF THE EXISTING
V-8s. (CAR &
DRIVER)



The new 5-series borrows styling cues from the 3.



Automobile magazine named the 325i one of its ten All-Stars, their pick for the ten best cars in the world.

About the 3 they said, "Most cars are compromised to give you more of the stuff that pampers your body but less of the stuff that feeds your soul. The 3-series six-cylinder cars have it turned around. They are full of life, all edgy and eager—and they're not for the uncommitted in spirit or in pocketbook. And that, in a philosophical nutshell, is why we can't get enough of them—and why they're on our All-Stars list for the third consecutive year.

"The BMW brand has lifted itself out of the doldrums in the past few years, despite the iffy U.S. economy and an image hangover from the Eighties. In large part, that is because of the 3-series. And although a certain number of buyers are probably shelling out for the blau-mit-weiss nameplate for all the wrong reasons, we think the BMW reputation is now fully restored."

◆ The BMW M5 is set to gain a fire-breathing V8 in its next incarnation, according to Munich insiders. The engine will be based on the 4.0 liter unit currently residing in the 540i. But after BMW's Motorsport division has finished with it, the engine will displace 4.6 liters and horsepower will jump more than 27 percent to a whopping 360. (*AutoWeek*)

◆ BMW model collector Michael Izor is publishing a newsletter with information about miniature versions of our favorite marque. To get on the mailing list for Baby Bimmer News send \$12 to Michael Izor, 36 Winnemay St., Natick, MA. 01760. (*Roundel*)

Gateway Tech, a national BMW CCA technical event, will be held March 18, 19 and 20 this year. For information contact George Reed, 12035 Craigview, St. Louis, MO. 63146 or call (314) 997-1970.

OH, WOLFIE, YOU BITCH

AT THE TOKYO MOTOR SHOW, BMW CHIEF ENGINEER WOLFGANG REITZLE SUMMED UP HIS IMPRESSIONS: "IT WOULD BE FOOLISH EVER AGAIN TO UNDERESTIMATE THE JAPANESE. BUT THEIR TOKYO SHOW PERFORMANCE SIGNALS A SURPRISING UNCERTAINTY AND AIMLESSNESS. EVERYBODY DOES EVERYTHING, YET NOBODY DOES IT RIGHT." (*AUTOMOBILE*)

BMW has set its criteria for assembly line "associates" in South Carolina. Standards include a high school diploma, willingness to work any shift, and willingness to work in a tobacco-free environment. Starting pay is \$12 per hour with a cap of \$16. The first 45 employees have been hired. (*Roundel*)



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➤➤➤➤➤ During the Geneva Auto Show this month, we'll get the first official glimpse of the 3-series hatchback. The hatch will be built first in Germany, later in South Carolina. The 1995 model will cost about \$2200 less than the 318i four-door. One way BMW may cut costs is by using

Chrysler engines. American suppliers say BMW has contacted Chrysler about the possibility of supplying its South Carolina plant with 2.0 liter, four cylinder engines. The



The 3-series hatchback is to be unveiled at Geneva.

engines were developed for the Neon as well as for Chrysler's upcoming mid-sized coupes and the Mitsubishi Eclipse/Eagle Talon. The SOHC variant makes 130 hp, and the DOHC version is expected to deliver 140 hp. BMW is also considering the Chrysler engines for other cars it will build in the U.S.

Whether or not the deal is consummated, BMW's little hatchback is scheduled to get some serious power upgrades starting a year after its introduction. That's when a high-compression version of BMW's sixteen-valve, 1.8 liter four will give the hot hatch nearly as much performance as a 325i but for 25 percent less money. Look for the ti suffix on the tail. Next will come the tii hatchback, which will feature two versions of a brand-new four-cylinder engine. A 2.0 liter version should develop 200 hp, and a 2.3 liter will produce 225 hp. To match the new engines, the ti and tii models will have lower, tauter suspensions, mildly flared wheel arches, wider wheels and tires, special interior trim and aerodynamic body changes. (Automobile)

Here's the final version of the new 7-series.



➤➤➤➤➤ The new 7-series is to go on sale in Europe in July. Initially only the eight cylinder version will be available. Later the six and twelve cylinder models will be available. (Auto Motor and Sport)

➡ Road & Track had an article on the collector car market, and its rise (during the '80s) and fall (since). Most dramatic was the volatility of Ferrari prices, but other collectibles also were effected. The only two BMWs listed in the table were the 507 and the 1972-1974 3.0CS. The table cites the 507's peak value as \$350,000 and current value as \$150,000. The coupe hasn't changed much at all: peak value of \$12,000, current of \$11,500.

The new E39 5-series is now scheduled to make its worldwide debut in June of this year. (Roundel)

Sure wish we could teach Americans some rules of the road like they have on the Autobahn. Here, the slow drivers hang out in the left lane and the faster drivers use the virtually empty right lane. It's totally nuts! The times I've been in Germany, I really appreciated their lane discipline.

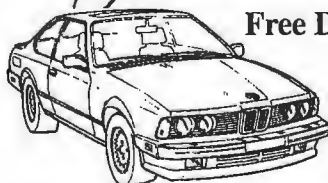
A friend of mine helped push a Mercedes about a kilometer to the closest exit from the Autobahn when it broke down, to keep from getting a fine. Drivers are expected to maintain their cars so that they don't break down on the Autobahn, or pay the consequences. Running out of gas is considered about the most stupid thing a driver can do and is punishable by an even bigger fine. These things seem funny to us, but the Autobahn really works. (The Internet)

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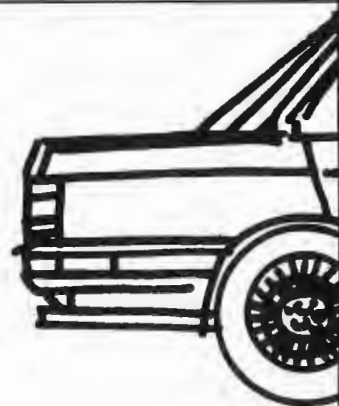
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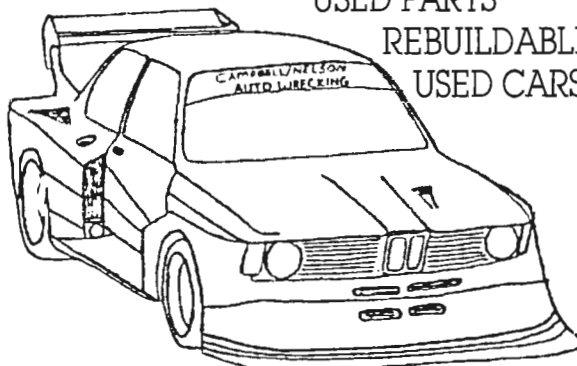
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