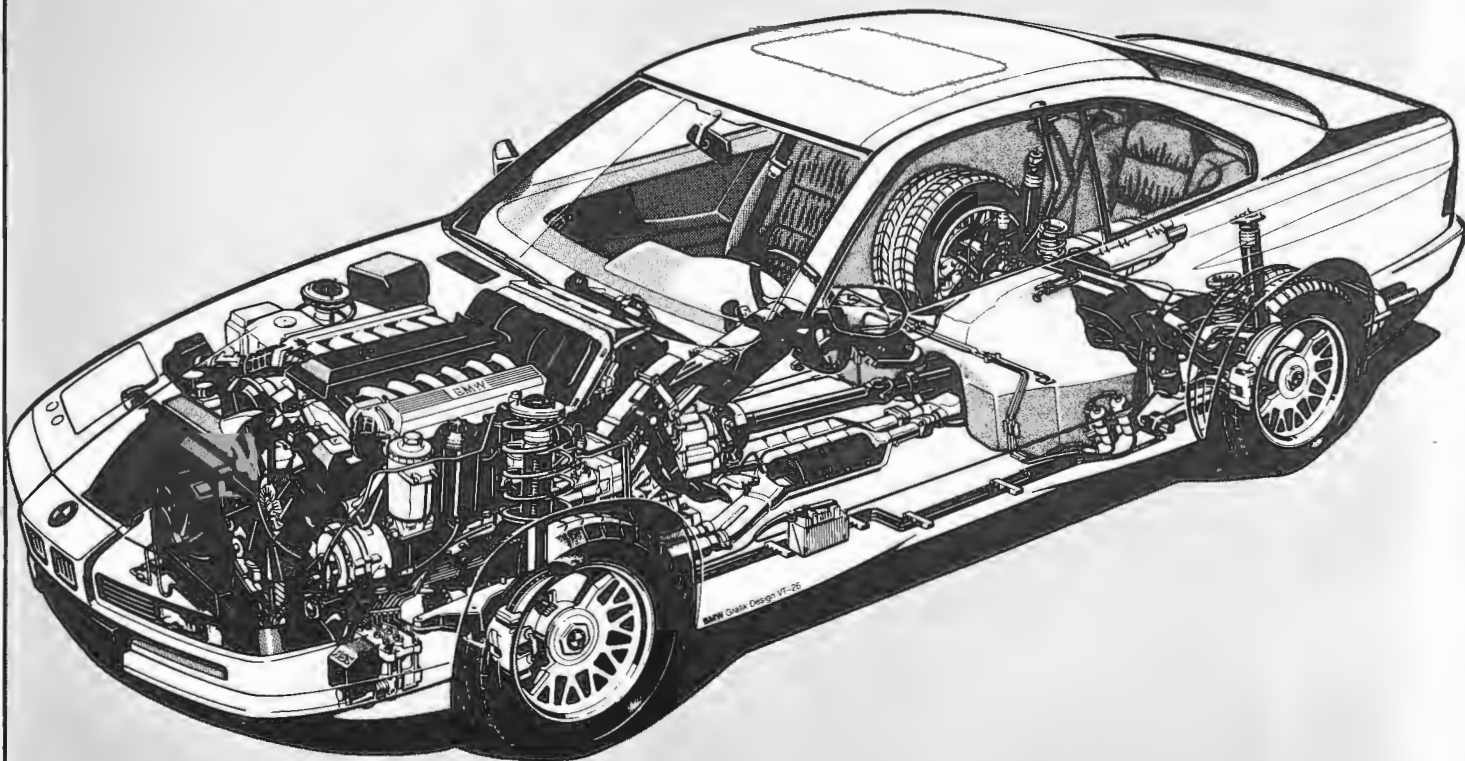


BMW ACA
Puget Sound Region

Zündfolge

January/February 1991



**New 3-Series
Introduction**

**Backfire
Debuts**

**Supercar M12
Rendering**

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Inhalt

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

The President's Corner

My name is Bill Muse, and I'm the new club president - which is another way of saying that I was the only one who was absent from the meeting at which the Board decided to appoint a new president.

That is not actually true, but it probably seemed to Tom Williams that this would be the only way his replacement could be found. I'll take this moment to thank Tom for his efforts and good work over the last three years. I'm looking forward to making an attempt at filling his shoes as president - a position I've wanted for a long time. Actually, what I REALLY wanted was to be president of IBM, or maybe Harvard - but the BMW ACA will work out just as well, I'm sure . . . maybe even better.

Let's consider for a minute the chances of IBM or Harvard being involved in a hostile takeover. Nil, right? Exactly my point. Since all of us are well aware that the presidents of organizations that get swallowed up get fired, AND they get large golden parachutes to soften their landing. Do I sense a little doubt in your belief that this is a good deal? We all want the job, we want to succeed, and want to prove that we are up to the challenge! That's good, and certainly the right thing to do, but -and this is a Big But . . . a Roseanne Barr Butt . . . it's far more lucrative to be fired *WELL*. To illustrate my point, I refer you to the 1986 Business Week chart of the highest-paid executives. The top earner for that year got \$12,729,000, which sounds like a nice piece of change for a year's work, until you consider that Michel C. Bergerac, who had been chairman of Revlon, got \$32,000,000 for hitting the bricks! That's close to three times the money for NOT working - so it's obvious to me that it pays better to not work, to be taken over and thrown out. I cancelled my subscription to Business Week at that point because they kept writing articles on how to succeed in business

-not on how to get fired. (Hell, I'll bet I know as much as Msr. Bergerac about lip gloss; I spent enough time studying it throughout my school years, f'gosh sakes!) But enough of this personal harping on what I want out of this presidency. I'll take my tongue out of my cheek and tell you what ALL of the Board wants for the club.

We are in the process of putting together the year's calendar and we have several good events and meetings planned. We're looking for more interesting ways to get *all* of the members involved in the club activities. So if any of you have some thoughts in this area, please let one of us know - we're eager to hear from you. The activity calendar should be ready for the March issue of *Zündfolge*, so now is the time to offer your suggestions. We will of course be offering the Fest Northwest with the concours and a driving event; the Victoria Tour is being planned; BMW Seattle is looking into when the new 3 Series will be available for previewing; there will be a Yakima wine tour; and a nice list of possible monthly meeting places. One of the things that I'm very excited about is our getting back into a good autocrossing series. It looks like we will be able to join with the Western Washington Sports Car Council, and take part in their events. We are also looking into the very likely possibility of a joint venture with BMW ACA Portland at PIR. This is being planned as an overnight tour, with a day at the track and a night of fun and food at a great German restaurant in Portland. And we will also have our October driving school at SIR. The annual banquet will close the year's activities, and will be the time to usher in a new Board.

So unless I can get some takeover options cooking that will at least put me in an 850 coupe, I hope to see all of you at as many of our events that you can find the time to attend this year, to thank you for this opportunity to keep

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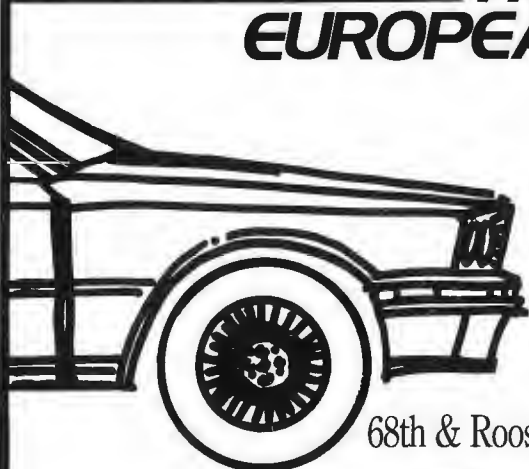
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Stalls

by Thomas B. Nast

There's No Old Saying What The Future Brings

There are many adages by which one can live ones life. My mother always told me, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Unfortunately, she never told me why catching flies is desirable, and the vinegar is very useful for cleaning the windows in my coupe.

Another old saw is, "When in Rome, do as the Romans." Presumably this means more than donning a toga, reclining and eating to the point of self-disgorgement (syrup of ipecac was not invented until the Crusades). In fact, it includes building and burning ("Rome wasn't burned in a day," or something like that).

BMW, which has suffered a drop in American sales of about a third in the past few years, might wish to observe the hoary wisdom about paying dues to customs. A few non-taxing suggestions are offered.

The most obvious (why haven't we seen this yet?) is a 3-series woody. Probably this should wait until the introduction of the station wagon version of the 3-er, the one with the vista cruiser eyebrow in the roof. Vinyl wood-grain sides and a polyethylene burl dash should catch fire like a prairie among first-time American buyers. Perhaps this would be a good time to revive the sculpted-railroad-tie look of the later 2002 bumpers, harking back to that golden era.

Celebrating world unity, a camouflage M-3 with a "Nuke the Saddamites" bumper sticker also should sell well. This would only come with the tropical package, including a Briggs & Stratton in the trunk operating an air conditioning system that actually cools the car when the outside temperature is above 70° (another BMW first).

An urban camouflage model would be a good companion to the Abrams M-3. It would come with dents, a cracked windshield, a bent antenna and a "No Radio" sign in the rear left



window. (You figure it out.) This car would offer less for more, like the Porsche Speedster. Weight savings can be realized in areas such as glass (broken out), emblems (Beastie Boys), spare tire and jack ("transferred"), sound systems ("deinstalled") and so forth. An electrically rapid-heat driver's seat is a mandatory option, however.

And how can you hope to compete without a mini-van? The 735i chassis is the obvious choice for "grosser" treatment. This vehicle will be in a class by itself, costing double of even a Ranger Rover. And at last, BMW will fulfill our fantasy of painting on the kidney grilles instead of bolting on those silly, drag-inducing, fragile and expensive pieces of molded plastic. Just like certain Asian companies now paint on the name and make of their (often otherwise indistinguishable) cars. And I, for one, look forward to what kind of hood emblem BMW will use; Chrysler has really set the standard with the midget in the engine compartment giving you the finger through a hole in the hood of each Caravan. Can BMW top this, given that Iacocca has already installed almost every available midget?

Another 7-series application will be the BMW ShortPlat. I'd put the V-12 in this stretch truck/van, aiming at folks dissatisfied with the build quality of their GM Suburbs. A major selling

point is that the excise tax to which these are subject is much less than the sales tax which applies to cars, provided you get a zoning variance before purchase. This model will really allow BMW to get into the mainstream, exploring domestic technologies once the exclusive province of Detroit, such as cup holders, white walls, crushed velvet sofas and front-and-back air conditioning systems.

The 5-series also will lend itself to some niche marketing. With just a minor sheet metal change, the La Ranchera model could be on the showroom floor. The bed should be made of the high impact plastics pioneered in the Z-1, and this would therefore be a limited production model out of the Motorsports division. This also would give Motorsports a chance to catch up on solid-rear-axle technology, an area in which it is seriously lagging. It is unclear whether the model will ship with a gun rack or whether this will be a dealer-installed option. California versions might have an optional heated swimming pool package, with airbags doubling as flotation devices.

I think we would all be willing to let bygones be bygones if BMW will build the chariots North America deserves. We will forgive the 8-series, whose main purpose seems to be to make the 6-series look good. We will forget the 318i, which was water over the bridge. We will even pass over the 530i, whose sheik consumption embraced even an analyst to care for its cracked head. There's still time to drink the local *aqua vitae*, Munchkins, but we remember that you can lead a Roman to water but that won't make him drunk. Or something like that.



A New BMW For The New Decade

by Jim Tulk

On December 9, BMW unveiled the new 3-series to America's automotive press. In a comprehensive presentation in Nime, France, they showed that BMW is no longer the builder of boxy performance sedans. The performance is still there, but boxy styling has gone the way of chrome fins and three-tone paint jobs.

The introduction of the new 3-series completes BMW's make-over of the line that started with the 7-series in '87. Along the way, they've totally redesigned the 5-series, released the Z1, dropped the V-12 in the 750, and developed the 850i. Everything they've learned in these exercises has been put into the development of the new 3.

Although it doesn't look it, the new car is $\frac{1}{4}$ " longer and 2" wider than the model currently on our streets. The wheelbase grew a whopping 5", mostly by pushing the front wheels forward. All this work has led to an ideal 50-50 weight distribution.

The basic structure is still unibody construction. Advanced design techniques allowed them to build a much stiffer unibody that doesn't weight any more than the current 3. The assembled, ready-to-drive car weighs about 175 lbs. more, which they attribute to increased bulk of accessories and sound-deadening materials.

And what accessories! The 325i (the only model the U.S. will get at first) is "accessorized" with BMW's new 2.5-liter, 24-valve, in-line six. This little stormer puts out 189 bhp @ 5900 RPM and 181 lb-ft of torque @ 4700 RPM. Mathematically, that's a 12% increase in horsepower and 10% more torque than the current engine. In the real world, it means this "family" four-door sedan is approaching the performance level of the M3.

Except for the displacement, this engine bears no kinship to the previous "baby six." The twin cams ride in their own removable holders, and are driven by a double-row chain off the crankshaft. This chain drives the exhaust cam, with another short chain off the exhaust driving the intake cam. The valves are driven directly off the cams through self-adjusting hydraulic buckets.

The top of the cylinder head sports six ignition coils, each mounted directly to its spark plug. The spark plugs are a special three-electrode design. And don't forget that intake manifold! Cast in plastic, it not only weighs almost nothing, it needs no machining on the assembly line. The end result of all this technology is an almost maintenance-free engine.

The wonderful powerplant is connected to either an automatic or 5-speed transmission. Both transmissions are new designs. The 4-speed automatic has all-new ratios and electronic controls. They are also introducing a 5-speed automatic transmission, but this will only be put in European cars. The 5-speed manual transmission features a direct drive fifth, instead of overdrive. BMW's engineers claim this reduces internal friction, increasing gas mileage.

In an apparent admission that they got it right the first time, BMW carried over the front suspension design from the current 3. This is made up of lower control arms, gas-filled MacPherson struts, and an anti-roll bar.

Alas, the time has come to mourn the passing of BMW's venerable semi-trailing arm rear suspension. Yes, this wondrous design that's supported nearly three decades worth of small BMWs is no more. Replacing it is a three-link affair originally used on the

Z1. This design, consisting of a longitudinal link and upper and lower transverse links, does a much better job of keeping the wheel upright. No longer will the rear wheels go into radical negative camber mode when you load up the trunk and back seat. Also helping to control wheel motions are an anti-roll bar, gas-filled shocks and coil springs.

The Euro 3 comes with 15" wheels, made of either stamped steel (with plastic covers) or forged aluminum alloy. The U.S. 325i will come only with the alloys which, to me, aren't terribly attractive. The plastic wheels covers are better looking. No matter, most BMWs seem to end up shod with aftermarket wheels anyway. Tire size varies by model, with the 325i wearing 205/60X15s from various manufacturers. The four-wheel disk brakes have benefited from this increase in wheel size, gaining 1" in diameter in the front and $\frac{3}{4}$ " in the rear. BMW's excellent ABS is still standard.

The interior redesign is effective, though not as aesthetically pleasing. The back seat profited most from the increase in length, making it a much more pleasant place to be. I adjusted the driver's seat to my normal driving position, then tried sitting behind it. I found adequate legroom for my six-foot frame, though my head was just touching the roof. Anyone shorter should find it quite comfortable.

All switches and controls on the dashboard are easily reached and have a solid feel to their operation. The center section is laid out very logically: the radio mounted up high where it can be reached easily and frequently, the climate control system below that, and the trip computer situated on the bottom. The computer continuously displays the time in one window, and all



the other functions in another. Selecting the function displayed can still be done by pressing in on the turn signal lever.

The seats are "standard," without the deep bolstering of the "sport" seats found in cars such as the 318is. They adjust mechanically for fore-aft, height, and seat-back rake with three levers. Europeans will have their choice of cloth or leather, we may or may not get the same choice. Several interior color choices are available to complement the exterior colors, with the dashboard fascia remaining black. This, to me, is the one area that needs further work. I saw both types of interiors, cloth and leather, and my lingering impression was that the materials used on the door panels and dashboard were too cheap-looking and "plasticky" for this caliber of automobile. Inferior to even my ol' 320i.

Although it doesn't look like it at first, this car really does have a large trunk. The opening goes all the way down to the bumper, and the cantilevered hinges let the lid swing completely out of the way. You will find a fully-carpeted cavern that should swallow everything the family needs for that weekend trip to Aunt Esther's. You will also find BMW's trademark toolkit in the lid, a full-size spare tire residing under the floor and, on the 325i, the battery mounted in a well on the right side.

Lastly, there's the purely subjective area of exterior styling. I like it. I admit I had some doubts when I saw the first photos. It sorta looked like they'd grafted a Pontiac Grand Am front end onto a 5-series. Believe me when I say photos don't do the car justice. In reality it looks somewhat like a scaled-down 5-series, yet it has a personality all its own. It looks well-proportioned from just about any angle. The design seems to work better painted in darker hues such as navy blue and gray; bright red looks almost unappealing and out-of-place. That may be at least partially

because the bumpers and rocker panels are done in gray no matter what.

Enough walking around, let's get in and drive. The seat adjusts easily to a comfortable position, while the steering wheel, although not adjustable, is in just the right place. All the usual BMW gauges (tachometer, speedometer, fuel, temperature, and instantaneous fuel mileage) are fully visible.

Our driving consisted of about 140 miles through the French countryside and a stint at BMW's test facility. After all this, my general impression is that it drives just like a BMW. Is that a revelation or what? The owner of a current 325i would have a hard time telling the difference between the two cars.

In typical BMW fashion, the engine doesn't really start to crank until the pointer gets into the top half of the tach face. Then the sound of the engine becomes almost lyrical and the scenery starts going by at a rapid rate. You don't have to keep it wound tight though. Power is more than adequate just pattering around town. In case you get stuck in a traffic jam while pattering, the 5-speed shifts easily.

Two things came to light during highway cruising that may or may not show in final production. One was a rather sharp thumping sound from the suspension when going over raised strips in the pavement. And almost everyone had something to say about wind noise. Most of the complaints seemed to center around the "B" pillar, right next to your ear. BMW's spokesmen claim that these bugs will be worked out before full production starts. This may be, but I've noticed wind noise in the same location on some 5-series cars, a similar design.

That's about it for grousing. Everything else about the way this car drives is fantastic. The gearing is right, the ride comfortable, and the handling nearly perfect.

We drove the cars on BMW's high-speed oval, and on a mile-long "handling course." We also had several 525s available for comparison purposes. The 325i, being lighter, is quicker getting up through the gears. At speeds of 120-125 mph on the oval, it never felt like either end was getting light or wanted to wander. On the handling course, the main characteristic was understeer. But do not get discouraged, fans of such shenanigans, trailing-throttle oversteer is not dead! Using my right foot to pick which end of the car I wanted to move around became a piece of cake. The 5-series, in the same situation just adjusted the amount it wanted to understeer.

During all this excitement, the driver doesn't even break a sweat. The steering feel is excellent, as is the "seat-of-

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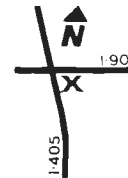
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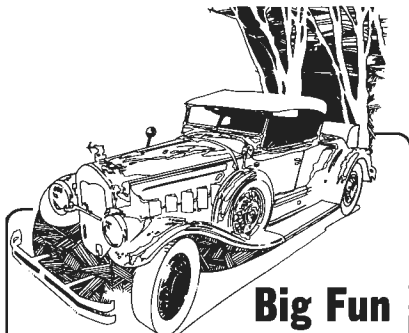
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the-pants" feedback. The seats themselves could provide more lateral support when messing around at the limit, although they're just fine for normal driving.

So, what we have here is the current 325i with more power, bigger brakes, updated styling, and the same weight. In summary, an excellent car made even better.

The new 3 will go on sale in the U.S. in April as the 325i. Although the equipment level has not been worked out yet, I suspect it will be very close to the current car. Which means about



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the only options will be metallic paint, leather, sunroof, and heated seats. The price is also undetermined at this time, although they admitted it will cost more than the current model. With that listed at \$27,000, my educated guess would put the new model at a base price of around \$28,500.

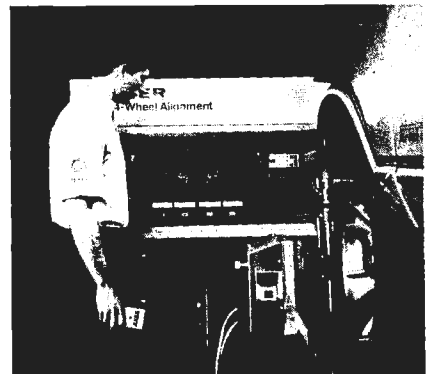
The 3-series "mix" in this country is going to be jumbled for awhile. BMW will stop importing the current 318 and 325 two and four-door versions when the new 325i arrives. You will still see them for sale though, as dealers clear out their stocks. About six months later (around October) BMW will release the two-door version of the "new" body. This will come as the 318is and the 325is. The M3, still in the "old" body, will be discontinued at the end of the 1991 model year. It will be back, in the new body, sometime in 1993-94. Meanwhile, the 3-series convertible will soldier on in the "old" body for at least two more years. The all-wheel drive 325iX is going away completely; its sales figures too low to mention.

BMW has really done it up right. I predict that, starting in April BMW

dealers are going to become a whole lot busier.

(Jim Tulk is the editor of *Whispering Bomb*, the publication of the Los Angeles Region of BMW ACA.)

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The Saga Continues

by Carl Constam

The last time I wrote you was a couple of years ago about my adventures with my white 1971 2002 which I had affectionately nicknamed "The Sponge". Shortly after I completed the article, I was approached by a university student who desperately wanted the car. So after some serious negotiations, "The Sponge" was his. I later found out that he did some serious damage to the car that winter.

So here I was with cash in hand and no BMW to drive. I had been watching the local papers in anticipation of the sale of the car and of course I had my eye on several vehicles. But once again, my good friend Murphy reared his ugly head and all of the vehicles that I was considering checking out surprisingly disappeared.

I was able to acquire a 1975 2002 with only 75,000 "original" miles on the odometer. This car was so original, it still had a Blaupunkt AM/FM mono radio. Living in the Great White North, I don't have access to any club activities without the necessity of at least a 15 hour drive. I had such a good time at Seattle's BMW Fest Northwest, that I decided to start building the car towards the next time I could attend a driving school.

I spent a lot of money on the car including KYB gas shocks all around, replacement of all the sway bar bushings (highly recommended), a valve job and transmission work and a new sound system. I also went to a set of Michelin MXV 196/60-14 tires on 318 14" rims (not recommended). These made the ride of the car very harsh and if anyone is interested, they are currently for sale.

So finally, in July, we prepared for the great trek to Seattle with a stop in Spokane to visit with Tony Longinotti to acquire parts. You see, I can obtain most BMW parts in the U.S. for half of what I would have to pay in Canada.

We loaded the car to the roof line and set off on a typical 90 degree afternoon for our holiday. This was also an experience for us as it was our first long distance driving holiday for our five year old son who can identify any BMW on the road.

Everything was going fine until our first gas stop in Calgary. When we pulled off the highway, I heard a noise that I had become all too familiar with in the past - a broken exhaust. The exhaust pipe had snapped in half in front of the centre resonator. Fortunately, we were able to find a Speedy muffler shop who had us repaired and back on the road again in less than an hour.

The trip on to Spokane was very uneventful and it was a pleasure to finally meet Tony Loninotti, President of the Inland Empire Chapter. However, nobody had ever told us about I-90 across Eastern Washington in the summer months. When we stopped to refresh fluids at Moses Lake, it was 115 degrees. Despite the heat and no air conditioning in the car,

we all survived somehow and the 85 degree temperatures in Seattle were a welcome relief.

After attending the event in Seattle, we decided to drive down to Olympia and back up to Port Angeles to catch the ferry across to Victoria. As we neared Port Angeles, the "NOISE" started to return. When we finally stopped at the dock in Port Angeles, I was mildly upset (I'm being polite to mixed company). I looked under the car in anticipation of another broken muffler, but it was still in one piece.

When I opened the hood, I immediately discovered the problem. I had installed a header (not a Stahl) and the header had broken clean across at the #2 exhaust port. Not only did it sound awful, but the header was also vibrating against the engine block. Needless to say, the sound of a broken exhaust in the enclosed confines of the ferry boat were very interesting and if there had not been a chain across the front of the boat, the car would now be part of a fish reef in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

And if you think that this was fun, you should have seen the face of the Canada Customs official in Victoria. I am still not sure if it was pity or dis-





gust. Fortunately, after four telephone calls the next morning, I was able to find a shop that was able to re-weld the header. Ironically, these fellows dealt quite regularly with my parts guys in Edmonton. On the rest of the trip, nothing else fell off.

But when we returned home, I knew that it was time for another car. My first attempts to sell the car privately were unsuccessful. And then, one day on my way to work, I caught the reflection of something on a small used car lot near the office. Later that day, I stopped in to confirm what I thought I had seen earlier.

What I discovered was a 1977 733i that I knew immediately was Grey Market because of the small bumpers and the different size headlights (7" beam and 5 3/4" high beam). The car was filthy but appeared to be basically sound. I was told that the car was on consignment and that the current owner was the second owner of the car. The car only had 175,000 km. (105,000 miles) on the odometer and I thought that this was extremely reasonable for a 13 year old car. Arrangements were made, and I took the car to my mechanic for an inspection.

I can't say that the car was abused or neglected, but the owner just had not paid any real attention to the car. It is

interesting to drive a Grey Market car as all of the instrumentation is in German as is the owner's manual. Driving the car to the shop, I discovered some of the more obvious problems, like the car needed rear tires (the front tires were new), the radio was shot and the shocks all needed replacement.

Once on the hoist, I started to realize what I had found. Inspection of the mechanicals revealed that everything underneath was dry from the block back to the differential. The car drove beautifully despite the shocks, and I was in love. After a few days of negotiating and begging with my bank manager, I was the proud owner of my newest source of cash depletion.

I have already taken care of the obvious mechanical repairs and the more I drive this car, the better it gets. Ironically, the car came with no rear seat belts which has already been rectified with a call to Campbell-Nelson in Edmonds. As I had mentioned earlier, the owner's manual was completely in German. Well, an owner's manual is an owner's manual and one can usually

figure anything out. But some of the instructions defied my best attempts. However, my mother-in-law, who is German, came to the rescue and translated the appropriate portions for me (I knew I would finally find a use for her).

Everyone who has seen the car has fallen in love with it. The car is Polaris with a blue interior and has been named "The Bear" (Polaris is colour, a big car, I live in the Great White North, therefore Polar Bear, well you can figure it out). Surprisingly, parts are not that hard to come by and I have already found several sources in the United States.

The local dealer has informed me that because the car is Grey Market and not officially recognized as being in the country, if I require body parts for example, I have to make special application to BMW Canada to bring in the parts to Canada with a 12 to 14 weeks wait. Oh well, everyone needs a challenge.



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(Editor's note: *Zündfolge* welcomes a new columnist, Joshua Weinstein. Joshua has owned BMWs since 1977 and been a member of BMW ACA or BMW CCA for the past ten years. Joshua has owned several 2002s, a 2800CS and currently drives a 1980 323i. We hope you enjoy "Backfire.")

I'm from New York City, went to college in Boston and lived the majority of my years in California. That isn't going to make Emmet Watson my friend, but it does give me a fairly decent foundation from which to make gross generalizations about different driving styles in different regions. Since I'm letting loose with the information that would make Mr. Watson hate me, I'll say this from the get go: Washington drivers are by far the worst.

In New York people just drive any way they damn well please. They don't pay attention to lane markers, they have no care for other drivers or pedestrians. It's just groups of cars, like schools of fish (or maybe packs of wild dogs) haphazardly flowing (usually) in the same direction. If some plankton (pedestrian) gets in the way, you eat it. And, of course, you never forget that the biggest, fastest fish wins. So when that light turns green, floor it! This is the main reason that there is no right on red in New York. Can you imagine 13 million New Yorkers coming to a complete stop, looking both ways, yielding to the pedestrian and then, when it's safe, slowly proceeding into traffic by turning right on red? Neither could whoever makes the traffic laws for New York.

Boston, a civilized city with history on its side, approaches driving a little differently. In Beantown the goal is simple: try to never have to bring your car to a stop. Most visitors to Boston remark on how aggressive Boston drivers are, and while that is true, the aggressiveness is not what differentiates Boston drivers. Most urban drivers are aggressive and Boston drivers are probably not as aggressive as



New York drivers. However, in Boston, drivers never want to stop and traffic lights do not dissuade them. When the green light turns yellow, the cautious driver may debate whether it is safer to stop or to hurry through before the red. In Boston every one just proceeds. Then once the light turns red, the questioning of whether to continue through begins. The first cars will drive through the red, and maybe a couple more. The calculations the red-light-runner must consider, though, is that Boston drivers hate to stop and, of course, the converse is also true that they love to go. In other words, while half the people are running red lights, the other half are trying to jump the red light before it turns green.

What makes driving in Boston *really* interesting is adding right on red to the equation. Picture an intersection where the light is turning green, yellow, red for one group and red to green for the cross town traffic. Everyone is running the various yellow or red lights. Now add a couple of right on reds. Oh, and don't forget the basic driving in Boston rule. You hate to stop, so the right on red is not completed after a full stop, rather it is negotiated at about 15-25 miles an hour. After four years of this driving "style" I gladly moved to San Francisco.

San Francisco and California, of

course, is filled with mellow self involved yuppies driving their Porsches (or people driving a Celica pretending they're driving a Porsche). However, these drivers are not only awake but they are able to do more than one thing at a time. For instance, if they see a faster car behind them flashing it's headlights, they can figure out to pull over into the next lane and let it by. They, confronted with the same situation can also slow down. Or simply stay in the fast lane applying their make up (ok, or reading the newspaper). Worse yet they may let you pass because it's easier to shoot you from behind. In fact the last alternative became so popular possession of a gun (loaded or not) in a car became a felony in California. But seriously, in California people actually use the left (fast) lane for, are you sitting, driving fast. Like 75 mph. Some even dare to go 80. But since CHP rarely use radar (state law says the local county has to pay for the radar units), it's easy to speed. And when you are stopped (if you aren't from Washington) they often say something like "Nice car. Slow it down. Have a nice day." And you do.

Washington drivers are another breed. Maybe even another species. Maybe from another planet. Washington drivers drive like they're from a cow town that grew up too fast for its' own good and they didn't bother to adjust to the fact there are five times as many cars on the road nowadays. Come to think of it, maybe that's what happened. But why they couldn't drive in the first place, I can't tell you. I can almost understand why seemingly normal people drive 50 to 55 in the lane and seem to think you're nuts if you ask politely that they get their slow butt (and that stupid Plymouth Valiant, too) over into the "slow" lane. Doesn't sound too complex to me, but some people think that since *they* feel 50 is a safe "speed", then you should too.

What really drives me nuts about

Washington drivers, and what proves them (us?) to be the world's worst drivers is when they stop in the middle of intersections and spend the next five days trying to decide what to do next. This type of brain fade is prevalent. There is a mass inability to cope with the possibility of making decisions while the car is moving. People simply forget that there is the possibility of pulling over to stop and pass out. The scariest thought to me is a Washington driver in Boston for a weekend. The visitor parks in the middle of the intersection while drivers from every possible angle fail to stop at the lights and all proceed straight for the Washington driver. Even I think that would be harsh punishment for not knowing how to drive.

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For Sale: 1972 2002 Touring Blue with dark grey interior. Very rare hatchback 2002. Very strong engine with dual Webers, aftermarket suspension, sunroof, 318 wheels, Fittipaldi wheel, body solid. \$6,500. David or Lucetta: 206-282-2641

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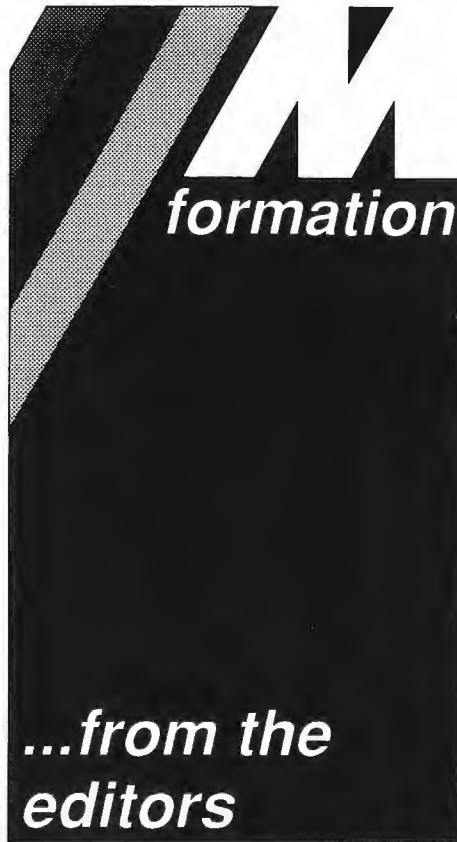
BMW has introduced a two-door convertible version of the 318i, at a price of \$28,500. Also available is a power-operated top on the 325i convertible. That car lists for \$35,700. Both cars arrived at dealerships in mid-December. (Autoweek)

Bid a fond *auf Wiedersehen* to BMW's eccentric Z1 roadster. Production is to finish this summer. BMW was never convinced the Z1 would sell when it was announced in 1987. But it was sufficiently encouraged by public reaction to start making ten a day and promised to make 5,000 customers happy. Instead, it will have made 8,000 when the lines are shut down.

Even without an American presence, customers were having to wait three years for delivery. BMW says it will meet those orders - and build a few more to limit black market trading in existing orders. There are no plans to replace the Z1, the company says. (Road & Track)

The 29th annual International BMW Driving School at the Nurburgring will be held June 19-23, 1991. For information contact: Leo Newland, 3728 Hulen Park, Fort Worth, TX 76109. Leo's phone is 817-923-2212. (Roundel)

BMW AG has four prototypes of an 850i convertible roaming the roads of Germany. A BMW official, however, says the company has not decided if the convertible will see production. The prototypes are powered by BMW's 300 hp V12 engine, as is the 850i coupe. Additionally, two all-new V8s may be available: a 4.0-liter, 265 hp engine and a 3.0-liter, 230 hp unit. The new BMW's have been seen with both a removable aluminum hard top and a soft top. (Autoweek)



BMW prefers the clean sheet approach for a high tech two seat mid-engined sports car that could become the basis of a Group C car. The so called M12 is a team effort by BMW Technik, BMW Motorsport and tuner Alpina. The M12 was styled in house and has short overhangs, a generous greenhouse, an unusually wide track and a relatively long wheelbase.

The suspension is said to be identical to the 850i's but with revised geometry and stiffer mounting points. Expect adjustable shocks, springs and anti-roll bars, but not four wheel drive and probably not four wheel steering.

The V-12 engine is as yet undecided. In the running: a normally aspirated 400 hp 5.7 liter engine prepared by Alpina; a twin-turbo, 48 valve 5.0 liter capable of 800 hp; and a normally aspirated 500 hp 5.4 liter with an active inlet manifold and four or five valves per cylinder.

So far, the M12 remains in the experimental stage and a production decision may await mid-1991. (Automobile)

The doors for the proposed M12 are two piece gullwing style, with the lower sections sinking into the doorsills, a la the Z1 roadster. (Road & Track)

The EPA's list of the ten cars with the worst gas mileage estimates is out and three BMW's made the final cut. In tenth place was the 750iL/850i, considered one car for EPA purposes. The eighth position was held down by the M5, the only 6 cylinder car to make the list. BMW is in good company. The rest of the "top" ten is filled out by Ferrari, Rolls-Royce, Bentley and Lamborghini. (Autoweek)

BMW's proposed M12 not only has driver adjustable shocks but driver adjustable anti-roll bars. (Car & Driver)



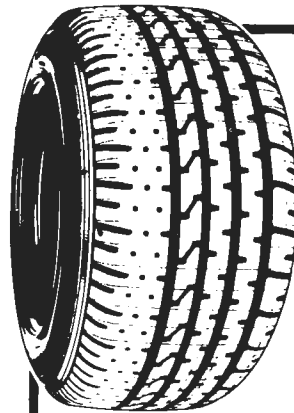


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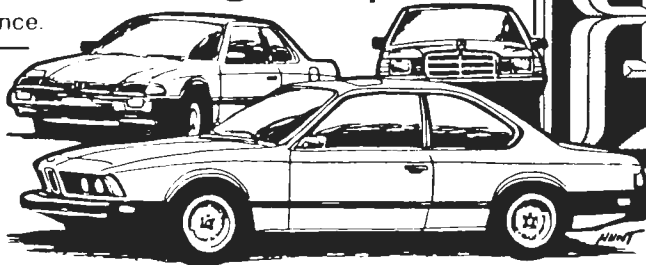
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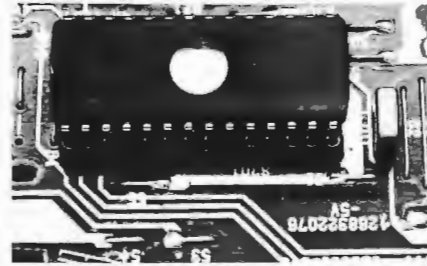
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