



FEBRUARY 2009

# Zündfolge

Official Publication of the BMW Car Club of America Puget Sound Region



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# ZÜNDFOLGE

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## Boilerplate

This magazine is the monthly publication of the BMW CCA, Puget Sound Region, and remains its property. All information furnished herein is provided by the membership for members only. Ideas, suggestions and opinions, technical or otherwise, are those of the authors, without authentication by or liability to the editors or the Club.

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# KALENDER

## January 29

**Board Meeting:** starting time is 6:45 p.m. All members are welcome to attend. Contact the Club President to RSVP and for meeting location.

## January 31

**Save the date for the BMW CCA Puget Sound Region's Annual Club Banquet:** it will be held in Bellevue. For more details contact de-Anna Martin at [demartin@pc-resource.com](mailto:demartin@pc-resource.com).

## February 3

**Deadline for the March 2009 Zündfolge issue:** all submissions must be received by this date. They may be sent to the *Zündfolge* Editor at [lucettalightfoot@msn.com](mailto:lucettalightfoot@msn.com).

## February 7

**Instructor Clinic:** to be held at South Bellevue Community Center. Go to [MotorsportsReg.com](http://MotorsportsReg.com) to register for a full day with Ross Bentley. See article in this issue.

## February 21

**Interbay Garages Tour:** Group 2 Motorsports, Gerber Motorsports, Ken McBride, William Cotter, Goodman Racing. See article in this issue.

## February 26

**Board Meeting:** starting time is 6:45 p.m. All members are welcome to attend. Contact the Club President to RSVP and for meeting location.

## February 28

**Safety Gear Tech Session:** from 10 a.m. to noon at Speedware Motorsports, 7509 159th Place NE, Redmond, WA 98052. RSVP to Jeff Butler at [jeff@hauryscollision.com](mailto:jeff@hauryscollision.com).

## March 3

**Deadline for the April 2009 Zündfolge issue:** all submissions must be received by this date. They may be sent to the *Zündfolge* Editor at [lucettalightfoot@msn.com](mailto:lucettalightfoot@msn.com).

## March 14

**Griot's Garage Ultimate Garage Tour:** Second annual Richard Griot's garage tour. See article in this issue for more details.

## March 26

**Board Meeting:** starting time is 6:45 p.m. All members are welcome to attend. Contact the Club President to RSVP and for meeting location.

## March 28

**Haury's Consumer rights/Collision Tech Session:** 10 a.m. to noon at Haury's Collision, 11514 Lake City Way NE. To RSVP or ask questions contact Jeff at [jeff@hauryscollision.com](mailto:jeff@hauryscollision.com) or 206-365-1565.

## March 31

**Deadline for the May 2009 Zündfolge issue:** all submissions must be received by this date. They may be sent to the *Zündfolge* Editor at [lucettalightfoot@msn.com](mailto:lucettalightfoot@msn.com).

## June 13

**Dyno Event & BBQ:** Begins at 10 a.m. at the Carb Connection, 13611 NE 126th Place ST 240 Kirkland, WA 98034. To RSVP or ask questions contact Jeff Butler at [jeff@hauryscollision.com](mailto:jeff@hauryscollision.com) or call 206-365-1565.

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## Safety Gear Tech Session Speedware Motorsports Reminder Notice

February 28

KICKING OFF THE SEASON of driving events this year is the safety gear tech session at Speedware Motorsports in Redmond. Come out Saturday morning for a brief presentation of safety gear required to attend this years schools and other driving events. The event will include a tour of their 25,000 sq foot service center. At last year's event, we viewed some very cool projects, both BMW and other. Discover additional services Speed Ware offers as BMW experts.

Circle February 28 on your calendar and join us at Speedware Motorsports,

from 10 a.m. to noon. Coffee and snacks will be served so arrive early. Find out more about Speedware Motorsports at [www.speedwaremotorsports.com](http://www.speedwaremotorsports.com). Send RSVP to Jeff at [jeff@hauryscollision.com](mailto:jeff@hauryscollision.com).

For the full article, see the January *Zündfolge* or check the Club bulletin board under Club events

*Jeff Butler*  
Tech Event Coordinator

**Speedware Motorsports**  
**7509 159th PI NE, Redmond WA 98052**  
**[www.speedwaremotorsports.com](http://www.speedwaremotorsports.com)**

## Tour of Motorsport Garages

February 21

IT HAS BEEN A FEW YEARS since the Club visited the motorsport shops and car collections in the Interbay area of Seattle. And even if you have seen these collections before, you should come out again because these are not static collections and you will likely see all new stuff. We will start the day off at Group 2 Motorsports which is in the same building as Ken McBride and William Cotter's personal garages. Only a few blocks away are Gerber Motorsports and John Goodman's Goodman Racing.

Group 2 Motorsports is a full service automotive shop for repair, service and upgrades ([www.Group2Inc.com](http://www.Group2Inc.com)). Group 2 is a *Zündfolge* magazine advertiser. They are an authorized installer for the Tire Rack, so you can have tires shipped directly to them.

Ken McBride has his personal collection of vehicles, art and collectibles in the same building as Group 2. McBride has a very diverse collection and a beautiful garage.

William Cotter is down stairs from McBride and is another great collection of all things automotive. In addition to storing vehicles, they have a movie watching area and every available surface and space is used to display something.

Gerber Motorsports ([www.gerbermotorsport.com](http://www.gerbermotorsport.com)) is an independent Porsche service and race preparation shop just down the street from Group 2 and is in

the same building as Goodman Racing. Gerber also does engine rebuilds and conversions, as well as full restoration projects.

Goodman Racing is a personal race shop and garage for John Goodman. Goodman has raced in the Ferrari Challenge, SOVREN and LeMans so there are always interesting race cars to see.

The event is Saturday February 21 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. Group 2 Motorsports is at 4442 27th Ave West, Seattle, near Fisherman's Terminal just south of the Ballard Bridge. There will be a thread for this event on the Club bulletin board closer to the event ([www.BMWPugetSound.com](http://www.BMWPugetSound.com)). There is no cost for the event and no need to reserve a spot.

*Chris Mason*  
[christophermason@gmail.com](mailto:christophermason@gmail.com)



### ON THE COVER

This month's cover features team principal Stan Bovetz in the Frost Engineering E36 following Bob Mearns in the camera car around Thunderhill at 30mph. This image was taken during the lunch break on Fridays practice and

qualifying session. Both Bob Mearns and Stan Bovetz unofficially hold the record for the slowest lap times around Thunderhill. To read more about the enduro see page eight.

Photo by Club Member, Curtis Creager.



## Looking Forward to Tours 2009

TRAPPED INSIDE BY THE EARLY JANUARY SNOW, the Garage Queen M3 safely under cover, my thoughts turn to spring, and the warmer, drier days that lend themselves to weekend drives. As last summer drew to a close, your Tour Coordinator had been busy planning very short tours (when gas was \$4.50 a gallon). Now with premium closer to \$2.15 a gallon, we have only our carbon footprints to hold us back. Let's drive!

So, what is a tour? Tours are group driving events, usually combining great scenery, great roads, and great food, with stops along the way to socialize. Groups range in size from fifteen to forty cars, and participants can be alone, or have the entire family join them. Drivers must be eighteen years of age or older. The length of a typical tour is 100 to 400 miles, and we usually return by the late afternoon. In accordance with the tour governance policy, traffic laws must be obeyed. Tours are not competitive, high speed events. We focus on leaving those we come across with a good impression of BMW drivers. While I highly recommend you attend our driving schools, no special skills or cars are required.

We are still finalizing plans for upcoming tours. We will most likely do another local tour, ending at a High Performance Driving School at Pacific Raceways in Kent. Another repeat will be the Hood River Hopsfest Tour in October. It can't rain that hard two years in a row, can it? See the next *Zündfolge* for the complete 2009 tour schedule.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions for tour routes or activities along the way, please contact Scott Hieronymus at [tour@bmwpugetsound.com](mailto:tour@bmwpugetsound.com).

*Scott Hieronymus*

## Ultimate Garage Tour #2

March 14

APPROXIMATELY FIFTY CLUB MEMBERS had the opportunity to visit Richard Griot's personal garage last year. The second annual Richard Griot's garage tour has been scheduled for March 14. Last year's event was a huge success. If you did not get to attend last year and would like to attend this year, I recommend you send your RSVP to me as soon as possible.

Every car nut dreams of owning their own ultimate garage, well organized and functional, with all the necessary tools to work on their ultimate driving machine. Many of you have already taken the opportunity to visit the Griot's Garage store in Tacoma. Now is your chance to see their line of high quality garage organization items and products in a residential garage setting. Whether you have a two car garage or 20,000 sq ft

garage for twenty-five cars, March 14 is your opportunity to see the "Ultimate" Griot's Garage and get ideas for building your own.

The Ultimate Garage tour will start at Griot's Garage Corporate Headquarters (3500-A 20th St. East) in Tacoma (Fife) at 10 a.m. There will be coffee and snacks available while we are waiting for everyone to show up. From Griot's store, we will car pool with four members per car to Richard Griot's garage. Carpools will leave promptly at 10:30 a.m. and arrive back at Griot's retail store around 2:30–3:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided, so bring your appetite.

Please email your RSVP to Rick Gulstrom at [rick@gmsarch.com](mailto:rick@gmsarch.com). Space is limited (maximum of fifty people—first come first serve).

*Rick Gulstrom*

## Collision/Body Repair and Consumer Rights Tech Session

March 28

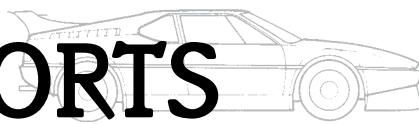
Club members Jeff Butler and Zac Underwood, owners of Haury's Lake City Collision, are hosting their collision repair and consumer rights program again. Topics will focus on legal issues regarding consumer rights, how to insure that your car is properly repaired and paid for by an insurance company, negotiating with insurance companies, settling a total loss of your vehicle and diminished resale value. There has been a lot of discussion on the bulletin boards about these issues and they will be addressing your concerns and arming you with information to protect your self. Guest speaker this year is Attorney Rich Milham. Rich is an accident/injury attorney with twenty-five years experience who serves on the BMW CCA PSR Board of Directors as Risk Management for the Club. The program kicks off at 10 a.m. sharp with a tour of their modern, state-of-the-art collision repair shop located at 11514 Lake City Way NE, Seattle.

Come see the latest technology in collision repair and refinishing equipment and discover why we should select a BMW approved repair shop when repairing our precious Bimmer

(BMW's repair criteria is very similar to Audi, Mercedes & Porsche). Topics will include; OEM certified refinish technology, specialized welding equipment and a demonstration of their Celette frame jig system. Once the tour of the repair facility is complete, we'll find out from Jeff how the insurance company and body shop interacts to repair our collision damaged vehicles and why we, the customer, should be well informed and involved in this process. Also discussed will be general insurance company policies & practices, differences between insurers (they're not all the same), aftermarket body parts, coverage for upgrades, your legal rights as the claimant or insured, how to protect your self from fraud and more.

Join us at Haury's Lake City Collision Service, 11514 Lake City Way, Seattle. Coffee and snacks will be served so arrive early. Attendees will receive a \$10 dollar coupon to Lombardi's Italian restaurants. To ask for a specific question be addressed or find out more about Haury's, email [jeff@hauryscollision.com](mailto:jeff@hauryscollision.com) or [www.hauryscollision.com](http://www.hauryscollision.com). RSVP to [jeff@haurys](mailto:jeff@haurys).

# MOTOR SPORTS



'TIS STILL THE DEPTHS OF WINTER and we are still recovering from Snow-pocalypse '08. But plans and preparation for the 2009 Track season are underway. The first event of 2009 is our Instructor Clinic. We alternate years hosting this with the Porsche Club hosting the other years. This is our year and we've decided to take a different approach. Instead of a day at the track, we're going to spend a day in the classroom with renowned racer, driver, instructor, coach and author, Ross Bentley. The goals are to help each and every instructor become even better.

The Clinic is February 7 at the South Bellevue Community Center. We will spend a little time on policy and procedure. We'll also have a discussion on "the line." But about six hours will be led by Ross. Each instructor must pay to attend the clinic and, remember, they don't get paid to instruct at Club events. It is a good indication of the dedication and excellence of our instructor corps that they will spend their time and money on self-improvement and then volunteer their time.

For the rest of you, we've got four track events coming up in 2009 and you should start making your plans to participate. If you have never driven

your BMW at the track, let me tell you that you are missing out. You can't drive that car to its potential on the street. The track is the only safe place to really experience just how good your car is.

The opportunity to drive at the race track is one of the best benefits of Club membership. Not many people get this sort of chance. You may come out to a Car Control Clinic (CCC), learn a bit more about your car and yourself, and say that's enough. Or you may want to try a CCC and then step up to a High Performance Driving School (HPDS) and really have a thrill. Or you may get really hooked and decide after a few HPDS that you want to get involved in racing. (This is a terminal condition.) We don't do racing in the Club and our schools aren't racing schools. But that can provide a foundation and guidance for going on to racing.

However far you want to take this, my point is that you have the opportunity to pursue a thrilling car hobby. Not many people can realistically do something like this. But your membership in BMW CCA, Puget Sound Region, allows you this opportunity. You really should take advantage of this.

## 2009 Driving Events Calendar

### BMW CCA PSR Events

#### February

**7** Instructor Clinic

#### April

**16** Driving School & Car Control Clinic at PR

#### May

**21** Driving School & Car Control Clinic at PR

#### July

**10** Driving School & Car Control Clinic at PR

#### September

**13** Driving School & Car Control Clinic at PR

### Other Events Open to CCA Drivers

#### February

**14** PCA Skills Day at Bremerton

#### March

**7** ALFA School at Bremerton

**8** BMW CCBC Car Control Clinic at Pitt Meadows, BC

**14** PCA School at Pacific Raceways

**22** BMW CCBC Skills Day at Pitt Meadows, BC

**29** ALFA School at Bremerton

#### April

**3-5** BMW CCA IEC Car School in Spokane

**10** PCA School at Pacific Raceways

**23** ALFA School at Pacific Raceways

**28** BMW ACA School at Portland

#### May

**15** PCA School at Pacific Raceways

**19** BMW ACA School at Portland

**22** ALFA School at Bremerton

**23** PCA Skills Day at Bremerton

**30** BMW CCBC Car Control Clinic at Pitt Meadows, BC

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#### BMW Car Club of BC

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#### Bremerton Sports Car Club

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#### NW Alfa Club

[www.nwalfaclub.com](http://www.nwalfaclub.com)

Herb Sanborn: [blue74gtv@earthlink.net](mailto:blue74gtv@earthlink.net)

#### Porsche Club

[www.pnwr.pca.org](http://www.pnwr.pca.org)

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# Meet the Board

OVER THE NEXT FEW ISSUES OF THE *ZÜNDFOLGE*, you will find photos and bios of your hard working Board of Directors. This will give you, the Club member, an opportunity to put a face with a name and also a little personal background history of the people managing your BMW Club.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact a member of the Board of Directors—their phone numbers and email addresses are located on page two.

*Rick Gulstrom, Vice President  
BMW CCA Puget Sound Chapter*



## **President Mike Ellis**

Mike was born in Gloucester, England and raised in Auburn and Black Diamond, Washington. An active member of many car clubs over the years. His first car club was the Shifters Car Club in Auburn during the 60s and many 'sports car' clubs in various parts of the country while serving in the US Navy during his thirty-year career. Mike always wanted

a BMW since the days of the E21/320i but Lore his wife of forty-one years said they were too cramped. Once retired with the children gone it was time for a fun car. Mike and Lore found a like-new 1991 E30 Cabrio (Garage Queen) in 2002. Mike joined BMW CCA and shortly after attending his first PSR Board meeting. He has served as SIG Coordinator and most recently as the Membership Coordinator. Mike recently added a 1997 318ti Compact to the stable to use on Club tours during inclement weather. Mike also volunteers at the LeMay Car Museum during his spare time.



## **Vice President Rick Gulstrom**

Rick was born and raised in Portland, OR. His family moved to Lewiston, ID where Rick completed high school and later graduated from the University of Idaho with a degree in Architecture. Rick resides in Bothell, WA with his wife of thirty-eight years, Darlene. They have two grown children, Roxy and Ty, and six grandchildren (four boys and

two girls). Rick has been a "Bimmer" man since he bought his first BMW, a new 1999 M3 and joined the BMW Club in 2000. Since then, purchased another BMW (2006 325i) as a commuter car and uses the '99 M3 as a dedicated track car. Rick started racing in the 70s and for the last two years has raced PRO3 and EIP classes of conference racing renting Greg Miller's PRO3 car. During his tenure with the BMW club, he has served as Membership Chair, Vice President, President, Judge for Concours, and Driving Instructor. Rick enjoys not only the cars (BMW's), but also all of the people he has met over the last nine years.



## **Secretary Wayne A. Mulholland**

I was born in Iowa, moved to California at age ten. I became a railroad engineer like my Grandfather. My hero, Ronald Reagan became governor of California and quickly doubled the size of the highway patrol. That being my true passion I was one of the first to apply. I retired after a long and wonderful career and moved to Washington. All

those years of high speed driving on streets and highways I found I could still continue going fast on the track as a member of BMW CCA. Now I golf, write novels and run the wheels off my 2002 330ci.



## **Treasurer Tom Olsson**

My family's been into BMWs since the 70s when Dad bought a 1978 320i while he was stationed in Germany. I learned how to drive on that car (killing the clutch in the process), and that began a love affair with BMWs ever since. My first car was a '62 MGB: Dad gave it to me in pieces. At some point I realized keeping a twenty-year old British car as a daily driver was a bad idea, so I put it out to pasture

(returned to dad). A Sahara 1974 2002 replaced it, making my BMW relationship serious. I loved that car! The last time I thought about it, I think I've had sixteen BMWs, but who's counting? I've been a member of the local Chapter since the 80s, and have been on the Board for the last six years in many different roles. I've been the Tech Coordinator, Secretary, Driving Events Chair, and now I'm the Treasurer for the Chapter. At some point around 1999 or 2000 I took my first driving school, and immediately found my new home. I was addicted from the very first day, and it's progressed to the point that now I teach other people how to do it and I'm racing a 1987 325is with a whole bunch of other hooligans in PRO3.

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# Veni, Velox, Infractus (We Came, We Went Fast, We Broke)

## 25 Hours of Thunderhill 2008

FOR NORTHWEST RACERS WHO LIKE ENDURANCE RACING, there's the 4 Hours (soon to be 6 Hours) of Pacific Raceways and the 12 Hours (formerly 8 Hours) of the Cascades in Portland. The trend is towards longer, more challenging enduros. Every December, several Northwest teams take this to the extreme by entering the 25 Hours of Thunderhill in Willows, California. It's longer than the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the Rolex 24 at Daytona, yet accessible to the club racer wanting to have a "twice 'round the clock" racing experience. It's a tasty mix of energy, sleep deprivation, noise, euphoria, disappointment, speed, competition, and camaraderie.

Most of this year's 68 entries were from the West and about half from California, but teams from Florida, Texas, Maryland, and Illinois made the long trek to Willows. Four Seattle-based teams traded the hometown drizzle for California sunshine. Club member Stan Bovetz campaigned his Frost Engineering E36. Manfred Duske, also a Club member, ran his Highlander Motorsports 240Z. TC Motorsports entered a FR500S Mustang from their large stable. Outgoing ICSCC Race Steward Hal Hilton ran his Matrix Integrated Hilton Motorsports Porsche 944.

A typical team at the 25 Hour has four or five drivers and somewhere between a handful and a horde of crew. Manfred's crew numbered four, while an unofficial count of Hal's crew yielded 22. I was one of eleven Frost crew members. What do all these people do? Our team was headed by car owner Stan Bovetz, maker of final decisions. Mark Lovitt, principal of Lovitt Motors, was crew chief. His job was to anticipate everything. Mark, Bryce Allen, Kevin Doyle, and Gerald Lowe handled the mechanicals. Eric Nelson was in charge of tires. Jeanne Spreen communicated with the drivers on the radio. She has a knack for giving drivers exactly the information they want. David Beagle was the king of data—fuel consumption, lap times, stint times, pit stop times, competition factors, and more. Adam Greenberg and I handled fueling. And Viktor Bondar did whatever else needed doing, from helping Kevin drive there and back towing the race trailer, to preparing food for everyone, to keeping the race car looking shiny, to bringing hot tea and coffee to anyone who looked chilly. Our driver lineup was PRO3 podium resident Andrew Newell, E36 racer Jim Gallagher, and father-son team Bob and Kris Spreen. Bob and Kris drive open wheel

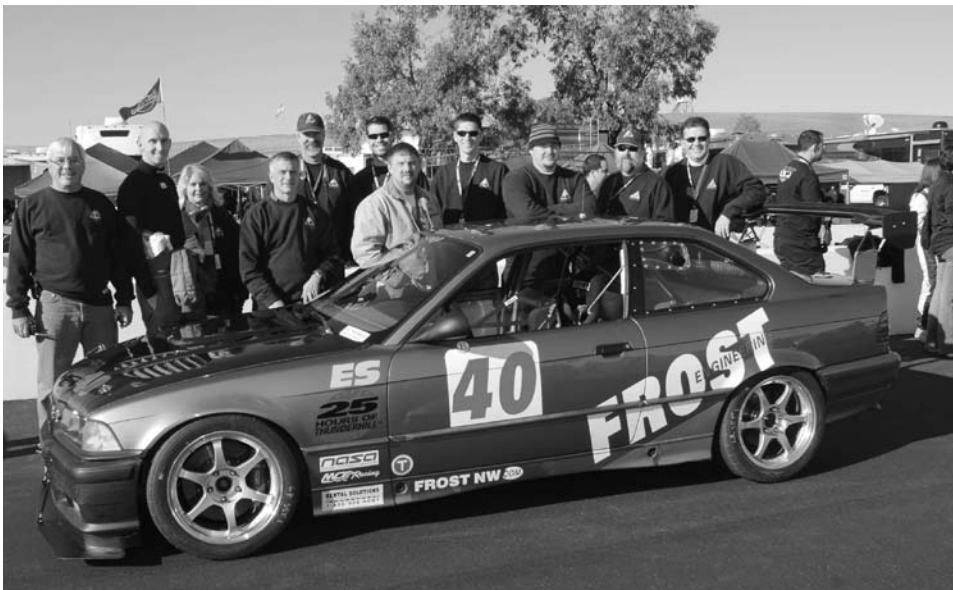
Club Fords in ICSCC, and have teamed up with Andrew in the Strictly E30 in past Cascade enduros.

Thunderhill is about an hour drive north of Sacramento, where the flat fields of the Central Valley meet the gently rolling foothills of the Coastal Range. The track is three miles of changing elevation, off-camber turns, blind crests, and two relatively short straights. It's a blast to drive, and has huge amounts of runoff room, so it's very safe.

The Thursday and Friday before the 25 Hour are open practice sessions. There's a brief qualifying session after dark on Friday. The race itself starts at 11 a.m. Saturday and ends at noon on Sunday. Some years it rains on the 25 Hour, some years it snows, but this was the Year of Fog.

We arrived early Thursday morning in liquid air thick enough that the planned 9am track opening was delayed. If turn station workers can't see down the track to the next turn station, that section of the track is unobserved, and therefore unsafe. The fog lifted just before noon and practice got underway. Our drivers each got time in the car learning the course and the car's characteristics, while the mechanics dealt with the little issues that always seem to crop up. While that was going on, we set up the small parcel of real estate allotted to the team. Each team gets a 10 x 130 foot paddock area behind their pit space. Ours held the race trailer, an RV that served as crew refuge and chuck wagon, and a canopied area for working on the race car. It also held the tiny trailer onto which was strapped a 55-gallon fuel drum (for runs to the on-site gas station), a golf cart to tow it, tool chests, and various bits of racing paraphernalia.

Friday dawned clear—no sign of fog. Race officials had communicated to the teams in the weeks leading up to the event that if the fog got too thick during the race, it would be red-flagged until visibility improved. Friday's bright clear morning gave everyone hope that fog wouldn't be an issue. The day was devoted to getting the car through tech



**Pregrid Frost Engineering Team Photo—David Beagle, Andrew Newell, Angela, Mark Lovitt, Bob Mearns, Kevin Doyle, Eric Nelson, Kris Spreen, Bryce Allen, Stan Bovetz, and Bob Spreen.**

All photos this article by Curtis Creager.



**Race Start.**

inspection, and more driver practice, all leading up to qualifying. Tech took quite a while—the car didn't make it out on the track until the afternoon. At lunch time while the track was closed to race cars, I drove 3 laps. At 30 MPH. At six minutes flat, I believe I now hold the track record in the minivan-with-guy-named-Curtis-hanging-out-the-open-back-shooting-E36-pix class.

Qualifying for the 25 Hour is sixty-plus drivers looking for a fast, clean lap in the dark. I heard many drivers say they couldn't find one and weren't happy with their qualifying times. But in a 25 hour race, starting grid position usually doesn't matter much. Hal's 944 had been having many mechanical issues, but the crew got the last problem fixed just in time for them to get a few qualifying laps in, and they managed

a 17th in class position. Manfred's Z car qualified 16th in class, and TCM's Mustang, which had also been fighting mechanicals, was 13th in class. Andrew's qualified the Frost E36 10th in class and 13th overall.

Race day dawned clear. Cars were rolled onto the grid on the front straight around 10 a.m. For the next 45 minutes, drivers, crews, spectators, and media milled about the shiny race cars in the warm sunshine. There must have been close to a thousand happy, excited people on the asphalt. A bagpiper marched down the grid playing patriotic music, trailed by a US Air Force color guard. The National Anthem was sung, followed by the raucous music of race engines coming to life. The crowd was chased back across the pit wall, and the cars rolled off for two pace laps. As the

green flag flew, the big countdown clock at start-finish clicked to 24:59:59. The cars made it through turn one more or less cleanly, and everyone settled in for a very long race.

Andrew started in the Frost car and worked his way up to fifth overall for most of his stint, with the only Daytona Prototype, a Norma sports racer, an M3 GTR, and a Factory Five GTM-R ahead. He even got up to second overall behind the Prototype for four laps. Stan overheard one of the GTR drivers in the paddock space next to us expressing some shock and dismay that "that old E36 is faster than we are in the corners."

Meanwhile over in TC Motorsports land, Ted Anthony Jr. pitted on the pace lap with a big oil leak. They made the decision to swap in an engine from another of their Mustangs they'd brought along. Three hours later, they were finally racing. Things were not much better for Hal's 944, which blew a head gasket early-on. Manfred's Z car was running flawlessly, executing the team's tortoise/hare strategy. The fastest cars are usually not the winners in endurance racing—the most reliable ones are. Manfred has two podium finishes in past years' 25 Hour races to prove it.

A visibly nervous Jim took over for Andrew. What was there to be nervous about? Only maintaining the great position that Andrew had gained the team, in somebody else's car on a track he'd not driven until two days before. His nerves calmed down after a lap or

*Continued on Page 12*

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# 25 Hours of Thunderhill 2008



How do you fit twenty-five hours of racing into seventeen? Have a ten-hour fog delay.



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Andrew Newell making his way to turn 3.



Team Nitto Tires.



Prototype Development Group.



Followed by many entering turn 14.



Jeff Van Lierop Piloting the TCMotorsports Mustang-3.





**Team principle Stan Bovetz watching and waiting.**

two and he maintained fourth or fifth overall for his entire stint, battling with the GTM-R. The mood of the team was upbeat and optimistic—here we were running in the top five in a big field—but cautious as well. Disaster could strike at any minute, in the form of a bad collision or a mechanical failure, and it was still very early.

Jim got out of the car at the next scheduled stop and Bob took over. He maintained the quick pace set by the first two drivers, but then a rear wheel bearing failed. Bob stayed in the car in the paddock while the crew worked furiously to make repairs. In well under an hour Bob was out turning fast laps again

and making up positions lost while the car was in the paddock.

Not long after dark, the fog rolled in. It was not too bad at first, but by 6:30 p.m., cars were running nose-to-tail in long trains. If the lead car of a train had gone off track, all the rest would likely have followed. Out came the red flag, and cars rolled to a stop on the front straight. Race officials held a quick drivers meeting in which they told everyone that they'd make an announcement every hour on the hour over the PA and over the radio frequency that all teams monitored, telling us whether the race would resume that hour.

Some people stayed awake as they'd planned to do anyway. Others went back to motel rooms in town, betting that they could make it back to the track in half an hour if the call came. Crew chief Mark bedded down in the RV with a radio next to his ear. Hourly announcements of continued fog and no racing continued through the night, like the pronouncements of town criers of old; "2 a.m. and we still can't see a bloody thing." At 4 a.m. no announcement came. When the call came at 4:15

announcing a 5 a.m. restart, Mark was deep in a bad dream in which he'd missed the radio call.

Sleepy crews sprung to life, as work was allowed on the cars as they sat on the front straight where they'd stopped ten hours earlier. At 5 a.m. they rolled off for a few laps behind the pace car, to blow some of the lingering fog off the course. Finally the course went green and the race was back on.

Viktor made countless hot drinks for the Frost crew shivering in the pre-dawn fog, which was now much lighter than the previous evening but still very much a factor for drivers and anyone who ventured out of the warmth of RVs. The car was running well through the early morning, making up positions lost during the long stop Saturday afternoon. Almost no car goes the entire race without some mechanical problem, so if the car kept running, we might be in a very good competitive position at the end, as odds were that cars ahead of ours would break down at some point. The finish time had been pushed back to 3 p.m., so the race duration would ultimately be 17.5 hours.

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Dawn came uneventfully, and with continued fog. All of us had hoped for clearing and a warming sunshine that would thaw our bones, but it wasn't to be—the fog hung in all day. Through the morning, the drivers all got time in the car and our position improved. While Jim was driving, a tie rod end broke, meaning loss of steering control on one side of the car. Jim was able to avoid contact with anything harder than the car and limped it back to pit lane. The crew was on it like free beer, and a new tie rod was installed in eight minutes. We didn't lose much position, and we remained optimistic.

And then about noon, with three hours to go, in an instant our race was over. An oil cooler line was compromised and the engine was starved of oil. It soon threw a connecting rod and put a big hole in the engine block. Poof! The air was let out of the team faster than the oil departed the engine. All the planning, all the effort, all the time that had gone into the Frost team effort was, all of a sudden, wasted. Or was it?

As we tore down our camp and packed up, the race continued on to its conclusion. In the end, the overall winner was a Mazda MX-5 Cup car. The Daytona Prototype, the M3 GTR, all the Mustangs, the Frost E36, and numerous other cars that were faster than the MX-5 had broken and retired, or spent long enough in the pits that they couldn't catch the reliable Mazda. Manfred's Z car finished fifth in class, having run a nearly flawless race. The

TC Motorsports Mustang finished tenth in class, having eked out seven more laps than the Frost car, which finished eleventh in class. Hal's team decided to make the most of an uncompetitive position, and used Sunday as a test and tune session to dial in the suspension and aerodynamics for future races—they finished thirteenth in class.

As Stan, Mark, David, and I drove back to the Sacramento airport to catch a flight home, we reflected on the effort. It was successful in many ways—not a waste at all. Not like it had felt at noon. We had applied lessons learned in 2007 to the 2008 effort and it had worked out well. The team jelled much better than in '07, we were better organized, the car was better prepared, and we had a better finishing position. Not to mention that we had more fun. So as we discussed the lessons of '08, talk inevitably turned to the '09 effort. Yeah—this endurance race stuff is pretty addictive.

*Bob Mearns*



**Hole in motor.**

## Photographer Perspective

WHAT IF YOU HAD THE CHANCE to photograph the longest amateur race in North America? Of course, you would do it!

At 3:30 a.m. on Dec 4, I was outside the world headquarters of TC Motorsports in Auburn preparing to head out for Willows, CA. Sixteen hours later we pulled into Thunderhill.

The next morning, I met with Jerry Kunzman NASA's Executive Director for the Nor-Cal region and Steve Cabana the local photographer. I learned that photographers are allowed to cross the track if they check in with the turn worker...I thought are they insane, no actually I was! I did in fact hop the wall under green flag conditions. If you're not awake when you make the decision to hop the wall you will be, running for your life across forty feet of track while cars are tearing down on you at 100+ mph!

I carried roughly thirty-five pounds of camera gear during the race weekend. I shot with my Nikon D2x and split my time between the 500mm f4.0 and my 70-200 f2.8. I also carried four other lenses.

On Saturday, Dec 6, race day, I was up at 5:30 a.m. and didn't go to sleep until Sunday after dinner ended around 10 p.m. The track is simply beautiful in December; the rolling hills are full of green and gold and the light was perfect. To see more images go to the 25 Hour link on my website home page at [www.creagerimages.com](http://www.creagerimages.com).

Having the opportunity to shoot this race was a real treat. Thanks to Lucetta Lightfoot for getting me the credentials, and thanks to Jerry Kunzman and to Steve Cabana for their graciousness. I also give a big thank you to everyone at TC Motorsports for the ride down and back home, for a little comedy mixed in with some good food.

*Curtis Creager*

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# The PRO3 Line

## The PRO3 Line, by a PRO3 Wife.

IT'S JANUARY. Mike has given up writing and is moping around the house. I'm taking over his column to let you all know just what we are going through around here. Evenings seem to be the worst; sometimes during dinner, he'll dump a full plate of food onto the table, and then take off running through the house pretending the plate is a steering wheel. Our two kids, Joe and Danica join in right behind him, so I'm left alone at the table while two kids and a crazy person run around the house making engine noises with their dirty-dinner-plate steering wheels. When Mike comes home from work, he spends hours just moving the car in and out of the trailer. Ultimately, he'll leave the car in the trailer, just in case a call comes in sometime in the dark of night that a secret PRO3 race has been scheduled and he must be out of the driveway in fifteen minutes. Let me tell you, if that call comes, he's ready. That being said please don't call here at 2 a.m., it might seem funny, but keep in mind I have enough to deal with around here.

I can't remember exactly how this all started. Hind sight being 20/20 I think there was a comment or two that I really should have paid VERY close attention

to. Mike may have said something like: "racing cars would be really fun," or "I think I'll go to Auburn and watch this race," or "Hey, did you notice the new car in the garage?" Yep I should have listened a little more closely. What I do remember is this: I was pregnant, Joe was two, and there was an E30 being dissected in our garage. I will leave it up to your imagination to figure out how well a few of those conversations went.

Fast forward three years and a family weekend away is a family weekend at the track. I'd stay home more often but apparently I'm not in a very good mood after a three day weekend home alone with the kids. Imagine that.

So off we all go with our little camper, which long ago should have been retired, snuggled in under a ripped blue tarp to spend the rest of its days silently decaying in peace. But no, for ten plus weekends a summer that little piece of Americana is our home. At 7 a.m. when the alarm clock, I mean engines, start going off the very first thing I do is roll over and turn on the coffee pot. The best thing about the camper is that the coffee pot is within an arms' reach. The down side of this is that by the time I've been awake for thirty seconds the high-light of my camper living day is over. Roll over, turn on coffee pot and it's all downhill from there. At home we have a lot of nice, comfortable space in which to complete all the tasks of the day. In

the camper I'm trying to brush my teeth, wash dishes and change a diaper all in the same forty square feet, often all at the same time. Around that point every morning I'm thinking that a weekend at home alone with the kids wouldn't have been so bad after all.

I've seen sherpas on expedition in the Himalayas carry less stuff than I do just to watch a thirty minute car race: with snacks, juice, toys, blankets, sunscreen, raingear, kids. However, no matter how much stuff I carry I can't fit the one thing that every little and kid is going to need as soon as we sit down: a bathroom. "Are you SURE? You just went!" So, while most of you can give details of all the tracks based on distance, number of turns, etc., etc., here's the "potty perspective"—Mission: "No problem I can see the porta potties from the bleachers." Seattle: "Okay, restrooms are kind of on the way, but hurry." Spokane: "If it's an emergency the grass is taller than you are, just go there." Portland: "Are you KIDDING me!? The bathrooms are where??"

Mike's been racing for three years and in all that time I've never sat down and watched a complete race. You can bet that when something really exciting happens on the track I'm either passing out snacks or opening a juice box. Ninety-nine percent of the people in the bleachers gasp or yell, and I'll look around saying "What happened? Was it Mike?" As long as I can glance up every once in awhile long enough to see the Reaper go by then I consider the race a success.

And yet somehow even I am starting to look forward to next season. So here's my plug for PRO3: Thank goodness for this group! I walk around, chasing kids, looking forward to a few minutes to sit down, with only a faint idea that all around me people are working like crazy to make sure everybody is ready for the race. I can't begin to imagine a weekend at the track without the friendship, support, and (especially) the humor of these racers and their crews. Please keep waving and smiling at the crazy lady, as I stumble through my days at the track I appreciate your smiles more than words can say. See you in a few months!

*Melanie Olsen is the very patient spouse of Michael Olsen, driver of the Spirit Halloween Superstores PRO3 #130  
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### Tell me why you "live to drive" your BMW.

I WATCH A LOT OF CAR TELEVISION. Mostly I watch stuff about car show events; I really like "Chasing Classic Cars" on the Discovery channel. I don't know if you have seen this show, but it's about a guy who buys, restores and re-sells classic cars.

The issue with these shows is that even though most car nuts and gear heads like you and I enjoy these shows, we will most likely never show a car at Pebble Beach. It doesn't mean we don't have cool cars. It just means we don't have piles of money lying about.

Which brings me to my idea: I would like to feature a different member's car every month. Now this may seem sort of bland and feel like a "done to death" idea, but I want to put a twist on it.

I want to approach it in a holistic way, focusing on the individual as well as their car. People are interesting: their desires, passions, goals and the stories of how they got to where they are. We all love our cars and want to share them with others or we would not be in the Club to begin with.

If you walk up to a BMW driver at an event, the conversation goes in a circle. The conversation starts with the car, moves to some stories, then information is exchanged and friendships are formed. That is what I'm after here; we're going to visit a little bit while showing off our cars

So here is what we are going to do. You are going to email me a few pictures of your car, along with answers to the following questions:

1. Tell me about your car?
2. When you bought it?
3. Why you bought it?
4. Modifications you've made?
5. Whether or not you like the mods you've made? (We could all use each others experience and wisdom).
6. Is there an interesting story involving your car?

7. What was your first car?
8. What was your first BMW?
9. What car would you buy if there were no limitations?

This gives us a good starting point and I'm sure we'll evolve as the feature matures. Here is what I need from you along with answers to the questions above:

- Your name
- Your email address  
(Let me know if you want your email address posted in the article, some people may have questions or kudos on your car.)
- Pictures of your car  
(just a couple of your favorites)

Make sure the word BMW is somewhere in the subject line of your email. It makes it easier for me to not miss it in the spam-filtered email world.

That's about it. One other thing: don't be shy, here is your chance to get your car published, share ideas and make BMW friends.

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## Special Interest Groups

THE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs) are independent groups run by individuals not necessarily associated with the BMW CCA Puget Sound Region. They are neither regulated nor funded by the Club, with the possible exception of specific co-sponsored events. However, the Club Board of Directors does feel that they are an important resource for Club members in the area, so we have chosen to promote them for the benefit of our members. We welcome new SIGs to the list. Please contact Lance Richert to add a SIG to this list.

SIG GROUP	CONTACT	EMAIL	PHONE
E3—2500/2800/ Bavaria/3.0si '68-'77	Gus Blazek	E3Bavaria@Gmail.com	253-941-0463
E30—3 Series '84-'91	Lance Richert	Lance@Richertnet.com	425-644-8009
E36—3 Series '92-'99	Kim Burgess	Bluptgm3@att.net	206-601-8705
Z3/Z4 Coupes '99-	Doug Mill	Y2kMcoupe@aol.com	
Racing SIG (PRO-3, etc)	Wes Hill	wes.hill@earthlink.net	206-989-9516

*Last updated 11/25/08*

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## MARKETPLACE

### BMW's for Sale

**2004 330Ci:** WBABD53474PL13274 Silver/Gray 61,000 miles, Steptronic, Premium and Sport packages, Rain sensor and auto headlight, in-dash cd player (Harmon-Kardon sound system), eight-way power seats (heated) with lumbar support, Myrtle wood trim, power glass moonroof, MacNeil rubber mats throughout, universal transceiver, Xenon headlights, full-size spare, tool kit, new tires, Billy Boat performance exhaust, DINAN chips (engine and transmission), K&N air filter, oil and fluids changed more frequently than BMW recommends, 28+ mpg, regularly hand-washed and waxed with Xymol. \$24,000. Contact Bill at 360-666-0557 or billlaull@pacifier.com.

**2002 M3 Coupe:** Showroom condition with only 17,486 miles. Carbon black/black interior, smoke-free interior, 6-speed manual, power sunroof, heated seats, DINAN software upgrade, Hartge 19" wheels, H&R springs, 3M Scotchgard protection, UUC short shifter, Eisenman exhaust, tinted windows. Never tracked. Always garaged and covered. All maintenance records available. \$32,000. Pictures upon request. Email to Ed at vintagered2@verizon.net or call 425-775-1668.

**2001 M3:** E46 model, titanium silver over black leather, 6 speed, 68,000 miles, second owner (both BMW CCA members), superb condition in & out, CARFAX certified, no accidents or paint work, fully loaded, 19" OEM M3 wheels with new tires, heated nappa leather seats, tint, xenon lights, HK CD/MP3 sound though the speakers have been upgraded with Rainbow BSW Stage 1 speaker kit, SIRIUS with eight months left of free service, moonroof, clear corners, side markers and rear taillights, painted reflectors, Rogue upgraded tranny mounts (smoother shifts), Rouge clutch stop, up to date on all services and every record since new, very fast, serious buyers only please. Buy a car like this ///M with a clean history that has no issues, problems or excuses. \$24,500 obo. Call 206-719-6453 or email mahall75@hotmail.com.

**1998 M3:** WBSBG9322WEY78698. Silver/gray leather, 2-door coupe, 115,000 miles, 5-Speed, multi CD Harmon Kardon sound system, overall unusually excellent condition, power sunroof, Bilstein shocks, forged lightweight BMW design wheels, updated late 1998/1999 style 3-spoke steering wheel/air bag, second owner (originally BMW CPO), car cover, over maintained by thirty-year BMW Club member, Synthetic Lubricants only, always garaged, no accidents, abuse, track, kids, pets, smoking, excuses. Clean CARFAX History, all maintenance records, hand washed and waxed only. \$12,500. Call 425-985-3193 or 425-888-3184.

**1976 2002:** One owner car, 145,000 on the car; 45,000 on the factory engine. Sienna brown, 4 speed, sun roof. Clean history, service records, references with twenty year mechanic. Asking \$8,500. Email Howard@shgllc.com.

**1974 3.0CS:** Second owner (since 1985); 75,000 miles. Sienna brown, 4 speed, sun roof, air. Clean history, service records, references with 20 year mechanic. Asking \$14,500. Email Howard@shgllc.com.

### Parts for Sale

**Vintage Recaro Sport Seats:** A pair of early 1980s Recaro Sport seats finished in their original black corduroy material. They came out of my 1972 911S and include the Porsche mounting rails. They would be wonderful in a vintage BMW. Note: these are not factory Recaro sport seats. They are in excellent condition without any rips or tears. Huge side bolsters, high-back seats with headrests. They are incredibly comfortable and fully adjustable. Photos available via email or stop by Griot's Garage in Fife and I'll show them to you. \$1,200 for the pair. Mark Greene at Griot's Garage 253-922-2400, ext. 102 or mgreene@griotsgarage.com.

**Four Nokian Hakkapelitta studless snow tires:** (195/70 R14 ) mounted and balanced on BMW steel wheels. From a 318is, 80% tread left. \$360. If interested, call Dave at 503-668-5188 or email deborahkaechele@yahoo.com.

**Set of Five BMW aluminum rims:** 165TR390. Good shape. Off my 1983 735i (E23). Also fits 1978-89 5 Series (E28), 6 series (E24) and 7 series (E23). Call 206-601-7704.

**Set of Four 14" Aluminum BMW wheels, 6JX14H2.** Fits 1974-89 5 Series (E28) and 6 Series (E24). Just right for those winter tires. \$100. 206-601-7704.

### Miscellaneous

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