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of America  
Houston Chapter



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A Publication of the Houston Chapter BMW Car Club of America



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# The Road Ahead



For those unable to make it out for our Annual Dinner in January, we hope you make it a point to attend the 2013 event. Kathy Lee and her volunteers truly did a wonderful job in coordinating the gala. And thanks to James Weaver for the innovative slide show he put together. He made it a bit different and interesting. As you know at this event we hold our annual membership meeting, announce the results of the elected Board members for 2012, recognize the front-runners and award trophies for the various autocross categories, acknowledge new Road Monkeys, and celebrate the year in review.

For 2012, members of the Executive Committee are:

- President - David R. Dalton
- Vice President - Dennis Nowak
- Alternate Secretary – Pam Johnson
- Treasurer – Sarah Nowak

The Executive Committee voted the following members to appointed Board positions:

- Newsletter Editor – James Saynay
- Webmaster – Jeff Thomson
- Membership Chair – Pam Johnson
- Social Events Chair – Kathy Lee
- Driving Events Coordinator – Ken Finley
- Autocross Chair – Gerald Anderson/Aaraj Thyagaraj

Due to the even and odd years for elected Board members to serve established in our Ops Manual, Jim Moffitt was caught up in serving a third year as Secretary. In an effort to allow other members to serve Jim chose to step down for 2012. The Executive Committee then elected Pam Johnson as Alternate Secretary to serve for 2012. Many thanks to Jim for functioning as Chapter Secretary for the last two years.

Something unheard of for quite some time, we had three members step up for the Technical Advisor position this year. Our thanks to all that volunteer to keep our Chapter as active and well organized as it is. As without them... well, we wouldn't be. This year the Executive Committee voted to appoint Mike Williams with BMW of Houston North as our new Technical Advisor. As many of you know Mike has been instrumental in the support BMW North has given the Chapter over the years and now we welcome his direct involvement with the Chapter. Our deepest

appreciation to James Williams for the many years he held this position. I can't think of many that would step up year after year like James did to support the Chapter. Thank you James, you have our admiration and gratitude!

Also this year, our Chapter is taking on a new venture, thanks to Steve Amos. For those that may not know Steve, he is the BMW CCA South Central Race Chairman and thanks to his efforts our Chapter is hosting the BMW National Challenge Club Race and DE at Texas World Speedway December 15th-16th. The Board will be working close with Steve over the following months plus he will be keeping the membership advised through the Torque as well as eBlasts in the months ahead.

For those not signed up to receive our monthly eBlasts you are strongly encouraged to do so. Not only to keep current with this event as we go forward but also to be aware of our other activities ranging from dinners to monthly coffees, drives, overnight trips, and fun rallies, to Concours d'Elegance, and tech sessions at independent BMW shops, autocross events to driver schools aimed at making you a safer driver while navigating through the mad-house on the Houston roads. These are other benefits available to you as a BMW CCA member.

Our t-shirts with the new Chapter logo have arrived. Pam Johnson will be your contact for getting your hands on one of these. Also we are expecting to have polo-type shirts embroidered with the logo available soon as well. Check your eBlast for availability.

Welcome to Brad Massey as a new advertiser in the Torque. Brad works as a Service Advisor with Momentum BMW West and has taken care of my service needs for several years now. He is a hands-on, detailed type of guy that makes certain your particular requirements are addressed and attended to. Thanks Brad for your support in the Torque.

Please remember to check the events calendar on the website regularly to keep current on various activities as they are developed and scheduled throughout the year.

See ya on the back roads.

- David



# So You Think You Can Drive?

BMW Club Race and Drivers Education Event (DE)



Steve Amos

Our Houston Chapter of BMWCCA is hosting the BMW National Challenge Club Race this coming December 15-16 2012 at Texas World Speedway. In addition club members and guests have the opportunity to register with the Speedway's Drivers Education DE.

The race is BMWCCA's only National Challenge Race and is second only in importance to the O'Fest Race at Mid Ohio Raceway in September. Due to bonus points awarded in a National event we fully expect many out of state racers vying for Regional and National honors.

Have you ever thought about driving in a DE?

Have you ever had your BMW out on the highway and wanted to "open it up" but hesitated because you were afraid of getting a ticket or having someone pull out in front of you? Many of us have had those thoughts. Deep down inside many of us would like to see what our cars can do and are curious as to how we would do on a race track.

Food for thought: It is amazing how much safer it is on a race track that on the street. On the street you have drivers going all kinds of different directions. You have cellphones, loud stereos, arguments, amber lights, people running red lights, alcohol and so many other distractions I don't think I can list them all. Pretty crazy out on the street. I remember my first driving school like it was yesterday and it was actually a long time ago. One of the first things I noticed was how well organized the

event was and how controlled the driving environment was. Wow.

Everyone on the track was driving the same direction. No stop signs, no curbs or telephone poles. It was amazing. And, in a DE you are not allowed to pass someone unless they give you a passing signal. And they even tell you what side of their car to pass on.

The purpose of a DE is to learn how to handle your car in a safe manner and still have fun and the main focus of a DE is safety. Every new driver has a highly skilled instructor in the car with them at all times. The instructor teaches the necessary basics of driving on a race track and if you want to they will teach you how to go faster. After every session on the track there is classroom instruction for all drivers. A DE is one of the most rewarding and exciting things you will ever do AND you get to it with your BMW. You get to find out why a BMW is the Ultimate Driving Machine.

Did I say that there are no speed traps on a race track? No cell phones, no radios. Only drivers and instructors focused on safety. If you have ever had thoughts of racing wheel to wheel then this is the place to start.

Your Houston Chapter is in the planning stage of hosting an annual DE and Club Race next year that will be solely sponsored by BMWCCA. This year's event will held within the rules and guidelines of Texas World Speedway's Driving School

but the BMW Club Race will be sanctioned by the Chapter and BMW National. It will be exciting to watch the race and a also have a chance to drive you own car on the track at speed.

I remember my first time. Wow, what a weekend. We had drivers who wanted to go fast and we had drivers that wanted to learn car control only. Some drivers had no interest in being the fastest. This is the beauty of a DE. You choose your speed. The choice is yours. Did I mentioned there are no speed traps?

I will be writing more this year about the benefit of a DE as well as the "behind the scenes" happenings at a race.

Steve Amos  
E30 M3  
#217







# Steel Polishes Steel

Howard Laster

Aside from Coca Cola being known as “the Real Thing,” there are likely few more recognizable brand slogans in any industry automotive or otherwise, than “BMW - The Ultimate Driving Machine” and “Porsche, There is No Substitute”. BMW vs. Porsche has been, and will continue to be, a heated debate between those of us who currently own either marque, or those who merely aspire to own either. Each brand in its own right represents the very epitome of racing history, social status, engineering brilliance and driving enthusiasm.

However, with any good rivalry, inspiration to compete can be had with only a glance over to the opposing team; thus acknowledging the complicated ying and yang of a symbiotic racing development pursuit. More simply - through competition, steel polishes steel. And in this case, that phrase applies both figuratively and even quite literally sometimes on the racetrack.

Without regard to price comparisons and exact performance space, we could easily take a path of examining the various brand lineup comparisons (7 Series vs. Panamera, X5 vs. Cayenne, M5 vs. 911 Turbo, Z Roadster vs. Boxster) and have a heated and healthy debate. However, the focus here will be simply on the two icons for each brand that provide the most race ready platforms to the consumer for both street and track use: the BMW M3 vs. the Porsche GT3.

For the BMW purist, the M performance badge represents the very finest in BMW's storied in-house motorsport division. Despite producing countless innovations, technical achievements and racing victories within the highest ranks of Formula One racing dating back to 1950, the BMW M Division generates far more direct racing interest in the entire lineup than any other form of BMW. One need only look to the meteoric rise in US brand sales of the 3 series lineup since the late 1980's to evidence that statement.

Originating in 1986, the first M3 (E30) was limited

to just 16,202 cars worldwide and produced 192 horsepower from its smallish 2.3 liter - inline four cylinder engine, yet delivered an unprecedented 146 mph top speed and class best 0-60 time of 6.9s. On the street this platform sold out so quickly deposits were taken here locally in Houston over a year in advance to obtain one. The aggressive styling and typical German functionality combined with the cutting edge performance of the M3 created huge demand for the daily driver and a cult type following. So great was the demand that it surpassed that of even its slightly older and bigger brother, the M5.

On the track, BMW waged war under the E30 M3 platform in various touring car championships with 12 major titles over its lifetime. More notably however, the BMW E30 M3 absolutely dominated the 24 Hours of Nurburgring with consecutive wins between 1989-1992. Of note was the fact that

three separate teams comprised the four titles (Team Bigazzi in '89 & 92, Schnitzer in '91 and Linder in '90) which included a new track record of 144 laps. Multiple team victories represent a tribute to the M3's adaptability, race reliability and ease of setup and tuning.

Over the next 13 years, revised editions of the M3 (E36) and the M3GT/GTR battled Porsche, Chrysler, and Opel for victory at the Nurburgring and bested the competition six of those 13 years, with Porsche only scoring a single overall victory with the 911 Carrera 993 in 1993. In its final year of production the E36 M3 in showroom trim produced horsepower ranges of 240-316 hp from a 3.2 liter - inline six platform; with only 120 race dedicated lightweight (LTW) race models available. While probably of little historical significance to the non-Porsche file, the first M3 GT platform was produced as a Europe only, limited edition of 356 units.



The M3 Interior - more sport than luxury but comfortable enough for a long drive



For those of you reading with Porsche history in mind, perhaps the most historic car built by Dr Ferdinand Porsche's son, Ferry Porsche, is the Porsche 356. To most Porsche faithful, the 356 set Porsche on the road and quest towards its status today. The 356 brought forward three key ingredients to the marque's success: the unique styling shape, the forward iconic eye-like headlights and the much debated rear engine design, that still can be found on the latest generation - the 911 991. So, with 356 BMW racing units produced, war was declared; or really just re-declared, should we say.

As with most rivalries, seldom does one team dominate the other in perpetuity. Clearly in this article, I am in no way suggesting that Porsche did not best BMW in many other venues during this time period including the 24 Hour of Le Mans, and likewise that BMW did not also outperform and out-design Porsche in race settings like Formula One, where Porsche has never even entered the arena. I am merely focusing on what to date is often every German carmaker's obsession and proving ground: The 24 Hours of Der Nurburgring.

So it was that in 1998 that the table began to turn as Porsche unveiled its completely new 911, generation 996. With its newly designed hood lines and wider body, combined with a 911 first, a water-cooled engine, the base 911 996 drew mixed reviews from Porsche loyalists. The new car not only departed from its historic air-cooled roots, but also shared front-end design, and yes even some parts, from the Boxster platform. No doubt partly in response to the outcry of discontent from purists and also from the 12 year Nurburgring victory drought, Porsche in 1999 brought forth to



The GT3 RS interior is purpose built - even the back seat is removed



its dealerships the high performance/raced dedicated/street legal alternative, the 996 GT3.

The 996 GT3 was based in part on the early 911 tradition set by the 1973 911 RS cars, but I digress from the more modern era. What the GT3 was in 1999 and still is today is a 6 cylinder, naturally aspirated engine; with its heritage and direct technology enhancements derived from the Porsche factory GT3 RSR program cars. These cars, just like the BMW M3's, are stripped down in weight, stiffened in suspension, tuned to ear piercing RPMs and stripped from all luxury class appointments (including

back seats); yet are available at your local dealership for purchase.

It was in 2000, that Porsche and the GT3 began to assert Porsche's overall commitment to the 24 Hours of Nurburgring with a stunning victory over the prior year winner, the Chrysler Viper, and set a new track race record of 145 laps. Porsche would just barely yield the top podium spot to Chrysler in both 2001 & 2002; and again narrowly to BMW and the stunningly shaped and re-designed BMW E46 M3 platform in 2004 and 2005. The E46 M3 winner was fitted with a limited production 3.9 liter V8 engine. In my opinion, a used V8 equipped E46 M3 is easily one of the best values around for someone seeking this type of car ownership (anecdotally, my head still swivels when I see a Laguna Seca Blue E46).

Despite the 996's dominance in many other GT based racing series against the early BMW E46 six cylinders, Porsche routinely lost to the large displacement V8 E46 M3s. As Porsche was determined to return to the top of the podium, it was once again BMW's dominant steel that drove Porsche's next development. With a much awaited and anticipated debut, Porsche delivered to both European and US showrooms the 2007 GT3 "RS" version for one purpose and this purpose alone; beat the M3. Based entirely off the 2006 Nurburgring GT3RSR race winner, the 2007 RS variant included a new close ratio, six-speed gearbox, a single mass flywheel, reduced overall weight, a horizontally opposed 3.6 liter Metzger motor, a wider rear stance/tires and produced 415 hp, a top speed of 193 mph and a 0-60 time in Road and Track's test of 3.8 seconds, (despite Porsche's claim of only 4.1 seconds).

The reduced weight, increased power and slicker aerodynamics proved to be the much needed

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combination for success on the Nurburgring and in the showroom for Porsche, as sales of the 911 in the mid 2000s waned against the Boxster and the Cayenne in terms of units sold. The 24 Hour Nurburgring victories for the 997 GT3 RS continued from 2006 into 2007, 2008 and 2009 and included a new race distance record of 155 laps in 2009.

However, once again in 2010, it was the arch rival BMW M3, in its E92 GT2 variant, that pushed Porsche off the podium once again with a specially designed 4.4 liter V8 producing an undisclosed "more than 450 hp" claim putting the power down with a revised sequential carbon fiber clutch. This GT production variant for BMW made its way to the showroom floor the year before in the form of the (stunningly orange) E92 M3 GTS.

And so you may ask, what happened in 2011? The see-saw continues, as the new 911 GT3RS 4.0 six cylinder platform with a claimed 493 hp, up from 3.8 liters via its increased stroke, returns the Matheny Racing Porsche team to atop the podium for the fifth time in six years with yet another new track lap record of 156 laps!

If this is starting to feel like a never ending game of poker, with each opponent raising the ante infinitely, well, you might just be getting my drift. The obvious point here is that both brands lead at times and follow at others. These constant responses to the opposing team's success and yes, even failures seem endless. No further proof of this exists than as we go to press with this article, Porsche just recently unveiled its plans for the new 991 Turbo, arguably its most iconic selling model. The new Turbo is to be offered in a revised triple turbo induction system. Industry conjecture is that this design could quite possibly be based on the success of the current BMW 550d x-Drive diesel tri-turbo design, (but hey, it's probably just a coincidence right?).

Both brands clearly are bitter rivals, but they are indirectly best of friends as each pushes the other to the next level of performance and we the consumers are clearly the benefactors. It's impossible to argue the superiority of either vehicle be it on the track or street. It's also impossible to chronicle the entire individual racing history each brand has enjoyed in various classes in one article. Each of these vehicles competes in classes sometimes inclusive and exclusive of the other and both must be respected, and coveted, for their individual merits on both the track and the street.

However, as the current owner of the GT3 RS pictured on the cover, a prior 911 Turbo owner and an admitted Porsche addict, I must confess that I am equally as passionate about BMW, as the first car I purchased out of college was a BMW 325i and I have also been fortunate enough to also own M5. I can say with a clear conscience, devoid of brand loyalty that I absolutely pined away for each BMW and Porsche before the purchase, drove all in anger and loved on them all equally with the orbital. Hopefully no matter what your brand bias, we can all agree that we should all be grateful for the opportunity to own any of these cars, and even more grateful for the beautiful evolution of both brands spawned by their maker's intense pursuit to out-do the other year over year. Let our prayer to the car gods tonight be that both brands continue to battle it out on the track for years to come!





# Homes for Our Troops Event

Dennis Nowak



The BMWCCA Houston Chapter was invited to join in on a charity car display on January 28th, 2012 to benefit the Homes for Our Troops organization. This organization helps with the construction of homes for disabled troops who have been injured in service.

Unfortunately, I did not get to meet the soldiers who were the guests of honor, but I did catch a quick procession of cars and motorcycles coming into the complex. I was not aware of what was going on until I saw the convertible Continental with the stars and stripes paint job and I only managed to snap a couple of pictures by the time I got my camera ready.

Besides the car display, the main event was a sporting clays tournament, carnival rides, food vendors, jousting displays and charity rides in a Huey helicopter. Various cars were on display from Corvette, Camaro, Austin Healy, Ferrari, Porsche,

and Mini to pre-war Rolls Royce and Cadillac and of course, our BMW's.

For taking the time to support a worthwhile cause and displaying their cars I would personally like to thank the following people: Kathy Kehoe-Lee (1973 2002 tii), Pam Johnson (2012 650i), Adriana Diesen (2008 M6), Sarah Nowak (1984 M635CSi) James Saynay (1985 535i) and Tor Taklo (1974 3.0 CS). All these fine automobiles along with my M Roadster were parked next to brand new Dealer cars from Mercedes, Jaguar and Aston Martin.

Some of you BMW aficionados will notice that we had a model of all 3 generations of 6 series produced to date. Pam, Adriana and Sarah had their cars parked side by side in order of production. It was quite interesting to see the styling differences from generation to generation. Another thing you might notice is that we had the first and second generation of the original coupes parked

together. Tor's 3.0CS "Coupe" is the older brother and predecessor to Sarah's M635CSi which is also referred to as the "Big Coupe" by BMW owners. The distinct backwards sloped nose of these two coupes can also be seen in the styling of Kathy's 2002 and James 535i as well.

While we were hanging around the car display, I had been photographing the Huey take off and land in a field not too far away.

For those of you younger in years, a Huey helicopter is a military helicopter in service during the Vietnam War era and to me it looks like a huge tadpole, plus they have a distinctive sound! Now I have been on quite a few helicopters going offshore to platforms in the Gulf, but I have not been in a Huey. So, when I asked Sarah if she wanted to take a ride with me she said sure. We mentioned to Pam that we were going for a ride and she said she had never ridden in a helicopter







and she would go too. We each bought tickets with Pam buying a ticket to ride up front in the co-pilot's seat. When it was our turn to load up they buckled Pam into the front seat and filled the back seats with others leaving Sarah and I to sit in the gunners seats, back to back facing out each of the doors and yes the doors were open! What a great ride!

So, the next time you see Pam Johnson, ask her how she enjoyed her first helicopter ride!

All in all it was a nice event. This was their first car display, not without a few hiccups, but I am ready to go next year. The weather turned out great and given the charity it benefited, I think all who attended felt proud to be there!

May God bless our service men and women!

Thank you for what you do!



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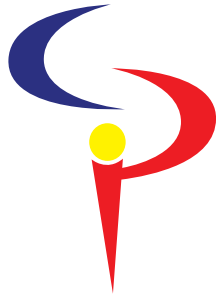
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**TECH TIP**  
**Mike Williams**



Tire pressure is a measure of the amount of air in a vehicle's tires, in pounds per square inch. The required service involves checking the tires' pressure with a pressure gauge, at least monthly, if not more frequently.

Why do I have to do this?

Having the proper tire pressure is a crucial safety issue. Next to the brakes, the tires are the most important safety devices on your car. Incorrect tire pressure will compromise cornering, braking and stability. Incorrect tire pressure also will affect your comfort, fuel economy and tire life.

What happens if I don't do this?

If tire pressure is too high, then less of the tire touches the ground. As a consequence, your car will bounce around on the road. And when your tires are bouncing instead of firmly planted on the road, traction suffers and so do your stopping distances. You'll also feel a decrease in ride comfort. (Hint: If you notice that every tie you own has coffee on it, check your tire pressure. It may be too high.)

If tire pressure is too low, then too much of the tire's surface area touches the ground, which increases friction between the road and the tire. As a result, not only will your tires wear prematurely, but they also could overheat. Overheating can lead to tread separation — and a nasty accident. One sign of low tire pressure is if your tires squeal when cornering.



You also need to check your tire pressure even if your tires aren't leaking. Why? Because tire pressure also changes with the temperature outside. Tire pressure decreases by about 1 pound per square inch for every 10-degree drop in outside air temperature. So if you last had your tire pressure checked in July, when it was 80 degrees outside, and it's now January — and the temperature is minus 20 — your tires may be under inflated by 10 pounds, which is dangerous.

How do you determine the correct tire pressure for your car's tires?

A lot of people check the pressure listed on the tires themselves, but that's actually the wrong place to look. The number on the tire is the maximum allowable air pressure — not the recommended pressure for that tire when used on your vehicle. The recommended tire pressure is almost always lower than the maximum tire pressure. Check your owner's manual to find out where to look on your vehicle to find the recommended measurement. This number is usually indicated on the driver's door pillar.

Once you know the manufacturer's recommended tire pressure, then you need an accurate tire gauge to check the tire pressure. Some tire gauges, such as the popular pencil-style gauge, are notoriously inaccurate. Analog, dial-type gauges or digital gauges tend to be fairly accurate.

And when should you check the tire pressure? |

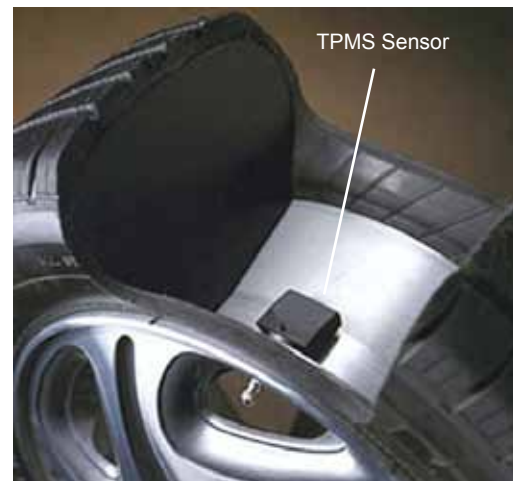
You should check it when the tire is cold. Cold, in this sense, simply means that your tires are at air temperature. You can check tire pressure any time of the day, as long as the tires have been sitting for a few hours or haven't been driven for more than a few miles. In other words, you can drive to the gas station a few blocks away and ask them to check the pressure, but don't expect to pull off the highway after driving for an hour and expect to get an accurate reading.

When you do check your tire pressure, remember to check all four tires. Just because three of your tires are at 30 pounds doesn't mean that the fourth tire isn't nearly flat. Finally, check the spare tire at least once in a while — it would be an unpleasant surprise to find it flat when you need it. If you have a small, space-saver spare, then the pressure for that tire is probably not the same pressure as your regular tires. The correct tire pressure should be printed right on this particular type of spare.

What is TPMS?

Short for Tire Pressure Monitoring System it is a constant electronic measuring sensor (see picture) that can tell you if one (or more) tire is low compared to the others or in more modern and sophisticated cars, the actual pressure for each tire and display it on your dashboard. While these systems enhance vehicle safety, they should not preclude the tips presented earlier in the article.

Oh and while you are down there - check the tread depth and overall condition of the tire - but more on that later.



A typical instrument panel display if a low tire pressure situation is present



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# CAN-AM!!

Tony Sakkis



**Probably the most-lamented series is Can-Am. That's real Can-Am, the unlimited-displacement, insane-horsepower, thundering, stupid-fast, oh-my-God-look-at-that-thing, bad-ass Can-Am. It'll never happen again. But one can hope.**

Likewise, the Procar series is a series is something that a lot of race fans would like to see return. It was another great concept – but it never really got off the ground. BMW ended it just as the series was getting popular. And it was a shame.

Frankly, there are too many racing series in the world. And although we all know it, that doesn't mean we couldn't stand another one or two.

The idea was dreamed up by BMW's Jochen Neerpasch in 1978 for the Sports Car World Championship in 1979. The M1 was to compete, but there was a small problem. Group 5 rules required a minimum of 400 cars that had been built or had competed in Group 4 before the car could be further homologated for Group 5 racing. BMW had neither credential.

The M1 was being built, but it couldn't be campaigned if 400 cars weren't built, so Neerpasch decided he could build race cars since they counted toward the 400 minimum. But where to race them? There weren't enough Group 4 buyers to fill 400 orders.

Bang. Procar, a one-make series consisting of the Group 4 M1.

Under direction from March's Max Mosley – who was using BMW power in his F2 cars – Neerpasch was able to market his idea as a support event for European Formula One events. The Procar

Association was formed and FISA subsequently approved it.

The Procar Championship was first announced in 1978 at the M1's official unveiling and slated for action in the 1979 season. The series would hold practice and qualifying on Friday of European F1 race weekends, and the Procar races were to take place on Saturday.

What was unique about the series was who was to contest the races: F1 drivers themselves.

Seats were guaranteed to the five fastest F1 drivers as they had qualified in Friday's F1 practice. So they didn't even have to qualify the M1s as long as they had done well in their own cars. Likewise, they didn't have to prepare the cars. BMW did all the prep work and all they had to do was drive, for which they were paid a small purse based on finishing results, but were awarded an M1 at the end of the season for winning the series championship. This was a nice deal. Half-hour's worth of racing for the possibility of a new BMW M1?

It wasn't all smooth sailing. Since the Procar series ran Goodyear tires, several drivers were prohibited from running – like the Michelin and Pirelli drivers. Then there were the factory teams like Ferrari and Renault, who were not allowed due to the possibility of being seen in the competition's machinery. But those who could did. In addition to F1 drivers, the series had some of the best sports car, touring car and formula car drivers filling out the rest of

the grid. So it was a sort of IROC for road racers of different disciplines.

The cars were built to identical standards, by one of three builders: BS Fabrications, Project Four—which was led by future McLaren boss Ron Dennis -- and Osella. The car was stripped to 2,200 pounds and the M1s top speed was increased to 192MPH and moved from a dead stop to 60 mph in 4.1 seconds.

The car was modified with a more aggressive spoiler and adjustable rear wing and the wheel wells were widened to allow for wider Campagnolo center-nut wheels that mimicked the aluminum 'moon' wheels that became standard equipment on the street M1 and would be modified to appear on the 750s in the late '80s and early '90s.

Engines on the standard M1 was an aluminum-blocked 3.5-liter, 277-HP M88 straight-6 that was modified for the series by Paul Rosche so that it had 470 horsepower at 9000 rpm. It did use, however, the 5-speed ZF gearbox from the street car, with mild modification. It had bigger brakes – with driver adjustable brake-bias – and was stripped and equipped with a roll cage.

The season started in 1979 in May, at the Belgian Grand Prix. Lotus driver Elio de Angelis won the first event, with Niki Lauda winning at Monaco, Nelson Piquet at Donington Park and again at Dijon. Lauda won in Silverstone and Hockenheim, Jacques Lafitte won in Austria and Monza. Lauda





took the title and the new car. For a total of about five total hours of work. Not a bad deal.

The Procar series was a hit.

With the popularity, the second season expanded so that races were not solely support races for F1. Winners were Jan Lammers, Manfred Schurti, Hans Stuck, who won two races, Carlos Reutemann, Didier Pironi, and Nelson Piquet, who won three races straight and took home the second car.

The irony is that Piquet's win put an end to the Procar series.

With Brabham team driver Piquet winning the M1 street car, and Brabham boss Bernie Ecclestone building some of the Procars, the relationship with BMW and Brabham flourished. BMW agreed to furnish Brabham with their engines and BMW had to abandon the Procar concept to focus on the new four-cylinder turbo for Brabham – which ultimately won the F1 Grand Prix World Championship.

An altered Procar, a Group 4 M1, competed in the 1000 Kilometres of Nürburgring. Procar veterans Hans-Joachim Stuck and Nelson Piquet shared the car. But the cars basically disappeared after the 1980 season.

As a footnote, in 1988 Brabham Formula One Team was sold to Alfa Romeo. Hoping to revive the Procar series, Brabham and Alfa developed a prototype racing car using a mid-mounted Formula One-based V10 engine, covered in a bodywork that silhouetted the Alfa Romeo 164. It was a beautiful car and a beautiful concept – an F1 car wrapped in a street car body. But only one car was built and shown and the series and the idea died with it.

BMW announced plans to revive the Procar concept in 2008, with ten original M1 Procars driven by some of the original drivers such as Lauda, Dieter Quester, and Marc Surer. But it was more a nostalgia-based exhibition than a racing series.

If you've been around a while you remember the Alliance Cup or the Neon Cup, the Corvette Challenge the Porsche Cup or the Ferrari Challenge. Good racing all of them. But with top-rung pro drivers getting the juices flowing before a Grand Prix? That's something everybody would want to see again.



### Stay Informed!! - eBlast Signup

Once a month the Chapter emails an eBlast to all members who have indicated they want to be kept abreast of Chapter activities and events, as well as news and information involving the Chapter. If you wish to receive this information and are not already signed up you may do so on the website at [www.houston-bmwcca.com](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com). The eBlast request is located at the lower left on the front page.

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



# Dodging a Bullet...



Peter Manhard

My wife Melanie and I wanted to spend Thanksgiving with her grandmother Wanda and her cousins this year, so we decided to drive from Katy to Wichita Falls Texas for Thanksgiving. Last year I bought a BMW 335 diesel and have been itching to take it on a long road trip. I love to drive the car and it gets great gas mileage. My wife wanted to take her mother Paula along on the trip, but Paula has severe back problems and can barely walk let alone sit in one position for several hours. We changed our minds and decided to take my wife's Dodge Nitro because it has plenty of room and it has a built in DVD player to keep our three year old son Parker occupied over the eight hour trip.

A week before our trip I brought the Nitro in for a service checkup and oil change. The day before our trip I filled up the tank, washed, vacuumed and detailed the car. I checked the tire pressures and checked all the fluids. I even stocked the car with good music and several movies for my son to watch. I finished just as it got dark and decided to put the car in the garage. To my horror I turned the key and found the car dead. In order to jump the car I had to roll it into the street; blocking traffic so I could maneuver my BMW near it to jump it. Once I got it started I drove it to a local mechanic so they could find the problem. Three hours later they told me that they could not find a problem and everything checked out ok.

The next morning we got up, ate, packed the Nitro and took off. It was a beautiful day and we were ten minutes ahead of schedule. All was going well until a mile from the house the car started losing power and would not go faster than ten mph. We limped back home and my wife and I decided to take my BMW. In record time we unpacked the Nitro and packed my car. Next I tried the Nitro again and it worked fine so I decided to drive it to the dealership so they could fix it while we were gone. I took off to the dealership in the Nitro expecting my wife

to follow me in the BMW, but after a few minutes I noticed that she was not behind me. Just then she called me and said that my car had no power and would not back up. Cursing I turned around and headed home again. Things were not going as planned and I thought about canceling the trip. Just as I arrived home my wife phoned to say that all was ok; in all the excitement she forgot to release the parking brake. Ahhh... the power sapping parking brake!

After leaving the Nitro at the dealership I had to fill up the BMW with fuel. We drove to two gas stations before we found one that sells diesel. When we drove in I noticed that all four diesel pumps were out of order. We finally found a gas station with working diesel pumps, so I swiped my credit card and waited for the fuel to flow. After messing with the pump for five minutes and unable to get it to work I drove off to the next pump. I finally found a working pump; although it must have been the slowest pump in town.

After picking up Paula we had to re-organize the trunk to make room for her suitcase and walker. Two hours behind schedule we finally got on the freeway and headed towards Wichita Falls. Still upset because of all the bad luck I told Melanie that if one additional bad thing happens I would turn around and cancel the trip.

My wife wanted to take the scenic route through the back roads of Texas, but this meant that we had to travel on two lane farm roads with lots of bumps and stops. This did not sit well with Paula because the bumps were hurting her back and she was stuck in the back seat with little room. To make up time I was driving beyond the speed limit and Paula was complaining about this also. Our first stop was at a Dairy Queen where I had to unload the trunk to get the walker out so Paula could go inside. While everyone was inside I removed Parker's car seat

and re-positioned everything so Paula would have more leg room. After repacking the trunk we took off again. We were driving on a beautiful winding country road when I came around a bend and saw a car heading toward us half way in our lane. I slowed down and was just about to honk the horn when the driver swerved back into their lane. As the car drove past us we noticed that the driver was busy texting. I sure wish people would concentrate on driving and not typing while they are on the road!

For lunch we stopped at the Cracker Barrel in Temple Texas and had a wonderful meal. With our bellies full and everyone happy we continued on through the back roads of Texas. A short time later we were on a two lane farm road going about 65mph when the on-coming truck caught my eye. It was a white truck pulling a large trailer, but the trailer had just started to fishtail. Melanie was in the front seat talking to Wanda over the phone when she noticed the truck also. I still recall the next few seconds in slow motion just like in the movies. As the trailer started fishtailing the truck must have hit the brakes because all of a sudden the truck started swerving off of the road away from us, but the trailer swerved directly into my path. I slammed on the brakes and swerved off of the road right before the trailer hit us head on. In the excitement Melanie hung up the phone while I came to a stop on the side of the road realizing that we just came within a few feet of a head on collision. Only my quick reaction and the BMW's antilock brakes saved us.

The truck and trailer slid off of the road and came to a stop. As other cars screeched to a halt the driver jumped out shaken, but safe and unharmed. With our heart's still pounding we resumed our trip when Melanie realized that she needed to call Wanda back and tell her that we were ok. Poor Wanda was on the edge of her seat hoping we were not in an accident until Melanie called to tell her the story. We made it to Wichita Falls an hour after dark and a few hours late, but we made it safe and sound!

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner and we were able to spend time with Melanie's cousins and their families. We visited Sheppard Air Force base so Parker could see some airplanes and have a visit with Santa. The four days flew by and soon we were back on the road heading home. We left early in the morning and were worried that there may be ice on the streets, so we decided to stay on the main highways and away from two lane country roads. We made it home in record time traveling in style with heated seats, a heated steering wheel and satellite radio for entertainment. We drove a total of 850 miles across Texas and averaged 35.6 mpg.

Thinking back I don't think we would have been so lucky if we were in the Nitro. The Nitro does not stop as quickly as the BMW and it may have rolled over when I swerved to avoid the on coming trailer. I still believe destiny forced us to take the BMW to save our lives. Either way we are planning on staying home next Thanksgiving!





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# Editor's Corner



What!!! Are you SERIOUS? What in the world is a Porsche doing on the cover of a BMW Newsletter? If you are like me, you have asked yourself this more than once. As I was setting this up for print my thoughts kept wandering to 'I can't believe I am really doing this'.

Is it there for the shock value? No. Is it there because I want to be fired from the Newsletter Editor position? Of course not. Is this a secret conspiracy to convert BMW fanatics to the "other German automobile"? Heck no!

When Howard first approached me with this idea my first reaction was NEVER! However, the more I thought about where BMW came from and how it evolved in the competitive space it started to make sense.

So **why**, you might ask, **is** the *competition* featured on the cover of **OUR** newsletter?

Competition is why. Celebration is why.

Competition is one of the things that have made BMW so successful as pointed out in Howard's article. Celebration that BMW has bested Porsche many times over with innovative, precision engineering and performance.

Thanks to both Howard and Brian for donating their cars for the photos. And thanks to Howard for researching and guest-writing the article – lots of little facts I never knew (really - a Viper? hmmm).

Well here we are already a third of the way through 2012 and it's looking like a good year ahead! We are setting the stage for the DE in December, Survival School, we just finished the first of what is hoped to be many of our Tech Sessions a few weekends ago and on and on.

We have added a new section to highlight one of the many outstanding volunteers that make things happen in the club. We plan on doing this every issue, so if you have a nominee – please speak up!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Torque of the Town and as always keep two hands on the wheel and all four on the ground

- James

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# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Member: Warren Campbell

Nominated by: Kathy Kehoe-Lee

At the last board meeting we talked about spotlighting members, who have repeatedly volunteered to help keep our club active and special. As I thought about who was worthy of mentioning immediately my mind centered on Warren Campbell.

Warren has been a member of our Chapter for as long as I can remember. My husband Tony and I were members of the Chapter when we lived in Houston in the late 90's. At that time, Warren was organizing drives and events for the Z cars. In the past several years on January 1st Warren has organized the very successful, "Hair of the Dog Rally".

Anyone who has put on an event knows how much time and effort it takes. Last year, in addition to the Hair of the Dog Drive, Warren organized a fun rally and the Wash, Wax and Tech Session at BMW North. All events were well organized and all who attended had a great time. His involvement enhanced our social event calendar.

Tony and I attended the April Fun Rally Warren helped organize and everyone who attended had a great time. It didn't take us long to realize Warren is a devious person when it comes to rallies and rally answers.

If you thought the Fun Rallies at Oktoberfest were tricky, they don't hold a candle to Warren's fun rallies.

We also attended the Wash, Wax and Tech Session which helped everyone prepare our cars for Oktoberfest. Other members took advantage of the event to make their BMW shine for their daily commute.

So THANK YOU Warren for making the 2011 events calendar a success. I am sure I am not alone in my appreciation for all you have done for the club.

Members - your club needs your help. We need volunteers for Teen Street Survival, finding sponsors for the Torque of the Town and help with social events. Please help our chapter to be more than it could be by volunteering.

Street Survival contact Jim Iden at [jiden@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jiden@sbcglobal.net),

Torque of the Town contact Jim Saynay, [newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com](mailto:newsletter@houston-bmwcca.com),

Social Committee contact Kathy Kehoe-Lee at [socialevents@houston-bmwcca.com](mailto:socialevents@houston-bmwcca.com)

## WELCOME New Members to the Houston Chapter!

In order to help us keep you informed of last minute changes to event schedules, please send your email address to: [membership@houston-bmwcca.com](mailto:membership@houston-bmwcca.com)

We will add your name to the e-mail list that goes out on a more frequent basis. Also, be sure and visit our website and forum at [www.houston-bmwcca.com](http://www.houston-bmwcca.com)

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