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February 2008

Volume 38 No.2

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Boilerplate

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Zündfolge design and lavout by Paulette Eickman 206.283.1423. Club Activities 3

Motorsports 6 Nürburgring 8

Live to Drive 17 Classified Marketplace 20

KALENDER

Club members are encouraged to submit articles for publication.

January 31

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 5

Deadline for the March 2008 Zündfolge issue, all submissions must be received by this date. Send to the editor at lucettalightfoot@msn.com.

February 16

Club Tour to Vehicle Research Institute

(VRI) in Bellingham. See article in this issue. Check the Club Events section of the message board at www.bmwpugetsound.com for updates. Send RSVPs and questions to Scott Hieronymus at scottnlaurie2@comcast.net.

February 16

General Meeting at the Vehicle Research Institute at Western Washington University in Bellingham.

February 28

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

March 4

Deadline for the April 2008 Zündfolge issue, all submissions must be received by this date. Send to the editor at lucettalightfoot@msn.com.

General Meeting at Vintage Racing Motors in Redmond. See, hear and smell some of the world's greatest vintage racecars.

March 25

Deadline for the May 2008 Zündfolge issue, all submissions must be received by this date. Send to the editor at lucettalightfoot@msn.com.

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.

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- All contributions and correspondance with the Zündfolge staff need to be sent to Lucetta Lightfoot, the Zündfolge editor, at lucettalightfoot@msn.com. Submit all photos as 350dpi tifs at 100% size. Submit text display ads as 800dpi tifs. Items submitted for publication will not be returned.
- Contact Jim Millet at jimngloriamillet@comcast.net for information about display ads.
- · Send all address change notices to bmwcclub@aol.com.
- The Zündfolge staff is always looking for volunteers. If you want to help contact the editor.

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ZÜNDFOLGE

February 2008



A Visit to the Vehicle Research Institute

This is the final notice for the Club's visit to the Vehicle Research Institute or VRI on February 16, 2008. Robert Cumberford in *Automobile* Magazine called VRI "very possibly the best school in the country for total car design." Founded by Michael Seal, and now headed by Eric Leonhardt, VRI has allowed students to build amazingly creative experimental vehicles since 1971. VRI isn't a design school like Art Center in Pasadena. It is, instead, more of a comprehensive vehicle engineering program.

The Vehicle Research Institute is part of the Engineering Technology department at Western Washington University in Bellingham. Dr. Michael Seal is the founder and driving spirit behind the VRI. While retired, Dr. Seal continues to maintain an office at the VRI and enjoys helping the students think through innovative solutions to automotive problems. See the January Zündfolge

for a more comprehensive history of this treasure of the Pacific Northwest.

Tour Director Scott Hieronymus has planned a tour from the Seattle area to Bellingham. It will be a lovely scenic drive. However, if you want to meet us at the VRI, you are welcome to do so. See Scott's adjacent article for information about the tour.

Our visit will be at 11:00 a.m. We will see the facility and hear presentations from some of the current student teams and Eric Leonhardt, head of the program. We'll also get a chance to see some of the past Viking cars. The Club will be presenting a \$500 contribution to the VRI to help further their work. The VRI is located on the Western Washington University campus in Bellingham. It is located in the Ross Engineering Technology Building, building 40.

David Lightfoot d.lightfoot@comcast.net

Club Tour to Vehicle Research Institute February 16

THE VISIT TO VRI in Bellingham gives us an excellent opportunity for the first tour of 2008. After enduring I-5 for a short while, we will exit near Marysville and explore back roads and small towns along the way. The driving portion of this tour will end when we reach Western Washington University just before 11:00 a.m.

We will meet in front of Nordstrom at Northgate Mall at 8:00 a.m. After a short drivers' meeting, we will depart at 8:30. The Club will be providing donuts and coffee at the meeting place.

One must be a Club Member to drive our tours, but newbies are allowed one run prior to joining. Please visit www.bmwpugetsound. com, click on Tours and review the Club Tour Policy. RSVPs and questions should be sent to Scott Hieronymus.

Scott Hieronymous scottnlaurie2@comcast.net





This month's cover shows the BMW Sauber F1 car on display at Kuala-Lumpur Malaysia. The Petronas Twin Towers (also known as the Petronas Towers or Twin Towers), are the world's tallest twin buildings.

Photo by BMW Press.

Pilgrimage to Vintage Racing Motors

March 15

A FEW YEARS AGO my sons and I went with the Club to visit Vintage Racing Motors in Redmond. We had a blast as we always do at Club events. For that reason, I am happy to host the event this year. Basically this means I can tell my spouse, "honey I have to go, I am bringing the coffee and muffins!" I am hoping it works a little better than the old standby about taking the BMW to get milk and bread in ... Carnation?

On March 15 Vintage Racing Motors (VRM) in Redmond is opening their doors to us. The meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. to noon. Our open house and tour will be guided by Byron Sanborn, who runs the shop at VRM. Byron does a fantastic job of talking about the cars currently in their care and the work entailed to keep these cars race ready. Between the cars and Byron's stories I suspect it will be simply captivating.

VRM is a business dedicated to the repair, restorations, tuning, storage, transportation and trackside support of vintage racecars. VRM has gained a reputation of impeccable workmanship and service to a discerning clientele. During our visit, we can expect to see extremely exotic vintage cars. I recently talked with Byron and they have a number of cars rotating in for service during the winter months. We could see just about any vintage racing car imaginable including: Ferraris, McLarens, Lolas, Elvas and many other marques. Keith





Fournier, a member of the Club, provided the photos (above) from his trip to VRM in 2005.

The Club will provide refreshments. Remember to bring your camera. The meeting is open to Club members and their guests. There is no charge but please RSVP to the undersigned. Do not contact VRM directly. VRM is located at 9255 151st Ave. NE, Redmond. There will be more information and a few more photos in the March *Zündfolge*.

Greg Rosell grosell@comcast.net







Portland BMW ACA Tours And Events For 2008

GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS from your fellow enthusiasts at the Portland BMW ACA Chapter. It's that time of year again to announce our upcoming events. The holidays are over and our Touring Committee has already been busy planning this year's events. Time to start looking forwards to getting our ultimate driving machines out and enjoying some weekend twisties, events, great places to go and scenery. Our schedule of events is as follows this year:

March 22	Spring Equinox Tour
April *25-27	Puget Sound Tour
April 30-May 5	BIMMERFEST
May 10	Winery Tour
June *27-29	Silver Lake / Central Oregon Tour
July *11-13	Historic Races Weekend
	and corral campout at PIR
July *18-20	Crater Lake Tour
August 9	Willamette Valley Tour
August 30	Pacific Coast Tour
September *12-14	Sun River Exotic Car Show
September 20	Huckleberry Tour
October 11	Fall Colors Tour
December 6-7	Fifth Annual Charity Toy Drive

^{*} Friday afternoon/evening departure

For more information on specific tours and details, please contact Cam Scott, Touring Events Chairperson for the Portland BMW ACA Chapter, at camtscott@verizon.net or 503-970-1662. We look forwards to seeing you.

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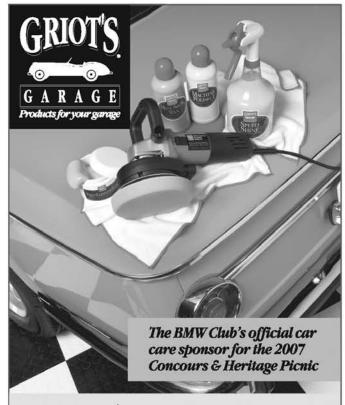
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MOTOR SPORTS

THERE IS A BUNCH OF GOOD NEWS this month. First, we've managed to add a warm weather date at Pacific Raceways. This came up due to a cancellation from another club, so we pounced on it. The date is July 11, a Friday. Put it on your calendar. Thanks go to Tom Olsson for getting this date.

The other good news is February is when we start coming out of the winter doldrums and our driving events begin. We've got a full and busy calendar of events for the next few months. Registration is open for the earliest events, so get signed up!

The third piece of good news is we are now providing online registration and payment for all driving events through Motorsport Reg (www.motorsportreg.com). You've asked for it and now it is here. We think this will make the process more convenient for everyone.

Instructor Clinic

It starts with the February 9
Instructor Clinic. This year it is hosted by the Porsche Club. This is by invitation only.
You should have received your invitation by now. If you haven't, and you think you should have been invited, contact Chief Driving Instructor, Karl Seeger at cdi@bmwpugetsound.com.

Car Control Clinic

For those eager to get into this sport and enjoy your Ultimate Driving Machine to the fullest, the action begins March 1. That's the date for our Car Control Clinic to be held at Bremerton Raceway. This is a prerequisite to coming to a school at Pacific Raceway. If you are a novice, my advice is to sign up for this March 1 Car Control Clinic and at least one of the March or April schools at Pacific Raceways.

At the Car Control Clinic, you will learn a lot about your BMW and its capabilities. Yeah, I know, you're a great driver. Isn't everybody? But, believe me, you'll have your eyes opened.

Our top priority is safety, so don't worry about that. We'll keep it safe. But the real point is how much fun you'll have. Prepare for one of the most exhilarating experiences you've ever had!

Registration is now open for the Car Control Clinic. Visit the Club's website which will point you towards Motorsports Reg. The Clinic will be preceded by a classroom session to help acquaint you with the terminology and theory behind the sport.

High Performance Driving Schools

Our High Performance Driving Schools take place at Pacific Raceways. We've got a number of school dates at PR. See the details off to the right. This is a real road racing track. We won't be racing: we will be driving in a safe and controlled manner. You won't be pushed beyond where you are comfortable. But be prepared for a real thrill. Once you've completed a Car Control Clinic, you are welcome to attend a High Performance Driving School at PR.

Those attending the schools at PR are assigned to one of four groups based on experience, ability and their car's potential. Everybody starts in the D Group for novices. The progression is up to A Group, which is made up of very experienced drivers and some fast cars. This progression is a multiyear process.

Registration is online from the Club's website using Motorsport Reg.

Requirements

- 1. To participate in track events you must be a Club member or a member of a reciprocal club. Those include PCA, BMW ACA, BMW CCBC and NWARC.
- 2. You must be 18 year of age or older and have a valid driver's license.
- 3. Your car must pass a technical inspection within thirty days prior to the

- event. The tech form is available on the Club website. You will get a link to it in your confirmation email. An ASE-Certified mechanic must perform the inspection.
- 4. You must wear a helmet while driving. A Snell 2000 or newer rated helmet is required.
- You must drive a car with a fixed roof. No convertibles are allowed at our track events.

Once you register for an event, you will receive a full information package with directions to the tracks, what to bring, what time to get there, etc.

David Lightfoot dec@bmwpugetsound.com

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2008 Driving Events Calendar

BMW CCA PSR Events

March

Car Control Clinic at BremertonDriving School at Pacific Raceways

April

11 Driving School at Pacific Raceways

May

Driving School at Pacific Raceways

July

Driving School at Pacific Raceways

September

25 Driving School at Pacific Raceways

Other Events open to CCA Drivers

February

Instructor Clinic, hosted by the PCA, at Pacific Raceways
 ALFA Car Control Clinic at Bremerton
 PCA Car Control Clinic in Bremerton

March

 7-9 Roadrunner Chapter School in Phoenix
 8-9 Golden Gate Chapter School at Infineon (Sears Point)

8 ALFA School in Bremerton

15 PCA School at Pacific Raceways

15 BMW CCBC Car Control Clinic at Pitt Meadows

April

4-6 BMW CCA IEC Car School in Spokane
4-6 Sin City Chapter School in Las Vegas
12 PCA Car Control Clinic in Bremerton

20 BMW CCBC Car Control Clinic at Pitt Meadows

24 ALFA School at Pacific Raceways

28 BMW ACA School in Portland

May

PCA School at Pacific Raceways
 BMW ACA School in Portland
 Alfa Lapping Day in Bremerton
 PCA Car Control Clinic in Bremerton

25 BMW CCBC Car Control Clinic at Pitt Meadows

27 BMW CCBC School at Mission

31-6/1 LA Chapter School at Willow Springs

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NW Alfa Club

www.nwalfaclub.com

Herb Sanborn: blue74gtv@earthlink.net

Porsche Club

www.pnwr.pca.org

Tom Pritchard: DriverEd@pnwr.org

www.bmwpugetsound.com

BMW Car Club of British Columbia 2008 Driver Training Program

Following is an abbreviated version of BMW CCPC's Driver Training program. See their web pages for complete details. www.bmwccbc.org www.bmwccbc.org/schools

Program Overview

The BMW Car Club of BC strongly advocates safer driving through driver education, and since 1999 has offered drivers the unique opportunity to learn from highly qualified instructors and improve their driving skills, gaining superior safety skills and a better understanding of their vehicles capabilities. Driver Training programs are available to all - you need only to hold a valid, full class drivers license to start. Begin with Car Control courses, progress to the second level Road Skills courses. Finally, move to the highest level with the Advanced Skills courses.

Courses

Our graduated program consists of the following course levels:

CAR CONTROL

This is our entry-level program, and is a classic skills development program meant to impart basic skills and car control awareness to the driver. The course is held on a purpose built training facility

Morning session: starts with a classroom session about basics followed by on course skills exercises to introduce and practice basic skills.

Afternoon session: the skills worked on and learned in the morning session are put together. Sessions include on site catered lunch.

ROAD SKILLS

The purpose of our second level program is to continue the safety skills learned at a Car Control session in the context of a 'road course,' hence the name Road Skills.

Morning session: starts with a classroom session followed by on-course skills exercises, orientation and introduction to the road course.

Afternoon session: the skills covered in the morning session are put into practice in on-course sessions. Those not on the course are in a classroom session to review the skills and techniques. Sessions include on site catered lunch.

ADVANCED SKILLS

This level is offered for enthusiasts who can't get enough and want more. Participants must have graduated through the first two course levels and be signed off as having demonstrated sufficient skills development at a Road Skills course.

DRIVING SKILLS CHALLENGE DAYS

These courses are an extension of the Car Control skills level. They are basically all day skills practice days at the Pitt Meadows facility. Completion of a Car Control session or similar entry level skills program is highly recommended.

Vehicles and Eligibility Notes

Participants bring and drive their own cars. Cars must be fully insured street legal and licensed, and must meet current MOT regulations and standards. Cars must arrive under their own power. Participants must have a valid drivers license.

Course Locations

Car Control Course are held at the British Columbia Driving Center at Pitt Meadows Airport. Road Skills Courses are held at Mission or other specified location. Advanced Skills Course locations vary and are listed on the web with the program info listing.

The 2008 schedule for BMW CCBC Driver Training Program is included in the Motorsports Calendar to the left.

The Nürburgring Tour

THE CLUB HAS HOSTED some driving events that have wandered far from the Pacific Northwest: trips to Laguna Seca and eastern Washington come to mind. But we've never had a Club event in Germany, until last June's amazing tour to Germany's Nürburgring racetrack.

Club member Wes Hill and Club President Lynne Eskil organized the tour. While working at the 'Ring, Wes fell in love with the track and the area. Seventeen Club members, friends and family took Wes and Lynne up on their generous offer to lead a tour back. These people made a very good decision: the trip was fantastic!

Wes and Lynne put together a comprehensive schedule with enough flexibility that anyone could opt out of any day's activities. The schedule included plenty of interesting things to do for those who were not car fanatics. Because the 'Ring was only open to the public during the early evening, we had all day for other activities. Sometimes these involved observations of other

cars on the 'Ring and sometimes we'd go act like tourists. It was a good balance and a great group of people.

The Nürburgring

The main reason for the trip was to drive the famous Nürburgring, the world's most challenging racetrack. The 'Ring consists of the Nordschleife, or North Loop, and the Grand Prix track. The GP track is modern, with lots of runoff room. A Formula One Grand Prix and other big-time races are held there.

The Nordschleife is the legendary portion of the track. It was originally built between 1925 and 1927. It is 20.8 kilometers (12.9 miles) long with 73 named curves (and many nameless ones) and 300 meters (1,000 feet) of elevation change. Grades range from 17% uphill to 11% downhill. Almost every corner is blind, or changes elevation, or changes camber or all-of-the-above. There is little runoff room; guardrails and trees surround the track. Most

manufacturers use the 'Ring to develop new vehicles. BMW considers the track their spiritual home.

The length and complexity make it very difficult to memorize. I couldn't do it in a week of evening sessions. That's the real challenge of the 'Ring. On any

The length and complexity make it very difficult to memorize. I couldn't do it in a week of evening sessions. That's the real challenge of the 'Ring.

normal circuit you can anticipate what is coming. At the 'Ring, until you have a tremendous number of laps in, you don't. A fairly quick lap in a rental car is ten minutes. Over the course of five evenings at the track, I managed fourteen laps.



How do I describe the Nürburgring to someone who has never been there? It's the Holy Land of Speed, the BMW enthusiast's version of Mecca, something to put on your list of things to do before you die. You should make the pilgrimage at least once and experience this place that is like no other on Earth.

The track is located in the Eifel Mountains of Western Germany, out where there is little else. It's about an hour from the Cologne airport and about an hour and a half from Frankfurt. The last thirty kilometers or so to the track are two-lane roads. Traffic on an F1 weekend must be a nightmare.

As one gets closer to the track, the exotic cars become more frequent. When you get to the track itself, there is every sort of exotic car in the world. We saw Porsche GT3s, one Porsche Carrera, Ferraris, Lamborghinis, Audi R8s, Vipers, TVRs, Nobles etc. You get





A rented Volvo approaches the water walls at the amazing Driver Training Center facility.

the idea. Plus there are gobs of hot motorcycles with their insane riders. We started referring to the motorcyclists as "organ donors."

The Nordschleife is a public toll road, open to all. A single lap ticket is 19 Euro (about \$26 currently) or you can buy multiple lap tickets, which are cheaper per lap. The parking lot at the entrance is, atypical of Germany, total chaos. There are two lanes for cars and two for motorcycles at the entrance. Punch your ticket as you would in a parking garage and off you go.

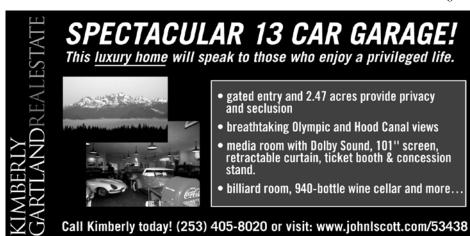
The Roller Coaster

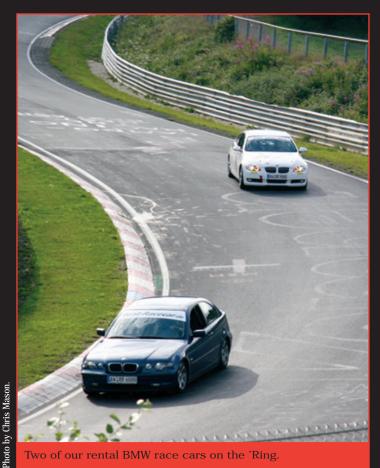
Driving the 'Ring is like a roller coaster except you're in control. It was also a bit of an emotional roller coaster, to be honest. On the day of our arrival, we went to various vantage points to

observe. It was a public day but most of us had been awake for over 24 hours and wisely chose not to attempt the 'Ring with diminished mental capacity. As we watched the combination of fast cars, fast motorcycles, tour buses, innocent tourists and all, I thought, "This is seriously stupid." The speeds are high and the track is unforgiving. The mix of fast and slow traffic means lots of passing: passing everywhere, with no flag stations. The bikes are faster on the straights and the cars are faster in the corners. It makes for a pretty wild on-track environment.

The next day, we took our first tentative drive on the 'Ring with Wes showing us the way around. My impression changed to, "This isn't bad at all. It's like driving a mountain pass really fast. This is fun."

Continued on Page 12





Two of our rental BMW race cars on the 'Ring.



Our organizers and hosts for the tour, Wes Hill and Lynne Eskil.



Breidscheid is the lowest point on the track and the location of the second entrance to the track.



the booth where one buys tickets for the 'Ring.



The Eltz Castle has been in the same family for 850 years. Rick Steves says it is the best castle in Europe.



Our group at the Fahrsicherheitszentrum or Driver Training Center.



The bridge over the Formula 1 track has BMW's logo and slogan.

Photo by David Lightfoor

rburgri



The track rats of the group with some of our rental cars.



This is BMW's M Test Center in the village of Nürburg. The village is inside the Nürburgring.



A typical piece of the amazing Nürburgring.

A car for the narrow streets of Monschau; a BMW Isetta.



A rental 320 avoids the water walls at the Driver Training Center.

Photo by Chris Mason.

Photo by Chris Mason

The Nürburgring Tour Continued from Page 9

By mid-week my emotions towards the 'Ring had swung back to a middle ground between "This is stupid" and "This is easy and fun." Almost every day we were there, we saw serious wrecks, usually involving Porsche 911s. They are fast and unforgiving, plus there are a lot of them at the 'Ring. I was driving a newer 3 Series (E92) racecar that Wes had rented and the group shared. Wes was riding in the passenger seat and navigating," allowing me to drive faster than I could on my own. On the second half of the track we came upon a 911 that had significant damage at the rear. The Porsche was leaking radiator coolant onto the track. When I hit the fluid at speed we had a very sideways moment. I caught the car in time and moved over to avoid the slippery stuff.

When I hit the fluid at speed we had a very sideways moment.

By the time we got back to the track entrance, about five minutes later, we found the track closed. This is standard procedure when there is a serious collision on the track. In this case, not far behind us, a motorcyclist had hit the coolant at speed, went down and was badly injured. The track was closed for the day and an airlift was called for. The airlift was subsequently cancelled, since the rider's injuries were so severe. The rider in fact did die overnight.

It's hard to get reliable statistics, but Wes was told that collisions at the 'Ring claim about seventy people who actually die at the track and another hundred who are transported off the property and later die of their injuries. This is each year and with the track closed in the winter. It is a dangerous place, especially for the motorcyclists. Being close to this sort of thing gives one pause. Several in our party tried one lap of the 'Ring and decided they had seen enough and didn't venture out again the whole week.

On balance, it is a lot of fun to drive the 'Ring; it is daunting, not to be taken lightly and must always be respected. Mistakes are costly here. But with the proper attitude, it is exhilarating. On balance, a fantastic experience.

More Stories

After every lap, you must pull into the parking lot and queue up again for another lap. One lap takes enough out of you, mentally and physically, that everyone in our group got out of their car and relaxed a bit before going out again. Plus, at \$26 per lap, one doesn't want to do too many laps back-to-back. This also gives a chance to relate stories from the just completed lap. And every lap at the 'Ring has a story or two.

For example, you can be doing 100 mph in a little rental car and get passed by someone going 60 mph faster. Or you can do (as one person in our party did) 100 mph past a tourist stopped on the side of the track with the rear door open adjusting a child seat with a child in it. I passed a tall tour bus in the

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carousel. While they were way up in the air looking down, I was blasting through the bowl portion of the carousel on the inside of the turn. Is this nuts or what? Whoopee!

Most of us were able to get BMWs as our rental cars. A couple of us had 320s with gas motors and a couple of others had 118ds with four cylinder diesels. Both the 3 and the 1 were underpowered but still nice cars. Wes gave a ride to one person with a background in American iron. He wasn't very impressed with a little four-cylinder diesel motor. That is, until Wes crested a blind brow at 100 mph. This newbie just about made poopy pants and said, "This is a whole different world." Indeed it is. By the end of the lap, he got out of the 118d and headed straight for the shrubbery to recycle the schnitzel he had for lunch.

How is this Possible?

How can the Nürburgring exist in modern times? It helps that it's in Germany and that Germans still believe in individual responsibility. If this track were in the U.S., it would probably last, oh, maybe thiry minutes before the lawyers descended on it like a plague of locusts, a buzz filling the air from the flapping lawsuits. The other thing that

helps is that the 'Ring is a closed, public highway. This means that anything that is licensed can go on it and that the laws of the road apply. Passing is on the left and there is even a speed limit on two parts of the track. Now, that speed is only enforced if there is a crash. But it is marked with standard traffic signs. So the liability laws of German highways apply at the 'Ring. We were told that the driver of the Porsche who leaked the radiator fluid would be held responsible for the death of the motorcycle rider. So in that sense, the rules are stricter than in the U.S. However, a place like the 'Ring is inconceivable on American soil.

My Big Crash

Yes, I have to confess right now that I crashed at the 'Ring. Actually, it was in the parking lot of the track, not on the track. Actually, it wasn't really a crash. Actually, all I did was run over a curb with the rental racecar and crack the side skirt. I had to pay 400 Euros to have it repaired. You'd think I'd get a better story than that for 400 Euros. Oh well.

Grand Prix Track

As mentioned above, the modern GP track is typical of modern tracks: safe, lots of runoff room, sanitized and boring. We watched motorcycle racing, a vintage car/rich guy's track day and a Le Mans car qualifying during our week there. The Le Mans cars had some good support races and a three-hour vintage race that included four M1s and an old 3.0CSL. Good stuff. Compared to our local facilities, the

garage spaces, paddock and hospitality areas at a world-class track make one, well, sick. It is nice to see a proper racetrack now and again. But it is hard to come home.

Nürburgring Museum

The track has its own museum showcasing the history and the cars of the 'Ring. There are three halls to the Museum. The first one has a bunch of old cars and tired exhibits. The second hall has simulators that are pretty dated. The good stuff is in Hall 3, the BMW building. This is a sleek new building done in typical BMW style: chrome, glass, stainless steel and hardwood surfaces. The exhibits are well done if a bit spare. Cars include all the recent M cars, an E30 M3 racecar, a Z8 pace car, the M6 Original Parts car and a current BMW Sauber Formula One car. It's a feast for people like us.

There is also a terrific gift shop attached to the museum. It is about 40% Nürburgring souvenirs, about 40% Ferrari/Michael Schumacher stuff and about 20% other goodies. We stopped here more than once.

Driver Training

On our first full day at the 'Ring, Wes arranged for driver training for all of us at Fahrsicherheitszentrum Nürburgring. That translates as the "Nürburgring Driver Training Center." At this facility, we spent three hours going through three stations. Our instructor Petra had typical German bluntness, but with a sense of humor.

Station 1 was a corner with specially treated pavement to make it slippery and sprinklers to keep it wet. There were two radar guns to provide corner

Continued on Page 14



The Nürburgring Tour Continued from Page 13

entry and exit speeds. Station 2 was collision avoidance. The obstacles to avoid were simulated with water walls that pop up from the pavement. We started with one water wall and moved up to three

The final station was a skid plate on another wet surface. These are common at European driving schools but I've never heard of one in the U.S. You drive between two cones and break a light beam. This triggers a large plate to violently move left or right under your rear tires. It induces oversteer which the driver must correct. It is very challenging and fun.

After the training, we had lunch at the training center and Petra awarded graduation certificates.

Non-car Stuff

We had several local area tours during the days, since the 'Ring was only open to the public in the evenings. One highlight was a trip to the Eltz Castle. This is, according to travel guru Rick Steves, the best castle in Europe. It has been in the same family for 850 years and is one of the few intact castles in Germany.

We also visited the beautiful Mosel River valley, home of the famous white wines. The grapes grow on the steep hillsides of the river valley, with the vineyards actually terraced because of the steepness. The river is dotted with pretty little villages.

Some of us made the trip into Cologne to visit the famous cathedral. There is also a nice chocolate museum and factory on the banks of the Rhine River.

The best non-car tour, however, was to the village of Monschau. Monschau is like entering a fairy tale. The streets are narrow and lined with amazing old buildings that have been preserved. Cars are prohibited except for the residents. They are also not necessary since the village is tiny. Monschau is an enchanting place and worth a side trip if you visit the 'Ring.

Do it Again?

When one visits one of those "must do before I die" places, you usually ask yourself if you would want to return. In some cases, once is enough and check it off the list. With the Nürburgring, this isn't the case for me. This is a place I'd like to return to. Often. If I had the time and money, I'd come back annually for as long as I was able to drive. Yes, there are a lot of other places I want to visit. But there is no place on Earth quite like the Nürburgring.

Thanks to Wes Hill and Lynne Eskil for all the work they did to make this tour possible. It will be hard to top this experience.

Rental Cars

While most guidebooks advise making your rental car reservations from the U.S., we had good luck just walking up to the airport counter upon arrival. Many of us rented from Sixt, who has lots of BMW 1 and 3 Series cars. A 320 with all insurances, VAT and no advance reservations was 313 Euros or about \$425 for a week. And the rental car contract (in English) doesn't prohibit going to the 'Ring.

The racecars Wes rented were BMW street cars modified by stripping out the carpets, adding a race seat and belts, stiffening the suspension, adding race brakes and adding a roll cage, but leaving in the glass and electric window lifts. A six-lap rental starts at 230 Euros or \$300. Remember, six laps are just over an hour of actual track time. Contact Theo Kleen at www.rent-racecar.de or mail@rent-racecar.de or Theo's mobile: +49(0)172-2001156.

Hotels

We stayed at Center Parcs (www. centerparcs.com) in Heilbachsee, a family-oriented resort about twenty minutes from the track. We had full apartments with kitchens and sleeping for four. The only hotel at the track is the Dorint. There are plenty of guesthouses close to the track.

Budget

Here is an estimate of what you should expect to spend for a weeklong trip to the 'Ring:

Airfare	\$1,300
Airiare	\$1,500
Hotel	700
Rental car	450
Gas	200
Food	300
'Ring tolls	250
Other	500
Total	\$3,700

Many of these costs could be split with a travel partner.



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Choosing the Perfect Engine Oil

My 2007 Dodge truck came with a \$5.600 option package that includes a 5.9L Cummins turbo-diesel engine. When it came time to change the engine oil, I didn't want to make any expensive mistakes. I wanted to make an informed choice. On-line message boards are a common place to find technical advice, but discussions about oil can take on a religious fervor. After digging into other sources, I wanted to share some aspects about lubrication beyond "dinosaur vs. synthetic," and "5W-30 versus 10W-40."

Oil by itself is not a very good lubricant for a modern engine. An additive package makes up fifteen to twenty percent of the volume of current motor oils. This package includes trace elements that

The high-pressure lubricants are critical to all internal engine parts, but most of all, the valve train.

act as detergents and highpressure lubricants.

The high-pressure lubricants are critical to all internal engine parts, but most of all, the valve train. Engine bearings have oil delivered under pressure to create a barrier between reciprocating parts. The valve train is lubricated only by oil sprayed or dribbled over the shearing surfaces. This difference makes the additive package critical to intense pressure points such as cam lobes that wipe across flat tappets, cam followers and rocker arms.

The two principal additives acting as high-pressure lubricants protecting the

valve train are phosphorous and zinc, in the form of ZDDP—Zinc Dialkyl Dithio Phosphate. While ZDDP does a great job of protecting the valve train, its phosphorus content substantially reduces the effectiveness of catalytic converters. Oil companies have started cutting back on these additives in some oils from 1995 levels of 1600 parts per million (ppm) to 400 ppm currently. The lower levels of ZDDP are contributing to premature cam and follower failure. As a result, some after-market cam manufacturers have limited their warranty based on the oil that you use.

(See www.schneidercams. com/Warranty.htm and www. compcams.com/Technical/ Instructions/Files/255.pdf)

Certain well-known oil additives are more than a viscosity index improver (VII)—the once ubiquitous STP in the red bottle, which had more ZDDP and less VII. is slowly disappearing from retailer shelves. We're left with the blue bottle. which is mostly VII. Some camshaft manufacturers sell an oil additive containing ZDDP or are recommending diesel-rated oil for the breakin period of a new camshaft.

The Federal emission standards for diesels were dramatically tightened in 2007, resulting in changes to oil additive packages. The Turbo Diesel Register (TDR), a popular Dodge/

Continued on Page 16



Cummins diesel truck owner enthusiast site, had a chemist with twenty-five years of lubricant industry experience analyze multiple oil samples (www.turbodieselregister. com/TDR57_Oil.pdf). The expert was able to separate the 'new' oils from the previous standard oils just by reviewing the additives. His analyses showed that some of the new oils definitely do not have long-term drain intervals. It also seems to me even if you change your oil more often, some oils don't have enough of the necessary additives to protect your valve train.

The American Petroleum Institute (API) Performance Category is generally used to evaluate oil quality. In the case of my 19-year-old BMW 535 and 735, the API SE or SF category oils originally specified by BMW have been superseded by SL or SM (currently) categories. They may or may not be superior in protection but have the potential for longer drain intervals. For the diesel spec, CI-4+ was the pinnacle of anti-wear and detergent additives. It has been superseded by the inferior CJ-4 to satisfy emission requirements. Use caution: when you look at the API symbol and it has CJ-4 in it, it will also have CI-4+ and possibly CI-4 in

it as well, leading you to believe it is backwardly compatible, which just isn't so. A good source of info is the Oil Bibles website (www.carbibles.com/engineoil bible.html).

On the subject of detergents, the Total Base Number (TBN) is a measure of the ability of oil to buffer the acids produced while running an engine. It's characterized by the addition of calcium —kind of like Tums for your engine. If you want to consider extended drain periods, then using oil that has a TBN greater than ten would be a good idea. The TBN for nondiesel-rated oils are typically eight to nine, while the TBN of CI-4+ rated oils are typically greater than ten. I'm going to avoid discussions about running high-detergent oils in older engines that have been running dino oil, long drain intervals or are just worn out.

Another option to consider is sending an oil sample to a lab for analysis. I started using Blackstone Laboratories (www.blackstone-labs. com) for my diesel, and now that I've researched this article, I'll be using it for my Bimmers. Their staff, based on years of experience, provides helpful comments and interpretations beyond raw numbers—like letting you know when they see traces

of coolant or maybe bearing material suspended in the oil.

I've run synthetic 15W-50 oil in my M30-powered 535is and 735il for many thousands of miles. Both engines have minor cam lobe wear from loose oil spray bar bolts. Would a better oil and additive package have helped? Probably not, but now I want to protect what's left. That means engine oil with more additives like ZDDP. For example, Mobil1 (www.mobil1. com) specifically mentions a re-formulation of their 15W-50 to include higher levels of ZDDP "... for certain racing applications and camshaft designs." It's worth the effort to find engine oil that surpasses a specification, not just meets it.

I had to consider some other factors as well: summer versus winter viscosity requirements, stocking fewer

oils, price, availability and change intervals. Spending a day changing six gallons of oil in three cars (three gallons alone for the diesel!) is not something I want to do very often.

After all my research, I wound up using one oil for the truck and for my BMWs: the Shell Rotella T Synthetic 5W-40. Its API quality rating is SL for gasoline engines and CI-4+ (no CJ-4) for diesels. According to the TDR article, it has high levels of ZDDP, and is available locally at \$16.24 per gallon. I can report the oil pressure light goes out very quickly; there haven't been any leaks and no perceived oil usage after 700 miles so far. When I get 3.000 or more miles on this oil, I'll send a sample in to Blackstone and report back on the CCA message board as a follow-up.

Louie Lindenmayer





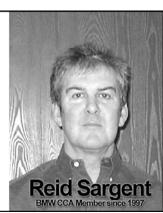
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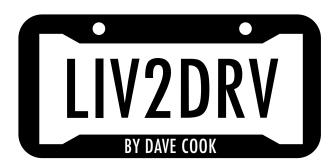
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Just Slow Down

OUR LIVES ARE MOVING FASTER AND FASTER all the time, more to do and less time to do it. Technology allows us to do more in less time, even back to the invention of the washing machine. Now a person can wash clothes while doing something else simultaneously.

If you consider that simple illustration, just imagine what the technology of today allows us to get done while we are doing several other things. The biggest complaint I hear from friends and co-workers is there is just not enough time to get things done, especially do things we actually enjoy.

I think that part of the difficulty is that we are always looking ahead and dreading the next thing we have to do, no matter what it is. I was explaining this to my 17-year-old daughter the other day; she was asking why it seems that time passes more rapidly as you get older. I told her to watch little children at play sometime. They really enjoy what they are doing right in the moment; they aren't looking forward to the next game they're going to play. They get totally lost in their present game. Days seem to last forever to little children.

As adults we have our lives scheduled out weeks and even months in advance, even our vacations. We're always trying to get to the next thing while we are doing several things at once, then we wonder why time is going by so fast. Why are months and years flying by at mind-bending speed?

Even our entertainment is set to warp speed. The other night we sat down to watch the new "The Bourne Ultimatum" movie. I was taken back at the filming technique applied to this picture: the scenes were shot so fast that it was almost impossible to keep up. Most of the sequences were less than a second apart. After the movie we were

discussing the fact that some of the plot was lost to the sheer velocity of filming. It was like it was filmed with the fruit fly in mind. They only live twenty-four hours so let's make sure we cram in as much as possible before they die.

It seems that is the motto of our entire society "Let's cram in as much as possible." The problem with this approach to life is that it does not allow us to ever slow down and enjoy what we are doing.

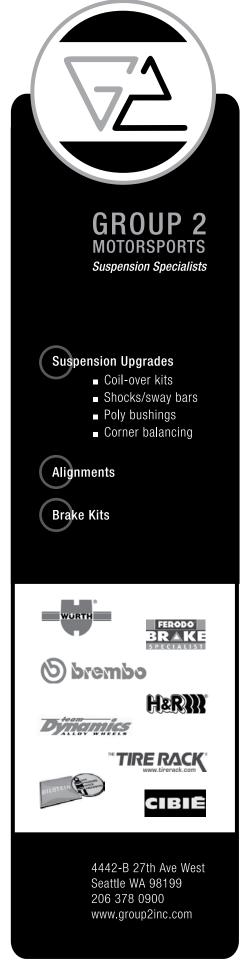
The way I deal with this madness is to climb into my BMW of choice at the time and really take in the experience. If I'm in my little 5er, I just love the sound of the exhaust note, the sensation of the thick leather steering wheel in my hands, the way the short shifter feels in my right hand, ahhhhhh, I just take it all in.

The way I deal with this madness is to climb into my BMW of choice at the time and really take in the experience.

This sensory experience goes a long way to calm my jittery nerves. It serves to bring pleasure back into focus and makes me realize that the things that make us happy and calm are just as important if not more important than the things that made us jittery to begin with.

Do we have to deal with life and its never ending responsibilities? Yes, we do. However, much like little children, we should slow down and enjoy what we are doing while we are doing it. After all, this is one of the secrets of life. Embrace yourself, embrace your family, and embrace your life. It's fairly simple, just slow down..

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February 2008

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Feb. 5: March Issue March 25: April Issue

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1983 320is: Bronzit beige, black cloth, Recaro seats. Restoration project or parts car. In my immediate family since new. Was my daily driver until two years ago when something in fuel injection went—hasn't been started since. Body is straight with two minor dents. Rebuilt gearbox, new master brake cylinder, factory sunroof, 6CD changer. I hate to get rid of her, but I have too many cars & too little time. \$750 to good home. Contact Karen at 206-719-6964 or kmschlosser@centurytel.net.

Parts for Sale

E46 330cic (2006) parts: Hardtop on the car ~2,000 miles. Imola red with dark headliner and black exterior trim (can be painted of course). \$1,500 or offer (hardtop stand included). Windscreen for E46 convertible, \$200 or offer. DINAN exhaust, about 9,000 miles on it, \$250 or offer. Call Rich at 425-836-8117 (days).

Snow Tires for 3 series: Set of four 205/60/15 Michelin Alpine PA2 snow tires mounted on BMW steel wheels. Set of four BMW wheel covers are also include. Two tires are new. Asking \$400 obo. Contact John at 425-228-9459 or johnewaters@earthlink.net.

Tires and Wheels: Four Blizzak WS-15 205/55/R16s on 7½ X 16 MSW wheels. Low use. Wheels in very good condition \$300. Contact Mike at 425-228-0848 or z3wave@blarg.net.

Parting out 1991 535i E34: Granitsilber with light grey interior, 152,000 miles. Body damage, very good mechanically. All or part. Engine and automatic transmission out of car. For information contact Karl at 253-797-1511 or krufener@skynetbb.com.

Tires: Two 255/40ZR18 Michelin Pilot Sport tires bought new \$285 each in September 07; they have 378 miles will sell for \$225 each. I already have 19" wheels and tires for my M3 and don't need these. Contact Jaime at 425-271-1706 or Jaimeole@aol.com.

Snow Tires: Four Nokian Hakkapelitta stud-less snow tires (195/70 R14) mounted and balanced on BMW steel wheels. Eighty percent tread left. \$425. If interested, call Dave at 503-668-5188 or email deborahkaechele@yahoo.com.

AC Schnitzer Aluminum Pedal Set: For automatic transmission BMWs from 1997 to current. As new, unmarked and unworn with all mounting hardware in original box. Price new was \$289.95; yours for \$150. Contact Bob at ifpracing@comcast.net.

Bayarian Autosport Car Cover and Storage Bag for E60 (from 2004 5 Series): As new, \$100. Contact Bob at ifpracing@comcast.net.

Miscellaneous

Roundel magazines: 1980–2003. Missing years 1992, 93, and 94. Issues 1980–1991 in cases. Good to excellent condition. \$200. Please contact Mike at 425-228-0848 or z3wave@blarg.net.

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