

BMW Car Club
of America
North Star Chapter



North Star Bavarian October, 2015



The BMW M Coupe shown was modified and built exclusively at BMW of Minnetonka.



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On The Cover



This quarter's issue of the North Star Bavarian newsletter is graced by yet another rare bird owned by the same enthusiast that owns last issue's E28 Alpina.

Pictured left is an uber-rare 1995 BMW E36 M3 factory light-weight

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Upcoming Club Events

BluntTech.com BMW get together event
Saturday, October 17, 2015 8:00 am – 10:00 am
18305 Minnetonka blvd, deephaven, MN 55391

Annual winter dinner at Gasthaus, Stillwater.
Saturday, Jan 16th, 2016 Time TBD.
8390 Lofton Ave, Stillwater, MN 55082

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'S54' is only two numbers and a letter. 'M3' is a legend.

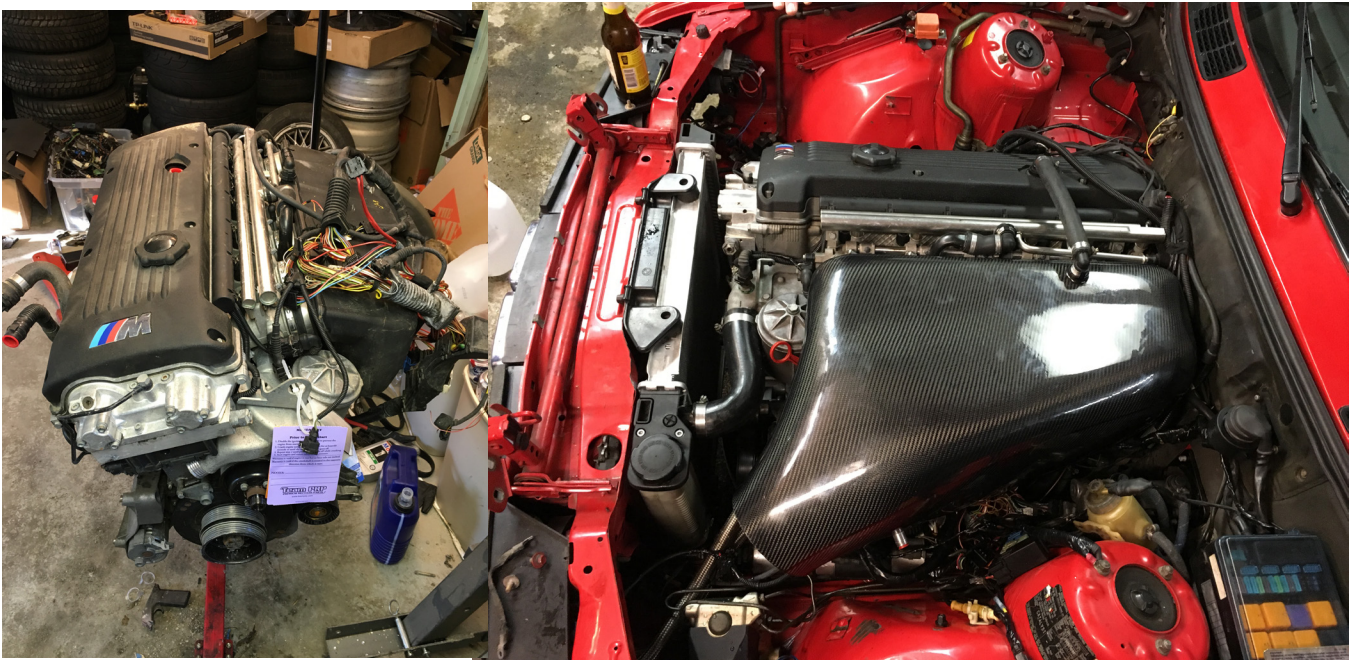
Words and photos by Erik Berger

BMW's S54B32 straight 6 24-valve aluminum head, iron block direct ignition, multi-port fuel injection engine with double continuously variable valve timing is one of the crown jewels of the new Millennium BMW engine lineup. The last hoorah of the M50 block architecture that debuted in 1990, combined with a duplex timing chain, double VANOS, fracture-split forged steel connecting rods, a forged steel crank shaft and seamlessly balanced rotating assembly capable of the 8,000 aurally pleasing r.p.m. These engines are getting cheaper and cheaper by the day second hand if you know where to look, and they're still a terrific performance value when you factor in what they will fit with relative ease, and how many dollars per horsepower you get from the package and formfactor.

This engine isn't without fault though. There are definitely bad examples of this engine to buy for a swap project like mine, but once the 12 small camshaft front bolts which have a nasty tendency to back themselves out, vanos exhaust oil pump drive hubs which sheer off and cause catastrophic engine failure or rod bearings that need to be inspected and

dealt with every 90,000 miles, they're very easy and inexpensive to keep up with once bulletproofed, rivaling the reliability of even the iron-block M52 of the late 90s. This engine deserves a home in a lighter vehicle than the E46 M3 convertible it was originally burdened with. Que stage left, the E30 chassis.

Not just any E30 chassis, though. the Chariot of the Gods 'E30 M3. Pulling up to a modest, unkempt house in southern Rochester, I spot a blue tarp with the signature E30 M roof antenna sticking out of a weather-worn hole, followed by a glance of those gorgeous box fender flares. As I circumambulate the car in the seller's driveway, with the seller nowhere to be found, I slit the rope off of the bottom of the tarp and started to unearth this once-beautiful DTM-bred king, every inch of blue tarp that comes off reveals more distress and more dignity. Fewer things in this world excite me more than a good car chase, and this morning was one for the scrap book. A smashed right front corner, dents all over, rusted battery box.. and 224,000 miles, but so solid and a numbers matching chassis. (story continues on pp.8)



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Bimmers 'n' Brats: what you missed, or not...

August 30th, 2015

Bimmers 'n' Brats 2015 was once again a great success, with a wonderful, sunny, clear day and a great member turnout at the picturesque germanic american institute in St. Paul.



Bimmers 'n' Brats always brings out some impressive iron, and this year was no exception, whether an Isetta, an Apolina B9, or a modern twin-turbo M tickles your fancy, the event has it all... And brats to boot!



(S54 M3 continued)

Eventually, about an hour later, the owner of this long-dormant beast stumbles out of his house and immediately begins coming to grips with the fact that I was not there to simply look at the car as I had said via email the week-end before -- I intended fully well to take the car home with me that evening. I learned that the car had been sitting for 6 years, parked just after a light deer hit on the front right corner, just 6 months after the S52 engine swap had been completed. The interior of this 1988 DiamondSchwarz M3 looked fairly unmolested by the years and miles, but the car had an autopower 4 point roll bar installed in it, no back seat anywhere to be seen.. A cause for genuine internal concern since a 'decent' E30 M3 back seat is about \$1,000 these days. Sheepishly I asked the seller what happened to the back seat, he looked up at me immediately and said 'oh, that's in my garage', which is proceeded to open and uncover in near-mint condition.

Sitting for 6 years, even partially covered, comes with its fair share of issues, and the main one. The issue that nearly killed the dream of taking the car home that night was an incredibly seized brake caliper/rotor on the front left corner.

Throwing caution to the wind, I rang up AAA and requested a tow. I figured the tow driver would have no issue working with a frozen wheel, and after a nice tip they wouldn't mind making the trip, late night, to Minneapolis with the car. 56 minutes later, a massive roll back pulls in to this tiny turn-of-the-century driveway and begins winching this limping wurstwagen on to it's back. The wrecker operator took my destination address and off he went, seller slowly walking behind the tow truck as it leaves the neighborhood it had spent so long occupying. a 13-year relationship had come to an end, and the start of a new had just begun.

The following afternoon, returning home from work, I finally have a chance to look over this old, dented, crashed non-running and barely rolling car I had just shelled out an unreasonable to most sum of money for.. Within 5 minutes of arriving at the car, with a new battery, MAF and penetrating oil on the frozen brake pads, I had the car not only running, but was able to take it for a short drive. Later that week, a friend of mine and I stripped off all of the trim and she is now at the body shop, returning to glory.

(to be continued).

It's a Wild, Wonderful and Sometimes Weird BMW World

Words and Photo by Tom Lawell

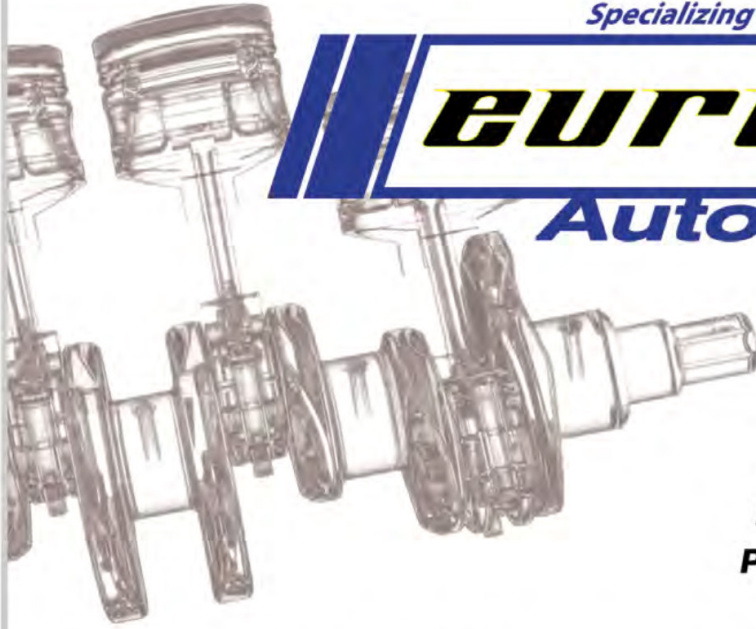
I'm watching the local 4th of July parade and I see this lady next to us with a BMW tattoo. Now I consider myself a true BMW fan, but the thought of getting a BMW tattoo had actually never crossed my mind. As a BMWCCA Northstar Chapter board member I figured it was my duty to further investigate, so I struck up a conversation. Come to find out the lady has two children, Brandon and Brittany, both with middle names starting with M and last names starting with W. She always wanted a BMW and figured she now had two, and somehow that inspired the idea of getting a BMW tattoo. Two other thoughts she shared with me during our conversation... it was the first time the tattoo artist had ever done a BMW tattoo and she still doesn't drive a BMW... she drives an Audi.



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