

Do I need help?



I'm addicted to the E36 BMW Coupé

Words and photography by John Denny



I have been driving now for over 18 years, and slowly worked my way through the rear wheel drive ranks until I bought my first E36 BMW in the form of a 92 J Plate 325i SE. Finally I bought my dream car, a Porsche 911 with Martini Racing Stripes, a bit bling, what can I say it was an impulse buy.

The dream soon turned into a nightmare when over the 3 months of ownership the car spent 2 months in the garage having gearbox rebuild after rebuild, and to add insult to injury I was forced to drive around in a Volvo Estate, Saab 900 and a Micra! I traded the Porsche back at the Garage I bought it from, and they gave me a low mileage 325i coupe which I drove round for 3 1/2 years, and was one of the best cars I've ever driven. The purchase of my first 3 Series coupé started my obsession with the E36 coupé, the model which I believe to be one of BMW's finest shapes. After two

325is, a 328i, nine M3s I now currently running a 1999 M3 Imola Individual (GT2). Along the way I have had 3.0s, 3.2 Evos, a Convertible and an SMG.

The current car is the second GT2 I have owned number 42/50, after having number 1/50 special edition right hand drive cars BMW produced. I constantly get ribbed by all my friends as soon as I get a new E36 I proceed to take it back to standard, replacing all the bits I can afford, even now having paintwork done (have found a brilliant paint shop locally), wheel refurbishing, servicing, tyres, Stereo, the lot. Then as soon as there are no more jobs or improvements I sell them, for another "project" it's a very expensive hobby as I never make money. I have tried to move away from the M3, and in the last few years have had a Mitsubishi EVO6, 535i Sport, Boxster, MR2 GT T-Bar and a Celica GT Turbo. But I always came back to an M3. I'm guessing it's because it's such

a versatile car, it's good looking with a classic car feel, but start every turn of the key, with a modern interior and all the extras, it drives like a track car, but is docile around town. It has space for all the shopping, luggage and your friends, and returns a great mpg for a 3.2 litre engine, with the added security of BMW's brilliant build quality and safety features makes this a great car.

I am trying to keep my current M3, but already getting the itch for a Alpina B3, but if I make the transition, wonder how long it will be before I'm back to the trusty E36 M3 Evo..... I'm sure I need help.

