

fast times

the newsletter of **Bavarian Autosport**

spring 2005

Too late for the catalog, but just in time for spring!



Ronal R38 - 7x15, 7.5x17, 8x18

For 3 series 84 on, Z3, Z4, Mini.

7x15	3 series 84 thru 91	\$149.95 ea.
7.5x17	3 series 84 thru 91, Mini	\$199.95 ea.
8x18	3 series 92 on, Z3, Z4, Mini	\$279.95 ea.

Complete packages start at \$899.95



Ronal LS - 7x15

For 3 series 84 thru 91.

7x15	3 series 84 thru 91	\$189.95 ea.
	BMW wheel emblem	\$3.95 ea.

Complete packages start at \$999.95

Plus, **NEW** lower pricing on two of our most popular packages:



Hamann HM3 - 8.5x17

For 3 series 92 on, 5 series 89 thru 03, 6 series thru 89, 7 series thru 01, Z3, Z4.

Complete packages start at \$1,799.95



M-contour look - 7.5x17

For 3 series 92 on, 5 series 82 thru 03, 6 series thru 89, 7 series thru 01, Z3, Z4.

Complete packages start at \$1,299.95

for more details, ask you phone rep or visit www.BavAuto.com...

New from Ronal, Germany's #1 rated wheel manufacturer.

A lot of our customers who drive older BMWs have been begging us for some lower priced wheel upgrades. We've been looking, believe us – in Germany, Italy, America and Asia – but well-made wheels aren't cheap. And cheap wheels aren't well-made. (Our philosophy is, "If we wouldn't put them on our BMWs, we won't put them on yours.")

Good news, bad news.

This past February, though, we received a call from German wheel manufacturer Ronal. It was both good news and bad news. The good news: they were interested in having us offer some of their high-quality alloy wheels at very attractive prices. The bad news: the call came the day after our catalog went to press. So we're letting you know about it here in *Fast Times*.

For those of you unfamiliar with Ronal, *continued on page 2*



Ronal R41 - 8x18

For 3 series 92 on, Z3, Z4.

8x18	3 series 92 on, Z3, Z4	\$289.95 ea.
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Complete packages start at \$1,899.95



Have a question about your BMW? Ask that savvy old BMW enthusiast, "Bavarian Otto".

See page 3...

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BAVARIAN
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PRODUCTS FOR BMW ENTHUSIASTS

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New Wheels continued from page 1

they have been producing wheels for the auto industry since 1969. Their client list reads like a Who's Who of auto manufacturers and tuners, including BMW, Mercedes, Audi, Porsche,

Rolls Royce, Alpina, Hartge, AMG, AC Schnitzer and Lorinser.

On top of all this, you should know that Ronal's quality is second to none. In fact, in a series of independent scientific tests conducted by Germany's TUV, (their version of our DOT), Ronal was identified as having the "best quality wheel," competing against 15 other well-known wheel manufacturers, including OZ, BBS, Borbet and Antera.

The return of the Challenge!

We were, however, able to get one lower-priced wheel for the 3 series 84 thru 91 into the catalog by asking our old friends at Zender to "un-retire" their mold for the split-spoke Challenge wheel (left). They agreed to produce a limited run for us, in both classic silver and new hyper black.

For model-specific pricing on any wheel-and-tire package, ask your phone rep or visit www.BavAuto.com.



Zender Challenge - 7x15

For 3 series 84 thru 91

7x15, classic silver \$149.95 ea.
7x15, hyper black \$179.95 ea.

Wheel & tire packages start at just \$899.95



Hungry for savings? Order a "floor mat sandwich."

Winter may have "left the building" as they say, but as usual, it has a way of leaving a big mess behind. Sand, dirt, mud, salt – these are the enemies of your BMW's floor mats. If you want to protect your floor mats but don't like the look of heavy-duty rubber mats in your BMW, our clear vinyl Protect-a-mats are just the thing. Sure, similar products have been around for years, but these are different:



- They're made of heavier vinyl than the cheaper versions you find in retail chains, so they come with a Lifetime Warranty.
- They feature longer nubs to reach deeper into your floor mats, grab hold and stay put.

- They're cut to fit your BMW precisely, using the exact same patterns as our carpet floor mats for a perfect match and complete protection.

A set of four Protect-a-mats costs \$59.95, and we take \$10 off if you buy them in combination with any of our custom-cut floor mats (Plush mats, Ultimate mats, Berber mats, Rhino mats or Coco mats). But now thru April 30, when you order a set of new custom floor mats, Protect-a-mats are just \$39.95 – a savings of \$20.

How easy is this?! do-it-yourself

Fix those cloudy, sandblasted, plastic headlight covers. ✂

Yellowing, pitted plastic headlight lenses are a common problem on 3 series 92 on, 5 series 97 on, 7 series 95 on and the Z series. Not only does this damage detract from the beauty of your BMW, it can be a safety hazard due to reduced light output caused by the cloudy lenses. And because the headlights are complete assemblies, you can't replace just the lenses.

Until recently, the only real option has been to replace the headlights. The cost of replacement assemblies, depending on your model, starts at about \$100 per side. (Owners of 3 series 92 thru 98 have the option of upgrading to European headlights that feature brighter H1 bulbs and high-impact glass lenses. See page 39 of our new Spring & Summer catalog.)

We now have another option: for less than \$90 plus an hour of your time, you can use our PolyClear kit to remove most of the cloudiness and yellowing, then add our urethane headlight shields for protection against future damage and a like-new appearance that lasts and lasts.

The PolyClear kit contains everything you need to renew your headlight lenses using your own power drill. Take a look at how easy it is:

Note: You can remove the headlight assembly from your BMW to perform this work, as we did, or protect the areas around the lens (e.g. painted headlight trim) with painter's masking tape.



1 Install the PolyClear pad mount to your cordless or standard power drill, then install the blue polishing pad to the pad mount. Apply polishing paste to the headlight lens and work the paste across the face of the lens in slow even strokes.

2 Once the initial polishing is complete, remove the blue polishing pad and install the white buffing pad. Clean the compound from the lens and proceed to buff the lens to a luster with the soft buffing pad. We polished and buffed half of this



headlight lens. Total time spent was about 10 minutes. (Your time will vary, depending on how damaged your lenses are.) While the lens is not perfect (it still has remnants of some of the deeper pits), what an improvement! The lens looks much better and the light output will be much improved.

3 Apply the peel-and-stick urethane headlight shields according to the directions.



Voila! Your lighting is improved, the appearance of your BMW is improved, and you have the added pleasure of saying to friends and family, "I did that."

from our tech team

ask "bavarian otto"

BMWobbly.

Dear Bavarian Otto,

Last year my 94 325i started to shake on right hand turns at highway speeds. I don't mean sharp turns, just slow sweepers that require the slightest deviation from center. I replaced the driver's side ball joint and the problem was solved. Well, just last week the same problem started. Of course, my first thought is to replace the ball joint again. Could there be another problem? It seems like a ball joint should last longer than one year.

Ron G.

Ron – Unfortunately, the nylon-socket ball joint BMW uses on 3 series built since 92 is less than reliable. It is very possible that the ball joint that you installed is, in fact, worn out again. You may also have an issue with the ball joint on the other side, the inner ball joint (the one at the subframe) or the control arm bushings. We now carry metal-socket ball joints and upgraded control arms for 3 series 92 on. Installing these should change your BMWobbly back into a smooth-driving BMW for good. – Otto

Hey, Otto, help me filter out the B.S.

Dear Bavarian Otto,

For some time now, I have been considering putting K&N panel air filters in both of my BMWs (a 99 323i and a 96 318i). I have read the pros and cons for this upgrade. The pros are better performance and better fuel economy. The cons are poor dirt filtering and decreased engine performance, if not outright engine failure. I have no desire, nor can I afford, to kill either of these fine cars. What is your honest recommendation for air induction? Thank you.

Don K.

Don – Thank you for the opportunity to clear up a couple of misconceptions. The K&N filter not only allows substantially more air to pass than a stock-type filter, it also filters better. The design of the K&N (a cotton gauze element with a special oil coating), traps smaller particles than a paper-based filter and will do so for a much longer period before the flow is degraded. K&N is the most widely used filter in all forms of racing – from drag strips to the Baja – on engines that cost from \$25,000 to \$250,000. I personally have been using K&N filters for 30 years and will use nothing else. I think it is one of the best \$45 upgrades you can make on a BMW, and I can only surmise that, sadly, those "damage your engine" rumors were started either by folks who do not offer K&N products, or by its competitors. As for maintenance, we recommend cleaning the filters once a year (more often in very dirty conditions). To do this, you simply spray K&N cleaning solution on the filter, rinse it out and let dry. When dry, apply K&N filter oil. We offer the cleaner and oil separately or as a "recharge kit." There's enough cleaner and oil in the kit that you won't have to buy it again... unless you plan to take K&N's "Million Mile Warranty" to the limit. – Otto

We list K&N filters on page 94 of our catalog. Or you can visit www.BavAuto.com, enter your year and model and type "K&N" in the search box – we'll show you the right K&N for your BMW.



Over 200 years of BMW experience is just a phone call or e-mail away.

If you add up all the years the enthusiasts at Bavarian Autosport have been working on BMWs – and helping people like you work on theirs – it totals well over 200 years. That's a lot of BMW knowledge. And it's yours for the asking. Have a BMW question? Ask that savvy old BMW enthusiast, "Bavarian Otto" – just call 800.535.2002 or e-mail Otto@BavAuto.com. Here are a few of examples of the hundreds of questions Otto answers each week:

To change or not to change, that is the question...

Dear Bavarian Otto,

I recently purchased an 01 325xi and have a question about changing the oil. The reviews I read on the car recommend changing the oil every 15,000 miles or when the service lights come on, but I was advised by my dealership to change it every 6,000 miles. Which is correct?

Susan F.

Susan – This is one time when we agree with the dealership. Many late model cars, including BMWs, now use what is referred to as "long-life" synthetic oil and advise prolonged intervals between oil changes. These longer intervals are an attempt to lower a car's "cost of ownership" rating. We firmly believe – and apparently your dealer does, too – that 15,000 miles is too long between oil changes. We recommend regular oil changes with a top-shelf synthetic oil at 7,500 miles for newer cars and 5,000 miles for older engines. [Ed. Note: See the write-up on Lubro Moly's new 5W30 oil on page 7 of this newsletter.] At these intervals, the oil may not yet be broken down, but it is definitely loading up on con-

taminants. A good rule of thumb is to change the oil when it starts to become opaque instead of translucent. Coloration and darkening are fine, but when you can no longer see clearly through the oil to the dipstick, it's time for a change. Remember, an oil change is much less expensive than an engine repair. – Otto

These plastic headlight lenses are the pits!

Dear Bavarian Otto,

120,000 miles of road debris had pitted the headlight lenses on my 98 750il. Is there a polish I can use to make the pitting go away?

Pete M.

Pete – I actually just finished testing a new polishing kit on a headlight assembly from a 92 325i. It made a very noticeable improvement – we'll be adding the kit to our spring catalog. [Ed. Note: See the article on page 2 of this newsletter.] After polishing, I highly recommend adding urethane headlight shields. They will prevent further damage and give the lenses a "like new" appearance. – Otto

Bavarian Profile



Gregg Balsler

This June will mark Gregg's 3rd anniversary at Bavarian Autosport, but he's been a car guy forever. He started working on cars in high school when he swapped a small block V-8 into a 1986 S-10 pickup. In the past three years he has owned six BMWs: an 84 318i, 85 318i, two 86 325e's and two 87 325e's. In 2003, he took First Place at

the Yokohama Ride and Drive in Boston. When he's not winning driving events, working on his new house, working here or spending time with his wife and 18-month old son, he is swapping an 86 535i 5-speed engine and tranny into an 88 528e body. (Sleep! Who needs sleep?..)

Tune-up your direct-fire ignition engine.

All 6-cylinder and V-8 BMWs 1992 and later (except 535i and 735i) use a Direct Ignition system (also known as “coil-on-plug”). In this system, individual ignition coils for each spark plug are mounted directly above the plugs. As a result, BMW models with Direct Ignition do not have the distributor cap, rotor and spark plug wires that many of us grew up with. On cars with Direct Ignition systems, BMW recommends 100,000 miles before changing the spark plugs. We believe this is part of an industry-wide effort by car manufacturers to make their “cost of ownership” figures look better to potential buyers and consumer reporting agencies.

All this may mislead one into assuming that no standard “tune-up” maintenance is required on these engines. This is simply not the case. Now that these Direct Ignition systems have been out in the real world for several years, we are seeing specific areas where ignition tune-up maintenance is needed. We are finding that, for better fuel mileage, better performance and longer catalytic converter life, it's a good idea to change the spark plugs sooner than the recommended 100,000 miles. Additionally, we are

1 To access the ignition system, the valve cover trim panel (with BMW logo) must be removed.



2 Remove the two plastic cover plugs to access the securing nuts.



hearing from customers that the rubber boots that connect the spark plugs to the coils are deteriorating. This allows sparks to arc to the spark plug tube walls, creating misfires. One of the most common “check engine” fault codes Otto is asked about is “Random Misfire.” When this code is generated, it is often due to faulty spark plug connectors. (For more on fault codes, see the article on page 7.) But another cause for the “Random Misfire” fault code is a leaking valve cover gasket. If the rubber seals for the spark plug tubes begin to leak, engine oil can collect in the tubes. This creates the possibility of a misfire due to the spark arcing from the connector boot.

Given these reports of failures and poor performance, we are recommending a simple tune-up on Direct Ignition systems between 60,000 and 75,000 miles. Performing this tune-up is relatively easy and straightforward, and the cost ranges from \$100 to \$250, depending on the number of cylinders, etc. Follow along as we replace the spark plug connector boots and the spark plugs on a 2001 6-cylinder:

3 Remove the two valve cover trim panel securing nuts, using a 10mm socket and ratchet.



4 Remove the oil filler cap.

5 Lift and remove the trim panel.



6 Gently pry up the wiring harness plug lock clip and remove the harness plug from the coil.

The Bosch Advantage

In 1886, 25 year old Robert Bosch started the “Workshop for Precision Mechanics & Electrical Engineering” in Stuttgart, Germany. In 1902, he received a patent for an innovative spark plug with a high-voltage magneto. In 1911, Ray Harroun won the first Indy 500 driving a Marmon Wasp using specially-built Bosch spark plugs.

Since then, hundreds of professional racers, from Darlington to Dakar, have relied on Bosch... including the past 16 winners of the Indy 500.

What impact does all this race experience have on you and your daily driver? A lot! All those years of winning have taught the engineers at Bosch a thing or two about spark plug design. Their plugs for BMWs feature:

- Heavy-duty copper, platinum or silver core center electrodes for superior durability, conductivity and reliability.
- Nickel-chromium ground electrode for consistent performance and long life.
- Metal glass fused center electrode seal that prevents combustion leakage.
- Angular, five-ribbed insulator that prevents misfires due to current leakage.

Plus, every Bosch spark plug is engineered and tested on the specific BMW engine for which it is specified. Do yourself and your BMW a favor – when ordering replacement plugs, make sure they're Bosch.



7 Using a 10mm socket and ratchet, remove the two coil mounting bolts.



8 Gently pull up on the coil assembly. The spark plug connector boot may be stuck to the plug. If so, twist the coil a bit while pulling up.



9 Gently twist and pull the spark plug connector boot from the coil tower.

10 You can now remove the spark plug and inspect for oil leakage in the spark plug tube. (If you DO find oil in the spark plug tube, it is due either to a loose spark plug or a leaking valve cover gasket. Inspect closely to determine if the valve cover gasket is leaking. If it is, you can either stop now and order a new gasket set, or do your best to clean up the oil and plan the gasket replacement for a later date. A typical valve cover gasket set is shown below.)



11 Apply anti-seize to the spark plug threads. Install the plug in the connector boot and the boot on the coil. Reinstall assembly in engine.



Above: separate plug, boot and coil. Left: all 3 assembled.

How easy is this?! do-it-yourself

Read engine fault codes.

One of the most valuable tools for diagnosing late model BMWs is our Code Reader and Reset Tool. BMWs 1988 and later have varying degrees of self-diagnostic capability through the use of On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) systems. Earlier models use OBD-I; BMWs 1996 and later employ the government-mandated and very powerful OBD-II. These systems monitor many engine management parameters and generate fault codes when the parameters are out of specification, (e.g. the "Random Misfire" code mentioned in the Direct Ignition article on page 6). Each time the "Check Engine" light comes on, these codes

are stored in the computer. Our Code Reader allows you to access these codes, then clear and reset them after the problem has been corrected. (It also allows you to reset your oil change and service interval lights.) Performing diagnostics without a code reader is futile. And this tool is so easy to use – check it out:



1 Plug the tool into the diagnostic port. (Although most models 88 thru 00 have the port under the hood, some 1996 through 2000 models have it under the dash. All 2001 and later models have their OBD-II connector under the dashboard on the driver's side.)



2 Turn the ignition key to the ON or RUN position (do not start the engine), then push the START button on the tool. The tool will display "Fc.". This indicates the tool is ready.



3 Push START again. The tool will now display the number of the proper chart to use (in the instruction booklet) to decipher the codes for your model. This example is showing chart number 19.



4 Push START again. The tool will now display any fault code that is stored in the system. If there is more than one code, each time the START button is pressed, the next code will be displayed until there are no more codes. The vehicle in this example is showing the codes F5 and F6. These codes are for a faulty secondary air pump and check valve, (very common failures on 1996 and later 6-cylinder and V-8 cars).

Once you've deciphered the fault codes, you can figure out what needs to be done to fix the problem, or use the info to confirm what the service tech is telling you. And if you have a question, remember – Bavarian Otto is just a phone call or e-mail away.

Just changing the oil? This is the tool for you.



After an oil change, don't pay the dealer to reset your service interval lights – do it yourself and save! This tool works on all BMWs with round or D-shaped diagnostic ports. Pays for itself after one or two uses. Plus it's on sale thru April 30. Normally \$99.95, it's now just \$89.95.

NEW! Lubro Moly 5W-30 oil.

For years, owners of late-model BMWs have been asking us for Lubro Moly 5W-30 oil to match their OE oil. It's finally here! This 5W-30 motor oil is a combination of state-of-the-art, synthetic technology plus the most advanced additives available. The result is an oil that provides exceptional protection against wear, reduces oil consumption, improves fuel economy and ensures that the engine is immediately supplied with oil upon startup, when the worst wear occurs.

Lubro Moly 5W-30 has earned BMW's "Long-life-01" approval. Mobil 1 5W-30 doesn't have that approval. Nor do many other heavily-advertised brands. It may also surprise you to learn that the "synthetic" 5W-30 oil BMW sells in North America (a Castrol product) is classified as a Group III hydrocracked oil, which means it's a highly refined petroleum with no synthetic molecules. As such, it cannot be called a synthetic oil in Europe. (Do you think it would qualify for BMW's Longlife-01 approval?)

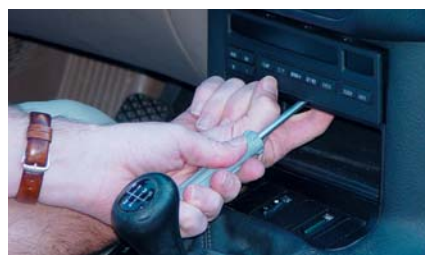
Never used Lubro Moly? We'll offer you \$1 per liter to try it. Yes, Lubro Moly costs more than some other oils, and for the same reasons your BMW costs more than a Toyota or a Ford – quality and performance. But to get you to try it, now through April 30, we'll take \$1 off every liter you buy. And not just 5W-30, but *any* Lubro Moly motor oil. (If you're a regular user of Lubro Moly, don't worry – we'll still take off \$1 per liter. Consider it a loyalty reward.)



How easy is this?! do-it-yourself

Replacing OBC illumination bulbs.

In the spring 2004 issue of Fast Times, we replaced the illumination bar for an On Board Computer (OBC) in the 3 series 84 thru 91, 5 series 82 thru 88, 6 series thru 89 and 7 series thru 87. (Go to www.BavAuto.com/newsletter to download the issue.) OBC displays for 3 series 92 thru 98, 5 series 89 thru 96 and 7 series 88 thru 94 are illuminated by four replaceable bulbs. (The 3 series uses #62 11 1 391 260; 5 and 7 series use #65 81 1 374 495. Both are \$2.95 each). If your display is missing a few pixels or lines, new bulbs will not cure it; you need to replace the display. But if you can see your display only in certain light, or if just a section is illuminated, you can simply replace the bulbs. The procedure is shown below on a 3 series 92 thru 98. *Note: on some cars, you must remove the radio using the radio removal tool (#600153, \$16.95).*



1 To remove the OBC, put your finger up through the access hole and push up on the release on the bottom of the unit. If the OBC will not release, gently use a small screwdriver to pry between the bottom of the OBC and the lower trim.



2 There are four illumination bulbs along the top of the OBC. Using needle-nose pliers, remove the burned-out bulbs and replace with the new ones. When finished, insert the OBC into the opening and push it in until the bottom locking clip snaps into place.

March & April 2005
gear up for spring

NOTE: Page numbers refer to our new Spring & Summer 2005 catalog.



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save \$50-100

Bavarian Autosport pre-painted rear wings (pages 57, 59, 63, 66, 67)

Available for 3 series 92 on, 5 series 97 thru 03, Z3, Z4. Examples...

M3-style trunk lip spoiler (above left) 3 series 92 on Orig. \$299.95 **now \$199.95**
 3 series 99 on 4-door (above right) 3 series 92 on Orig. \$449.95 **now \$399.95**

save \$50

Bavarian Autosport M3-style* sport mirror kit (page 57)

Orig. \$499.95 **now \$449.95**

* Sorry, LED and M5-style mirrors not on sale.

save \$5 pair

Bavarian Autosport lower headlight trim for 3 series 92 thru 98 (page 75)

Orig. \$49.95 **now \$44.95**

save \$20

Protect-a-mats (page 30) when purchased in combination with any of our custom-fit floor mats
 Orig. \$59.95 **now \$39.95**

10% off

Boge shock absorbers (page 12)
 Orig. \$45.95-121.95
now \$41.35-109.75

10% off DTM styling pieces from Europe (pages 57, 58, 59, 65)

Available for 3 series 88 on and 5 series 89 thru 96. Examples...



For 3 series 92 thru 98, (except M3):
 M3-style spoiler with black mesh (above) Orig. \$329.95 **now \$296.95**
 M3-style spoiler with silver mesh (not shown) Orig. \$329.95 **now \$296.95**

For 3 series 99 thru 01, 4 door:
 DTM front lip spoiler Orig. \$199.95 **now \$179.95**

10% off

Invisible paint shields (page 44)
 Orig. \$59.95-399.95
now \$53.95-359.95

save \$5

Bavarian Autosport non-slip fender mat (page 82)
 Orig. \$24.95 **now \$19.95**



10% off

Eibach Pro-Kit springs (page 14)
 Orig. \$254.95-379.95
now \$229.45-341.95

save \$1 per liter

Ate Super brake fluid (page 20)
 Orig. \$11.95 **now \$10.95**



save \$10

Service light reset tool (page 82)
 Orig. \$99.95 **now \$89.95**

save \$1 per liter

Lubro Moly motor oil (page 84)
 Orig. \$7.95-39.95
now \$6.95-34.95



save \$10

Bavarian Autosport stainless steel brake lines (page 19)
 Orig. \$94.95-124.95
now \$84.95-114.95

10% off

Bentley repair manuals (page 83)
 Orig. \$34.95-149.95
now \$31.45-134.95

Don't delay - sale prices end April 30, 2005!

for even more BMW bargains, visit www.BavAuto.com/clearance...



Winner! Classic 7 series: Robert Beaudin of New Hampshire and his 1983 L7. Upgrades and modifications include a front spoiler, rear apron, sunroof wind deflector, custom interior and a custom sound system.