

A Coupé with Alpina intentions



My passion for all things BMW started with the majestic lines of the BMW 3.0 CS (E9) when I was 8 years old, and I have been a member of BMW car clubs for the last 16 years.

My affliction (or is it affection) started with the BMW Car Club in Melbourne, Australia. I then moved to the United Kingdom and tagged along to a number of club events with the BMW Car Club GB, and during the past seven years in the

USA with the BMW CCA. It was at a classic car auction in Melbourne Australia when I first saw a 'Coupé', I was probably 8 years old at the time, and though all my friends had pictures of Lamborghinis, Ferraris and Porsches on their wall, I had a silver BMW 3.0 CSL poster and dreamt of having one.

My adventures with BMWs started when I was 24 with a second hand E36 318is, then a few years later I traded for an 323Ci, then an E46 M3, then an E39 M5... but my dream has just been realized, taking my fully restored 1974 BMW 3.0 CS "Coupé" for its first test drive in September 2007.

Background of the BMW 3.0 CS and the E9 family

The BMW New Six CS as it was known upon launch (with the internal name BMW E9) is the two-door sport coupé in BMW's New Six line, produced from 1968 to 1975 alongside the four-door BMW E3 sedan.

The E9 featured BMW's M30 straight 6 engines of 2.5, 2.8 and 3.0 litres in road cars, with larger units used in racing. The BMW 3.0 CS, and later the 3.0 CSL, were very successful in racing and helped establish BMW's status as a sporty driver's car, with success in European Touring Car



The heart of the coupé. A 3.5 litre with Alpina plenum & webers



Refinished wood paneling, re-leathered Recaro seats, Alpina steering wheel, shifter and upholstery



On the road

Intentions

Words and photography by Duane Sword



Championship with Alpina and the Deutsche Rennsport Meisterschaft series.

Starting in April 1971, the BMW 3.0 CS was built in Rheine by Wilhelm Karmann GmbH in Osnabrück, Germany. Karmann is the largest independent motor vehicle company in Germany. Over the course of more than a century, they have undertaken various roles, from design to production and assembly of components, for various automobile manufacturers including BMW, Chrysler, Porsche, and Volkswagen.

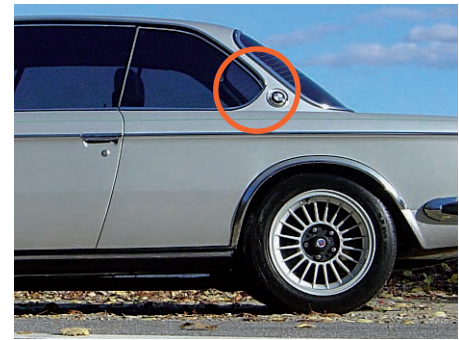
The four-seated coupé is the successor model of the BMW 2800 CS, which was built by Karmann from September 1968, on behalf of BMW. From 1971

until 1975 21,147 3-litre BMWs were built in the Rheine facility.

Back in Australia I did not see many coupés, in fact I recall seeing more on the track in the CSL 'Batmobile' form than I did on the road as production cars. I thought the rarity was due to being in Australia and that they were relatively low production... but there were a few more reasons as I would learn later on. First coupés rust, badly, more on that later. Second, in the early to mid seventies coupés were very expensive, and with the import duties and tariffs, the BMW 3.0CS (let alone the CSL) was equivalent to the Ferrari of the time, meaning not many of them made it to Australia.

Despite the production numbers It isn't easy finding the right coupé

When I arrived in the USA in late 1999, after spending a couple of years in the UK, I was eager to get my search going for a coupé. Our British friends (I hope I can call them friends that now the tension of the tea party and the battle of Bunker Hill have subsided) sure do have a fantastic passion and enthusiasm for all things automotive. Classics, modern rental packages (I had a weekend with a TVR Tuscan!), track days, motor sport, formula racing, and every marque seems to have their own club and plentiful



The Hofmeister kink – one of many design elements that make BMW, well, a BMW

activities for their members. My couple of years in the UK helped me to sort out my priorities, I needed a classic car, badly! After some Googling around I stumbled across the BMW CS Registry, and there it was, a silver BMW 3.0 CS advertised for sale! To my surprise it wasn't just a regular CS, it had some Alpina features that I wasn't familiar with at the time, and this sparked further reading and curiosity as to what kind of coupé I wanted, and to become a little more informed..... which all prospective coupé owners need to be. Buyer beware with the BMW coupé!

BMW E9 CS Production Numbers

Model/Year	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	Total
2800CS				138	2534	3336	276					6283
2800CSA				787	1089	73						1949
3.0CS					1974	1172	779	267	263	4435		
3.0CSA					820	1215	1169	365	408	3667		
3.0CSI					1061	2999	2741	579	665	7935		
3.0CSA							2			2		
3.0CSi RHD							66	128	13	207		
3.0CSA RHD							69	139	7	215		
3.0CSL					169	262	287	40	17	765		
3.0 CSL RHD							349	161		509		
2.6CS								272	328	600		
2.6CSA								101	143	244		
2800CS USA				43	415	183						641
2800CSA USA				36	403	67						526
3.0CS USA					132	411	450	375		1368		
3.0CSA USA					60	377	314	438		1189		
Total E9 Production	0	0	0	138	3400	6242	4535	6777	6026	2694	1734	36,546

Source: BMW CS Registry

I purchased several books on the E9 and classic BMWs, invested hours and hours searching the web for details on the coupé, and come across several references on Alpina; both road and racing history.

There was an Alpina modified 3.0CS which they called the B2, but there were also some standard 3.0 CS models retrofitted with Alpina gear. I checked out several coupés through private sale (none of them through eBay I might add) and didn't feel comfortable that I was getting the full story and history of the cars I was checking out. The other major concern I had after reading so many horror stories of coupé acquisitions that lead to tears or major money pits. It all revolves around the "R" word; Rust. BMW E9 coupés are exceptionally prone to rust, in fact if you are very very quiet, you can probably hear a coupé rusting now.

I came back to the silver coupé on the BMW CS Registry website and I decided to contact the owner now that I was a little more informed. To my very pleasant surprise the owner was very forthcoming with information on the car, where there was some rust (and importantly where there wasn't) and how proud he was being the original owner! After several calls and emails, I made the

trip out to the west coast from Boston, was greeted by a fellow BMW enthusiast, however.... he had progressively gone to the dark side by acquiring Porsches over the years; hence the need to create some garage space with the sale of the coupé.

Just sitting there in the garage the coupé looked great, incredible lines, the shark nose, the bold grill... so much better than any photos could possibly do it justice. Then there were the Alpina elements such as the wheels, airdam, motorsport spoiler and a noticeably lower profile stance making it look sporty and ready to be driven.

We walked around the car for an hour or so, discussing details inside and out... and I couldn't wait to go for the first drive. Thankfully it wasn't raining and we weren't in a busy area, so the test drive was only very stressful instead of chronically stressful. Neil Diamond said it best "what a beautiful noise". The sound of the Webers, the fantastic feeling of engagement and involvement with the car... now I had convinced myself, it was a matter of learning what needed attention.... Well, a lot.

I returned to Boston, got in touch with a recommended BMW specialist, and arranged a full and thorough inspection, and I mean complete inspection of motor, drivetrain, chassis, body and the general health of the car. With the knowledge of what exactly needed to get taken care of, coupled with the upfront candor from the owner, I knew that a full restoration would be required, not immediately, but it needed to be done. So after the previous owner parted with his 'baby', I had the coupé transported to Boston, which created quite the spectacle when it was unloaded in downtown Boston I must say!

Coupés started rusting from birth

The CS coupé was styled by Wilhelm Hofmeister (of Hofmeister kink fame) and was heavily influenced by the Bertone designed 3200CS. Certainly the BMW element with the most unusual name is the Hofmeister kink, the distinctive bend in every BMW's C-pillars—the metal roof supports that separate the rear side windows from the back glass.

Although it appeared as early as the 1930s, the kink formally debuted with the "New Class" 1500 Sedan at the 1961 Frankfurt auto show and was named after Wilhelm Hofmeister, then director of design for BMW.

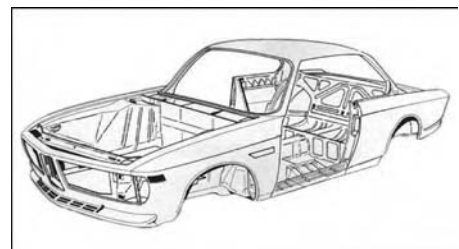
Aside from its pleasing visual effect, the Hofmeister kink subtly highlights a BMW trademark: rear-wheel drive. The complex, Karmann built bodies were known to start

rusting almost immediately. The more I read on coupés, the more I wondered if it wouldn't be better to consider purchasing the other classic car I love, a Ferrari 412... Essentially the Karmann built bodies were never rust proofed, and were said to have examples with rust in the showroom as new in dealerships. So it was a matter of how bad the rust was on the coupé I would purchase, not if there was any rust. Finding a coupé that had genuine California history as opposed to a daily driver in New England was a starting consideration.

Not being a mechanic myself, there was only so much I could do with a visual inspection be brave enough to ask, in the hope of finding out just how bad things really were; and the cost implications to do anything about it.

Thanks again to some helpful people on the BMW CS Registry email bulletin, I memorized a pretty easy to remember "rust checklist" as used it in every discussion with sellers online, on the phone and the few that I got as far as inspecting in person:

- ✓ A-pillars (difficult = expensive to repair given the complexity of welds)
- ✓ Rocker panels (the foundation of the car, and no B-pillar, makes for a problem)
- ✓ Floors (the floor may be fine, but check the spare tyre well!)
- ✓ Chrome bumpers (there are no fender liners, collects lots of moisture, salt, dirt)
- ✓ Shock towers (not a good thing to let go..)



Complex panel fit, and no rust proofing. It's a question of how bad is the rust; bad or terminal

A few words on the brilliance of Alpina

Alpina Burkard Bovensiepen GmbH is an automobile tuning company based in Buchloe, in the Ostallgau district of Bavaria, Germany, specializing in BMW cars. Alpina was founded by Burkard Bovensiepen who remains as the CEO of the company to this day.

Alpina still makes magnificent cars, and they are not just an aftermarket tuning company, as the Alpina B7 is testament to. The heritage of the company however isn't as illustrious as BMW's in making engines for aircraft, rather Alpina made typewriting machines. In fact it was Burkard's father, Dr. Rudolf Bovensiepen who founded an office machinery company and their typewriters became particularly successful. Until the company tried to diversify into the textile industry and the company folded. The company as we know it today was founded in 1965, by

Burkard who started a BMW tuning business following his success with investments in the stock market. The tuning business started in an outbuilding of the original typewriter factory, and Burkard took on the name of his father's business; Alpina the legend was born.

By 1967 there were six employees in the company working on carburetors and then into the art of rejuvenating cylinder heads. Which leads to an interesting segue, have you ever wondered what the Alpina logo represents?

It displays a crankshaft and a pair of intake trumpets; echoing back to the original tuning and bespoke modifications by the company. By 1970, with seventy employees and with high demand for Alpina products, the facility grew too small and was relocated from Kaufbeuren to Buchloe.

Between 1968 and 1977 Alpina cars did extremely well in competition, with the highlight in 1970 when the Alpina developed cars won the European Touring Car Championship, the German hill climb, rally and the prestigious Spa-Francorchamps 24 hour endurance race. 1973 was the start of the oil crisis and many tuners fell victim to it.

Burkard's foresight was to put emphasis on fuel consumption. Alpina performance cars of the time consumed no more fuel than the same series of factory BMW cars. In fact the BMW B2 3.0 CS was even lower in consumption than the factory 3.0 CS; such that through the oil crisis there remained an enthusiastic and loyal following to Alpina, making Alpina the largest tuning company in 1973 with 85 employees and surpassed the then largest tuning company in Europe, Abarth of Italy.

Alpina cars are not 'BMW cars modified by Alpina.' While other companies like AC Schnitzer, Hartge, Racing Dynamics, Hamann Motorsport and Dinan Cars are tuners that modify cars. Alpina cars are built as new cars branded Alpina, therefore all owner privileges through BMW are maintained.

Alpina is a stand-alone car manufacturer in very close cooperation with BMW. My coupé is not an Alpina B2, unfortunately, rather it is a BMW 3.0 CS with many aftermarket Alpina elements as described later.

The restoration by Vintage Sports & Racing, LLC

So the car had been a driver's car, particularly in the time it spent in Texas and California, and less so up in the moist foothills of Seattle, WA. The original USA spec front and rear bumpers were still on the car, the engine was still pulling strong, but needed to be rebuilt in the next few thousand miles, and the rust along the base of the door sills, footwell, rear tyre well, and bubbling in the lower

rear quarter panel needed to be addressed

Mario and the VSR team have been long time supporter of the Boston Chapter of BMW Car Club of America. VSR has worked on a numerous E9 coupés, and Mario was referenced to me by name from several people and sources. Anyone looking to get a coupé restored should not hesitate to contact Mario, I am sure the stress of restoring a coupé isn't for everyone, but Mario was a real professional, keeping me up to date through the process and keeping me involved on various decisions of quality, part selection, and aesthetics. It took just over 2.5 years to have the car restored, and it would have been a year soon if I wasn't so particular. I wanted the car to be a very clean driver's car, not for trailer rides to shows. Having said that the complete under carriage, engine, suspension, brakes etc. have all been extensively cleaned, powder coated, and particular care taken to stop the evil of coupés... yes, moisture! I want to extend many thanks and accolades to the outstanding work of Mario Langsten of Vintage Sports & Racing in Bow NH USA.

Drivetrain

The engine needed to be completely rebuilt, and after much deliberation I decided to upgrade the power, moving to a 3.5 liter Euro unit that essentially 'drops' in (I can say it, but I didn't do it). Idea again being that I wanted to drive, enjoy, cruise, and still be able to use the Alpina plenum with the triple Weber carburation.

Interior

I wanted to emphasize the Alpina theme of the car, hence the Alpina cloth upholstery inserts on the Recaro seats. I liked the Alpina pin stripes on the outside lines that are echoed in the Alpina cloth trimming. The carpets were shot in the original car, so we replaced them with similar blue, but used a deep plush English Wilton Wool as originally used in Jaguars of the era. The rear parcel shelf was recovered in leather to match the blue leather seats in the rear. The wood trim was a real work of art, literally! Mario had the wood sent to a French cabinet maker and restorer, such that the quality of the pieces that came back maintained the original gloss (not too shiny, not too mat, just right!) and you can see one piece of grain from the left rear, forward across the dashboard, and around to the right rear.

On the road

The Ultimate Driving Machine. Sheer driving pleasure. Well done BMW marketers for coining such a phrase. Driving the coupé is pleasure, engaging, and so different than the modern car in every way. I have been lucky to own various BMWs including the E46 M3 and E39 M5, both outstanding machines in their own right, but I can honestly say that I have more fun, bigger smiles and more

enjoyment in the coupé than any other BMW I have had the chance to drive. From starting, to warming up the car (a foreign experience to someone accustomed to modern BMWs), to hearing, smelling and feeling how the car feels as it gets warmer, as it gets more air and road under its wheels. Sure it sounds weird and abstract, but it is so true, and the more you drive the more you get to know the car, and how to respect it.

References

It may be of interest for the readers of Bimmer Magazine to share the list of various online resources that I used throughout my search for the coupé, parts and information.

Alpina Factory - www.alpina-automobiles.com

Alpina Register - www.thealpinaregister.com

Alpina Information - www.m5board.com/alpina/

BMW CCA - www.bmwcca.org

BMW CS Registry - www.bmwcsregistry.org

BMW E9 Site - www.e9coupe.com

Walloth Nesch Classic Parts - www.wallothnesch.com

Vintage Sports & Racing - www.vsr1.com



Specifications

There are several elements that I have taken liberty to upgrade but all within the character and era of the car.

BMW 3.0CS 'Alpina', VIN 4310155, Build date March 1974

Motor	Rebuilt 1983 Alpina 3.5 litre M30 bored and balanced engine. Triple 40DCOE Carburetors. Alpina air-box. Alpina manifolds, headers and exhaust. Mallory ignition.
Transmission	Getrag close ratio 5-speed with short throw shift & reinforced mounts.
Differential	Alpina 75% LSD.
Suspension	Alpina FB4 chassis set.
Brakes	Alpina B2 competition brakes.
Wheels	Alpina 7x16 front, 8x16 rear.
Interior	Momo-Alpina steering wheel. Alpina shift knob. Recaro seats. Alpina sports upholstery. Full & complete toolkit. Re-Leathered upholstery and rear parcel shelf. Carpeting is of the original colour, though is actually the weave of a 1970s Jaguar. Wood paneling was sent to a French cabinet refinisher.... Oh what a finish!
Exterior	Alpina front air dam. BMW Motorsport rear deck spoiler. BMW CSL chrome flares. Custom Alpina pin striping along full length of the car, and rear Alpina lettering. Sunroof (factory edition, however the car was originally a hard top).

