Mobile Tradition live

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25 years of the BMW GS

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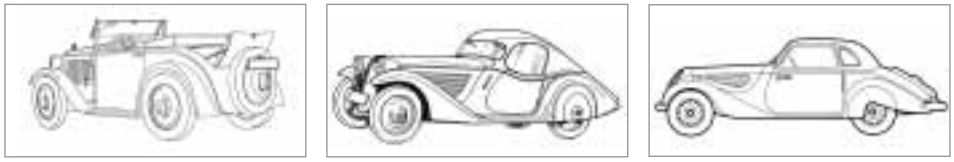
After BMW's entry into cross-country motorcycle sport, the summer of 1980 saw the market launch of the successful off-roader in modified form as the R 80 G/S production endurance bike. With this G/S – "G" stands for "Gelände" (terrain), "S" for "Strasse" (road), BMW founded the segment of the large, comfortable touring Enduro, a mainstay of its motorcycle business to this day. The world's first single swing-arm rear suspension, the BMW Monolever, caused a sensation.

BMW in Eisenach (1928 to 1952)

The BMW brand has a long tradition in eastern Germany. In 1928, BMW bought the Eisenach car factory, also known as the "Dixi" works. This seemed a favourable proposition for a company whose management was urgently seeking an entry into the booming car market. Through the decades, the Eisenach factory experienced a turbulent history. With the opening of the new production plant in Leipzig in May 2005, BMW takes up the threads of its car manufacturing tradition in eastern Germany.



BMW models that came out of Eisenach: BMW 3/20 PS Cabriolet, BMW 315/1 and BMW 327.

Dear Friends of the BMW Group,

Every summer for a number of years now, tens of thousands of people from many nations have gathered in the Alpine foothills of Bavaria. They come for the hospitality that greets them in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, they come for the opportunities to indulge in their passion, and above all they come because they are all great fans of our products: motorcycles by BMW. And there's one model range that has arguably played a pivotal role in fostering this fascination – the products of the GS series. At this year's BMW Motorrad Biker Meeting we will be celebrating the success of this two-wheeled series, which since its debut 25 years ago has turned countless people into loyal followers of the BMW brand. At the same time, the GS emerged as an ambassador of the brand thanks to GS riders reaching parts of the world that ordinary roads don't get to, and thanks to the virtues that have always made BMW bikes so special: ideal running gear and innovative technology coupled with imperishable reliability. Gear up for a comprehensive account of the GS success story in this magazine. I am confident that this and the many other topics covered in the current issue will once again open up new vistas of our exciting history for you.

Read and enjoy!

Holger Lapp

Director BMW Group Mobile Tradition

BMW HP2: the ongoing success of the GS series.

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Obituary of racing legend Ernst Jakob Henne

Left: Ernst Jakob Henne in Gran Canaria in 2004 with his wife Martha, Holger Lapp and Fred Jakobs of BMW Mobile Tradition.
Above: Henne at the start of the 1930s.

During the night of 22nd May, former BMW works rider Ernst Jakob Henne died at his home in Gran Canaria at the age of 101. In the 1920s and '30s he claimed numerous victories, championship titles and speed records on two wheels, while also making it into the list of winners at international car racing events.

Ernst Jakob Henne was born on 22nd February 1904 as the fourth child of a master saddler in the southern German town of Weiler near Wangen in the Allgäu. After his apprenticeship as a vehicle mechanic, he set himself up as an independent motorcycle mechanic. His first motorbike race was in Mühldorf in 1923. In 1926 he was signed up as a BMW works rider and became the official agent for BMW motorcycles. In 1929 he also became a BMW car dealer. He won his first victory for BMW on 2nd May 1926 in the Karlsruher Wildparkrennen. In the 1926 Eifelrennen he finished first to take the German Championship title, which at the time was still decided on the basis of a single race.

In search of new challenges, he signed up for the International Six Day Trial in the early 1930s. In 1933, 1934 and 1935 he won the team title with the national team, which was made up entirely of BMW riders. But Ernst Jakob Henne's great aim was to bring the absolute world motorcycle speed record to Germany. On 19th September 1929 he recorded a speed of over 216 km/h, making him the fastest motorcyclist in the world.

This sparked off a fierce contest, and the speeds kept going up. In 1932 Henne clocked 246 km/h in Hungary, in 1935 he achieved 256 km/h on the newly built autobahn near Frankfurt, and a year later it was 272 km/h on a fully enclosed machine. On account of its striking shape, the rider and his motorcycle were soon popularly dubbed "Henne and the egg" ("Henne" meaning "hen" in German).

In 1936, the prolific racer also made history on four wheels. In the Eifelrennen he drove the first BMW 328 prototype to win not just the two-litre class without supercharger, but at an average 101.5 km/h he claimed the fastest time overall. With the BMW 328 he went on to win the Belgian Grand Prix des Frontières in Chimay and the Bucharest Grand Prix. On the morning of 28th November 1937, Henne reached the valedictory climax of his career: he achieved 279 km/h on his "egg" over the flying kilometre, recording 280 km/h on the return. After that he ceased chasing top speeds, but his record remained intact until 1951.

After the Second World War, Ernst Henne set up an authorized repair shop for Mercedes-Benz models and became one of Germany's major dealers. In 1991 he devoted a considerable part of his fortune into setting up the Ernst Jakob Henne Foundation, which offers unbureaucratic help to people in need through no fault of their own. Ernst Jakob Henne, who had increasingly withdrawn from public life in recent years, has lived in the Canary Islands with his second wife since 1996.

En route to a world speed record: Ernst Jakob Henne in 1929.

Dates and events

June 2005

24 to 26 June 2005 / Goodwood (GB), Goodwood Festival of Speed
Exhibition, demo run, concours d'élégance.
Organizer: Lord March

July 2005

1 to 3 July 2005 / Garmisch-Partenkirchen (D), 5th International Biker Meeting
Exhibition, parade, ride-out.
Organizer: BMW Motorrad

7 to 10 July 2005 / Montafon / Arlberg (A), Silvretta Classic
Rally. Organizer: Motor Presse, Stuttgart

16 to 24 July 2005 / (D), 2000 km through Germany
Rally. Organizer: Günter Krön

20 to 23 July 2005 / Ennstal (D), Ennstal Classic
Rally. Organizers: Michael Glöckner, Helmut Zwickl

August 2005

19 to 21 August 2005 / Monterey / California (USA), Monterey Historics
Exhibition, race.
Organizer: Steven Earle

September 2005

3 to 5 September 2005 / Lime Rock (USA), Lime Rock Vintage Festival
Exhibition, race, concours d'élégance.
Organizers: S. Earle, M. Smith, S. Barber

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5th International BMW Motorrad Biker Meeting in Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Garmisch-Partenkirchen. "See you…" With these words BMW Motorrad beckons bikers, friends and fans to the 5th International BMW Motorrad Biker Meeting 2005 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Already approaching a tradition and the highlight of the motorcycle season, this gathering from 1st to 3rd July 2005 offers bikers from around the world an opportunity for excursions through marvellous touring territory in the Alpine foothills and a chance to try out the latest BMW motorcycle models. Petrol talk and a mega biker party, along with fascinating lectures and a two-wheeler parade have already delighted bikers in previous years. More than 30,000 BMW motorcyclists turned up last year for Europe's second largest biker meeting. This year, the anniversary of the GS – BMW's successful Enduro turns 25 – and a world premiere are among the highlights of a programme that surely leaves nothing to be desired.

Close cooperation has developed between BMW Motorrad and BMW Mobile Tradition. For the anniversary exhibition and the BMW Mobile Tradition live Special marking the birthday of the GS, a great deal of rummaging went on not only in the archives. A joint workshop also helped to dispatch some legendary bikes from the past to Garmisch-Partenkirchen for the 5th International Biker Meeting, along with the keenly awaited new models.
To experience the world of BMW Motorrad and the thrill of two-wheeled riding close-up, the BMW Motorrad team urges you to head for Garmisch!

Start of the motorcycle parade in 2004.

Preview: 2000 km through Germany

Mönchengladbach: Back in the 1930s, the 2000 km through Germany reliability run was one of the biggest and most spectacular long-distance rallies of the time. More than 70 years on, an international field comprising 115 teams of classic car and motorcycle owners will set out from Mönchengladbach on 16th July 2005 for the 2000 km of 2005. BMW Mobile Tradition will be entering a BMW 507. Acting as navigator will be a BMW dealer who is successfully involved in the supply of historic parts. Also lining up at the start will be a journalist from Motor Klassik, astride a BMW R 50 supplied by BMW Mobile Tradition.
Along the historic route through Germany's most attractive towns and landscapes, the daily stages averaging 305 km remain to this day a challenge for man and machine. Thousands of enthusiastic spectators will not only be cheering the departure of this "rolling museum", they will also be lining the routes of the individual stages. Beyond an atmospheric night-time stage, one highlight awaiting the drivers will be a regularity run on the race track of Motopark Oschersleben. The seven-day challenge ends back in Mönchengladbach. BMW Mobile Tradition is taking part in "Oldtimerfreunde zeigen Herz!" (Classic fans have a heart!) – a fund-raising campaign allied to the 2000 km through Germany. They will give a BMW 1600/2 Cabrio to the winner for use in the 2000 km of 2005.

Preview: Goodwood Festival of Speed – "The greatest show on Earth"

Goodwood. For the twelfth time, Charles Lord March, owner of Goodwood House, will be inviting guests to a huge "garden party" from 22nd to 26th June 2005, though this time numbers will be limited to 158,000. The Goodwood Festival of Speed will host VIP guests and well-known racing drivers. Also taking part will be racing cars from F1 teams, racing bikes and CanAm cars. BMW Group Mobile Tradition will be there for the "active driving" part – including Holger Lapp, head of BMW Group Mobile Tradition, in a BMW 328. The theme of "30 Years of the BMW 3 Series" will be represented by the BMW 320 Junior Team, a BMW M3 Group A DTM and a BMW 320 turbo diesel. Professor Burkhard Göschel, Director of Development and Purchasing, will be driving a BMW M3 GTR 2005. Apart from an M6 and an Alpina B5, the R 90 S Superbike and the RS 54 Zeller motorcycle will also be out on track, as well as an R 51 RS ridden by the head of BMW Motorrad, Dr Diess. At the exhibition, the Holbein HH49, BMW 507 and BMW Isetta will represent the theme "BMW and the 1950s", while the BMW 320i Turbo and the GTR/ETCC 2004/5 will embody the motor racing highlights of "30 Years of the BMW 3 Series". The current 2005 models will include a Formula BMW, BMW M6, BMW 645Ci Convertible, BMW M5 and M3 CS. The new GS two-wheeler will be on display next to the GS Vintage, the successful sidecar combination of Kraus/Huser, and the RS 500.

Goodwood 2004: Dr Herbert Diess on a BMW F 650 RR Paris-Dakar (left) and Professor Burkhard Göschel in a BMW M1 Procar.

Anniversaries in 2005

60 years ago

Starting afresh after the Second World War

Left the destroyed plant of the BMW plant 1 in the North of Munich, underneath the order from the Military Government dated October 1945 to dismantle and "raze" the plant.

When they marched into Munich, the US troops occupied BMW's two factories in Milbertshofen and Allach. The manufacturing plant in the eastern German city of Eisenach was now in the Soviet occupation zone and thus beyond the control of the company headquarters in Munich.

There was no hope of any short-term revival of production. However, on 28th July 1945, BMW was granted an initial, as yet restricted production licence. It covered the repair of machinery as well as vehicles belonging to the US Army. To this end, BMW could also produce individual vehicle components and coal-gas generators. A month later the licence was extended to the manufacture of agricultural machinery, bicycles and motorcycles.
Nevertheless, on 1st October the US military administration ordered the confiscation and dismantling of BMW's Munich plants. The manufacturing equipment was to be taken apart, packed up and eventually shipped to Allied states. For the rest, the order was to raze everything to the ground.
These measures resulted in BMW instantly losing control of its assets. Following extensive dismantling work, the military authorities renewed the licence for peacetime production on 25th March 1946 and annulled the seizure of the Milbertshofen factory. The facility in Allach, which was carrying out repair assignments for the US troops as the "Karlsfeld Ordnance Depot", was not handed back to BMW until 1st July 1955 (see also page 39).

35 years ago

Work starts on the new BMW office tower

Construction of BMW's "Four-Cylinder" head office in north Munich in 1970. Right: The foundation pit before building work began.

Excavation work began on 16th July 1970 for the new administrative office building in the north of Munich. The BMW Board had decided against a public cornerstone ceremony.
The design of the "Four-Cylinder" building stemmed from Viennese architect Professor Karl Schwanzer. Its construction was based on an unconventional method: for each of the four cylinders, around a hundred steel bars were attached to horizontal struts at the top of the building's core. The individual storeys, which were conventionally cast at ground level, were then lifted up onto this "corset". Thanks to this novel method of construction, the building was erected in a record time of just 22 months.
The exterior of the 11,000-tonne office tower was completed In time for the 1972 Olympics in Munich. During the games, Eberhard von Kuenheim had the BMW logo attached to the building, which rose to almost 100 metres in height. That earned BMW a penalty notice from the City of Munich to the tune of 110,000 deutschmarks.

30 years ago

The BMW 3 Series – a new format for the medium class

The 1970s were to prove a landmark decade in the history of BMW. Beyond the company's internationalization, a realignment of its automobile portfolio was the focus of attention. After the BMW 5 Series range had been launched in 1972 as a successful replacement for the cars of the New Class, the next step was to replace the most successful of all model ranges, the BMW 02.

Development work on the car code-named the E21 began as early as 1970. Its styling was definitively shaped by BMW's design chief of the time, Paul Bracq. The Frenchman knew how to unite styling cues from the 02 Series with the modern design language of the BMW 5 Series. When it came to both the chassis and the engines, the BMW engineers turned their attention to optimizing existing technology. On the safety front, meanwhile, new territory was broached: energy-absorbing front and rear ends, deformation channels in the wheel arches, and a special locking device and deformation facility of the bonnet were unique in the automotive middle range. Inside the new model, the driver-oriented cockpit celebrated its debut.

Finally, in 1975, BMW presented the result of five years of development work: the BMW 3 Series. "A new format for the medium class" ran the succinct slogan, highlighting the exceptional positioning of the new car in the four-wheeled market of the time.

With the development of the BMW 3 Series, the engineers and designers at BMW had landed a major coup. Each of the five generations to date has surpassed previous sales records. Clearly the company had accurately gauged what the public wanted.

Review: Mille Miglia 2005

The Isettas from the BMW Team Ferrari/Ferrari (number 146), the private team Mercandanti/Merdanti-Bostoni (number 148) and the team Holger Lapp, Director of BMW Mobile Tradition, and Jörg Reichle from the Süddeutsche Zeitung (number 150).

Brescia/Munich. The BMW Group had three reasons to celebrate at the 2005 Mille Miglia. The team of Boni/Barziza picked up 8,427 points to claim the Ladies' Trophy for the tenth time, while the Isetta and the BMW 507 were both celebrating their 50th birthday at the world's leading classic car event. This year, Franca Boni and Monica Barziza drove a BMW 328 Berlin-Rom. They finished 17th overall as the best BMW team in the 2005 Mille Miglia. The team of Viaro/De Marco were overall winners.

For the first time, three Isettas numbered among the 22 BMW teams. The private BMW team of Mercadanti/Mercadanti-Bastoni had already won the hearts of spectators some years ago with their "bubble car". To mark the Isetta's 50th birthday, BMW Group Mobile Tradition was fielding two works models. The diminutive car with 12 horsepower had no need to hide behind its large-capacity competitors, as shown in its placings: 65th (Mercadanti/Mercadanti-Bastoni) and 106th (Ferrari/Ferrari). The team of Jörg Reichle/-Holger Lapp also charmed the crowds, defying an engine fault to successfully propel their BMW Isetta 250 to the finish.

Review: Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este

Munich/Cernobbio. There were two noteworthy birthdays at the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este on 23rd and 24th April. The BMW Group, under whose patronage this event has been held for seven years, presented two sports-car classics, the BMW 503 and BMW 507, along with their derivatives on their 50th anniversary. Albrecht Graf Goertz created the BMW 507 design icon in 1955, and the two models together formed the centre of attraction at the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este beauty contest at Lake Como.

At this, the world's oldest concours d'élégance and the only one to provide a platform for concept cars and prototypes as well, the BMW Group exhibited the BMW Art Car by Robert Rauschenberg. The Pininfarina design studio also had cause for celebration and staged a special exhibition to mark their 75th anniversary. Rolls-Royce, meanwhile, was celebrating 50 years of the Silver Cloud.

The organizers had selected 54 historic models and eight concept cars from among the high-class applicants. The importance of the event was also reflected in the competition for modern design studies. Holger Lapp, head of BMW Group Mobile Tradition, described this as a "successful combination of modern design and the classic roots of auto styling".

On Saturday, the participants, jury and expert guests evaluated the up-and-running (a condition of entry) exhibits in the grounds of Villa d'Este. Then on Sunday the public awarded the Coppa d'Oro di Villa d'Este in the gardens of Villa Erba, which went to a 1952 Ferrari 212 Export Spider Vignale. The Trofeo BMW Group for the "best car in show" went to the Alfa Romeo Canguro Coupé Bertone from the year 1964, which had been entered by Shiro Kosaka. He also received the press award.

This year's Design Talk, initiated by the BMW Group, was entitled "1950s Design". Held on Sunday, it revolved around the presentation of the car in an aesthetic context, the showcasing of pioneering design developments and the impact of fifties design in our day.

For devotees of historic automobiles the event provided an opportunity to get a close-up look at details of cars in perfect, roadworthy condition.

Villa d'Este 2005: "birthday car" BMW 507 (left) and the Ferrari 212 Export Spider Vignale of 1951, winner of the Coppa d'Oro di Villa d'Este (above).

Eyecatcher not just in Munich: the “Skyline BMW Isetta” anniversary model.

New publication: Accessories Catalogue

In time for the 2005 Techno Classica, BMW Mobile Tradition this year launches the collecting season with a new edition of its Accessories Catalogue. The completely redesigned catalogue presents new and familiar products by BMW Mobile Tradition.

This year the emphasis is on the anniversaries “50 Years of the BMW 507”, “50 Years of the BMW Isetta” and “30 Years of the BMW 3 Series”.

To mark these “big 0” birthdays, BMW Mobile Tradition is presenting a selection of very special collectors’ pieces.

They range from an exclusive “50 Years of the BMW Isetta” container watch and a charming money box to mark the anniversary, all the way to an elegant silk scarf.

The “Skyline BMW Isetta” anniversary model appears in unusual, attractive clothing: its paintwork depicts the Munich skyline. The original Skyline BMW Isetta was on show at the Techno Classica. To mark the 50th anniversary of the BMW 507, collectors and classic fans can likewise look forward to a special range of new accessories and scale models. A further treat is the limited-edition anniversary model BMW 507 Graf Goertz, which is available in a set with a keyring shaped like the BMW 507 central lock.

The catalogue has 170 pages filled with exciting stories on key people from BMW’s past and an interesting presentation of our high-quality Original BMW Accessories and collectors’ items.

The Accessories Catalogue is published in German/English and French/Spanish editions and has been available from BMW dealers since mid-April 2005.

It will soon also be viewable online at: www.bmwmobiletradition.de.

New publication: the legendary BMW 507

In the early 1950s, BMW – with an eye to the US market – decided to build a sports car. The driving force behind this move was Max Hoffmann, America's leading importer of luxury European cars. On his advice, Count Goertz sent some sketches to Munich showing "what a sports car for the US market should look like". The drawings went down well and BMW's Chairman Hanns Grewenig invited Goertz to Munich. They came to a swift agreement and by November 1954 the contracts had been signed. The upshot was one of the most beautiful cars ever to be built – the BMW 507 Roadster. To mark its 50th anniversary, a new book in BMW Mobile Tradition's Profiles series has appeared, entitled The Legendary BMW 507.

The book is dedicated exclusively to this model, which for many connoisseurs ranks as one of the most attractive cars of all time. A number of legends are wreathed around this imposing sports car with its elongated bonnet and the most modern V8 engine of the day.

With a limited production run of 253 units, the BMW 507 has always been a rarity. But its history was not only punctuated by highlights. It arose in difficult circumstances, and expectations of its market success proved far too optimistic. After just four years of costly individual production, this chapter came to an end and the classy roadsters travelled the globe passing through many hands before they were eventually rediscovered as rare classics.

Each example today represents not just a fascinating piece of design and technological history, but also a fortune on four wheels. The latest research sheds new light on the famous sports car, far removed from the usual nostalgic romanticism. This book is a multifaceted, lavishly illustrated "auto-biography" as well as an important chapter in BMW's corporate history.

An extract from a contemporary description of the BMW 507

BMW continues its long-standing and successful tradition as a manufacturer of fast sports cars with the new BMW 507 sports tourer. It will be recalled that BMW dominated the two-liter sports car category effortlessly before the war. Powered by the most recent 140 bhp version of the 3.2-liter V8 engine, this racy, elegant two-seater roadster has a top speed of 220 km/h. Peak torque is 22.6 mkg and the compression ratio is 7.5:1.

The valves are operated via tappets, pushrods and temperature-compensated rockers. Twin downdraft carburetors are used. The chassis is the familiar BMW full-protection frame with its extremely rigid box sections and tubular elements.

The front axle has independent suspension with wheel location by means of upper and lower rubber-bushed triangulated wishbones, adjustable torsion bar springs and telescopic shock absorbers. A banjo axle with a hypoid-bevel final drive is used at the rear. Unlike the familiar BMW system, the modified rear suspension has a trailing arm and a lateral Panhard rod to ensure improved roadholding and cornering. This sports car provides the benefits of a soft suspension yet remains extremely manageable. The BMW 507 has a low-noise five-speed and reverse gearbox with baulk-ring synchromesh on four gears. As is usual in a sports car, a short gear lever is fitted between the seats instead of a steering-column shift.

The steering wheel is adjustable for reach using a zero-backlash bevel gear drive. The high top speed is matched by generously specified hydraulic brakes with a 1280 sq. cm brake lining area and aluminum drums with shrink-fit gray cast-iron rings.

The body is made from high-quality aluminum, as are the engine hood (which lifts against the direction of travel), and the trunk lid. The trunk is remarkably spacious for a sports car. The fuel tank, located behind the seats, holds 95 liters. The sports-style dash panel offers an excellent view of its precision instruments.

The tachometer and speedometer are both 140 mm in diameter, and the instrument dials have an anti-dazzle cowl. This BMW Touring Sport model is equipped as standard with an all-weather folding top, but can be supplied with a detachable coupe top as an optional extra to enhance its high-performance looks. Also available are a cover for the passenger seat, an underbody protection panel, a small racing windshield, and modified headlamps.

Weight on the road is approximately 1170 kg. 6.00–16 racing tires complete this high quality specification."

The book The Legendary BMW 507 is available through your dealer or from Heel Verlag GmbH, order hotline (Germany): 05 31 – 79 90 79.

Prototypes and anniversaries

The main theme of Techno Classica 2005 was the 1950s, a decade representing a major watershed for BMW. The second major focus was the theme of "30 years of the BMW 3 Series" with exhibits from the first generation to the new BMW 3 Series launched at the beginning of 2005.

By Martin Lohr

It is the contrasts between an Opel Commodore, a swish 1930s Rolls-Royce and a BMW 501 that have always defined the unique ambience of the Techno Classica in Essen. Once again, the previous year's statistics were surpassed. Over the same exhibition area of 110,000 square metres, this year's show featured more than 1,000 exhibitors. Around 2,000 exhibits were on display spread across 19 halls: clear evidence that the Techno Classica remains the largest event of its kind in the world.

In 2005, the BMW stand in Hall 12 once again proved the main attraction for lovers of historic vehicles. The two anniversaries "BMW and the 1950s" and "30 years of the BMW 3 Series" provide the stand with a wealth of interesting exhibits, many previously unpublished original photographs and rare documents. Many current motifs from the communication campaign on the theme of "30 years of the BMW 3 Series. Unequalled right from the start." were also featured.

Based on the anniversaries of the launch of the BMW 507 and the BMW Isetta, BMW Mobile Tradition focused on this key decade for the company. The BMW 501 marked the resumption of automobile production after the Second World War in 1952. The popularity of the "Baroque Angel" was further enhanced by the television series "Isar 12" in which it played a leading role as a police patrol car.

The BMW 501 and its "sister model" 502 manufactured in the early 1950s were too expensive for the mass market and failed to generate the anticipated success. The previously pros-

Holger Lapp, Director of BMW Mobile Tradition, opened the event focusing on "BMW and the 1950s" at the Techno Classica 2005.

BMW Mobile Tradition stand at the Techno Classica 2005: focus of attraction for visitors and exhibitors alike.

pering motorcycle market went into decline and exacerbated a latent economic crisis at BMW that was only to be resolved at the end of the decade. Although the BMW Isetta met the rising demand within the population for a small car, sales revenues failed to secure the long-term future of the company.

This was only ensured when the BMW 700 was launched successfully – a precursor to the later New Class – which brought the final breakthrough. The exhibition presented the history of the 1950s with a wealth of exhibits, documents and artefacts.

Marking that theme, three unique models of the still popular Isetta were exhibited at the Techno Classica – a BMW Isetta 250 Export "Lufthansa", a BMW Isetta 300 Standard "Stern" and a BMW Isetta 300 Export "Skyline". This was given a special new outfit by BMW Mobile Tradition on its 50th birthday which shows the Munich skyline. Lovers of the "bubble car" can order this vehicle as an exclusive model from the BMW Mobile Tradition Catalogue.

The second "anniversary" was the legendary 507 sports car. Not for nothing is this model designed by Albrecht Graf Goertz regarded to this day as "the most beautiful sports car in the world", as visitors to the BMW stand could see for themselves. As an additional highlight to the series model of the BMW 507 for the visitors to the show, BMW had also brought along the prototype of the BMW 507, developed among others by Ernst Loof, as well as the special coachwork by Giovanni Michelotti mounted on the 507 chassis: two very special one-off models which BMWMobile Tradition has not presented in this way to the broad public for a very long time.

From left: Dr. Florian Triebel, Fred Jakobs, Sinja Lohse and Manfred Grunert from BMW Mobile Tradition at the presentation of "BMW and the 1950s". Right a BMW R90 S Daytona.

Anniversary vehicles: Left BMW Isetta in special livery, right BMW 503.

Another major celebration this year was that of the BMW 3 Series, which at the age of 30 seems fresher than ever. In its honour, the Techno Classica showcased representatives of five generations of this model series in a proud line-up. Showing in the background was the film specially made for the anniversary by BMW Mobile Tradition. Entitled “30 Years of the BMW 3 Series. Right from the start...”, it strikingly conveys the dynamics and powerful core of the BMW 3 Series.

The BMW stand was rounded off by the clubs also represented there. The Techno Classica, featuring 130 international clubs, represents the world’s largest forum for vintage and classic clubs. In BMW’s Hall 12, there were numerous representatives of BMW, Mini, Glas and Rolls-Royce in attendance.

Another highlight was the evening’s event on the theme of “BMW and the 1950s”. In front of the fifties cars cast in a discreet light, the BMW stand was the starting point for an atmospheric journey in time. It began with a highly informative and entertaining presentation on BMW and life in the 1950s. At the same time, staff from the company archive with access to first-hand material were able to convey the state of technology at BMW in that era and the company’s advertising campaigns. This was followed by the keenly awaited premiere of the new film Rendezvous après midi. The film skilfully links the 1950s and its dreams, desires and yearnings to those of today. The spirit of the fifties and the “flirtation” of the BMW Isetta with the BMW 507, together with that of the two protagonists, visibly rubbed off on the viewers. Then as now, as the film made clear, the BMW 507 stood for beauty and athleticism, while the BMW Isetta, too, has sacrificed none of its unique charm over the years. Drivers at the time did not look down on one another but rather saw themselves as customers of one and the same brand.

As a crowning conclusion, the visitors were given some insights into the new book by Dr Lange on the BMW 507, which is due out in July 2005 as part of the Profiles series published by BMW Mobile Tradition. A discussion between Holger Lapp and the author gave a positive impression of the content describing the legendary cars.

Representative of the successful racing history of the BMW 3 Series, from left: BMW 320i ETCC, BMW 320td and rear BMW M3 Group A.

FIA World Touring Car Championship

2005 marks the first world championship for touring car racing since 1987. The 20 races of the series are being held in Europe, Asia and North America. In the FIA WTCC racing calendar, three circuits are hosting a world championship race for the first time: the extensively modernized course in Puebla, Mexico, which has been granted world championship status by the FIA, was the venue for races 9 and 10 on 26th June; the Istanbul Otodrom will mark its debut on 18th September; and to wrap up the season, 20th November sees the first international touring car championship race held on the legendary Chinese circuit of Macau famous for hosting the Guia Race.

By Gudrun Freier

"Curtains up for the first World Touring Car Championship since 1987" is the rallying cry for 26 drivers from ten nations and eight car manufacturers participating in the new FIA WTCC and vying for the coveted crown in international touring car racing. Needless to say, BMW is among their number.

BMW was successful in the 1987 World Touring Car Championship when Roberto Ravaglia (ITA) in a BMW M3 won the only world championship title in touring car racing to date – with a single-point lead. His rivals were Klaus Ludwig and Klaus Niedzwiedz. In 1988 Ravaglia won the European Touring Car Championship and in 1989 the German Touring Car Championship (DTM). In 1997 he ended his racing career, but in 2001 took up a new challenge when he set up Ravaglia Motorsport. In the 2005 FIA WTCC, Roberto Ravaglia – as the most successful of all BMW M3 drivers – is involved for the first time as team manager of BMW Team Italy-Spain. Their two BMW 320i cars are driven by Antonio Garcia and Alessandro Zanardi.

In search of the best touring car drivers in the world, BMW has three national teams lining up on the grid in BMW 320i models. BMW Team Italy-Spain is backed by the German, Italian and Spanish sales organizations. The prospects are good because in 2004's last European Championship for the foreseeable future, the Drivers' and Constructors' titles went to BMW Munich. RBM team manager Bart Mampaey (BEL) is banking on Andy Priaulx

(GBR) winning for his BMW Team UK after he took the Drivers' title in the 2004 ETCC. BMW Team Deutschland – Schnitzer Motorsport is represented at the wheel by Dirk Müller and Jörg Müller and directed by the experienced team manager of the BMW Motorsport development team, Charly Lamm of Freilassing.

Since it began fielding competition versions of the BMW 3 Series in touring car racing, BMW has been picking up numerous successes since 1977. The company's tally includes a notable 20 FIA-sanctioned European Championship titles as well as the 1987 World Championship. With this involvement in the WTCC – one of the three world championship series sanctioned by the FIA besides Formula One and the Rally World Championship – BMW Motorsport Director Dr Mario Theissen is reinforcing the high status of touring car racing for BMW. Despite fierce competition and further manufacturers who have signed up to the event, BMW's declared aim is to defend its title. With a good line-up of drivers the goal is once again to deliver the best and fastest car in the field.

The future World Touring Car Champion has to prove himself in ten racing events. The FIA WTCC regulations specify the awarding of one Drivers' title and one Constructors' title.

The grid line-up for the first of two races on a weekend is determined by two 30-minute free practice sessions and qualifying. On the following day there is a 15-minute warm-up and around 50 kilometres to cover in Race 1. After that, the teams have a break of just 15 minutes in which to prepare the cars for Race 2. For this race, also covering some 50 kilometres, the top eight finishers of Race 1 start in reverse order.

Facing page: Andy Priaulx in a BMW 320i in the 2003 ETCC.
Below: Roberto Ravaglia (2nd left), Linder Team, at the 1st race in Monza of the 1987 World Touring Car Championship.

The eight best-placed drivers are awarded championship points, and the most successful competitors over the weekend are given a weight handicap and ballast to carry depending on the number of championship points earned (see also table right). With the new regulations introduced for 2005, it is also possible to reduce the weight of the car. The weight handicaps of both categories are added up before each race weekend and the maximum handicap is 60 kg.

Since 2001, the BMW 320i claimed 36 wins in the FIA ETCC forerunner series. As every year, BMW Motorsport has further developed the BMW 320i within the permitted framework. The front apron, for example, has been aerodynamically honed. For 2005 the axle kinematics have been changed, and shock absorber performance has also been enhanced. In addition to the BMW P54 engine with its standard aluminium block and cylinder head, the engineers at BMW Motorsport have also carried out detail improvements on the electronic and mechanical side. For the engine management of the 275 bhp unit, the BMW Motorsport developers received practical support from the Electronics Faculty at Munich's University of Applied Sciences. In return, they used the BMW Motorsport's high-performance computers as a test lab for computer simulations of the on-board electronics. Dr Mario Theissen, who has been active in engine development for over 25 years, noted in an interview that the BMW 320i would probably be used for the last time in 2005 as the next generation of the BMW 320i is being prepared on the basis of the new BMW 3 Series.

Roberto Ravaglia and Dr Mario Theissen, BMW Motorsport Director, at the 1st and 2nd races in Monza of the 2005 touring car championship.

The ETCC races in past years have thrilled spectators with their exciting action on all the circuits, often with near door-to-door contact. Extensive live coverage of the FIA WTCC race weekend on the Eurosport TV channel allows viewers who can't see the races at the track to follow the action of the 2005 season. One particular appeal of the race version of the current BMW 320i lies in its success in touring car-racing. 110 models have already been sold to customer teams for further race deployment.

After a successful start to the season in Monza and Magny-Cours, BMW – despite the challenges of races 5 and 6 at Silverstone – still has the top slot in the FIA WTCC firmly in its sights.

Who will claim the coveted crown of international touring car racing? On 20th November we will know the answer – after the final race in Macau.

Points and handicap rules

Place	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
Points	10	8	6	5	4	3	2	1

Place	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
Weight handicap	+40 kg	+30 kg	+20 kg	+10 kg	0	-5 kg	-10 kg	-15 kg	-20 kg

Caught in the web of BMW Mobile Tradition

Visitors to the new-look BMW Mobile Tradition website can find a wealth of fascinating information about the projects and activities BMW Mobile Tradition is involved in – from the Historical Archive and vehicle collection to the Museum and BMW Clubs around the world.

The BMW Mobile Tradition website is your key to exploring its wide range of activities and resources in more detail.

It's not only journalists, authors and historians who will find much of interest in the extensive pool of information on the history of the company, the brand and its products in the Historical Archive. Rather than trawling around for hours in dusty archives, visitors can use the Historical Archive System (HIAS) to do all the research they want. And what's more, it's free of charge.

Owners of a vintage BMW can click on the "BMW certificate" link in the Historical Archive and commission their own certificate. And visitors can ensure that their BMW provides sheer driving pleasure for many years to come by ordering any parts required from the "Parts supply". The website also gives the curious or undecided the opportunity to find out about the availability of parts without necessarily making a purchase. The "Historic parts catalogue" allows you to browse through the range of options at your leisure.

The website also has much to offer if books – rather than catalogues – are more your thing, or if you've got an eye for accessories. Go to "Publications & Accessories" for a wide selection of published books and access to the Accessories catalogue.

The online service also provides an easy way of contacting Mobile Tradition. Visitors looking for a tour of the workshop or wanting to ask questions about what goes on behind the scenes can get in touch with the historic workshop by clicking on "Historical Collection".

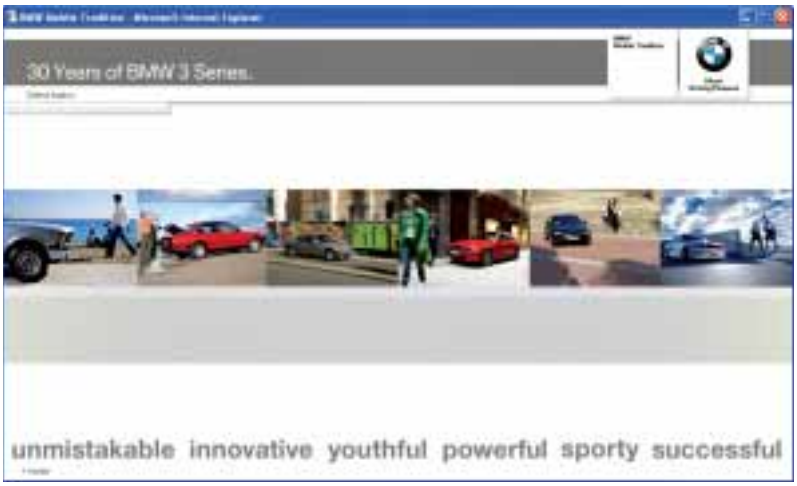
Needless to say, the BMW Museum located next to the Olympic Tower in Munich is also represented on the site. If you're planning a relaxing and informative afternoon in the Museum, click on the link for opening times, admission charges and details of special exhibitions before you go. And the BMW Mobile Tradition site features the latest progress report on the development of the new Museum, complete with some fascinating insights.

You can also log on to find details on important dates, events and the addresses of many BMW Clubs. Indeed, the BMW Clubs – which make up one of the largest networks in the classic car world – are well represented on the website. Visitors can find all the necessary contact addresses (e.g. http://www.bmw-clubs-international.com) and more in-depth information on the BMW Clubs by clicking on the "BMW Clubs" link.

Another highlight is the "Heritage today" section, where visitors can access extensive information on events, shows, anniversaries and special themes – e.g. current ("News") or past ("News–Archive") issues of Mobile Tradition live magazine.

Mobile Tradition is particularly pleased to have incorporated the "Special Themes" from the Mobile Tradition live magazine into its website under the "Mobile Tradition live" link. Here you can find broader features on themes such as "75 Years of BMW Automobiles" and "100 years of Ernst Jakob Henne", as well as a look back at the legendary BMW M1. Most recently, the spotlight has been on the successful 30-year history of the BMW 3 Series range, while a special presentation entitled "25 Years of the GS" is the latest new addition.

The website brings the history of BMW to life, from the early days of the company to the present day:
www.bmwmobiletradition.de



Online information on tap: the BMW Mobile Tradition website has been remodelled and offers a wealth of information on activities and resources focusing on every aspect of BMW's history.

Rare beauty: the BMW 3200 Michelotti Vignale is a genuine one-off.

The BMW 3200 Michelotti Vignale

Giovanni Michelotti was so consumed by the BMW 507 that he drew up an alternative form for the car's body. Fixing his new design to a 507 chassis, Michelotti created the BMW 3200 Michelotti Vignale – a truly unique model that was added to the BMW Mobile Tradition collection in 2004.

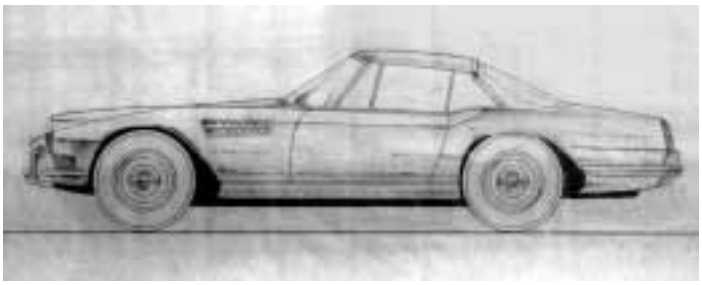
By Kai Jacobsen

The Italian designer started to give serious thought to creating an alternative body for the BMW 507 in 1957. By late July that year he had completed an initial draft, which proved to be very close to the final version of the car. At the time, Michelotti had an image of his new model as a coupé. In September 1958 he purchased BMW 507 chassis no. 70184 through Italian BMW importer Casa dell'Automobili, owned by Alessandro Paolini & Figlio. Assembly work began on 8th September 1958 and the chassis was delivered to Italy on 11th September 1958.

The body created by Michelotti had considerably sharper edges than the BMW 507 and wore its Italian influences on its sleeve. Body construction was entrusted to Modena-based coachbuilder Sergio Scaglietti, who had already made a name for himself with his work for Enzo Ferrari. The body was then introduced to the chassis at the Carrozzeria Alfredo Vignale company in Turin. The rear of the hard-top roadster recalled the hind quarters of the BMW 700 Coupé, also penned by Michelotti. And the same rear-end lines made another appearance in 1961 in the Michelotti-designed Triumph TR 4.

The BMW 3200 Michelotti Vignale went on display for the first time at the Turin Motor Show held from 31st October to 11th November 1959. As the press reported, it was 1.5 million lire (10,098 deutschmarks) cheaper than a standard BMW 507, which cost 7.222 million lire (DM 48,619) in Italy at the time. The BMW 507 was certainly rather more affordable for customers in Germany, where it was priced at a comparatively modest DM 31,700 (including a coupé hard top). From there, the trail of this extremely rare model ran cold. Indeed, it wasn't until 21st April 1986 that Michelotti's creation re-emerged – at the auction house Christie's. An American, Oscar Davis, put up the winning bid of £50,760 (DM 169,234, including surcharge) at the sale in Beaulieu to secure the purchase of a car that had only 10,315 kilometres on the clock. According to the auction catalogue, the car had been under the ownership of the Earl of Chichester between 1980 and 1986. Christie's put a guide price of £25,000-35,000 on the distinctive, reddish-brown metallic BMW, and was pleasantly surprised when it changed hands for twice its lower-end estimate.

Car enthusiast Davis, whose collection already included a standard BMW 507, two BMW 328 Roadsters and various Ferraris, Lancias and Bugattis, had his unique new purchase restored and repainted in red. In 2001, the BMW 3200 Michelotti Vignale was acquired by the Blackhawk Collection based in Danville, California. Then, in August 2004, it was discovered by BMW Mobile Tradition workshop manager Klaus Kutscher at Pebble Beach, California with a "For Sale" sign in the window. Kutscher quickly notified



Michelotti's drawing of the 3200 Michelotti Vignale, 1957.

BMW Mobile Tradition boss Holger Lapp of his discovery and the decision to buy was made without further ado. The Blackhawk Collection soon received a satisfactory offer and, by the end of 2004, the car was on its way to Munich. Between 1986 and 2004, the BMW 3200 Michelotti Vignale covered just 550 kilometres. This extraordinary one-off car made its debut appearance on German soil at the Techno Classica vintage car show in Essen in April 2005, where it lined up alongside a BMW 507 prototype, and was on display once again for the Concorso d'Eleganza held at the Villa d'Este estate later that month.

A new class of motorcycle: 25 years of the BMW GS range

The BMW R 80 G/S is a milestone of BMW motorcycle history. Even today, 25 years on, the market segment it established has lost none of its fascination for bikers. With their innovative features and striking design, the various GS model generations have conquered ever-new target groups.

By Fred Jakobs

In September 1980, in Avignon, BMW presented the BMW R 80 G/S to the press. The fact that BMW had landed a grand coup with this Enduro model became clear even at the first test rides. The BMW G/S created a new market segment which even today, a quarter of a century after its launch, has lost none of its attraction.

The birth of the BMW GS in the year 1978 came during a period of declining sales following nearly a decade of steady growth. One of the reasons for this was a weak dollar, which made it particularly difficult to sell to the USA, their chief export market. But another reason was an excessively conservative model policy compared with the competition. On 1st January 1979 a new management team took up their posts to get the motorcycle business back on track. The first model to be shown to them by the development department was a cross-country prototype as the basis for a new production model.

It was largely built from components of the BMW R 80 road model which were imaginatively combined with newly developed elements to form an entirely new motorcycle. A lighter rear end and a larger front wheel formed the basis of its

Freedom and adventure in the land of opportunities. The BMW R 80 G/S in unique terrain.

off-road credentials. But the outstanding technical innovation was a single swinging arm on the rear wheel.

This had already been developed by the BMW engineers some time earlier and put in the "bottom drawer". Now it proved perfect for the project to create a completely new endurance model. Single suspension arms had been used as early as the 1950s, though only on very small motorcycles like the German "Imme" or in some motor scooters, in other words in machines whose weight and performance were not to be compared with a "grown-up" BMW. Incidentally, the initial prototype was built without a formal development brief and was immediately used by the test department to accompany the works team in cross-country motor-sport events.

Cross-country tradition

Cross-country racing was familiar territory for BMW; back in the 1920s and '30s the company had been successful in six-day events, and even in the 1950s and '60s BMW raked in title after title. The last three cross-country championships were won in the years 1970 to 1972 by Herbert Schek on a modified BMW R 75/5. In 1978, when the rules allowed four-stroke motorcycles to compete again, Laszlo Peres from BMW's test department came second in the German Championship on a self-built 800 cc machine weighing only 142 kg.

This success created an appetite for more: in 1979 BMW established another works team, so that it could now officially take part in cross-country competitions. The reward for this commitment was the German Championship title, won by Richard Schalber in 1979 and Werner Schütz in 1980, not to mention the European Championship, which Rolf Witthöft won in 1980.

Building a successful sports model is one thing. Developing an economically viable production motorcycle is a more complex challenge. Thus it was clear from the outset that the new model was not simply to be a replica of the cross-country sports machines which could only have been sold at a relatively high price to a few active sports riders or collectors. The new model had to be primarily suitable for everyday use, and the selling price had to be in line with the market.

Seeking a market position

The only question was what sort of sales figures could be achieved. With the Honda XL 250 and the Yamaha XT 500, Japanese manufacturers had proved that, because of their ease of handling, endurance models also had their appeal for road riders, and had triggered an "enduro wave" especially in the USA. So there was definitely a recognizable market out there.

Yet these single-cylinder motorcycles were not what BMW had in mind. They were fitted out in a very spartan fashion, which may have been adequate for brief cross-country excursions but made riding over long distances a strain. As for taking a

Prototype of the 1979 BMW R 80 G/S. Its cross-country racing origins are clearly visible.

pillion passenger along, that was out of the question on extended journeys.

A BMW had to look different. Typical virtues such as comfort, long-distance suitability and longevity were vital. And so the idea gradually materialized that cross-country viability should be combined with high performance and ride comfort on the road.

A careful study of the market for Enduros, moreover, showed that a mere two percent of the kilometres ridden were across really difficult terrain, with 98 percent on normal roads, unsurfaced tracks or narrow paths.

Ingenious rear-wheel drive

It was against this background that the top management gave the go-ahead for series production. Rüdiger Gutsche, head of chassis development, was put in charge of the project. Gutsche was – and still is today – a keen cross-country rider who in the past often attracted attention riding his self-built BMWs at events.

The focus of development was on the new single-arm rear-wheel suspension. By strengthening the mounting of the crown wheel in the rear-wheel drive it was possible to screw the road wheel directly to the final drive via a flange. It would make changing the wheel as easy as on a car, but this was broaching new technical ground and the key question was whether such a design would be able to withstand heavy stress.

Initial tests were promising and in January 1980 the G/S was to undergo a real-life test under the most extreme conditions: BMW's press spokesman, Kalli Hufstadt, set off with the journalist Hans Peter Leicht on a 2,000-kilometre journey through Ecuador, riding two pre-production machines. The slogan was "From primeval forest to eternal ice", for during the trip the motorcycles had to prove themselves in extreme climatic and road conditions: from the heat and humidity of the Amazon basin up to an altitude of more than 5,000 metres in the rarefied atmosphere of the high Andean glaciers. Both men and machines emerged from this trial of strength with no more than a few slight injuries.

Herbert Schek in the European Off-Road Championship in 1978.

Trial run with the pre-production model. BMW press spokesman Kalli Hufstadt and journalist Peter Hans Leicht put the R 80 G/S through its paces in Ecuador in 1980.

The development work of the BMW engineers had paid off, as had the intense physical training undertaken by both riders before their departure. The backroom boys could now get down to the fine tuning, where their work naturally benefited from their experience with competition motorcycles.

The press is impressed

By 1st September 1980 everything was ready. The BMW R80 G/S was introduced to the international press in the French city of Avignon. Less than 21 months had elapsed since the launch of the project, and those involved at BMW were anxious to see the reaction. Needless to say, attention first focused on the "Monolever", as the rear swing-arm was called. But this innovation was not an end in itself: it made the assembly some two kilograms lighter than a conventional solution, while torsion resistance was about 30 percent higher, noticeably reducing the unwanted lateral forces during spring compression.

With a dry weight of just 167 kg, it was the lightest motorcycle in the 800 cc class. It had a clearance of 218 mm – 50mm greater than on the /7 series – and its spring travel of 200 mm in front and 170 mm at the rear delivered off-road qualities to satisfy most riders. Another result of experience in cross-country sport was the electronic ignition and – a first on any endurance machine – a disc brake on the front wheel.

Left: Press launch of the BMW R 80 G/S in September 1980 in Avignon. Euphoria after the test drive. Right the R 80 G/S proves off-road quality.

But the question was, how would the press take to the concept of a large, long-range endurance bike? Would the BMW R 80 G/S, in the hope implied by its nomenclature – G for Gelände (terrain) and S for Strasse (road) – be accepted as a positive synthesis, or derided by the public as a lazy compromise?

The answer was not long in coming: the enthusiasm among journalists at the launch of the new motorcycle was unanimous. The words of the journalist writing for the Swiss magazine Moto Sport stand for numerous reactions in similar vein:

"Incredible! BMW has managed to build a motorcycle that has everything it takes to become a really big seller: the R 80 G/S! Holding steadfastly onto tried and tested traditions and combining them with careful observation of market trends and bold new ideas, they have created a motorcycle which many true biking aficionados have been waiting for.

Though there are 'Enduros' with which you can cover long distances perfectly well, in terms of performance alone there's no keeping up with modern road machines… The G/S feels at home on the tight and twisty serpentines of a dirt track in the Alpine foothills, along broad, well-surfaced mountain passes, and – no exaggeration – the autobahn. Not to mention the sheer fun of it."

Rarely indeed had a new model inspired journalists to such a variety of word play: "natural boxer", "off-road champion", "one-armed pathfinder", "mountain boots for sprinting", "BMW for a bit on the side", to quote only the most piquant. Some magazines, such as the German publication Motorrad and the British Motorcycle Sport, described it with a wink as "the best road motorcycle from BMW", so impressed were they by its handling qualities. A summary of all the test rides might be: "A motorcycle for every terrain".

Customers go for the G/S

It is worth mentioning that the BMW R 80 G/S, at 800 cc, not only had the largest-capacity engine of any endurance machine allowed on the road, but with a top speed of 168 km/h it was by far the fastest.

To this end, Metzeler had developed special tyres, since those hitherto available on the market were only licensed for speeds of up to 130 km/h. Such figures alone underline the special status of the BMW G/S.

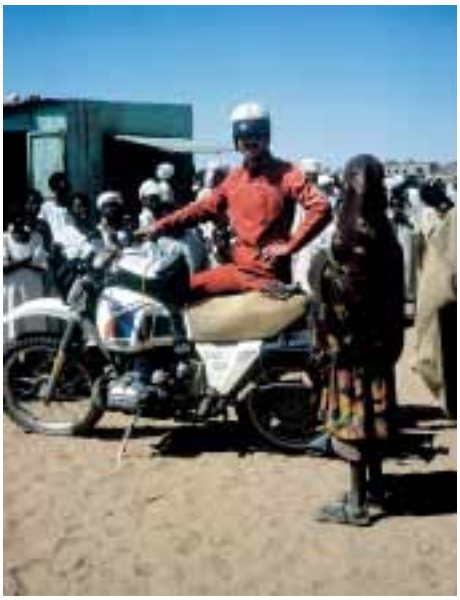
On 19th September, when it was shown to the public at the IFMA (international motorcycle show), there was a tremendous crush around the BMW stand. People were anxious to see the "Bavarian Allrounder" that had already received so much advance praise in the press. Enthusiasm on the stand was converted into orders for the coming motorcycle season.

By the end of 1981, 6,631 machines – more than twice the number originally planned – had left the workshops in Berlin. In that year, one in every five BMW motorcycles sold was a G/S. The endurance tourer was making a key contribution to BMW's steadily rising sales figures – and to this day, 25 years after the launch, this segment of the market has retained its enormous importance for BMW.

Success in the desert

In parallel with the market launch, BMW increased its commitment to cross-country sport and set its sights on the toughest and most prestigious off-road event in the world: the Paris-Dakar Rally. First staged in 1979, this race covered 9,500 kilometres. A mere 30 percent of the route ran along on surfaced roads. In 1979 the only BMW driver, Fenouil, retired with a technical fault. In 1980 the start of the Paris-Dakar hung by a thread when the leading sponsor backed out,

Maximum driving pleasure: The BMW R 80 G/S also offered perfect handling on the roard.



Left: G/S 80 Project Manager Rüdiger Gutsche and Africa Tour 1985.
Right: Hubert Auriol and Gaston Rahier after the Paris-Dakar victory, 1984.

and only a whip-round among French BMW motorcycle dealers produced the necessary funds at the last minute. It seemed as if this personal financial involvement would pay off: Hubert Auriol, who signed on as the second BMW France rider beside Fenouil, was in the lead after 11 stages, but in the 12th he was disqualified for obtaining unauthorized assistance. Even so, by coming fifth, Fenouil earned a succès d'estime.

In 1981, the rally was prepared for more professionally. BMW went to the starting grid with three motorcycles prepared by HPN: Auriol was the first to reach Dakar, and it was he, too, who was able to repeat BMW's overall victory in 1983. In 1984 and 1985 the Belgian Gaston Rahier won the Paris-Dakar, but these would be BMW's last victories for many a year, for after the 1986 season BMW withdrew its works team. With four victories in the Paris-Dakar, BMW had given impressive proof of its off-road potential.

The revolutionary single swinging arm of the BMW R 80 G/S: wheel changing made simple.

Into the distance on the G/S

The publicity value of its successes in the Paris-Dakar helped to gain BMW new customers. Of course, to a road rider who only occasionally went along country paths, it mattered little whether or not "his" motorcycle had proved itself in the world's toughest rally. But for globetrotters keen to visit remote civilizations on two wheels, results like that certainly counted.

While BMW offered an extensive range of accessories for the G/S, alongside that a second market established itself which was specifically targeted to meet the demands of long-distance travel. It ranged from larger fuel tanks made of every imaginable material, through luggage and navigation systems, to special mudguards. Then there were numerous specialists – headed by the Dakar-seasoned teams of HPN and Schek – who offered conversions which adapted the motorcycle completely to the planned tours. Customers did not baulk at a purchase price that was double that of the production model. In 1984 BMW itself brought out a special "Paris-Dakar" model. A 32-litre tank with the striking Paris-Dakar logo and a single seat with a generous luggage rack gave it the outward appearance of the competition machines, even though the technology of the production model was hidden under the new clothing.

The G/S sold superbly well, yet success attracts not only admirers, but also imitators. Competitors from Japan and, later, Europe as well were now offering endurance models more specifically tailored for road use. When the first twin-cylinder models appeared on the market with capacities approaching 800 cc, it was clear, if it had not been before, that BMW could not rest on its laurels and had to actively defend its position.

The Paralever

The result of further development was presented to the public for the first time in Florence on 24th August 1987. These successor models were called the R 80 GS and R 100 GS – the oblique stroke in the typography had been dropped, which suggested the interpretation Geländesport (cross-country sport).

With the 1,000 cc R 100 GS, BMW was once again able to offer the largest-

BMW rider Hubert Auriol crossing the endless

engined Enduro on the market. Yet it was not the engine, which was already well known from the road models, that attracted attention. Once again it was the frame, which had undergone sub-

Gaston Rahier storms to victory at the Paris-Dakar 1984.

stantial modifications, including the rear suspension again. It is true that BMW had scored a major hit with the first single swing-arm in a large-engined, high-performance motorcycle, but true to the motto that the better is the enemy of the good, the BMW designers had set about building on the advances already made.

The Monolever had attracted attention at its launch in 1980 and from 1983 onwards was incorporated in the new four-cylinder series, and a year later in the big Boxers as well. However, not even the single swing-arm could eliminate the characteristic drive-shaft reactions.

During acceleration the bike pitched forward due to expansion of the rear wheel suspension spring and plunged back when the throttle was reduced. In cross-country riding this was particularly significant, since the raising of the rear wheel when accelerating hardened the suspension, thus reducing the traction that was so critical on rough terrain. To eliminate this reaction it would have been possible to lengthen the suspension arm. However, this was only a theoretical possibility, since to neutralize the rearing effect, it would have been necessary to lengthen the arm to 1.7 metres.

With the "Paralever", as the new suspension arm was christened, a different route was chosen, one which had already been tried out in the 1950s by BMW's former development chief Alexander von Falkenhausen. In 1955, for Walter Zeller's works racing bike, Falkenhausen had developed and patented a rear-wheel suspension arm with double joint and driving force support. For reasons of cost this solution never reached series production and doubtless with the passage of time had been rather forgotten. Then, after three decades, the idea was taken up again in the Paralever.

expanse of the Sahara: Paris-Dakar Rally of 1983.

The housing for the rear-wheel drive was located on the suspension arm and could rotate with it, and the reactive forces were diverted into the frame through a driving force support. The rotatability of the axle drive was made possible by two roller bearings in the suspension arm and a second universal joint in the drive shaft. This solution resulted in an additional weight of just 1.6 kg compared with the Monolever, but its effect was equivalent to a theoretical suspension arm length of 1,400 mm, reducing the unwanted reactions to a minimum. In addition, the suspension play was lengthened from 170 mm to 180 mm, and the diagonally positioned suspension strut, which could be set to four positions, had a slightly progressive action.

Perfection in the detail

Beyond this, numerous detail improvements were incorporated in the new GS. The frame and rear end were given added reinforcement, and a new Marzocchi telescopic fork was fitted to the front wheel. Marzocchi had already been active in the works involvement in the Paris-Dakar, and the result of their joint development work was a fork with suspension play increased from 200 mm to 225 mm, which guaranteed an active damping effect even on rough terrain and eliminated distortion on

braking. The front brake disc was enlarged and a larger Brembo brake calliper fitted. The wheels were of the new cross-spoke type, which allowed for tubeless tyres. Furthermore, thanks to their running through the flange, individual spokes could be replaced without removing the tyre and wheel.

Tank capacity was increased to 26 litres, placing it between the old production G/S and the special Dakar model offered hitherto. The longer and wider saddle promised more comfort, as did a small windshield which came as standard on the R 100 GS and was optional on the R 80 GS. The press again proved enthusiastic and attributed outstanding ride qualities to the GS. With this new launch, BMW continued to set the standard in this segment of the endurance bike market.

Two successful siblings off the beaten track: the BMW 100 GS (left) and the R 80 GS.

The entry-level model

Alongside the two big endurance machines, and specifically for the German market with its insurance classes and graduated driving licence regulations, BMW also introduced a 27 bhp starter model, the R 65 GS, priced at under DM 10,000. By contrast with the two big models, this still featured the Monolever rear-wheel suspension.

But the R 65 GS was only granted a brief production life; in just three years no more than 1,727 units had been sold, and it was removed from the range again in 1990.

The Paralever models followed seamlessly on from the success and high sales figures of the R 80 G/S. By 1996 over 45,000 units would find buyers, of which more than three quarters would opt for the 1,000 cc model.

Careful model development

At the IFMA in 1988, BMW introduced the special Dakar model, so keenly awaited by the GS community. It had gained its sporting pedigree a few months previously when Eddy Hau, riding an HPN-modified production GS, had won the marathon class as the best private rider in the Paris-Dakar Rally. Experience gained in this long-distance rally was fed into the new “special”, which was modified with an ergonomically shaped 35-litre tank with a 5-litre storage compartment, a fairing fixed with a robust tubular bracket, engine casing and cowling, widened mudguards, and a single saddle with a large luggage rack.

These items could also be ordered as a conversion kit, with the option of red and white paintwork as on the special model or with a base coat only. In addition, BMW offered an extensive range of accessories for the GS as well as equipment for the rider, ranging from helmet and clothing, through specially designed case and bag systems, to training courses.

Professional rider training

Following an ever-growing demand in the 1980s for endurance training courses, in the early 1990s BMW acquired a 22-hectare piece of land in some former sand and gravel pits. In 1994 the Hechlingen Enduro Park was officially opened. Since then, under the supervision of experienced instructors, GS riders have been able to learn the basics of off-road biking on gravel tracks, marked-out trial courses, steep climbs and descents as well as sections through sand and water.

In the past, even experienced riders have found plenty to challenge them here. In this, the planners not only kept one eye on the requirements of riders, but also placed a high value on the protection of the environment, as acknowledged by, among other things, an award from the Federal Ministry of the Environment.

Starting in the spring of 1990, ambitious GS riders could order a sports frame developed by BMW with the White Power company, and from September of that year all BMW Boxer models were supplied with a secondary air system (SLS).

This worked on the principle of afterburning of exhaust gases, reducing the emission of carbon monoxide by 40 percent and that of hydrocarbons by 30 percent. The majority of customers did not hesitate to pay the small premium of DM 150 in order to reduce environmental pollution.

The Paralever of the BMW R 100 GS, 1987.

A 10th birthday upgrade

In 1990, on the tenth anniversary of the GS series, extensively redesigned versions of the R 80 GS and R 100 GS were presented at the IFMA in Cologne. The basic models were now also given a fixed cockpit fairing with an external tubular frame. Also new were the adjustable wind deflector and a suspension strut developed jointly with Bilstein. The rectangular headlamp and instruments on the handlebars, meanwhile, were borrowed from the K series. These were to remain the last major changes to the second GS generation.

Nevertheless, BMW had another surprise in store for the fans. October 1991 saw the launch of a road version derived from the GS models: the R 100 R. With this, BMW was reviving the tradition of the first generation of Enduro models, since in 1982 a road version of the GS, the R 80 ST, had been put on the market. But whereas that product had found barely 6,000 buyers in three years, the R 100 R generated 7,000 orders in only six months.

The new road model with its classic, stripped-down appearance benefited from the retro wave in the two-wheeled market, which began in the early 1990s. By the time production ceased in 1996, over 24,000 units of the R 100 R and the "little" R 80 R had been sold.

A new dimension to endurance

At the 1992 IFMA, BMW introduced a new four-valve Boxer engine, and in January 1993 came the launch of the R 1100 RS, the first motorcycle to feature this revolutionary power unit. The press kit for the R 1100 RS included drawings of a new endurance bike intended to give journalists a foretaste of future models. The R 1100 GS had its debut at the Frankfurt Motor Show in September 1993. With its audacious styling and impressive size – compared to the R 100 GS the new model was 65 mm higher and its kerb weight had increased by 23 kg – the R 1100 GS hit the Enduro community like a bombshell.

Many observers openly expressed doubts as to whether a motorcycle of these dimensions could be at all suitable for endurance touring. Yet demand for the new "Über-Enduro" was enormous; by the end of 1994, 9,500 units had left the production line at BMW's Spandau plant. This is all the more remarkable when one remembers that not only was the R 100 GS still being marketed, but from 1993 the BMW range also included the single-cylinder F 650 "Funduro", a rough-terrain entry-level motorcycle.

So what contributed to the success of the new GS? First of all, at its heart was the four-valve Boxer engine with air/oil cooling, which was derived from the power unit of the R 1100 RS. However, in the GS the engine was given a different performance profile, resulting in a better torque curve and thus more pulling power. At 5,200 rpm, torque was as high as 97 Nm (in the R 1100 RS it was 95 Nm at 5,500 rpm). At the same time the output of 90 bhp (66 kW) was reduced to 80 bhp (59 kW). Despite this reduction in power output the R 1100 GS achieved a maximum speed of nearly 200 km/h, more than enough for an Enduro.

Weightlifter Manfred Nerlinger during driver training at the GS.

The Telelever

At these speeds the height – and thus the aerodynamic disadvantage – of the R 1100 GS might have made it difficult to ride, but this problem was solved by the chassis, whose design was also taken from the R 1100 RS: the frame was constructed in three sections, with the engine and gearbox housing forming

Far left: Gaston Rahier in the Marlboro BMW Team of 1986. Left: R 100 GS of 1987.

a single stressed unit. The rear wheel was fitted with an improved Paralever single swing-arm, and the front with the Telelever. The latter, which had similarly been introduced a year previously on the R 1100 RS, was a combination of the telescopic fork with a leading link between the bridge of the fork and the frame.

Safety and the environment

This technical solution guaranteed outstanding responsiveness and a high degree of rigidity in conjunction with an anti-dive feature, which prevented a hardening of the suspension when the brakes were applied. For cross-country work the suspension play was, of course, increased. Instead of 120 mm in front and 135 mm at the rear, as in the RS road version, on the GS the equivalent figures were 190 mm and 200 mm.

The perforated double-disc brakes with four-piston fixed calliper and a diameter of 305 mm were borrowed from the K models and the R 1100 RS. Even the rear-wheel braking was provided, for the first time in a BMW Enduro, by a disc brake. The single-disc assembly with twin-piston floating calliper had a diameter of 276 mm, making it somewhat smaller than on the RS.

The two disc brakes and the Telelever were the ideal prerequisites for the introduction of an anti-wheel locking system, and so BMW's ABS II was available as a special feature – a first for Enduro bikes. This could be deactivated for cross-country riding, where locking wheels were sometimes desirable.

Those who wanted to contribute not only to road safety but also to the environment could order a GS with a three-way catalyst; from 1995 onward it was fitted as standard.

Yet the success of what was now the third generation of GS models from BMW cannot be explained solely by these innovations, nor even by its imposing appearance – for all the respect it commanded. It was rather the overall character of the motorcycle that explained the superiority of the R 1100 GS. The way the individual components complemented each other perfectly to create a harmonious whole was the great achievement of the BMW engineers – as indeed it had been since the R 32 of 1923, the first motorcycle to bear the blue-and-white logo on its fuel tank.

What mattered to them was never just the performance that an engine could achieve on the test bed; they were more interested in the performance a rider could safely bring to the road even after travelling for hours on end.

BMW met this self-imposed benchmark in the new GS as well, as described by a clearly impressed test rider for Motorrad magazine: "Once you have become accustomed to the generous dimensions of the big Enduro, which you do very quickly, you soon learn to appreciate the pleasant attributes of the GS: the comfortable upright position, for example, which the rider seems to assume quite naturally, and the well-padded seat cushion that leaves rider and pillion equally unsore even after many hundreds of kilometres in the saddle… With spring travel of 200 mm at the rear, the GS proves it can ride out any bumps in the road, badly surfaced sections and the toughest of potholes. It's like riding an inflatable dinghy across a rough sea… And so the GS effortlessly reaches the remotest of destinations, climbs up the most eroded gravel ascents without a problem… On twisty roads, thanks to its low centre of gravity and wide cross-country handlebars, it even puts the assembled big bike league firmly in the shade. In terms of handling it is unbeatable in this weight class… From standstill to 100 km/h in 3.9 seconds, or up to 160 km/h

Collectables that are already sought-after today

The aristocratic profile highlights the BMW R 100 GS PD Classic which came on the market in 1994.

Pure retro: the BMW R 80 GS Basic built in 1996.

in a mere 10.6, it will remain hot on the tail of any large-engined sports tourer… With the new Boxer generation and associated frame technology, BMW in the guise of its R 1100 GS enters dimensions hitherto unfamiliar to big endurance tourers."

Farewell to the twin-valve Boxer

Aside from the euphoria surrounding the success of the new generation of Boxer engines, the end of the old air-cooled, twin-cylinder horizontally-opposed engine was being heralded. This engine design, which had since 1923 been inseparably linked with BMW motorcycles, was in the long term no longer able to meet the more stringent restrictions on noise and exhaust emissions. Thus at the 1994 IFMA, BMW introduced a Classic Edition of the successful twin-valve engine. The GS Special, in elegant black with silver transfers, continued to be built until January 1996. At that point the era of BMW's twin-valve Enduro models appeared to have finally come to an end. Yet BMW went back to work and produced the R 80 GS Basic. With its 19.5-litre tank and white paintwork it was outwardly reminiscent of the original G/S of 1980, albeit fitted with second-generation Paralever technology. In a few short months, 3,003 units left the Berlin factory. The last R 80 GS Basic and thus the last of BMW's twin-valve Boxer-engined machines came off the line on 19th December 1996. The motorcycle with the chassis number 0267503 was handed over in a formal ceremony to the BMW Mobile Tradition collection by the then head of the motorcycle division, Dr Michael Ganal, who is today a member of the Board of Management of BMW AG.

On the 75th anniversary of BMW motorcycles in 1998, a jubilee model appeared with special paintwork and luxurious accessories. In September 1998, at the INTERMOT in Munich, the R 850 GS was launched as the little brother to the 1100. The engine was already familiar from the R 850 R Roadster of 1994, and except for the bore, reduced from 99 mm to 87.8 mm, was almost identical to the 1100 power unit. It developed 70 bhp (52 kW), but was also available in a downrated 34 bhp (24 kW) version for first-time driving licence holders. The BMW R 850 GS was only produced for three years, and in 2000 it was replaced in the range by a single-cylinder model, the F 650 GS.

Historic triumph in the desert

Back in 1998, BMW had celebrated a comeback in cross-country sport when, after a gap of 13 years, it again entered a works team for the Paris-Dakar Rally. This time, the four-man team were not riding big Boxer machines but single-cylinder motorcycles based on the F 650. Their expectations were deliberately modest: the main objective was to finish the course. But the results nevertheless proved disappointing, with a mere 35th place to add to the record. The following year the factory focused on its strengths and took a more professional approach to the "Dakar" challenge. The major competition that year came from Austria: 75 riders, nine of them from the works team, were riding KTMs. No fewer than 12 service trucks

Head of BMW Motorrad at the time Dr Michael Ganal takes the last twin-valve off the assembly line on 19th December 1996.

The BMW R 1100 GS special model to mark "75 Years of BMW Motorrad" in 1998.

were there. Yet the small BMW team – again comprising just four works riders – held their own against these superior forces: Richard Sainct, who had only joined the team in 1999, won the motorcycle class to give BMW its fifth victory in this event after the successes of Auriol and Rahier in the 1980s. Furthermore, the fact that all four of BMW's starters completed the course was proof of the reliability of the single-cylinder endurance bike – and of course the excellence of the riders.

In the year 2000, BMW entered six motorcycles: in addition to four single-cylinder models there were once more two Boxers on the starting line. The two R 900 RRs had been built by HPN, and their high-revving 900 cc power unit developed 90 bhp at 8,200 rpm. That year BMW celebrated a historic triumph in Dakar when not only Richard Sainct managed to repeat his success, but BMW also took 2nd, 3rd and 4th places. Among three single-cylinder models Jimmy Lewis had ridden his Boxer into third position.

Desert sands: Andrea Mayer on a BMW F 650 in the 1999 Granada-Dakar.

The F 650 GS

When BMW introduced the F 650 GS in January 2000, this victory was still fresh in people's minds. The triumph gave an additional boost to the launch of the F 650 GS in Malaga, which coincided with the arrival of the Dakar convoy in Cairo. In its styling the F 650 GS leaned heavily on the design of the Boxer-powered Enduro models, but under the fairing was a complete reworking of the F 650 "Funduro". The most important modifications were those to the four-valve engine. For the first time on any single-cylinder motorcycle engine, BMW had fitted digital electronics, which controlled the ignition and fuel injection – the old F 650 still had carburettors. The F 650 GS was also the first single-cylinder motorcycle to come with a three-way catalyst. This meant that BMW was once more a pioneer in the field of environmental protection, for in 2000 BMW was the only manufacturer whose entire range was fitted with the most effective form of exhaust gas cleaning.

Riding to victory in the 1999 Granada-Dakar: Richard Sainct on his F 650.

The F 650 GS was introduced in two variants: the F 650 Dakar came on the market at the same time as the basic model and was conceived for more intensive off-road use. Apart from the special paintwork, the most striking features which picked it out were the hand protectors and windshield, of the kind seen on competition machines. The chassis was appropriately adapted; the suspension play on both wheels was increased to 210 mm (compared to 170 mm front and 165 mm rear on the F 650 GS). The 19-inch front wheel was replaced by a 21-inch one. This gave the "Dakar" some 45 mm additional clearance. The concept of the "small" Enduro caught on, and by the end of 2000 over 18,000 F 650 GS units had been manufactured.

Model development with the Boxer GS

After six years and over 40,000 sales, the R 1100 GS was replaced by the R 1150 GS. Output was increased by 5 bhp, and in the range between 3,000 and 6,500 rpm torque was consistently in excess of 90 Nm, which gave the R 1150 GS superior acceleration in all riding situations. The output was now delivered to the drive shaft through a six-speed gearbox; the sixth gear was designed as an overdrive, which provided greater comfort and low fuel consumption at high speeds. From 2001 onward the sixth gear could also be ordered in a sports ratio.

The chassis and frame were subject to numerous detailed modifications, begin-

Richard Sainct in the 2000 Paris-Dakar-Cairo Rally.

Paris-Dakar 2001: John Deacon of BMW Motorrad Team Gauloises on an R 900 RR.

ning with the improved Telelever fork, through a shorter Paralever suspension arm, to an optimized rear-end frame. In addition there was a reworking of the design, which set the R 1150 GS apart from its predecessors in terms of appearance as well. With the R 1150 GS, BMW asserted its lead in the class of big endurance tourers and was able to keep ahead of its competitors, who were also crowding into this lucrative market segment.

The ultimate GS for adventure and global touring

For globetrotters BMW brought out a new model in the spring of 2002, which they named the R 1150 GS Adventure. In doing so, BMW not only offered a comprehensive range of special equipment and accessories, but also modified the standard features. Thus the suspension play was enlarged by 20 mm on each wheel, to 210 mm at the front and 220 at the rear. On the rear wheel a suspension strut with travel-dependent damping was used, built by Showa. The suspension base was adjustable at the front with a hook spanner and at the rear with a hand wheel. The front wheel was fitted with the EVO brake introduced 12 months previously, and as an option BMW offered the integral ABS anti-locking system in a partially integrated version. As on all GS models the system could be deactivated.

The engine was taken over from the R 1150 GS unchanged, though it was also suitable for normal-grade petrol. With this BMW met a request from many long-haul travellers, who often had difficulty in tracking down super-grade petrol in the more remote corners of the world. For this the rider required an encoding plug which activated a modified ignition map. As a special option it was possible to order an extremely high-ratio first gear for riding over difficult terrain. The sixth gear was no longer an overdrive on production models but was also set at a higher ratio.

Further modifications were principally designed to enhance the comfort of the rider: for example, the windshield and front mudguard were lengthened and widened, ensuring better protection for the rider from wind, weather, spray and mud. Hand protectors and protection from handlebar jolt were standard, and the protection under the engine was also strengthened. In place of the 22-litre fuel tank, customers could opt for one holding 30 litres. Adequate stowage space was provided by a set of aluminium cases specially designed for the Adventure. Two side cases and a top case together provided 105 litres of space. There was even a big cylinder protection bracket, a protective grille for the headlamp, and a fog lamp, also with a protective grille.

With these special accessories BMW could once again claim to be a system provider and could offer the globetrotting community “one-stop shopping” for a complete solution.

New benchmark: the BMW R 1200 GS

While the Adventure still remains in the range, the R 1150 GS was replaced in 2004 by the R 1200 GS. The new model was a surprise with its weight of 225 kg, which represented a saving of 30 kg compared with the R 1150 GS. However, this low weight was not achieved through compromises. On the contrary: it surpasses its commended predecessor in every respect and sets new standards in terms of agility, handling and reliability.

With a capacity of 1,200 cc the Boxer engine is once again the largest ever fitted in an endurance machine. With an output of 100 bhp (74 kW) and a maximum torque of 115 Nm, the current GS guarantees a supreme power curve and sufficient pulling power at all engine

Paris-Dakar-Cairo 2000: Jimmy Lewis rides the Boxer to place 3.

To the remotest corners of the earth with the BMW R 1200 GS.

speeds on or off-road. Thanks to the first-time use of a counterbalanced crankshaft in a Boxer, the engine generates less vibration than its predecessors, despite the larger cylinder capacity. Engine management is handled by BMS-K digital engine electronics, whose most important features are fully sequential fuel injection, integrated knock control and a swifter processing of extensive sensor signals using the most up-to-date microelectronics. The double ignition introduced into all larger Boxer engines in 2003 has been further improved. An important factor for long-distance travellers is that the engine, though tuned for super-grade unleaded petrol, will happily run on normal fuel without any manual adjustment. On the question of fuel consumption in general, this has been reduced by eight percent compared with earlier models, while power output and torque have been raised by nearly 18 percent.

The principle underlying the chassis has not been abandoned, though the frame is new and every detail has undergone modification and weight optimization. A striking feature of the Paralever is that the torque strut is now located above the suspension arm, which gives greater clearance and, moreover, affords better protection to the strut from damage on difficult terrain. Externally too, the GS has a new face: careful alterations to the asymmetrical double headlamp and a windshield that can be adjusted to any of five positions without tools lend the R 1200 GS its unmistakable appearance.

The sports endurance bike

In April 2005, the youngest offspring of the GS family was presented to the public. The designation is short and sweet and does not really fit in with the traditional BMW nomenclature. BMW HP2 is the snappy name of the model, which sums up its salient features: “HP” stands for “high performance” and the “2” indicates the flat-twin engine.

With the HP2, BMW has, for the first time, freed a generally marketed motorcycle from the design constraints of mass production. True to the motto “by professional enthusiasts for professional enthusiasts”, a dedicated team of engineers and mechanics, all of them mad about endurance riding, have developed a vehicle for purists which is nonetheless equipped with technically sophisticated features. Yet the HP2 is to be only the first representative of an upcoming new category of motorcycle. Though HP motorcycles will make use of production models as a basis, they will set themselves clearly apart from them through an uncompromising interpretation of their intended purpose, a consistent orientation towards sport, and a range of exclusive features.

The HP2 takes the R 1200 GS as its basis. However, except for the on-board electrics, almost all components have been newly developed or at least modified. In addition, an extensive test programme was designed which, in addition

Every endurance rider’s dream: tackling the desert on the powerful BMW R 1150 GS.

25 years of success: technical data on the GS range.

BMW R 80 G/S

Production period	1980 - 1987
Capacity	797.5 cc
Output	37 kW/50 bhp
Weight	186 kg
Top speed	168 km/h

BMW R 100 GS

Production period	1987 - 1996
Capacity	980 ccm
Output	44 kW/60 bhp
Weight	210 kg
Top speed	181 km/h

BMW R 80 GS

Production period	1987 - 1996
Capacity	797.5 ccm
Output	37 kW/50 bhp
Weight	210 kg
Top speed	168 km/h

BMW R 65 GS

Production period	1987 - 1990
Capacity	649.6 cc
Output	20 kW/27 bhp
Weight	198 kg
Top speed	146 km/h

BMW R 1100 GS

Production period	1994 - 1999
Capacity	1,085 cc
Output	59 kW/80 bhp
Weight	243 kg
Top speed	195 km/h

BMW R 850 GS

Production period	1998 - 2000
Capacity	848 cc
Output	52 kW/70 bhp
Weight	192 kg
Top speed	187 km/h

BMW R 1150 GS

Production period	1999 - 2004
Capacity	1.130 cc
Output	62.5 kW/85 bhp
Weight	249 kg
Top speed	195 km/h

BMW F 650 GS

Production period	from 2000
Capacity	652 cc
Output	37 kW/50 bhp
Weight	192 kg
Top speed	appr. 170 km/h

BMW F 650 GS Dakar

Production period	from 2000
Capacity	652 cc
Output	37 kW/50 bhp
Weight	193 kg
Top speed	170 km/h

BMW R 1150 GS Adventure

Production period	from 2002
Capacity	1,130 cc
Output	62.5 kW/85 bhp
Weight	253 kg
Top speed	192 km/h

BMW R 1200 GS

Production period	from 2004
Capacity	1,170 cc
Output	72 kW/98 bhp
Weight	225 kg
Top speed	over 200 km/h

BMW HP2

Production period	from 2005
Capacity	1,170 cc
Output	77 kW/105 bhp
Weight	196.5kg
Top speed	200 km/h

The BMW F 650 GS with matching rally outfit as a special accessory.

to the usual test-bed running and drives on BMW's testing grounds, included trials in extremely hot or cold countries, autobahn runs at full throttle, and participation in the Baja California rally.

The result is the sportiest BMW Enduro there has ever been. Kerb weight stands at 175 kg, and even with a full tank the HP2 weighs in at well under four hundredweight. Compared with the R 1200 GS, engine output has been modestly increased to 105 bhp (77 kW), though not at the expense of torque, which still measures a maximum of 115 Nm at 5,500 rpm. Since the HP2 is chiefly designed for cross-country sports use, the engine has to do without a counterbalanced crankshaft for reasons of weight. And since the HP2 has no luggage space, it was possible to shorten the exhaust system and make it two kg lighter.

The chassis has been developed entirely from scratch, and incorporates 25 years' experience of endurance riding and the knowledge gained in the North African desert with the R 900 RR between 1999 and 2001. The layout of the space frame is closely modelled on the R 900 RR. Front wheel suspension is provided by a telescopic fork, since for a suspension play of 270 mm the Telelever design does not make sense. The fork, with a stanchion diameter of 45 mm, has travel-dependent damping. The pull and push stages can be adjusted separately. The principle of the Paralever swinging arm on the rear wheel has been retained, though newly designed for the HP2: the new Paralever – 30 mm longer than in the GS – is a welded construction of high-strength, forged light-alloy shells, which will stand up to the toughest cross-country conditions. The suspension strut on the rear wheel is a world first in motorcycle construction: a fully pneumatic spring-damping system.

The front brake – a semi-floating single-disc brake with a thickness of only 4.5 mm – is a new development. The rear-wheel single-disc brake has been adopted from the GS. For the cross-spoke wheels measuring 1.85" x 21 (front) and 2.5"x 17 (rear) BMW developed, jointly with the Metzeler company, a new tubeless high-performance cross-country tyre. As a special accessory for the predominantly off-road rider, a motocross style of tyre with a high proportion of negative profile is offered. This too arose from the cooperation between BMW and Metzeler.

No compromises

The design of the tank, saddle and controls has been restricted to essentials and is adapted to the ergonomic needs of endurance riding, where the rider spends a lot of time standing up. The 13-litre fuel tank of semi-transparent and knock-proof plastic is completely new. It is bedded between the upper frame tubes and covered with a light plastic shield. In the HP2 the tank area and saddle are given a particularly slim shape. There are numerous innovations in points of detail that might hardly be noticed, such as the footbrake pedal, which can be adapted without tools to the position of the foot by means of a collapsible spacer.

All in all the HP2 is the most uncompromising all-terrain production Boxer motorcycle there has ever been. The high-quality materials, the outstanding overall qualities and, not least, the comparatively low production volume have, naturally enough, had an impact on pricing: the basic HP2 will have a price tag of around 16,000 euros when it reaches showrooms in autumn 2005.

Even before its launch on the market, top international riders are lining it up on the grid at various races in Europe and the USA.

And that neatly completes the circle. For at the beginning of the Enduro success story it was only the enthusiasm of a few BMW specialists for off-road racing which gave the impetus for the first big volume-produced endurance tourer. And even today, with the HP2, it has been the same kind of enthusiasts whose passion has brought a fantastic product up to a marketable status. Just as in the past, it will be the tough overland sports events in which the BMW endurance machine will show a clean pair of heels to its competitors

Unveiled in April 2005: BMW HP2, the sportiest Enduro ever.

Far left: Drawing of the frame of the BMW R 1150 GS and, next to it, the BMW R 1200 GS with its Paralever placed overhead.

as well as measuring itself against its own standards. The start has been highly promising. In the "Iron Road Prolog" of the Erzberg Rodeo in Austria, Finnish rider Simo Kirssi took overall victory in a field of over 1,000 starters. With 3rd place for Jimmy Lewis and 5th for Christian Pfeiffer, another two BMW riders made it into the top placings.

For the jubilee year – a GS to suit every rider

25 years have passed since the launch of the BMW R 80 G/S, the first big endurance tourer ever. In that quarter-century this segment of the world market has grown tremendously, and BMW as the pioneer has with each new model set the standard for an unprecedented harmonious synthesis of off-road and on-road qualities.

Today, BMW has five Enduros in the range. There's the R 1200 GS all-rounder, the fifth-generation successor to the original G/S of 1980. Globe-trotters will find in the R 1150 GS Adventure the right machine for long-distance journeys even beyond the reaches of civilization. In this anniversary year, it can also be bought as a special "25 Years of the GS" model, with equipment including heated handgrips, a driver information display, an Enduro gearbox with a short first gear, the partially integrated BMW Motorrad ABS, white blinkers, a large tank (30 litres) and an engine protection guard. It comes with attractive special paintwork in Alpine white matte, blue and grey.

For beginners, there are the two single-cylinder models, the F 650 GS and the F 650 GS Dakar. And with the HP2, BMW has put on wheels the ultimate sports endurance bike with a wealth of rally experience. Thanks to this well-rounded range of models and its pride in 25 years of achievement, BMW Motorrad can look with optimism into the future of the Enduro market.

Even on the toughest terrain, the HP2 is unlikely to make life easy for its rivals.

Where Bavarian automobile construction started

BMW in Eisenach (1928 to 1952)

The new BMW plant in Leipzig was officially opened on 13th May by German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. BMW has a certain tradition of automobile construction in eastern Germany: production of cars at BMW originated not in Munich, but in Eisenach. At the end of the 1920s, when the executive management decided to embark on producing cars following on from their successes with aero-engine construction and motorcycles, the high level of investment necessary for setting up new production facilities was an obstacle. When the vehicle factory in Eisenach went up for sale in 1928, BMW was presented with an opportunity of going into automobile production without costly development and start-up costs.

By Caroline Schulenburg

After BMW had made a name for itself with the production of engines and motorcycles, the executive management decided in the latter half of the 1920s to go into automobile production. The first test models were already undergoing extensive trials in 1925. The only obstacle to BMW AG taking its place among the ranks of car producers was the costly construction of new facilities. The BMW executive management was inclined to pursue a policy of purchasing existing production facilities. That's why they leapt at the opportunity to buy the Eisenach automobile plant (Dixi Works) from Gothaer Waggonfabrik. This company had been founded in 1896 and had originally focused mainly on manufacturing non-motorized military vehicles and bicycles.

Three Austin Sevens converted to 3/15 Dixis in front of the administrative office of the Eisenach car factory. The BMW purchase contract is shown on the right.

Fit for the family: the BMW 326, the top-selling BMW before the Second World War, in 1936.

Since 1899, the facility in Eisenach had also been manufacturing motor vehicles and this had been a very successful operation until 1918. In order to accommodate the sustained difficult economic conditions prevailing until the mid-1920s in the Weimar Republic, a decision was taken to manufacture a small car under licence from the Austin Motor Company. The small car was the "Austin Seven", also produced as the Bantam in the USA and as the Datsun in Japan. Military equipment was also manufactured in Eisenach alongside automobiles.

After the plant was taken over by BMW, manufacture of the small car 3/15 (Dixi) continued under licence from Austin. The BMW 3/15 Type DA 2 was the first automobile to feature the white and blue emblem. On 22nd March 1929, the first saloon rolled off the production line. The cars continued to be manufactured under licence from Austin until the early 1930s. However, in March 1932, BMW served notice on the licence agreement with the Austin Motor Company ahead of the scheduled date. The BMW Type DA 4 was the last model to be based on this licence. In April of the same year, the first model designed by engineers at BMW AG was launched. While the engine of the new 3/20 PS Type AM 1 was manufactured at the main plant in Munich and the chassis was constructed in Eisenach, the bodywork came from the Daimler-Benz plant in Sindelfingen.

Shortly after the purchase of the Eisenach plant had been completed, the global economic crisis hit demand for automobiles, and car production at BMW AG might have been brought to a premature end had there been a buyer for the Eisenach plant. However, the Supervisory Board and the Board of Management were unable to find anyone interested in purchasing the plant, so production went on. The focus initially continued to be on a small car. This changed with the upswing in the German economy starting in the second half of 1932. The International Motor Show held in Berlin in February 1933 witnessed the launch of the Type 303 – the first BMW car with a six-cylinder engine. Volume production began in April of the same year and BMW entered a new market segment. The 303 was the first automobile to display the "kidney" radiator grille – a typical BMW feature.

A year after the start of production, this first six-cylinder was launched on the market as the successor to the BMW 315. Apart from the more powerful engine, the engineering, visual appearance and equipment were basically the same as for the predecessor model. In May of the same year, the BMW 315/1 was launched as a sports two-seater powered by an engine with three carburettors and higher compression. BMW achieved significant racing success with this roadster in the 1.5 litre class.

The BMW 326 was launched at the International Motor Show in February 1936 and went into volume production in the middle of the year. It went on to become the top-selling BMW automobile in the pre-war period. At the end of 1937, BMW entered the realms of a luxury car manufacturer with the 327 sports convertible. When the Second World War started, manufacture of civilian cars was significantly reduced and production came to a complete standstill in April 1941. At the same time, motorcycle production was transferred from Munich to Eisenach from December 1941 onwards, and principally during the year 1942. Motorcycle production ceased entirely during the course of the same year and the plant then went over to the production of aero-engines.

Between 1928 and 1941, BMW had produced 18 different types of car in Eisenach powered by four-cylinder and six-cylinder engines. 88,622 automobiles were produced overall during this period.

Success with aero-engines

Since 1936, BMW had maintained a second line in Eisenach. On 16th October, Eisenacher Flugmotorenfabrik GmbH was established as a subsidiary of BMW Flugmotorenbau GmbH. A condition laid down by the German Air Ministry specified that the plant facilities for engine construction should meet the standard requirements for air-raid protection and camouflage. This meant that the engine plant couldn't be linked with the automobile plant. It was transferred to Dürrerhof, a newly developed and bigger site located on the edge of the city. Manufacture and sale of engines started up on 1st January 1937. The plant for manufacturing military equipment was transferred from the old BMW plant to the new engine plant.

In the summer of 1937, the capital of Flugmotorenfabrik GmbH was raised from

BMW 3/20 PS AM 1 from Eisenach, 1932.

20,000 reichsmarks to five million reichsmarks, with some two thirds of the capital stock being held by state company Luftfahrtkontor GmbH as the representative of the Reich. This meant that additional financial resources required could be obtained as interest-free loans from the Reich.

Part-ownership by the Reich permitted the German Air Ministry to intervene in operational and production-related workflows and processes. The Ministry also had to be consulted about the composition of the Advisory Board and the appointment of authorized signatories. It's therefore hardly surprising that the BMW Group worked towards settling the debt as soon as possible in order to end the involvement of the Reich in Eisenach. The deteriorating economic situation from the second half of the 1930s meant that the Reich was in turn endeavouring to shed stakes in armament companies. In February 1940, BMW Flugmotorenbau GmbH took over all shares still in the possession of the Reich.

Substitute production in Eisenach too

The BMW aero-engine plant in Eisenach was among the most modern and most productive manufacturing facilities of its time. Because the engines were manufactured on the basis of an identical model between 1934 and 1939, it was possible to sell them at a much lower price than the competition was charging. Apart from the low prices, the BMW aero-engine plant in Eisenach was also extremely efficient in the period up until the Second World War.

The Second World War saw forced labour being used at the factories in Eisenach and Dürrerhof. Prisoners-of-war were already being exploited in 1939. The proportion of forced workers was up to 40 percent in Eisenach and as much as 65 percent in Dürrerhof. Increasing numbers of prisoners from concentration camps were used at both plants from March 1944, in particular from the subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration camp.

Air raids during the Second World War destroyed 60 percent of the plant and equipment used for automobile construction in Eisenach. The authorities showed little interest in restarting production during the occupation of Thüringen by American forces (April to July 1945). This situation only changed when Thüringen became part of the Soviet occupation zone. A resolution dated 7th September 1945 confiscated all the property of BMW AG in Thüringen. While car production was supposed to start up again in Eisenach, there was no question of restarting the aero-engine plant because it had been used exclusively for the production of military equipment. The building materials from the engine plant were used to rebuild the production workshops for automobile assembly. The measures taken to repair the factory were time-consuming, and by the beginning of the 1950s only some 87 percent of the pre-war facilities had been rebuilt.
Substitute production started up as early as the summer of 1945 in order to generate wages for the workers carrying out the repair work. This mainly comprised household goods (cutlery, pans, ironing boards) and hand carts. The personal commitment of the BMW staff convinced the Soviet Military Administration for Germany that the production facilities still in existence should not be dismantled. Instead, a directive was issued to restart production of automobiles and motorcycles at the former BMW plant in Eisenach. The first cars (BMW 321) and motorcycles (BMW R 35) were produced here in October 1945.

BMW 3/15 PS DA 2 two-seater on the tough uphill climb to the Wartburg, 1930.

Before the war, the bodies for the BMW automobiles had been produced by coachbuilder Ambi Budd in Berlin, and between 1931 and 1937 they were produced by Daimler-Benz. However, the production figures demanded by the Soviet Military Administration meant that the bodywork had to be produced in Eisenach

Left: Aerial picture of the Dürrerhof plant, known as "forest plant" because of the camouflage, 1940. Right: BMW 303 Saloon.

itself, so that all the usable machinery was transferred from Ambi Budd to Eisenach.

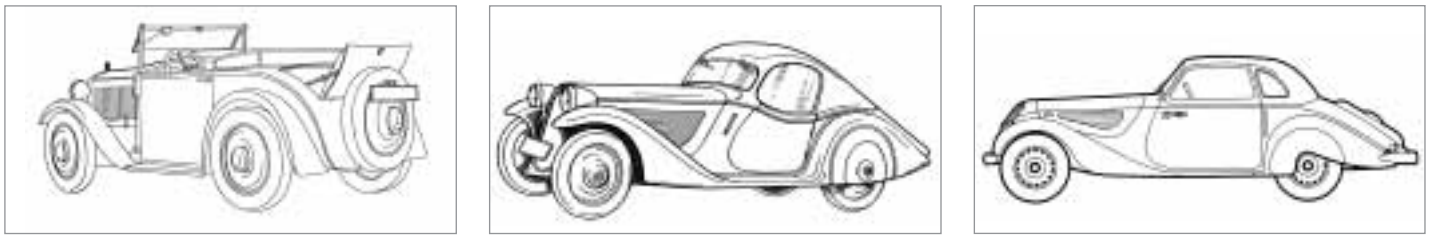
The division of Germany into four zones of occupation and the prohibition on companies in the Western sector supplying goods to the Soviet occupation zone meant that there were continual bottlenecks in production. The plant was therefore integrated within the Soviet state joint-stock corporation AWTOWELO. The production of automobiles and motorcycles rose steadily between 1945 and 1949. Most of the cars were exported, primarily to the USSR. The export successes of BMW products generated urgently needed foreign currency. The management decided to expand the model range with the aim of increasing export business, and the new BMW models from Eisenach were already launched at the Leipzig Spring Trade Fair in 1949.

All the cars bore the BMW logo and were designed on the basis of pre-war models. Until 1948, Eisenach was manufacturing cars based on the designs of the BMW 321. Production of a new model – the BMW 340 – only started up in 1949. Although this type was the first model to be developed independently in Eisenach, it still represented a further development of the BMW 326. The sports cars BMW S1 and BMW 340/1, which were developed at the same time, were also based on a pre-war model, the BMW 328. The Eisenach BMW automobiles were exported particularly successfully to the Eastern Bloc (especially the USSR, Hungary and Poland) and the Scandinavian countries.

The Eisenach plant continued to manufacture motorcycles alongside cars. The annual production figures of the BMW R 35 had reached around 6,650 units by 1950. The company management was not planning to move away from this model. Instead, it focused on modifying details and making improvements.

In October 1949, the entry in the commercial register for the subsidiary in Eisenach was cancelled following a request by the Board of Management in Munich. The official designation was now Awtowelo AG, and in contacts with the West, the company called itself Eisenacher Motorenwerke. Despite the change in name, the cars continued to bear the BMW logo with the name "BMW". The former "parent company" BMW Munich took legal action against a number of importers and foreign general agents for the Eisenach plant, in order to protect the company name for its products. The judgment handed down by the court prohibited vehicles produced in Eisenach from using the company name and company logo abroad and restricted such use to East Germany. From the end of 1950, this precluded the lucrative export to western countries, which was particularly important because of the inflow of foreign currency. Having changed the name, the Eisenach plant then also changed the company logo. The form and design with four fields of colour were taken over, but the former blue fields were now filled with red. A four-pointed star was selected as the border between the coloured fields, which then in turn brought Daimler-Benz into the arena.

In the summer of 1952, the owners of the company changed when the USSR classified it as the property of East Germany. The name changed with the change in ownership. The new company designation was "VEB IFA – Automobilfabrik EMW Eisenach".



Line drawings of early BMW automobiles (from left): BMW 3/20 PS Cabriolet of 1932, BMW315/1 of 1934, and a BMW 327 from the year 1938.

In 1992, BMW continued a tradition spanning 60 years by opening plant 8.1 at Eisenach.

After reunification, the new plant operated by BMW Fahrzeugtechnik GmbH opened in Thuringia 40 years later in 1992. Large tools for bodywork manufacture are produced at plant 8.1, located to the west of Eisenach on the new Deubachshof industrial site. The new plant at Leipzig started operating in 2005, and BMW is thereby continuing the tradition of automobile production in eastern Germany.

Left: The new logo of the Eisenacher Motorenwerke retained the original structure but changed the colours.
Right: Company name "AWTOWELO" at the Eisenach BMW plant in 1950.

Heinrich Richter-Brohm – the modernizer

Dr Heinrich Richter-Brohm took the helm at BMW AG in a difficult situation. His programme of modernization charted a path to a better future, but failed at the last post due to internal and external constraints. The perspective of the management in autumn of 1959 was that the company's last chance of survival lay in cooperation with a strong partner: Daimler-Benz AG. At a momentous Annual General Meeting, the small shareholders and dealer representatives refused to go along with the plan advocated by Richter-Brohm. They thereby rescued BMW's independence.

By Dr Florian Triebel

The Situation

Business performance at BMW AG during the 1950s was not promising for the company. The production programme being pursued held out no more than modest expectations for the future. The motorcycle market had been in decline since 1953 – the boom in two-wheelers experienced in the immediate post-war years evaporated and with it the profits from this area of business. Revenues generated from motorcycle sales over the years had largely financed the setup of BMW automobile production.

Moreover, the decision to build a "large car" in the automobile division turned out to be a serious strategic error. Although a small series of automobiles in the executive class required less investment in production overall, the "Baroque Angel" proved to be out of kilter with BMW and the brand values prevailing in the post-war era. The big car appeared too heavy, it lacked agility and had no sporting flair. Serious problems of quality and reliability were soon revealed in the car. What's more, the market for large cars in Germany failed to develop as dynamically as the very superficial dealer surveys carried out by the BMW Sales Department had predicted. Licence production of the Isetta "Motocoupé" started up in 1955 and this exploited some of the capacity lying idle as a result of the decline in motorcycle production. However, the extremely satisfying sales figure from the micro-car failed to make a major contribution to improving finances of the company overall.

It did not help that revenue generated from leasing the Allach plant to the US Army was lost. The Allach plant had

Helmut Werner Bönsch (centre) and Heinrich Richter-Brohm with a BMW 700, 1959.

been used by US troops to repair their vehicle fleet but in 1955 the US military authorities decided that it was surplus to requirements and returned the plant to BMW. This meant a loss of rental income that had long been a cushion for the company's operating result.

This situation and the ensuing bleak prospects for BMW AG seemed positively grotesque against the backdrop of the economic boom – soon to be known as the "economic miracle". The Supervisory Board of the company had to take action. At the turn of the year 1956/57, the Supervisory Board removed Hanns Grewenig (see MTL 03/2004) and Kurt Donath (MTL 02/2004) from their offices. The Supervisory Board held these two members of the Board of Management responsible for the grave situation the company found itself in. Heinrich Krafft von Dellmensingen (MTL 01/2005), responsible for internal administration of the company, was the only Board Member to retain his post as part of the executive management. This ensured a degree of continuity in the management of the company.

Up to that point, the three directors of the company had managed BMW AG jointly and without a named Chairman. It's possible that the Supervisory Board perceived this constellation as being one reason why key decisions were only taken tentatively and implemented half-heartedly. At any rate, a Chairman was appointed to the Board of Management for the first time in post-war history. Dr Heinrich Richter-Brohm had been selected as the candidate for this post.

The candidate

Born in Kehl am Rhein in 1904, Richter-Brohm studied law in Göttingen, Marburg, Lausanne and Berlin, interrupted by a stay in the USA. He completed his degree in 1932 with distinction and went on to take two doctorates in economics and law. In the same year, he joined the Prussian Interior Ministry as a Head of Department for Construction and Finance.

In 1934, he moved from government administration to industry. On 1st June, he took up a post as Head of the Legal Affairs Department at Mannesmann AG. After the German annexation of Czechoslovakia in 1938, the company sent him to Prague. Mannesmann AG held a stake in iron and industrial company Prager Eisen- und Industriegesellschaft and he was appointed as senior director and board member. Three years later, Richter-Brohm was appointed General Director of Böhmisch-Mährische Maschinenfabrik AG.

While Richter-Brohm's fortunes experienced a rapid rise in the context of the policy of expansion and the war economy being pursued by the National Socialist government, this was not brought about by close links with the NSDAP. After the National Socialists took over power, he handed in his party card already in 1933. What is not clear is whether his change from government administration to industry was also the result of his opposition to the political policies of the regime. Nevertheless, it is abundantly clear that Richter-Brohm's career benefited from Hitler's policies. He was part of the "technocratic elite" who dutifully carried out their allotted functions without regard to personal moral conscience and any reservations about the direction being pursued by the National Socialist government – and pursued a successful career as a result.

After 1945, these "technocrats" were a mainstay in the project of building up the post-war economy in the devastated states in Central Europe. This was how Richter-Brohm once again came to take up a responsible post in industry in 1947, with outstanding prospects. In that year, he was appointed General Director of the newly established iron and steelworks Vereinigten Österreichische Eisen- und Stahlwerke (VÖEST) based in Linz. In 1952, he took up a post as a representative of a group of banks in southern Germany looking at the options for rationalization in factories. In this capacity, he was involved in the winding up of IG-Farben AG. Three years later, he moved to engineering company Maschinenfabrik Pintsch Bamag AG based in Butzbach, Hesse, and became Chairman of the Board of Management. Board Member of Deutsche Bank AG Robert Frowein was Deputy Chairman of the Supervisory Board of this company.

When Frowein was appointed to the same function at BMW AG in June 1956 and became aware of the depressing situation the company found itself in, he

Mayor of Munich Thomas Wimmer tours Plant 1 in Milbertshofen (top with Board Member Willy Black, left. Richter-Brohm on the right top and bottom), 1957.

DER SPIEGEL

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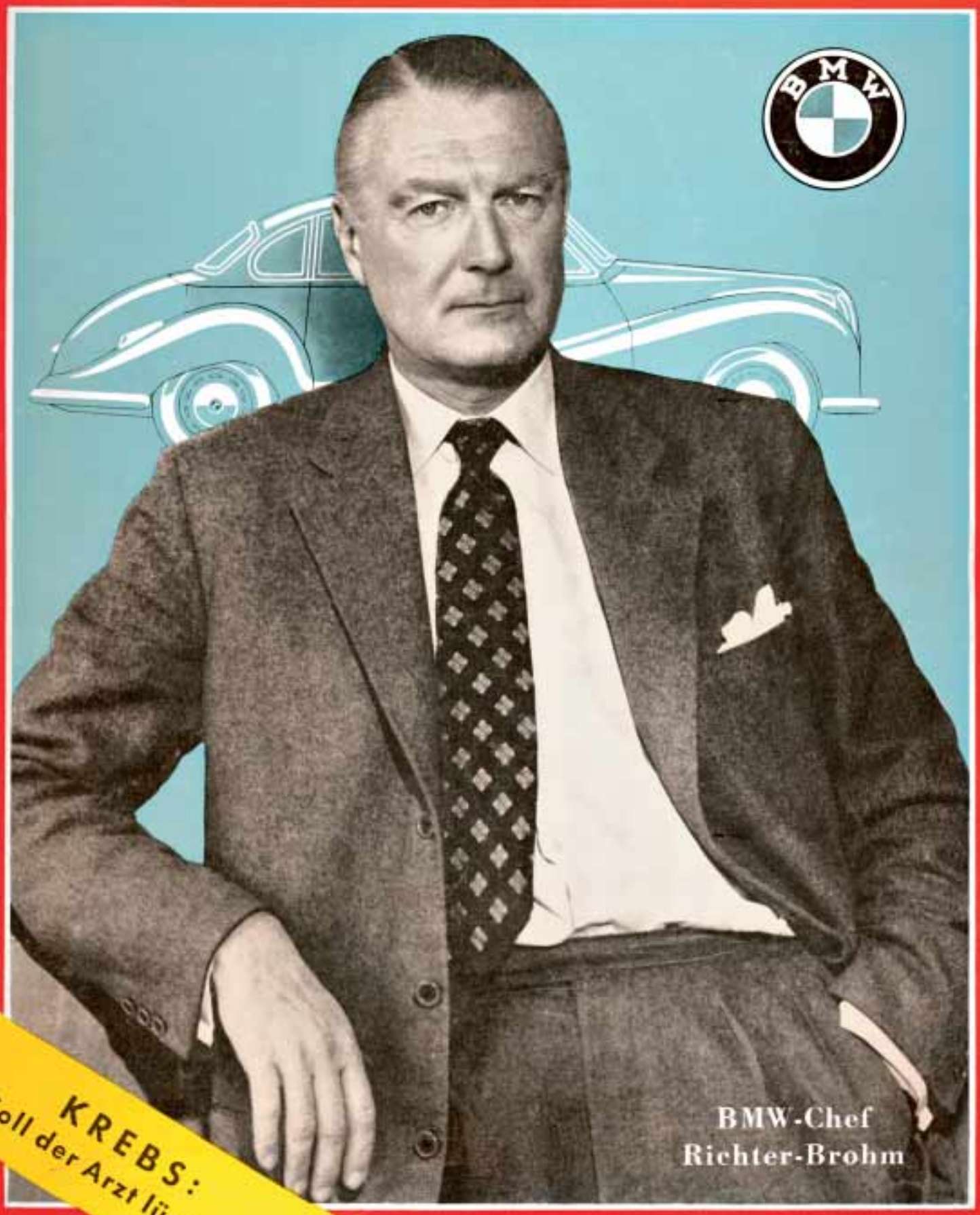


BMW-Chef
Richter-Brohm

KREBS:
Soll der Arzt lügen?

Cover picture Der Spiegel 3/1960 with BMW Board Chairman Heinrich Richter-Brohm.

recommended Richter-Brohm to his colleagues on the Supervisory Board as new Chairman of the Board of Management in the planned major shake-up in the BMW management. The experience he had gained in restructuring companies at the start of the 1950s was a key factor in Richter-Brohm's appointment to this position. His brief now was to apply this expertise in restructuring BMW AG.

The new Chairman of the Board of Management took up his post on 1st March 1957 and immediately introduced a host of innovations. He set up a secretarial office for the Board of Management, which produced detailed minutes of the Board for the first time. The office was also responsible for generating statistics centrally.

One of the major discrepancies identified by Richter-Brohm was that the vehicles being developed and produced by BMW were not selling, in other words they weren't appropriate for the market. He therefore established a new working group in October. The aim of this team was to have regular meetings with high-level representatives from Sales and colleagues from Development in order to discuss modifications based on customers' needs and improvements to the models. These ideas were then to be put into action. However, he didn't rely solely on how these BMW managers perceived the market and the company's customers. By 1st April 1957, he had already created a new department for systematic market research. The new department rapidly produced a series of fundamental studies. Richter-Brohm gave market research a high priority, an area that had up to then been neglected by BMW. At one of the first meetings of the Board of Management, he minuted an express request to colleagues requiring them to devote "special attention to the projected trend for future developments in the domestic and foreign automobile market", independently of these specific studies.

The future programme

Immediately after Richter-Brohm took office, he set out to produce a comprehensive report on BMW Aktiengesellschaft, in order to gain an overview of the situation in his new sphere of influence. He intended this report to be completed already for the first meeting of the Supervisory Board during his tenure, in June 1957. However, because some data from market research was not available at this point in time, Richter-Brohm postponed submitting his report until the next meeting of the Supervisory Board.

The analysis by the new Chairman of the Board of Management highlighted the mismanagement and mistakes that had brought about the deteriorating situation at BMW AG up to his appointment. More than any other part of the company, the automobile division was responsible for the financial predicament. The production of big cars had been unprofitable since car manufacture had started up. The 6-cylinder models had created the biggest holes in the accounts. For this reason, it had already been decided to bring their production to an end.

Richter-Brohm used this company analysis and the results of the market-research studies to draft a Programme for the Future at BMW. The data obtained indicated to him without any shadow of doubt that a "mid-range car" with typical BMW characteristics would effect a rescue. This car should be fast, manoeuvrable and have a powerful engine. The results of market research had shown that this kind of car, "drawing on the tradition of the unforgettable BMW 1.5 litre car still fondly remembered by large sections of the population", would be extremely successful. While there had been ongoing discussions in the BMW Development Department about a car of this nature since 1946, the work required had only been carried out half-heartedly and sporadically due to scarce company resources. The "Programme for the Future" drawn up by Richter-Brohm defined a development period of around 18 months for this kind of "mid-range car". The preliminary work and experience gained by BMW with similar prototypes from the pre-war period meant that this lead time was significantly less than the usual two to three years current at the time for a project of this nature. He believed that BMW would be in a position to start up production of the new car immediately and quickly given its reliable and well-trained workforce and the availability of the machinery that had been freed up by stopping the unprofitable production of large cars. However, it was necessary to

Despite accurate analysis, Richter-Brohm was unable to complete the process of rationalization.

Top: The first design for the "mid-range car" BMW 530, based on the design of the BMW 503.

Bottom: The second design had features of the BMW 507 in the front end.

Richter-Brohm speaks at the Annual General Meeting in 1959. Right the Supervisory Board.

bridge the period until the proposed "mid-range" car was ready to roll off the production line. Richter-Brohm made a number of proposals to cater for this.

With the exception of the 6-cylinder types, production of large cars was supposed to be continued until manufacture of the "mid-range car" commenced. However, the plan was to manufacture two new models in addition, to make use of the capacities available and at least cover fixed costs.

A larger vehicle developed on the basis of the Isetta, in the same bullet-shaped design but with an additional door and a second seat would already be available in the near future. The development departments were also working on a vehicle at the lower end of the range that would similarly be powered by a motorcycle engine, but would look like a "normal automobile". This was in response to demands by BMW customers. The two vehicles – the "big Isetta" designated BMW 600 and the BMW 700 – would represent a good transitional solution and lead up to the "mid-range car".

The Programme for the Future also envisaged starting up production of an engine model at the Allach plant under licence by American manufacturer Lycoming. The plan also involved marketing the proven V8 and motorcycle engines as industrial and marine engines. This supplementary use of BMW power units would take up additional production capacities and bring in revenues without further major investment.

However, it would only be possible to implement the interim solution and the Programme for the Future under two conditions:

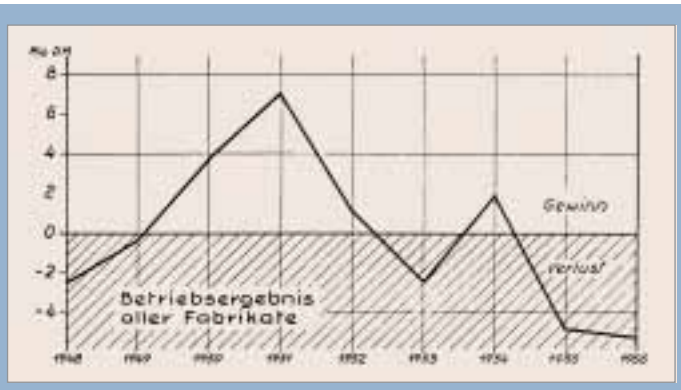
The banks and the state agencies would again have to bail out BMW with finance totalling 55 million marks.

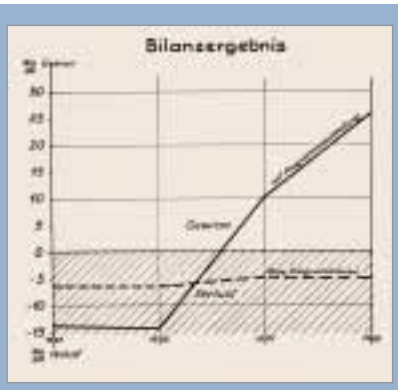
Moreover, Richter-Brohm stated that it was extremely important to take a disciplined approach to implementing the programme and keep to the plan that had been drawn up. A key factor would be keeping costs under strict control during the rationalization process.

Failure of the plans

After basic agreement had been secured from the Supervisory Board on Richter-Brohm's plans in August 1957, the first steps were instituted at BMW. Unfortunately, the company encountered some unexpected difficulties when it started to put the plans into practice. The sales figures for the BMW Isetta and the BMW 600 started to decline over the course of the year – a trend that gathered pace in 1958. Moreover, the negotiations on the necessary investments being carried out by Richter-Brohm with the banks and the Free State of Bavaria turned out to be extremely difficult.

The only bright spot in this situation was the development of the BMW 700, which was on schedule. This "beacon of hope" was launched for the press in spring 1959 and the first vehicles rolled off the assembly line in late autumn.





Extracts from studies commissioned by Richter-Brohm. Left: Chart showing the operating result for 1956. Centre: Forecast balance-sheet result if the Programme for the Future were implemented. Right the title page of the medium-term rationalization programme for BMW AG from 1957.

The death-knell for Richter-Brohm's plans came in the form of an "inventory order" for large cars. Production manager Kurt Deby had ignored resolutions to the contrary by the Board of Management and instituted this order. The plans were also hampered by a delay in investment applications for starting up production of the planned "mid-range car", which was caused by production director Willy Black.

In autumn 1959, the financial situation of BMW AG was so bleak that alternative measures for rationalization were being examined. For the Board of Management and the Supervisory Board, the most promising prospect appeared to be selling the company to a strong industrial partner. This plan was first floated with representatives of Daimler-Benz AG in the spring of 1958 and they began to take shape in the face of the imminent onset of insolvency.

The Annual General Meeting of BMW AG for the business year 1958 was held on 9th December 1959 and an offer from Stuttgart – head office of Daimler-Benz AG – for rationalizing BMW was presented to the shareholders. It envisaged a reduction in capital followed by a new increase in capital stock. However, all the original shareholders were excluded from subscribing to the new shares. Only the companies in the rationalization consortium headed by Daimler-Benz would be permitted to subscribe to the new shares. All those involved in these plans hoped that the original shareholders would consent to this partial loss of ownership in return for rescuing at least part of their capital.

However, these hopes evaporated during the course of the Annual General Meeting. Erich Nold as representative of the small shareholders and Dr Friedrich Mathern, speaking on behalf of a number of BMW dealers, delayed the process of reaching a decision. Mathern accused the Supervisory Board of failing to investigate all the alternatives to the proposed solution of selling the company thoroughly and impartially. He also suggested that the calculations assessing the sale value of BMW had not included two of the best corporate assets: the trained and motivated workforce, and the brand, which still represented a potent asset.

During the meeting, Richter-Brohm sat impassively on the platform at the conference centre. This provided further provocation for the shareholders present. They became angry and started hurling insults at him. As far as they were concerned, Richter-Brohm was responsible for the downfall of the company. But this didn't reflect the true state of affairs.

Undoubtedly, he was responsible for a number of omissions and difficulties when it came to implementing the Programme for the Future. He had a tendency to take decisions on his own and act without consulting his colleagues on the Board of Management and the Supervisory Board. He also antagonized the representatives of the Bavarian Economics Ministry by the way he handled the negotiations.

However, he took on a job at BMW in 1957 that could only be solved by deploying all the forces available. The failure of his plans and the projected sale of BMW AG to Daimler-Benz were primarily the result of internal hindrances in implementing the programme and the unforeseen collapse of sales figures for small cars.

After a meeting lasting more than ten hours, Mathern put forward a motion to postpone the Annual General Meeting. This meant that the offer from Stuttgart, which had a time limit, expired and the deadline wasn't extended. As far as Heinrich Richter-Brohm was concerned, this meant that his last solution for rationalizing the company had failed. He wasn't prepared to look at alternatives.

Heinrich Richter-Brohm presents the BMW stand to Ludwig Erhard at the Frankfurt Motor Show in 1959.

With effect from 26th February 1960, the Supervisory Board relieved Richter-Brohm of his duties. Although his plans ultimately failed, his short period of office was crucially important for BMW AG. The organizational changes he instituted made the company more professional, and the concepts developed in the Programme for the Future formed the basis for the successful rationalization of BMW during the years after 1960.

After leaving BMW, Richter-Brohm took up posts at foreign exploration companies. He died on 12th April 1994 at the age of 90.

“Why don’t you paint a car?”

When the starting pistol went off at 4 p.m. on 14th June 1975 to launch the 24-hour Le Mans Race, the history of this legendary circuit in north-west France gained a new facet. The engine of BMW 3.0 CSL was revving up on the grid, straining to face up to the competition at last. It wasn’t the 430 bhp that made the racing coupé with number 93 an attraction, for there was no shortage of power and capacity to provide excitement in this context. The attraction was the paintwork of the BMW.
Gaudy colours made this car stand out from the crowd of sponsorship liveries. What the onlookers saw was a work of art rather than an advertising medium promoting economic interests. The CSL was actually a synthesis of art and racing car. The admiring onlookers were witnessing the beginning of a collection of vehicles that was unique in the world: BMW Art Cars.

By Manfred Grunert

The idea of combining art and racing came from French auctioneer and racing driver Hervé Poulain. In 1973, he had already addressed the subject in his book L’Art et l’Automobile. He complained about the lack of bridges between the two areas of human endeavour and regretted the lack of interaction between them.

From today’s perspective, his conclusion sounds almost like a challenge to make waves. At the start of 1975, he embarked on the project. He viewed it as an association between art and industry as a counterweight to the increasing reduction in status of the automobile myth during the era of the oil crisis and industrial pessimism. He set out the theoretical tenets of the project in his essay entitled “Les mobiles de Calder et les miennes”.

The transition from theory to implementation seems rather unspectacular by comparison: “Why don’t you paint a car?”, he asked his friend Alexander Calder, one of the world’s most eminent sculptors. They were eating lunch together, and he took the opportunity to outline his idea. Calder was famous as an artist who had no inhibitions, and he agreed enthusiastically, asking him to look around for a suitable car. Poulain hadn’t anticipated this reaction. At that stage he had neither thought about a specific make nor a specific marque.

He had lots of contacts in the touring-car scene and took his idea to French racing driver Jean Todt, “one of the most progressive men in the world of motor sport,” as Poulain described him. Todt assured him that he could only think of one person on the racing scene who would understand the artistic aspect and comprehend the public interest in such a project: BMW racing director Jochen Neerpasch. Todt knew Neerpasch from 1973, when the Frenchman took overall victory in the Austrian Alpine Rally alongside Achim Warmbold in a BMW 2002TI.

Poulain followed the advice of his compatriot and called up the BMW motor sport director. He remembered the response from Munich as follows: “Our cars are in the United States. We don’t want to take part in any race in Europe this year, but … that’s a good idea!” Todt had been right and Poulain had moved his project forward significantly. Even when he expressed the wish to drive in the Le Mans 24-hour race, Neerpasch agreed. This couldn’t be taken for granted by any means, because a race in the American IMSA Series was scheduled for the same weekend. Only one of the planned two vehicles would be able to line up on the grid because a crew of mechanics would have to be provided in France. The presence of the make at the American racing series was extremely important at that time, because this was the route to attracting attention in the world’s biggest automobile market. Ultimately, success at this event would generate orders for cars.

Neerpasch needed some backup in order to justify an – albeit temporary – absence from the American racing scene. He received this support in the form of Horst Avenarius, at that time Head of Press and Public Relations. Avenarius quickly grasped the value of the project for the company. He wasn’t thinking in terms of advertising, because he was very aware that “where it [industry] links up with artists, it embarks on an adventure. It can be confronted with an abyss or be invited to listen to the most beautiful songs” – this is how Avenarius phrased it in the afterword of the catalogue for the exhibition. “The automobile in art” held in 1986.

His interpretation of patronage was directed towards engaging with art in a way that would open up a new horizon of experience and thereby impart new depth to one’s own – industrial – processes.

After the necessary cover had been procured, the choice of vehicle wasn’t difficult. BMW had created a sensation at Le Mans two years previously with a stunning victory by the BMW 3.0 CSL, going on to win the European Touring Car Championship. Hans-Joachim Stuck held the lap record for touring cars at the Nürburgring (08:09) with the racing coupé and the vehicle had proved popular in the IMSA Series with its power and handling. But the race had to be run in the USA

Union of art and technology in the halls of Motorsport GmbH. Cover page for the press folder for the Le Man 24-hour race in 1975.

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before Calder could be presented with this "racing canvas". And the time to Le Mans was getting shorter and shorter.

Poulain used an old trick to give Calder an impression of what the vehicle looked like: he gave his friend a toy car. Luckily, Calder had a wealth of experience in projecting his art from small models to large works of art. He had used this technique again and again to produce his giant sculptures. However, this project appeared to be rather unusual. A sculptor normally creates forms, and here he was being commissioned to change the colour of an established form with fixed technical parameters.

But this was nothing new to Calder either. Two years previously, he had painted an airliner for Braniff South American Airlines. And his passion for the interplay between static and dynamic images had been obvious at a much earlier stage. In 1932, he had already changed and stylized 15 engines, in part by applying colour.

Started very small

The critics reacted with overwhelming enthusiasm to "L'art automobile", and

French artist Marcel Duchamp described the sculptures as “mobiles”.

The term used by Duchamps and the spirit of this early work epitomized the constants in Calder’s oeuvre even at that time: the exploitation of engineering, the movement and the vibrant colours. Today, Calder’s “mobiles” rank among the most innovative sculptures of the 20th century.

Calder and Hervé Poulain with the toy car used as a model for painting the original.

Poulain visited Calder several times while he was working in Tourraine. The two friends agreed that after the toy car, a dummy should be painted on a scale of 1:5.

The sculptor was always asking the racing driver what he felt like when he was racing. Calder compared Poulain’s description of this situation with bull races, where the animals are attracted by the colour while simultaneously fearing death.

Soon Calder started painting. He distributed the colours yellow, red, and blue over large areas of the model. “It appeared as though these colours represented the tail of a comet in three colours,” was how Poulain described the model. Calder was “like a prehistoric priest directing wall paintings, who knows that the colours carry you away and move inexorably forward.”

Start in Le Mans: no worries

Calder used the velocity of a three-colour combination to generate a dynamic quality in their juxtaposition – a single-minded acceleration without end. The artist was much more laconic in describing his creation. When a cameraman brought along by Poulain asked Calder why he was only using these three colours, he replied with a smile, “That’s all I can do!”

When it was finished, the dummy was taken to Munich. There it was used as a template for painting the original racing car. By this time, BMW Motorsport GmbH had decided on a driver team. Hervé Poulain as the initiator of the project was to line up on the grid at Le Mans with fellow Frenchman Jean Guichet and American Sam Posey.

Posey drove for BMW with Hans-Joachim Stuck and Brian Redman in the IMSA Series. He had plenty of experience and success with the light-weight coupé, winning the 12-hour race at Sebring shortly before. But Posey was no more only a racing driver than Poulain was just an auctioneer.

Calder’s signature on the rear fin of the BMW: “Colours that move forward inexorably”.

Posey had studied at the Rhode Island School of Design. He had painted pictures and designed furniture. This and his passion for literature and film made him an ideal crew member for the CSL cockpit. Everything was now in place for the start at Le Mans.

In fact, the racing track wasn’t the first stage on which the Art Car could be admired. The premiere was celebrated on 30th May 1975 in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs of the Louvre in Paris – and it was probably the first racing car in the world to celebrate its debut in a museum. Curator François Mathey highlighted the significance of the car for contemporary art and its relationship with economic interests in his opening speech: “Art mocks industry. Industry ignores art. All attempts to prove the opposite are no more than alibis for salving our consciences.

Poulain and Calder were an ideal team for this project.

But that’s no bad thing. Calder has succeeded in drawing our attention to the fact that there’s a problem and he has demonstrated that it’s not about window-dressing or advertising. He knows that there’s nothing more serious than playing, and a racing car is the

Premiere on asphalt: The BMW Art Car by Alexander Calder at Le Mans 1975.

most sophisticated toy of people who want to be taken seriously.
We thank Calder and we thank Hervé Poulain because they still know how to have fun and because they give us pleasure." A week later, people in Munich got to see the extraordinary racing car – at art gallery Haus der Kunst. At the time, Horst Avenarius stressed the extraordinary moment guests were experiencing at the preview: "A BMW being exhibited at the Haus der Kunst, a few days after being displayed at the Louvre and shortly before a lively exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York: That isn't an everyday experience for BMW. We have Alexander Calder to thank for that."

A brand new racing design

Avenarius went on to highlight the link between BMW and Calder: "His sheer pleasure in colour is equivalent to our sheer driving pleasure. This pleasure in existence is something we share. We are both motivated by the conviction that an object shouldn't simply be assessed on the basis of its usefulness and utilitarian value. Any object should also be judged by the zest for life it conveys, by the play (and sport) that it

Left: Calder's Car at the "Haus der Kunst" in Munich 1975.
Right: In front of the BMW Tower.

engenders." The play and sport were to come one week later.

The lure of forbidden fruits

The car arrived on time in north-west France. After facing the art critics, it was now ready to take on the supercharged opposition. In view of the maximum speeds of over 280 km/h expected at Le Mans, there was a lot at stake when the art car lined up on the grid. Although BMW had insured the car for 1,000,000 marks, people were more concerned about the ideal value than actual financial losses.

But this was precisely the attraction of the project, you might say the lure of forbidden fruits: breaking down the barriers of motor sport and art at the same time – art at Le Mans and motor sport in the museum. Calder himself was a guest at Le Mans and one of the most photographed men during the weekend.

The CSL had achieved the best time in its class during the training session – but not without some nervous moments. Poulain recalled how a Porsche came hurtling back towards him in the Hunaudières. "You couldn't take evasive action at 290 km/h and I drove into a cloud of dust, burnt rubber and grit. Strangely enough, I didn't touch anything."

From that moment on, his biggest fear was not for himself: "My greatest fear was that Sam Posey, who was starting the race, would wreck the car before we were due to change drivers for the first time."

Nothing untoward happened: at 10 p.m., after the race had been going for nine hours, Poulain raced through the twilight to come first in the touring car placings and take fifth place overall, when a loud crack sounded beneath his feet and brought the lap of honour to a standstill. The drive shaft had broken.

The most craziest idea

This was the end of the "most craziest (and most refreshing) idea of this troubled decade", as Ron Wakefield put it at the time in Road&Track. At the same time, it represented the start of a unique collection of contemporary art: the BMW Art Car Collection.

The artist and his work: Alexander Calder with Hervé Poulain (left rear) and Jochen Neerpasch (right) in front of the BMW 3.0 CSL and some of his mobiles.

The BMW V12 racing car, designed by American concept artist Jenny Holzer in 1999.

The BMW Art Car Collection

Two worlds meet in the BMW Art Car Collection: the world of the automobile and the world of art. It is an extraordinary collection that now numbers 15 vehicles, all designed by world-famous artists. They were exhibited at the BMW Project House in the north of Munich from 23rd May to 10th June 2005. Under the title "30 Years of BMW Art Car Collection", the exhibition provided information on the originators and gave a rare opportunity to see all the Art Cars gathered together at one venue. The concept for this exhibition was drawn up in collaboration with the IOS team.

By Gudrun Freier

In 1975, Alexander Calder had painted the BMW 3.0 CSL owned by his friend Hervé Poulain, auctioneer and racing driver at the Le Mans 24-hour race.

With powerful colours and flowing surfaces. Calder provided the link between art and motor sport – the idea of having a car designed by an artist was born. Artists have always been fascinated by cars. Artists working in all styles – from abstract to representational – have depicted the car in critical or heroic terms over more than 100 years of automobile history. BMW Art Cars inaugurated the automobile itself as a work of art.

BMW has been the focus of attention across the world with this unusual collection of cars for the past 30 years. A new art form connecting art and engineering was created. It's been seen at the Guggenheim Museums in New York and

The Art Cars by Andy Warhol (left) who painted the car with his own hands, Robert Rauschenberg (centre) and David Hockney (right).

Bilbao, in the Paris Louvre and in Sydney's Powerhouse Museum.

Art Cars have been created by Pop Art artists such as Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol, who was the first artist to paint the car himself when he painted the BMW M1 and found the car more successful than the work of art.

There have also been new styles and artists from other nationalities – Austrian Ernst Fuchs, Australians Michael Jagamara Nelson and Ken Done, and Japanese artist Matazo Kayama. Sports cars were no longer the only cars painted. Volume-production vehicles followed, such as the BMW 635 CSi by Robert Rauschenberg (1986) or the BMW Z1, which A. R. Penck designed as the first German artist in 1991. His figures and signs show "Art on art, art on technology – particularly on an object of sculpture." Penck regarded the artistic design as a creative engagement, similar to the development of an automobile.

Like other artists before him, Penck was inspired by the creativity of the engineers and designers of the Z1 to give full rein to his imagination. The challenge for the observer is to engage with Penck's symbolic language and decode signs that are actually simple symbols. Jenny Holzer, American concept artist, squared the circle in 1999 – a return to Le Mans, the place of origin for BMW Art Cars. She "describes" the 15th Art Car, a BMW V12 racing car for the BMW Art Car Collection. As a critical artist of the contemporary scene, Jenny Holzer uses her truisms at spectacular automobile races to provoke the world of motor sport with surprising messages like "MONOMANIA IS A PREREQUISITE OF SUCCESS".

Numerous employees at the BMW Group visited the BMW Art Car Collection presented exclusively for them to experience fascination and innovation. Art in the FIZ – art appreciated at first-hand.

Other cultural activities by the BMW Group: www.bmwgroup.com/kultur

Like all other Art Car artists, representative of Pop Art – Roy Lichtenstein – designed the BMW in his inimitable style.

Helmut Polensky – fast track career

Few drivers have enjoyed such a rapid rise to fame: winning their first race and walking off with the championship in their first season. But these early successes were followed by years of hard work and sacrifice before Helmut Polensky finally crowned his career with the European Championship title.

By Hagen Nyncke

Berlin-born Helmut Polensky knew from an early age that he was not interested in joining his father's building company. Perhaps the proximity of the family home in Zehlendorf to the famous Berlin Avus race track had something to do with it. Every time there was a race on, young Polensky would somehow manage to get lost on his way to school. As soon as he was old enough, he started riding motorbikes in long-distance and cross-country trials. Even the business training he underwent was with car firm Auto-Union – he was clearly determined to pursue a career that had something to do with cars.

He acquired his second-hand BMW 328 Roadster in the spring of 1939. It was such fun to drive that he decided to try his hand at four-wheeled racing as well and had it prepared for competitive driving by the customer service department at BMW's Munich plant. At the time, vast sums of money had been spent at BMW bringing three models belonging to the National Socialist Motoring Corps (NSKK) team up to scratch as well. So far, they

Polensky in his Monopoletta Formula 3 racing car.

had only competed abroad, but this year the idea was that they would win victory on behalf of the Nazi party on home territory. The 1939 racing season had seen the launch of the first German Sports Car Championship, and the prospect of winning the title of "Champion of Greater Germany" was to breathe new life into the German racing scene.

First race – first win

The Hamburg Stadtpark Race in May marked the first round of the new championship. Polensky recorded excellent times in practice, but they went largely unnoticed, as nobody had heard of the 23-year-old newcomer. The field included a number of experienced drivers, even though mishaps during training put two of the favourites out of the running: Dr Fritz Werneck and Fritz Huschke von Hanstein were forced to watch from the sidelines.

When the race started, Polensky initially took things easy, only really putting his foot down in the final laps and surprising the crowd by crossing the line in first place. The flame of his ambition had been lit, but unfortunately he missed out on the next major event – the Eifelrennen on the Nurburgring – after his engine seized up in training and the white sports car ended up flattening a number of small trees.

Polensky after his first victory in the BMW 328 at the 1939 Hamburg Stadtpark Race.

Left: With the first Neumaier BMW on the Grossglockner. His victory in the "Grosser Bergpreis" won him the newly created title of "Champion of Greater Germany".
Right: Neumaier's lightweight chassis design for the "Kurpfalz".

During practice for the "Rund um Schotten" race at Vogelsberg, Polensky's attention was drawn to the performance of one of the other cars, which was easily outperforming the standard BMW 328s. It was a special with a 328 engine belonging to Anton Neumaier, which not only drew the eyes of the crowd with its aesthetic bodywork but also displayed phenomenal roadholding qualities. Polensky wasted no time in persuading Neumaier to sell him the car and proceeded to clock up the fastest lap in the race. Unfortunately a ruptured petrol line forced him to retire, and his fiercest rival, Huschke von Hanstein, emerged victorious.

First season – first title

The next race consisted of a mountain climb instead of circuits of a conventional race track. The "Grosser Bergpreis von Deutschland" had already been held on the Grossglockner the previous year. It was a route that gave Neumaier's lightweight construction a distinct advantage over the conventional BMW 328s, and Polensky succeeded in leaving all the favourites behind, including the drivers from the NSKK team. The fact that the 1.5-litre class was also won in a Neumaier BMW – driven by Hermann Kathrein – must have caused some shaking of heads amongst the Munich engineers. Polensky was now heading the drivers' championship and he turned once again to Neumaier to build him another chassis with a streamlined body suitable for the newly built high-speed track at Hockenheim. However, the outbreak of war prevented the final race from being held, and Polensky became Germany's first sports car champion.

The following year, he paved the way for his later professional career by purchasing the "Kurpfalz" BMW dealership on Berlin's prestigious Kurfürstendamm avenue. However, by the end of the war, the investment turned out to have been a mistake. Just before Berlin was overrun by the Red Army, Polensky managed to escape to western Germany on a BMW R 75 motorcycle, with his future wife in the sidecar and as many of his possessions as he could fit into a trailer.

Later, in Hamburg, he became manager of a company specializing in cylinder grinding. His Neumaier chassis had survived the war hidden in a farmer's barn, and he was now able to fetch it across to the west and have a streamlined "Intertyp" body added. Dubbing the car the "Kurpfalz" in memory of his years in Berlin, he took part in the 1947 racing season, competing in the category for engines up to 2,000 cc. But after setting another new lap record in Schotten, one of his rear wheels disintegrated at full speed. Polensky was able to bring the car to a halt without losing control, but his hopes of victory had been dashed once again. After his beautiful racing car had let him down on several further occasions, he started looking around for another project.

An elegant sports car, but unsuccessful in races: the Neumaier BMW "Kurpfalz".

By now he was living in Karlsruhe, where he set up his own cylinder grinding business. Polensky had always admired the design of Auto-Union racing cars, and it comes as no surprise that he now decided to incorporate the principle of the rear engine (nowadays it would be called a mid-engine) into his own designs. His eyes were now firmly fixed on the Formula 2 category for cars up to 2,000 cc that had been newly created for the 1948 racing season. The power plant he opted for was the BMW 328 engine, and the car had a VW front axle and Mercedes rear axle mounted on his own tubular frame chassis. It had a monoposto body – which, combined with his surname, led to it being dubbed the "Monopol". After sorting out the usual teething troubles, Polensky succeeded in winning his first laurels in the Aachener Waldrennen in August 1948. The following weekend he once again clocked up the fastest lap at the Schotten circuit – before his engine gave up the ghost.

Goodbye to the Monopol

Polensky now returned to his original idea of developing a special body for the high-speed Hockenheim circuit. In spring 1949 the Monopol appeared with a new, fully streamlined look, but engine problems meant he was only able to make 5th place. Finally, in his fourth appearance at Schotten, he not only recorded the fastest lap but came first in the racing car class. In the races that followed, his performance was once again mediocre, and it became clear that the car urgently needed further work done on it. But there was simply no

money available. At the time, engine designer Richard Küchen junior from Ingolstadt was looking for a suitable chassis for his newly developed V8 engines, and Polensky had little compunction in parting with the Monopol.

For some time now he had been hatching a new plan. The launch of a low-cost class for small racing cars – and not just for young drivers – had resulted in a considerable revival of the stagnating German racing scene. BMW or Zündapp engines up 750 cc were readily available from old German army stocks, and when it came to the chassis, there were plenty of DIY enthusiasts as well as experienced engineers eager to have a go. Fred Eckhardt, an engineer from Neu-Isenburg, had already created three such vehicles. Under the names of "LTE Juwel" and "LTE Brillant", and driven by Ferdi Lehder, they had clocked up a number of outstanding successes.

In the Monopol during the Schotten race. Polensky recorded the fastest lap but had to retire with a damaged engine.

Unusual design: the BMW 328 engine in the rear of the Monopol.

Next attempt with the "Monopoletta"

Polensky bought the rights for the design from Eckhardt with the intention of developing a series of little racers with 500 cc BMW engines for the new Formula 3. A name was quickly found: taking up the designation of its bigger predecessor, the new car was called the "Monopoletta". The basic design of the vehicle, which was produced in Polensky's Karlsruhe workshop, remained largely unchanged. He recruited Hans Meier, brother of the famous Georg ("Schorsch") Meier, from Munich to look after the engine. The new, professionally designed chassis were created by Hans Klenk, who was later to become famous in the racing world. A special brochure was even printed.

However, in the 1950 season German Formula 3 drivers faced stiff opposition from the British, who were fielding fast Coopers powered by JAP engines, which usually put in a superior performance despite their simple construction. Even so, the three Monopolettas performed respectably and won first prize in the Freiburg Hill Climb and the Nurburgring Grand Prix. However, the motorcycle gearboxes they were using were not up to coping with any enhancement of engine output, and it soon became obvious that there was little scope for squeezing even higher speeds out of the engine. Financial constraints meant that plans to further develop the car or even go into series production were now dropped. The same year, Polensky made a brief guest appearance at the Targa Florio in Sicily, for which Eckhardt had designed a little sports car using a BMW 750 engine. Named the "Fidelitas", it didn't bring its driver much luck either and ended up with a broken drive shaft. That was the end of Polensky's relationship with BMW products.

Vespas and Porsches

He decided that from now on he would sell Vespas and – above all – Porsche products. But his passion for racing remained. Through his connection with Porsche he took part in a number of major endurance races like the Liège-Rome-Liège Rally, which he won twice. He was also to be seen several times driving a 550 Spyder in the Le Mans 24-hour race. But the high point of his career came in 1953, when, with his friend Walter Schlüter, he won the first European Rally Championship at the wheel of a Porsche.

On the 10th of October Helmut Polensky will be celebrating his 90th birthday. We send him our warmest congratulations.

The "Monopol" was given a fully streamlined body especially for the Hockenheim race. But engine problems meant it only came in fifth.

German Grand Prix (Nurbürgring): retired on the last lap.

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