



Check out the mod accouterments: 6800-rpm redline, 240-hp in-line six, sport seats from God's own hot rod.

Rants and Raves

The seat side bolsters are so aggressive that they hang me from my admittedly wide hips. I feel arthritic after a couple hundred miles.
—Winfield

Great style—it brought out the kids from local hangouts in Toronto and caused a 54-year-old woman at the farmer's market to gaze with envy.
—Adam

This is a great car if you're late. At 100 mph, it's just hitting its stride.
—Schroeder

I was pleasantly surprised by the M3's ride quality. Call it the 'Potty Minder'—it only becomes uncomfortable with a really full bladder.
—Markus

The tires meander singlemindedly over pavement irregularities. I want one in silver, anyhow.
—Griffin

As energetic as this powerplant is, I can't say that I miss the slightly hotter Euro version, especially since it would have boosted the price by at least \$10,000.
—Csere

This car changes your driving attitude. It makes you wait until the redline approaches to shift. It makes you concentrate. It forces you to enjoy yourself. Definitely not for control freaks. —Berg



MARTIN PADGETT



DICK KELLEY

and found Rice Motors and Marine of Billings, Montana. Within two hours, Rice had changed the oil and filter and adjusted the headlamps. The service cost \$57.68. The mechanics forgot, however, to replace the rear-axle fluid, as recommended in the owner handbook. Also, at our request, they changed the transmission fluid, a \$12 snake-oil cure for the fifth-gear whining we noticed.

The M3 returned not 100 miles later from an unlucky encounter with a pothole in Yellowstone National Park. "The impact was so horrible," Griffin wrote, "the emergency lights and flashers came on. Love those 40-series tires."

And thus began our sole grievance with the M3: with its satiny but unfortunately malleable alloy wheels.

The M3 hobbled back to town, where a tire dealer put the car on the rack for a good eyeballing. Amazingly, the tires checked out fine. But the inboard edges of the right wheels were dented. A quick call to Rice saved the day. They had an M3 on the lot and graciously sold us and mounted a right-side pair of wheels for \$1063.10. In the repair cost tally, by the way, we don't count damage caused by our accidents or other freak occurrences.

The M3 scooted onward and upward, at least by the odometer's reckoning. At 13,328 miles, the new front shroud arrived in Ann Arbor and was installed. Our owner warranty was voided in this case, BMW declared, since the four attaching bolts were still in place. Trash on the track or driver error could have caused the mishap, BMW claimed. Tester Markus protested this accusation and noted no detritus, but nonetheless we were out \$178.85. (Since