



At Fontana, the PTG M3 won GT, and the Southard BMW-Riley made its DP debut.

PTG bounces back, with a little help from Grand-Am

After a disastrous opening race at Daytona, things didn't get much better for Team PTG at Homestead. The team entered four M3s but could only manage a best of seventh for the #21 car of Bill Auberlen and Joey Hand.

After Homestead, Grand-Am officials—in a rare move—adjusted the rules to make the M3 more competitive with the Porsche GT3 Cup cars. They allowed the M3s to use a 3.4-liter engine instead of the 3.2-liter while adding 100 lbs. of penalty weight to the Porsches.

The adjustments were immediately evident. At California Speedway on April 2, Auberlen placed his car on pole and went on to win with Hand. Tom Milner Jr. set the fastest race lap with a 1:41.545, some .04 quicker than the fastest Porsche driven by factory driver Patrick Long. Since the Porsche teams are sure to complain, it will be interesting to see if Grand-Am makes further changes to compensate.

In Grand-Am's Daytona Prototype (DP) class, the BMW-powered cars have shown



PHOTOS COURTESY GRAND-AM

good speed but haven't been able to make it to the podium. At California Speedway, BMW-powered DPs ran in the lead for much of the race but could finish no higher than seventh (the Ten Motorsports Riley with a Dinan-built engine, which also posted the fastest lap). The new Southard Motorsports BMW Riley (with a PTG-built engine) and the Synergy Racing BMW Doran also looked strong, so it's only a matter of time before one of the BMW-powered DPs gets to the podium.

Brian Frisselle From Formula BMW to DP

Brian Frisselle is only 21 years old, but he's already racing in the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series' top class, teamed with older brother Burt in a Dinan BMW-powered Doran Daytona Prototype (DP).

Brian grew up in a racing family and attended his first racing school when he was only ten years old. Before coming to Grand-Am, he made his way through "training" series such as Skip Barber Dodge and Star Mazda, as well as a full Formula BMW season in 2004. This season, Frisselle will be racing fender-to-fender with renowned road racers

on the best tracks in North America. *Bimmer* talked with him about how it's going.

Bimmer: I heard that you learned to race by riding snowmobiles.

Frisselle: (My brother and I) didn't race them competitively, but we raced them against each other on logging roads. It was really good training, because we were going 100% all the time and were sideways a lot. Burt and I both took pretty quickly to car racing, so I really think the snowmobiling helped.

Bimmer: How do the Star Mazda and Formula BMW cars compare?

Frisselle: Those cars require very different driving styles, and it was great training to race them both because you drive them so differently. With the Star Mazda, you have to drive it pretty loose and sideways to be fast, where in the Formula BMW you don't have as much power so you have to flow as much speed as possible. With the monoshock and tires on the Formula BMW, you have to keep the car level and smooth so its pitch doesn't change much. For a while, the Formula BMW coaches were telling me I was driving the Formula BMW too much like the Mazda.



PHOTO COURTESY BMW MOTORSPORT

World Touring Car tech

In its final season before making way for the E90 3 Series, the E46 320i Touring Car hopes to add to its record of 36 European Touring Car Championship wins since 2001. This year, of course, the ETCC becomes the World Touring Car Championship (WTCC) as it becomes a truly global series, with races in Mexico and Turkey as well as Europe.

For 2005, the 2-liter straight-six built by BMW Motorsport for the WTCC 320i has been further developed with a new airbox. It now puts out 275 hp at 8,800 rpm while producing 170 lb-ft of torque at 7,000 rpm. Maximum engine speed is 9,000 rpm (as per WTCC rules) and the compression ratio is 11:1. The car uses 13-inch cast iron brake discs in front mated to 4-piston aluminum calipers, with 11-inch discs at the rear. The suspension doesn't use anything too exotic, but it does have a wider track with enhanced caster/camber adjustment and four-position adjustable dampers as well as larger anti-roll bars.

BMW Motorsport could use a sequential gearbox, but since



PHOTOS COURTESY WTCC

that choice would exact a 66-lb weight penalty the team uses a 5-speed manual, which keeps the car's weight to the minimum 3,054 lbs. (with driver). The transmission is a little different than stock, using a single-disc carbon fiber clutch and a quick-shift system with ignition suppression controlled by shifting force. The car also has a mechanical limited slip differential. As can be seen in the photo above, the 320i can also throw flame almost as well as its big brother, the V8 M3 GTR.

First win for M3 in Grand-Am Cup

Turner Motorsport scored the E46 M3's first win in Grand-Am Cup on March 12, when Bill Auberlen and Justin Marks drove to a GS class victory from pole at the Autodromo las Americas in Santo

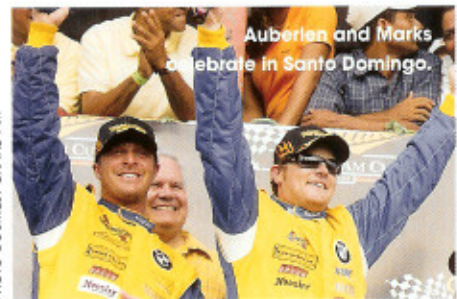


PHOTO COURTESY GRAND-AM

Domingo. The M3s continued to look strong at California Speedway, where the Anchor Racing car of Anders Hainer and Boris Said finished third.

"I'm so happy and proud to be part of a team that has made such tremendous strides in becoming more competitive," said Hainer after the race. "With some initial challenges on the set-up of the car, our team engineer, Nathan McBride, made the car handle very well on race day, so it was an absolute blast to drive!"

Grand-Am Cup's ST class sat out the Santo Domingo race but returned at California Speedway, where Turner Motorsport drivers Will Turner and Don Salama finished on the podium.

BMW's challenged in World Challenge

In the World Challenge Touring season opener at Sebring, six BMWs finished in the top ten. Bill Auberlen was the highest-placing BMW in second place, followed by Tecmark's Nic Jonsson in fourth. Both drivers are running limited programs this year, and both sat out the second round at St. Petersburg.

BimmerWorld Racing is no doubt one of the strongest BMW teams running the full season, and it showed its strength at St. Pete, where Matt Richmond finished fourth. New rules limit performance from the BMW 325i, and the car is not expected to be as competitive as it was last season against the Acuras and Mazdas.

Bimmer: How was the training you received in Formula BMW?

Frisselle: That was amazing. Formula BMW is far above any other series in that sense. The instructors are all top-notch, and it was great to be trained on the public relations side of the business, since most other series don't even attempt to do that.

Bimmer: Do you enjoy driving the Daytona Prototype (DP)?

Frisselle: I love it. It's a difficult car to drive and a real challenge, but I'm starting to feel like I'm comfortable with it and can get to the limit easily. I just can't wait until we have a race with no mechanical issues or incidents with other cars, so we can really show what

we've got. We've been running up front a lot, but something always seems to come up.

Bimmer: What makes the DP difficult to drive? Is it the lack of downforce?

Frisselle: It's the lack of downforce and also the weight. I'm used to racing cars that weigh much less, and the DP is almost double the weight of the Formula BMW. The power was pretty easy to adapt to, but the weight, especially in the braking zone where the car just feels like it doesn't want to stop, has been the most difficult thing to get used to.

I've had to make a lot of adjustments to my driving style from last year. For example, in Formula BMW you want to carry as much speed through the corner as possible, where

in the DP you just want to get it pointed and turned as quickly as possible so you can utilize the power.

Bimmer: What's it been like to go from racing in Formula BMW to racing in Grand-Am against guys like Scott Pruett, Andy Wallace and Max Angelelli?

Frisselle: If you forget about the names, you realize you're still dealing with the same things you dealt with in Formula BMW. But it's crazy to be out there and have my spotter tell me I'm coming up on one of those guys or they're coming up on me, because there are some really big names out there. But being able to run with them gives you a lot of confidence.