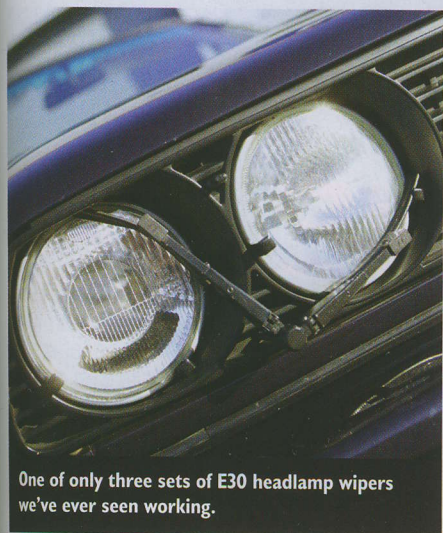




Car's original spec was massive and virtually the entire interior is covered in leather. Does anyone really need a leather-trimmed steering column?



One of only three sets of E30 headlamp wipers we've ever seen working.



Owner Edwin Tieben. "It had to be Macao Blue and it had to have leather."

it, the mileage has gone from around 60,000 miles to 100,000 – and none of that 'it needs a new timing chain' business either!

Edwin replaced the Bavaria C electronic gramophone with a Becker Mexico, a very expensive (in 1988) period radio cassette player which he rates as a better radio with JVC speakers – this is after all a bit of a cruising car no matter what engine it has. Against some advice, Edwin replaced the original Boge gas shocks with Bilstein Sport units although it retains the original springs – not for this one the ignominy of dragging its exhaust over speed humps. The result is better handling and a ride which is still pretty fair and doesn't increase the ever present scuttle shake – which is not bad on an E30 Convertible and less than the E36.

Talking of the exhaust, this one still has its original 1988 system which shows why BMW exhausts are expensive. How many systems would a 1988 Ford have eaten by now? "It's still good but I have carried out a couple or repairs so at some point I will replace the rear section," Edwin says.

Edwin's quest for perfection extends to the underbonnet too. He was surprised when upon ordering a new cam cover to replace the tired looking original, it came in bare alloy. No problem though as a can of Harley Davidson crackle black and some deft masking had it looking perfect. For what they cost, Edwin thought it mad not to replace the underbonnet plastic bottles as they won't be available forever.

A mate of mine has the most perfect factory finish and multiple concours-winning 1985 Escort RS Turbo (yep, the all white Series 1 hero chariot) and can't find a new coolant header tank for any amount of cash. If only he'd bought one 10 years ago...

Edwin's M3 Convertible is the best one I have ever seen. It's a stunning looking car but I'm still thinking it would be better with a steel roof but that's the purist in me I guess. As it is, the M3 Convertible is a great feelgood car in the same way a Lotus Elan (the FWD version thanks) is and on a perfect summer's evening when we photographed the car, just the thing.

Tech Spec

ENGINE

Standard 1988-spec S14 engine but with BMW upgraded ECU for 210 bhp

TRANSMISSION

Standard Getrag 265 five speed sport gearbox and 3.25 ratio limited slip diff

SUSPENSION

Standard suspension with Bilstein Sport dampers

BRAKES

Standard M3 ABS four wheel discs

WHEELS & TYRES

7.5x16 BBS split-rims with Bridgestone S02 225/45 tyres

BODY

Standard Macao Blue M3 Convertible with optional headlight wash wipe and rear wind deflector

INTERIOR

Full Lotus white leather including dash, steering wheel and column. Becker Mexico radio cassette with JVC speakers. Cruise control, trip computer, heated seats

