



In its element – a 2002 turbo charging a corner on full boost. The deep front spoiler and wheel arches presaged even bigger appendages as the seventies progressed

In June 1983 CLASSIC AND SPORTSCAR looked over the BMW 2002 range and remarked, 'arguably the most important historically – and certainly the most exciting – variant is the turbo... Although harder, and more expensive, to keep in top mechanical condition than the ordinary examples, the turbo is a fascinating machine.' Now we have had the chance to examine the pioneer of production turbocharging in Europe in some detail – and this 2002 emerges as a car of considerable charm for the collector. It can still be bought in reasonable condition, and provide a super car in the Lotus Cortina mould for £5000 or less. Yet durability may well provide a pleasant surprise, if the car is sensitively driven and conscientiously maintained.

Although the Americans showed the way in popularising turbocharging through Indianapolis races of the fifties, and the production Chevrolet Corvair Monza of the early sixties, BMW were not far behind. This was only logical when you recall the Bavarian expertise with high performance aero engines, where the turbocharger's performance at altitude made it a vital component in forties war planes.

However, it was a touring car war with some fleet privately-owned Porsche 911s in the 1968 European Touring Car Championship that led to the birth of the 1973 production 2002 turbo.

In 1968 BMW ran Kugelfischer mechanically injected 2002s, which weighed under 2000lbs and developed some 200bhp at 7500rpm with the aid of 11:1 compression. These 2002s, with their large wheelarch extensions and spiderweb pattern BBS wheels, were quite softly suspended by today's

Europe's first production turbo-car was BMW's 1973 hot rod 2002. Jeremy Walton describes the model and drives a pristine example of this prophetic machine

standards. Such saloons were only a step away from the road cars, in that they still had sufficient torque to be driven happily to a circuit and were originally road registered.

In the early and mid-season BMW picked up enough points with men like Dieter Quester (who won the 1983 European title for BMW after a season long fight with the TWR Jaguars) to pick up the class against the Porsches. But the winning margin was half a point and Porsches won the final three rounds...

So, for 1969, a secret weapon was needed in these freely-legislated Group 5 touring car events, if BMW were to beat the flat-six Porsches again. Through the 1968/69 winter the 1990cc sohc racing four was asked to cooperate with a single KKK turbocharger; as on the later road car, the unit was mounted to the right of the slant four (looking forward) and fed the Kugelfischer injection, via extensive tubing over the rocker cover. No inter-cooler was provided, but the compression was gradually reduced throughout the season and ever richer mixtures ensured that fuel consumption was horrific.

Placed in a sub-1900lbs racing 2002 with four wheel disc brakes and up to 10ins width of Dunlop racing rubber, the 2002 TIK (the K an unofficial

nickname for a *Kompressor* version of the TI 2002) performed spectacularly. The engine frequently expired, or at least its ancillaries did (such as the hastily fabricated high pressure fuel pump gears), but they stayed together long enough to give Quester four outright victories in 1969. BMW beat Porsche by five points in the class battle and Quester finished runner-up in the overall title hunt for drivers.

At the close of the season a change in FIA rules had ensured that neither Porsche nor BMW's factory cars would continue, although the 2002 itself was successfully campaigned by Alpina on BMW's behalf, along with the 1.6-litre 02, in carburetted and fuel injection form. The works also ran a 2002 rally team with varying degrees of success, but 16 valves and injection were the recipe, not turbocharging: Saab were later to run the first successful rally turbo.

The lessons of that short-lived turbo could not be forgotten. At 1.0 to 1.2 bar (14.23-17.07psi) boost, the tough four would deliver up to 280bhp at 7200rpm, with a flexibility and low noise level that was remarked upon by the drivers. Turning up the boost brought a maximum of 324bhp before the test room was assaulted by dissolving Munich metal-work and was produced by a team that included present World Championship-winning turbo BMW designer, Paul Rosche.

As is the habit of many manufacturers who want to see an old and faithful model retain some run-out sales respectability, BMW chose the 2002's last two production years for the ultimate derivative. They were not to know that the Arab-Israeli situation would literally blow up once more, leaving Europe

TURBO TRAIL