



WORDS DAVID MORLEY PHOTOS CRISTIAN BRUNELLI



# BLOWN M3

Bee-Em's feisty V8 coupe gets a \$40K blow-job

**Y**ou've got to wonder about a bloke who thinks: "Jeez, BMW's M3 is a bit gutless". But that's exactly what veteran racer Peter Fitzgerald said to himself.

Mind you, we should point out that there's not really anything Fitzzy hasn't done with a race car, nor should we forget that his own 335i road car has copped a serious torque upgrade as a showcase for his Melbourne-based Evolve Technik tuning business.

But even so, a V8 M3 being called out for being underdone in the gokies department?

Of course, if you've driven a current M3, you can a-l-m-o-s-t understand what Fitzzy's talking about. While the 4.0-litre V8 is smooth and flexible, it does need a few revs on board before it's really honking. Unlike its opposite number, the 6.2-litre Benz C83

AMG, the BMW's smaller donk, with its 6000rpm redline, needs more driver input to really boogie.

In any case, Fitzzy had customers with M3s who were, inevitably, looking for more. More came in the form of a G-Power supercharger and, when we say more, we're not talking about a smidge more.

Nope, this bugger now delivers a

## IT ALL BUT TEARS STRIPES OUT OF THE ROAD SURFACE

wallop that equates to 324kW at the wheels. Using one time-honoured formula, that should work out to about 432kW (or 590 old-fashioned horsepower) at the crank. Crikey.

Naturally, it's not as simple as bolting on the German-sourced centrifugal blower. There's also, in the case of this particular car, a Milltek Sport headers-to-tips

exhaust. And while there's a Stage 1 kit that liberates an extra 60kW, this one is a Stage 2 and adds 110kW by using a front-mounted intercooler, cold-air intake, carbon-fibre air-box and bigger injectors.

The final piece of the puzzle is a tune for the on-board brain, which is where the fine-tuning takes place and can either make or

break the conversion.

Believe it or not, G-Power also markets a Stage 3 kit based on the same blower. It adds even more boost but it really is questionable whether the chassis would have enough grip to make the most of any extra horsepower over what his car already has.

And just in case it's an M5 or

M6 filling the driveway at home, Evolve and G-Power can still help out. In fact, there are kits to take your V10 to anything up to 660kW and empty your wallet to the tune of \$100,000.

The Stage 2 M3 kit, meanwhile, is a bit more bank manager friendly at \$35,000, which, along with the M3's new sticker price, ramps your investment up to about \$200,000 (although you could always save a few bob, buy the four-door version and pretend it's a sensible car).

And while 200-large isn't pin money even these days, it's some kind of bargain for something with such explosive performance.

Unlike some aftermarket blower installs, this one doesn't exactly hide it's light under a bushel. From the moment your fire it up, there are clues that there's something extra going on. The thing idles at a stock-standard 780rpm, but it

sounds faster and more urgent than that. It's probably the new 'sorat but, even then, the idle feels a bit lopey, like the bugger's running bigger cams (it isn't).

Load the engine up and you don't get any blower belt whine, but you will hear a gusty exhalation whenever you back off down a hill or just to shift gears.

Speaking of which, the car Fitzzy supplied to us runs the conventional six-speed manual. It'd maybe be faster with the DCT clutchless 'box, but, as for the old theory of the auto being better by not letting the engine fall off boost, that just doesn't hold up here.

Why? Well, the torque curve produced by the blown V8 is so flat and so fat, there's really never a moment out of the grunt zone.

And don't go thinking that it's all bottom-end urge, either. Where a lot of blown engines simply run

out of compressor at higher revs, the G-Power M3 is still cranking hard – harder, if anything – as it gets spinning, and by 8000rpm, it's all but tearing stripes out of the road surface.

It's hard to believe, but the top-end rush is probably even more spectacular than the low-down stomp or the sheer spread of barbs. In fact, there's an argument that says the six-speeder is overkill, because this mutha would still be fast with a four- or even three-speed gearbox.

As it is, traction is the limiting factor, and the M3 will smoke its hides right through second and deep into third (you can forget about first gear altogether).

The issue is made worse by the throttle-by-wire set-up that, typically for the breed, offers a dull, wooden gas pedal that is impossible to

modulate intelligently. So a quick acceleration time requires the grippiest surface you can find and a decent serve of luck.

At least everything else from the gearshift to the clutch is on your side, so assuming that you can hook her up, you're looking at a 0-100km/h time in under 4.5 seconds and a standing quarter-mile in the mid- to low-12s.

And that folks, is serving it up to a whole raft of two-seater, no-luggage-space, wallet-crushing supercars.

The funny thing is that after driving the Evolve M3 for a couple of days, you start to think that maybe Fitzzy's original assessment of the standard car wasn't so outrageous after all.

Okay, 'gutless' is a strong word. But once you've sampled the blown G-Powered version, it's not going to be easy to go back.

## HOW MUCH?

Evolve Technik  
BMW E92 M3 coupe  
Factory 4  
27-29 Lexton Road  
Box Hill North, VIC 3129  
Phone 1300 980 898  
evolve-technik.com.au  
Options: \$40,890 (supplied/fitted)  
G-Power Stage 2 supercharger  
kit, including intake, air-to-  
air intercooler, air-box, inlet  
manifold, plumbing, fuel  
injectors, ECU tuning – \$35,000  
Evolve Technik [by Milltek]  
stainless-steel header-back  
exhaust system – \$5890

**SUPERCHARGER KIT** The G-Power Stage 2 includes a new intake manifold and air-to-air intercooler. But at \$35K, it ain't cheap



**EXHAUST** The Evolve Technik/Milltek exhaust is a full-length dual system from the headers back made from stainless steel



**PERFORMANCE** With roughly 430kW on tap, traction is marginal. We clocked 0-100km/h in 4.4sec and 12.4 (at 187km/h) for 0-400m

