

Leo's Z3 Corner

Episode 6 - Some Stuff You might choose to ignore...

But *I* couldn't!!

My ***gear shift knob*** started flying up with my hand occasionally on exuberant shifts from second to third! I must have pulled too hard! But it got worse and upon inspecting the knob I saw the plastic fastening was cracked and deteriorating. OK. Time to see whats out there and maybe do better.

I saw this in Turners web site

<https://www.turnermotorsport.com/p-20767-manual-bmw-shift-knob-m-logo-weighted-anatomic-5-speed-pattern/>

looked nice but NO improvement.

Then, in Amazon <amazing, right?> there's this nice shift ball which I got.

https://www.amazon.com/RYANSTAR-Shift-Adapter-Universal-Shifter/dp/B07Q8JLXBT/ref=sr_1_48?crd=3J7O22K4A0AFV&dchild=1&keywords=shifter+knobs&qid=1586486876&s=automotive&sprefix=shifter%2Cautomotive%2C218&sr=1-48

I liked that it was somewhat shorter than the original and was a better fit for my hand. I was able to screw it in but it wasn't my best work using a layer or two of wrapped packing tape to get the threads to bite on the shifter rod. It doesn't fly off and is definitely nicer for me to shift: I like that the transmission shifts so smoothly and, like the grips on my golf clubs, I like this shifter better than the original partially because its bigger!

BUT if I knew what I was doing, I would have found this place and really been able to secure the ball from turning. The great American Shifter Ball Company!!

<https://www.americanshifter.com/catalog/shift-knobs/bank-shot-billiard-shift-knobs/ASCSN030CW/ivory-billiard-cue-ball-custom-shift-knob>

They have individual metric adapters so check the shifter rod diameter and thread size to order the correct fit and lock the ball in place. AND some really interesting options for handles. Better and Nicer!!

So what else I couldn't ignore, was my ***radio!*** The volume knob became a no-show and I had to squeeze it so hard to get the sound up or down. No adaptive volume control in this Roadstar! Well, honestly, not that we listened to it much anyway with the singing coming from the engine bay on through the Magnaflo. But to adjust the volume at all was out of the question so what could I put in there instead?

The radio was nice in that it had a weather band, cassette player and ours had a 6 CD player in the trunk. So I decided that what I really needed was an aftermarket radio that could play one CD and have good AM/FM reception.

Simple is better in this case. That meant residing the 7 pounder in the trunk to the garage shelf!! Yeah, less weight! My mantra!! for one... AND

Crutchfield online <https://www.crutchfield.com/> has been a reliable supplier of aftermarket sound systems for automobiles for years. I found several units

that exactly fit our Z3's. There are many to choose

from. <https://www.crutchfield.com/car/outfitmycar/mycar.aspx>

This one was less than 70 bucks with so many features and easy installation with SOOO much better sound quality! Even has a remote and USB port.

Blows the original

away. https://www.crutchfield.com/p_130DS1200U/Pioneer-DEH-S1200UB.html. for two!

AND btw, I could never really hear my bass response (sub woofer) originally so I went into the Plastic box between the seats where they hide it and took out the useless mounting rig a ma roll and plastic mega phone tubes in my BMW ultimate engineered system. Then I used the speaker magnets to rest and hold them more sensibly inside the space. With the new radio I can really hear them working. The replacement prefixed equalizer function offers a Dynamic Mode. Push the button and you will hear just an amazing surround sound effect that is powerful and crisp even with the original speakers!!. NO, I don't use the remote but Sandra might!

So finally, THIS part is definitely for motor heads and Z machinists that want the complete driving experience when it come to the all important sports car's connection with zee road!

On other sports cars (Z4, Datsun 280Z, Capri, Mazda 3 hatch) I had, and even some sedans, the **steering wheel** was smaller than that one! The stock Beemer is 14.75" in diameter! A regular bus!!! That's 375 mm!!! So what to do..... NOT that I would ever try to convince you. So, you probably shouldn't do this, but....

Momo has made fine Italian crafted steering wheels since people started turning them, I think. Below is a 350 mm diameter three spoke suede wheel. At an inch smaller diameter, the sensitivity to steering inputs really jumps into my hands and I can still see the gauges well. However, you have to be crazy enough to give up the drivers air bag to do it!! This adaptation is usually reserved for track cars. In 1997, there were no controls **IN** the steering wheel, so the installation is fairly simple. With a little soldering and the right in-line resistor the dash light blanks the air bag warning light and the passenger side is still functional. Another excuse to practice safe enthusiastic driving! At the minute, the horn is a bit of a fabrication too but at least you can source a BMW horn button for your Momo wheel!

<https://www.turnermotorsport.com/p-1179-momo-steering-wheel-hub-adapter-for-e36-z3/>

<https://www.turnermotorsport.com/p-338958-momo-mod78-suede-steering-wheel/?pdk=Ag>

<https://www.ebay.com/itm/Horn-Button-BMW-Classic-Fits-RAID-SPARCO-MOMO-Energy-Sport-Steering-Wheel-/163296027903>

