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MB Classic: 280E (W114) vs E500 Limited (W124) vs E63 AMG (W211)[cawimmer430](#) submitted on 12/27/2006 [Official Bell & Ross Timestamp](#): 10:51 AMfrom: www.autospies.com**BOOST IT**[\[4\] user comments](#) | category: [Reviews](#)**Tags: MB Classic: 280E (W114) vs E500 Limited (W124) vs E63 AMG (W211)**

I subscribe to Mercedes-Benz CLASSIC, an inhouse printed magazine from Mercedes and they usually have some awesome reports about older Mercedes cars, trucks, buses and sometimes modern cars. This is an article I scanned from an older issue where they compared the W114 280E to the W124 E500 and the W221 E63 AMG.

Each car tested was or is the top model in their respective lineup. The 280E topped the W114/W115 E-Class range in the 1960s until 1975. The well-known E500 was the range-topping W124 E-Class and is a collectors item already. And we all know that the E63 AMG is the most powerful MB-produced E-Class. Together, these range topper produce 1,019-horsepower.

**280E, E500 and E63**

The 280E belongs to Thomas Meyer, a history professor from Karlsruhe. The 185-horsepower 280E was the most expensive and most powerful midsize Mercedes in the mid 1960s. Meyer's 280E is a 1972 model with a 4-speed manual transmission. Back in its day, the 280E was easily regarded as the perfect "understatement" car. Classy and elegant flowing lines coupled to the traditional conservative ideology of the firm characterized the W114. All W114/W115's look the same visually, hence, it is easy to confuse a run-of-the-mill 200D with the 280E: base model vs top model. Auto Motor und Sport in 1972 wrote about the W114/W115, "If you badly want prestige, then

I enter the spacious cockpit of the 280E and immediately find myself at home. The classical instruments are typical Mercedes from the era, yet easy to read and understand. The cloth seats are soft and comfy. The 6-cylinder engine, with its Bosch D-Jetronic fuel injection, runs smoothly, albeit a bit loud. I enjoy the eager nature of the

Thomas Meyer bought his 280E second hand with 164,000 km on the clock. The previous owner had ordered the car with a few useful options. Only when it came to the transmission did he save money. A shame. At high speed, the 4-speed 280E is very loud and the engine rev's over the 6,000 redline. A 5th gear with longer ratios would have been useful. Inbetween 4,000 and 6,000 RPM, the 280E feels the liveliest.

The 280E handles decently, but the traction qualities of the small 185 sized tires reach their limit early preventing

sporty driving. Often in curves, the driver will need to "steer" the car with braking and acceleration input. In short, the 280E is a wonderful cruiser, but nothing for the sporty-minded driver. The seats generally offer good side support, except when the car is driven in a sporty fashion.

And this is where the fun begins: the E500. Capable of being driven sporty on both Bundestrassen and the Autobahn, the E500 rocks to 100 km/h in 6.1 seconds and never seems to want to stop. The first curve with the 280E was something to get used to: not here, the E500 handles confidently and the car seems to be glued to the road. Should you speed up to fast, don't sweat it, the brakes are excellent and stop the car quickly to controllable speeds. At speeds in curves where the 280E was at its limit, the E500 is still capable of being driven through with ease and even higher speeds. The V8 engine of this car is a joy. With 470 Nm of torque on tap (almost double that of the 280E), the E500 is a rocket. Midrange acceleration is quick and energetic and we never felt the engine run out of steam.

In handling, there are tremendous differences between the 280E and E500. Mercedes joined forces with Porsche to create the car. Porsche's primary duty was to fine-tune the suspension - and they did a terrific job at it. The steering is uncannily precise for a W124 E-Class and the handling is a phenomenal mix between sports sedan and

Impressed with the E500, I enter the E63 AMG: the newest and most powerful E-Class from the house of Mercedes-Benz. The moment I enter the smooth cabin, I feel as if I am in a spaceship. The W211 interior has more buttons than the W114 and W124 I just drove. No wonder that the instruction manual has grown to 406 pages (compared to 68 pages for the 280E and 140 pages for the E500). I don't let this bother me and seat myself into the soft Nappa-Alcantara leather combo seats and turn on the engine via start-button. The light alloy V8 awakes with a ferocious growl. 6208cc, 514-horsepower @ 6,800 RPM make it the most powerful naturally aspirated V8 on the planet. I engage the 7-speed automatic into D and let her rip. The AMG delivers a lot of punch at any RPM, and the engine response is beautiful too. At 2,000 RPM, the engine already deliver 500 Nm of torque. At 7,200 RPM, the fun stops as the engine speed is limited here.

In the 280E I drove towards the first curve, in the E500 I flew towards the first curve: in the E63 AMG, the curve jumped in my face at lightning speed. Yes ladies and gentleman, that's how fast this car is. The brakes are excellent and powerful. Overtaking is not an issue with the car, it's got the power. Before the driver can even finish his thoughts about overtaking the slower car, it's already happened.

The handling is superb - and best of all, the driving comfort doesn't suffer at all. Comfortable? Check. Sporty? Oh yeah. Amazing considering that the suspension of the E63 AMG is softer than that of the E500 Limited, and yet it outhandles that car too.

Compared to the E280 and E500, the E63 AMG seems to come from another planet - no, not planet, galaxy. Maximum power, driving pleasure and handling packaged into an everyday car. And yet, it is just the most recent creation of what began in the 1960s as the 280E...

280E Technical Data

Engine: 2746cc inline-6

Power: 185-horsepower @ 6,000 RPM

Torque: 238 Nm @ 4,500 RPM

Transmission: 4-speed manual (optional 5-speed manual or 4-speed automatic)

0-100 km/h: 9.8 seconds

Top Speed: 200 km/h

Units Produced: 22,836

E500 Technical Data

Engine: 4973cc V8

Power: 320-horsepower @ 5,600 RPM

Torque: 470 Nm @ 3,900 RPM

Transmission: 4-speed automatic

0-100 km/h: 6.1 seconds

Top Speed: 250 km/h (limited)

Fuel Economy: 16.9 L / 100 km

Units Produced: 500

E63 AMG Technical Data

Engine: 6208cc V8

Power: 514-horsepower @ 6,800 RPM

Torque: 630 Nm @ 5,200 RPM

Transmission: 7-speed automatic

0-100 km/h: 4.5 seconds

Top Speed: 250 km/h (limited)

Fuel Economy: 14.3 L / 100 km

Units Produced: currently in production

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They just don't make Benz like they use to(280E and E500)!

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