

MOTORSPORT

REPORT



BMW Car Club
of America
Rocky Mountain Chapter



The official publication of the
Rocky Mountain Chapter BMW CCA
Winter 2016





WINTER 2016 – Volume 42 – No. 1

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GET OUT & DRIVE



Cover photo by: zonacars.top
Interior photo by: bmwon.com

LETTERS TO THE CLUB: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Did you take an exhilarating drive on a beautiful road? Did you attend a driving event that pushed your skills? What do you like most about the Club? What do you like least? Please write in and tell us – we want to know! Send letters and/or photos to the Rocky Mountain Chapter BMW CCA: msreditor@rmcbmwcca.org ■

RMC BMW CCA UPDATED BYLAWS

The RMC BMW CCA Bylaws were recently revised and adopted as of January 1, 2016. The updated bylaws document can be viewed on our website at:

<http://rmcbmwcca.org/chapter-info/chapter-bylaws/> ■



Photos provided by: Adrian Gonzalez

2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND UPDATES VISIT: <http://rmcbmwcca.org/events>

JANUARY

January 20 - Quarterly Board Meeting
Location TBA – 6:30-8:00 pm

January 23 - Ice Gymkhana
Georgetown Lake – 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

January 30 - Annual Winter Celebration
Johnny Martin's Car Central
Colorado Springs, CO
6:00-11:00 pm

Pre-Celebration Tech Session
Winslow BMW – 3:00 – 5:00 p

FEBRUARY

February 29 - Motorsport Report 2016
Spring Edition closing date for articles,
ads and letters

APRIL

April 13 - Quarterly Board Meeting
Location TBA – 6:30-8:00 pm

April 16 - Autocross Event #1
Front Range Airport

April 30 - Autocross School
Pikes Peak International Raceway

MAY

May 1 - Autocross Event #2
Pikes Peak International Raceway

May 21-22 - Spring Driving School
High Plains Raceway

JUNE

June 5 - 33rd Annual
Colorado Concours
Arapahoe Community College

June 11 - Autocross Event #3
Front Range Airport

JULY

July 23 - Autocross Event #4
Front Range Airport

July 30-31 - Annual Race Against
Kids' Cancer
High Plains Raceway

AUGUST

August 6 - Autocross Event #5
Winter Park, CO

August 10 - Quarterly Board Meeting
Location TBA – 6:30-8:00 pm

August 12-15 - Drive4Corners
Pagosa Springs, CO

August 18-21 - Rolex Monterey
Motorsports Reunion
Monterey, CA

August 23-28 - Oktoberfest,
100 Years of BMW (National)
Monterey, CA

August 27 - Autocross Event #6
Pikes Peak International Raceway

SEPTEMBER

September 10 - Fall Driving School
Pueblo Motorsports Park

September 17 - Autocross Event #7
Front Range Airport

OCTOBER

October 9 - Autocross Banquet
Location/Time TBA

NOVEMBER

November 12 - Quarterly Board
Meeting/2017 Planning Meeting
Location/Time TBA



Photo by: bmwblog.com

2016 ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER BMW CCA'S ANNUAL WINTER CELEBRATION EVENT

SPONSORED BY WINSLOW BMW

HOSTED BY JOHNNY MARTIN'S CAR CENTRAL
SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2016 FROM 6:00 – 11:00 P.M.

THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2016 AT 5:00 P.M.

Join us at one of the hottest scenes in downtown Colorado Springs for buffet-style contemporary cuisine, libations, and an extraordinary experience!

- When:** Saturday, January 30th, 2016 from 6:00 – 11:00 p.m.
- Where:** Johnny Martin's Car Central
1 S Nevada Avenue, #110 Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Phone: (719) 999-5996
- Cost:** \$35.00 per person and includes appetizers, dinner (various food stations), one drink ticket, dessert, and time on the racing simulator

Registration for the 2016 Annual Winter Celebration Event is available through our website: www.rmcbmwcca.org

Featured events include:

- Racing competitions using state-of-the-art CXC Motion Pro II Racing Simulators with prizes for the top three winners!
- A 7,500 square-foot showroom filled with four BMWs owned by RMC Members, along with 3 new BMWs from our sponsor, Winslow BMW!

In addition, **Winslow BMW** will be holding a tech session featuring an M3 prior to the Winter Celebration event on January 30th, 2016 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. located at Winslow BMW (5845 N. Nevada Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80918 • (877) 461-6421). If interested, please be sure to sign up for this tech session when registering for the Winter Celebration event.

For those wanting to make the event a weekend getaway, special hotel rates can be found at: The Mining Exchange, A Wyndham Grand Hotel (8 S. Nevada Ave. Colorado Springs, CO 80903 • (719) 323-2030).

RMC BMW CCA members need to call the hotel number directly and mention that they are RMC members. Upon check-in, please provide them your BMW membership card. The Mining Exchange is conveniently located across the street from Johnny Martin's Car Central

For those not staying overnight, multi-leveled covered parking is available across the street from Johnny Martin's Car Central. Food Bank of the Rockies is our charity for the evening. We ask that each member bring one non-perishable food item for donation.

Hope to see you there! ■



Winslow BMW
of Colorado Springs



JOHNNY MARTIN'S
CAR CENTRAL





BELIEVE MY WORDS: PUTTING HIS FINGER ON IT

BY: ANDREW JORDAN

Back in February 2008, in my column, Believe My Words, I wrote an article entitled, "Putting My Finger on It." It was about the origins of 'The Finger'. It started with the English battle against the French at Agincourt in 1415 and ended with my index finger, heavily bandaged, waiving at other motorists. Well, here is another story about 'The Finger', but this time it was not my finger. It was someone else's finger

Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing held an event at High Plains Raceway at the beginning of October of this year. It was not a well-attended event, but a fun event all the same. Somehow I found someone to race with each and every time I went on track. The other, faster BMW 2002s were not there. I was the only one. I managed to stay ahead of a couple of Alfas, a Porsche, a Mustang, and a few other cars. We ran the north loop because there were not enough corner workers to monitor the full course. Danny's Lesson, turn seven, and the blind, off-camber turn eight were omitted. We ran from the end of the main straightaway straight past turn eight into turns nine and ten. Running this configuration means you are a lot faster into the approach of nine and ten. After gaining confidence, I worked out that I could run this section of the track flat out in my little two liter racecar. OK, maybe just a small lift into the entry to turn nine, and then much harder than usual braking into turn ten. I was racing with Jeff Payne in his muscle car, a Pontiac Firebird. He would run away from me down the straightaway, but I would catch up with him between turn ten and eleven. Jeff and I take different lines through turn eleven. This is based on a heavy, five-liter car compared to a much lighter two-liter car. At the exit apex of turn eleven, I found that I actually had to lift slightly so as not to hit the back of the Pontiac. This scenario continued the entire twenty-minute race. I never passed Jeff, but we had a lot of fun. He beat me by about three car lengths at the finish line.

After the race he came running over to me. I was a bit concerned at first, because at Hastings, Nebraska I hit Jeff in the final turn and I was suspended for one race. However, the smile on his face said it all. No need to worry.

"That was a lot of fun," we both agreed.

"I could catch you through nine, ten and eleven," I said, "but then up the hill and on the back straight you just run away from me."

"You must have big attachments to run down the hill like that," he said. "I have to brake at each corner, but you don't, do you?"

"No. These BMWs have great cornering abilities. And my car is much lighter than yours."

The next race, Jeff changed the tires on his Pontiac and simply ran away from me. I wondered why I was slower. I was not. He was just faster.

One of the female RMVR Porsche drivers once asked me, “Andrew, where on this track do you like to pass another car?” I replied, “Wherever I catch them.”

“How about the Corkscrew? Will you pass there?”

“If that is where I catch someone, sure I would, if I can. But coming up the Stairway to Heaven, I am normally a bit behind when approaching the Corkscrew,” I proclaimed.

On Sunday, we had a “fun” race. This means that the starting grid is all mixed up. Normally the faster cars start at the front, and the slower cars at the back. In a fun race, you can have faster and slower cars in front of you, and also behind you. You have to be cautious when moving out of line at the start, because a really fast car that started behind you could already be occupying the real estate that you are moving into. I must admit that I was a bit overconfident at the start of the fun race. This was probably due to the earlier successes of Saturday’s racing. I was assigned spot number seven on pit and grid. This was about mid pack; a mix of cars in front and the same behind me. Bill Miller, in his beautiful Hertz Mustang, had the pole position. Everyone is careful next to Bill because his car is irreplaceable; no one wants to touch Bill’s Mustang. The number nine Corvette was positioned alongside of the Mustang.

The green flag waived for the start of the race. I was foot flat on the gas. After a quick glance in my mirrors, I moved to the center of the track. The cars in front of me hesitated. I ran between four of them before reaching turn one. At turn one, the front of my BMW 2002 was level with Bill Miller in the Mustang’s rear, and also level with the rear of the Corvette. I passed them both in turn one. There was at least two inches between my side mirror and the Mustang. And it was the same with the Corvette on my right side. I have raced with Bill Miller many times. I was counting on him taking a cautious line out of turn one. And he did. I was in front of the pack going into turn two. I knew I could take the entire corner to myself, so I did just that. The Corvette was hounding my tail through the kink. After the kink, there is the long back straightaway. I heard the roar from the Corvette. My two liters was no match for his five liters. It was like farting against thunder; no one hears you.

I looked to my right as the Corvette sailed past me down the straightaway. To my bewilderment, he gave me the finger. Yes, that middle, index finger; the same one I wrote about years ago. The message was clear, “Go forth and multiply!” I thought, in the heat of the race, “Hell, I must have cut him off somewhere. But where?” Then I realized that I had not done anything of the sort. I had made a good clean pass on him through turns one and two. He was simply mad that my little two liter car had passed his five liters. I chuckled to myself for the entire duration of the race. It was the most beautiful, gloved finger that anyone had ever waived in my direction. I can vividly recall the dark blue and white leather of the glove and finger.



Towards the end of the straightaway, Jeff Payne in his Firebird also passed me. He was far more polite about it. He is a true gentleman and gave me plenty of room.

I love racing. And the occasional finger tells me that I am still, at my age, doing OK. ■

TIRE RACK STREET SURVIVAL SCHOOL COLORADO STATE PATROL TRACK

BY: MIKE ROSEN AND DOUG BARTLETT



We held the first ever Tire Rack Street Survival School at the Colorado State Patrol Track on Saturday, August 29th, 2015. The event and the location could not have worked out better. Because we set up the course on Friday evening, Saturday registration went very smoothly. We found ourselves ahead of schedule and were able to give the teens twice the planned drive time on the course.

With access to 1.4 miles of pavement, we were able to offer an emergency lane change, multiple slaloms, a skid pad covered in cracked corn, a reverse exercise and multiple braking exercises. The Pleasant View Fire Department generously donated a fire truck to keep one of the braking exercises wet all day.

Thanks to a great volunteer effort from both the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the BMW Club and the Rocky Mountain Porsche Club, we had more staff than students. Each of the 30 students had their own in-car coach for the day.

During the lunch break, we had two great activities for the students. First, we blew up an air bag to demonstrate how dangerous it can be to not properly place your hands on the wheel. Then we used the Pleasant View Fire Department's truck to give a demonstration on blind spots behind and next to large trucks.

After lunch and a second classroom, the students headed back out on the track with their coaches for the second driving session. The students found that the exercises had been modified during the lunch break to increase the challenge for the now more skilled drivers.

Near the end of the day, the students got one last time to drive the course, but this time the coaches were replaced with the students' parents. The students got to show mom or dad everything they'd learned.

The day ended with graduation and shaved ice for everyone!

On the way home, at least one student remarked to her father (me) that, in addition to having a blast, she learned a very important lesson. I asked what that was and she said, "When I play lacrosse I only think about lacrosse. When I drove before today I thought about all kinds of stuff. From now on, I will only try to think about driving when I'm behind the wheel."

It doesn't get better than that! ■

Photo provided by: Doug Bartlett

RIDES, RESEARCH AND THE PURSUIT OF REMISSION

Last August, Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing (RMVR) held its 5th Annual Race Against Kids' Cancer at High Plains Raceway to help raise money for The Morgan Adams Foundation, a local organization that helps fund pediatric cancer research in Colorado and abroad. Several Rocky Mountain Chapter BMW CCA elite instructors and A-group drivers were invited to participate in this charity event, giving lunch rides in exchange for donations. An astounding \$12,000 was raised for The Foundation from the rides alone.

In 2016, the RMC BMW CCA would once again like to team up with RMVR and The Morgan Adams Foundation at the upcoming Race Against Kids' Cancer on July 30 – 31st at High Plains Raceway. In addition to lunch rides by RMC BMW CCA and RMVR's finest, Mr. Ross Bentley will be present to give instruction and lap rides for donations.

The RMVR Race Against Kids' Cancer charity event is a wonderful opportunity for members and their families to experience an exhilarating day at the track, as well as raise money for a great cause!

For more information, please visit <http://rmvr.com/2016-event-schedule/> ■




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CARS & COFFEE (AND YOUTH)

BY: ADRIAN GONZALEZ

It doesn't take much to make you feel hopeless as a car guy or gal these days. I don't think I'm exaggerating when I say that not a day goes by without my palm meeting my face after witnessing some sort of vehicular disappointment. Whether it's on the internet or on the corner of 6th & Speer, I've often found myself wondering if the future of car culture is on the fritz, and sometimes it really feels that way.

Such was the mood right before the moment I stepped into the Cars & Coffee event in Lafayette early November. My breath had been wasted on a futile argument about the importance of motorsports with a non-believer the night before, an argument that sucked all the hope and 10W-30 right out of me. So I dragged myself to Cars & Coffee that chilly morning, espresso-clad and traditional hangover ever-present, hoping to catch a few cool rides and possibly rescue that warm, fuzzy feeling I get whenever I smell burning rubber or the hundredth time I watch the M2 launch video. I caught a little bit of that feeling and an added bonus that day.

It was an hour into walking around the lot, having had the mandatory conversations with the Corvette fanatics and their V-TEC counterparts, when I noticed something that caught my car-loving eye. Two young kids walked right in front of me as I was kneeling to get a shot of a Martini Racing Porsche, one of them exuberantly telling the other to come see the new Ferrari F12 on the other side of the lot, as if he had just found a bottomless barrel of Fruity Pebbles. I don't have any kids, but I assume that's what their little hearts yearn for. I would normally have paused to count to ten, taken the shot again, and gone on with my day without a care for these little monsters. I don't know what was in that coffee but this suddenly gave me an epiphany. As I walked around the gathering, I noticed more and more kids perusing the eclectic collection of cars with an energy us "grown-ups" only feel when HR approves our vacation dates or Netflix announces a new season of House of Cards. They were genuinely excited! Genuinely excited about cars!

One can argue that all of us attending these gatherings are giant children of different ages and sizes, but something happens to us through the years as we fill our brains with Road & Track test numbers and saturate our biases with the harmonious rhythm of whatever car blog sounds good that month. You know that guy in the forums who has driven nothing but a Toyota Camry for the last two presidencies, but will incessantly "school" people about the greatness of modern Ferraris because he's read every article and blog that supports that sentiment? Surely a person that still harbors some sort of passion for the automotive industry but for reasons neither he or I could articulate. The point is that for every one of those people, there are kids out there innocently excited about "cool cars." Their little minds not yet clouded by numbers or opinions on the body roll on the new sinister-looking Miata.

Note to self: if ever that bleak feeling about car culture returns, remember that there is a kid out there with some sort of hypercar poster in his room, waiting for dad to take them to the next car show. Leave it to the youth to fill me with rage and hope all at once. ■



BMW CCA FOUNDATION BUY A BRICK CAMPAIGN

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Built on a firm foundation—the BMW Car Club of America Foundation- our vision is clear: to be a living repository of BMW information and benefit the motoring community. Hence three ambitious initiatives: Tire Rack Street Survival® teen driver safety program; The Library, Archive & Museum Program; and The Conservation and Preservation Program.

“The Ultimate Driving Community” Capital Campaign reflects the essence and energy that motivate our community, as well as a shared sense of pride in knowing what we can accomplish—together.

Please contact Andrea Galehouse at (864) 329-1919 or email andrea.galehouse@bmwccaafoundation.org with any questions. ■

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If you've ever read the fine print at the bottom of our ads you've probably noticed that Bimmer Haus has won a **Gold Star Award** from the Denver/Boulder Better Business Bureau every year since we opened... and we just won another one – our *twelfth* in a row – in addition to once again being awarded the BBB's highest possible rating of **A+**!

But what is a **Gold Star Award** and what does winning one really mean?

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TOUCHING LIMITS

BY: MARK LEGG



PART ONE OF THREE:

I recently watched the Karate Kid this week so forgive me for dropping Mr. Miyagi quotes and a few others during this piece. So with that disclaimer out of the way, here's the first drop.

“First learn stand, then learn fly. Nature rule, Daniel-san, not mine.” –Mr. Miyagi

There's a saying, “Better to be lucky than good.” I think we'd all prefer to be both lucky and good. There's a theory about creating luck. In fact, there's a whole field of study dedicated to the Theory of Luck. Maybe we'll just attribute this one to good Karma or, it pays to have good friends.

One day my wife, who by day is a professional cyclist with Trek Bikes, received a call from a good friend of ours who offered up his beautiful Estoril Blue 1999 BMW e36 M3 to drive at Pueblo Motorsports Park with the Rocky Mountain BMW HPDE School. We are both avid Formula 1 fans and would often get together on weekends to watch the race over bottles of wine and potluck dinner. Somehow during the evening we all got to see some of the racing, but the love of cars, wine, food, dogs and banter kept us busy during the broadcast. I'm also a fan of V8 Supercars from Down Under and the Continental Tire series. We know one of the drivers who is one of the few women in motorsport racing cars at the higher levels in the sport, Ashley Friedberg. Ashley races a BMW for Fall Line Motorsports with Trent Hindman. Ashley is a very talented driver and a very nice person, and she also happens to race cyclocross during the fall as part of her training for motorsport, although I suspect it's more for the love of racing cyclocross than “training for racing cars.” I'll explain cyclocross shortly. The offer came up after our friend with the e36 M3 had participated in a HPDE school with the club and had a great time. It didn't take much thought to jump at the offer.

Turns out, we were in for a fantastic experience that would shape the way my wife would race her bicycle and affect our bike coaching and cyclocross clinics in the future.

My wife, Katie Compton, races for Trek Bikes. She's the current US National Cyclocross Champion and she's been one for quite a few years. Since 2004, Katie has won every US Championship held and has won medals at the Cyclocross World Championships on four occasions. Many of them, as we would later learn, were helped in part by our driving school (HPDE) and autocross experiences. In the world of bicycle racing, she's bit of a legend with a knack for going really fast downhill. We both travel around the country and to Europe for bicycle racing every year, mostly from September to early February. Cyclocross is a little difficult to explain to the uninitiated, so bear with me. It's not your typical bike race. The bikes look from a distance like road bikes, but up close they have slightly knobby tires with 33 mm maximum width to limit traction. The courses are a little like a cross-country running course, where they travel in a loop on varied terrain. They typically have around ten percent pavement and ninety percent off-road. Off-road can be anything from grass, dirt, mud, sand, snow and ice. It's a fall/winter sport which means we're faced with those beautiful fall days we have here in Colorado

Photos provided by: Mark Legg



to cold, wintery, snowy conditions here in Colorado, Wisconsin, The Czech Republic, France, The Netherlands and Belgium until we finish up the season with the World Championships on Super Bowl weekend. That's usually the last weekend in January or the first weekend in February. Historically it's a European sport with the rest of the competition here in the US, so we travel back and forth to Europe four or five times a season. One trick we picked up from Formula 1 drivers is to adapt to the time zone early by changing our sleep times, which for us means waking up very early and going to bed very early. During the winter, once we're in full adaptation period, it's in bed by 5 p.m. and up at 2 a.m. This decreases our time zone adaptation from eight hours to four hours, which if you want your body to perform at its best with a clear head, this makes things significantly easier. Fortunately for us, the internet or reading books in the middle of the night allows us to stay warm and occupied in the small hours. Like racing cars, or simply driving cars fast, the dynamics of racing cyclocross are closely related. Brake points, braking under varied conditions that affect your braking points depending on speed and feel, corner apexing, corner exit speed, eyes up, changing track conditions, and don't forget to focus on your breathing, are all components of racing bikes well. Naturally, we took to driving cars with the same basic approach which gave us a solid advantage. We both coach cyclists, although Katie has backed away from full-time coaching to focus on her cycling career over the past couple years. Fortunately for us, the principles of driving and riding bikes relate very closely.

Here's the fun part with cars: you don't need to worry about your limited VO2 Max (the maximum rate of oxygen consumption as measured during exercise and is an important determinant of their endurance capacity) or your sprint finish in order to drive a car well and have an incredible amount of fun and satisfaction doing it.

Before taking to the track, we signed up for a car control clinic run by the Club. We entered the clinic with our friends' e36 M3; yes, we are lucky to have great friends. The car control clinic was broken into small groups with each of us running through the various drills. I suspect most of you have experienced this a long time ago. If you recall, the feelings during these clinics were intense. Fortunately for us, the learning curve was a comfortable one that allowed us to gain an early understanding of the dynamics of the M3. One of the great aspects of the clinic is how we're able to push out of our comfort zones and even push beyond our limited talent level in a safe environment. A simple spin, which can be an emotionally intense moment, gives us an understanding of pushing

the car beyond our skill level without harm to us, the car, or others. We and the car finished up none the worse for wear and big smiles on our faces as we headed home looking forward to the driving school. The clinic instructors were patient and communicated really well. Fortunately for us, many of the tasks weren't too different from the exercises we give when presenting a cyclocross technique clinic. It goes without saying, there's a bit of competition between Katie and myself both on and off the bike. We're both similarly as strong on the bike, although Katie's skills are better. And of course, much to her delight, she drove the slalom faster but I got her back in the Figure Eight drill. Like many guys, my steering input was too aggressive along with my right foot input, which will take some time to work through. Katie's finesse and sense of balance allowed her to drive the car a little faster than me. And that's an interesting aspect of driving cars well. Sex doesn't necessarily enter into driving a car well. Men may be more inclined to take risks or over-drive the car while women may be more methodical in their learning curve. Overall, strength doesn't limit a driver, male or female. In fact, being a woman is, in my view as a cycling coach, an advantage. I think more than a few driving instructors will find the limitations are still sex-orientated, but not due to any inherent advantage. More of a lead-footedness and overconfidence may be the leading limitation.

There's a saying in cyclocross racing. "Smooth is fast." Sound familiar? It applies broadly across motorsports and bicycle racing universally. It would take me a couple years to really develop the feel for this skill.

We rolled up to the 2006 Spring Driving School with a mix of excitement and "what the hell did we get ourselves into?" Fortunately for us, the club is a welcoming environment. It didn't take long until we were explaining to a few people that the car wasn't ours. There were a lot of, "Wow, you have very nice friends" responses. We don't recall who we were working with during this first HPDE, but we had an incredible day lapping Pueblo Motorsports Park. The track-day buzz lasted for the next couple weeks; we both knew this was something we wanted more of and soon. HPDE stimulated our minds and bodies with that hair-on-fire excitement with, "How do we get better at this?" Take for example skateboarding or telemark skiing. Those are activities that have steep learning curves and a requirement of a lot of natural ability and an athletic background to learn without hurting yourself too often. It's a steep and often painful learning curve. Fortunately, driving your car at the track well while taking small incremental learning advances isn't so daunting and there's a lot less bruises.



Riding on a driving school high, we needed more time in the car. We both accepted that our learning path was significant but achievable because driving cars well on track is about small details, like learning how the track affects tire pressures and how those tire pressures affect tire traction. For bike riders and in particular, cyclocross racers, the discussion is always about tire pressures. It's been the running joke when Katie is giving a talk about cyclocross racing, the talk invariably always comes back to tire pressures over and over again. Katie and one of the most famous male cyclocross riders of all time who is a Belgian named Sven Nys, are both sponsored by the American bike company, Trek Bikes. Last year, we were in Milton Keynes, an odd English town that was designed in the 1960s to be a pre-planned living community. Compared to the natural development of villages in England, Milton Keynes was designed in a one-kilometer grid pattern as opposed to the conventional radial pattern found in older towns. Turns out, the reasoning behind the one-kilometer blocks was that they were designed so the locals would always be within close proximity to a bus stop. 1960s Great Britain was quite different from here in the United States where the cars were getting bigger along with the highways. If you've ever visited the UK, you'll understand how smaller cars would suit the local roads. Last year I drove a Mercedes Sprinter van, one of the largest they produce in England, to Milton Keynes. It was a tricky drive until we got into Milton Keynes. Wider roads and grid pattern road made it significantly easier to drive the Sprinter van around while looking for a good Curry shop. Anyway, I've strayed a little offline, but you'll see how we relate to how the car was reacting based off our experiences with our own world of cyclocross, where traction is heavily dependent on tire traction.

For the Cyclocross World Cup in Milton Keynes last year, Katie raced on 14 psi in her tires. If you've ever ridden a bicycle, you'll understand this is an incredibly low tire pressure.

Having the correct tires to run these tire pressures is what allowed Katie to race a tire pressure so low. How this relates to your car is to understand what equipment you're driving and learn to understand how this equipment feels when you exert a new force on the car. Take something you can relate to, understand how differing environmental stressors affect a change that you now feel. I've gotten a little tire-focused here, as they are your only connection from the car to the road. The biggest focus for the day is learning a great deal about apexing corners, turn in points, track-out points, which are wonderful when you get them right and awkward when they aren't performed well. Focusing on your apexes is a big part of HPDE Driving Schools. The other part that was very helpful was the classroom sessions between driving sessions. Learning from an instructor in a small class setting makes all the information about driving click when you get to take that knowledge back on track. The classroom and track sessions had made a huge difference in how Katie would race her bike. ■



PHILES' FORUM

BY: VIC LUCARIELLO



Hello, Bimmerphiles! This time out we return to the original idea of *Philes' Forum* and address a question posed by one of our members. Bimmerphile Peter Baltazidiz contacted me regarding one of my favorite topics (you guessed it!): Brake fluid replacement.

The reasons for periodic brake fluid replacement have been addressed in this space many times, perhaps *ad nauseam* for regular readers. So, suffice it to say that the fluid's performance, both in resisting boiling during hard braking and in preventing corrosion of expensive brake components, degrades with time and use. Some vehicle manufacturers recommend periodic brake fluid replacements, while others, inexplicably, do not. BMW's current recommendation is that the fluid be replaced every two years. BMW's previous recommendation (prior to their including periodic maintenance in the cost of the vehicle) was a yearly fluid flush. My own opinion, based upon extensive boiling point testing of in-use brake fluid on Bimmers and other marques, is that a high-quality fluid such as Ate Type 200 can be left in street service for two years. I do not have sufficient data on "parts store" brake fluid to make a recommendation.

Peter asks, "I was thinking of replacing (my brake fluid). I got myself a Motive (Products) power bleeder. Can you give any tips for someone flushing brake fluid for the first time? For example, the order of brakes to bleed (right rear first, then left rear, then right front?). Anything else? My car is a 2006 e90 330i."

Peter certainly took the correct first step by procuring a power bleeder. These are available in two general types: pressure and vacuum. The Motive is a pressure type, where pressurized fluid is introduced to the brake master cylinder reservoir via a custom adapter cap from the bleeder's reservoir. The pressure-type forces fresh fluid through the system when caliper and clutch-cylinder bleeders are opened. The vacuum type applies suction to the bleeder screws, either via a hand pump or a shop air-powered venturi, to withdraw fluid. While both types are effective and each has its proponents, I prefer the pressure type.

A disadvantage of the vacuum-type bleeder is that one must be careful not to suck all the fluid from the master cylinder reservoir and introduce air into the system. Once air gets into the ABS/DSC module, you may need a specialized scanner (NOT a DIY-type code reader) to remove it! Introducing air into the system is less likely with a pressure-type bleeder, as it has its own reservoir of brake fluid which supplies the master cylinder. If you let the pressure bleeder run dry and get air in your system – shame on you. It happens, though, so be careful.

So, Peter, here are some tips for flushing brake fluid:

- Unless you are a miniature masochistic ambidextrous contortionist, you will need to raise the car to gain access to the caliper and clutch bleeder screws. Ensure the car is securely and safely supported on jack stands before you venture underneath. While it is not necessary to remove the wheels, this is a good time to do so and inspect your brake pad thickness.
- Use the correct spec fluid for your vehicle. For all current and recent Bimmers, a DOT (U.S. Department of Transportation) 4 low-viscosity fluid is specified. Pentosin DOT 4 LV is an example of a high-quality, low-viscosity brake fluid. Of course, procuring brake fluid at your BMW dealer is another option. The Ate Type 200 mentioned above is not a low-viscosity fluid. Ate SL.6 DOT 4, another high-quality fluid, is. Ate SL DOT 4 is not. Yes, the nomenclature is confusing.

- Ensure that any old fluid remaining in your pressure bleeder is removed before you pour in the new fluid.
- Use at least a liter (about a quart) of new brake fluid from a sealed container.
- Keep in mind that brake fluid is an *excellent, fast acting* paint remover.
- Keep in mind that it burns like Hades if it gets in your eyes, so be sure to wear eye protection. TRUST ME ON THIS ONE!
- Use a catch bottle to capture fluid expelled from the bleeder screws. Many times when helping folks at the track, we have used a ubiquitous water bottle and a scrounged length of hose.
- Clean thoroughly your master cylinder reservoir cap and reservoir top prior to removing the cap.
- I like to remove the old fluid from the master cylinder reservoir and refill it with fresh fluid prior to connecting the pressure bleeder. You can remove the old fluid with a suction gun such as a Phoenix Injector or a large medical syringe. A turkey baster is a rather inelegant, rather messy alternative. If you borrow your spouse's, ahhh...don't return it.
- When you pressurize the master cylinder reservoir with the pressure bleeder, do not exceed 20 psi, as indicated on the bleeder's gauge. I personally use 15 psi.
- Use box-end wrenches, not open-end wrenches, on the bleeder screws. Sizes vary with vehicle model and year. Typical sizes are 7, 10, and 11 mm.

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- If your Bimmer has a manual transmission, be sure to flush the clutch hydraulics. On a BMW, the clutch and brake hydraulics share the same fluid reservoir.
- The traditional flushing sequence on a rear-drive or all-drive vehicle is right-rear, left-rear, right-front, left-front. This sequence was traditional prior to the advent of 4-wheel ABS, and I personally do not think the sequence matters much on vehicles so equipped.
- When you are finished, ensure the master cylinder reservoir is filled to the "MAX" indication and not above. Overfilling risks fluid overflow if the fluid gets hot such as it would at the track.
- Before you drive the car, ensure that you have a firm brake pedal and properly operating clutch.
- When you do your road test, actuate the ABS to introduce the new fluid to its internals.

That's all for now, Bimmerphiles. See you next time.

Anyone wishing to contribute to *Philes' Forum* can contact me at vic.sr@njbmwcca.org. I'm interested in tech tips, repair/maintenance questions, repair horror stories, emissions inspection sagas, product evaluations, etc.

Mr. Vic Lucariello has been a BMW CCA member since 1985 and served on the NJ Chapter Board for 15 years. He was Chief of Tech of their driving school program for 28 seasons, served as an instructor and instructor mentor, and club-raced a 2002 in D-Modified. Vic is an ASE certified automobile technician who in real life is a mechanical engineer.

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NOT JUST A SNACK FOR A GERMAN SHEPARD

BY: MARK BAER



So, here's the thing about car people: we're all the same. The difference is in the nuance. It might be sprint racing in GTS, endurance racing with WRL or a quiet mountain drive with a loved one, but something turns our gears. We are fortunate to live in a time and place where we have choices of where and how we get to indulge in the awesomeness of our Ultimate Driving Machines. Poke around YouTube for an hour and you can find footage of almost every kind of auto enjoyment. Last fall my good friend, Steve Murphy, ran across some videos of what appeared to be sports cars bombing through mountain roads with police vehicles blocking inbound traffic, instead of chasing them down for incarceration. After a couple of beers and some fishing stories at our favorite pub, "Hey Baer, take a look at this...." Upload the Chihuahua Express.

For a decade now the city and state of Chihuahua, Mexico has hosted an outrageous event called The Chihuahua Express. Drivers and navigators cover over 1,000 miles of paved, public mountain roads in three long days of competition.

The technical language for the type of race is tarmac hillclimb, with stage rally scoring. The timekeeping is identical to FIA World Rally, which accommodates for separation of speed stages and transit stages in both directions. The most significant difference between traditional hillclimb events, such as Pikes Peak, is that Chihuahua Express competitors race back down the mountain pass that they just raced up. Finally, and perhaps more importantly, the cars get hammered for hundreds of miles at a time, not just a few...."OK, Steve. How much of a challenge are you up for?"

Photos provided by: Mark Baer

The unique format makes the demands on the cars very similar to the endurance race-prepared BMWs that we build every day, but with a more substantial list of minimum safety equipment.

With the high likelihood of attrition, we wanted to start with cars that were reasonable to walk away from in the event of a complete write-off. We weren't interested in driving 8/10ths because we were scared of hurting the cars, so we settled on a pair of E36s and found donor cars in opposite preparation stages of one another. Steve started with a 1995 M3 that had previously been raced in GTS and was due for a refresh. I started with a 1996 Ti with an S50 that we had built for another customer a couple of years back that needed all of the race bits added. Throughout the spring of 2015, we assembled the two cars to have as many common parts as possible to keep from having to carry unique spares package for each car. We used the project as an opportunity to build and enjoy a team of guys working together, each with a specific list of responsibilities. Steve, his navigator Scott Koogle, my navigator Nick Caruso and I got together about every other week to make prep decisions, work on pace notes, interpret rules, drink beer and talk smack. I guess one could relate it to a Chump or Lemons team, only with professionally built cars and a very serious consequence of failure. Our sole objective was to come home safely to our families; everything else was a bonus.

In April, we loaded the trailer and headed south to El Paso where the convoy of Americans met for border crossing and a 250-mile commute across the hostile barren desert. There really is safety in numbers.





The following morning it only took 3 hours to secure permission and pay the import fees for the racecars and dually to be taken into Mexico. At the end of the extremely stressful transaction, all they really wanted was a pile of money and to know that all of the equipment was returning to the U.S. within ten days. Like any other experience, the first attempt was met with unknowns to overcome. Now we know which documents to have and who gets greased to get the green light. We made it to the host hotel in the city of Chihuahua by mid-afternoon, got the rig parked and the cars unloaded for tech inspection.

The next challenge was WRC FIA Technical approval to run our cars in the competition. We had prepared the cars to the letter of the written rulebook, but at the end of the day, the interpretation of the rules ultimately lies in the hands of the inspectors. Our first pass through tech was frustrating at best, but all of the necessary changes were able to be corrected with a couple of trips to the hardware store and scavenging through our spares bins. After relocating a couple of fire bottle cables and removing the sliders from our drivers' seats we were given the almighty nod and the sticker that granted us permission to enter the competition. After finishing the registration process, a strict medical exam and application of a bunch of mandatory sponsor graphics, we were finally ready to race. All of us were exhausted from the 48-hour battle to get to that point, so we retired to our rooms for some much needed down time.

Day 0 was the only opportunity for practice of any sort. Early in the morning, we suited up to run a short stage just outside of town to shake the cars down and give the drivers and navigators a chance to time and communicate before it REALLY mattered.

Nick had navigated at Pikes Peak in 2011 and I had over a decade of racing experience, but neither of us had ever competed in a formal rally setting. Steve and Scott were as green as they come, and their sole mission was to survive. Needless to say, our learning curve was steep and abrupt. The rest of the day was spent preparing pace notes and attending timing seminars in hope of preventing major mistakes. One of the biggest lessons was that one timing mistake would cost us more than slow driving, changing the emphasis from going fast to proper navigation and effective in-car communication. That evening we took the cars into town for the Blessing of the Helmets, a ritual carried out by the local tribe every year. Even though it was pouring rain, the courtyard was filled with local enthusiasts and media who came to bless the drivers, navigators and crews of the

teams. Regardless of religious beliefs, I felt like that was a valuable part of our experience. There was an indescribable feeling of calm and clarity of what was to come, along with the reminder that this sport comes with serious consequences; people die doing this.

The next three days were among the most fantastic experiences of my driving career. Absent any speed or traffic laws, we blasted through more than 1100 miles of paved mountain roads.

We were surrounded by over 300 local and federal law enforcement personnel blocking every intersection and connecting road along the route. The infrastructure and support from the locals was unlike anything I've ever seen. The streets were lined with cheering locals and fans were camped out in the mountains anxiously awaiting our passing. Not once did anybody complain about the race being there. Each day we took a green flag at the edge of the hotel parking lot, raced stages out to a designated service location for lunch and to address any mechanical issues before we raced the same stages in the opposite direction back to Chihuahua. Each night we turned in our time cards, nut and bolted the racecars and toasted to our survival with Coronas.

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Our BMWs were fantastic. Robust, reliable, and plenty fast. Having nearly identical cars made it much easier to perform daily turnover and maintenance during the event. Putting emphasis on drivability and serviceability from the very beginning was ultimately the key to our success.

The only mechanical failure all week was a broken sway bar end link from jumping the car in a corner. Our only crash damage was from me trying to blast through a chicane at 85 MPH and catching the side mirrors on the barriers. Our conservative decision to run street tires over soft, delicate race tires was absolutely the right call. Almost every car on race tires had a puncture at some point in the race. Our finishing positions, which were combined over all three days, were a testament to our strategy. In the end, only 22 of the 27 cars that started the race in the unlimited speed group finished without non-curable mechanical issues or irreparable crash damage. Nick and I finished second in class to the factory-prepared 1M on Hoosiers that won the race last year and Steve and Scott finished just behind us in third, which was strong enough for 5th and 7th overall, including all of the WRC and Pan Am competitors. They introduced us at the awards ceremony as the Colorado Invasion and let us know that we now have targets on our backs for next time. There goes our rookie status.

For years I've wondered why people blow their entire annual race budget on a single event. Not only do I now understand, I may have become one of them.

In motorsport, it's easy to forget that the team extends well beyond the cockpit of the car. To that end, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge my dad, Duane, for driving our support vehicle and offering his help throughout the event. We couldn't have done it without him. ■

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