

# der BAYERISCHE brief

Roy Hopkins and Adrienne Hughes  
navigate the twisting roads of the  
Targa Newfoundland  
story on pg. 6

*Genesee Valley Chapter  
BMW Car Club of America  
DECEMBER 2005*



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## der BAYERISCHE brief

December 2005

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BMW Car Club of America

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# Bimmer, Beemer, Binner?

## the president's message

by vince  
Leo

I would like to start my President's message by letting everyone know how proud I am of our Chapter as we again rose to the occasion when it came time to raise funds for the tragedies that almost feel so common place. At the same time, I would also like to suspend reality for a while, focus on light-hearted issues and ask the question that seems to be on everyone's mind. Is the new MINI a BMW or not?

After I sold my racecar, I wanted to replace it with a street car that would be the jack of all trades. I needed to be able to drive it 10 months out of the year, it needed to have a back seat, it needed a roof (so I could do a driver school or two), and it needed to be fun. I found a number of likely candidates - C6 'Vette, Boxster, WRX sti, Evo, VW GTI, Z4, 330Ci, 325i, M3 and the MINI Cooper S. As you can tell by my eclectic list, many of the cars came close, but few were able to meet all the required criteria. The MINI Cooper S kept coming up as a logical choice, but for some reason, I just could not pull the trigger. So after yet another test drive in Dr. Stu's highly modified Cooper S, I decided to buy one. I settled on a 2005 MINI Cooper S with the John Cooper Works Package - a nice upgrade in power!

It wasn't until after buying the car and having it for a few weeks that I remembered Stu's immortal words, "At first you will love the car, after about a week or two you will question why you ever bought the thing and then after about a month, you will find any excuse to drive it." He was right, I love the car.

Which leads me to my question, it is a BMW? My first response is the MINI is the hatchback that the 318ti could have been. It is quick, nimble and a blast to drive... doesn't that sound like the definition of the ultimate driving machine? The BMW engineers definitely had their hand in the design of the new MINI, but is it a BMW? Well let's see, it certainly handles great - just like what I would have expected from any other BMW. I know the engine drives the wrong wheels, but the BMW/MINI engineers seem to have overcome that "minor" detail and in 2005, which are the right drive wheels? The 3 and 5 series come in both rear and all wheel drive. The X3 and X5 only come in all wheel drive - granted with a rear wheel bias. But today, the answer is not so clear. And if BMW decides to release an AWD MINI, would that further cloud the issue? Next issue, the motor is not made by BMW; it's a product of Daimler Chrysler. While it is no S14 (e30 M3 motor), compared to the M42 and M44 (the last 4 cylinder motor that BMW brought to the

US), I am OK with this DC motor! This motor screams and in its supercharged format it is simply amazing. Rumor has it that the Cooper S can "get rubber" in first and second gear... not that I would try that.

What does this car have that leads me to believe it could be a BMW? The gauges are that familiar orange color at night. Solid feeling switch gear, the doors have that solid BMW feel and the brakes are BMW standard ATE. If I try hard enough (or just ask Roy Hopkins), I could probably figure out which current or past BMW could provide me with a "bolt up" factory big brake kit. MINI even uses some of those familiar BMW terms like leatherette - ever wonder how pleathers had to give up their lives for a full leatherette interior? Sorry PETA, I opted for real leather.

If you look on the build tag, the label clearly says BMW AG. Also when I called NYS EZ Pass to update the fleet, I said "I bought a MINI". NYS' response, "you mean BMW MINI". If NYS' computer says it's a BMW, you might as well give up the fight now.

I am convinced the MINI is a BMW or at least has the soul of a BMW. This car reminds me of what the BMW faithful have been calling for... the successor to the 2002. Blasphemy you say? I don't think so. It might drive the wrong wheels, but after a few miles in the car, you don't seem to mind. I have owned a 2002 and an e30 M3 and I really think the MINI has some of their DNA. While the upcoming 1 and 2 series will most likely be labeled the next 2002, my guess is they will be too refined and too much like an e30 or and e36. Do yourself a favor and take a long hard look at the illegitimate child of the 2002 and the e30 M3 - the MINI Cooper S.

Finally when you do go to look at a MINI, you will quickly find the MINI dealer and your Motoring Adviser (not sales person) to be a strange breed. For example, they wear Hawaiian shirts, not ties, and they answer the phones with "let's motor!" Truth be told, they're a lot of fun, just like the car.

With that settled, we have one last question: if a BMW car is a Bimmer and a BMW motorcycle is a Beemer, what is a MINI? It's certainly is not a Bummer. How about a Binner? Or just Bimmer Lite!

Remember, all MINI owners are welcome in the BMW CCA and the GVC BMW CCA.

Finally to Dan Ives - get well soon, your MINI friends miss you!

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## January

21st, Saturday 6:30 - 10:30 pm Post-Holiday Party:  
Artisan Works • 565 Blossom Road • Rochester, NY 14610  
6:30-7:30 Hors d'oeuvres  
7:15-8:30 Grazing stations: roast beef, scalloped potatoes,  
pasta bar, Caesar salad, bread & butter  
8:30 Gallery tours • 8:30 Coffee & dessert  
6:30-10:00 Cash bar

Solo pianist and singer Ernesto LaBella

Please bring a new clothing item for donation to the Open Door Mission (mittens, gloves, scarves, socks - for man or woman).

RSVP by sending a check for \$25 per person (made out to GVC BMW CCA) to Elaine Lanni, 2353 Magog Rd., Palmyra, NY 14522. Questions? Call 315 597 0064 or email: dealanni@rochester.rr.com.  
Checks need to be received by January 13, 2006.

## May

13th & 14th, Saturday & Sunday. Ultimate Driving Schools at Watkins Glen

## July

25th & 26th, Tuesday & Wednesday. Ultimate Driving Schools at Mosport Canada. That's correct! For the first time ever, GVC is going international, hosting a 2 day Driving School at Mosport, in Canada. Start making plans now; we expect this new and exciting school to fill up quickly.

## August

30th & 31st, Wednesday & Thursday, Ultimate Driving Schools at Watkins Glen

## September & October

30th & 1st, Saturday & Sunday, Ultimate Driving Schools at Watkins Glen



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# Targa Newfoundland 2005

By Adrienne Hughes & Roy Hopkins

We left Rochester on Tuesday, September 6th, heading east, destination Newfoundland. Somewhere around Herkimer, the Suburban started sounding like a John Deere tractor. Pulling into the next service area, we filled it with gas, and Roy looked under the truck to see what all the noise was about. The downpipe had separated from the flange at the manifold. Using ingenuity and the equipment we had brought, Roy jacked up the pipe to its former configuration using a scissor jack from a Neon. He then safety wired the whole thing as securely as possible. Not only was the truck much quieter, but there were no longer flames escaping from the manifold trying to melt the wiring harness! Our first night's stop was planned for Bolton MA at our friend Michael Wilson's house. We arrived around 11:00 pm. Michael possesses a welder, so the next morning we welded up the downpipe as best we could and were on our way.

We entered Maine going north on Route 95, and some time later the downpipe separated itself from the welds. With the jack still in place, we rewired it and continued. This year we were taking Route 9 towards Calais, for the border crossing and would then do a little sightseeing in the Bay of Fundy. Choosing the lesser traveled route and border crossings saved us a couple hours in travel time. At the border we were asked for ID (first time in a long time for this request). In 2003 when we crossed, the guard asked one question, "Hey you ever roll that thing?" After checking out our passports, he asked "Other than clothing are you bringing anything into Canada?" Was this a trick question? I looked over my shoulder and said, "A car." This seemed to be the correct answer and off we went. St. Stephens is the tiny town on the other side of the border - two blocks of town and you are back in to rural country. We drove up the coast, and stopped

in Sussex for the night. The next morning our plan was to catch sunrise over the Bay of Fundy. Though we departed in time to see this, and the day looked good for a spectacular event, but as we neared the coast it grew very foggy. We did spot a young moose and some very pretty coast line, but it was too foggy for the sunrise. Crossing into Nova Scotia the commercial truckers were protesting the diesel fuel prices and trying to block the main highway. With only 10 or so trucks blocking the right lane, we managed to get through quickly. (Others traveling the TCH were held up for over three hours!)

We started hearing clicking sounds from the truck at low speeds. Roy proclaimed that it was the U-joints protesting and considering giving up the ghost. Next stop, Canadian Tire in Truro. Canadian Tire is great; they are ubiquitous and always seem to have what you need. They were very helpful and put in front and rear U-joints immediately. We had lunch and they were done when we were. Did I say how much I love Canadian Tire? \$174.00 Canadian and we were once again on our way. Next stop, North Sydney and the ferry crossing. Disembarked the ferry in Argentia, drive an hour and we arrived in St. John's.

All day Saturday was spent with registration and tech. Friends Bruce and Alex (1st timers) needed some repairs to their car. Roy spent the better part of Saturday getting it fixed to pass tech inspection. Luckily our car had already been inspected; because after Roy was done, the left turn signal on the other car worked great, ours did not! Sunday was prologue day. This is practice and a way for the organizers to seed the cars for the week of competition. Targa cars run slowest to fastest; the plan is to keep the pack tight. Rain kept us all on our toes. Our plan was to take it slow and cautious. Though we did, that we still ended up being in the top ten fastest.

The cars are started 30 seconds apart. We didn't really want



to be that far back in the pack because that meant we would need to be more cognizant of those behind possibly needing to pass.

Monday was the first day of competition. Our plan was to be conservative and make all the plate times get our gold plate and be done with it. That lasted about 100 meters into the first competition stage. Seven stages later we had zero time penalty point and were feeling pretty good about ourselves. The last stage of the day was Gander, an eight kilometer stage with 40+ turns, the longest distance between turns 500 meters. Somewhere around the fifth kilometer, the car started to sound like a John Deere tractor. The valves in one of the four cylinders had decided they had had enough. We had three kilometers left to go. We made an instant decision to keep going as long as possible. The next cylinder went, then the next. Finally, with all the oil blowing through the manifold the last cylinder fouled and with Roy's foot on the floor, the car came to a halt – less than two kilometers from the finish. Darn! If we had only blown it up a little further down the road, we could have finished the stage.

Mike, our crew (whom we shared with another competitor), had decided that when the stage opened, he would drive it. So having run towards the end of the pack we only had to wait for the last 8 cars or so to pass. Along came Mike and he flat-towed us into the stadium parking lot. Wanda, our CRO, (competitor relations officer) got to work and found us a guy named Corey who owned a gas station with two work bays. He was willing to let us use one to remove and replace the motor we had just blown up.

Roy was packing up the truck for the trip with all the spare parts he thought we might need, including a spare tranny. There was a motor we had recently purchased, still sitting on its pallet and tied down. In it went. Other parts Roy packed went to other competitors who had the good fortune to be driving a car similar to ours and could parts share. We got rid of an axle and some spring purchases.

This turned out to be a very good thing. However, the spare motor was in the truck parked at the hotel in St. John's 3 hours away. Again Wanda went to work for us. H&H towing, based in St. John's, services the whole Targa route. Marc, still in St. John's, was willing to drive the truck to Gander. Roy had zip-tied the key to the underside of the truck to make it accessible should we need it. Advance planning pays off. Once again Mike flat-towed us to the garage, and shortly thereafter Roy had the motor out of the car and was waiting for the next one to arrive. Around 1:00AM our motor showed up, Corey and Marc both lent a hand, and by 9:30 the next morning the car was up and running. Our out time for that morning was 10:13:30 – we made it with time to spare.

Back in the thick of things, we had a great day. On one stage a bolt backed out of the alternator, and the alternator belt is now a part of the Newfoundland scenery. We could now relax and enjoy the week; after losing a stage we were no longer in competition for a win. Due to other competitors' mishaps and unfortunate incidents, we managed to place 29th overall, still in the top third of the pack. We finished back where we started in St. John's on Friday.

Saturday was devoted to retrieving and repacking the truck with all the spares Mike had carried around the rock for us. Watching the weather was also a big part of our day. Tropical storm Ophelia was on her way, bringing high winds to Nova Scotia. We had decided to drive the 9 hours across the island and catch the shorter ferry on the west side in Port aux Basques. One hundred kilometer-an-hour winds forecasted could mean we were going nowhere. Luckily, Ophelia stayed to the south, and by the time we reached Port aux Basques, she had already gone through. We boarded at 9:30 PM and left the dock at 11:00 as scheduled, landing in North Sydney at 5:30 AM. Fifteen hours later in Springfield MA, we found a hotel and dropped into bed exhausted. We arrived home at noon on September 20th.

The trip was both exhilarating and exhausting – great scenery, wonderful people. A great time was had by all!





## GVC BMW CCA Holiday Party

Save the date; join  
us for food and fun!

Saturday, January 21, 2006, 6:30 - 10:30 pm

Artisan Works • 565 Blossom Road • Rochester, NY 14610

- 6:30-7:30 Hors d'oeuvres
- 7:15-8:30 Grazing stations: roast beef, scalloped potatoes, pasta bar, Caesar salad, bread & butter
- 8:30 Gallery tours
- 8:30 Coffee & dessert
- 6:30-10:00 Cash bar

Solo pianist and singer Ernesto LaBella

Please bring a new clothing item for donation to the Open Door Mission (mittens, gloves, scarves, socks - for man or woman).

RSVP by sending a check for \$25 per person (made out to GVC BMW CCA) to Elaine Lanni, 2353 Magog Rd., Palmyra, NY 14522. Questions? Call 315 597 0064 or email: [dealanni@rochester.rr.com](mailto:dealanni@rochester.rr.com). Checks need to be received by January 13, 2006.

Enter the complex by the horse statue adjacent to Tops Supermarket (corner of Winton and Blossom Rds). Turn a hard right and drive along the building until you come to the blue building. Park along the wall, or in the lot past the building to the left. Enter the door decorated with mural of a train.





# Unsalted Popcorn, Unbuttered Toast and Tuna Fish without Mayonnaise

perspektive

by hal  
miller

hmillerm@aol.com

This was the reason stated by the Speed Channel's "Dream Car Garage" for not featuring Lexus automobiles on their show. On the other hand, the automotive press would have you believe that Lexus's new IS350 will soon replace BMW's 3-Series as best sports sedan and their GS350 will put the 5-Series on the trailer.

Well, don't bring your Bimmer to a Lexus dealer for a quote on a trade just yet. There are five major car magazines and god-knows-how-many secondary publications screaming for your attention every month and one of the ways they get your attention is by being controversial. There is also a little "Shadenfreude" involved - a German term that, loosely translated, means 'satisfaction taken at the trials and tribulations of the high and mighty.'

Shadenfreude can be heard in the commentary of the sports broadcasters as they bemoan the fall of Michael Schumacher's championship dynasty in Formula 1 racing, or the troubles of BMW / Williams racing team. Truth of the matter is, whether you're Tiger Woods, Michael Schumacher or BMW, if you are at the top of your game you are game for the naysayers who want to knock you off your peg.

Make no mistake about it - BMW is at the top of its game. Sure they make mistakes, who doesn't? Some wise pundit once said, "Success is being right more than 50% of the time." BMW ventured into the morass of the British automotive industry with disastrous results, but they took their medicine, cut their losses and have bounded back - and in the process re-invented a British icon! The new Mini is brilliant and the entire industry is forced to, begrudgingly, admit it. On the other hand the new Rolls Royce Phantom is far from a home run, but there is a new convertible and "entry" sedan in the works and they are stunners, so don't count that division out just yet.

The only way to avoid mistakes is to do nothing. BMW embarked on a new design direction a few years ago and they have been the recipients of much bad press about it. Guess what? The new Mercedes S-Class has been unveiled and they have copied the 7-Series design right down to the bustle trunk, the double cowl dash and a revamped "Command System" that is a dead ringer for i-Drive.

BMW had to learn the lesson that Mercedes soon faces, which is that size and diversity is not the pathway to maintaining independence - profit is. In this age of merger mania, market research, brand marketing and all the other nonsense that goes on in the corporate world, it is hard to stay focused. The entire automotive world is under siege, but BMW has a few things going for it. Their continued independence is prime. So far they have avoided that great leveler - consensus - which cripples most of the automotive giants. The fierce loyalty of their customers is next in line. BMW CCA and GVC contribute to keeping that alive and well. Finally, the secret no one has yet duplicated



- their wide range of automobiles, from sports cars to SUV's (SAV's, sorry about that) to luxury sedans, are simply the best handling and most fun to drive.

Now - about one of the most maligned models of all, which is the E60 5-Series that we own. Putting aside all the nonsense about design (which is really in the eye of the beholder) let's talk about the ultimate test drive. We drove our 545i-6-Speed to Oktoberfest from upstate New York taking a delightful detour on the Blue Ridge Mountain Parkway along the way. Then we participated in the BMW Performance Driving School at Virginia International Raceway. Every conceivable driving condition was encountered including high-speed super highways, winding mountain roads through elevation changes of almost 3000 feet, and finally racing on one of the best racetracks in the country. You might think that taking a 4000-pound sedan to a race is like taking a knife to a gunfight but such was not the case. We held our own among M3's, Turbo charged Mini's, Corvettes, Porsches and a host of purpose built race cars. The E60 is a comfortable riding luxury sedan that is reasonably priced, accommodates five people and their luggage and can run with the best sports cars. Is there anything else to say?

The German automotive industry in general and BMW in particular has been under fire from the global industry for many years but, still, most everything else out there is unsalted popcorn, unbuttered toast and tuna fish without mayonnaise.

Hal Miller  
hmillerm@aol.com

## BMW CCA Membership

Membership cost is only \$40 for one year, \$76 for two years, or \$112 for three years! You will receive the monthly Roundel, our informative 140 page magazine which many consider to be the world's best car club publication. You'll become a member in one of our 63 local chapters which publish newsletters, conduct driving schools, tech sessions, social events, and assist you in servicing and enjoying your BMW. In addition, BMW CCA offers a long list of additional benefits & services.

**Contact National Office:** BMW CCA,  
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questions@bmwcca.org or call 864-250-0022



## Towne BMW-MINI Autocross Report

by Tim Moriarty

Well, the snow has flown, the race car is safely tucked away in the back of the garage, all the timing equipment and the orange cones are in storage for the winter. I'm glad it's over but... I can't wait for spring!

Since the last newsletter, we ran our final event of the year. We made one more trip to the perennial favorite, BIMP. It was a light turnout, probably because of the forecasts of rain. But as typically happens, the rains only dampened the early runs. By lunch it was dry, the sun came out, and we had a beautiful afternoon.

To cap off the already superb Towne BMW-MINI Autocross Series, this event was designated "MINI Day." Ray Kasprzyk from Towne MINI brought out a beautiful red Cooper S. This MINI was meant as a "demonstration" vehicle. It was equipped with a Steptronic transmission with shift paddles on the steering wheel. Several competitors, including myself, were fortunate enough to give this little car that could a try. What a blast; I'll take mine in dark silver, body color roof and mirrors, Works package... (but I'll stick with a stick)! A big thanks goes to Ray and the folks at Towne for providing the MINI and a slew of give-aways. I think everyone walked away with something. The good news is that Ray was having so much fun, he was trying to figure out how he could make every event a "MINI Day" next year.

Four of the thirty competitors were in MINIs. Dr. Stu took the class easily, even though he had to go operate or something at the lunch break. Ray managed a third with a time good enough to beat several cars including a 2006 Corvette. John Roe took his third BMW class win of the season in a close three-car battle. John was driving his E36 M3 4 door sedan... with an automatic. The Prepared class was a battle of brute force and traction against finesse and momentum, brute force won this time. Eric Hobron took his Subaru WRX STI to the class win and FTD. John Bockman led the five-car Corvette class with his 95 Corvette. Borden Mills was on the top of his, taking the twelve-car Others class for the first time this year. Borden, a regular at the Drivers Schools as well as the Autocrosses, was driving his 83 Camaro.

For a complete listing of the results please visit the GVC web site ([www.gvc-bmwcca.org](http://www.gvc-bmwcca.org)).

The Towne Top Gun Results are listed below. To qualify for Top Gun, you must be a club member and compete in at least three of the events. Everyone is thrown into one class and points are awarded according to your finishing position. We count your best five of the six events. Any car is eligible as long as a club member drives it. Come out next year and give it a try, you never know, you might have fun!

Pos.	Driver	Model	Apr 17	May 29	June 26	July 23	Aug 14	Sept 17	Total
1	Tim Moriarty	E30 318is	20	20	20	20	20	20	100
2	Bill Hicks	E30 318is	15	10	10	6	10	12	57
3	Andy Blake	E30 318is		12	15		12	10	49
4	Mel Dillon	E30 325	5			15	15		35
5	Robert Kraus	E30 M3	6			10		15	31
6	John Roe	E36 M3	1	3	3		8	5	20
7	Roy Hopkins	E46 M3	3		4	12			19
8	Stu Sacks	Mini Cooper S	1		2	8		6	17
9	Borden Mills	Camaro	1	1		1		8	11
10	Tony Barbagallo	Mini Cooper S	1	5	1	3			10
11	Adrienne Hughes	E46 M3	1		6	2			9
12	Eric Lewish	VW Jetta	1			1	6		8
13	Henryk Lotyczewski	E36 328is	1				5	1	7
14	Mike Tedesche	Corvette	1	1	1	1		2	6
15	Christa Barbagallo	Mini Cooper S	1	2		1			4
16	Neo W. Jang	E36 318ti	1	1	1	1			4

A few quick facts on the year: we had 146 different competitors, we averaged 39 competitors per event, we made 39 timed runs in six events, each run averaged about one minute... so 39 competitors x 39 runs x 1 minute = 1,521 minutes = 25.35 hours = 1.06 days of one minutes runs!

For a complete listing of the year's results and all the Top Gun standings, visit the GVC web site. Bill Hicks and I would like to thank all those who came out early to help set up and stayed late to help pick up. Special thanks go to, in no particular order: Adrienne Hughes, Roy Hopkins, Stu Sacks, Andy Blake, John Roe and Mel Dillon for always being there to help make this another successful year. And of course, we could not have done this without Towne BMW-MINI.

*When I said you might try a little soap and water on the car this is not what I had in mind!*



# Oktoberfest 2005

By Mel Dillon

O'Fest 2005 has finished, and I would have to say it was one of the best yet! Several members from the chapter were there to enjoy the week's activities, which made the experience even better. In planning this year's trip I noted that Mapquest stated it was eleven and one half hours to drive down, so this year we decided to do it in one big run on Saturday. We got rolling at 8:30 in the morning and pulled into the hotel in Greensboro 12 hours later. I retrofitted the cruise control in the 325 last year and that made the trip a lot easier this time. Everything seemed to be going like clockwork until we were refilling the car after our dinner break. That was when I noticed that the right rear wheel was full of black crumbly chunks. I checked the car over and did not notice anything out of order so we hit the road again. A few minutes later I had an idea and pulled into a rest area with lots of overhead lights. Sure enough when I checked the fan shroud there was evidence that the fan was rubbing against the shroud. And the motor seemed to be a little wobbly in the engine compartment. Seems the hours of heat from the headers had softened the right engine mount until it allowed the motor to twist under heavy torque while running through the mountains. Luckily, we were into the flat lands and the air was cooling so I decided to soldier on. The last hour of travel passed without incident and we arrived in Greensboro. The next morning the motor mount was nice and firm again and everything was in order. I can do without cheap thrills like that. It was interesting to watch the price of premium fuel drop about a dime for every one hundred miles we traveled south. We topped off in the morning at \$3.45 in Rochester and filled up at the last stop for \$2.80. Seems insulting for some reason.

By running hard on Saturday we had the luxury of sleeping in on Sunday morning and having a large breakfast. What decadence! Registration opened later in the day and we were one of the first to pick up our packets. Lots of familiar faces milling around. There was a change this year in that Kyla received her first full registration packet and identification. But, they wrongly had marked her as a first year attendee. She proceeded to pull

off the little blue ribbon that proclaimed her as a first timer as this was her sixth O'Fest. We ran into Holly McReynolds and Dave Dill, both from the Buffalo area, at registration. It's fun to see chapter members at O'Fest.

Monday dawned bright and early. Wait a minute. It was still dark, where does the bright part of that phrase come in? Alice had registered for the Street Survival course being held at the Danville airport and we had an hour trip to get there. So much for the leisurely vacation. The morning was cool but rapidly warmed as the sun started into the sky. Kyla and I worked as Alice's pit crew and readied the car while she attended the classroom session. Once that was over it was into the car for some fun. For the school they had set up four skid pads and had a water truck and a big drum of some magic foam that made the skid pads nice and slick. Nice and slick, and soapy. And the soap made sure that all the slime and yellow pigment from the old runway markings ended up all over the car. By the end of the day the car was more gray than burgundy. Enough complaining about the dirty car. During the

course of the day Alice got more than enough time on the skid pad, threshold braking, lane changes and backing exercises. God, even with a slicked up course the amount of wear on the brand new tires was amazing. At one point in the afternoon I noticed Alice and her instructor were driving around with the windows up. Sure enough they had the A/C on and were having a wonderful time. I had to remind her that real race cars don't have air conditioning but that did not faze either of them and they went right back to shredding tires. The grin on Alice's face could be seen from the side of the course for the rest of the afternoon. As with all good things it had to end and we packed up the car and hauled back to the hotel.

The Michelin tire truck that was supporting the school and providing shade from the heat of the day for all us extras was an interesting sight. Instead of the usual dual tires you expect to see on a large truck they had single rims sporting 445/50-22.5 tires. Next time some one wants to tell you about the bad rims and

*Steve Hauer's nice 320 on display at the O'Fest concours*





tires they have on their SUV, tell them that ain't nothing! Look at the picture to see just how big those tires were. Somehow, it will be strange referring to it as a ten instead of eighteen wheeler.

At Monday night's reception we met another GVC member in attendance - Everett Mahoney. Good to see you Everett. We also spent some time sitting with the owner of Zionsville Auto-sport and his wife. A true BMW fanatic. When he heard that we had a 525i he suggested to Alice that he had the perfect thing in the back of his shop - an S54 motor and wiring harness. I like the way he thinks!

Autocross day was on Tuesday and at VIR. Since that was even further from the hotel than the Danville airport, it was another early morning. Except this time the girls were still blissfully sleeping as I hooked up the tire trailer and headed out. Boy, if I thought the first day in North Carolina was hot, this one quickly reset my opinions. The autocross course was held on the Patriot track inside the VIR race course. It resulted in about a mile long autocross course that was very entertaining. If you have been to BIMP, you have a small sample of the elevation changes involved. Now throw in a couple of blind corners over hills and an off camber finishing complex. Damn it was fun! With the last set of modifications to the 325, I was moved to the three series open category. That means just about anything goes as long as it started as a three series. So, I had some real competition this year and started the first run with a hard charge at the course. This succeeded in making me the first person of that days competition to go sub one minute on course. Things looked good briefly. But I did not count on Alex Shchipkov. Alex brought an E30 325 built to the limits for SCCA D street prepared class. His first run on course was 54 seconds compared to my 59 second run. From there he succeeded in making a 52 second run. To put that into perspective, that was faster than T.C. Kline or the PTG M3 did on the same course. Alex had just finished second in class at the SCCA Nationals, a sure sign of his skill.

In the end, try as I might, my best run was a 58.9, which earned me a fourth place finish. I was happy considering second and third place were 330's on race rubber. Once we were done it was off to work the course for the second half of the competitors. And

boy, did it turn into work as the weather decided to set a new record. Once the day was over it was back to the hotel and the evening reception in the vendors area. We met up with Steve Hauer, another GVC member and talked for a few minutes. Also in attendance was Chris Koch from Buffalo who we sat with while munching on the excellent barbeque. Seems Chris has acquired another car for his collection that involves an offer made years before. That's a tale for another time.

Wednesday was my day for the driving school at VIR so it was up again before the birds and drive off into the darkness. Doesn't it sound like a great way to start each day of your vacation? This was my first time at VIR so I did not know what to expect, and boy was it fun! This is one of the nicest facilities that I have been to - clean and park like. I was a little surprised by the stone paddock area which turned out to be hell on hot tires after a session on track. No sooner then I gridded the car, Blake Smith, one of our regular instructors at Watkins Glen walked into view. Thanks for donating the time to make the driving school happen Blake!

In a nutshell, I loved VIR. I was signed off after my first session on track and had a blast all day. I took the Hartge ECU for the engine and since they had 100 octane at the track I stuck that in the car and enjoyed a few extra horses. It was pleasant to find that the fuel pumps at VIR use credit cards and the 100 octane is only \$3.90 per gallon! I kind of went over the edge and filled the tank. If you have not been to VIR, it has one of the longest straights I have seen connected to the slowest exit corner - Oaktree. I am not sure that I ever really got Oaktree right but that just gives me a reason to go back some day soon and work on it. Sounds like justification for another trip to me.

All too soon the day was over and it was the usual drudgery of change the tires and brakes, pack the car and hook up the trailer for the trip back to the hotel. Not far into the dash back at a major split in the highway a tractor trailer had rolled over on a sweeping off camber ramp. Made for a momentary thrill to come over the crest at speed and realize the road was full of trucks, emergency vehicles and police. I also could not help but think that maybe he should have taken the safety school on Monday.



Wednesday night is the motorsports banquet. The food was German all the way and very good. The guest speaker was Boris Said and he did an excellent job. It was entertaining to hear him tell of meeting Dale Earnhart and how nervous he was at the time. He went on in detail to explain the differences in driving a NASCAR truck versus the BMW race cars. We also had the pleasure of spending the evening seated with the editorial staff of the Roundel. A very fun group of people, and I believe Jeremy Walton was surprised when I asked him to autograph my helmet.

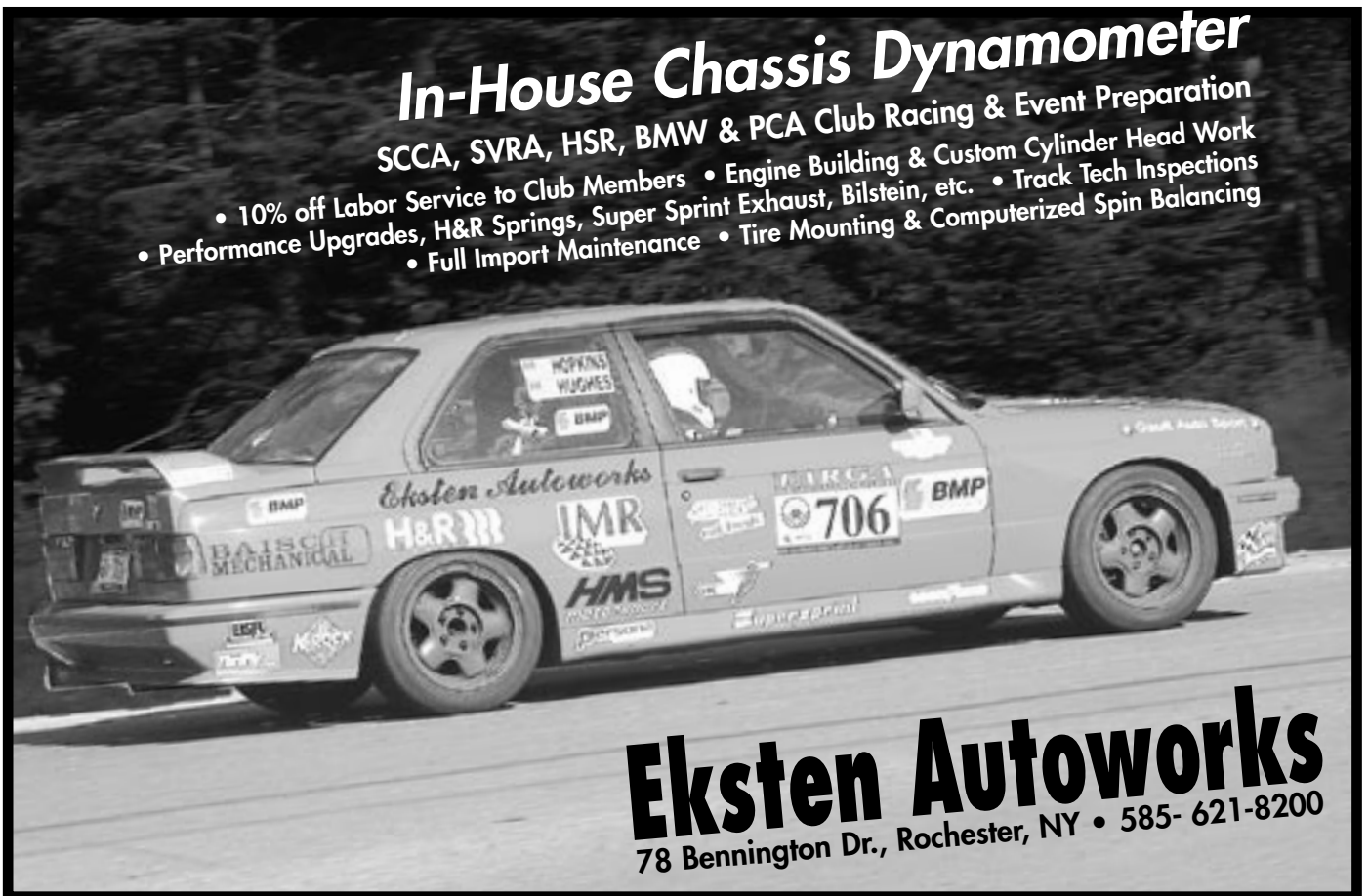
Thursday was an off day (homey don't rally, sorry ) and we traveled to Ashboro to see the North Carolina zoo. It was huge and took us five and a half hours to walk through. The layout used the natural landscape to isolate each exhibit and made it very enjoyable. If you are in the area it is well worth the time spent with the family. Finally, we came to the end of the exhibits and were preparing to leave. While setting on a bench in the shade waiting for the girls suddenly behind me I hear a shrill cry of "where'd ever one went?" This strange call was repeated and this time I located the source. Once I realized that one of the members of the hillbilly exhibit had escaped I was sure that a zookeeper would be along shortly to round it up. I'm not sure, but for a moment I faintly heard the opening bars of dueling banjos in the distance. Probably just my imagination.

Thursday would have been a perfect day except I noticed the gearbox making rattling noises when we returned to the hotel. Guess what was the only part of the car I did not check out before the trip started? So, I opened the O'Fest program looking for a sponsor who might be able to take the car in. The closest seemed to be Carr Industries near the airport, so I called them late in the day. They were great and told me to bring it in first thing on Friday morning and they would take a look at it.

Sure enough, a quick change of the gear box fluid and it was nice and quiet again. Thanks guys!

Now that the car was fixed, it was off to the car show. This year there were 80 cars entered in the concours, too many nice cars to even begin to describe. There was one 2002 with a supercharger on it almost as big as the engine. That picture is here somewhere. If memory serves me correctly we also had two fine examples of Isettas on the lawn. Throw in a collection of the other production cars and it was quite a sight. Steve Hauer's car was looking great alongside the others. He had gotten into the concours spirit with a nice long session of detailing the car the previous day and it paid off. At the banquet on Friday night Steve took second place in his class and earned a special mention from Chuck Bennett of Zymol for the condition of his car. Seems Chuck had one like it in his past and regretted letting it go. We sat with Holly and Dave from Buffalo for this last meal. Seemed only right to bring some of the chapter members together for the closing ceremonies. Sad to say, as they announced the last name for the M5 drawing none came to GVC or were any of the winners in attendance. It would be great if someone at O'Fest won a car again.

Saturday morning it was up early and on the road back to Rochester. The E30 ran great and it was only twelve hours from hotel to home. The little bimber delivered 28-29 mpg towing the trailer at 70 mph and just flew all the way. Next year's O'Fest will be the third week of July in Grand Rapids Michigan, only six hours from Rochester according to Mapquest. Gingerman raceway will be the location of the driving school and we are already planning on going. Nothing would make the event more fun than a whole bunch of GVC members in attendance so plan ahead. See ya there!



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The snow falling outside right now doesn't really inspire anyone to hop into their BMW and head out for a drive - unless you've got a good set of snow tires and enjoy donuts.

It certainly makes me miss my BMW experiences from this past summer and autumn, which included plenty of top-down time in the new-to-Uncle Tom 2001 Z3. My crafty uncle had a fun time keeping this secret from me, unveiling it Labor Day weekend, after about a month of ownership. I think my cousin had the worst time not calling me up as soon as she saw her dad pull up in it, but she was able to hold it in.

Labor Day weekend in Central Pennsylvania is often still summer weather, and this year was no exception, which was perfect to cruise campus and the back roads in a sporty roadster. I think I was able to impress my girlfriend with the car, but the guy in the red 348 Spyder following me through town didn't seem phased. I made sure to acknowledge his ride, and he was humble enough to at least give me a nod back.

The culminating event of this BMW weekend was a drive from Lewisburg to State College, PA, in the Z3 (top down) and my dad's GTI. The destination was the Drive for the Cure, to have some fun and support the good cause. I was away at school by the time the show rolled through Rochester, so I missed out, but my father Joe and Uncle Bob made their rounds in Rochester, driving 8 cars combined. My Uncle Tom, living near Philadelphia, gets the privilege of attending Cure drives at both Otto's and Devon Hill BMW, so State College became his third drive of the year. We drove a broad spectrum of cars, from the new 3 to the newly facelifted 750i. All told, with the 18.7 mile course, we racked up about

150 miles in State College. This is an event my family does every year (and at as many locations possible), and is a great cause and lots of fun. I can't wait till I get to jump behind the wheel next year and add my miles to the tally.

The final BMW event of interest was the Euro Auto Festival in Spartanburg, which drew Uncle Bob in the M3 (while I had to make do with cellular phone updates at school). The pictures alone made me pencil it in for next year, and it is a wonderful show featuring a wide range of fun automobiles. This year's featured cars were everything Italian, and they showed up in great numbers. The main event was held at BMW's Zentrum, and even included some autocross time with BMW's cars on various pads. The show is also close enough that a sprint over to Tail of the Dragon, in Deal's Gap, North Carolina, isn't out of the picture. Uncle Bob had a fun time running this twisty course, though you have to be ready to share the road with bicycles, campers, lumber trucks, and fearless motorcycles.

Driving back to school from Thanksgiving break gave me time to ponder life, rain, and the eternal role of the automobile (it's a long drive). My first realization, which came on 390 just after leaving Greece, was that if you drive a green Buick Regal, you can't seem to acknowledge any cool cars. Not only because they speed past you (Porsche Cayenne Turbo), or park far away from you at the rest stop (528iS), but they simply don't look your way. Which sure, I understand, the Regal doesn't have much in the way of innovation going for it, but it's still a comfortable cruiser that will do 75 at 2000 rpm, pull with all its American torque, and willingly take those Steam Valley, PA curves with minimal body roll. But if it were me, I'd want to reap as much adoration as I could get in my semi-sports car (though that Maxima with the giant wing, hood scoop, and oversized wheels that kept pestering the 325Ci need not apply).

Later on, though (probably around Painted Post), I realized that even if you're not driving the coolest car on the road, I do have transportation, from my home to my college, safely and comfortably, for which I am glad and thankful. Even without snow, the holiday spirit found me! Have a safe and Happy Holiday season.

the  
bimmer  
boy  
by russell  
labarca

## THE BMW CCA MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Beginning September 1, 2005 through July 15, 2006. This membership drive is open to three categories of participants: Current BMW CCA members, current BMW CCA members who work for a BMW dealer or independent BMW shop, and BMW CCA chapters.

To be eligible, BMW CCA members must be paid members; (that is, they may not be members by virtue of being "comped" by BMW CCA or a BMW CCA chapter).

There are three reward categories of this incentive program that corresponds to the three categories of participants: rewards for current BMW CCA members who refer new members; rewards for BMW dealer or independent BMW shop employees who refer new members; and 3. rewards for chapters that achieve a designated level of new member activity.

BMW CCA members who refer new members, will be eligible for drawings for a variety of additional prizes at the end of the membership drive. These drawings will take place at Oktoberfest 2006. Winners need not be present at Oktoberfest to win. The prize list will be published on the web site as prizes are added.

Please visit National BMW CCA web site for more details. [www.bmwcca.org/members](http://www.bmwcca.org/members)

# October GVC Board Meeting

## Leo Residence

Business Meeting called to order at 7:25 PM by Vince Leo

Present: Patty Perkins, Bill O'Neill, Gary Matteson, Tim Moriarty, Amanda Kellogg, Roy Hopkins, Vince Leo, Chuck DeRoller, Danielle Salley, Jim Dresser, Dave Lanni, Bill Hicks, Karla Kuzawinski, Jason Byrne, Seth Berlfein, Joe Ajavon.

DS: Club Racing impact was discussed. Overall impression was very positive. Discussed possibilities for next year, with some mild concern over the state of the economy influencing CR. Patty commented that it was a good idea to have joint racer/participant meeting on Friday; prevented having two "camps" with different agendas.

Funds raised for Red Cross Katrina relief, which was matched by the Chapter, and matched again by Canandaigua National Bank, raised \$5600. Bill suggested we do something like this on a continuing basis targeting various charities. Karla said that Red Cross wants to do a joint event for their (100th?) anniversary next fall.

Discussed safety issues regarding the poor response to the incident with fluid on the track in the esses. Should sit down with the flaggers to review their procedures, and with the track officials to talk about what level of safety staffing is included in the price for a race weekend. Also should speak to WGI about track access on (Thursday) night before such events for racers to unload. Permission was verified that morning, but that information didn't get relayed to the security people at the gate.

WGI notified the chapter through Dave Lanni of our DS dates for 2006. They are:

- Spring School: 5/12 - 5/14
- Midweek School: 8/30 - 9/1
- Fall School: 9/29 - 10/1

Seth raised the issue (again) of running a fourth driver's school at another track besides WGI, partly because of the big gap between the spring and midweek schools as they are now scheduled. Seth is strongly in favor of this. The issue was debated, with (the usual) objections expressed regarding the staffing of an additional school, and whether instructors and students alike could be attracted to an event at a track not in our vicinity. Some felt that we could do it if the numbers of students were kept low, keeping down the demand for instructors and lightening the burden on running the event. Those not so favorable to the idea pointed out how other chapters have repeatedly taken significant losses trying to run schools at WGI far from their respective home bases. The issue was tabled to a Driving Events Committee meeting for further debate and recommendation.

Monthly Meetings: Vince would like to have small-scale business meetings for the core board members, and separate general meetings. The general meetings would be suited to a restaurant or bar as in the past, but this gets into issues regarding space, economic interests of the bar/restaurant, etc. Another possibility

would be to have unofficial spur of the moment get-togethers at local bars, as in the past. General meetings could be done quarterly at BMW dealerships, such as Towne BMW/MINI, Holtz BMW, etc. Need to have a special feature to attract members to such meetings. Chuck suggested bringing member's cars to these events to talk about preparing cars for autoX and DS, in order to familiarize new people with these activities. Could extend an invitation to other clubs as well. Specifically, Vince mentioned the Mini-Cooper club, as they would be a natural partner at Towne. Mini clubs are very active; the members love their cars in much the same spirit as the early days of the BMW CCA. We should extend an invitation to them to join with us in our events. The benefit to them would be access to our best events (DS, autoX, etc) and our extensive experience with running them, and the benefit to us is participation of new enthusiasts.

Decided to try for an general event at Towne in November, prior to Thanksgiving. Amanda will do a postcard to send to the western NY members.

Decided to approach Holtz to see if they would be interested in hosting a meeting, optimally in January. February is also open at present; March has the annual meeting. Amanda will talk to Mel Dillon to help coordinate Holtz event, and Bill Hicks will help.

Holiday Party: December 3 was the date set on the calendar, but we don't have a place (!) Fall back might be to have a party with another club. How do we get attendance up? Need to make sure that the event format is clear: if we have a cocktail party with light hot hors d'oeuvres, then that needs to be stated clearly so people don't come expecting dinner (which happened last year). Need to advertise the party on the website and email list-server. Vince emphasized again his desire to get more people involved.

Advertising: Seth gave a short report about the subcommittee meeting. Ad costs will be raised. There is also a need for more ads, because Seth wants the revenue to go full color in publication. Danielle resigned down as an ad rep, but Dan is resuming as one. Seth will reduce the number of free copies placed at sponsors' place of business, as many are being thrown out. Ads placed on the chapter web pages will be an included benefit with the ad costs for the Brief. If someone donates services to the club, they will be offered a web ad. Deadline for next print issue is November 30.

Finances: There were about 90 paying students at the Fall DS, in addition to the CR participants. Vince reviewed the outstanding bills, none of which were unusual at this time of year, and gave the current bank balance. If the chapter can afford more charity donations this year, Vince would like to do it. Need to decide if this is so by November monthly board meeting.

Adjourned 9:00 PM





that is not staged on the track of the Spartanburg, SC based Performance Center, or on the nearby Michelin Proving Grounds tracks. The Advanced M Schools are held at either Lowe's Motor Speedway (LMS), or Virginia International Raceway (VIR). Having heard positive opinions about VIR from driving instructors at the GVC schools at Watkins Glen, VIR was the first choice for my prize-winning experience. Work commitments, however, conflicted with the VIR schedule dates, necessitating me settling for the second choice LMS venue.

Onward to my Advanced M School schedule:

Monday November 14th. Fly to Charlotte, and check into the Advanced M School headquarters hotel in sufficient time to attend a casual, welcoming 7:00 PM cocktail reception with fine

## BMW's Invade NASCAR Turf

By Jack Pierotti

Lowe's Motor Speedway, Charlotte, North Carolina  
November 14-16, 2005

Given the mere mention of this venue, and the time of year, many BMW enthusiasts may conjure up images of NASCAR cars racing around the banked oval amidst balmy fall weather. Instead, LMS was hosting the BMW Performance Center "Advanced M School." New, unmodified E46 M3s and E39 M5s were speeding around the oval with "yours truly" as one of the student drivers. The temperature was in the 60's and 70's, with overcast, threatening skies for most of the event. Fortunately the weather gods saw fit to provide us with minimal rain on the morning of the first track day, November 15th. Further wet weather held off until five minutes after the school concluded on November 16th.

My journey to the Advanced School began in June 2005 when GVC-BMWCCA hosted a corral at Watkins Glen during the Grand Am races. Club arrangements included a hospitality tent, parking corral, paddock tour, victuals, libations, and (best of all) a hard-working, friendly, volunteer GVC staff. For this event, the BMW Performance Center generously sponsored a raffle with the prize being a BMW expense-paid trip to attend a Performance Center M school. While visiting the GVC tent "yours truly" filled out a raffle ticket. Subsequently, the day after the Grand AM weekend concluded, I was pleasantly surprised to get an email from Adrienne Hughes advising that I was the lucky raffle winner. This is all the more surprising considering that I have never won anything in my life—that my aging brain can recall.

Soon thereafter, I received confirmation from the Performance Center with the schedule of the M schools. The BMW Performance Center (BPC) offers the M Schools four to five times per year. Since I had previously taken the Performance Center M school in the spring, I asked for, and received, an upgrade to attend the Advanced M School for the difference between the class prices.

The Advanced M School is the most expensive entrée on the Performance Center menu of driving schools. As raffle winner, all my expenses were covered by BMW with the exception of airfare and taxi to hotel.

The Advanced M School is the only one of the BPC schools



dining buffet. Dinner was followed a Power Point presentation showing the LMS multiple track/autocross layouts, the schedule for the next two days, and other pertinent information. A question and answer period followed the presentation. The instructors mentioned that they planned a good workout for the students over the next two days with as much as six hours/day behind the wheel for everyone. The evening comments concluded with the suggestion to "get a good nights sleep."

During this reception/dinner, I was surprised to learn that including me there were only seven student drivers. A grand total of sixteen persons were involved in the school. The school was comprised of seven students, four instructors, two mechanics, and three logistical staff from the Performance Center. Of the students, the gender breakdown was six men, and one woman. The participants included a family of three— father, daughter, and son-in-law. One of the other students was Mr. Patrick Hong, Senior Technical Editor of Road & Track magazine. The Performance Center staff explained that Hong was a late addition to the school. The editor was in attendance to experience the school, and write an article about it, which is expected to appear in either the January or February 2006 issue of Road & Track. The Performance Center instructors indicated they were pleased at the publicity opportunity, should Hong see fit to write a favorable review.

Tuesday November 15th. Following breakfast, the hotel shuttle van departed for the Lowe's Motor Speedway with arrival at 8:00 AM. The feeling that one could experience upon entering the LMS complex may be like a gladiator entering the coliseum for the first time. The massive facility can accommodate 180,000 spectators for NASCAR events. From 8:00 to 9:00 AM, instruc-

tors gave us briefings on the two LMS autocross courses, skid pad, big track, and schedule for the day. The briefing was followed by a helmet fitting for the students. Each student was then set up with a 2-way radio with under the helmet earplug. Complimentary equipment included the new helmets, and M logo BMW helmet/duffel bag, collared sport shirt, fleece lined vest.

Next, students were split into two groups, of four and three. Two instructors were assigned to each group, and everyone walked to the nearby garage to get into the cars. The school format has each student in a car by themselves, in 2-way radio communication with the instructors, who drove separate cars.

#### LMS track statistics of courses used for this Advanced M School:

The smaller autocross course was held on the infield asphalt Go-Kart track, which is 6/10 of a mile length, with many curves of every degree, including two hairpins close to 180 degrees. Fifty-five seconds was the best time achieved on this autocross by any student driver during this school, with most drivers best time around 55 to 60 seconds.

A nearby (longer and wider) autocross track of .75 mile length was used for the larger autocross course the first day of school, with competitive timed runs taken toward the end of the day. Yours truly distinguished himself by nearly winning this event, were it not for entertaining all onlookers, by doing a double doughnut agricultural excursion 150 feet from the finish line. I had a little too much speed entering the last curve, and did a 180 into the grass. Knowing the clock was still running I immediately drove back onto the track with too heavy a foot, and the tires spun the car around off into the grass again. Instructors and students alike thanked me for the finish line entertainment, the quick recovery, and indicated I would have won this event, were it not for the entertainment. Much to my surprise, despite being the "Doughnut King," my time was still good enough for a fifth place finish among the seven students.

Note: The second day of school, this .75 mile course was combined with the LMS big 1.5 mile banked oval track to form the long autocross course of 2.25 miles. Most of the student drivers agreed that this long course was the most fun. This main LMS banked track which is used for NASCAR racing has the following statistics: 1.5 mile length (7,920 feet), front stretch length of 1,980 feet, back stretch length of 1,500 feet, turns one and two (banked end curve) of 2,400 feet, turns three and four (banked end curve) of 2,040 feet. The radius of turns one and two is 685 feet, and turns three and four is 625 feet. Banking of the straightaways is 5 degrees, and 24 degrees in the curves. Instructors commented that we would feel the G-forces in the banked curves, and that NASCAR drivers typically experience 2.5 Gs in the curves.

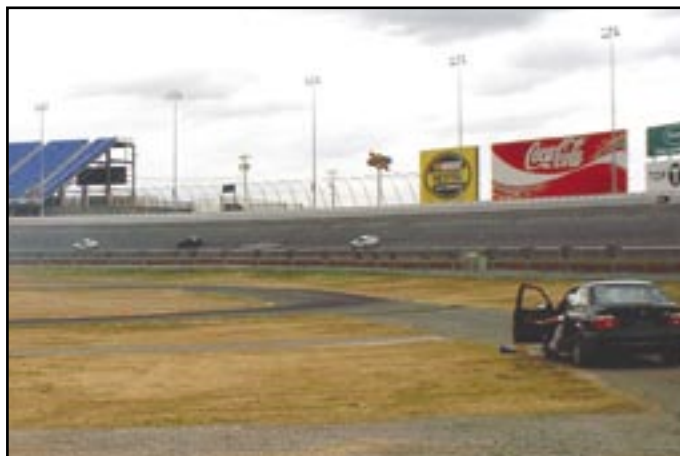
#### The Cars used:

The cars the Performance Center transported to LMS for Advanced M School, were twelve 2005 E46 M3s with Competition Package, and eight 2003 E39 M5s. Half of the M3s had the SMG transmission, and half had a 6-speed stick. All M5's had a 6-speed stick.

#### Tuesday, November 15th, schedule:

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Three 50-minute sessions on different areas of LMS, with 10-minute hourly breaks at the garage for pit stops and refreshments.

12:00-1:00 PM. Lunch buffet in the LMS Media center building, near the garage.





1:00-4:30PM. Same format as morning sessions, and instructors modifying the courses.

4:15 -5:00 PM. "INTRO to the new 2006 BMW E60 M5" Each student was permitted to drive two laps on the big track (with instructor in passenger seat) in a brand new 2006 M5. The M5 had just finished the 1200-mile break in period and oil change. On these laps we had an opportunity to accelerate from a standing stop to near redline in the first three gears before slowing to enter the 24-degree banked curves. When I slowed for the curve, I was in 4th gear (short of redline) and had reached about 125 mph. This observation was made by a fellow student observing from the back seat. That's right! There were three students plus an instructor in the M5, and despite this weight, the V-10 M5 was still very fast. Unfortunately, the students were not permitted to drive the M5 on the big autocross course, which would have been fun.

My impression of the new M5 is quite positive. The M5 is definitely a stealthy "Tiger," even while parked and idling. At speed on the track, the M5 is fast, agile, tight, and stable while still

being comfortable. The M5 is, however, not as agile the M3—not surprising, given the M5 longer wheel base and curb weight of 4012 lbs. This is nearly 600 lbs. more than the M3. The M5 third generation SMG transmission shifts noticeably smoother and slightly faster than my own 2005 M3 with second generation SMG. The see-through heads-up display (on lower part of windshield) is a neat feature on the new M5. At a glance the display provides the driver with the following information: tachometer revs, speed, and transmission gear. The steering wheel M button instantly converts the M5 from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde—from a luxurious, fast, agile, sophisticated 400 HP cruiser to a 507 HP track-ready sedan. Engaging the M button provides faster, smoother shifts and throttle response, and a firmer suspension. On the luxury side, as expected of an M5, only the finest well-bred cows were sacrificed to upholster the M5's interior. No doubt in my mind that BMW must have acquired the fine leather from those Italian tanning elves.

Note: Through the duration of two-day school schedule, the students drove M3s on both the small and large autocross course, and M5's on a wet skid pad. The students drove M5s in second gear on this skid pad, and made valiant attempts to master the art of drifting the cars around a figure-eight course. No student mastered this art, but we had fun while improving our skills.

5:00-6:00 PM. Shuttle bus to hotel through rush hour traffic jams with some of the tired students napping on the way.

7:20-10:00 PM. A lengthy and fun casual dinner for everyone at a nearby five star seafood restaurant. The day ended with the exhausted students and instructors dragging themselves back to the hotel before they might fall asleep on the restaurant tables.

### Wednesday November 16

The day's schedule began with an 8:30 AM track arrival, discussion of the previous day's experiences, discussion of the day's schedule, and then out to the cars at 9:00 AM. This day's schedule was the same as previous day; however, the students participated in the timed autocrosses. More time was spent on the long autocross course, which for this second day included 95% of a lap on the big-banked track. These laps were done in groups of three cars, consisting of two students driving E46 M3's and one instructor driving in between them in an E39 M5. One student took a turn being the leader of the pack for three laps prior to changing places with the other student. The instructor would drive in between the students by four to five car lengths behind the leader student. He gave radio instruction, and positive constructive commentary, while the student drove the course as fast as possible within his comfort level. All this while the student did his best to follow the correct line. Following three laps, the leader change was accomplished by the instructor advising the leader to slow and go high on the track allowing the trailing student and instructor to drive underneath and into the lead. This event was the most fun. The maximum speeds reached were 135-140 mph at end of straight, prior to slowing as we entered the banked curve. Upon exiting the banking, we drove the flat portion of the track at around 110 mph before reaching the turn-in point to the infield autocross section of the course.

During one of these laps, "yours truly" distinguished himself by spinning out again on the same infield curve as the previous day. This incident was caused by the left rear tire of my M3 coming off the rim during hard cornering. I was the trailing student during this incident with the instructor in front, not yet aware of



its way out, causing the tire to go flat. The last curve took it off the rim.

12:00-1:00 PM. Lunch buffet at the LMS Media Center

1:00-4:30 PM. Same format as morning session with students having some leeway to choose their favorite course, and spend time at it. Instructors tried to accommodate these requests, which I believe, was made easier by the small number of students.

4:30-5:00. Say good byes

5:00 PM. Sstudents depart LMS on the shuttle van to the airport, for return flights home.

me—the missing man. To avoid any traffic, I immediately drove off the track into the grass, and radioed him. The Performance Center mechanics then proceeded to impress me with their skill and organization. “They came prepared for fast action.” One mechanic drove out a spare M3 to my location, and had me back on the track within three minutes of my radio call. The second mechanic drove out a spare tire and jack, and had the car back in service when this track session ended 15 minutes later. The mechanics and instructors later informed me that I had distinguished myself by achieving another first. They indicated that no driver had ever had a tire come off the rim at any previous driving school. The mechanics speculated that the heating of the tires and hard cornering had caused the tire valve stem to work

FYI: I inquired about the BMWs used at the Performance Center. I was informed that all BMW’s used at the BPC driving schools are delivered new from the factory with no modifications. The cars are then assigned to a BPC staff member (or an executive at the nearby BMW Z4 and X5 manufacturing factory) for use during the 1200 mile break in period. At the conclusion of the break in period, the cars are put in use at the schools, and maintained by the BPC trained mechanics in the Performance Center state-of-the-art garages. These BMWs are used at the schools until they have 12,000 miles on the odometer. They are then taken out of service, replaced, and subsequently transported to overseas markets to be sold.

In summary, my Advanced M School experience was fun, intensive, fantastic, and exhausting. What a thrilling way to get tired! It was a great way to advance my skills with expert instructors and get valuable seat time without all the worries, wear and tear on my own M3.



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