

Fall 2011

der **BAYERISCHE** **brüder**

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Autumn is once again upon us in the northeast and winter is fast approaching. After taking one last spin around town, most of the summer cars have been tucked away to keep them protected from the ice, snow, and salt that is surely coming. This time of year lends itself to planning modifications and accumulating parts for off-season projects and maintenance. I know I've made a few visits to TurnerMotorsport.com and BavAuto.com web sites in recent weeks. One way to show our appreciation for sponsorship of our chapter is to click through to their sites from the gvc-bmwcca.org web site. Those clicks let our sponsors know that by supporting us they're getting page hits on their sites and possibly selling a few parts to the bimmerphiles we represent.

Looking back on the summer driving season behind us, we've had a lot of memorable events. The driving schools at Watkins Glen and Mosport continue to draw good turnout and reflect the hard work and dedication that Bill O'Neill and Dave Lanni consistently put in to ensure a safe, fun time is had by all. The autocross season was also well-attended and Mel Dillon made sure there were plenty of opportunities for our club faithful to get out and dance with the cones. Our two Street Survival schools were filled to capacity and our instructor base really stepped up to make those events meaningful to a lot of young drivers just starting to learn about speed and safety. And our chili cook-off was a nice way to get together for some season-ending camaraderie.

The year was not completely without its reminders that the driving activities we enjoy come with risks and the potential for bad things to happen. Between mechanical failure, driver error, and situational contact in club racing, there were a handful of reminders that putting cars on race tracks can lead to costly damage. After going to see the movie Senna about the brilliant but short career of Formula One driver Ayrton Senna, and watching coverage of the Indy Racing League race in Las Vegas in which Dan Wheldon's life was tragically lost, it is clear that the sport we engage in when we drive at track speeds cannot be taken casually. While the speeds achieved in our schools and races are significantly lower than in professional racing, the risk of injury is certainly present, so focusing on safety and driver protection continues to be paramount.

Fortunately, the frequency of incidents at our schools is low and our instructors do a tremendous job keeping our students driving in a safe manner at track speeds. Over the past decade the average horsepower in the typical driving school vehicle has increased significantly. BMW and Porsche along with other manufacturers of high performance vehicles seem to be competing in a battle for top honors in providing very powerful cars that can achieve spectacular

speeds at affordable prices. This makes our job of teaching car control to the relative newcomer that much more difficult. It also makes it much more important. A race track is designed for safety and really is the best place to learn the effects of putting speed into the process of negotiating turns. It is far better to find out how sudden throttle input affects the car, and learn techniques for smooth application of power under controlled conditions on a wide track surface than on the streets where curbs, trees, and other cars provide very little room for error. I would encourage anyone who is fortunate enough to own a car branded with an "M" to sign up for a driving school in the near future. Of course, even an owner of a "lesser" BMW like a 328 would benefit greatly from the experience as well.

The coming winter months promise opportunities for social get-togethers and celebrations with friends and family. Our holiday party is right around the corner and our annual meeting will be another good opportunity to socialize with our BMW-driving friends. Even though the cold and snow may make road conditions less than desirable and driving downright miserable at times, I'm sure the warmth of our club gatherings will help make the time fly by and we'll again be cruising on summer tires before you can say "New R Comps."

See you at the races.

2012 Calendar of Events

March

17th Saturday – **Annual Meeting** – Woodcliff Hotel & SPA

April

14th Saturday – **Instructor Seminar** - Burgundy Basin

May

5th & 6th Sat & Sun – ***Ultimate Driving School** – Watkins Glen

12th Saturday – **AutoX** - Letchworth State Park

June

17th Sunday – **AutoX** – WGI with PCA

August

22nd & 23rd Wed & Thurs – ***Ultimate Driving School** – Watkins Glen

September

15th Saturday – **AutoX** - Letchworth State Park

22nd & 23rd Mon & Tues – ***Ultimate Driving School** – Watkins Glen

*Registration will open for all Driving Schools on New Year's Day

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Bimmerphiles Aren't a Shiftless Bunch

My first test drive of a BMW was in California during a vacation in 1979. At that time there weren't many BMWs on the roads but I was intrigued with this "four door sports sedan" – an E12 5-Series. At that time my commuting car was a 1975 VW Sirocco. Wouldn't it be great to have a five passenger everyday sedan and a sports car all rolled into one? The test drive hooked me for life. The six-cylinder engine was smooth and powerful, but the real deal maker was the manual transmission and velvet clutch that effortlessly sought out each perfectly-spaced gear. Immediately upon returning home I bought an E 12. Since then every Bimmer we've owned has had a manual transmission.

Driving is my passion – there is no other endeavor in my sphere of existence that produces more pleasure (well – maybe one). To see a ribbon of road ahead; curving and undulating, rising and falling, turning and twisting – starts the adrenalin pumping. The rhythm of driving; accelerating and decelerating, matching rpm's with deftly executed heel-and-toe downshifts – is like dancing with the stars. There is no computer in existence – nor will there ever be – that can match the human brain for instant adjustment to road conditions. I have never used the auto pilot which comes standard on virtually all BMWs. It angers me having to pay for this feature which enables others to text, drink their coffee, monitor the nav system, file their nails, or any other activity that has little to do with driving. I was following a woman the other day who was going 30 mph in a 55 mph zone. I passed her at the first opportunity, and, as I suspected, she had her Blackberry resting on the steering wheel – texting away.

It is frustrating that BMW is forced to squander their time, talent, and resources – much of it mandated by the governments of our world – on electronic devices that will allow

our Ultimate Driving Machines to be driven without human input. All of which – in my opinion - detracts from the simple joy of driving.

Today, there is a raging debate going on in the halls of Munich and northern New Jersey as to the future of manual transmissions within the BMW luxury sports model lineup such as the 3-Series, 5-Series, 6-Series, and all M models. A sad statistic reveals that over 90% of American drivers – cars and trucks alike – are sold with automatic transmissions. The vast majority of Gen X drivers were taught on their parent's cars and have never been exposed to the joys of manual shifting. Consequently, the marketing suits are having a tough time justifying the expense of certifying manual transmissions for the other ten percent. On the other hand, "The Ultimate Driving Machine" is not the ultimate driving machine – again in my opinion – without that third pedal on the floor.

Former GM vice chairman Bob Lutz recently published his take on this conundrum entitled Car Guys vs Bean Counters/The Battle for the Soul of American Business. Sad to say but soon the sports sedans we love, and love to drive, will become another victim of our increasingly regimented society.

Ironically, American sports cars still have stick shifts while Europe goes for Formula One technology. Consequently, the new M5 – due to hit our shores in 2012 will still sport a stick. Sales for the last M5 bombed until they added a manual.

The governmental bureaucrats are striving to render the driver of tomorrow obsolete – while substituting i-pods, nav systems, and buzzers that go off if you drift out of your lane – all in an attempt to keep the driver from falling asleep behind the wheel.

Go figure.



BMW

of Rochester

It's been over a year since our local BMW dealership in Rochester changed ownership from John Holtz to the West Herr Automotive Group of Buffalo. The West Henrietta site remains, as do much of the staff in sales, service and parts, but much has changed. West Herr has been in business for 62 years in Western New York and is the number one volume dealer in New York State – on track to deliver over 32,000 vehicles in 2011 across 20 franchises. You can see the difference when you drive in to the dealership. The lot is packed with cars.



1

1. A pristine certified preowned M3, just waiting for a new owner and a day at the track.



2

2. Doug Martin, service manager, with service advisor, Dave Roberts (seated).



3

3. Scott Harvell (foreground) sales manager and Nick DeMarco, BMW sales manager.

They typically have over 100 new BMWs in stock, 15-20 Certified Pre-owned (CPO) BMWs and 50-75 other pre-owned BMWs, highline and off-brand cars. The sales staff at BMW of Rochester also has access to over 1500 pre-owned vehicles in the West Herr network and

can have cars brought to Rochester for a prospective buyer to test drive. Scott Harvell, the BMW General Manager, says, "Our high volume allows for lower gross profit, which means better prices for our customers. Whereas in the past, shoppers may have gone out of town to

get the best price on a BMW, we are confident we can meet their needs right here. With our large dealer network, we can also provide access to vehicles throughout our system."

To handle the increased sales, BMW of Rochester now has eight BMW sales represen-



Dan DiPaolo, parts department

“We take our community role very seriously, and we are committed to giving back to our neighbors who have supported us. It is our desire to be good corporate citizens with another important purpose other than selling and servicing automobiles.”



tatives. Nick DeMarco, the BMW sales manager, says, “We are proud to represent BMW. We think it’s a perfect marriage of the ultra-high quality of BMW and a large volume, quality dealer that will stand behind the car and provide factory authorized service on that vehicle.” There is also a Business Development Center (BDC) with dedicated staff to promote convenient shopping through the BMWROCHESTER.COM website. The complete inventory is available online. You can send an inquiry to the BDC specialist and literally take care of the entire process online and pick up the car the same day. You can also schedule service appointments online.

Doug Martin remains onboard as BMW service manager. “Our service department is busier than ever. We have the only factory authorized BMW service center in Rochester. We have 12 factory trained technicians, 7 of whom are BMW Master Technicians. These techs have completed over 20 specialized BMW courses and have to update their certifications with additional practical exams periodically. We have all the latest BMW diagnostic equipment as well as state of-the-art vehicle alignment equipment and tire mounting and balancing machines. Several of our techs are specially trained on diesel, hybrid and body components technology. We have 22 BMW service loaners, so most of the time you can drop off your car and be on your way. Our focus is on customer satisfaction.”

The waiting area on the main floor is now called the “service boutique.” It is an airy, open space in the middle of the building between the parts and service departments and usually features a beautiful BMW model on display. A sweet, black 650Ci was featured when I last visited. All the usual refreshments are available, along with television and WiFi, sofas, tables and chairs. There is also a more secluded waiting room upstairs overlooking the showroom.

BMW club members get a 10% discount on parts and labor. For club members heading to one of our driving

schools at Watkins Glen or Mosport, BMW of Rochester offers free track tech inspections. Club members who plan to buy a new BMW can take advantage of the Membership Reward Rebate ranging from \$500 to \$1500. On Certified Pre-Owned BMWs, the rebate is \$250 or \$500, depending on model. See details at: bmwcca.org.

West Herr also now owns the Mercedes-Benz of Rochester dealership. They are building a new Mercedes-Benz facility on West Henrietta Rd. adjacent to BMW of Rochester, creating another entrance for both dealerships. The entrance on Calkins Rd. will remain open.

The West Herr Automotive Group is uniquely community minded. They are a long-time contributor and supporter of many worthwhile organizations in western New York. “We take our community role very seriously, and we are committed to giving back to our neighbors who have supported us. It is our desire to be good corporate citizens with another important purpose other than selling and servicing automobiles.” In addition to the donation of time, facilities and other resources, the West Herr Auto Group has provided direct financial support to over 600 organizations from little league baseball and football, to senior citizens groups, school bands, and benefits for individuals with catastrophic illnesses, just to name a few. As a company, West Herr has chosen the following three western New York based organizations with which to partner and provide major support: Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Kids Escaping Drugs and The Center for Hospice and Palliative Care.

BMW of Rochester helps sponsor our Street Survival Schools geared to helping teen drivers learn life car-control skills in a controlled environment at Monroe Community College and Watkins Glen. Look for a future club event in conjunction with BMW Rochester, or just stop in the next time you are in the area. Let them know you are with the BMW Club and they’ll be glad to show you around the facility.

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**The 2012 BMW
Motorsport
Programme:
DTM, ALMS,
Customer Racing,
Promotion of
Juniors and a DTM
Test for the Sports
Trophy Winner**



Munich, 26th November 2011. BMW Motorsport used the 50th BMW Sports Trophy Award Ceremony to announce further details of next year's programme. The focus is firmly on the return to the DTM after an absence of almost 20 years.

At the ceremony in the Double Cone building at Munich's BMW Welt, BMW Motorsport Director Jens Marquardt presented the latest addition to the team of DTM drivers, the newly crowned DTM champion Martin Tomczyk (DE). Tomczyk will join Andy Priaulx (GB), Augusto Farfus (BR) and Bruno Spengler (CA), who have already been confirmed as BMW drivers, behind the wheel of a BMW M3 DTM in the coming season. The BMW Sports Trophy will be even more important next year: The winner of the

annual BMW privateer competition will be rewarded with a test day in the BMW M3 DTM from 2012.

Marquardt appeared happy with the progress of preparations ahead of the 2012 curtain-raiser in Hockenheim. He said: "We are right on track. The entire team at BMW Motorsport has been working feverishly since we

stable base. The focus next year will be on teasing every last bit of performance out of the car, before development is frozen in March, in accordance with technical regulations. We should be well set up for 2012."

Speaking at his first public appearance for BMW, Tomczyk said: "This is obviously a very exciting and special

where I will be let loose on the track in the BMW M3 DTM for the first time." The test drives at the race track in southern Spain will be held from 6th to 8th December.

As well as lining up in the DTM, BMW will also continue to compete in the American Le Mans Series (ALMS) in 2012. The goal here is to successfully defend the Drivers', Team and Manufacturers' titles won in this year's GT class. The team responsible for running the BMW M3 GT remains BMW Team RLL, while the drivers will be announced at a later date. Marquardt said: "It goes without saying that we will not be sending a successful car like the BMW M3 GT off to the museum after a season like the one we enjoyed in 2011. BMW Team RLL will be back with this model to defend its GT titles next year."

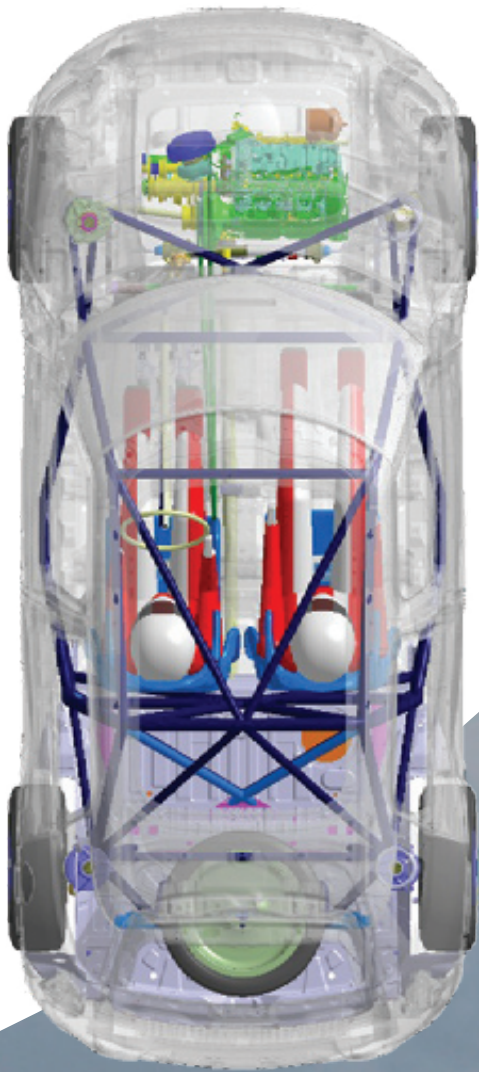
In Europe, BMW is strengthening its customer racing presence with the BMW Z4 GT3. After the many triumphs achieved last season, the car will be the subject of intense further development for 2012 and, in the hands of private BMW teams and drivers, looks set to cause a stir at events and championships held in accordance with the GT3 regulations. Marquardt said: "We believe that the GT3 class

"We are right on track. The entire team at BMW Motorsport has been working feverishly since we announced the DTM comeback. As it stands, we have already completed over 15,000 kilometres of testing with the BMW M3 DTM. Every single kilometre is crucial: it is essential to make up ground on our competitors, who have the edge when it comes to experience..."

announced the DTM comeback. As it stands, we have already completed over 15,000 kilometres of testing with the BMW M3 DTM. Every single kilometre is crucial: it is essential to make up ground on our competitors, who have the edge when it comes to experience. We have established a very

evening for me. To meet everyone in the BMW Motorsport family and immediately be accepted as a member of it is absolutely fantastic. I am really looking forward to the new challenge and cannot wait for the season to get started. First, however, I have the tests in Montebello to look forward to,





has a successful future ahead of it. You only need to look at how many manufacturers are racing in this class with competitive GT3 versions of their production cars. The strength of the field is incredibly high – which is why we will be doing everything in our power to ensure that the BMW Z4 GT3 continues to guarantee victories for our privateer drivers and teams.”

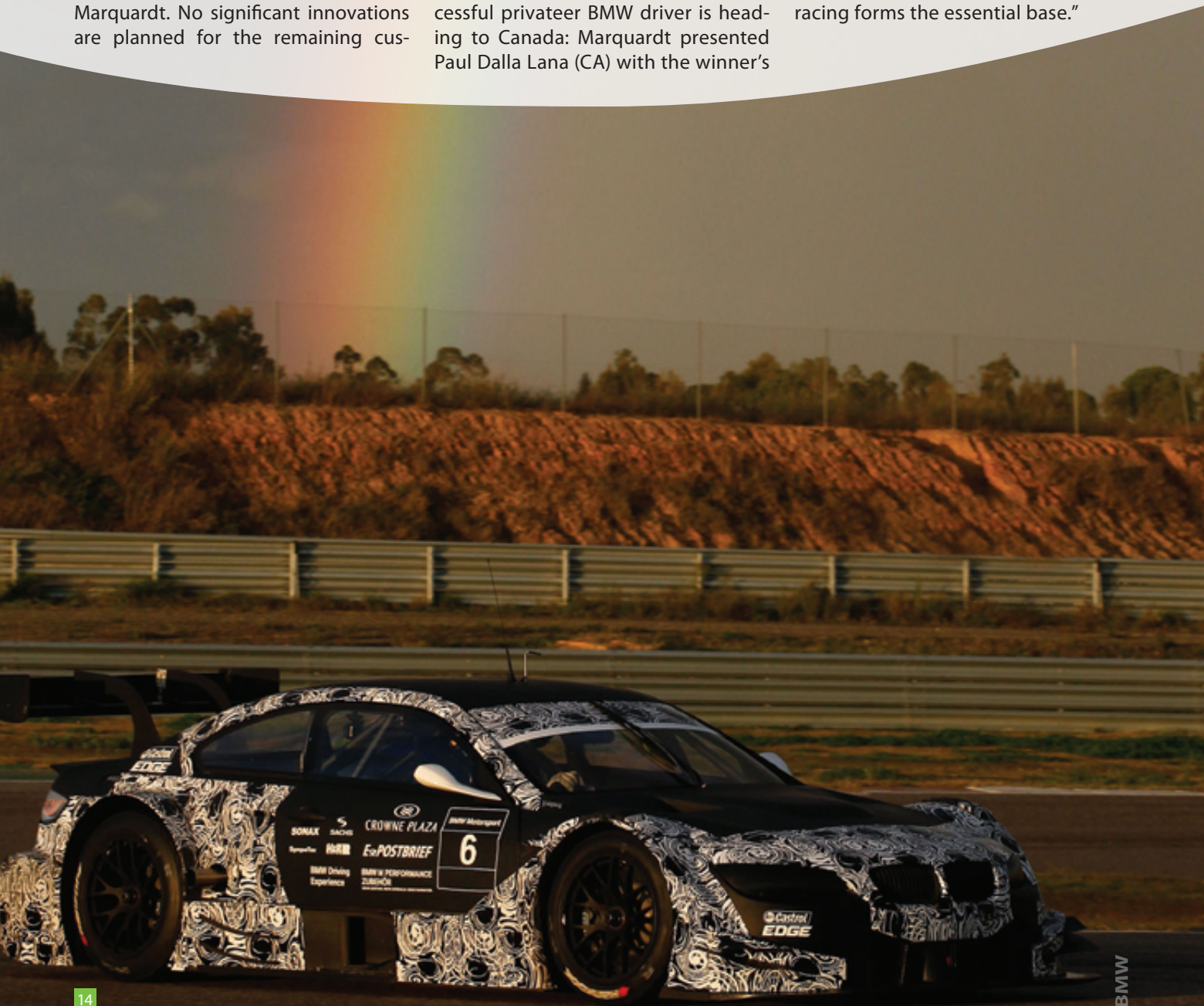
The 2012 season will also see private BMW teams using the BMW Z4 GT3 at 24-hour classics, such as the marathon round the Nürburgring-Nordschleife (DE). “I am certain that this car will provide us with everything we need to challenge for overall victory,” said Marquardt. No significant innovations are planned for the remaining cus-

tomers racing models, the BMW 320 TC and BMW M3 GT4. The BMW customer teams will continue to receive support.

The Formula BMW Talent Cup enters its second season in 2012. This training series sees 15 talented junior drivers systematically introduced to the demands of professional motorsport. Driving coaches and race engineers supervise the participants in small groups, working their way through everything from individual driving styles to the complete setup. In the inaugural season in 2011, Stefan Wackerbauer clinched overall victory at the grand finale in Oschersleben (DE).

This year’s trophy for the most successful privateer BMW driver is heading to Canada: Marquardt presented Paul Dalla Lana (CA) with the winner’s

cheque for 30,000 Euros at the 50th BMW Sports Trophy Award Ceremony, held in the Double Cone building at Munich’s BMW Welt. Marquardt explained how the BMW Sports Trophy will gain even more importance: “As part of our realignment in close-to-production motorsport, next year’s winner of the BMW Sports Trophy will receive a test day in the BMW M3 DTM the following year. On the one hand, this will allow us to underline the importance of the Sports Trophy to BMW. On the other hand, it shows the close interaction of our involvement in motorsport. At the forefront of this is our DTM commitment, while customer racing forms the essential base.”



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Epic Alpine Road Trip

I woke up one morning in June and realized my employer-assignment in Germany would soon be over. My dad must have had the same thought because he e-mailed me to ask, "Time for one more visit?" Dad had already made three visits while I was abroad - twice coupled to his own work obligations, though with his recent retirement I thought those would wane. Rather, he had a new business venture to investigate, which just happened to be in Germany. I was a little busy packing up my life again, to ship it all back to the US, and tie up other loose ends as required by moving to a different country.

But one more visit was definitely in order. And not just any visit: attached to the e-mail was a picture dad took in 2005 on a beautifully clear Alpine day. You could see for miles across white mountain tops in blue sky, green mountain slopes below the snow line, and bright sunshine. "I want to see another view like this," he stated simply. And so the makings of an Epic Alpine Road trip were born.

Attached to the e-mail was a picture dad took in 2005 on a beautifully clear Alpine day. You could see for miles across white mountain tops in blue sky, green mountain slopes below the snow line, and bright sunshine. "I want to see another view like this," he stated simply.

The timing was such that I picked up dad at the Munich airport immediately after having kissed my wife goodbye, as she was flying home earlier than me. Dad and I experienced the airport's observation hill, to watch her flight depart, and then we headed downtown for an obligatory BMW Welt visit. I will never bore of going there!

We spent the next couple of days planning our Alpine excursion, which would be based from Chur, Switzerland. Chur is the country's oldest city, and seat of the Romansh-speaking region (though German today dominates).



Russ Labarca



Russ Labarca

We started out on a rather soggy day in Germany, spent twenty minutes total in Austria (most of which was under mountains in a tunnel), and looked into Lichtenstein as we paralleled its border with Switzerland. As we approached Chur, the mountains seemed to keep rising in front of us, higher and higher - and began to part the clouds, too.

Looking at the GPS map on the dashboard, there was nothing but a colored spaghetti set of twisted lines awaiting us as we came upon San Bernardino Pass. The resolution on the map wasn't high enough at points to show all of the curves. We pressed on with grins from ear to ear.

The turbo diesel in the 120 at this point showed its limitations: first gear was a must coming out of these tight right-handers, but I know a straight six with some low-end grunt would have kept things a little more interesting powering through in second. However this didn't stop me from building boost and revs,

fast, and occasionally leaving my rubber mark on the Swiss asphalt. The 120d can be tail-happy, if you let it.

Along the pass we were greeted by bell-wearing cows, which we could hear much sooner than we saw them. Many pull-offs allowed us to stop and take in the amazing views, but briefly - despite the sun, it was cold up there! At the coldest we saw about 1 or 2 degrees above freezing; at the hottest point, in Locarno on Lago Maggiore, where the palm trees were in full bloom, the temperature was in the mid-70's Fahrenheit. I found it a difficult day to dress properly.

As we moved again north, the Italian influence returned again to German, going from Airolo (signs telling us "Chiusura invernale") to Oberalp pass (where we were again warned, dass "im Winter gesperrt"), back into Romansh territory (where the signs might have told us the road was closed in winter, however my Romansh vocabulary is limited to the word for 'school'). The temperature started to drop, adding to the German versus Italian contrast. The road was sprinkled with little villages, tourist bed and breakfasts, and mountain chalets. Quaint, clean, and more amazing views, all as expected.

After seven and a half hours, we ended the loop back in Chur, with 338 km more on the car, and almost 5 GB worth of photos and videos crammed on to our memory cards (and probably a lot more into our mental memory cards).

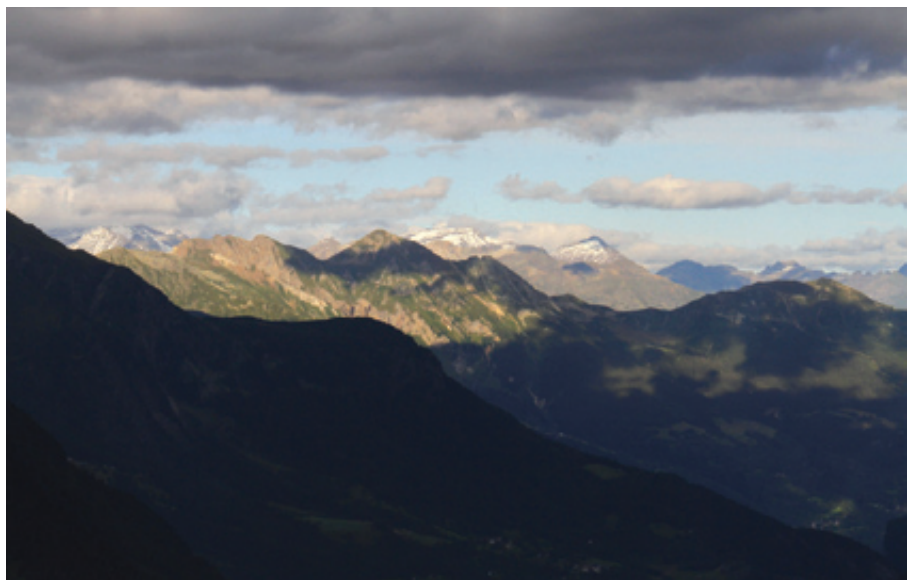
It was the perfect send-off for ending my adventure abroad, and a nice last road trip for the 120d, which I happily put 14,000 km on without any trouble. It was a sad day when I dropped the car back at the BMW dealer, remembering 14 months earlier when I eagerly picked it up, driving it down the mini-Welt ramp from the second floor.

Not knowing then what to expect from my assignment or my car, I can truly say that both worked out perfectly and were as good as everything I hoped.

I'll do my best to keep extolling the virtues of the 1-series hatchback diesel, with and maybe BMW will hear and send 'em our way one day.



Russ Labarca



Russ Labarca



Russ Labarca

From the Little Speed Shop: *Winter Driving*



Kevin Van Valkenburgh

The dreaded driving season is almost upon us: the nasty slush, cold freezing rain, ice-covered wipers, icy, sticky door locks, slippery roads, and the most dreaded of all...SALT! Here are ten quick tips to help your winter driving go a little smoother.

- 1** Give yourself plenty of time before leaving your driveway on a frigid morning. Take a few extra minutes to completely clear your car of all the snow. Hood, roof, trunk, wipers – and don't forget your headlights and taillights.
- 2** Exterior: give your car a good waxing. Protecting your paint is important. As brutal as our winters can be, it will help not only in clearing ice and snow, but giving your car's paint another line of defense against that slow car killer, SALT! Don't forget your door jambs; even throwing a light coat of wax on your outside windows will help quite a bit (wax works on more than just paint).
- 3** Interior: get all of the distracting stuff out of your car and check your floor mats. You don't want an old floor mat getting jammed under a pedal.
- 4** Buy a small can of WD-40 and spray some in your door locks and hinges. This will help keep moisture out of your door locks and keep your door hinges operating. Don't forget the hood latches, trunk and even a little on your gas cap threads.
- 5** I have found over the past years that a foam snow broom with a long handle works the best for vehicle snow removal. They are safe for your paint and clear a lot of snow fast! You still have time to order these online – or swing in to your local car parts dealer or discount store to beat the rush and buy one now.
- 6** Top off your fluids. Have your coolant protection level checked by your local repair shop or dealer. Keep your windshield washer fluid topped, off and, as inexpensive as it is, keep a gallon or two around.

- 7** Check your tires. This is the most important part! Your tires are often neglected – especially tire pressures. Make sure you have plenty of tread and there is no dry rot or cracks. Check your tire pressures often. During season changes tire pressure can change rather drastically overnight or even during the day. Remember this: for every ten-degree change in temperature, your tire pressure will change one pound! Check your tire pressures often during these drastic climate changes.
- 8** Change your wipers. It's best to do this twice a year: once before winter and then around springtime. Changing your wipers to a winter blade helps beat ice and snow from clogging those little pivot points and hindering your view of the road.
- 9** Have your battery checked and consider keeping a set of jumper cables in your car. Old batteries can seem stable during warmer months, but when the temperature drops below freezing your battery will suffer – as well as possibly you – if you get stuck waiting for a tow truck to get you back on the road.
- 10** Keep your gas tank as full as possible! This will ensure you make it to your destination if you get stuck in a lengthy traffic jam – or worst case – stuck in a snow bank.

All in all be safe. Take your time and don't rush. The extra time it may take to prepare yourself and your car for your commute will not affect your life as much as rushing and getting yourself into trouble on the slippery roads.

Can't wait to check back in for spring! Any questions? Feel free to email me at thelittlespeedshop@gmail.com. I am always looking for a good topic to write about, so feel free to write in and follow the blog on our website at www.thelittlespeedshop.com
Stay safe!

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The 2011 autocross season is at an end and Mother Nature is making threatening comments involving that four letter word – snow. The second half of the year saw events held during a hurricane and the first ever event at Letchworth State Park. After the tedious day spent under the unrelenting lash of hurricane Irene, the last two events were dry pleasant fall days – just what makes a day of autocross enjoyable!

by Mel Dillon

The August event at Seneca Army depot was also the last time we will be going there. Shortly after that event we received notice that they will not be leasing the facility out for any more events. For those who were not at Seneca, the day before the weather service was forecasting that things would be overcast but dry. But overnight the path of the storm shifted and we got more than our share of rain: horizontal rain compliments of hurricane Irene. Thanks to Bill Hicks for loaning us the cab of his pickup so we had someplace dry to set up the laptop and get the event underway. While attendance was down due to the weather, everyone in attendance got seven runs in and practiced a lot of car control skills in the wet. Steve Lawless continued his practice for the year and set the fastest time for a BMW. Try as I might I could not catch him, but did succeed in bumping Andy Blake out of the second place spot. Greg Turner finished top in the MINIs and Markus Kroll, whose poncho slowly disintegrated as the day progressed, brought his Porsche home first in that group.

Our next event was at Letchworth State Park. It's the first time an autocross has been held there that anyone can remember, and we have been invited back for next year. The day at the park was just about perfect. At the start of the day there were lots of issues with the generator and the timing gear. Remember the previous event, the hurri-cross? Well, rain had gotten into the power strip we use and shortly after turning on the generator smoke started to come out of the power strip. Definitely not a good thing to have happen to electronics. A quick run to a local store procured a new power strip and we were back in business, which was good as the lot was smooth and Andy Blake had designed a simple but fast course. We did have to make some small modifications to the layout as the M3 crowd wanted a straight up the backside. Bad M3 drivers -- the power just seems to go to their heads. Eight runs were made before the day was over -- and surprise, Steve Lawless was not in first place! Somehow, both Paul Smith and I sneaked past Steve when the final times were in.

The last event of the season had us returning to Cherry Valley

with beautiful fall weather and a group of seventeen BMW drivers competing. While Cherry Valley is a long haul from Rochester, it's fun as it brings out our friends from central New York and new faces always make the day more interesting. Tom Arter made good use of the E90 M3 power and put the fastest time for the BMWs on the clock. Steve Lawless put on a good drive, but ended the day one tenth of a second behind Tom. Try as I might I could not get the 330 any closer than three tenths behind Steve. Tim Moriarty found time to join us again only to have his car develop a mechanical issue that cut his day short. Riding home in the two truck is never fun!

With the end of the last event we crowned a new Top Gun Challenge series champion in Steve Lawless. Steve drove excellently all year long and deserves the title for 2011. With the first place finish at Letchworth Park, I just managed to edge Paul Smith aside for a second place in the year-end points. Andy Blake finished fourth and Tom Arter finished a respectable fifth. I think all of us should be looking over our shoulders in 2012 as Tom as shown real improvement this year, and if he can make more events, I predict he will finish even higher in the points in 2012.

Let me close this column with an appeal for someone to step forward to lead the autocross program in 2012. We need new faces in every aspect from making sure all the equipment makes it to the events, setup, running the timing gear and running the events. The same "gang of four" has driven the program for some time now and deserves a chance to enjoy the events. Besides, the more hands involved, the lighter the workload will be for everyone. Step forward and talk to Andy Blake or me about how you can contribute to the 2012 Top Gun Challenge series.

New Members

September

Ryan Atkinson
Matthew Baum
Keith Bernard
Lucia Bevia
William Bowen
David Brugh
Louis Ciminelli
Denton Clark
Linda Clark
Robert Cleiss
Andy Cocilova
Noa Denova
Matthew Dentinger
Cody Didas
Dawn Dryden
Briell Giancola
Brittney Halsey
Gregory Hammonds
Mark Harrington
Alexander Harrington
Paul Hawkins
Linda Henley

Elaine Herko
Eric Hostetter
Carla Huertas
Melvyn Hurwitz
Brian Jensen
Melanie Lakis
Mary Lenahan
Taylor Litto
Danika Luntz-Martin
Gary Mantz
Alex Martinec
Christopher Medina
Kylie Mosher
Leah Mosher
Spencer Nichols
Wayne Ohl
Daniel O'Shea
Bryan Papaj
Barbara Radolinski
Arvind Rao
Carl Reed
Bradley Reed
John Ring

Brianna Roat
Sean Ryan
Joey Scaglione
Joseph Scaptura
Emily Scripps
Sharon Severson
Robert Simpson
James Smith
Karen Smith
Stephen Truong
Douglas Warner
Andrew Whittaker
Parker Wild
Peter Willsea
Kamillah Wood

October

Cynthia Arnal
Frank Arnal
M Artz
Antonino Barbagallo
Chris Braun
Raymond Bray

Vitaliy Chiley
Garin Danner
Chris Dillon
Gary Donaldson
James Dresser
Stephen Edge
Dave Eichelberger
Mingkai Guo
Joseph Hradil
Jordan Karawiecki
Robert Libby
William Liberto
James Marcy
Ben Margolius
Steven Plouffe
Joshua Porkarski
Tyler Porter
Heather Power
Philip Scaffidi
Daniel Wellington

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