



New Jersey Bulletin

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Driver School: Lime Rock Park



Photo by Greg Lockman

Newsletter of the NJ Chapter
BMW Car Club of America
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May Meeting Recap

We had quite an amazing night for the monthly meeting at the Deutscher Club in Clark, NJ. The temperature was cool and crisp, and the sky was clear. The great weather was evident by how long it took everyone to get inside and get the meeting started. I think the cars, as well as the weather, was to blame for the tardiness as well! There was especially a large amount of e30's to include convertibles, sedans and M3's. There were also plenty examples of most other models and years as well! I think hanging around outside and checking out everybody's BMWs is my favorite part of these meetings.

We finally got inside and worked our way upstairs, after picking up a few refreshments. There were tons of great items for sale by other members and a good number of first time members too! And my other favorite part, the food! All the German food provided was great! We get choices like Bratwurst, kraut and pasta! Well, I guess someone in the kitchen that night was 1/2 German and 1/2 Italian? Whoever was cooking, the food was delicious and plentiful.

This month's meeting involved a technical question and answer session. This is particularly a great meeting to attend if you have any issues with your car that you, or anyone for that matter, cannot figure out. What we have are some of the greatest BMW minds in the area putting their heads

together to answer your questions, you really can't get much better than that. Our panel included Vic Lucariello of the Philes' Forum, Don Fields of Mr. M Cars, Sal Puleio of Rennsport Motorwerks, and Ray Adam of Open Road BMW.

We had issues brought up from fueling issues to braking issues, oil recommendations to modification suggestions and everything in between. Just as last year, we had so many great questions we went past 10pm! Even I had a few questions that I was able to get answers for my own car's issues.

After the meeting was adjourned, there was a little more hanging out in the parking lot and showing off new toys. The temperature was just right. In fact, it was the perfect temperature for a ride home with the top down! I'd like to thank Vic, Don, Sal, Ray, and John for spending their time with us; it was a great meeting. Also, I'd like to send thanks out to all the new members and all the regular faces who are the key ingredient in making the meetings a success month after month. Hope to see you all next month for the big meeting at BMW NA Headquarters.

- Jeff Burgess

NJ Chapter of the BMW CCA Board Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2009

Board members present: Larry Engel, James Kavalieros, Barry Stevens, Neil Gambony, Ross Karlin, Warren Brown, Jeff White, Deborah Kolar and David Allaway. Board members absent: Bob Conway, Al Drugos and Jerry Faber. Others present: Elihu Savad, Brian Morgan, Doug Feigel, Ron Acher.

President

Larry Engel called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM at 18 West in Raritan. The reading of the April minutes was waived and the minutes accepted. Larry distributed copies of the thank you letters which were sent to Will Turner and DeSimone BMW regarding the April membership meeting. Larry also thanked Brian Morgan for setting up this successful and well-attended meeting.

The BMW Corral at the New Jersey Motorsports Park Grand Am race was a success. We may rent a tent or provide other items for next year. The catering for the June school/race at NJMP will be provided by the track.

Vice President

Barry Stevens reported that the May 20th meeting will be a tech round table featuring Sal Puleio, Don Fields and Vic Lucariello. The June 19th meeting will be at BMW NA. The Deutscher Club of Clark event has been moved to June 12th. Older BMW's of interest are desired by DCC. A "vintage day" at a winery is being investigated, with a suggestion that this be our July membership meeting. There is no picnic planned for this year.

Treasurer

Warren Brown distributed the year-to-date profit and loss statement. Taxes have been filed. The Summit ITS school appears to have been an approximate \$8000 loss. LRP is a \$203 loss as of today. We are hoping that the NJMP and Summit Point race/school events will be profitable. Schools are generally being subscribed later than last year. The rally and ITS expenses still need to be verified.

Driving Events

Driver Schools - Jeff White reported that Lime Rock is full except for the green run group. The red and blue run groups are wait-listed. Thunderbolt (NJMP) is near-full. Registrations are coming in for the October school. Ross is coordinating the Westlake School participation at NJMP, with students expected to attend on Tuesday (June 9th).

Club Race - Ross Karlin reported that he is waiting for confirmed sponsors for the NJMP event. Trophies have been ordered at lower cost than prior years. There was discussion on the 40 thousand sq. ft. maintenance facility being built at the track.

We have been invited to attend the Westlake School carnival, and one or two race cars are desired.

Autocross - Elihu Savad reported that the first autocross will be this Sunday. Any weather cancellation will be a last-minute decision. The next autocross after Sunday will be June 14th at Expo.

The Meadowlands parking lot construction is driving more SCCA and PCA entrants to our events. We continue to be limited on space at the TD Bank Ballpark. Any BMW CCA member is guaranteed a spot. All others are on a first-come first-serve basis.

Jamie Kavalieros suggested the idea of a gymkhana following an autocross.

Rally - Larry reported that the Spring Rally was phenomenal, thanks to Brian and Francine, with 26 entrants and 24 finishers. The 2009 Champ Series points spreadsheet has been started based on the rally results.

Teen Street Survival - Jamie reported that the ad did not make the May newsletter. We are currently short on instructors, for which the need is about 20. A 1:1 student-instructor ratio is planned. The event will be at the NJ Expo & Convention Center. Middlesex Water Co. will again provide continuous water, which has proved far superior to the fire trucks we had used in the past.

Barry suggested a car control clinic for adults. As a non-subsidized event, this would require a significant entry fee.

Newsletter

The next newsletter deadline is June 1st.

Social Events

No report.

Old Business

Larry distributed the High Point Insurance affinity agreement. Coverage for autocross, rally and high-performance driver events are as desired. Concerns were raised regarding on-site sales, advertising and mailing requirements which may be more than expected. Larry will follow-up with Bob Conway and High Point regarding further refinement and clarification.

New Business

Ross Karlin thanked the Board for the memorial donation to his rescue squad.

Jeff White was welcomed as our newest driver school instructor.

The next board meeting was set for Wednesday June 17th at 18 West. Warren motioned to adjourn at 8:57 PM and Neil seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
David Allaway, Secretary

The Cone Catcher



OK, this one's going to be a rant. There are a lot of things putting me over the edge these days, but there's one particular type of driver that will be the object of my scorn this month. Their behavior has become so pervasive, so insidious, that it shakes the very foundation of our automotive freedom! (All right, maybe I'm exaggerating a little here.) I'm referring to the scourge of the superhighway, the idiot of the interstate, the pest of the parkway - the Left Lane Bandit! Not far behind on my public enemy list is Left Lane Bandit's close cousin, Center Lane Hog.

Folks, the law in almost every state of the union is a variation on the theme that you should stay in the right lane unless you're passing someone. In New Jersey, "KEEP RIGHT EXCEPT TO PASS" signs are posted on most highway medians. Try as I might, I can't think of a driving law that's more universally ignored. These laws are on the books for good reason. As anyone who's ever attended a driver's school will tell you, road safety is largely dependent on orderly traffic flow and being able to predict other drivers' behavior. Our friends Left Lane Bandit and Center Lane Hog detract from orderly flow and cause other drivers to make otherwise unnecessary lane changes to get around them, creating additional disorder.

I've heard some people opine that if they're driving at the speed limit they can use any lane they choose, and anyone going faster than them is breaking the law. Dimwits!! This passive-aggressive attitude isn't helpful in any circumstance, and on the highway the result can be fatal. In addition, you can't proclaim to uphold the law by breaking another one - we call this hypocrisy.

Next time you're on the Parkway or an Interstate, observe the traffic. Time and time again you'll see a crowded center lane, a left lane that's faster, and an almost completely empty right lane. It's unbelievable! The Garden State Parkway is where I see this most often, especially between exits 129 and 135. When the traffic is light or moderate, this presents no immediate problem other than those caused by any other oblivious driver. But when the volume gets heavier, the accordion effect begins in the left and center lanes while the right lane is still clear and moving!

Today I was on Route 78, and there was a black Escalade in the left lane travelling at a steady 71 miles per hour. There were slower cars in the center lane. I pulled out to pass the slower cars, and gradually approached the Escalade. When I came up behind him, I patiently waited for him to clear the slower traffic. When he did, he turned on his right turn signal. Wonderful, I thought! A Caddy driver who's not going to perpetuate the Caddy driver stereotype! Turns out I was wrong. Really wrong. This guy stayed in the left lane, turn signal on, for at least another mile. I just wanted to see what he'd do with a car behind him. I finally signaled and went to the right lane, which by that point was clear, as was the center lane. I stayed on the road for several more miles, and when I turned off this guy was still in the left lane, imposing his will on others. Arrogant Jackass Caddy Driver!!!! (I warned you that this would be a rant.) I resisted the temptation to stare him down and give him a one finger salute, because I didn't want to perpetuate a certain BMW driver stereotype. [and it would be un-becoming of our president. Ed]

Speaking of BMW driver stereotypes, I saw several BMWs during my recent California trip that were driving rather sedately in the left or center lanes of Highway 101 in Marin and Sonoma counties. I wish those people had bought a Benz instead! They're making us look bad. They shouldn't be driving a Bimmer! I guess there are a few perceived stereotypical BMW

drivers. I'd like to hope that we all do our best to support the notion that BMW drivers are knowledgeable people who appreciate well-engineered machines and who drive briskly but safely. While I don't appreciate left lane slowpokes, especially when they're driving a BMW, I don't have any greater tolerance for those who drive like maniacs on the highway, dodging in and out of traffic lanes. This isn't helpful to our reputation.

(Hopefully you'll appreciate the irony of what I'm about to say. As usual, I took a break from writing this column and didn't get back to it on Saturday when I began writing. Early Sunday morning I travelled out Route 78 again to go play golf. At about 6:45, as I approached the Readington exit, I passed an SUV that was going a few miles per hour slower than me. He was in the center lane, and I passed him safely.

A short time later, while traveling in the right lane, I came upon a slow truck ahead of me. The SUV in the center lane was too close to me, so I slowed and waited for him to go by, checked my mirror, and pulled into the center lane behind him. Realizing that I was now gaining on the SUV again, I checked my mirror, signaled, and pulled to the left lane to pass. I immediately was greeted by the blazing high beams of another SUV that I had pulled in front of and cut off. I never saw him, and I still don't know where he came from. There are only two possible explanations - 1) The SUV in the left lane was travelling at an exceptionally high rate of speed, or 2) He was travelling at the same rate as the vehicle in the center lane and I couldn't see him in my blind spot and behind the other car. In any event, if we had collided it would have been entirely my fault. Aside from the heart-stopping close call, I'm most distressed to realize that now I'm guilty of being the kind of BMW driver that I railed against in the last paragraph. Forgive me. And now, back to our regularly scheduled rant

For those of you who share my frustration with left lane bandits, you'll be happy to know there's hope. A few months ago a colleague at work came into my office to tell about his experience the previous week on the Garden State Parkway. He was driving in the left lane at a few mph over the speed limit. A State Trooper pulled him over. When the Trooper greeted my friend, he asked if he knew why he was being pulled over. My friend thought that maybe he was going a little fast, but pointed out that other drivers were going faster. The Trooper replied that he was not being pulled over for speeding, but for the fact that his failure to keep right was against the law and creating a hazard. As my friend related the story to me, he seemed a little mystified that he was pulled over for this infraction even though he was exceeding the limit. I asked him whether he remembered the name of the Trooper. When he asked why, I let out a big laugh and said I wanted to award him a medal!!! I'm glad this law is being enforced, even if only sporadically. I've also seen a column in the Star Ledger on the subject. I'm just sorry that the campaign hasn't been big enough to stop the practice of left lane banditry.

So, I'm going to try harder to be a safe driver, and I promised Karin that I wouldn't be quite so vocal in my opinion of other drivers' shortcomings. This will be easier than it would have been prior to my own boneheaded move on Sunday. Let's all try to be safe, courteous BMW drivers (brisk is still OK), and let's all remember to keep right except to pass. To the driver of the black Lexus SUV on Route 78 - please accept my apology. To the rest of you, and until next month, let's keep the cones standing!

Larry Engel
larry_engel@njbmwcca.org

Welcome New Members

Anthony Alo
Matthew Angeleri
Antoine Attara
John Baldassarre
Jean-David Borges
Kyle Burns
Ken Chen
Michael Chen
Jason Cheong

Ryan Ciampa
Evan Corwin
Frank D'Antonio
Matt Dibenedetto
Robert Dzienis
John Feindt
Kenneth Fleischer
Michael Gregory
Henry Huang

Jun Kim
Maarten Kraan
Vincent Lisanti
Thomas Maher
Jeffrey Miller
David Molendyke
Alan Paschedag
Franklin Purcell
Marie Russomanno

R Verleur
Matthew Wright
Albert Wu





Philes' Forum

by Vic Lucariello

Hello Bimmerphiles. This time out I have a headlamp-detailing tip for those of you on the lunatic fringe of Bimmerdom, as well as something more prosaic to check out on your rear shock absorbers. The detailing tip was actually featured in a long ago *Philes' Forum*, but it was prior to my use of photos in the column. I recall NJ Chapter autocross icon Jim LaForge was our newsletter editor at the time, so it was some years ago.

I still wish to receive copies of your NJMVC emissions-inspection reports. You can either mail a photocopy of your report [preferred], or simply e-mail the test data. [Include your name, too, if you want to be famous and be mentioned in *Philes' Forum*!] Please include both the test results and the pass/fail criterion for each pollutant along with your model and year, transmission type, and mileage. If you know at what mileages your oxygen sensor and spark plugs were last replaced, include that as well. Please indicate what, if any, modifications have been made to your motor [aftermarket chip or software, intake, exhaust, etc.] and your exact model number [e.g.: 328i, not 3-Series].

Recent submitters of emissions-test data are fellow engineers Mark Carlini and Bill Vanderbeck. Mark is a NJ Chapter driver school instructor and both Mark and VW-enthusiast Bill help us out with driver-school Tech. Thanks, guys!



Photo #1 Discolored Headlamp Rings.

Here is a little detailing hint that applies to many, many older Bimmers out there. Prior to the advent of "aero" [read: expen\$ive] headamps, for many years BMW used conventional headlamps that were retained by circumferential metal rings. [Anyone who has ever changed one of these lamps remembers how easy it is to drop and lose one of the tiny screws that hold the ring to the headlamp housing!] It bothered me that the rings could be seen through the black "plastic" grille, and that they became discolored over time. See Photo #1.

So, one day while I had the grill out of my E30 M3, I removed the headlamp rings, scuffed them up with a Scotch Brite pad, wiped them down with some solvent, and painted them with a matte-black enamel. Behold Photo #2!



Photo #2 Lunatic Fringe??

And no, Alphonse, I didn't lose any of the little screws; my marbles, perhaps, but not the screws.

Moving on to more earth-shattering topics: In another inveterate design only recently discontinued, BMW used a bolt passing through the lower pivot of the rear shock or rear shock/strut to secure the shock to the rear hub. While this simple design has proven reliable, on rare occasions I see a rear shock or strut that looks like what is shown in Photo #3, which depicts an E36 premium-brand rear shock that is only about a year old. You can see how the lower end of the shock has "walked" along its inner-mounting bushing, which is still firmly attached to the wheel carrier by the aforementioned bolt, which was found to be unbent and properly tightened.



Photo #3 Check Your Rear Shocks!

Speaking of properly tightening a rear-shock bolt, on the E30 and E36 non-touring models, BMW specifies 77 newton-meters [57 lb.-ft.] for the M12 [12 mm diameter] bolt in question. However, for E30 and E36 touring models, BMW specifies 100 newton-meters [74 lb.-ft.], a 30% increase, for the same bolt [same part number]! Perhaps the Bavarian engineers felt that a touring model would have a more aggressive rear-shock calibration; hence more loading on the shock-mount bolts? If so, why not specify the higher tightening-torque spec for the E30 and E36 M3s? If anyone can offer a better explanation, I am all ears!

Anyhow, the "fix" we decided upon was to install a washer under the shock-securing bolt as shown in Photo #4. Now when the shock again tries to "walk" along the bolt, the washer will tend to restrain it. I have contacted



Photo #3 Da Fix Is In.

the shock manufacturer about this problem, and I'll share with you any response I get.

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

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

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Driver Schools - Lime Rock report; Thunderbolt School & Race Next

We had a near full school for our "2nd Annual Last Chance to Run Lime Rock" on May 15. The day started with low clouds over the Berkshire Hills in northwest Connecticut, but the overcast skies gave way quickly to blue skies and perfect weather for driving. From almost all perspectives the school ran flawlessly. Our crack team of Tech workers was set up and ready to go before 7 am so that everyone was through Tech right on time for the Driver's and Instructor's meetings. After a quick reconnaissance lap, it was decided that we would run the "Classic" configuration. The new pavement, absence of the concrete patches in the turns and the new apex and exit curbing made for a track that was noticeably different from the Lime Rock that we all knew so well. This is now a track that demands you drive it differently - you may know where the turns are but you really do need to change how you approach those turns.

Bill Foster made a welcome return as our classroom instructor with a cameo appearance by Bruce MacInnes - Senior Instructor at the Skip Barber School. Fortunately the tow truck was only dispatched to retrieve one of our instructor's cars that made a somewhat unfortunate off-track excursion. Everyone I talked to in the paddock had a great big smile on their face and, more than once, I heard the comment "I really do love this track." Will we have a 3rd Annual Last Chance....? At this point, only time and Lime Rock's management will tell. However, I want to thank everyone for their support of the school and for making it a rousing success.

Next up, is our combined Driver School and Club Race to benefit the Westlake School at Thunderbolt Raceway, New Jersey Motorsports Park. This column may reach you just in time to come out and be a spectator. The Club Racing is always exciting, the venue is fantastic and the Westlake kids really enjoy the day. I hope that you can make it down. Look for a full report and pictures next month.

See you at the track.

- Jeff White



Photo by Paul Ngai

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2009 Driver School Schedule

School	Dates	Location
Driver School/Club Race (Joint with DeVal)	June 8-9	NJMP- Thunderbolt Raceway, Millville, NJ
Driver School/Club Race	July 25-26	Summit Point Raceway, WV
Driver School/Club Race (Joint with DeVal)	Aug 21-23	NJMP Lightning Raceway, Millville, NJ
Shenandoah Driver School	Sep. 19-20	Summit Point Raceway, WV
Introduction to the Track Driver School	Oct 26	NJMP Lightning Raceway, Millville, NJ

June Meeting at BMW NA

Once again BMW NA has extended their annual invite to their headquarters in Wood Cliff Lake, NJ on Friday, June, 19th at 6:00PM. Larry Koch along with other Product Managers has made this yearly event a standout, must attend affair. You will be given a wealth of information on their lineup of vehicles, updates, the future and depending on the quality of your questioning even some secrets. Those who have attended previous meetings will understand the last point. This has always been a great event with an exceptional buffet and display of vehicles.

The event will begin promptly at 6:00PM, so come to be informed and bring your questions. As was mentioned last year the location of the meeting may be held in a different building on the BMWNA campus therefore directions will be posted as soon as this is confirmed.



Photo by Paul Ngai

Teen Street Survival

The Teen Street Survival Event will be held at the Raritan Expo Center June 28, 2009. Registration is through the BMW CCA Foundation. The Foundation allows participants age 16-21 years of age. They have also opened up participation for permitted drivers with some stipulations. To register for the event go to <http://www.streetsurvival.org/school-schedule.php>.

Registration will open in early to mid May watch the club web site for updates.

Instructors who would like to volunteer please contact me directly.

The primary emphasis of the Tire Rack Street SurvivalR is a "hands-on" driving experience in real-world situations! We use your own car to teach you about its handling limits and how you can control them.

The students will become more observant of the traffic situation they find themselves in. They will learn to look far enough ahead to anticipate unwise actions of other drivers. As the students master the application of physics to drive their cars, they will make fewer unwise driving actions themselves. They will understand why they should always wear their own seatbelts, and why they should insist that their passengers wear seatbelts, too.

It's about more than driving - it's about LIVING!

Jamie Kavalieros
Driving Event Chair

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A Ponderous Question

by JT Burkard

I was emailing one of my customers back and forth on a 1989 Turbo Trans Am 20th Anniversary Pace Car (say that all in one breath) when I had to inform him it was sold. He emailed back and asked what it eventually sold for. I let him know it sold close to asking price. He responded with this message:

"That is good to hear with Pontiac going out of business. I would be interested in your thoughts on where cars like this will be going in value now that the Government will own GM and mandate the making of fuel efficient/hybrid cars."

This is an interesting question and now I went from being the Internet Sales Manager for a specialty car dealership to an automotive forecaster. I felt like some top news reporter was interviewing me as if I was the guru of the collector car market. I am no Keith Martin and maybe I was reading too much into it but it posed a spark in my head. This was my response expanded for purposes of this article:

"I am sad that Pontiac is under the axe. I personally own a 1980 Formula Firebird that I've had since 1990 that I am fully restoring at this time. Everyone said when GM ended production of the Camaro and the Firebird in 2002 the prices would sky rocket. Well, the Camaro's did shoot up in value as the prices went to the moon and back over the last 7 years but that's because the whole market increased, not because they got rid of the brand. The Bandit era Trans Am's (1977-78) are now hitting their stride with prime examples from \$32,000-40,000+. I don't feel that the mandates will make these cars more or less collectable than they are already. They have made their mark in the collector world they will remain as investment cars. What was popular back then will be popular again, thus making them collectable. Rare examples are more sought after and command bigger stacks of dead presidents than lesser editions. As the baby boomers started to think about the cars they once owned and lusted for as kids, they started to buy them up and the market formed. As the ball got rolling, the popularity continued and prices slowly started to increase. I can see this starting with the Gen X'ers like myself buying the cars they lusted after when they were in high school. There is an increased popularity in the Turbo T/A's, Grand Nationals (well, they never dropped in prices like the rest of the 80's cars), IROC Camaro's (especially the convertibles) and 5.0 Mustangs. Unmolested low mileage examples are the cream of the crop.

Also auctions like Barrett Jackson didn't help as they brought this whole inner circle of car collecting to the masses as we all watched it on TV. Men and women with big egos with bigger bank accounts bidding at \$5000 increments like it was mere dollars. No one backs down as it's a 6 figure dual to the finish where the loser has to try and bid on a different car and the winner gets to write an overly inflated check for 40+ year old iron. All for their 15 minutes of cable TV fame. We had seen everything increase, the car market, the housing market, something was going to pop and in a bad way. We are living this in the economic state we are in the middle of right now.

The aftermarket performance companies are in an uphill battle to turn the new efficient econo-cars into fire breathers and this is where the Tuner crowd is coming into play. What were efficient commuter cars are now buzzing the streets with the new generation. The V8 car is not dead yet as technology advances each model year and they find ways to gather more MPG out of them, and still increase horsepower to boot. (New M3 anyone?) As you noticed, the new Vettes, Camaros, BMW's etc are coming out with more HP than ever before and they still meet federal standards for emissions and increased fuel economy.

The older Muscle Cars will always have their followers. Mandates, bankruptcies and whatever else this bad global situation throws in front of us will not increase or decrease the desire for the muscle cars. The economy will determine the prices. The market hit a high when all was great. The housing market boomed, the collector car market flourished and then when everything crashed, the market had a correction. This is the right time to buy a collector muscle car; they will go back up in value again. Some cars like the Turbo T/A's and the other 80's muscle cars weren't hit too hard because they still on the up rise as their prices haven't gone out of the reach of the average collector."

I could have gone on for another couple of paragraphs but I assume he was just expecting a simple couple of sentences to appease him. I really got to think about this though. How does all of this change the way the collector market will go? What about the sports car market? I can't see if GM, Ford or Chrysler has to build cars that get over 40 mpg that all of the sudden, people are coming out in large numbers to buy a 20-40+ year old car just because they have big V8 horsepower. People generally buy a new car so they have reliable daily transportation. Even new high performance cars are rarely driven on a daily basis. You might see the occasional Corvette or Porsche as a commuter car but in most cases, they sit in the garage and only come out on nice days. Meanwhile, these owners will have some other type of sedan in the garage that hauls the family and gets respectable fuel mileage, unless you drive the ultra world dominator SUV with 6 row seating with room for a small Guatemalan village, a refrigerator and a theater/arcade setup for the kids.

I hate to see the big three struggle but whatever happens, the collector car world will survive with little reflection on the market. When Oldsmobile and Plymouth were put out to pasture, the collectability of these cars didn't increase because they don't make them anymore. They didn't make any of the cars that are collectable at this time anyway. No more Cudas, no more 442's. The good ones were long gone out of production before these manufacturers were put to rest. I don't see an Olds Aurora or Plymouth Breeze being worth more than scrap in the near or far future.

So where does this leave us as BMW enthusiasts? Well, the European car market is much different than the American car market. The classic BMW's have their own following and this will always be strong. The 2002 market is virtually bulletproof and will always have new buyers entering into the fray. Our beloved car company we all gather to celebrate is not in the same situation as the Big Three. Sales may be down, but not to the tune of restructuring or getting taken over by an Italian car company. BMW looks to its heritage as part of who they were and where they are going. They may design some retro cars that resemble something of the past, like the Z8 and the M1 Homage show car. Heck, the Mini is based on the same looks as the original. People equate the 1-series to the 2002. I think they are seeing something just to say it. There is nothing on the two cars that are a like expect a similarity of a small car that handles well and is a blast to drive. The 1 was not going to be brought into this country but with the wants of the masses, we have it here in the States. That's power of the people's word! Nothing that BMW builds today would affect the collectability of the cars of their heritage. I didn't see an increase in people wanting to buy an e21 as the new 3 series came out. The e21 was the first, the original, and the one that started it all but yet it's the most forgotten of the 3's.

So in conclusion, I don't know exactly what I've just written as I have been in front of this laptop computer for over 3 hours now and its past 1 am. It may all be random thoughts strung together in a strange mishmash of words or it may all be cognitive. I have lost all rational thinking and the only thing that's working properly is my spell check. My mind has shut down about 14 Local on the 8s ago on the Weather Channel in the background. Sandy has gone to sleep in the other room with a cat on her head and I am ready to fall asleep at the desk as I write this article. I am one day away from a 2 week vacation and the only thing that makes sense right now is a nice tropical drink with lots of rum pool side in Vegas. [We look forward to your next column, Ed.]

JT Burkard

Send comments and suggestions to JTFormula@aol.com

Finish Lines

By Thom Rossi

Let me put the most important thing I have to tell you right up front. The new track surface at Lime Rock R-O-C-K-S!!!

Now come the details.

Last year at this time, it seemed that our club's days of enjoying the challenges and excitement of Lime Rock Park in Connecticut had come to an end. If you recall, Lime Rock was taken private, with an exclusive "motorsports country club" operating model. The theory was that the club would attract enough members to pay for needed upgrades to the track itself as well as the amenities offered around the paddock. According to that operating model, track rentals to outside clubs like ours would be much harder to come by, and probably not available for a full day without sharing track time with the Lime Rock club members.

I am happy to say that only about half of that operating model seems to have worked out. And it is the good half at that. Investments have certainly been made to the facility. The paddock area is completely paved now (no more muddy rivers during the all but certain downpours we experience there every spring). New corner layouts have been introduced at various points around the track. And the most important of all the changes since last year, the track has been entirely re-surfaced.

Despite their new operating model, our club was able to secure a full day of track time on May 15. For me, getting to the track this year was definitely NOT half the fun. My plan had been to take both Thursday and Friday off from work. Thursday was to be car and trailer prep-day, with my intent being to leave the house by mid-afternoon for a leisurely tow up to Lakeville followed by a relaxing dinner and a good night's rest at the Wake Robin Inn. However, reality intruded once again upon my plans, this time in the form of urgent teleconferences, phone calls, and e-mails that prevented me from hitting the road until around 8 pm. That left me with a foggy, rainy drive up to Connecticut with arrival close to midnight. But, oh-my, it was sooooo worth it.

On Friday, we ran the original track layout in perfectly dry, mild weather. If you've been on Lime Rock, you know that track surface has always been bumpy, pot-hole, and full of concrete patches. Not so any more. Three places where the track surface changes are particularly noticeable are in the Turn 1,2 complex known as Big Bend, the line through the turn and climb of the uphill, and the high speed down hill right hand sweeper on the front straight. I estimate that I was 5-10 mph faster at the track-out of each of these turns than I had been at my last outing at Lime Rock. I also estimate that my underwear was a lot cleaner at the end of the day, because the braking zones are now smooth and predictable.

Some drivers felt that the extra bits of track added around West Bend were distracting, making it difficult to find their old tried-and-true lines. I personally did not find this to be the case. I guess I must just have different reference points than some of the other drivers. The only negative I have about that turn in its current set up is that there is a section of the curbing not far from the turn's apex that has a very high, sharp edge. Considering that there is little margin for recovery as you track out of that turn, you

definitely want to stay off that part of the curbing because it is the wrong place to upset the balance of your car.

I had one student, in the intermediate run group. I still find the added challenge of teaching brings an interesting dimension to my track days. Not only did I have to get my own brain in gear after a long winter lay-off, but I also had to assess my student's approach to the track and strive to apply the best teaching techniques for that particular student. The intermediate group poses a particular challenge to instructors because of its wide variety of speeds, skills and experience. My student had about a half dozen track days under his belt, but had never been to Lime Rock before. I believe that a good day of instructing is one in which my student leaves the track with a few added skills, more safety awareness, and a solid sense of improvement and potential. Oh yeah, I also think it's good if the student leaves with no new scratches on the side or especially the roof of his/her car. I'm happy to say that my student accomplished all of those objectives in addition to being introduced to a new, top quality driving venue.

I apply those same objectives to my own driving and instructing at every school. When instructing, it's important to be able to self-diagnose where the areas of improvement for one's own driving lay hidden. It was obvious to me that improvements were there to be had. Despite my faster than usual corner exits, I found that compared to another instructor in a race prepared e-30, I was having a hard time keeping up. Or, to put it more bluntly, I was slower. No, driving schools are not races. But seeing another driver in a similarly equipped car take the track a few ticks faster than you does point to the prospect of improvement.

By the time we came to our fourth and final run of the day, I was puzzling over where I was going to find the improvements I desired. Blake Smith's bad luck was my good luck. Due to engine problems, Blake found himself without a car to drive at the end of the day. He was kind enough to ride "shottie" with me and point out where I could shed a few tenths of a second here and there. My biggest improvements came in Big Bend, where Blake coached me to taking the first section of that corner at much higher speed than I had been doing, and also in the right hand turn into the uphill section. In the last few laps of that session, I was following a race prepared e-36 (looked like it was ready for the spec e-36 class of club racing). With slow and steady improvements throughout the track, lap after lap, I was able to catch up to and overtake that car while coming out onto the front straight. Reminder: I already admitted that a driving school is not a competition. But... it's still fun to find another similarly equipped driver and work to make yourself faster.

My only regret about the Lime Rock event is that we never get two days in a row. There were lots of things I thought about after I got home that I would have liked to try on day 2 of the event. However, the exorbitant cost of Lime Rock precludes the possibility of a two-day event. But then again, my unfinished business with that track gives me all the excuse I'll ever need to make my way back to the track at our club's next event. Did you miss this one? Too bad! The school still had six more advanced student slots available. Hope to see you at the next one.

2009 Autocross Schedule

Time to get off the Blizzaks. Time to mount up the stickies. Time to look at ads for Yoko, Kumho, Nitto or whatever. Our 2009 autocross schedule is printed below. Note the name change at the ballpark in Bridgewater.

For those who haven't tried autocross, this is the best, easiest way to experience car control at the limit with some big pluses: it doesn't cost much, you wear out only some rubber, and you get to go home and sleep in your own bed. Oh yeah, it makes you a safer driver on the street, and gives a big adrenaline rush!

For those who are regulars, I'm sorry we don't have more events, bigger venues, and earlier dates. I know you are going around muttering "vroom-vroom", just try and contain yourselves.

June	14	Autocross	EXPO
July	12	Autocross	TDBP
Aug	16	Autocross	EXPO
Sept	13	Autocross	TDBP
Oct	11	Autocross	TDBP
Nov	1	Autocross	TDBP

TDBP: TD Bank Park, Patriots Park, Bridgewater. Name change from Commerce Bank Park.

EXPO: NJ Convention and Exposition Center, Raritan Center, Edison

- Elihu Savad

NJ Chapter Calendar

June 2009

Friday, June 19th

Monthly meeting at BMW NA in Woodcliff Lake. 6:00pm start time. This is always special and a great time. See you there.

July 2009

Wednesday, July 15th

Monthly meeting. Details to follow.

Friday, July 17th

Hans Zolet from the Deutscher Club has extended another invite to us to attend their "Beer Garden" festival on Friday, July,17th. at 5:00PM.



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MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION and LOCATION

The New Jersey Chapter's monthly membership meetings begin at 8pm and are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at the Deutscher Club of Clark. However, special topics often force a different date; please check the calendar of upcoming events (or the website) carefully.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

All membership applications, renewals and address changes can be done via the BMW CCA National website: www.bmwcca.org or can be sent to:
BMW CCA National Office, 640 South Main Street, Suite 201, Greenville, SC 29601
800-878-9292 (Mastercard or Visa)

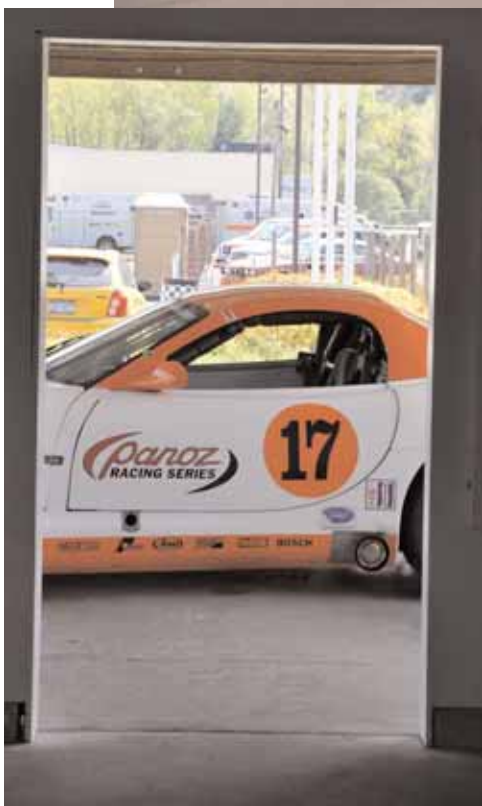
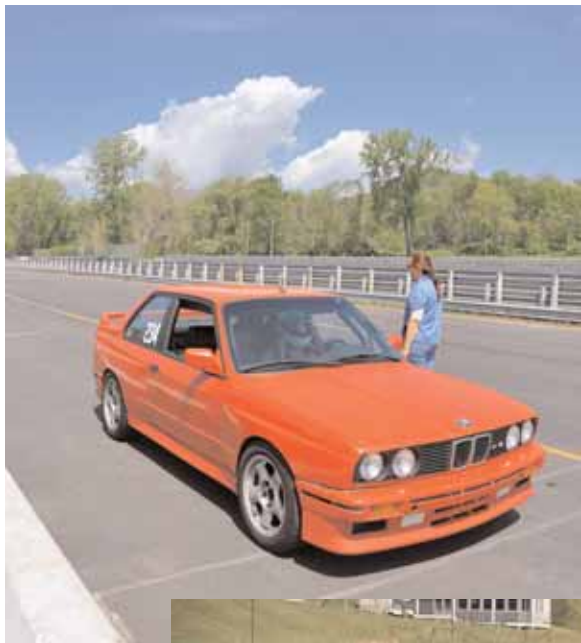
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NJ Chapter Driver School at Lime Rock Park

Photos by Paul Ngai



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