



New Jersey Bulletin

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BMW CCA Oktoberfest 2013



Photo by Avery Baratz



Photo by Chris Hennechy

NJ Chapter Members take a trip.
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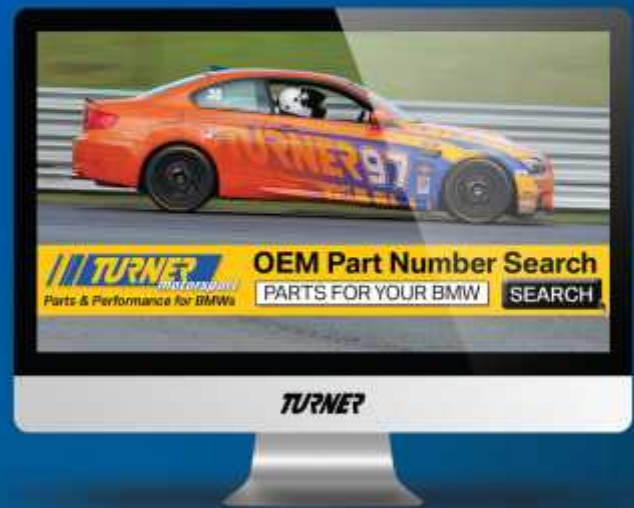
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Oktoberfest

By: Matthew Baratz

I just returned from Monterey after attending the first three days of Oktoberfest. The California chapters did a great job of hosting the event with National and it attracted a huge turnout. A number of people drove from the mid-west and some from the eastern chapters. I only had time to attend some of the events. Here are some highlights:

Dinan

Steve and Jan Dinan hosted a fantastic open house at their Morgan Hill facility. More than 300 people attended. Somehow they made each of us feel like a special guest and they demonstrated how much research and development they put into everything they make. They demonstrated their race engine on the dyno and everyone was duly impressed by its sheer power. They showed us their 3D printer and demonstrated how they use it to make sure everything fits and works perfectly in plastic before they manufacture it.

Monterrey

A neat location and loads of rare cars and trucks being loaded into vans from the prior week's festivities. Mecum was breaking down its auction at the hotel and was packing up the last of the sold and unsold vehicles. Someone bought a beautiful white E30 M3 at Russo and Steele's auction. It was still waiting for transport at one of the lots.

BMW

BMW brought a beautiful blue M6 Grand Coupe with a manual, an orange M6, a blue M6 convertible, and an Alpina B7 for test drives. I drove the M6 Grand Coupe and it is both a civilized cruiser and a wild gnarly beast. Drivers before and after me were besotted and so was I. Monterey has some great back roads right near the hotel and the Grand Coupe ate them up. It has oodles of power an amazing ability to carve a corner and this wicked back burble when you come off the gas quickly. Frankly I am more of an M3 than M6 fan, but this Grand Coupe is a work of art and science.

(Most amazingly, I had to retrace the route in a brand new, well-equipped Ford Fusion rental car. OK, you can have four or five loaded Fusions for one M6 Grand Coupe, and the Fusion is designed to be a Lexus wannabe. Nevertheless, the Fusion scraped hard and bottomed out on the hairpins even though I drove them well under the meager speed limit. The Grand Coupe, no light-weight, lowered and with low profile summer tires flew through the hairpins over the humps and through the swales without a care. I realize it's a lousy comparison, but it still impressed me.)

The drives were really popular except for the folks who tried to go to Carmel and got stuck in horrible traffic. BMW provided them for three full days!

Concourse

Many amazing cars and a neat BMW logo painted on a practice green at the golf course where the event was held. An older fellow named Jim, who brought a 1936 318i (sorry if I have the wrong year). He also had a wood model built by his dad of a 328i of similar vintage. The wood model used many beautiful and rare woods. Jim disassembled it for us and was really proud of it.

I am always amazed at the time and the detail concourse participants put into their loved ones. We saw one fellow prepping his blue M Coupe from the afternoon to the next morning. I thought it was immaculate before he started. It was also immaculate when I saw it on the fairway the next day. Hope he did well, so many rare and beautiful machines.

Laguna Seca

What an amazing track. Just like Millville, it's built on top of a mountain. There's a hairpin followed by a 16 percent grade just to get to it. You hear about the corkscrew, but you've got to see it.

Someday I hope to return to drive that amazing track. I saw many happy exhausted people running it. Lots of people in the car control school in the parking lot, too. One guy in an 850 was experiencing some serious understeer on the figure 8 (dry) a fellow in a Mcoupe on the otherhand preferred serious oversteer! I spent most of the day volunteering with the Michelin AS3 tire test drive. Michelin's new all-season high performance tire is very impressive and they provided two M3s shod with the tires and a nice autocross course for participants to try 'em. These were really cool tires and everyone seemed impressed by them.

We had to leave Monterey on Wednesday. I missed the rallies, autocrosses and autocross schools that continue as I write this back home in the Garden State. Tonight they'll be having a wonderful closing dinner and tomorrow they'll have a special tour of San Simeon. All the California guys have the route to and from Monterey mapped out to enjoy their Bimmers on roads that they chew up.

We are fortunate to have this club.



Photo by Chris Hennecey



Philes' Forum

By Vic Lucariello

Hello, bimmerphiles! This time out I have an emissions saga related to last month's. I also have some tips for you folks who change your own spark plugs.

Last month I wrote about bimmerphile Art Neufeld's ultimately successful struggle to get his 1995 Toyota Corolla past the NJMVC tailpipe sniffer. The 200,000-mile Toyo failed repeatedly for high emissions of unburned hydrocarbons [HC], and finally passed after Art installed a set of rebuilt fuel injectors.

Just after I had filed my September column, I received another high-HC-emissions saga, this one from erstwhile driver-school Tech worker Roger Wagner. Roger's 1995 M3, which he bought new, has only 36,000 miles [!] and is, according to Roger, all original except for a K & N air-filter insert.

Roger took the car for inspection immediately after awakening it from an eight-month hibernation. [Heck, even my M3 gets started more frequently than this!] The M-car failed the idle-speed test for HC at 280 ppm [allowable = 220] at a "State" inspection facility. Carbon monoxide was a respectable 0.21 % [allowable = 1.2]. Both the HC and CO were high as compared with typical M3 test results in my database. Roger reported having no previous trouble passing emissions tests over the life of the car.

Given the test results and the condition and mileage of the Bimmer, I suspected that Roger was a victim of stale fuel and fuel-injector deposits. I suggested that he run the fuel tank nearly empty, refill with fresh premium and add some fuel-injector cleaner to the tank.

Well, Roger reports putting about 800 miles on the M3 and using some Redline SI-1 fuel-system cleaner [good stuff in my opinion] before his rematch with the sniffer. The M-car passed the retest with the following results: HC 10 ppm; CO 0.00 %. Quoth a happy Roger: "Such a huge difference, just by driving the car." Indeed.

Thanks to Roger for sharing his emissions saga with us. Now we have to get him back in the driver-school fold. Hey, Roger, we miss ya at Tech!

While it is true that automobiles in general, and BMWs in particular, are becoming ever more complex, changing spark plugs is an important maintenance function that can still be performed by most DIY enthusiasts. BMW's recommended spark-plug-replacement intervals vary greatly by year and model, so check your owner's manual for your particular Bimmer. Since if you are reading this you are probably somewhat familiar with removing and replacing spark plugs, an operation addressed in your Bentley Manual, I'll concentrate on getting access to the plugs and some associated tips.

on-plug [COP] ignition [AKA: Direct Ignition]. In this type system, the traditional single ignition coil, ignition distributor and spark-plug wires that sufficed for more than a half-century have been eliminated, and each spark plug has its own ignition coil. While many other makes have COP ignition, BMW adopted COP with the advent of the M50 sixes introduced in the E34 5-Series during the changeover from the 1990 to 1991 model US-spec cars. Photo #1 depicts a COP ignition coil, with spark-plug attached, from the popular M54 six found in E46 3-Series and E39 5-Series.



Photo #2 - Old-Style Coil Hold Down

In addition to elimination of the maintenance-intensive distributor, rotor and spark-plug wires, COP ignition can theoretically provide a "hotter" spark at higher RPM because each coil only fires a single spark plug. Moreover, COP allows the knock-sensor control to regulate spark timing on groups of cylinders [Typically cylinders 1-3 and 4-6 on a six.] as opposed to all cylinders together.

So gaining access to the plugs on a COP motor involves disconnecting and removing the ignition coils. BMW made this easy on their earlier COP motors by securing each coil to the camshaft cover with 2 bolts. See Photo #2. Later Bimmers use coils that simply press onto the spark plug. "Simply" will surely elicit a chuckle from anyone who has ever removed one of these coils! Heck, I've had to pry the suckers off.

Once the coils are removed, pay close attention to their spark-plug connectors. The connectors tend to deteriorate with age, heat and sometimes oil from a leaking camshaft-cover gasket, and any cracks can cause mysterious misfires, especially in damp weather and/or after a cold start. The plug connector in Photo #3 is obviously cracked, but the one in Photo #4 looked pretty good until I squeezed it as shown in Photo #5. Then, not so good. All the photos are of the coils removed from a 180,000-mile, 2002 E46 325i with the M54 motor. These particular connectors are available separately from the coils, but at 180,000 miles, I replaced all six coils, which came with new connectors.

(Continued on Page 5)



Photo #1 - COP Ignition Coil

One of the differences between changing plugs on newer versus older cars is that many recent models have what is called coil-

Whack Your Turkey Rally

Once again, Thanksgiving looms, and you what that means, don't you? Yes, it's time, once again, for the annual Whack Your Turkey road rally. The date is set—Sunday, November 24th, the Sunday before Thanksgiving. We will meet in Flemington, NJ, and guide you through the wilds of New Jersey.

For those of you unfamiliar with road rallies, everyone is given a set of directions to follow, and asked questions about the things you see along the way. The roads are generally fun to drive on. The questions can be straightforward, complex, confusing, silly, and puzzling, sometimes all at the same time, but all in the spirit of fun. We end the rally at a restaurant, where everyone can relax and enjoy a meal while the results are tallied.

We split everyone into two classes - Family/Fun, and Competition. The Competition class results count towards our chapter's Driver of the Year competition, and are restricted to having a driver and a navigator (points are awarded to each). The Family/Fun class is for all other entrants with more passengers. Children are welcome, provided you fill out the permissions form(s) and bring it (them) to the start. It's available on our website (one form per child, please).

If you want to participate, please drop an email to rallymaster@njbmwcca.org. Please state your name, which class you're participating in, and the names of your passenger(s). Your membership number would help, too.

We will start at 9:00 AM on 11/24. The final starting location is being determined, but will be close to the traffic circle in Flemington, NJ. We hope to have that pinned down, shortly. Once confirmed, we will email it to all registrants. You can also check the chapter website for the latest updates.

The entrance fee is \$25 per car. Please bring exact change if you can. On the day of the event, we recommend you arrive with a full tank of gas, a clipboard, writing utensils, and a desire to have fun!

- Jon Trudel

Philes' Forum (Continued from page 4)



Photo #3 - Cracked Spark-Plug Connector

Back to the spark plugs themselves, be sure to install the same plug specified by BMW, whether you source the plugs from your dealer or the after-market. Beware of multi-application after-market plugs, even though they might be less expensive and claim better performance and/or fuel economy.



Photo #4 - Connector That Looks OK

And be sure to tighten your new plugs with a torque wrench. BMW specs for tightening spark plugs, at least up through the E9X models [excluding MINI], suggest a torque of 23 newton-meters [17 lb-ft] for plugs with a 12-mm-diameter [about 15/32-inch] thread and a torque of 30 newton-meters [22 lb-ft] for plugs with a 14-mm [about 9/16-inch] thread. BMW took the trouble to specify that new spark plugs be installed without any lubrication on their threads. Opinions vary on this, but the fact is that BMW wouldn't specify unlubricated threads unless they had reason to. The spark-plug manufacturers seem to concur.



Photo #5 - OOPS, Not So OK



Photo #6 - Connector Separated From Coil

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

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A Perfect Weekend

A perfect weekend – there are simply no other words needed to describe the NJ chapter's 8th annual driver school on the Shenandoah Circuit at Summit Point Raceway over the weekend of Sep. 7-8. Attendance at this event has been climbing over the past few years as more and more drivers appreciate both the nuances and pleasures this track has to offer. This year was a record in terms of student attendance with 47 participants. We were treated to cool temperatures in the mornings, mid-day temps in the low 80's and the only rain that fell came down Saturday night.

There is no question that Shenandoah is a challenging track. Twenty turns in 2 miles are daunting numbers to drivers who come to the track for the first time. For many tracks, turns are approached in isolation: brake at this point, turn in here, hit the apex and accelerate to the track out point and then down the track to the next turn. However, what you quickly learn is that Shenandoah is best approached as a series of linked turns. The proper set-up and execution of turn one then sets you up correctly to flow through turns 2, 3 and 4. In this way twenty turns become perhaps 6 groups of turns that become much easier to remember. The second benefit of learning the track in sections is that it emphasizes patience. You must be careful not to get into the first turn too early or you will be fighting to get back into position for all the turns that are linked to it. This track requires drivers to let turns flow together. Being smooth with inputs is rewarded with clean laps and faster times; power cannot be used to compensate for bad technique. We have said it before and we will keep saying it: learning to drive Shenandoah well will make you a better driver on the street and at every other track you visit.

I want to say a special thank you to all our on-track instructors who attended. They all worked hard with two students each on a track that is demanding both physically and mentally. Dedicated instructors make our events possible.

Reinforcing the lessons learned on the track were our two other instructor groups. Gerry Chan provided classroom instruction for all run groups. Gerry's instructional style is enthusiastic and he works hard to engage students in the classroom and get them to think about what they are doing on the track, why they are doing it and the consequences of various driver inputs. We were also treated to one of Gerry's legendary track walks during the lunch hour on Saturday. It sounds simple but there is no substitute for seeing the track on foot, looking at the nuances of the track surface and curbing and having the time to establish sight lines and reference points for various turns.

Our third instructor group was our skid-pad instructors from our friends at the National Capital Chapter. Learning to feel how a car behaves when it is understeering and how to correct it is a fundamental driving skill (and the reason we teach it as part of the Street Survival curriculum). It is as important for driving on the street as it is for the track. Similarly, once a car transitions into oversteer, learning and practicing how to bring the car back into control and heading in the proper direction is an important "tool" for any driver's set of driving skills. Like safety systems such as ABS and stability control, recognizing and correcting understeer and oversteer are safety skills that help keep you out of trouble before it becomes serious.

Make a note in your 2014 calendar for next September to attend this event. It's a great time of year to be in West Virginia, the run groups are small, the atmosphere is relaxed and the driving is terrific. What could be better?

Next up is our final driver school for the year, our Introduction to the Track event at Lightning on October 13-14. What started as an experiment has evolved into a tradition. The mission of this school is to encourage more members to come out and try a driver school. We do this by lowering as many barriers as possible: we have a dedicated run group for first-time students with a dedicated classroom time. No more worries about being the only newcomer in a group of experienced drivers. We hold the event at NJMP – the closest track to our membership and where hotel rates are low. We have a series of scheduled car control exercises for new students to complement what they learn on the track. We allow new students to sign up for either Sunday or Monday alone or for both days. We have loaner helmets in case you need a helmet and are uncertain about whether you will do future schools. Finally, the chapter subsidizes the cost for new students to make it the most affordable way to get on the track anywhere. How do we do this? By also holding a regular 2-day driver school for experienced students. The day is long with 4 student run groups and an instructor run group but the format allows everyone to have a great last event of the season. This event has sold out every year we have run it so don't delay – register now. Come on out and finish the year on a high note.

We'll see you at the track.

Jeff White

Driver School Committee Chairman



From a Previous Track Day

Photo by Etch Photo



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September Meeting



Rob Siegel, aka Roundel Hack Mechanic, speaks to NJ Chapter at September meeting. Rob shared his decades of experiences working on cars, notably BMWs, as a past-time. (His real job is as a geophysicist.) His new book, *Memoirs of a Hack Mechanic*, captures that experience.

Photos by Paul Ngai



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NJ CHAPTER CALENDAR

October 2013
Monthly meeting—TBD. Check our website.

Sunday, 20th
Autocross at PNC Bank Arts Center.

November 2013
Sunday, 24th
Whack Your Turkey Rally. See some great countryside and test your problem solving skills. See article on page 5.



Welcome New Members

Iyare Amegor
Linda Cerminaro
Amit Chaudhari
Edward Choe
Charles Dilkes
Vladimir Drazenovic
Guillaume Dufresnoy
Tim George
Jorge Guerra
Christine Gurak
Syed Haider
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MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION

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 result in a different date and/or location. Please check the calendar of upcoming events (or the Club's website).

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual BMW CCA and New Jersey Chapter dues: \$48.00. New Jersey Chapter Dues and Bulletin Subscription ("dual citizenship" for primary members of other chapters): \$15.30. All membership applications, renewals, and address changes can be done via the BMW CCA National website: www.bmwcca.org or can be sent to:

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Please do not send applications, renewals, and address changes to the newsletter, the PO Box or any of the club's officers; contact the National office. Members of other BMW CCA local chapters may additionally join the New Jersey Chapter. Contact the National BMW CCA office for details.

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