

THE ALLEGHENY APEX

*Friends don't let friends miss apexes
and the chapter won't let you miss the news.*



BMW Car Club of America • Allegheny Chapter Newsletter • SPRING-SUMMER 2019



PVGP Friday Drive pg. 6
PVGP Friday Dinner pg. 7
PVGP Schenley Park pg. 8
PVGP Club Racing pg. 12

**Do You Believe
Your Speedometer?** pg. 4
Dust Off Drive pg. 5
**Get with the
Program** pg. 14

**Are you on
Social Media?** pg. 3
New Members pg. 11
**My M School
Experience** pg. 16-19

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Vice-President

Marianne Mehan ✓
Secretary

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Performance Event Coordinator

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Glen Beattie
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BMW Car Club of America
Allegheny Chapter



EVENT APPAREL

Dress for the Club

The Allegheny Chapter has partnered with **Log Cabin Embroidery** to provide you with a wide selection of club logo apparel. The Log Cabin Embroidery offers a wide selection of shirts, hats and garments that can be customized with our logo.

For detail or order inquiries go to:
stiches@logcabin-embroidery.com

1616 McClure Rd. Suite B
Monroeville, PA



Stay in the Loop

Have you moved or changed email?



The National Office maintains one database of membership information. It is used for USPS mailings, such as the Roundel and chapter newsletter, and for email blasts of the weekly electronic Roundel and chapter blasts of updated information. It is important that your addresses are current. Update your information at www.bmwcca.org.

Follow instructions to create a username and password and log in to your account.

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2020 Vision

BY GARY SEFCIK

President, Allegheny Chapter
BMW CCA

It can be said that a club is only as good as its volunteers. The Allegheny Chapter continues to impress me with the accomplishments in 2019. Our Facebook presence, led by Steve Forest, has grown substantially over the past 6 months and increased volunteer participation. Next to e-mail, it is the best way to communicate with our new and existing members. Thank you, Steve, for your time and efforts.

We have had many well executed events in 2019 that have grown the Chapters membership. The Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix is the

pinnacle of the events and it was executed flawlessly. Thank you to our more than 40 volunteers whose hard work help us make a substantial contribution to the PVGP Charities, and have a great time doing it. In addition, many thanks to all of our members who bought tickets and helped share in their generosity with supporting the raffle and silent auction fund raising. It was a pleasure to see everyone have such an enjoyable time and socialize.

As we begin planning for 2020, I encourage all members to provide your suggestions and volunteer time and energy to

future events. I am confident that you will find it as rewarding as I have.

Best regards, Gary



COVER PHOTO BY:
GARY Sefcik

CHAPTER RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Bobby Rahal BMW of South Hills

Congratulations to Bobby Rahal BMW, for earning recognition from BMW Car Club of America as Outstanding BMW Center, North Atlantic Region.



Allegheny Chapter President Gary Sefcik presents the award to Rick Speicher, VP Operations – Bobby Rahal Automotive Group.

SOCIAL MEDIA

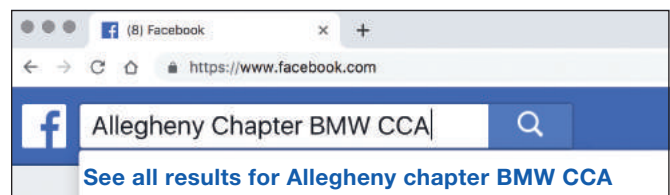
Are You On Social Media?

If so, the chapter has a Facebook page and a group.

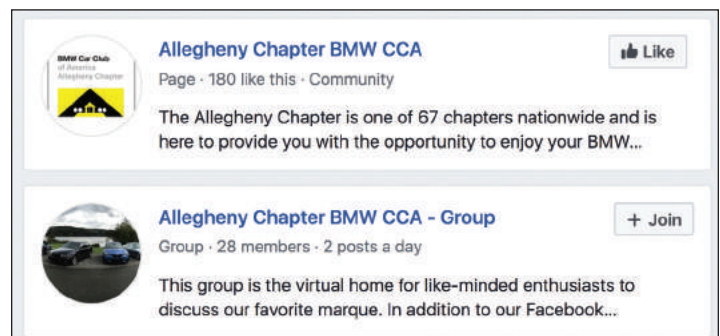
The page has information about the chapter – drives, get-togethers, etc. – as well as BMW-related news and stories, but the content is determined by the chapter. The group is a

member-driven forum where members can share pictures, stories, events, questions, etc. that are not necessarily chapter related.

To join the page and/or the group, click on the search box at the top of the screen and type **"Allegheny Chapter BMW CCA"** and then click on **"See all results for Allegheny chapter BMW CCA"** (see Figure 1). This will bring up the results in Facebook for the chapter. Then simply click on **"Join" for the group** and **"Like" for the page** and you are all set (see Figure 2). On behalf of BMW CCA, we look forward to new members joining us on Facebook.



(Figure 1)



(Figure 2)

Do You Believe Your Speedometer?

BY GLEN BEATTIE

If you've ever compared your vehicle's speedometer with an independent GPS receiver, you've probably noticed a discrepancy in the indicated speeds. (I'm not talking about the vehicle's internal navigation system. I'm talking about a totally independent system such as a Garmin, Magellan, or Tom-Tom.)

The GPS almost always provides the more accurate reading, especially when driving in a straight line.

Uncalibrated vehicle speedometers and odometers will generally be most accurate when the vehicle is fitted with the largest wheels and tires that the vehicle can accept. If you have anything smaller, the readings will be skewed on the high side.

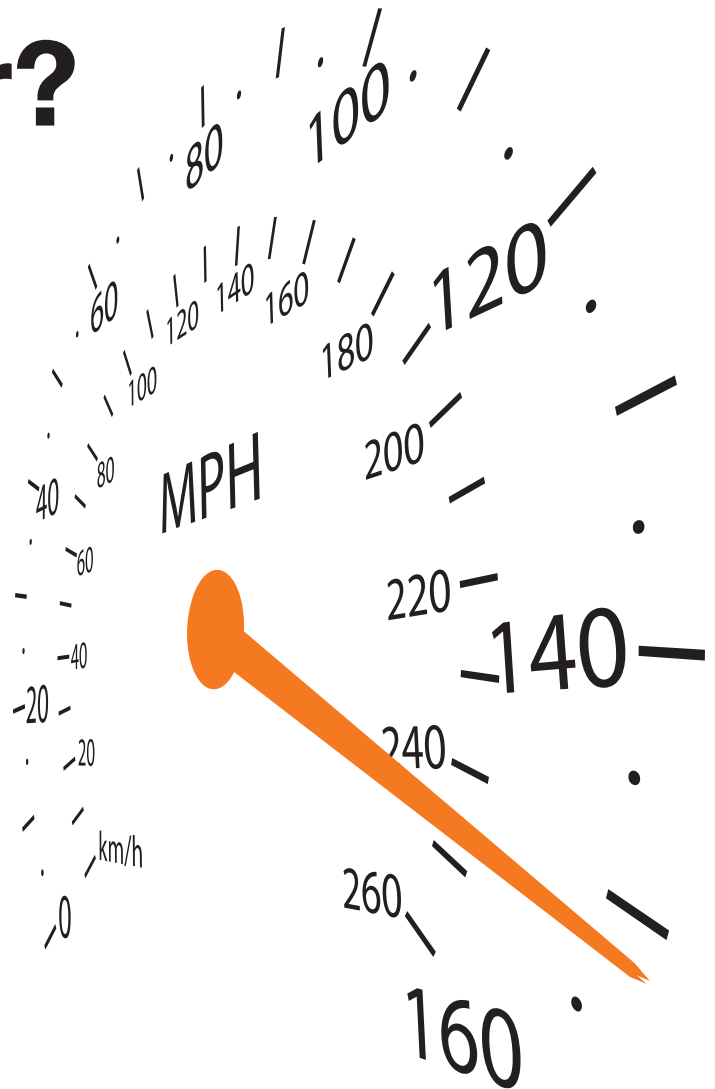
This has two "benefits." One benefits the owner, the other benefits the manufacturer.

For the owner, the speedometer will generally read higher than the actual vehicle speed. This helps drivers avoid speeding tickets because they're never traveling as fast as they think.

For the manufacturer, having the odometer run fast gets the car out of warranty quicker and makes the gas mileage look better than it really is.

With my own cars, I've found the speedometer discrepancy to be on the order of 2% to 6%, and always on the high side.

Keep this in mind when you adjust your cruise control, calculate your gas mileage, or decide when your next oil change is due.



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Dust Off Drive a Huge Success!

BY AL APEX

Over 30 Bimmers turned out to enjoy a beautiful day on a well-designed route is nothing short of Fantastic! Let me begin by thanking Steve Forest for setting up the drive, great job! Also, many thanks to our leaders and sweepers: Steve, Glen Beattie, Gary Sefcik, Spencer Troetschel and Bud Kuhn. If you're interested in learning how to perform one of these functions, please reach out to Glen Beattie or Gary Sefcik. The more folks that step up to assist, the more possibilities we will have to plan future drives like the is one.

Special WELCOME to members attending their 1st driving event:

- Terry & Wendy Singer
- Mike Cozza
- Tyler Wood & Guest



We're so happy you could join us and hope to see you again very soon!



Photo Credit: Gary Sefcik





PVGP FRIDAY DRIVE

PVGP BMW Friday Tour

BY AL APEX

The Friday tour could be summed up as a “tail of two tours”, an eastern morning and the western afternoon. Our group of 19 people and cars, started our adventure at a MacDonald’s, near the Meadowlands Racetrack and Casino, then went south to the Laurel Mountains for an entire morning driving on newly paved, wonderful twisty roads around Waynesburg. After a morning break, we were introduced to numerous fracking vehicles on our westerly connector that reduced our spirited drive to a 45 minute sightseeing tour.

The group enjoyed a wonderful lunch at Oglebay Resort, then off to an afternoon of spirited driving on numerous winding roads in West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania.

Thank you to our leads and sweeps, Steve Forest, John Toal, and Gary Sefcik. Special thank you to our Drivemeister Glenn Beattie, for designing and leading an outstanding tour!



Friday Evening Celebration

BY AL APEX

The Allegheny Chapter traditionally hosts a dinner on the Friday evening prior to the Schenley Park racing. This year's event was held at the LeMont located in beautiful Mt. Washington. In addition to great food, drinks and wonderful conversation, we were treated to the best view of downtown Pittsburgh. Chapter President, Gary Sefcik, welcomed guests and provided the opening remarks. Guests were encouraged to bid on the many items donated by our generous sponsors. A special thank you to Erin Calvimontes, owner of Divine Celebrations and Ashley Calvimontes, for not only coordinating the event, but also seeking sponsors donations for auction, which resulted in raising \$2,000 for the Grand Prix Charities.

Upon conclusion of our five-star meal we were honored to have Mike Renner, Professional Driving Instructor as our guest speaker. Mike shared many interesting stories ranging from his start in racing, through his career as a driving instructor at the Performance Center in Greenville-Spartanburg, SC. Mike's story of being serenaded by AC/DC's Brian Johnson, while taking him for a hot lap, was the unanimous favorite.



Photos: Greg Calvimontes





PITTSBURGH VINTAGE GRAND PRIX

Schenley Park Race Days



BY GARY SEFCIK

There are two things that can be counted on for the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix event. The first is our outstanding participation from our volunteers and the second is the hot humid days of July. 2019 was no exception with the temperatures over 90 degrees and the heat index in the 100-degree range. As a result, cold water, Gatorade and ice-cold beer were in high demand. Thank you to our generous sponsors, Bobby Rahal BMW of South Hills, Penn Brewery, Pittsburgh Brewing Co and i.e. Insurance, who contributed beverages that kept us well hydrated.

Despite the excessive heat, the BMW Corral on German

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18







Hill is the go-to location for our Chapter Members and spectators. Our view of the racetrack provides an exceptional opportunity to see racing up close around turns 13, 14 and parts of 15. When not watching racing, the BMW car show provides a variety of vintage and contemporary examples of the brand. This year's featured chassis was the E21, E30 and E36, or early 3 series for the BMW novice. Our volunteers worked tirelessly

to park cars by chassis series which helps spectators visualize the progression of style and technology.

Since 2009, Mike Renner, Professional Driving Instructor, BMW Performance Driving Center, has made the trek up from Greenville/Spartanburg, SC, to provide Charity Hot Laps. Mike is a top promoter of the PVGP and their Charities, and certainly a well-known celebrity in Pittsburgh.

Mike often refers to the PVGP as "one of his favorite events". Well Mike, you are our favorite too!

We thank all of 40 plus Allegheny Chapter volunteers who helped make the 11 days of the PVGP events a huge success. We also thank the more than 50 drivers, vendors, sponsors, contributors and members who participated. All of everyone's efforts helped the Chapter raise close to \$30,000,


towards the PVGP Charities. Congratulations to all for making this event such a huge success.

Last but not least, thank you to our PVGP Chairman Ron Vivian, registration coordinator Tiffany Nolan, and Michael Meehan, the man behind the curtain. This event would never happen without your dedication and hard work.




SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thank You to All of Our Contributors and Sponsors
The Allegheny Chapter and the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix
would like to thank all of our Contributors and Sponsors:



The Ultimate Driving Machine®

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OF SOUTH HILLS**

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<https://www.BobbyRahalBMW.com>



**Pittsburgh
Brewing Co.**

<https://pittsburghbrewing.com>



<https://www.pennbrew.com/>



<https://ieinsurancepa.com/>

NEW MEMBERS

The Allegheny Chapter extends a warm
welcome to the following new members:



DECEMBER 2018

Katherine Korn *Pittsburgh*
Madison Tanczos *Presto*
Matthew Tanczos *Presto*
Tristan McClelland *Pittsburgh*
Frank Venzeio *Girard, OH*
Dexter Stoltz *Emsworth*
Brian Krieger *Mt. Washington*
Shelby Fitzgerald *Ambridge*
Timothy Pitzer *New Castle*
Shaun Endicott *Greenville*
Philip Suppa *Pittsburgh*
Janet Churilla *Delmont*

JANUARY 2019

Matthew Cherimele *Greensburg*
Daniel DeArment *Bedford*
Sean Handerman *Carnegie*
Brian Jones *Pittsburgh*
Robert McNutt *Erie*
Richard Wendell *Pittsburgh*
Michael Zebley *Gibsonia*

FEBRUARY 2019

Justin Lostetter *Pittsburgh*
Sarah Lamperski *Pittsburgh*
Justin Ritz *Bridgeville*
Joseph Appel *Pittsburgh*
Neil Gwynne *Gibsonia*

MARCH 2019

Ian McConnell *Sewickley*
David Mosier *Erie*

APRIL 2019

Sandeep D'Soua *Mars*
Justin Filey *Pittsburgh*
Swaroop Kondreddy *Irwin*
Jody Leonardo *Pittsburgh*
Emmanuel Oseikumi *Richmond, TX*
Edward Prekelezaj *Birmingham, MI*
Art Rodriguez *Valencia*

MAY 2019

Kristen Handy *Wexford*
Michael Monocello *Erie*
Richard Patrizia *Erie*
Charles Perrone *Glenshaw*
Rich Retort *Edinburg*
Tuna Sansai *Pearland, TX*
Don Taylor *Pittsburgh*
Andrew Wall *Pittsburgh*

JUNE 2019

Alayli Ghassan *Pittsburgh*
William Cawley *Bridgeville*
Delbert Clinton *Warren*
Frank Delsandro *Fairview*
John Dey *Erie*
Lloyd Lane *Pittsburgh*
Pritha Madhavan *Pittsburgh*
Nathan McKee *Pittsburgh*
Karla Miller *Pittsburgh*
Sukh Sharma *Erie*
Brett Shiring *Pittsburgh*
Eric Snyder *Pittsburgh*
Dennis Unks *Erie*
Brian Waters *Zelienople*

Divine Celebrations

Certified Event Planners
www.divinecelebrations-events.com

LeMont Restaurant

<http://www.lemontpittsburgh.com/>

Pittsburgh Custom Home Technologies

We are your Electronic Architect
<http://www.pghcustomht.com/>

Westin Pittsburgh Hotel

www.westinpittsburgh.com

Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh Hotel

www.wyndhamgrandpittsburgh.com

Senti Restaurant

<https://www.sentirestaurant.com/>

German Motor Werks, Inc.

<http://germanmotorwerksinc.com/>

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

<https://pittsburghsymphony.org/>

Heinz Hall

https://www.pittsburghsymphony.org/psos_home/web/heinz-hall

Pittsburgh Public Theater

<https://www.ppt.org/>

Katy Cusano

Live Wedding/Event Painter
www.katycusano.com

Gateway Clipper Fleet

www.gatewayclipper.com

A&L BMW

<https://www.albmw.com/>

Maximillian Imports Co.

www.bimmer.com

You Pull & Pay

<https://upullandpay.com/pittsburgh/home/>

Busy Beaver Pittsburgh

743 Plummer St, Pittsburgh, PA 15201
Phone: (412) 904-1444

Lawrenceville Pet Supply

<http://lawrencevillepetsupply.com/>

Dreadnought Wines

<https://www.dreadnoughtwines.com/>

Griot's Garage

<https://www.griotsgarage.com>

Rob Siegel

(Hack Mechanic)
<http://www.robsiegel.com>

Popped Envy Pittsburgh

<https://www.poppedenvy.com/>

Lendable Linens

<https://www.lendablelinens.com/>

Angel Nails

Penn Center East
3456 William Penn Hwy, Pittsburgh, PA 15235
Phone: (412) 823-8000

Chapter Hosts BMW CCA, Club Racing at Pittsburgh International Race Complex



From left to right: Melissa Cunningham, Steve Forest, Eric Snyder, Zach Cunningham, Ron Vivian, Rob Morelli and Glen Beattie.

BY GARY SEFCIK

Once again, in conjunction with the Pittsburgh Grand Prix, The Allegheny Chapter hosted 38 BMW CCA Club Racers at Pitt Race in Beaver County. The event is in conjunction with the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix Historic Race weekend. The BMW portion is a combination of four days of racing events and having a great time. "The Club Racing Team looks forward each year to coming out to Pittsburgh and experiencing the world class facilities at Pitt Race", says Isi

Papadopoulos, Club Racing Marketing Director. Many people are returnees after being impressed with 2019 O'Fest Club Races here.

In addition to counting on the very warm days of July, we were again supported by Bobby Rahal BMW of South Hills.

Thanks to Rich Speicher, VP Operations-Bobby Rahal Automotive Group, Club Racing participants, Chapter volunteers

and Chapter members who escaped the 90 degree heat in the air conditioned banquet room and were treated to ice cold bottled water. Thank you, Rick, for over 10 years of solid support!

A special thank you to Ron Vivian, Chapter Member-at-Large, for Chairing and managing this successful event. We also thank all the volunteers who helped throughout the four-day event.





Get With The Program

Programming your vehicles ECU

BY GLEN BEATTIE

ECU

Unless you drive a very old car, your car is probably filled with Electronic Control Units, or ECUs. Some cars have as many as 70 of them. They affect the characteristics of the vehicle and many are programmable.

Several of the ECUs in a BMW have behavior settings that are stored in non-volatile memory. Some of these behaviors can be modified by the driver through the iDrive interface. But many cannot.

There are behaviors I saw in BMW 2-series cars in Germany that I was unable to mimic with my 2-series here, such as automatically folding the mirrors when the car doors are locked.

I spoke to a BMW Genius in Spartanburg and he freely admitted that the things I wanted to do were all possible.

Several of the ECUs in a BMW have behavior settings that are stored in non-volatile memory. Some of these behaviors can be modified by the driver through the iDrive interface.

But he said that BMW dealers cannot make such changes to US vehicles.

But with a wink and a nod, he said that just because BMW won't do it doesn't mean that it can't be done.

Carly Connected Car for BMW

Depending on the age and model of the BMW, many of the ECUs in the vehicle may be accessible through the OBD data port next to the steering wheel. I discovered that there are 3rd party products available that allow you to re-code those ECUs through this port.

Doing so is potentially dangerous. If you make the wrong mistake, you could possibly render an ECU inoperative. Depending on which ECU it is, "bricking" an ECU may result in a flat-bed trip to a dealership to have a repair that's not covered under warranty.

After reading many reviews of several BMW coding products, I decided that Carly Connected Car for BMW looked like the easiest to use and the best protected against accidental damage.

The good points of Carly are that the system provides an excellent description of what each coding does, and it automatically makes a backup of the current configuration before it applies any changes. So theoretically, you can undo any changes you make.

The bad point is that the user interface is unintuitive at times and requires a steep learning curve until it makes sense. Carly support is great at helping users over the bumps.

Identifying the right ECU

Carly starts by querying every ECU and then develops a list of the codable ECUs that responded. In my case there were 11: KOMBI, FEM REM, CSM, iDrive, ICM, FZD, SMFA, SMBF, ASD and IHKA

Then Carly presents a list of the coding possibilities within each ECU.

You have to go "menu-snooping" through the various ECUs to find the feature that you're looking for and want to change.



The most interesting ECU on an F-series BMW is called FEM (Forward Electronics Module). It combines the functions of five ECUs on E-Series models: CAS (Car Access System), FRM (Lights and mirrors), JBBF (windshield wipers), IHKA (Auto heating and air conditioning) and SM (Seats).

Almost everything I wanted to change was in the FEM module.

Due to my fear of unintended consequences, I changed one thing at a time and then drove the vehicle for a couple of days before I changed anything else. It took a while, but I eventually got it just the way I wanted it.

Newer BMWs that have a FOB and a Comfort Access system can control door locks, windows, sunroof and mirrors through software.

As configured from the factory, activating the Comfort Access lock function on the 2-series will lock the doors. Under no circumstances will it do anything else.

A momentary activation of unlock function will unlock the doors. If it's held for a few more seconds it will also open the sunroof and all windows.

I've suffered a few unfortunate occurrences of unintentionally opening the sunroof and all the windows from the FOB when I was not within sight of the car. I thanked my lucky stars that it wasn't snowing or raining at the time. I badly wanted to inhibit this behavior.

I've now coded the FEM ECU so that when I momentarily activate the lock function, it locks the doors and folds in the mirrors. If I hold it longer, it also closes the sunroof and all the windows.

If I activate unlock, it unlocks the doors and unfolds the mirrors. It will never do anything else.

I no longer need to worry about the possibility of accidentally opening the sunroof and windows when the car is parked outside in the rain.

There are more examples. When parking the car, pressing the Start-Stop button once will stop the engine. But it will not turn off the iDrive electronics, so the radio keeps playing. (If the vehicle is left unattended for long enough iDrive will eventually turn off. But it takes quite a while.)

You need to press the Start-Stop button a second time to turn off the iDrive. But if your foot is on the clutch (manual) or on the brake (automatic), pressing the Start-Stop button a second time restarts the engine. I've accidentally done that several times.

After re-coding, pressing the Start-Stop button once stops the engine, and then opening the driver's door (with the engine off) shuts down the iDrive.

Perfect.

But then I got too greedy. I found a setting in SMFA that promised to relax the seat bolsters when entering and exiting the vehicle. I had to have it.

Unfortunately, programming the SMFU module "bricked" it. Even more unfortunately, all attempts to restore the back-up data crashed the Carly application. Most

The most interesting ECU on an F-series BMW is called FEM (Forward Electronics Module). It combines the functions of five ECUs on E-Series models...

Unfortunately of all, Carly support went deaf, dumb and blind on me. They provided no useful assistance whatsoever.

After many days of frustration with Carly support, I turned to my local BMW dealer. They came through for me with fantastic service. Thank goodness they were there to help.

I'm now retiring my Carly. I'll never trust it again.

Although a Carly device may be useful to change the behavior of your BMW, it might just as easily cause damage that's difficult to repair. And there's no warning when it goes bad.

Just be careful out there!

My M School Experience



BMW Performance Center West Driving School

BY MR. GRUMPY

Thermal, CA—I picked the first week in February for my M-School. Who knew that Palm Springs would be so cold in the winter?

Then again, cold is a relative term. Temperatures were in the mid 50's to mid 60's,

and the temperatures weren't much colder back here in Pittsburgh. It just happened to be the coldest week they had in Palm Springs in a long time.

The day before M-School we checked into the Miramonte Resort/Spa which is where the BMW school houses students. It's a very nice hotel and we

had a large room with orange, grapefruit and lemon trees right outside our patio.

After taking our luggage to our room, we drove to the Thermal BMW facility to check things out. The BMW facility looked spotless and new. We noticed that there were truckloads of new BMW's being delivered

which we later found out was for a special event that weekend. We weren't permitted to take pictures or videos of the vehicles being brought in (some were in black and white camouflage, others had just a body panel or two camouflaged).



Day 1: Clear blue sky



Included in the M-School package are some meals (dinner the first night and breakfast both mornings at the Miramonte, and one dinner at the BMW facility). We had breakfast along with the other students. Until we started talking to everyone, we didn't know that they, too, were students.



After breakfast we all met the shuttle at 7:30.



Following a classroom instruction/orientation/vehicle dynamics presentation, which was about one hour long, the 18 drivers were assigned to 3 groups and car numbers and went to the cars. I was in the Blue Group with 5 other drivers.



Session 1 was on the skid pad in M3's.



We got into the instructors' cars for a demonstration of the skills we would be attempting. We were also shown how far ahead we were to look for our reference points. On many occasions, that was out the side window.



After this we got back into the cars we were assigned and practiced the skills with an instructor as passenger. They would have us break the rear tires loose and recover. Each successive attempt would be to hold a drift longer to sustain a drift. (I need to practice untangling my hands as we're not supposed to let the wheel slide through your grip to let it straighten out. "Hand over Hand.")



Session 2 for my group was the accelerate, hard brake in a straight line, and then turn hard into a 90 degree corner,

going from the turn in point through apex to the exit turn point. These were marked with cones. The brakes on these cars get a really good workout.



Session 3 was on the short autocross course hitting apexes and smoothing out the corners using M3s.

I never knew I could make myself car sick as a driver. But I was close.



The lunch break included various sandwiches and salads prepared by an in-house chef. I was glad they had Coke products. I had a cup to help my stomach, after which I was able to eat some of the good food.



Session 4 included timed auto- cross on the short course in M3s, which we were required to stop within a box marked with cones the length of 1 ½ cars.

My best time was off the leaders by 2+ seconds. I never really did like autocross. I found that I need a lot more practice.



Session 5 was in M2s on the long autocross course.

This was easier on my stomach as it had longer straights.



Session 6 was back to the skid pad for what they called a rat race with the M4s.

This is where the circle was set up more elliptical where two cars start on opposite sides and try to catch up to the other. As these were only three laps, the winner was the one who crossed the line first. Somehow, I kept winning my heats and eventually won this event in my group.



The last session of the day was a timed autocross on the long course.



We did two consecutive laps in M4s for best time. That ended the in-car activities for day 1 and we went to the facility for a very nice dinner. They gave some awards for the day. The prize for each of the group winners for the rat race was a stuffed rat. It has "BMW performance Driving School" on the belly, and "The Big Cheese" on its back. Guess who won??



Afterward we were shuttled back to the hotel.



Day 2: Another clear blue sky.



We caught the shuttle at 8:30 that morning after another great breakfast at the Miramonte.



There was a brief classroom session to go over what would transpire that day, before questions and comments.



Session 1 Blue group's first session was back to the skid pad for a barrel or clover leaf race in M2s.



Session 3 The 3rd morning session we drove in M4s.

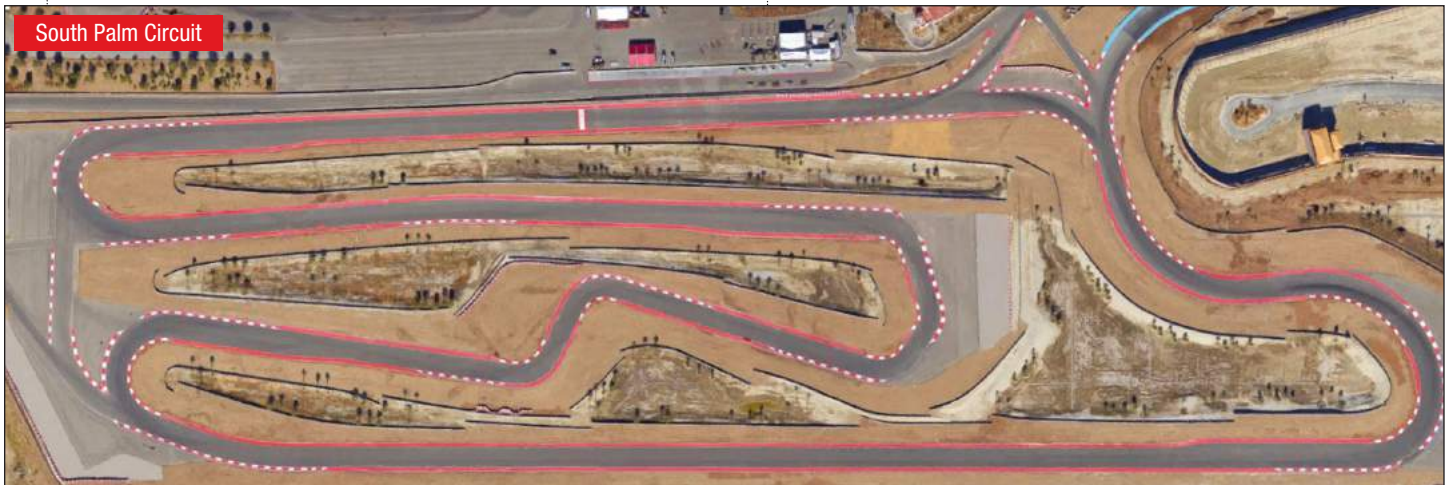
The routine was similar to session prior, but on the inside section.



Lunch was another nicely prepared meal.



Session 4 The afternoon first session was another timed autocross competition on a different configuration in M2s,



(Similar to a rodeo barrel race) We started from the outside edge of the skid pad towards the group of cones to the left of center, circled them counter clock wise, then across to the group of cone on the right and circled the clockwise, then continued to the center group of cones and also circled them clockwise then headed to the finish line which we were required to stop within the same box the length of 1 ½ cars. We did six runs each for a timed competition.



which we were required to stop within the same box the length of 1 ½ cars. I was surprised I didn't get lost on the course as we only had 1 practice lap. I did better than the autocross the day earlier but then so did everyone else (we were probably feeling more comfortable in the cars). I have a couple videos posted on YouTube if you are interested.



Session 2 We headed over to the South Palm circuit for some education on the track.

For the first part we were in M3s. Before we started our practice runs, we got into the instructors' cars to be shown our turn in and apex reference points. We started on the back stretch at full throttle to the braking zone into a quick 180 left hand curve, into a 90 right hand curve, short straight to another quick 90 left hand curve onto the front straight full throttle to where a second instructor waiting to lead us back to our starting point on the back straight to start another practice lap.





Session 5 was in M3s on the South Palm Circuit.

We were regrouped in packs of three behind the instructor to lead us around the full circuit. I'm not sure how many laps we did but we drove for almost a half hour and it was fast and intense.



Session 6 was similar but in the M4s.

I prefer the M4. For me, it was a better fit. I felt that it handled better than the M3, but it could be that the setup of the M3 I used was different from my style of driving, or that the alignment could have been off due to one of the other drivers hitting a curb a little too aggressively.



That was the last of our driving.



The instructors took us for hot lap rides around the track. If you have ever done a charity ride with Mike Renner at the Vintage it was very similar, except we drifted all the corners. Riding with Mike is a more violent ride as he pretty much drifts only on German hill. Class over, awards for the 2 competitions. We received our certificates, shirts, jackets and goody bags.



My wife and I shopped in the school store for more clothing and a new duffle.



All the people and instructors were very knowledgeable treated us great.



I was happy that I went to M School at Thermal, CA. The BMW facility is top notch. The Thermal Club is unlike any experience I've had. It is a country club for auto racing. There are three separate tracks that are interconnected into one massive track. I would love to go back and take advanced M School there. Don't pass the opportunity to go to Thermal.





**The Allegheny Chapter
of BMWCCA**

P.O. Box 27114

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