



Roundel Ramblings



Newsletter of the Northern Alberta BMW Club, a chapter of the BMW Club of Canada

MARCH 2004

So You Want To Keep Your BMW

(part 2) by Ike Moolla

This article is continued from the last issue.

CLEANING, POLISHING, REJUVENATING AND REPLENISHING THE PAINT

This is by far the single most important task to getting superior results but you have to first determine the condition and type of paint before you start.

There are two basic types of paint finish (for our purpose):

Conventional pigmented paint—

this is a layer of pigmented paint as the final finish and you can determine this by rubbing a mild abrasive polish in an inconspicuous area – your working cloth will begin to show a slight bloom or colour transfer from the car.

Two step finish or clear-coat—

this is a clear protective coat as a wear layer applied over a base coat of pigment and is trickier to ascertain because your cloth will yield no evidence of pigment or colour. Most new cars are two step with a clearcoat especially if they have a metallic paint finish.

WHAT DAMAGES AND MAKES PAINT LOOK DULL

Environmental causes such as carbon from exhausts, tree, bird and insect droppings, acid fallout from industrial pollution, all of these accumulate on your car, either directly or through precipitation. Whether it is rain, fog, mist, dew, frost, or snow, the finish deteriorates and is chemically accelerated by heat and UV radiation from the sun. The result is oxidation of the paint and through a microscope it would look like the parched scaly bed of a dried out lake.

Physical causes such as automated car washes – akin to weed whackers, even the touchless types use very high pressure washing and harsh chemicals; and the well meaning owner who unwittingly installs swirl marks with abrasive polishes and harmful cleaning methods resulting in a myriad minute scratch marks that no longer reflect light like a finely polished mirror but instead reflect it randomly, making the finish appear dull. Swirl marks are caused by circular polishing, use of synthetic or dirty towels or by detail shops that use wool pads to ostensibly polish out imperfections in the paint. Stay very far from such places – wool pads heat up the paint and can rapidly burn through painted edges.

The first order of business is to bring the paint back to a smooth mirror-like finish and once this is done, to protect it from future damage (covered in the next task).

The condition of the paint together with its type will determine what you need to do to it. However, always use the mildest products that can accomplish the task at hand. The objective is to bring back or to maintain the finish to as close to perfection as possible. If the paint has been neglected, this entails getting rid of the oxidized top layer of dead pigmented paint or clearcoat and also to polish out any minute scratches or swirl marks if possible. As a general rule if a scratch is shallow enough that a fingernail will not hang up on it, than it can usually be polished out. If the scratch is any deeper you will need to touch it up with new paint or to respray.

Removal of paint, however gentle, presents risks and I do not advocate the use

of power equipment. Power equipment is much harder to control than your hands and will get you into trouble much quicker, often with disastrous results. Some factory paint is between 110 and 160 microns thick – that's about four to six thousands of an inch – not much to go through with power equipment – so be careful. A micron is a millionth of a metre, by the way.

So what does one use? There are literally hundreds of products on the market – each claiming to be the best – some work chemically, others work physically. Let's start by looking at them and their aggressiveness quotient.

CLEANERS

These are chemical (either petroleum or citrus based) and they work democratically, in that they will remove a uniform layer of paint or contaminant (bug splatters etc.) Damaged paint however, is like a continuous mountain range and the idea is to smooth out the tops of these mountains so that they are level with the valleys – resulting in a smooth (polished) surface topography. I use cleaners very selectively and only in localized areas when I need to dissolve a particularly bad bug splatter or attack a bird dropping.

CLAY BARS

These have become popular in the last few years but have been around body shops forever. They were initially used to remove paint overspray from trim, mouldings, etc. and are a mixture of plasticene and abrasives used in conjunction with a lubricant like soapy water or proprietary products like Meguiars' #34 "Final Detail" or Mother's "Show



Instant Detailer". They friction cut the top layer of paint in order to smooth it. I am not a fan, because they leave a messy residue which is hard to remove from the finish and they tend to hold dirt and grit on their surface, potentially making a bad situation much worse.

POLISHES

These are minimally abrasive cleaners and come in a variety of aggressiveness quotients. I use the least aggressive types, like Meguiars #09 "Swirl Remover", or 3M PN 39109 or 3M PN 39009 "Swirl Mark Remover" which are formulated with an abrasive that breaks down as it is used – generally Diatomaceous earth.

These are the most aggressive products that I would recommend for use on a finish that has a lot of swirls or oxidation. They can be applied by hand or machine – 3M makes a special "Perfect it" foam polishing pad for use with their swirl remover product. This fits on a recommended seven inch low speed (maximum 1800 RPM) hook and loop (Velcro) polisher for their product and it works wonders on dull or lightly damaged paint. This is the only instance where I would consider recommending power equipment on a painted finish, providing extreme care is exercised. Hand application is just as effective but takes a little longer; however it makes it easier to apply the product in a linear fashion – front to back – minimizing the installation of potential new swirls. Besides, you will probably only need to do this once and then follow a strict regimen of washing and waxing to protect the paint and to keep it in showroom condition.

GLAZES AND SEALERS

A good glaze is a superfine friction type of extremely mild abrasive agent. It is formulated with emollients and lubricating oils and may even contain some mild chemical cleaners. Glazes will usually remove mild swirl marks, scratches, replenish the paint with oils and smooth out the finish. It is the most mild and preferred method of smoothing the paint and replenishing it before it is waxed or protected. My personal favourite, and I believe most of the concours crowd's as well, is the 3M "Imperial Hand Glaze" PN39007. Meguiars makes a similar product - #07 "Showcar Glaze" – which is probably as good as the 3M stuff. I have used both and they appear to be

virtually identical – besides, I also notice that the 3M and Meguiars products have the same last two number digits to denote their product line. Coincidence perhaps?

THE IMPOSSIBLE

There are two things that no car care product can do. Totally oxidized paint, checked paint (thousands of tiny cracks), and peeling or flaking paint, cannot be restored. Paint this far gone (regardless of its age) should be stripped and new paint applied. No compound or wax can save that which has been destroyed. In addition, deep scratches (i.e. near or into the primer) cannot be completely removed, as obviously all the paint will be removed with them. They can be minimized, but not eliminated. So don't expect miracles if your paint is this far gone.

Do not be completely discouraged, however. Partially oxidized paint can be restored, and light-to-moderate scratching can be removed. If you aren't sure whether or not you are attempting a miracle, give it a shot you may be pleasantly surprised.

REMOVING SCRATCHES

The technique for removing scratches depends on the severity of the scratch.

Very light scratching and light oxidation can be addressed with Meguiars No. 9 "Swirl Remover" or 3M PN 39109 or 3M PN 39009 "Swirl Mark Remover".

Light scratching is addressed with the standard cleaning routine, using Meguiars No. 2. "Fine Cut Cleaner" or 3M "Fine Cut" PN 39002

Deep scratching is handled with sandpaper and wet-sanding, but that is beyond the scope of this article. ■

This article will be concluded in the next issue.

Northern Alberta BMW Club Member Discounts

Bavaria BMW

17250 Stony Plain Road
Ph. #: 484-0000
15% off Parts (except Dinan parts)
10% off Service

Dante's Bistro

17328 Stony Plain Road
Ph. #: 486-4448
10% off the entire bill for April
(excluding Friday and Saturday after 10 pm)

Fastech Tire

4726 - 97 Street
Ph. #: 435-4449
10% off wheels, tires and Service

Fastech Tire

17226 - 107 Avenue
Ph. #: 483-8344
10% off wheels, tires and Service

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP CARDS MUST BE PRESENTED

NABMW Club Post Christmas Party by Alison Poole

January 17th marked the first Club event for 2004. With the thermometers reading well below the seasonal average it did not stop the twenty-five club members from showing up for the annual Post Christmas Party. Members and guests wound their way out to St. Albert for a delightful potluck dinner gathering at the residence of Brent and Lyn Bromilow. The food was simply marvelous and it was a great opportunity to meet with old friends and make new ones. A great time was had by all. Why not come out and join us at our next event?

CLASSIFIEDS

1988 BMW 535i - 3.4 litre, 5 speed manual, a/c, elect sunroof, cruise control, new paint, excellent condition body and mechanical. All service records, plus handbook, ski rack. Details & images available. Asking \$7150.

David – Phone (780) 439-3158 (res.)
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President's Ramblings

by Peter Spencer

Welcome to the Northern Alberta BMW Club's newsletter. It's been a long cold winter but spring is imminent and your executive has many activities planned. They include a mix of social, technical, and driving events that hopefully will capture the interest of all members. These events will all be listed at www.nabmwclub.ca which is updated frequently, so check often for news and events. For those of you that want to start the driving school season a bit earlier than usual, consider the Inland Empire Region's March 27/28 school in Spokane. Scott Adare runs a pretty good school and he has personally assured me that you will not need snow tires for the school!

You will notice on the web site that the Polar Region Porsche Club invites all BMW Club members to their auto slaloms that are held at Namao. These are a lot of fun and very exciting. There are instructors present for those that have never participated in these types of events, and there are rental helmets available from the driving school. Please make sure that you register ahead of



time as the base requires a list of participants well in advance. This type of driving event is a very effective way of becoming familiar with you and your vehicle's capabilities in a lamp post and curb free environment. Come out and have some fun!

The winter driving school was a success! There were 32 students and 23 instructors that spent two spectacularly sunny days on the ice at Telford Lake in

Leduc. There were many out of province participants from Manitoba, BC, and Washington State. I don't believe that I have ever seen so many smiling people gathered together at once. It was also very pleasing to see many father/son husband/wife pairs, and one entire family attend the school. Winter driving is tricky business and practice does help everyone!

The club is growing rapidly with new members signing up every week. It has been a lot of work but the membership database is coming along nicely and I'm sure most of you have received your new membership cards in the mail. Keep these handy as they qualify you for many events and discounts at a growing list of automotive suppliers. The feedback so far from members has been very positive and the events held so far have been well attended. Please feel free to contact any of the executive with event ideas, or any other ideas that you'd like to run past us. Most of all come out to an event, have some fun, and meet the rest of us that enjoy driving and owning BMWs.

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Roundel Ramblings Advertising Rates (per issue)

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1/3 Page	\$65.00
7.5" x 2.0"	\$50.00
3.5" x 2.0"	
<i>members</i>	\$25.00
<i>non-members</i>	\$50.00

Classified ads are free for club members, and \$20.00/issue for non-members. All classified ads will be posted for one issue unless otherwise notified. Classified ads for non-members must be prepaid prior to printing.

Advertisers wishing to advertise for 1 year (4 issues) may receive a 10% discount on the single-issue advertising rates. To qualify, full payment for the year's ad run must be made upon invoice following publication of the first issue with the ad.

To place an ad, please send the exact text (and pictures) via e-mail to the club newsletter director, or by regular mail to the club mailing address. For non-club members payment must be sent to the club mailing address. Payment can be made by cheque payable to the Northern Alberta BMW Club.

Disclaimer

The opinions and comments expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the author and do not represent the position of the BMW Club of Canada, the Northern Alberta BMW Club, the Editor or any of the Officers.

BMWCC Winter '04 Report

by Jim Robson
NAC Director

As your new NAClub representative, I attended the National Directors Meeting in early February. To save our time and your money, these are 'virtual' get-togethers that happen on a quarterly basis, last 2-3 hours and typically result in a case of telephone-ear...so much for executive perks!

Here are some high points that came out of that 'online' meeting...

ELECTION – In true Canadian fashion, we not only decided that our Club should continue to be governed by the Quebec representative; but as well we re-elected the incumbent executive by acclamation: President (Phil Abrami), Vice President (Chris Pawlowicz) and Secretary-Treasurer (Rolf Drommer). It should be noted that Phil has done a tremendous job over the past several years in the development of both the regional chapters and our international presence, which culminated in his recent appointment to the International Council of BMW Clubs as a regional vice-president.

FINANCES – the National Club is now in very decent fiscal shape with over \$20,000 in the bank and with another \$20,000 expected in 2004 from BMW Canada, who now are assisting and encouraging the club on a number of fronts. Based on this situation, the Directors agreed unanimously to again waive annual chapter dues. Accordingly, once again all our club dues/moneys collected will be staying in Northern Alberta.

MEMBERSHIPS – You should know that you belong to a rather exclusive club, which currently totals just about 1750 members. Our national numbers are slowly increasing, about 10% per year having grown from only 1308 card carrying members in 2001, when we re-formatted the national organization. This does mean though that we have lots of room to grow, as Canada has one of the lowest percentage rates of membership on the International scene.

BMW CC MERCHANDISE – Along with our window decals, later this year we'll again be selling our old ball-caps, T-shirts and sweatshirts. The news here though is that we're finally developing a BMWCC grill badge...which will be a high quality alloy and hopefully very difficult to steal.

Tech Corner

by Ralph Buchsdrucker
Service Manager
Bavaria BMW

In this regular contribution to our newsletter, Ralph Buchsdrucker, Service Manager at Bavaria BMW, will kindly answer questions submitted by club members regarding the service and maintenance of your BMW. If you have a question that you would like him to answer, please visit the newsletter page on our website at www.nabmwclub.ca/newsletter.asp. There you will find a form where you can submit your questions directly to Ralph.

Q: If someone was looking at buying a BMW and they wanted to know the condition of the engine, they might have a compression test and leak down test done. I know you've mentioned before that compression gauges aren't very accurate so a buyer should look for even compression across all the cylinders rather than worry about the absolute compression readings. However, I understand that a leak down test is much more accurate method of determining the health of an engine. Is that true? If so, what readings on a leak down test would indicate a healthy engine or one that needs to be rebuilt?

A: A compression test is still a valuable tool to quickly discover a problem with an engine. However, because things such as the variation from one gauge to the next, the temperature of the engine during the test, strength and condition of the battery and starter, the number of compression strokes, whether the throttle is held open, etc. can effect the absolute readings recorded, a compression test may not show that an engine has reduced compression across all of the cylinders. It will point out if there is a variation between the different cylinders. Care must be taken during the test; to be sure the variables are kept the same.

During a leak down test, the individual cylinders are checked at Top Dead Center, with the valves in the closed position (compression/ power stroke). The crankshaft must be held to prevent it from turning, while compressed air is forced into the cylinders through a gauge that measures the amount of 'leakage' or air that needs to be added to the cylinder to maintain the pressure. This pressure loss is measured as a percentage. Generally leakage above 10-15% is considered a problem. During the test, listening for the escaping air in the exhaust system, throttle body or oil filler cap, will also give a clue as to where the cylinder is leaking.

Q: Many gas companies claim that their premium grade gasoline has special additives to clean the engine, and many companies sell fuel injector or fuel system cleaning additives for gasoline. Should I use premium grade gasoline every fill up to clean the engine even though the owner's manual says that regular gasoline is sufficient? How about using premium gasoline every few tanks of gas? Should I use fuel injector or fuel system cleaning additives with my gasoline? If so, how often should I use them?

A: I think that one of the most important things, when it comes to fuels is buying good quality fuel from a reputable source. The amount of fuel system or fuel injector additive that a company adds to their fuels is pretty small. Therefore adding a bottle of cleaner to a tank full can result in a much higher concentration. For the purpose of maintaining clean injectors, adding more cleaner than the recommended amount is not beneficial and may in some cases even cause some damage. However, if you are trying to clean dirty injectors, a little stronger concentration may help. I say, may help, because there are many times removing dirty injectors and having them professionally cleaned, is the only way to get them back to functioning the way they should. Using fuel with insufficient amounts of cleaners in them (discount fuel retailers?) will result in dirty fuel injectors and a build up of soft carbon on the backs of the intake valves (port fuel injected engines), untreated fuel will cause this in abundance.

Using a premium fuel when your engine does not require it or can't take advantage of it, is not money well spent, especially at today's prices. Octane is added to a fuel to prevent the fuel from self-igniting when subjected to higher amounts of compression (reason high compression engines require high octane fuel). Using high octane fuel in a low compression engine, or an engine that does not have the ability to advance its timing, is a waste of money and is actually more harmful to the environment. I believe in being selective from who I purchase my fuel, using the correct grade of fuel my engine was designed for (not higher, not lower) and adding a fuel additive every 12,000 or so km. You can add it more often if you like, but if your injectors are already clean, what will it benefit? I have also seen that using injector cleaner in several consecutive tanks of fuel can clean up injectors that are not too badly fouled. Also keep in mind that other fuel additives are sold that can help to prevent or remove the soft carbon deposits on the back of the intake valves, although this is not that common of a problem anymore.

The Ultimate in Driver Education by Ike Moolla

The Black E46 M3 cabriolet is barely visible because of the fine mist of ice crystals and rooster tails of snow kicked up by its screaming spinning rear tires. We are keeping a safe distance from it as it makes the turn fully sideways, rally style, front wheels pointed in an unnatural position to where it's going, rear wheels clawing for traction on the polished ice and loose snow that passes as a track surface. The concentration is so intense and the brain so focused that auditory senses are momentarily switched off - sounds only seem to enter the helmeted muffled sensory realm, when attention is disturbed or relaxed.

We are similarly hurtling around the corner parallel to it, sideways, making sure our back end stays where we want it, with just the correct throttle and steering input being sparingly feathered into the car. The steering wheel is sawing gently to correct any imbalance of inputs which could make the back end rotate too much and result in us being labeled "UNCOOL".

The M3 makes it around and accelerates like a slingshot granted liberty, when it reaches the correct track position and its front and rear tires are oriented in a straight line. It powers past the next apex and onto the front straight. We follow in similar fashion, our tail threatening to become a pendulum, while the throttle is gently hooked up.

Too much throttle and the back end will come up to meet you so quickly – adrenaline will hardly have had time to pump into the system. We easily get up to 100kph on the straight and can just barely see the brakes light up on the M3, faintly through the white hazy cloud that trails behind it, as it reaches turn one.

We follow closely around the big sweep of turn one, just a little sideways but with good speed. We know this is a decreasing radius turn and we need to be a little sideways if we are to make the turn-in in order to hit the late apex that is now polished smooth enough to push you away like a giant polarized magnet in the middle of a centrifuge. We fight to get back onto the part of the track that won't scrub off speed and degrade line position.

This is also where you could easily lose it big time; the surface is so slick, any greed with the throttle will cause severe



imbalance and will send you into a spin that would be impossible to correct. Besides, when reality invades your cloistered thinking, you realize that a BMW spoiler is not exactly built to hit the snow banks head on, without exacting considerable pain from the wallet.

This is day two of the Alberta joint BMW clubs' Winter Driving School. A driving experience under controlled conditions and a driving education possibly like none other in North America. A two day immersion into intense focused driving - constantly testing the limit of the driver's skill level, and concentration, and of the car's handling and adhesion, all at a relatively safe venue and within reasonable speeds.

This was my third BMW Winter Driving School and I realized again why I am so enthusiastic about them. After having completed the first one – the inaugural Alberta joint BMW clubs' event of this type - carefully planned and organized in 2000 – I had meant to write about it purely because of how much I had learned in the two days that it took to run and I wanted other people to take it. Other things intervened, however and I never got around to doing a write-up for the newsletter. This time though, I was intent on keeping my word to myself and this article is the result.

The event was organized jointly by the Northern Alberta (Edmonton) and Southern Alberta (Calgary) BMW clubs and takes place over two days. School

size is limited to 30 students in order to make the event workable. School starts with a 9:00AM Saturday half day classroom session held at the Northern Alberta Sports Car Club Headquarters in Edmonton, where Barry Munson goes through the basics of vehicle dynamics, weight transfer, tire contact patch, correct seating position, understeer, oversteer, track etiquette, flags and their meanings, all laced with anecdotes from his vast storehouse of ice racing experience. He has but one rule for the students – "UNSMOOTH IS UNCOOL"

Being "UNCOOL" means that you have violated track etiquette, or exited the track because of inattentiveness and gotten stuck in a snow bank, thereby delaying proceedings. The embarrassment of being labeled UNCOOL is the ultimate indiscretion at this school, barring outright removal from the track.

The students range from old and new members of the BMW club. There are young family members of BMW clubbers, or owners of other car marques, who joined the BMW club just to participate in this event. Membership in the BMW club is a mandatory requirement to be a participant, as is a rated helmet.

Barry skillfully and patiently explains what happens to the car when various inputs are given or not given by the driver – throttle, brakes, gear changes, steering, heel and toe, and also talks about the differences in handling posed by automatics, front wheel drives, ►



and four wheel drives (X5 owners). Properly equipped cars and SUVs are welcomed, providing they passed a thorough technical inspection by a licensed mechanic prior to registration. The classroom theory will become very relevant on the ice course but the rookie students are as yet not aware of how crucial this knowledge will be until they get on the course and experience it in the seat of their pants.

The course is at Telford Lake – 30 minutes south of Edmonton in Leduc, the town where oil was first discovered in Alberta. This discovery changed the fortunes and future of Alberta and all us Albertans. Telford Lake is home to the ice racing community of Alberta – it is a skinny East-West lake just over 4 kilometers long and perhaps a kilometer wide that serves as the track venue for weekend winter ice racing. Two full courses are laid out on the lake, both with front straights about 1.6 kilometers in length and a series of turns, sweeping and brutal enough to test the mettle of ice racers. The winter ice is generally thick enough to support the heavy road graders needed to maintain the tracks. If the graders can go out and do their work, the cars can safely race.

There are no amenities at the track; the BMW club brings along a rudimentary tent shelter and Barry Munson's large cube van which serves as temporary track headquarters. The cube van also doubles as a speaking platform for addressing students before sessions. A rescue/tow vehicle is also available to service the unfortunate "UNCOOL".

Several rented Johnny's-on-the-spot serves as relief stations but at minus 10 – 20 Celsius, (average Edmonton temperature for February) it is cold comfort. Leduc's bustling city centre is however

only seven minutes away for those craving civified comfort or the full range of North American fast food.

The ratio of volunteer instructors to students is about one per car; this is almost unheard of at any other school that I have attended barring the ultra expensive private label racing schools. Alberta boasts some superb drivers; they come from the ice racing community, the BMW and Porsche clubs, Northern Alberta Sports Car Club and interested skilled private individuals. Albertans are renowned for their volunteerism, and the spirit of giving back the help and knowledge that they received from their own mentors prevails throughout this school. This is a school run by enthusiasts and it shows.

Time at Telford is broken up into approximate half hour sessions of on-track and off-track. Students are split into two run groups, while one group is on-track, the other is off-track, thereby maximizing each student's precious minute of paid

school day time. Off-track time is just as educational as on-track; in fact only if you master the off-track exercises can you hope to become a more proficient track driver. The most innovative off-track exercise is the big sweeping "S" of the increasing and decreasing radius practice run. It is demarcated entirely by cones or a just-visible but benign 150mm (6inch) high snow bank, so there is absolutely nothing solid to hit.

You take off and approach the first part of the "S" through a cone gate, build up speed and negotiate the first part of the increasing radius while you induce the rear wheels to lose traction either by tapping the brake hard or using the throttle while gently sawing the steering. You are rewarded with an amazing sideways slide if you put in the correct inputs and the car just goes sideways into the correct attitude and position to enable it to negotiate the second part of the "S". If you admire how rally drivers do this on dirt, this same skill is yours for the taking, but without any threat to either the car or yourself. On the other hand you could over-rotate and spin like a top, but this is again the safest place to do it. If you executed the first part correctly, you are now in position to accelerate into the next (decreasing radius) turn. You are again rewarded by another sideways slide in the opposite direction, as you give the car the proper inputs and negotiate the turn, hit the apex (or not) and shoot out of the "S". If you remember the exhilaration you felt the first time you were on a favorite fair-ground ride, this is a close duplicate. However, here, you can run this "S"



again and again until your grin becomes permanent, your skill level shoots up to where you are comfortable, your tolerance for fun is exceeded, or your turn on track approaches.

The other off-track exercise is a long cone slalom with cones spaced pretty far apart; to successfully traverse this slalom requires a steady, constant, even throttle – remember you are on ice and any jerky input will make you slide. There is also a brake trap which will quickly show you the benefits of ABS should your car be so equipped. Both of these exercises are made more challenging by moving cones closer or changing the rules, as the school progresses and student skill increases. You run these also as often as you like.

On-track is where you assemble off-track skills into a seamless track run through about 5 kilometers of corners and a straight. The snow banks are anywhere from 600mm to 900mm or more high (2-3feet) depending on the amount of precipitation on the days preceding. They also get packed hard by the graders so exiting the track unintentionally, while not as terminal as summer tracks, is still not recommended. The corners can be up to 30metres (100feet) wide and the straight is perhaps 20metres (60feet) wide. This setup provides ample opportunity and flexibility for both the rookies and the skilled drivers to derive optimal benefit from time spent on the track.

If you are afraid, you can stay in the centre of the track and concentrate on driving or spin away without hitting any-

thing. The skilled guys can use the track like any dry track – follow lines, hit apexes, find better traction and hone skills while constantly driving at the limit of their prior skills or the car's adhesion. This is the most important difference from summer driver education sessions. In summer you would have to be going insanely fast to induce skids, do four wheel drifts, run sideways or just be able to feel the result of every small input into the car, unless you have had hundreds of hours of seat time.

At Telford every input (or lack thereof) is amplified. You can feel the back end breaking loose as the car is unsettled, when you downshift without matching engine speed to road speed. You think to yourself “so that's what happens when you use the engine as a brake retarder”; an action with a consequence that would be almost too subtle to notice on a dry track but at Telford an unmistakable and obvious reminder why heel and toeing is an important skill to develop to be smooth (I still cannot do it properly and it annoys me to no end).

Abrupt steering inputs cause major instability; you cannot help but be smooth or you pay the price right then and there. How many times have you had to catch or save the car on the dry track? If you have been forced to do this, you were in serious and possibly terminal sphincter-pinching danger. At Telford you can do this ad infinitum until you instinctively know when to catch it or what it feels like just before it happens. How often do you induce spins on the dry track? At Telford you can spend hours doing nothing but this.

Throttle input – you know what happens when some truck-driving yahoo puts a testosterone fueled pedal to the metal in some parking lot. The wheels protest and the truck's back end literally breaks lose. Lots of smelly rubber and you thank god the idiot managed to catch it before somebody got hurt. At Telford you can practice this and instantly feel the result of indiscreet pedal application. You will feel and appreciate the benefit of smooth throttle application and the ensuing response.

This is perhaps the most democratic of all schools because driving skill is the only currency worth anything here. Power and aggression do not belong at this school; so leave the horsepower and hormones at home; this is a school where smoothness (skill) and good snow tires (traction) rule. A well-driven 318 will easily outperform an M3 or M5; this school is all about being SMOOTH. Brute power is useless; it cannot be harnessed and put to the ground without incurring major penalties in loss of control or traction.

The clincher for me is the absolute bargain-basement price of this Driver Education School as offered by the BMW clubs of Alberta. A mere \$195CDN for a BMW club member plus \$100 for an additional driver using the same car. A husband and wife duo can therefore get two full days of instruction for \$75 per person per day. Perhaps a price increase will signify a greater value for potential students. If you are coming from out of town, Leduc has motel rooms starting at less than \$75 per night or you can stay in Edmonton. If you are an American, this is akin to stumbling onto a third world bargain without straying too far from home.

If you have a new driver in your house, this two-day session should be made mandatory in my opinion.

I could go on and on, because the greater your level of skill before coming to Telford, the further and quicker you can advance your learning. I personally believe that two days spent at Telford are equivalent to at least three summer Driver Education schools. This kind of learning leverage is not available anywhere, but then again I am biased, since I belong to the BMW club of Northern Alberta and I love this school. ■



Event Calendar

March 2004

March 25

BMW Films Night
sponsored by Bavaria BMW

Location: Dante's Bistro
17328 Stony Plain Road
Edmonton, AB

Time: 7:30 PM

Cost: No charge for club members.
Hors d'oeuvres will be
provided with a no-host bar.

March 26-28

Inland Empire Advanced Driving School

Location: Spokane Raceway Park
Spokane, WA

Contact: Visit the Inland Empire website
at <http://www.iebmw.org> or
contact Scott Adare at
509-468-6502 days,
509-466-6731 evenings,
or sadare@aol.com.

Cost: Rates start at \$305US.

April 2004

April 13

Bavaria BMW Tech Night

Location: Bavaria BMW
17250 Stony Plain Road
Edmonton, AB

Time: 7:00 PM

April 15, 17 & 18

Calgary Sports Car Club Solo I Series

Location: Race City Speedway
11550 - 68 Street SE
Calgary, AB

Contact: Visit the Calgary Sports Car
Club Solo I webpage at
[www.bishop.ab.ca/CSCC/
solo1.html](http://www.bishop.ab.ca/CSCC/solo1.html).

April 25

**Alberta Advanced Driving School -
Instructors' Session** (by invitation only)

Location: Race City Speedway
11550 - 68 Street SE
Calgary, AB

Cost: Set on a cost recovery basis
at \$100

May 2004

May 1

Dyno Tuning Day

Location: Apex Modified
3271 Parsons Road
Edmonton, AB

Time: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Contact: Brent Bromilow at
bbromilow@nabmwclub.ca.
Registration will be restricted to
15 participants/cars, and will be
exclusive to NABMW Club and
Polar Region Porsche Club of
America members until
April 15, 2004.

Cost: \$65 (includes lunch)

May 2

Porsche Club of America Autocross #1

Location: Edmonton Garrison (Namao)

Time: Registration & setup
9:00-9:30 AM
Drivers meeting 9:45 AM
Runs begin 10:00 AM

Contact: Participants and spectators
must register with the PCA club
at least one week in advance.
Please visit the PCA club
website at [http://www.pca.org/
pol/autocross.asp#87](http://www.pca.org/pol/autocross.asp#87) or
contact Barry Ryziuk at
zigzagn@telusplanet.net
to register.

Cost: \$35 NABMW Club Members
\$50 Non-members

May 16

Porsche Club of America Autocross #2

Location: Edmonton Garrison (Namao)

Time: Registration & setup
9:00-9:30 AM
Drivers meeting 9:45 AM
Runs begin 10:00 AM

Contact: Participants and spectators
must register with the PCA club
at least one week in advance.
Please visit the PCA club
website at [http://www.pca.org/
pol/autocross.asp#87](http://www.pca.org/pol/autocross.asp#87) or
contact Barry Ryziuk at
zigzagn@telusplanet.net
to register.

Cost: \$35 NABMW Club Members
\$50 Non-members

June 2004

June 11 – 12

**Alberta Advanced Driving School
Spring Session**

Location: Race City Speedway
11550 - 68 Street SE
Calgary, AB

Contact: Tracy DesLaurier at
tdeslaurier@nabmwclub.ca

Cost: \$425 for first driver,
\$100 discount for second
driver in same vehicle. Fees
include manual, lunches and
day 1 BBQ; helmet rentals are
an additional \$20.

June 26

Bimmerfest 2004

Location: Tunerworks Performance
Parts House
4505 – 1st Street SE
Calgary, AB

Contact: Additional information and
on-line registration can be
found at www.bimmerfest.com.

September 2004

September 10 – 11

**Alberta Advanced Driving School -
Fall Session**

Location: Race City Speedway
11550 - 68 Street SE
Calgary, AB

Contact: Tracy DesLaurier at
tdeslaurier@nabmwclub.ca

Cost: \$425 for first driver,
\$100 discount for second
driver in same vehicle. Fees
include manual, lunches and
day 1 BBQ; helmet rentals are
an additional \$20.

NABMW Club executive meetings
are open to all members
and are scheduled for the
second Thursday of every month.

Please contact the club President at
pspencer@nabmwclub.ca for meeting
location and issues that you wish
added to the agenda.