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Dennis Nowak
President - Houston Chapter



Leadership roles in the club can be rewarding when everything functions well. When they don't, it's the Board's responsibility to find a solution to the problem. One nagging problem we are struggling with is a difficulty to plan and host social events. Why? Because we are again without a Social Events Coordinator. We had a member volunteer to take on the role, however, he couldn't dedicate enough of his time outside his work duties to perform well as SEC. The Board can't do it all, we have enough on our plate and we need your help. The solution is for another member(s) (we have over 1300 in our club) to step up to take on the role, after all, we all want more events and this is your club. Help us to help you by volunteering a little of your time. We have past event information, driving routes and ideas, we just need someone to help implement them. If you would like to help out with social events, please email me and I will get you started. president@houston-bmwcca.com
On May 17th we held another successful Teen Street Survival School. A huge THANK YOU goes out to all the instructors and support staff who make these TSS schools happen. You ROCK! All of these folks volunteer their time and effort to help make young drivers better behind the wheel, which in turn helps all of us. We

always need folks who can volunteer a little of their time for these schools, so if you are interested in helping out these kids, email me and I will put you in touch with the TSS coordinators.

In the last issue of the Torque I mentioned working with an online store company that can embroider our chapter logo onto clothing items. Five-Star Printwear is an owner operated, small business, in Phoenix Arizona, that has also set up the online store for the RoadRunner Chapter. Some of the reasons we chose to work with Five-Star is that there are no contracts, no set-up fees, design fees, we do not have to buy or keep any inventory on hand and there is no obligations to buy. It cost us nothing to have this store setup. The downside is we do not make any money off the items sold. They do have a return policy, you can pay with credit card or PayPal and shipping is included in the price. The store is online line now, go check it out!

<http://houstonbmwcca.tictail.com/>

At the Chapter Congress in Dallas on March 14-16th a presentation was given by Larry Koch, former BMW NA ///M Brand Manager and active club member.

His presentation was to brief us on the plan to help rebuild the relationship between the chapters and dealerships. His presentation listed some ideas as to why a good relationship with dealers would be beneficial to both parties. Something I happen to agree with. I don't see this as a simple process, but one necessary to mend fences, which will take some doing on both sides. Some of us will be meeting with dealership management soon to initiate the process. Also, in the very near future, I will be asking some of you to act as liaisons to the dealerships to help with communications. By the time this issue gets into your hands, some of you will have just returned from O'Fest in Colorado. I wish I could have gone with you this year, since listening to all the stories from last year's attendees, it will be epic this year. Can't wait to hear about the latest Road Monkey mayhem and mischievous happenstances. It will be hard to beat the aluminum foil stories from last year. Remember I asked you to be my navigator. Without you giving me directions and feedback I can't take us where we need to go. This is your club, get active in it! I hope to find you at the events, you can find me.....

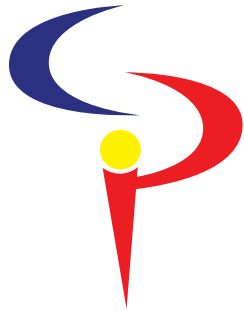
In the driver's seat!

Stay Informed!! - eBlast Signup

Once a month the Chapter emails an eBlast to all members who have indicated that they want to be kept informed about Chapter activities and events, as well as news and information involving the Chapter.

If you wish to receive this information and are not already signed up you may do so on the website at www.houston-bmwcca.com.

The eBlast request is located at the lower left on the front page.



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What Exactly Is An Autocross

by Chris Stokes



Even though we tend to abbreviate using AX, no, this is not a Bavarian styled lumber jack event. Autocrosses are low-speed timed driving skill events. They reward car control and skill, and most importantly, are a lot of fun! You don't need to be Mario Andretti and have an M3 Lightweight to do well. They consist of timed solo (i.e., you are alone on the track) laps of a twisty course laid out using traffic cones. The objective is to drive around the course without hitting any cones or missing gates (just like the gates in slalom skiing). The main attraction of Autocrossing is that it allows drivers to compete in a safe environment. Not only are the speeds low (typically less than 60 miles per hour at the fastest point in a lap) but also the course is laid out such that the only obstacles are soft traffic cones.

Our Autocross events typical occur on the 3rd Sunday of each month, with exception of those hot summer months (July & August). We don't like to melt on the spot so we take a short break from getting cooked.

Our typical timeline is as follows:

- 08:30 AM – Participants Enter the Site
- 08:45 AM – Registration/Check-In Open
- 09:15 AM – Course Open for Walking
- 09:45 AM – Registration
- 09:50 AM – Event Safety Talk
- 10:00 AM – Heat 1
- 12:00 PM – Transition Break
- 12:30 PM – Heat 2
- 02:30 PM – End of Event

Event participants love to take videos from various angles during their runs and you can find many examples on YouTube.com or Vimeo.com. Just search for Houston BMW Autocross and you'll find lots of interesting videos. Don't let the videos influence bad habits.

You'll be surprised how fast slow can be.

This is my first time Autocrossing. What should I expect?

1. Arrive on time. If you haven't completed the on-site portion of registration (signing waivers) you will not participate in the event even if you have paid. Registration closes about 9:15ish, so you really want to arrive just AFTER 8:30am.

2. Inspect your car. Before the event make sure your car doesn't have any major leaks, the battery is secured, you have tread on your tires, and that your brakes are working properly. Also, put an extra 5-10 pounds of air in your tires and bring a tire gauge with you to the event. Make sure you have at least a half tank of gas. You don't want to be the one to stop an event due to being out of fuel on the course.

3. Remove loose items from your car. You don't want anything loose moving around while you are in the car. So, before you leave home, take a few minutes to leave your loose items at home. If you do end up at the event with loose items, they can go in a bag or pile (garage door opener, water, snacks, water, sunscreen, etc.). Your subwoofers/amps, pile of clothes, child car seats, drum set... can be left back your garage. The driver's side floor mat has to come out, and you can either do it at the event or prior. I generally just leave it at home.

4. Arrive refreshed. Get plenty of rest, sleep, and food the night before. You want to be completely aware of what is going on during the event. Also, have a good breakfast.

5. Stuff to bring. Water, snack food, hat, chair, sun screen, printed numbers and painters tape (either make your numbers from painters tape, or print out on regular paper and tape to car; if printing it should

fill up a 8.5X11 sheet of paper so that it is easy to read during the event). Bring a helmet if you own one, and make sure it complies with the current helmet requirements listed on our site. We do have a limited amount of loaner helmets available.

6. Event schedule. The gates open at 8:30, people come in, park their cars and unload their stuff and prepare the car to be tech inspected (everything out of car, hood and trunk open, numbers on the side of the car). Once the car is ready to be inspected, go sign in (look for a line of people forming). At SIGN-in you will sign waivers, get a copy of the course map, and your work/run group assignments. Announcements will be made before sign in closes, and when the course is ready for walk through. Walk the course (several times if time allows) to get an idea of where you are supposed to go when you drive it. There will also be a rookie walk through where an experienced person will give ideas on where you should be (and looking) at each part of the course. There will be a safety meeting to go over rules, penalties, and general information.

We tend to break up into TWO run/work groups or heats. After the safety meeting, Run Group 1 people will go to their cars and Work group 1 people will go to their assignments (generally first time drivers work corners (picking up and replacing fallen cones, there are also jobs available for drivers with limited mobility). After the first heat is over, we switch places with those who worked group/heat 1 now going to drive and those who drove group/heat 1 going to their work assignment. We have plenty of experienced individuals that come out and they are extremely friendly and always helpful to new Autocrossers.

When it's your turn to drive, you will move your car into grid, which is a parking lot with other cars in the same run group as you. The grid worker will help get you into place and direct you on when to drive to the starting area. As they signal to move your car to the start box, put your flashers on and an instructor will come ride along with you. Don't feel pressure to push it on your first run.

My recommendation is to also get some



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E	60 to 69
D	50 to 59
C	40 to 49
B	25 to 39
A	0 to 24
Non-BMW Classes	
Class	Car
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X2	6 Cylinders and normally aspirated rotaries
X3	4 cylinders or less
X4	Prepared Autocross cars

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When you see the "Restricted Area" sign, do not pay attention to this, just drive on into the complex and drive to the end of the driveway, take a left and you will see us! (But stop before you drive into the SWAT training area!)

The Best Way to Get Started

The best way to get introduced is to just jump in with both feet. Coming out and watching is alright to do, but regret of not signing up sets in very quickly. I

like to say "watching Autocross is like watching Golf, it's a lot more fun being out there playing". The Autocross committee hosted a Women's Experience to autocross in February 2014. We did this to encourage more female participa-



ing for the new experience drivers to have fun and be safe. We had a lot of feedback instructing us to host another one of these events in the Fall. Keep an eye on our Twitter, Facebook, and/or Website for upcoming driving events. Who knows, November seems like a good time to host another "new experience" event.

A big thanks goes out to all the previous Autocross Chairs and Committee Members for documenting much of this information on our website. I've aggregated it all together here with the intent of gathering more membership interest in the sport.

In the words of Ricky Bobby, if you "wanna go fast" come join us for any of the following Autocross Events in 2014:

- Sep 21
- Oct 19
- Nov 16
- Dec 14

Information on how to register maybe found at the chapter website <http://www.houston-bmwcca.com/> under Autocross. I hope to see you out there!



tion and to allow the spouses of our male drivers to come out and see what happens on a Sunday afternoon. The response of attendance was overwhelming. We had James Weaver come out with his Espresso Rescue coffee truck to help get everyone caffeinated. (<https://www.facebook.com/EspressoRescue>)

Our seasoned drivers took to being our instructors and course workers, allow-



ride-a-longs with instructors in order to see the course at speed. Pay attention to how they go through the course, and where they brake and accelerate. Times will also be announced during the event and given to the driver after each run.

Each cone you hit will add a 2 second penalty to your time, so come close, but don't hit the cones.

Each group will probably get around 6 runs through the course. There are usually a total of 2 run groups. The event generally wraps up no later than 3:30PM (most of the time), with final results posted on the website late that evening. Once the event is over, hydrate and go home and rest. You'll probably be very tired, but have a new respect for your car.

How do you Classify and Group Cars?

The autocross committee of the Houston BMWCCA utilizes a point system to class vehicles into one of seven BMW classes (A, B, C, D, E, F, G) or one of four non-BMW classes (X1, X2, X3, X4). This classification system has been adapted from those in use by other BMWCCA chapters around the country. Points are assigned based upon (1) the inherent performance characteristics of individual BMW models and (2) the modifications you have performed on your vehicle. If you are not driving a BMW, we have an additional set of classes to fit you in.

Where is the Autocross Event Hosted?



to the car. I Many people try to draw comparison of the i3 to the Fiat 500, although the Fiat isn't electric, they are similar in size. In person the i3 looks bigger than those depictions.

Length 157 inches (13 feet)
 Height 63 inches (5.25 feet)
 Width 70 inches (5.8 feet)

The i3 is constructed at the Leipzig plant and ergonomically its typical BMW. All the controls are where they should be. The radio and A/C are familiar, the iDrive screen, controller and associated buttons are where they belong. The seats are comfortable and aesthetically designed. There's plenty of leg room, being an electric car, there's no hump in floor.

Ian Robertson, BMW board member

What do I know about Green Machines? The only green machine I can recall is The Green Monster, the jet powered car from the 60's that held the world land speed record for a short time.

Art Arfons built and drove a variety of drag racers in his day and then, with little technical training, he bought a military surplus General Electric J79 jet engine taken from an old F-104 Starfighter. He built a car around it, strapped himself in it and went streaking across the salt on November 7, 1965, setting the land-speed record with an average speed of 576.553 miles per hour screaming down the Salt Flats of Bonneville in Utah.



for a while and now electric cars are making great strides; it looks like we're moving along through adolescence and into early adulthood.

Enter the BMW i3

After reading about these various examples of electric cars; Teslas and Fiskers, are readily seen around Houston. We've waited for BMW's example to hit the streets.

I've been reading about and seeing the pictures about the i3 BMW and it has piqued my interest. Roundel has had a few dutiful send ups about the i3. Well, now they have arrived here in Houston. I went to [Advantage BMW Midtown](#) for a closer look. I was favorably impressed. Now, I'm the kind of car guy that likes the fast and exotic cars. My dream car is the V-10 M5. Well, what I'd really like is a normally aspirated V-12 in a five series but BMW doesn't offer a 560i.

To start with, the pictures don't do justice



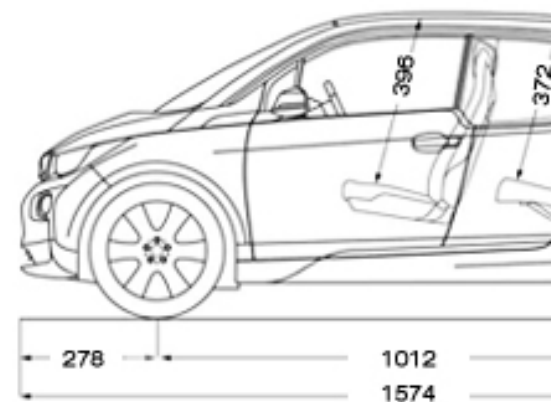
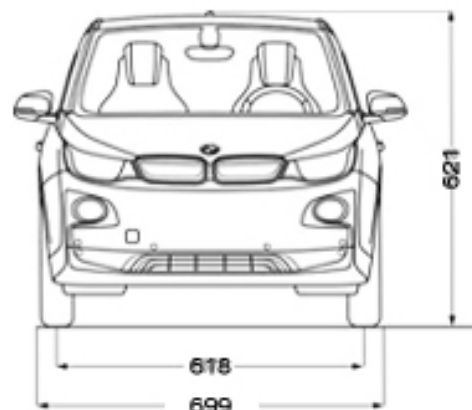
for sales and marketing of vehicles states that 80 percent of i3 purchasers have never owned a BMW before.

Also, it's been reported that Tesla CEO Elon Musk is in discussion with BMW spokesman Kenn Sparks concerning high-speed charging and potential ways to collaborate on the Supercharging network.

"Both companies are strongly committed to the success of electro-mobility

Okay, so much for perspective. We've had a King Hell of a good time with the internal combustion engine. But these days with the ice floes melting, sea levels rising and polar bears embarrassing themselves for a Coke we've taken the notion that maybe we ought to have a little more respect for Mother Earth. Maybe it's time to start looking for other ways to propel ourselves kicking and screaming further into the twenty-first century.

Various carmakers have experimented



and discussed how to further strengthen the development of electro-mobility on an international level,” Sparks says.

At a typical starting price of \$41,350 MSRP the i3 is well appointed. The four seats are comfortable and the design elements of the interior are pure BMW. There’s no drive train hump in the floor plate. The car is made of carbon fiber and the exterior looks like it means business. Advantage BMW Midtown graciously let me have the keys to the car and although I didn’t drive it I was able to turn it on and look at the system displays and such. Once again what I saw was superb BMW innovation and craftsmanship. Taking information gleaned from the website I discovered several facts about the car.



features of your route. That should get you to the Woodlands and back from downtown but maybe not in Houston rush hour. At least not the way I and most Houstonians drive.

The ECO PRO mode operates with an adapted accelerator pedal that demands less power yielding a possible distance traveled increase up to 12%.

ECO PRO+ mode, is designed for range, the maximum speed is reduced to the recommended 55 mph, while energy consumers—such as heating and air conditioning—are switched to their energy-saving mode. Thus, when compared to the COMFORT mode, the possible action radius is increased by up to 24%. Just stay out of the left lane or those 63 AMG’s will be breathing down the back of your neck.

The electric motor of the BMW i3 was designed for instant power, delivering 170 hp with a torque of 184 lb-ft. Typical for electric motors, full torque is immediately available from a standstill and does not need to be built up first via the engine speed, as is the case with internal combustion engines. This gives the BMW i3 particularly high agility in various situations and impressive acceleration values: the BMW i3 accelerates from 0 to 35 mph in under 4 seconds and to 60 mph in approximately 7 seconds (7.8



The iDrive display features BMW Navigation Business system in conjunction with iDrive Controller and 6.5-inch high-resolution screen provides maps and 8 programmable memory buttons.

The success of the BMW i prove that true sustainability is achievable. It also demonstrates BMW i is dedicated to changing the future of mobility.



As far as driving dynamics, the standard yet sporty COMFORT mode the BMW i3 provides a range of 70 to 110 electric miles on a single charge, depending on driving style, traffic conditions and the topographical

seconds with Range Extender). Top speed is 93 MPH. But what’s even more impressive is the nearly silent driving experience. CHARGING TIMES 80% 20 minutes at 50kw DC fast Charge 100% 3 hours with level 2 rated 240volts @ 32 Amps

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67 Local Chapters

BMW CCA's local chapters provide a range of social, technical, and driving events. They're your gateway to many of the club's driving schools, rallies, and autocrosses. Many events are geared toward the novice mechanic or driving event participant.

BMW Car Club of America Houston Chapter



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- Events at the Circuit of the Americas F1 track in Austin
- Monthly Autocross at the Houston Police Academy

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Considering New Brake Pads?

Eventually the brakes and your car will wear out. Most people, me included, don't like the black dust from BMW factory pads. Over the years of BMW ownership I have tried a number of different brands of pads on our BMW's.

It's important to realize that brake pads and even brake sizes are a compromise. BMW typically does a good job of sizing the brakes for a particular vehicle and performance level. However, their default idea of what is appropriate for a given model may not suit the operation that your car sees.

One thing to be aware is the market for brake pads is continually changing due to company buyouts, combinations and environmental restrictions on elements that are used in the pad material. The pad purchased a few years ago may have been changed when it is need again.

Principal replacement parts in the brake system are fluid, pads, and rotors. The most likely need for replacement is the order listed.

Note that BMW rotors are consumable, and are only thick enough for one use and should not be turned or machined down. The typical allowance for wear is 1.6mm (.063 in). Divide this by two and it's only .8mm or (.031 in) per side.

The reasons for not machining be-

low this number are:

- Balance of rotor will be lost unless the rotor is also properly rebalanced
- Thickness lost from rotor will make the rotor more prone to warping and potentially cracking.
- Most automotive

shops will measure the rotor and compare to the stamped minimum on the rotor (federal requirement in US). Unless their measurement is 1/64" (.016 in or .4mm) per side greater than their allowance for machining, they will not machine it. Essentially if you have .2mm wear, most shops will not re-machine them due to potential liability.

Why does BMW make the rotor so thin? Performance is improved with less weight and the likelihood that local machining may be less than perfect, and without proper balancing of the rotor. BMW basically decided that the rotor is just as consumable as the brake pads.

In my experience BMW factory pads consume rotors at almost the same rate, with rotors lasting slightly longer than the pads. Aftermarket pads can double or triple rotor life depending on the pad. Brake fluid is often forgotten; however BMW recommends a complete flush on a two (2) year interval. I suggest if you are doing any type competitive driving (autocross or track days) then at least once per year is prudent.

Why must brake fluid be replaced?

- Fluid absorbs water which reduces the boiling point as soon as the seal is broken on the container
- Fluid becomes contaminated with corrosion products in the

brake system.

- The brake fluid was overheated due to track day or other excessive braking such as driving a long down hill with the brakes on instead of down shifting.

Contaminated brake fluid makes the fluid more susceptible to brake fade. A common belief is that brake fluid should only be used from a sealed metal can. Motul, which makes some well regarded brake fluids says this is not the case with their fluid as the plastic bottles are specially treated on the inside to prevent moisture entering the fluid. ATE fluid is typically in a metal can. This is a popular fluid with BMW owners as it has a higher boiling point than the DOT 4 minimum and is made by the company that makes many of BMW's OEM calipers.

Brake pad options:

Factory OEM BMW and in general German car brake pads make a lot of dust. Years ago I had the opportunity to take trips around Germany and drive the Autobahn on a number of occasions.

When cruising at 105mph in the fast lane and having to stop quickly, it really gives you an appreciation for good brakes. One of the first observations I made while driving on the autobahn, was that fast lane seemed to be dominated by BMW's, Mercedes, and the odd Porsche, usually coming up from behind. So what causes the black dust? It is primarily the brake pad material.



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Typical characteristics of a BMW OEM pad are:

- Strong cold bite
- Good stopping distance
- Good high speed stopping distance
- Fair to good heat resistance

Downsides however to OEM pads;

- Too much cold bite
- Poor modulation of brake pressure – either on or off
- Fair heat resistance
- Serious dust (black) after only about a week of typical commuting
- Brake dust can damage wheel finish

From the above list, it should be clear there is room for aftermarket alternatives. Remember that all brake pads are a compromise, and as the performance is increased in one area it is likely that downsides in other areas are increased. The key then is to understand what features can benefit your driving style and requirements.

I have tried many brake pads brands on our family vehicles. In most cases we were satisfied with the OEM brake power and feel, but did not like the dust. Now I prefer a little different mix of properties, and put more emphasis on maximum braking torque for use in autocross or DE events. The brands I have tried and continue to use are Hawk, Stop Tech, and Akebono. Table 1 gives a relative rating based on my experience.

For low dust as a primary concern, while still maintaining a similar to stock feel, Akebono is a good choice. The Euro version is a ceramic based pad, that surprising works very well on 5 and 7 series (read heavy) cars. Fit and finish is very good.

Very easy on rotors, mate these to a new set of rotors and you may never have to buy another set of rotors. If the budget is tight, try the Centric Ceramic pads as an alternative. I suggest this at the recommendation of Zeckhausen Racing (have not tried them myself).

For lower dust than factory pads, with a little less cold bite, but good modulation, try Hawk HPS. The Hawk HPS is marketed as a Street Performance pad, and Hawk claims increased braking. Do not expect increased braking over factory pads, however brake modulation should be better. These are marketed a good choice for autocross, they are OK, but don't have the maximum braking torque that I want. Upside is very low wear on the rotors, dust is more brown than black, and not as noticeable. A fair amount does build up after three to four weeks though. If you are doing track driving, then stay away as they are reported to fall off a cliff if overheated, leaving very little braking. For street, they are fine. I currently run these on our X5.

Stop Tech was a specialty brake supplier who has been bought out by Centric, a larger company that manufactures in China mostly. Stop Tech used to supply the Axxis Ultimate compound as their standard "street" pad. Stop Tech now manufactures their own compound which is provided with their big brake kits and also sized for OEM replacements. Expect the Street Performance pad to be a higher coefficient of friction than the Hawk HPS. Also expect more dust and more rotor wear. I run them on our Z3 right now and put them on my 5 series. Wheels need a wash after about 2 weeks, and the dust is black. I like the

cold bite level, less than stock, but more than HPS. Maximum braking is better than a ceramic pad or the Hawk HPS. The price point is very good for these, with lots of online discounts, and many sets on ebay as well. They reportedly have good high temperature characteristics, so for track use are a better choice than the previous pads.

The Hawk HP+ is a great pad for autocross. Truly great braking torque, even with a fairly cold pad. Lots of dark dust. Needs a wash after only a day or so, Dust worse than stock. Also reportedly to fall off a cliff if overheated, so be careful if you use these for track use (again a recommendation from Zeckhausen). For street use they squeal at low pressures, to the point of being embarrassing at a red light. No unusual noise under hard braking.

For to and from event street driving, this is a great pad for a dedicated autocross car.

If you are doing track events with your street car, the brake pads will be a compromise unless you change to dedicated track pads. This is one reason to install a big brake kit, as the pads can be quickly changed out. That way you can run a ceramic pad for clean wheels on the street, and switch to high friction, high temperature, pad for track days. Unfortunately there is not pad made that fully meets both scenarios.

Remember when replacing brake pads to use a brake pad lubricant or antiseize (small amount) on the back of the brake pads. Hawk and Akebono typically provide a package with new pads. Also lubricate the guide pins with a brake lube. Brake lube is available at any auto parts store (StaLube or Permatex work well). Use a small amount at the contact points but do not allow any on the pads or rotor. Lubricant will minimize noise and allow the pad to self align. Clean the rotor with brake cleaner, unless you have rotors coated with a break in coating. Usually rotors are coated with wax/oil rust preventative, which must be removed. The typical recommendation is to use hot soapy water to remove all trace of cutting oil, particles, and rust preventative. I always just use brake cleaner though, for me it's less messy, and do several times with Scott white paper shop towels, until the towel stays clean. For new rotors, if purchased at the dealer, the hat will be painted. Aftermarket rotors, even if the same brand, typically are not, unless they have the Zeomet type break in coating (ATE and Zimmermann rotors may have this).

I usually paint mine with rotor/caliper paint, by masking and painting with two coats of paint. Makes the rotors look better behind your wheels.

ATE calipers have rubber guides for the pins. These guides allow the caliper to float to improve the operation. While usually these guides can be reused, if your car is getting older, or you do track events, consider replacing them. I suggest every two (2) years if you do track events, and at least every 100k miles for street cars.

Also the main caliper seal is rubber and degrades over time. While it is a lot more work to replace, this seal performs a vital function to help unload the brake pads from the rotor when the brakes are released, reducing drag and improving gas mileage.

For my cars usually this seal is changed about 100k, or 10 year interval, or when I decide to paint the calipers to improve appearance.

When selecting a new set of pads consider the features that are most important for the use of your car. Also give consideration to whether new rotors are needed. However, If you have a new BMW, I suggest trying to get new rotors before your 50,000 mile warranty expires. Vendors that may help you decide are Tire Rack, Zeckhausen Racing, and Bimmerworld.

Jeff Otten



Figure 1 Donovan makes good use of strong E36 M3 brakes with HP+ pads on his AX car

Table 1 Relative Pad Ratings

Brake Pad Brands	Suggested Use	Low Dust Level	Noise	Cold Bite	Brake modulation	Max. Braking	Rotor wear	Best Price
Akebono Euro	Street	5	5	3	4	2	5	4
Hawk HPS	Street	4	4	3	4	3	5	3
Hawk SUV Ceramic	Street	4	5	3			5	3
Hawk HP+	AX driving events	1	1	5	5	5	2	2
Stop Tech Street Perf.	Street, driving events	3	4	4	5	4	3	5
Performance Friction Z	Street, driving events	4	4	2	3	2	5	2
OEM BMW	Street	2	4	5	3	4	2	2
Centric ceramic	Street							5
Old Repco (Axxis) Deluxe	Street	5	4	2	2	1	4	5



Houston BMW CCA Points System



Activity	Points
Return Survey Form	50
Attend a meeting or event (coffees, socials, autocross and annual dinner)	30
Organize a monthly event (social/technical etc.)	100
Assist with a monthly event (social/technical etc.)	50
Recruit a new member (must be credited by BMW CCA)	30
Original photo(s) published in the "Torque of the Town"	10 (30 pts max per issue)
Original photo(s) published on the web site	10 (30 pts max per subject)
Original Tech Tip published in the "Torque of the Town"	15
Original Article published in the "Torque"	100 (500 words or more)
Original Article published in the "Torque"	50 (less than 500 words)
Recruitment of a commercial ad for the "Torque". Ex: full page ad for one year (\$500) = 100 points. (Advertising rates available in the website)	20% of ad cost



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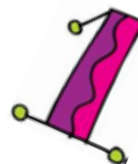
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Tony and Kathy receive their official Road Monkey T shirts at the Cedar Creek Bar & Grill coffee meeting.

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Broken Air Dam Dennis Nowak

Earlier this year I was enjoying a nice drive in my vintage 1975 BMW 3.0csi. It was one of those drives that just couldn't get any better, then \$*##! I pulled a dumb move and broke the front air dam, split it in two places. Yes it was an original CSL thin fiberglass piece that is expensive to repair. I opted to purchase a reproduction from Coupe Guy who has it made from the original molds except his is thicker. Once I received the new air damn I needed to have it painted. Now, if you are like me you are not going to take it to just anybody to paint it. You want someone who knows what they are doing. Just so happens I attended a coffee meet at Metropolitan Collision last year. While there, I spoke to Andy Holder, the owner, and his staff about how they do business. They explained repair procedures as we toured the facility and what I was most impressed with was the quality of their repairs. Plus, how many repair shops do you of that have dedicated curing rooms that bake the paint on?

I took my new air dam and dropped it off along with my car, leaving it with the guys at Metropolitan Collision to do their magic. They fixed the imperfections on the new air dam, primed, painted and then installed it on the car. The Taiga Green paint matches the rest of the car perfectly. And the total cost came in



under their original estimate. I am a happy customer! So if you are a picky customer that cares about your car and are looking for a reputable business that will give you the quality you demand, give these guys a call:

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After last year's event I couldn't wait for another chance to drive this amazing track. I have a new weapon in my arsenal now and it needed a little TLC to get it ready for this years fun. I bought a 1999 M3 coupe, Cosmos Black and black Vader interior. I bought this from one of our good sponsors...Alain at Bimmer Workshop and I am very happy with the purchase. The previous owner had already done many of the modifications that I would have done anyway. As most of you know, I do have a penchant for Super-charged cars and this one has a fine kit on it from a good tuner, Active Autowerkes. The car ran great on the trip from Houston to Austin and I am really looking forward to seeing how it behaves on the track.

and child for a good dinner. Back to the hotel for some much needed rest, early day on the Track tomorrow! Friday dawns misty and cool but no rain forecast so that's good. My car likes the cool weather, makes the blower purr..... into the COTA paddock with the rest of the Houston folks.



talk to and gave me some good tips about this track. Off we go for our first laps. I take it pretty slow for this first time around, I want to try and get a good mental picture of the track before I start pushing my car. I am still learning how this car behaves so this will be a big test for it. We complete our laps and head back to the pits and another classroom session. I was happy with the cars performance and ready for more!



Chris Stokes got some pictures of the other Houston folks that were at the Trifecta, everyone had a big smile on their face!



Nice Weiss M3 Gerald!



Araj is ready...



So is Jim....



I left Houston on Thursday as I had signed up to drive the track on Friday, and AutoX on Saturday then returning home on Sunday. The drive up was uneventful, got checked into my Hotel and headed for the track. I met up with Chris and his wife Leann and Albert and his wife Meredith



Leann and Chris both looked happy to be here. That's one thing that I really appreciate about these events, there's just a great sense of FUN about it all!

John and his gorgeous E30 M3 were there, unfortunately the car had some tuning issues and wasn't able to finish the day.



Soon its off to the drivers meeting and we get some inside information about the track and its tricks, as well as some good info about why it is REALLY recommended that we not take out any of the barriers around the track. Lets just say it would be a very costly mistake. Back to the paddock to finish prepping the car and soon it was time to drive. I was really happy with my instructor, he was easy to



Vicky too!

After lunch I went out for my second session. I was having problems finding a visual cue as to when to turn in to the Esses...If you wait til you can see the turns, its too late! My instructor kept telling me to look for the bridge coming over the horizon. There are lots of bridges out there and it wasn't until I rode with him that I finally saw the one he was talking about. It is Wayyyyyyy off in the distance, but he was right, if you turn in just as that bridge comes up on the horizon, you are in perfect shape for the upcoming S turns. I know it's too late if you wait til you see the S turns to turn in because I made that mistake. My car let me know that it was too late! I swapped ends, did one 360 got both feet in about a third of the way around and by the time I came to a full 360 my speed had bled off, I was facing down the track, a quick look in the rear-view for traffic, and a shift into second, pop the clutch and we continue down the track. Not the way I would recommend entering this set of turns! Lesson learned! The Club racers were out in force, it was fun to watch them duel it out on this colorful track.

My last set of runs in the afternoon were such a blast. I was turning into the Esses correctly and thanks to my instructor doing it without spinning the car. I had to be careful at turn 20 at the end of the day. I was getting comfortable with carrying a lot more speed into this turn and getting down into 2nd for the punch out of it. I got a little greedy once got on the throttle too quickly and ended up drifting the corner. Fortunately I didn't lift off the throttle so the M3 just drove a nice little slide back to the center of the track. Again my instructor told me what I needed, just a little patience on the throttle coming out of that turn, it really is quicker than a drift. Not as much fun, but quicker!

For those not driving this day, there was plenty to do around the track. Val, Dan and Leann found a great place to watch the Club racers.



They even got to take a look into COTA control. It's an amazing room with monitors that cover every inch of the track.



Just like last year I came to the end of that day wishing I had signed up for another DE day. It was over too quickly and just as I and my car were getting used to this wonderful track. Ahhhh well, I look forward to tomorrow's AutoX. I had the AX the next day to still look forward to. Roger Johnson, Ricardo Barnes, Chris Stokes, and



Jeff Conley did a great job setting up a challenging course and running a smooth event. That in his Frankenfur E30 about to tear up the track.

This was a fun and challenging course. I got lost about 2/3 of the way through twice. I said enough of that, got an instructor to ride with me and saw the turn I kept missing. Its amazing how when you miss a turn and look out at the track all you can see is a sea of orange cones that make no sense at all. Not so if you make the turn properly, then you can see the next gate and the whole thing looks easy. I was getting better each run but those two lost runs cost me.

Dinner that night was at "Flying Monkey" pizza appropriately! Good pizza and good folks to eat it with.



So ends another great experience in Austin Texas and Circuit of the Americas racetrack.....

Looking forward to COTA 2015!

Editor's Corner

Jim Robinson



The O'Reilly Auto Parts NHRA Spring Nationals

Oh Lord, what a spectacle. I am amazed by the cars these days. I went to a race when I was a kid and was amazed with those cars when they only went half as fast as today. The legends of the drag strip, Big Daddy Don Garlitts, Don "the Snake" Prudhomme, Shirley Muldowney to name a few were my heroes. John Force red lighted in the first round yesterday. I remember the battles with him and Al

interesting in that many of them drove cars similar to those legends of yesteryear. Barracudas, Mustangs and Corvettes, Camaros and other modified automotive creatures went down the track with their front wheels in the air. And I still don't know what to make of those crazy individuals on



throttle produce a series of violent explosions when each piston fires from the headers to move the air all around and through you. It's a truly incredibly exhilarating experience. I can only imagine what it's like for the drivers of these cars.

The crowd of Nitro Freaks were wearing their colors; their favorite drag racing T-shirts and others a little more upscale with their race team duds. Harley-Davidson shirts too. Tattoos were peeking out of clothing everywhere.

But I only saw four BMW's in the parking lot. A 650i an older 740i and a 335i and of course my 528i. I think the others must have been wearing shades.

Hofmann. I always liked Al better but he didn't have the backing to make speed as John did. But he still won some races like David slaying the giant.

their tricked out motorcycles? They go down the track on the rear wheel alone for about half way. The cars these days are so incredibly fast and the noise made by the Top Fuel and Funny cars is astounding. But it's not the volume, it's the sound pressure. As the cars go by, at speeds over three hundred mph the sound pressure vibrates your whole body seemingly turning insides to jelly. It's as if all your body's blood and water



Antron Brown, driving the Matco Tools car won Top Fuel with a 3.793 pass at 317.72 over Khalid alBalooshi. Robert Hight driving the Automobile Club of Southern California Ford won Funny Car he ran a 4.055 at 314.90 to defeat Jack Beckman. And Erika Enders-Stevens won Pro Stock in her Elite Motorsports Camaro with a hole shot 6.594



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