



Music City Memorial Day Fun

A Weekend of Open Track—The Abstract Art Of The Pony Car Scene

By Josh Bolger

Photos Courtesy of Wes Duenkel

The great thing about the MCA is the open canvas that is on the easel for each member to paint his own masterpiece of our beloved Mustang. While many Mustang owners are content with cruising to a show in their Mustang, or showing their Thoroughbred pony, a few have decided that the best way to splash colors on the canvas comes only through the abstract art of open track events. One of the most dedicated groups in the MCA in this art is the great group of guys and gals of the Music City Mustang Club.

Many of you already have first-hand knowledge of this group—they were instrumental in the success of the 40th Anniversary celebration in Nashville in April 2004. Twice a year, they host their own open track event at the same venue as the 40th, Nashville Superspeedway, just a few miles east of Nashville, near Lebanon, Tennessee.

The Superspeedway is configured as a 1-mile tri-oval, that has been the bread-and-butter of NASCAR for nearly 60 years. However the owners of the track had the foresight to incorporate a short 1.5-mile road course inside the oval. Those of you who were able to

attend the 40th bore witness to this abbreviated road course during the fantastic Trans-Am Vintage Race and Celebrity Challenge.

The road course incorporates the front “tri-oval” between turns four and turn one; leaving the high-banked oval at the entrance to turn one with a high-speed off-camber sweeping left handed turn that shoots you into a decreasing radius 180-degree left-hander. This part of the course proves the metal of your brakes and you. You need to haul down from 100-plus miles per hour in a hurry. Blip the throttle and down shift, not once but twice, take it down to second-gear.



Once out of turn one and two, you roll into the gas setting up for another off-camber 180 to the right that sets you up for a chicane (quick left-right-left) that dumps you onto the back straight at the exit of the tri-oval turn two. A couple up and down gear changes, second or third leaving the chicane. Here you have



to be quick off the gas—as turns two, three, four and five combine to be the slowest segment of the course—back in the gas, shift up to third, then fourth for a few hundred feet and drift out to the wall of the back straight, now you stab the brakes, down shift, take it to three to carry speed (the deeper you can brake the better) and look for your mark for turn seven, which will take you into the “bus stop” just before the entrance to the turn three of the tri-oval. Seven drops you downhill to a quick right-hander that you let your car drift out to the edge of the tarmac. Try to hit your marks and remember to only brake in a straight-line. Turn nine-ten combo comes fast.

Just before you head for nine tap the brake to settle the car and watch for the pot hole on the apex between nine and ten and turn right then a quick left into ten, let it drift out but keep it on the pavement. You’re now on the Indy-Car pit access road that parallels turns three and four of the tri-oval. Stand on the gas and hold the wheel to the left on this high-speed flat sweeper. As you make your way towards the front straight start

looking for your mark on the concrete wall—vertical two red stripes, wait not yet, wait, loosen on the wheel, wait, let it drift a little, go across the NASCAR pit road entry, across the chevron strips and head straight for the red stripes on the wall. When you feel the car hit the banking, stand on the gas and grab some more gears, if you have enough ring and pinion fifth gear, if not run it out the back in fourth. That will set you up for turn one; you've almost completed a lap. First you have to cross-start finish and drift up the banking setting up your exit from the banking back down on the flat off chamber entry to turn once. Look for your mark and drive it in deep, the lateral scrub will bleed some speed, carry it into turn, blip the throttle, grab some gears and ease onto the brakes, turn hard left. Repeat! Repeat! Repeat!

While some art lovers can't appreciate abstract art and the apparent chaos of random rhythms of the paint on canvas, open track events are that abstract art in the Mustang hobby, splashes of color in random chaos of speed and control on a tarmac canvas.

High Speed Fun in Music City—Fall I and Music City Mustang Club's 28th Annual Mustang and All-Ford Show

By Jim Chism
Photos Courtesy of Wes Duenkel



Nashville Superspeedway in Lebanon, TN, was again the site for more high-speed fun on Friday and Saturday, September 21-22, 2007.

The weather for the weekend was absolutely beautiful with bright sunshine and temperatures in the mid 80s.

Our 28th annual car show was held on Saturday only with 127 Mustang and Ford-Powered entries including a 1921 Model "T," a 1931 Model "A," a 1938 Ford Pick-up, and a couple of vintage Baby Birds. In addition, a large contingent from the Tennessee Region Saleen Owners was on hand and conducted a mini-meet within the confines of our regional show. One of the highlights of the show was the when Shelby Hayes, a toddler who was touring around the show site in a 2005 radio-controlled Mustang operated by her father, Todd Hayes, was named the recipient of one of our special awards. The crowd went absolutely hysterical when she drove up to receive her award. As you can see in the picture, she was rather preoccupied.



Our open track event had 105 cars ranging from Vintage Mustangs, Corvettes, Porsche, BMW, and a slew of Miatas in attendance. The Tennessee region SCCA worked closely with our own staff to conduct an absolutely flawless event.

We opened the gate on Friday at "O dark thirty" (6:30 a.m.) and had all of the cars teched and on the track by 9:00 sharp. Our Mandatory Driver Meeting was held at 8:00 and the low speed familiarization laps were conducted at 8:45. Everything went smoothly with only one skinned knee by one of the attendee's daughters being the only attention required by the track EMS staff.

Saturday was pretty much a repeat of Friday with the exception that we had hundreds of spectators from our car show to add to the atmosphere of the event. The entire Staff of the Nashville

Superspeedway (site of the Mustang 40th Anniversary Celebration in 2004) is always a pleasure to work with.

Bill Dillard acted on behalf of the MCA to talk about the driving events program at our Drivers' Meeting on Friday and Saturday. Bonnie Madden from Heacock Classic Insurance also attended the event and said that she "absolutely loved the smell of gas and the sounds of the event."



Carolina Regional's High Performance Driving School —A Participant's view point

By Rodney "Shorty" Brown

I have always wanted to drive my Mustang on a track at speed, but never really had the opportunity until the MCA 30th anniversary at Barber Motor Sports Park. I decided to sign up for one day of open track driving that wonderful September weekend.

Prior to participating at the Barber Motor Sports open track event I had about six years of Sports Car Club of America Solo II driving experience between my 1967 coupe and my 2000 GT coupe. For those who do not know what Solo II is, it is driving a mini road course outlined by traffic cones usually set up in a large parking lot. The speed is not real fast, usually averaging about 40 mph over the length of the course, but it does give you the basics of car control and what your vehicle feels like at the limit of traction.

I had a wonderful time driving my 2000 GT coupe at Barber on Friday of that weekend; however, it just made me want to learn some of the finer points of car control at high speed. The Carolina Regional Group was in charge of running the open track event at Barber. I was very impressed in the professional manner they ran the event; there was a strong emphasis on safety as well as having fun.

I gave high-performance driving some thought over the following months but was not sure what to do. That is until a day in January of this year when a package on how to sign up for the Carolina Regional Mustang Clubs 7th Annual High Performance Driving School arrived in the mail. After some pleading and discussion with my wife she decided that it would be my wedding anniversary gift from her. So I quickly filled out the paper work and sent it back to registrar Karen Demers. A few weeks later my confirmation paper work arrived with various safety forms like "Helmet Release," "Vehicle Inspection," and "Medical Information" that were to be filled out by the time of the event in June of this year. A most helpful "What to Bring" sheet of information was included, this was well thought out and highly useful.

One thing that was strongly emphasized in the confirmation paper work was this was not a racing event and no form of racing would be tolerated. This was a driving school to teach one how to handle your car at speed, what it will do and will not do at speed, not a timed racing event.

June arrived and I loaded up my '07 GT coupe that I had purchased just barely 2 months prior to the event and headed out. The event took place at Carolina Motor Sports Park near Kershaw, South Carolina, which is about 45 miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina. I arrived late Friday evening about 1 hour prior to closing and checked in with registration where Karen Demers and co-workers gave me my paperwork, a cool T-shirt and a goody bag! I went from registration to the tech area where my pony was carefully and efficiently checked for basic safety and security. My helmet was looked over to insure it was in good condition and checked for the Snell safety foundation compliance sticker.

Saturday morning arrived and it looked overcast and gray when I arrived at the track at 7:00 a.m. A mandatory

drivers' and instructors' meeting took place at which event stewards Jim Edwards, Tom Hennig and chief instructor James Ray went over the rules for the event. The two-day event was divided up into six 20 minutes sessions that each run group would have spread out over each day. There were four different run groups A-D that were based upon driving experience and car capability. I ran in group C, one step up from group D that is for those participants with no high-performance driving experience.

For groups C and D there was classroom time with experienced professional driver Dan Unkefer, who went over a variety of situations you might find yourself in on public highways. The classroom instructor emphasized safety and went over a variety of driving scenarios and how to avoid a crash or what to do minimize the crash.

I met my instructor Alan Stopko prior to my first time out on the track on Saturday morning and Alan was in the pony with me at each track session for each day. Alan was pleasant and quite knowledgeable about how to handle a high horsepower car at speed. I learned some finer points of high-performance driving like what the apex of a corner was and where the braking, entry and exit points are. Alan emphasized smoothness and keeping the car balanced at all times by using combinations of throttle, brakes, and steering inputs. There was to be no burning rubber through the turns, locking up the brakes in order to use the brakes ABS system. Alan also pointed out techniques on how to find the best line through each turn of the track.

All in all it was a pleasant weekend in spite of my spin out at turn 8 on my last session for Saturday. There was no damage done to the car, but my ego was greatly humbled. I was strongly encouraged to go back and drive the pony again which I did on Sunday. I had a great time no spinouts that day! The track has enough run-off space to allow for spinouts or other off-track excursions so you most likely will just walk away a humbled driver!

I would highly recommend this to any person who wants to learn what his or her car will and will not do at speed and during difficult situations out on the highways. I say this because the classroom instructor strongly emphasized that you were safer out on this track in this school than on public highways and that the skills learned at this school

could save you from serious injury, or even save your life!

Performance Driving School - '07

A resounding success and a massive increase in CRMC's charitable contributions!

by Jim Edwards, 2008 Chief Steward

Under the ever-watchful eyes of Chief Steward Tom Hennig and Chief Instructor James Ray, CRMC conducted its 7th annual Performance Driving School at Carolina Motorsports Park in June. With a record number of student-drivers, James Ray found himself tasked to provide a sufficient number of instructors, but find them did he! Not only did we have a record number of students, but also a record number of sponsors, thusly increasing the school's net profits to over \$8,000! Those funds will benefit CRMC's charities come the end of this year.

Before I share with you the many fun comments from the students, let me first share with my fellow members the "labor of love" that goes into this annual event. First and foremost, please remember that solely VOLUNTEERS staff the Performance Driving School (PDS). Most worthy of note is that these fine folks don't just volunteer their time at the PDS, but their labor begins early in the fall preceding the event. We began in early October of to assign various tasks to those volunteers. After numerous meetings and untold numbers of e-mails, the PDS begins to take form despite the many other obligations pulling on each volunteer. I want to list each person who spent their time and personal funds to make this incredible event such a success and you should take time to thank them as well: Tom and Lynne Hennig, James Ray, Norm & Karen Demers, Leah Gowan, Larry Kilgore, James Clegg, Norm and Edna Goelzer, Larry & Marianne Vandawalker, Michael and Mike Andreacola, Bill Heybuck, Todd Howe, Ray Michue, Maria Athey, Callie Phillips, Steve Silsby and Brett Smith. If I missed anyone, then blame my gray hair.

Now, let's chat about how the students felt. Frankly, with the exception of

one who couldn't keep his car on-track, all of the evaluations have been stellar. Each and every student-driver sang the praises of their in-car instructor as well as the classroom sessions. I have yet to find even one soul who didn't feel as though they learned and learned a literal ton about their personal skill levels and the dynamics of their vehicle. Comments ranged from SUPER to GREAT to SUPERB and most said that they'd be back with absolute certainty. The coolest thing was the plethora of GRINS. I thought Todd Howe's face would literally break from his seemingly permanent grin affixed to his face. So too my daughter (Meredith) each time she returned from being on track, the grin grew exponentially in proportion to the quickness with which she negotiated the 2.23 miles of CMP. While it rained on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, an event that would throw a wet blanket over most outdoor events, the PDS went on. And it was nearly a perfect training venue for novices and veterans alike. As many of the instructors noted, "if you can negotiate CMP on a slick track while its raining cats and dogs, you can easily do it on a dry track." So the students started with a dry track, ran a wet track, and ended with a dry track. In fact, if the driving instructors had ordered up a perfect set of conditions for teaching on a road course, this weekend proved to be just that!

I can't say enough about our instructors. James Ray always does a miraculous job of recruiting knowledgeable,

patient and skilled instructors and our students obviously felt that way based upon their evaluations. We thank every single one of you for your wealth of knowledge and let this article stand as our invitation to you to return for years to come.

So then? What of the rest of you? Why aren't you out there? Are your driving skills so refined that you couldn't stand a smidge of training and education? Are you concerned that you'll look foolish? Are you worried about damaging your cherished vehicle? Awww...get over it! Come on, join us in June of 2008 and please, please...volunteer to help the PDS group once we begin our planning processes later this year. You'll feel good about that volunteerism knowing that the money we raise goes to the CRMC charities. Besides that, you'll simply have a blast at a fun event at a great venue with the best folks you can ever imagine.



1964-73
Mustang

1928-69
Ford Car

1960-70
Falcon

1928-71
Fairlane/Torino

1928-79
Ford Truck

1955-66
Thunderbird
Street Rod

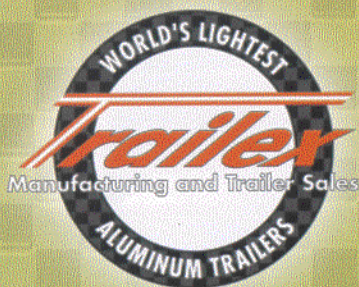


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ROAD REPORT— FORD RACING'S 2005-'08 MUSTANG HANDLING PACK

Over the last few months, almost every major Mustang periodical has shown their readers what it takes to install Ford Racing's outstanding Handling Pack. I can attest to you that this kit is everything that Ford Racing says it is and more. What's more, most of you out there in the MCA can achieve the same results at home in your garage with very basic tools. No kidding, I installed the kit myself in about 4-hours, the most exotic tool was a McPherson strut coil spring compressor. However, if you go to your local Ford dealer and order a few inexpensive parts, you can leave the spring compressor on the shelf. Here's why:

The Ford Racing Handling Pack comes with struts, shocks, sway bars, and bushings, along with nearly every bolt needed to complete the work. The only parts you need to pick up at your dealer are the upper strut bushings and retaining nuts. You buy these and you don't need a spring compressor, because you don't need to disassemble your factory struts. Total cost above the Ford Racing parts, about \$40 bucks.

Ok enough on the how-to, what about the real deal—the ride? Will it make my Mustang ride like a bucking Bronco? No it won't. I drove my 2005 Mustang GT from my house in Florida to the Music City open track event, completed three 15-minute sessions and continued on my way heading to Ashville, North Carolina, for a little R-and-R with my wife, Cathy. After a few days on the Blue Ridge it was back to the Sunshine State via I-26, I-95, and finally I-4. None of these marvels of the Eisenhower Interstate system would I consider table top smooth. The odd pothole and 60 or so miles of clip-clop expansion joints or I-26 leaving Asheville did not make our time together painful or irritating.

To be totally transparent, the Ford Racing Handling Pack will dramatically change the ride and handling characteristics of your Mustang. The term that comes to my mind is a more athletic ride. It is both graceful in day-to-day driving and ready to spring to action at a moment's notice.—*Josh Bolger*

DRIVING SCHOOL

Being around the car hobby for years I had been exposed to talk about many areas; judging, drag racing, road racing. Never did all the big talk make me think needed any of these experiences. I had no idea what to expect either. Plus I did not have a real desire to ever enter this field of male-dominated sport.

This summer, for reasons I cannot explain (other than possible conniving between my husband and Larry Kilgore), I found myself in the most refreshing aspects of people sharing a passion for performance in a driving racing school. What I learned was not how to drive fast and reckless but how to handle a car by listening to a trusting, kind, and patient instructor.

The class met Saturday morning for roll call and to meet our instructors. Then we proceeded to the track. This was the first time I had ever seen a road course. At this point I knew I had a lot to learn. I was nervous and anxious. My instructor told me I should feel this way every time I went out on the track. We went to class for instruction and for some of the guys to get their bragging rights aired—seems none of us girls needed to air any tall tales but on the other hand we did not have to be reprogrammed from our bad habits.

After two days I came away from this experience a better driver, more in tune with my car, and with more confidence in myself and my driving skills—all which will help me in everyday driving. What I really learned was that a big ego wasn't necessary to have a great time and I had a bunch of fun mingling with some great people. I had so much fun that my car number (D19) is still on the windshield of my 2005 Mustang about five months later. Guys move over and let the girls say, "Go Girls Go."

Thanks to the Carolina Regional Mustang Club (CRMC) for hosting its annual Performance Driving School at the Carolina Motorsports Park in Kershaw, South Carolina. The hard work of many of the Club members gives us the opportunity to learn more about our cars and how to drive more safely and have such fun in doing it. To Larry Kilgore, Randall Shannon, and Karen Demmer—a special thanks from me.—*Wanda Whitsell*