

# Gesundheit

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA

FALL 2005

ST. LOUIS CHAPTER



MICHELIN



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Round 2

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Cover: Car 41 concludes its tour of One Lap.  
See page 10.  
Photo: Dave Tozer



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# President's Column

TOM ALLEN

THANKS, DAD, YOU SAVED MY LIFE.

Today is September 20, 2005. I received my Summer 2005 Gesundheit newsletter in the mail yesterday and read it for the first time earlier this afternoon. I was thinking about my next President's Article when something happened that I felt I had to share with everyone in this club. The topic for my next article was an easy choice.

I got a call from my 21 year old son today, Mike, thanking me for sending him to the Street Survival School in July. Mike was one of the oldest members of the entire school. He and I have done two different performance driving schools a few years ago (on the track stuff), but he never attended Street Survival School. Street Survival School teaches you skills you don't learn on the track.

He started the phone call by saying, "Thanks, Dad. You saved my life today." Being accustomed to Mike starting conversations in a bizarre fashion, I didn't get too excited. I responded by saying, "You're welcome...what are you talking about?"

Mike is going to school at Mizzou and he said he was driving to class today and avoided a head-on collision. He was on a two-lane road (with a shoulder) when an oncoming car swerved into his lane. He really didn't know if the other car was dodging something in the road or if the driver was just not paying attention, but he said that all of a sudden the oncoming car was grill-to-grill with him and about 30 feet away, doing 40 miles per hour.

"Dad, that Emergency Lane Change maneuver that they taught us at Street Survival School probably saved my life today. As that car was coming at me, I immediately swerved to the right onto the shoulder and then back to the left but I kept the car in my own lane. I don't think the other car

knew what happened until I was already around him. There was another car close behind the one that came into my lane and that if I had swerved back too far, I might have hit the second car."

He said the swerve he did was exactly the same as the Emergency Lane Change maneuver he learned in the Street Survival School. He said it was almost "instinctive."

He told me that he pulled over into the next driveway to relax and got to his class 15 minutes late... so it had to be close. "Thanks, Dad", he said.

Of all of the events that this Club sponsors, driving schools, parties, Gateway Tech, golf tournaments, and others, the most important event we do for our Club members and for the entire community is the Street Survival School. This event saves lives. Young lives!

If you have teenage drivers send them to Street Survival School. Don't let them talk you out of it. Most kids who attend this school are "sent", not many volunteer, none ask to go.

Mike really scared me today. But it made me so grateful that I spent \$60 a couple of months ago to teach him some skills he'll never learn on his own until it's too late.

All the kids who attend the school have a great time and are very glad they did. And so are the parents... me included. Send your kids!

In August, 2005, there was an article in the Post Dispatch about two dads whose teenage sons were killed in auto accidents. The dads are traveling around the country spreading the word to other teens about driving safely. I wrote a letter to the Post Dispatch regarding our Street Survival Schools. Here's my letter to the Post:

To: Bill Smith – Writer, St. Louis Post Dispatch,

I read your article this morning about "Dad's Telling Young Drivers to Slow Down, Buckle Up"... a devastating situation for both families involved... quite sad.

I'm President of the St. Louis BMW Club a chapter of the BMW Car Club of America (BMWCCA). We just held our second annual Street Survival School (SSS) a month ago (July 23, 2005). Street Survival School is a behind-the-wheel driving school that teaches teenagers how to handle their car in emergency situations. These events are held in cities throughout the United States at various BMW Club chapters.

I'd like to tell you a bit about the school. It seemed appropriate due to the topic of your article.

The purpose of this e-mail is just an FYI... I'm not trying to sell anything nor recruit students. I personally have three sons (15, 19 and 21) and the oldest two have been to several different driving schools through the BMW club... my goal as a Dad

  
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is to teach them how to handle a car when things go WRONG. The situation described in your article scares me to death and makes me do whatever I can to avoid that from happening to me. My youngest will get his license in about a month, so he's next in line for our schools.

The purpose of the Street Survival school is to teach teenage drivers what to do if they lose control of their car. Each student drives his own car (be it his car, mom's mini-van, dad's pickup, whatever they normally drive). We rent a large parking lot (we've done both of our schools on parking lots over at Gateway International Raceway). We set up different courses using rubber cones, and spray down the entire area using a fire truck. I placed a link to the national SSS site below and it greatly expands on the benefits of the school to the inexperienced driver.

Each student has an instructor sitting in the passenger seat all day. There are no helmets, the speed of the car is very limited and the intent is to have the kids lose control—spin it, slide it sideways, lock up the brakes, oversteer, and understeer—then they try it again and learn how to control it and prevent it. We have an oval skid pad, a slalom course, a dry braking pad, a wet braking pad, an emergency lane change course, and classroom instruction.

Many of our students have been behind the wheel for only a matter of weeks (some, just days). Most of them have never slammed on the brakes. Many of them don't have a clue what anti-lock brakes do. None of them have ever spun a car on a wet surface. Our goal is to give the kids some type of experience in car handling so when they're driving down I-270 in a light mist; traffic stops; they have to press the brake pedal to the floor and start to slide sideways... what do they do then? How do they control the car? We put them in that situation in a controlled, managed and safe environment. Our goal is to save lives.

The cost is \$60 per driver for the full-day event. The majority of the event expense is underwritten by national sponsors of this program, BMW of North America, BMW Car Club Foundation, TireRack, ZF Driveline and Chassis, and Liberty Mutual Insurance. The \$60 allows us to rent the parking lot, pay the fire department, buy shirts for the instructors, buy everyone lunch, give the kids a graduation certificate, and buy 20 cases of water (man it was hot on July 23rd). The cost per student is well over the \$60 charged.

Nobody gets paid. This is not a money-making deal. All of the administrators, course workers and instructors are 100% volunteers. The Madison County Fire Department donated the use of the fire truck and we used water from Madison County fire hydrants. We have to pay the firefighter a minor sum since he's working on one of his days off—we've used the same fireman two years in a row and he commented that he absolutely loves doing these events.

In addition to learning new skills, the kids have a great time. We had 30 students this year which is close to our maximum (we're limited by the number of qualified instructors we can find).

I read your article and looked at the brakesforbrett.org web site. It is imperative that kids slow down while driving. Educating them to do that can be done by your article and the great work being done by the brakesforbrett group. The BMW club takes things a step further and teaches the kids skills they need if they don't follow the rules; or if they're in a traffic situation that turns into a BAD traffic situation.

It's a great event, the kids love it, and the parents are amazed at what the kids learn in 8 hours. The final half hour of the day, the parents ride the course with their teen drivers. We wear down a little bit of brake pads, shave a little rubber off the tires, and probably cause some car maintenance to be done a little earlier than planned... but it's a lot cheaper than a car crash.

Here are some website links:

This is the St. Louis BMW Club site... see the Street Survival School group picture on the bottom of the home page:  
**[www.stlbmwcca.org](http://www.stlbmwcca.org)**

This is the National BMW Car Club of America BMWCCA site: **[www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org)**

This is the national Street Survival School site: **[www.streetsurvival.org](http://www.streetsurvival.org)**

Thanks for listening, Bill. Great (but sad) article.

Tom Allen  
President  
St. Louis BMW Club



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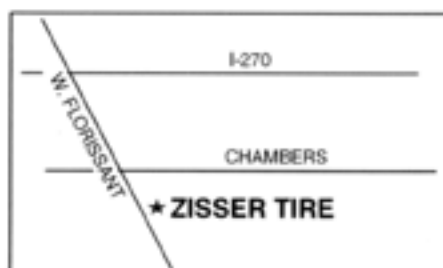


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# Upcoming Events

## **DECEMBER**

### **12/06/2005**

The St. Louis BMW Club -- Monthly Meeting -- 6:30 PM -- Growlers Pub - 3811 S Lindbergh Blvd, St Louis, MO, 63127.

### **12/10/2005**

The St. Louis BMW Club is holding their 2005 Holiday Party at the Tap Room. Since last year's event was such a success, we have moved upstairs at the Tap Room to their much larger room. Keep an eye on this site for more details.

## **GATEWAY TECH 2006 - MARCH 23 - 26, 2006 ST. CHARLES, MO**

After twenty years in Saint Louis, Gateway Tech moved west in 2003, then migrated as TechFest East (a great springtime get-together in the Washington, D.C. area) and now returns to St. Louis for a 25th anniversary bash.

Techfest is BMW CCA's national symposium on automotive technical issues relating to the operation, maintenance, modification, restoration, and enjoyment of BMW vehicles. Techfest is an expanded weekend of technical seminars, displays, panels, demonstrations, and social activities. Techfest is the spiritual successor to Gateway Tech, an event originated and conducted for 21 years by the St. Louis BMW Club to provide technical updates and serve members who were interested in the technical aspects of owning, operating, and maintaining BMWs. Through the years it has grown to be one of the larger technical gatherings of BMW experts in the world.

Tech Fest East in 2004 was the first genuinely successful in the new series of nationally-based technical- exchange fests that began in California with TechFest West - Los Angeles. Prior to TechFest, Gateway Tech was an annual, local affair held in St. Louis, where twenty-plus years of experience made planning each year's get-together a predictable process. Indeed, the spring tech exchange became part of BMW Club ritual and history, and Gateway Tech, the mother of TechFest, became a "must attend" event for many members every year.

In 2006 TechFest returns to its St. Louis roots for the 25th anniversary.

Two decades of high-quality programs and hosting by the St. Louis Chapter established the precedent and contextual thrust for the tech-exchange concept and allowed the evolution into the current process: a rotating, region-to-region traveling event that allows members from various regions more convenient access and lower costs to attend, being held one year on the west coast, the next year in the east.

Dirk Alberts of BMW Mobile Tradition had overflow crowds in his sessions describing the goals and projects of the Mobile Tradition division of BMW AG.

BMW of North America and BMW Mobile Tradition will be providing technical support in the form of new product or technical speakers, a display of current and newly-introduced models, a well-known guest speaker for the Saturday evening banquet, and very likely some of their historic and current racing cars, perhaps even fresh from the track! Gateway Tech will also feature a large number of vendors of products of interest to BMW owners. The vendor exhibit area will be open for most of the weekend and will serve as the main gathering point for this year's participants. Gateway Tech 2006 as each Gateway Tech before it, will be known for the quality and quantity of door prizes given away over the course of the event.

Don't miss this landmark Club event - **register now at [www.bmwcca.org](http://www.bmwcca.org)**.

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# One Lap of America

Jim, DC and Philly—Round Two

JIM DEMCHSAK

*This is the second of two articles describing the One Lap of America event lasting 9 days, covering 4500 miles and 8 different race courses. Jim Demschek is a member of the St. Louis BMW Club.*

## **DAY 5 SUMMIT POINT, MASON-DIXON DRAGWAY, VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY**

The transit leg from NHIS to Summit Point offered us a unique delight. If you went the short way, you would pass straight through New York City and get there right around rush hour.

DC took the first transit leg and drove us to the northern outskirts of NYC. By this point, we had gotten into a pretty good rhythm of driving where we kept our stops to an absolute minimum. When the car stopped for fuel, the people could also get something to eat and empty bladders. Otherwise, there was no stopping.

Shortly after I took over the driving duties we encountered both heavy traffic and rain. Philly, being from Philly, was well familiar with the northeast corridor area and broke out the atlas and charted us a way around NYC traveling around the outer western suburbs. The route worked out pretty well as we avoided a lot of the traffic and several other competitors did the same also. We hooked up with a Subaru Sti who was driving about 100 MPH in the rain and followed them for a while. I suppose there are more advisable things than driving 100 MPH on public road at rush hour in the rain, but at the time, it seemed to be the right thing to do. Besides, One Lap really isn't an exercise in prudence.

Neither one of us had any trouble getting around New York City and out into rural Pennsylvania. And neither one of us knew it at the time, but that Subaru was going to hit the wall hard

and drop out of the competition the very next day. Philly was going to drive for us at Summit Point as he's an instructor there, so he drove the last stretch.

DC sat in the back looking absolutely miserable. He looked like I felt: like death warmed over. We got to our hotel reasonably early, around 2300, so we bought a 6 pack of Heinekin. I knew DC was miserable when he turned down beer. I think he was asleep within 30 seconds of us getting the hotel room set up.

FINALLY! We had an opportunity to get a decent night's sleep. I was so looking forward to that decent night's sleep that, naturally, Philly and I went out and had the Heinekins with some other One Lappers. I think I got in at 0100, having ruined my opportunity for that decent night's sleep. In the morning, DC said that he'd had enough. His car was parked at the airport, only about an hour away



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## ONE LAP

from Summit Point and he was going to take a taxi there and just go back home. We had tried in vain to get him to do any of the competitive events, but he didn't have the confidence to take a strange car out on the track and flog it. If you're not going to compete, One Lap is little more than a really long commute and that's no fun at all.

Unable to talk him out of it, DC left the rest of the trip to Philly and I to finish. Summit Point is the track with a replica of the Nurburgring's famous Karussell. There's a bridge that crosses over the track right at the approach to the Karussell and that's where most of the people stood to watch the cars. As you approach the Karussell, the track crests and the really fast cars get airborne. At this crest, it's really important to have the car positioned properly. The Subaru from the rainy commute wasn't and by the time the driver realized it was too late...it was too late. The driver couldn't regain control in time to slow his car and when the track made its 180 degree hairpin turn at the Karussell, the Sti didn't. The driver was unhurt, but the car smacked the tire wall hard enough to force its retirement from the competition. It was the only time during the competition that I can recall where they red flagged the session.

Later it was Philly's turn and once again my ego took a blow. Being an instructor there, Dave was pretty quick. He drove us to a 31<sup>st</sup> followed by a 26<sup>th</sup> place. As he crested the hill, full on the throttle, I heard a guy next to me turn to his friend and say "Now THAT's Dave in there." I didn't say anything, but my ego took yet another shot.

After Summit Point, we had only a very short trip to Mason-Dixon Dragway. I chose to drive the drag races because I had never in my life run a drag race of any kind. Not even as a 16 year old at the stoplight in Dad's Oldsmobile (Honest!). In terms of absolute performance potential, my car – a stock e46M3 – is absolutely mid-pack compared to all the other cars that participate in One Lap.



One of the fun things about the drag race is that the first event is purely an elapsed time event. You are really only competing against the clock, so it leads to some odd pairings on the dragstrip; VW Golf diesel vs. Porsche Turbo and the like. You can also pair up with anyone you want to and agree to race each other. Completely accidentally, I was paired with another e46M3, the class leading car driven by Roy Hopkins. I was so focused on getting the car staged that the lights caught me by surprise when they started to light for the start of the race right after I had gotten my car on line. Still, I drove my best race when it counted. I didn't beat Roy – he edged me by less than 0.2 seconds – but finished in 45<sup>th</sup> overall.

The next round at the dragstrip was the bracket races. In bracket racing, you state up front the time that you will drive, in my case we chose 14.0. If you are faster, you lose automatically. If you jump the light, you lose automatically. If the car beside you dials in 16 seconds, he will start 2 seconds before you. In an ideal bracket race, both cars will cross the finish line at exactly the same time. The winner is the guy who comes closest to his dial in time plus his best reaction time.

In the first round, the car beside me jumped the start, so I won automatically. The down side of winning is that you have to stay at the track longer (and thereby get less

sleep). I had seen lots of people lose by jumping early when the car beside them left the line. In the second round, my competitor had a 15.5 dial in so I came up with the bone headed decision to leave my car in neutral at the line. I figured that I would see him leave and have 1.5 seconds before my lights started. What I forgot was that the starting lights go off 1.5 seconds before you leave so you can time your start. That meant that when the car to my right left the line, my lights were already started. Allow me to assure you that you can't put the car in gear in a state of total surprise and launch it in 1.5 seconds.

With a really lousy reaction time, I lost in the second round. That really was no big deal, though, as leaving sooner meant more sleep. The drive from the drag strip to Virginia International through the Democratic People's Republic of Virginia was fairly slow and uneventful and we arrived at our hotel in time to get a good night's sleep. (Which we did!)

### DAY 6: VIR TO ROEBLING ROAD

The entire day was devoted to time trials at VIR. Instead of the usual 2 trials, there were 3. Philly and I had basically agreed he had dibs on tracks he'd driven before, I had dibs on tracks I'd driven before, and we would split the rest. Neither of us had ever driven there and we had both heard the wonderful stories about how great a facility it was. And it was

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| 2002     | 330i    | Auto.   | 4 door   | silver w/grey leather (Aero pkg.)    | 1684  | 57k  | WBAEV53482KM22914 | \$27,500 |
| 2001     | 330ci   | Auto.   | 2 door   | grey w/black leather (Sport pkg.)    | 1741  | 76k  | WBABN53431JU34511 | \$23,900 |
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| 2001     | 330cic  | 5 speed | 2 door   | black w/grey leather (Sport pkg.)    | 1734  | 67k  | WBABS53481EV86429 | \$25,900 |
| 2002     | 330cic  | 5 speed | 2 door   | blue w/tan leather (Sport pkg./Nav.) | 1697  | 49k  | WBABS53452EV89838 | \$34,900 |
| 2006     | 330i    | 6 speed | 4 door   | silver w/black leather (Sport pkg.)  | 1713  | 9k   | WBABV33576AZ85373 | \$37,900 |
| 2001     | Z3 2.5i | Auto.   | 2 door   | blue w/black leather (Sport pkg.)    | 1676  | 47k  | WBACN33401LM02872 | \$22,500 |
| 2004     | Z4 3.0i | 6 speed | 2 door   | black w/red leather                  | 1711  | 8k   | 4USBT53564LT27179 | \$34,900 |

## 5 SERIES

|      |          |         |        |                                     |      |      |                   |          |
|------|----------|---------|--------|-------------------------------------|------|------|-------------------|----------|
| 1989 | 525i     | Auto.   | 4 door | grey w/indigo leather               | 1718 | 150k | WBAHC2302KBE22103 | \$4,900  |
| 2002 | 525it    | Auto.   | 4 door | black w/tan leather                 | 1623 | 20k  | WBADS43402GE10051 | \$28,500 |
| 2002 | 525i     | Auto.   | 4 door | black w/tan leather                 | 1495 | 51k  | WBADT43462GZ95647 | \$25,900 |
| 1997 | 528i     | Auto.   | 4 door | white w/tan leather                 | 1699 | 133k | WBADD6322VBW08570 | \$10,700 |
| 2001 | 530i     | Auto.   | 4 door | silver w/grey leather (Sport pkg.)  | 1685 | 78k  | WBADT63401CF03490 | \$23,900 |
| 2004 | 530i     | Auto.   | 4 door | black w/black leather               | 1694 | 24k  | WBANA735X4B060488 | \$42,500 |
| 1994 | 540i     | Auto.   | 4 door | white w/tan leather                 | 1607 | 137k | WBAHE6322RGF29782 | \$8,900  |
| 1998 | 540i     | Auto.   | 4 door | silver w/grey leather               | 1709 | 124k | WBAD6329WBW63032  | \$13,900 |
| 2000 | 540i     | Auto.   | 4 door | beige w/tan leather (Sport pkg.)    | 1671 | 78k  | WBADN6348YGM66618 | \$23,900 |
| 2001 | 540i     | 6 speed | 4 door | grey w/black leather (Sport pkg.)   | 1646 | 43k  | WBADN53441GC97989 | \$29,900 |
| 2002 | 540i     | Auto.   | 4 door | silver w/black leather (Sport pkg.) | 1630 | 59k  | WBADN63442GM74383 | \$33,900 |
| 2002 | X5 3.0i  | Auto.   | 4 door | silver w/black leather              | 1729 | 66k  | 5UXFA53512LP42841 | \$27,900 |
| 2002 | X5 4.4i  | Auto.   | 4 door | black w/black leather (Sport pkg.)  | 1732 | 55k  | 5UXFB33502LH34752 | \$31,900 |
| 2002 | X5 4.6is | Auto.   | 4 door | black sapphire w/black leather      | 1678 | 31k  | 5UXFB93582LN79142 | \$43,900 |

## 7 SERIES

|      |       |       |        |                           |      |      |                   |          |
|------|-------|-------|--------|---------------------------|------|------|-------------------|----------|
| 1993 | 740iL | Auto. | 4 door | black w/black leather     | 1278 | 108k | WBAGD8326PDE84015 | \$9,000  |
| 1993 | 740iL | Auto. | 4 door | silver w/grey leather     | 0092 | 115k | WBAGD8324PDE84921 | \$9,000  |
| 1994 | 740iL | Auto. | 4 door | white w/tan leather       | 0085 | 134k | WBAGD8326RDE92473 | \$7,900  |
| 2000 | 740i  | Auto. | 4 door | silver w/grey leather     | 1738 | 85k  | WBAGG8341YDN78374 | \$19,900 |
| 2001 | 740iL | Auto. | 4 door | steel blue w/grey leather | 1445 | 82k  | WBAGH83451DP30949 | \$26,900 |
| 2001 | 740iL | Auto. | 4 door | blue w/tan leather        | 1187 | 62k  | WBAGH83441DP22342 | \$29,900 |
| 2002 | 745i  | Auto. | 4 door | black w/tan leather       | 1735 | 67k  | WBAGL634X2DP60162 | \$39,900 |
| 2002 | 745i  | Auto. | 4 door | silver w/black leather    | 1737 | 58k  | WBAGL63432DP57698 | \$41,500 |

## M SERIES

|      |                |         |        |   |      |      |                   |          |
|------|----------------|---------|--------|---|------|------|-------------------|----------|
| 2003 | Mini Cooper S  | 6 speed | 2 door | dark silver w/black leather (JCW pkg.)    | 1726 | 30k  | WMWRE33473TD73676 | \$24,900 |
| 2004 | Mini Cooper S  | 6 speed | 2 door | red w/red and black leather (Monte Carlo) | 1695 | 7k   | WMWRE33494TD87421 | \$24,900 |
| 2005 | Mini Cooper Sc | 6 speed | 2 door | red w/black leather                       | 1730 | 5k   | WMWRH334X5TF81092 | \$28,900 |
| 2000 | M Roadster     | 5 speed | 2 door | silver w/black leather (Hardtop, DINAN)   | 1690 | 54k  | WBSCK9347YLC92147 | \$32,900 |
| 2002 | M Roadster     | 5 speed | 2 door | black sapphire w/black leather            | 1733 | 14k  | 5UMCL93472LJ82140 | \$34,900 |
| 2002 | M5             | 6 speed | 4 door | le mans blue w/caramel leather            | 1473 | 33k  | WBSDE934XXCF90498 | \$79,999 |
| 2004 | M3             | SMG     | 2 door | silver grey w/black leather & cloth       | 1707 | 14k  | WBSBL93424JR24807 | \$45,900 |
| 1997 | M3             | Auto.   | 4 door | cosmos black w/black leather              | 1693 | 85k  | WBSCD032XVEE10227 | \$15,000 |
| 1998 | M3             | 5 speed | 4 door | white w/black leather                     | 1716 | 116k | WBSCD9329WEE09138 | \$15,000 |
| 1999 | M3             | 5 speed | 2 door | techno violet w/grey leather              | 1703 | 65k  | WBSBG9335XEY80942 | \$22,900 |

## PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

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T-Shirt: \$10.00

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far and away the nicest track facility I've ever been to.

An absolutely manicured facility with miles of runoff room, good surface, and lots of elevation changes. Philly called it 'Disneyland for Carguys'. And I badly wanted to drive it. And it was my car. Something happened at VIR, though.

We were getting close to the end of the competition and we were the #3 BMW in the entire field. Now that I could see the finish line, I wanted to win. I also knew that the format they had at VIR—a single trial on 3 different tracks with no opportunity to learn from your mistakes and improve next time—would favor Philly's driving better than mine. Plus, he lives a lot closer to VIR so if it really was that fun, he would have more of an opportunity to go back and enjoy it.

He enjoyed it plenty that day. He came off the track after the first run with an ear to ear grin absolutely pumped. The scores also reflected his enthusiasm as VIR was our best day altogether. We placed 30<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> at the 3 trials. If you ever have an opportunity to drive VIR, do it. It's magic. And I didn't even get to drive. At the end of the day, Philly was so grateful that I let him have the VIR sessions that he proposed we do a driving event there in his car, a very well prepared e36m3 CSL. I'm going to have to take him up on that offer some day! As we were towards the end of the competition, the controllers had gotten good at running the event and VIR's a big track so they could send out more cars in a run group, so we got out of there quickly. On the way to Roebing Road, they had set up a passage control point at a hot rod shop at the South Carolina border. We stopped and had a couple of sandwiches and continued on our way to Georgia. We also took the time to make a stop at the BMW plant in Spartanburg and take a couple of photos as it was right on the way.

One of the fun things about driving One Lap was the generally positive response we got from most folks. As I was driving out of Spartanburg towards

Savannah, a father and his 2 kids in a really ratty old pickup truck decided to get racy with me as we left a toll booth. I laughed as it was a 1970 Ford F-150 vs. a 2004 M3. So I did what any sensible, responsible person would do when confronted with a father and his kids in a Ford pickup. I blew his doors off. I could see the kids looking out the windows with big grins. I slowed down where we had to turn off and they sped up and waved. Everyone had a good time. And I was really going fast only for the kids' benefit.

After that small diversion, we were only about 4 hours away from Roebing Roads and arrived there very early. So early that we had time to try to get a beer ON TAP! We stopped into a serious redneck bar within walking distance of our hotel and ordered a beer but found out that they were going to be closing early. All that meant was that we bought some impromptu party supplies and had a mini-fest outside at the hotel's swimming pool. There was no swimming; it was still way to cold for that. After staying up irresponsibly late, we had a restful night. Which was good, tomorrow would be the longest day of the week.

#### **DAY 7: ROEBLING ROAD TO NELSON LEDGES**

The day dawned gray and rainy. Although the weather dude had suggested that there was a chance of rain all week long, we managed to avoid any for the track events. Until Roebing Road. At breakfast in the hotel, I was about to make a sarcastic comment that the rain would at least mean that the fellow competitors wouldn't have to worry about all the coolant the two highly modified Acura NSXs were dumping on the track. Then I saw I was standing right next to one of owners. And I was going to use the phrase 'POS Acuras.' These things had been dumping coolant all across America, and much to their fellow competitors chagrin, all over the racetracks. I would have eventually black flagged them were I in charge, but I wasn't so I was only going to bad mouth them while waiting to toast my bagel.

The rain let up for a little while in the morning long enough to let me get in my track walk. Roebing Roads is a really boring track. It's almost completely flat with only 8 turns. I've only driven it once and that was 6 months ago. Roebing Road's layout is: Right-left-right-left-right-left-right-right-straight.

After the track walk, it started to rain. Hard. It stayed that way for the rest of the day. Rain, they say, is the great equalizer. I didn't really fear the rain as I've driven in plenty of rain at the Nurburgring. I thought that rain would actually give me an advantage. My battered ego started to feel better as car after car pointed me to move forward in the line to get on the track. All the high horsepower boys now didn't know what to do. The Viper pointed me ahead. Then another one. Corvette. Porsche. Porsche Turbo. Hey! I was finally getting some respect, but I still had to go out and drive in the worst conditions of the whole week.

On my recon lap, I recognized that there was no such thing as the ideal line. You basically had to go where the standing water wasn't and that wasn't on the line. I started behind a bright yellow C5 Corvette, spaced about 10 seconds back. I felt pretty good with my first lap in the rain and came out on the front straight to see that I had taken about 5 seconds out of the Corvette's lead. In addition to the heavy rain, the red mist descended. I was gonna go get some dignity back. The remaining 5 seconds of lead were gone by the end of the second lap and I passed the Corvette about as we passed the start/finish line. Maybe I do know how to drive this thing! At least a little.

I finished my last lap and was probably as happy as Philly was yesterday after playing at VIR. It was less fun to drive in the rain than VIR would have been in the dry, but passing someone, anyone, gave my ego a big boost. Now how did that damn Porsche Turbo who demolished me at NHIS fare? On equal ground that neither of us knew and in the rain, I ran 6 seconds



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a lap faster! Now I felt better. I had to wait through a couple days with a bruised ego to get the chance to prove something and I did okay. Now I had to do it again in the afternoon.

I knew that there were plenty of places where I was cautious the first time out in the rain and I mostly knew where they were. In the afternoon session, I drove about 8 seconds a lap faster in worse conditions than in the morning and finished in 37<sup>th</sup> overall. We packed our soggy gear and prepared to head out for Nelson Ledges.

Unfortunately, in order to leave the infield at Roebing Road, you have to cross the racing surface. That meant that they would only occasionally stop running time trials to let people leave and we got stuck waiting until after the very last group was done on the track, finally leaving around 1530.

Nelson Ledges was more than 700 miles away. What followed was a serious exercise in burning fuel. Apart for a traffic jam around rush hour in Charlotte, we had no issues and Philly and I were simply in driving rhythm. Philly drove until the low fuel warning light came on. Then we switched and I had a fantastic drive through twilight into darkness and through the mountains in West Virginia. Occasionally, we'd see another competitor and run together for a while.

In my opinion, the most stunning car there was a replica of a Ford GT40. Driving cross country (quickly!) with nothing but the vision of a GT40 in your rearview mirror is one of those driving memories that I'll have for a long time. I typically kept the cruise control set between 85 and 100 mph (the Valentine 1 providing our front cover). When the low fuel light came on, we bought fuel and changed drivers again. I also bought a bottle of Corona as it was the Cinco de Mayo of the Century, 05.05.05. I would have liked to have done something more original, but there's not a lot you can do when you're on the road and in a hurry. I told Philly that we were going to stop at a Taco Bell along the way, but we

never saw one and the need to press on outweighed my desire for nachos.

We all arrived at our hotel near Nelson Ledges at around 0130 and completely overwhelmed the harried night clerk. She tried her best and hopefully got everyone taken care of. You could tell that she wasn't accustomed to getting 50 customers at 0200. We made our way to the room, happy to be there that early. I opened the Corona, took a swig in honor of Cinco de Mayo, and gave the rest to Philly. Since I was driving at Nelson Ledges only a few hours later, I figured it would be a good idea to not have much alcohol.

#### **DAY 8: NELSON LEDGES TO THE TIRE RACK**

I could keep this schedule up indefinitely. A few days ago, I felt like death warmed over. Now, it was easy and 4 hours of sleep a night was fine as long as there was fuel.

Getting to the track was an adventure as Nelson Ledges is kind of in the middle of nowhere and our directions were not the best. After some lost time wandering around rural Ohio, we did eventually make it there. Everything VIR is, Nelson Ledges is not. The facility was a dump. The track was a bumpy mess, the toilets were just really big outhouses, and the coach really was the roachiest.

The day itself was probably the most uneventful of the trip. About the only distraction was Jenni. As best as I can tell, Jenni was the girlfriend of a rich guy who was interested in driving One Lap next year, so they basically became something like groupies, following the competitors around from track to track. Jenni stuck out at Nelson Ledges (literally) because it finally warmed up enough to the point where she could, um, wear flimsier clothes. EVERYONE noticed Jenni. And she really was attractive. She actually changed clothes

while at the track from one revealing outfit to another. Not sure why she needed to change clothes right there, but... Now what was I writing about? Oh yeah, we finished at Nelson Ledges, I drove OK, but not great, and drove back to South Bend.

#### **THE LAST DAY:**

The night before the last event found everybody in the hotel bar swapping stories and just generally having a good time. The following morning was only the dry skid pad. Since I opened up the event, I let Philly finish it. There's really nothing exciting to tell about the skid pad competition, all you do is drive in circles. Despite posting a figure of 0.91g, we placed only 52<sup>nd</sup>. That should give you an idea of the level of the equipment that enters One Lap.

The dry skid pad is followed by an open session on the skid pad where any competitor can go out and do burnouts, drifting, whatever. It's a freeform entertainment session where folks who can afford to trash what's left of their tires go and do so. It's a hoot to watch. All that was left was the awards lunch.

We didn't win anything, but the 41 car's finishes were: 38<sup>th</sup> (out of 90 cars that received points) overall, 8<sup>th</sup> (out of 14) in our class, and the #3 finisher among all BMWs entered. All things considered, it was a pretty successful week. That's my story, and I'm stickin' with it.

*For information on One Lap, see [www.onelapofamerica.com](http://www.onelapofamerica.com)*



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# News from National

## OKTOBERFEST 2005 - WHAT A SPECTACULAR EVENT!

Over 400 people registered for the week, and more than 350 purchased day passes before and during the week. We enjoyed perfect Carolina weather, great food, great fun and true BMW camaraderie. The survey responses received so far indicate that this Oktoberfest will likely be one that future Ofests will be measured by for many years to come. The first 25 respondents have placed it at an 8.2 out of a possible perfect score of 10. Only Oktoberfest 2002 comes close to that average with an overall score of 7.9!

An enormous THANK YOU and JOB WELL DONE to the Tarheels and each of the event teams for their excellent planning, hard work and outstanding southern hospitality.

## RAFFLE WINNERS 2005

OK, the moment you've all been waiting for:

M5 Winners: Alexander Mestetsky El Sobrante, CA; Bruce Stauch Simi Valley, CA; Kurt Beckler Davie, FL; Susan Stearn Chicago, IL; Jim Martin Dallas, TX; Glenn Weiland Great Falls, VA; Jessie Ritchie Richmond, KY; Jennifer McCloy Louisville, CO; William Branch Austin, TX

Cash Prize: Marshall Smith Arlington, IL

**Congratulations to you all!**

## MEMBERSHIP STATS AS OF 09/22/2005

|                                | FULL   | ASSOCIATE | TOTAL  |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----------|--------|
| <b>Current Membership</b>      | 65,793 | 9,151     | 74,943 |
| <b>Last Month's Membership</b> | 66,042 | 9,151     | 75,193 |
| Monthly Net Gain (Loss)        | -250   | 0         | -250   |
| Monthly % Change               | -0.38% | 0.00%     | 0.33%  |
| <b>Last Year's Membership</b>  | 67,641 | 8,950     | 76,591 |
| Annual Net Gain (Loss)         | -1,849 | 201       | -1,648 |
| Annual % Change                | -2.73% | 2.25%     | -2.25% |
| <b>New Members, 09/05</b>      | 1,114  |           |        |
| Renewals 09/05                 | 48%    |           |        |
| Roundels Mailed                | 66,650 |           |        |

## GATEWAY TECH 25TH ANNIVERSARY! THE NATIONAL EVENT RETURNS TO ITS MIDWESTERN ROOTS!

Mark your calendars - March 23 - 26th, 2006 will mark the 25th anniversary of Gateway Tech in St. Louis. We'll be hosting the event at the beautiful, new St. Charles Convention Center and will use the brand new Embassy Suites as the primary hotel.

We have a long list of presenters, keynote speakers and excellent vendors lined up for 2006 - so don't miss out. Watch Roundel and the BMW CCA website for details and

registration information. Registration opens 10/15/2005.

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# VOTE

## St. Louis BMW Club Election Ballot For Calendar Year 2006

### POSITIONS

President

Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Board Members  
(select 5)

### CANDIDATES

Tom Allen

Terry North

John Hoffner

Joyce Hoffmann

John Cox

Peter Rossato

Matt Meier

Ryan Weis

Andy Wilding

Peter Knese

### WRITE-IN

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Is BMW a Man's car? That's what they're telling me. My crack team of researchers (Google searches) returned reports showing around 70% of BMW buyers are men. Other reports

show similar numbers for the MINI. That same crack team is less interested if a "buyer" is the same as a "driver" and went to play wiffleball instead of delving deeper into such shallow statistics.

As a man who owns a BMW, I can relate that 100% of the BMWs in our house are owned and driven by men. Man. That is to say, me. The 2002, bought on a whim and a 30-hour roadtrip weekend, is partner to an equally frivolous car—a Miata. When the 02 arrived in America, it was not frivolous at all! A sporty coupe, comfortable seating for four, cavernous trunk, good gas mileage... the sort of selling points that today produces wildly exciting cars like the Chevy Cobalt. Makes my mouth dry out just thinking about it.

But today, 31 years on, my BMW is frivolous in some respects. In others (starts every morning, still goes to 100, better gas mileage than half the vehicles sold in the last ten years) it's a rather common sense car. My wife Emily drives a Prism/Corolla. Very common sense. Quite useful for grocery shopping, carpooling, or road trips with more luggage than will fit in the Miata. Having owned a Protégé, a Metro, and a Sentra I'm all for the compact sedan. But since we're already well stocked in that department, I'll continue to be frivolous.

That's one of the reasons I am selling the 2002. After four years, it's starting to take on the characteristic of another "f" word: familiar. In some respects, men are accused of being like the fish who longs for the world above the surface of the water: we want that which we cannot have. And once we have it, we don't want it anymore.

There are long term plans afoot to keep a BMW close at hand (if BMW decides to bring a 1 series coupe to North America with something less than a six cylinder). Emily and I keep the plan in the back of our minds to take European delivery of something or other 'round about 2008 or so (very detailed plans). With, what I call, eurodiesel coming to the states, and the efficiency of diesel, I would be ready to receive a 120d with open arms. Not much similarity to the carbureted 2002 left at that point, but a small BMW to be sure.

But what to do in the meantime? I can't be down to one car, not for any length of time. I might go funny in the head.

Fortunately, my interest in cars has rubbed off on Emily. Mostly we talk about the design of cars (we both cringe at the sight of a Pontiac Aztec). But one of her professional and personal interests is the environment, and specifically clean air. And she's rubbing off on me. Last time through the inspection station, I took pride it seeing my 2002 pass emissions. And when, more recently, the Miata didn't, I was on the phone that day getting parts to bring it back in line (more than halved or quartered all the emission readings from the first test).

And now these interests converge in my new master plan (read: temporary spur-of-the-moment quest to satiate need for the next new thing). Biodiesel! Once the 02 is out of the stable, I'll be looking for a used diesel to work my Victor Frankenstein experiments on. For the humble diesel engine was designed to run on peanut oil, and why should the Grand Wok down the street get all the good stuff?

I've seen kits for around \$800 (greasecar.com) and there are plenty of old diesels lurking around in the US, from the lowly VW Rabbit to the grand MB 300. And you may well know that in 1985 you could go to your local BMW dealer, look him straight in the eye and say in a firm voice "I would like to by a BMW, in fact today I think I'll have a diesel!" and he would show you the new 524td.

I've seen a few 524tds on the internet through a range of prices. Turns out the 524td engine was even used in an RV called the Vixen, so make sure you know what you're getting before clicking "buy now." So it is possible to realize my latest hair-brained scheme AND own a BMW to boot. Regardless, I just renewed my club membership, so 524td or not, I'm sticking around for the member discount on my next BMW.

Emily attempts to inject logic with questions like "Is a 20 year old car with 190,000 miles really worth that much?" I dunno, that's what I paid for the 30 year old one (with a broken odometer). But that's not the point, is it? If I wanted a low mileage car, or one that was inexpensive, that would be conservative; even *familiar*. But damn the torpedoes and full steam ahead if I'm going to achieve anything resembling frivolous! It's the spirit that makes drivers go through several sets of track tires in a year—on the car they also drive to work. In fact, I think it's the same spirit that permits men NOT to ask for directions. It's what makes it reasonable to sell brand new MINIs (the old ones mind you) in Japan under the name Rover to the end of the millennia.

Emily has shoes, coats and magazine subscriptions. I have cars and old Macintoshes. And somewhere in between we find common ground. A BMW fueled by the remains of General Tso's chicken may not be a man's car, but it would certainly be our car.

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# Monthly Membership Meeting

The combined business and social meeting is held the first Tuesday of each month at Growler's Pub in Sunset Hills, beginning at 6:30pm. We have a private room reserved at the left end of the pub. Socializing follows the business meeting (usually 7:30 or 8pm).

Growler's Pub Royal Order of Tasters encourages you to try their 131 different beers.

The club has special prizes available for those who imbibe in each beer with an associated e-model number. Have an e36, or an e85! See Terry North for details.

## Directions to Chapter Meetings—Growler's Pub

**From Hwy 270** Exit 44 East/Watson Rd. and continue East to Lindbergh Blvd. South on Lindbergh Blvd to 3811 S. Lindbergh Blvd (on the right).

**From Hwy 44** Exit Lindbergh Blvd and go South to 3811 S. Lindbergh Blvd (on the right).

**ST. LOUIS BMW CLUB  
BMW CCA  
P.O. BOX 11823  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63105**



Your **Gesundheit** is here!