



DRIVER TRAINING EVENTS: A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO SAFER DRIVERS

courtesy Roger Harmston photo credits Roger Harmston & Art Chambers

*Do you know where your car's limits are? * How about your limits as a driver?*

*Do you know the optimum shifting technique? * Can you heel and toe?*

What does weight transfer mean to you?

What is understeer and oversteer? How do you control it?

What is the ideal line through a corner?

Do you know how to use your vision, not just your eyesight?

**If you'd like to learn the answers to these and other questions,
then you are a prime candidate for our Driving Schools.**

Each year we contract Driving Unlimited from Vancouver for several events at Western Speedway and other locations to teach drivers the secrets of advanced driving techniques in a controlled environment. Senior instructors Tony Riddle, Danny Kok, Melanie Patterson, and Ross Bentley bring their decades of professional experience to give us practical, hands-on ways to improve driving skills and to add more fun quotient every time you get behind the wheel.

In simple terms, they ARE THE BEST. Their client list includes the Vancouver Police Department, ICBC, Ford, Nissan, Hong Kong Bank, Labatts Breweries, Pacific Press and many more.

This is NOT a competition, and there is NO wheel-to-wheel racing or stop watches. We want you to learn how small adjustments allow a driver to get the most of themselves and the vehicle. You will learn how to drive fast by choosing the correct line into corners, the proper way to position the vehicle for braking and turning.



The day usually starts bright and early at 8:00 AM sharp. There will be breaks for lunch and mini breaks in the morning and afternoon. We generally leave the track area by 4 PM. The goal is to have you in the car as much as possible.

For the advanced drivers there are trips to Mission, Boundary Bay, Portland or Seattle. These are excursions and involve extra days of travel and are almost always on a Monday. The cost is significantly higher but you will get a lot more seat time. Generally the price is in the \$250 to \$350 range per day per driver per course. If you compare the costs of other schools, this is very reasonable indeed. It is recommended that you have attended at least two local driving events before venturing to other tracks.

All events have some classroom breakouts to explain what each session will cover and to go over what has been going on during the previous time on the courses. We attempt to give you as much seat time as possible to make it an enjoyable learning experience.

For our "Slip and Slide" and course events we do a series of warm up exercises. They help engage the brain and reduce the "cold tires, cold brakes, cold brain" syndrome.

The concentration is on balance, vision and smoothness. After a brief chalk talk, you will be out on the track with an instructor driving your car to show you the lines through the corners and braking zones. Then, train lapping following the instructors and other drivers. Now the fun begins and it's you and the car working on what you've been taught. You will have LOTS of opportunity to gain a better understanding of vehicle and driver dynamics.



SPEAKING OF SPEED, HOW FAST WILL I BE GOING?

That depends on several things. It will be dependant on how the course is laid out, and also how you are progressing throughout the day. The instructors closely monitor how people are progressing and what their limits are. We won't let you go over those limits.

The students are broken into several groups ... you will be with your peers, but the emphasis is on learning at your own pace. As you feel more comfortable with the exercises and the course, you will start moving through things a bit more quickly. By the end of the day, your speeds will be considerably higher than when you start in the morning.



There are lots of things that you can do to prepare yourself and your car BEFORE coming to one of the events. Safety is foremost on our minds, and we don't want anyone hurt. Therefore ALL vehicles MUST be in good working order or we will not let them on the track. If your car doesn't pass muster, there won't be a refund, so make sure that everything is in good working order BEFORE you get to the event.



Pay attention to the brakes, steering and all suspension parts at least a week in advance of the school and have any repairs done that are required.

It's meant to be a fun day, and we don't want you to be disappointed that you can't run because of a mechanical defect to the car.

Also, bear in mind that you won't your favourite mechanic at the event, so have ALL the maintenance done long before you head off on the trip.

Helmets are required for train lapping and individual sessions. It must be a Snell 98 or newer rating. We would prefer a Snell 2000 but the minimum we will accept is a Snell 98. Remember this is your head we're talking about protecting. No Helmet, no seat time. This is a requirement of our event insurer.

Passengers are not allowed in the car. First and foremost, our insurance company won't give coverage when there are passengers even if they have signed a waiver. The only other people that will be in the car with you during the day are instructors. We want you to be concentrating on what you are doing, and get the most from the instructors.

One of the most often asked questions is "Will I harm my car?" No. Obviously there is going to be a little more stress and strain put on the vehicle than normal street driving but this won't be excessive. We routinely have vehicles that are more than 25 years old at the Track Days and they do fine.

*If you'd like to learn more about these events,
talk with Roger Harmston, Art Chambers, or Martin Lane
at one of the Club Meetings.*