

March/April 2014

bimmerimmer



“The Art of Making Mistakes”

Inside...

- The Art of Making Mistakes – Part 2
 - Pre-purchase Inspections • Spring Fling Tour
 - Bimmers' Car Show • E30 Meet-up & Picnic
- ...and more

BMW Car Club
of America
Badger Bimmers





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Editor • editor@badgerbimmers.org

Cover Photo: *Skidding at RA*
Photo by Mike Clemens



2014 Calendar

March 15-16	Chapter Congress, Dallas, TX.
April 10	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
May 3-4	<i>Spring Fling</i> Driving Tour to Galena, IL.
May 8	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
May 10	Spring Car Clean-ups: Milwaukee, Madison, Fox Valley area
May 10	E30 Gathering and picnic (and swap meet?) at Frame Park in Waukesha
June 7	Badger Bimmers 11th Annual Car Show @ Concours Motors, 10 am–2 pm
June 12	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
June 16	DE Day at Blackhawk Farms Raceway in Rockton, IL.
July 10	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
August 4	DE Day at Blackhawk Farms Raceway in Rockton, IL.
August 12	BMW/Mini Cruise Night @ Highland House, Mequon
August 14	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
August 23	Club Saturday at the Masterpiece Car Show
September 11	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
September 26-28	<i>OktoberFAST</i> at Road America
October 16	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
November 13	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale
December 11	Monthly Board Meeting @ Concours Motors, Glendale

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA FOUNDATION SEEKS EARLY *bimmer immers*

The BMW CCA Foundation is trying to build a complete archive of newsletters from all chapters in the country. Does anyone out there have any issues from 1999 and before? If you do and are willing to allow the Club to photocopy some, please contact Erik Ivarson at eicarguy@wi.rr.com.

Board meetings *generally* are held on the second Thursday of each month. They start promptly at 6:30 pm. Board meetings are open to all members. The Board encourages members to attend.

Monthly Board meetings will convene at 6:30 pm in the Board Room at
Concours Motors • 5990 N. Green Bay Ave. • Glendale, WI.

Please consult the monthly Calendar (above) for exact locations and dates.

News of Note...

2014 Spring Clean-up x 3

This year, Bimmers' spring car clean-ups will happen in three parts of the State on the same date — **May 10**.

If you're interested in joining one of these gatherings to spruce up that wonderful machine (in an environment far more stimulating than your driveway or garage), contact one of these Board members:

In the **Fox Valley Area** @

Bergstrom Enterprise Motorcars in Appleton
10 am – 12:30 pm • Contact **Dale Kressin**

In the **Madison Area** @

Zimbrick BMW

9 am – 12 noon • Contact **Larry O'Brien**

In the **Milwaukee Area** @ International BMW
1:00 – 4:00 pm • Contact **Dave Thuerk.** **bj**

—Ed.

Plug-in Hybrid System for BMW X5

From *Roundel Weekly*

With the BMW Concept X5 eDrive model, first presented last September at the Frankfurt Auto Show, the BMW Group highlighted how their Sports Activity Vehicles can be made more efficient. For the first time, the public was introduced to an SAV concept model that combined the BMW xDrive intelligent all-wheel-drive system with an innova-



tive BMW plug-in hybrid system. It looks like BMW will be bringing us the production version before too long; it will be called the BMW X5 eDrive. **bj**

—Ed.

Michelin Announces Premier A/S

From *Roundel Weekly*

This year, at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michelin announced the **Premier A/S**. This new tire features a revolutionary tread design that evolves to prolong grip. Michelin says that this new **EverGrip** technology not only

stops shorter on wet roads than the leading competitors' brand-new tires, it can also out-stop their brand-new tires when it's worn. The tire combines hidden grooves that emerge as the tire wears down—think of the Michelin Alpin's Y-sipes, developed two decades ago—expanding rain grooves that widen over time to continue to evacuate water, and a unique rubber compound for increased wet grip. **bj**



New Member Name Badges Available

Again we want to offer our members new name tags that include our new Chapter logo!

We would like our members to be able to show their Club support and enthusiasm with a personalized Chapter name tag. Wearing these at Club events allows easier name recognition for other members (and they're so much nicer than sticky paper name tags).

These tags also come with a magnetic backing that will not damage your clothes. If

interested, contact **Cindy Ansay** at (262) 388-3740.

The cost is \$8.00 per tag. Please make checks payable to **Badger Bimmers** and mail to **Mike Clemens**, P.O. Box 345, Mequon, WI 53092. **bj**



Member Discount on Avis, Hertz BMW Rentals

From *Roundel Weekly*

If you're flying to one of BMW CCA's National events this year and are interested in renting a BMW, be sure to check with Avis. You can rent BMWs from Avis at numerous locations and save money using the Club's Hertz and Avis discount. And if you're headed to O'Fest this year, the Denver Airport location has a number of models to choose from, including the X5, X3, 528i, and 328i. **bj**

From the President

Erik Ivarson

Up to Speed...

It's 226,000-mile Decision Time

Greetings Badger Bimmers! Since last month, we've had **Chili and a Movie** and the Madison area meeting hosted by **Wisconsin Brewing Company**. Both provided snowy-weather driving — the e46 325xit proved again to be the right tool for the job. The e46 all-wheel-drive system has open differentials front and rear, and a fixed torque ratio in the center. The e30 iX had the benefit of limited slips, but I have “nannies.” These electrical watchers carefully remove any excitement from cornering in the snow.

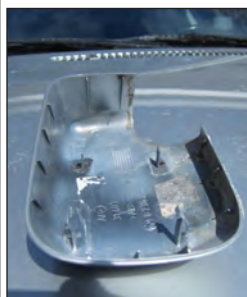
I'm still driving on the 16" all season, non-run-flat tires that came with the car, now over 226,000 mi. I know it's hypocritical to promote snow tires while not actually using them, but it is hard to justify a new set of sneakers for a car that doesn't get stuck and still stops ok. Sporty driving is another story. I tried a power drift through a snowy median and when I landed on dry pavement there was a shudder and stutter that fully confused the momentum. That was with nannies — DSC (Dynamic Stability Control) — engaged, on city streets. Maybe snows would fix that, but it might bring unintended tickets. The DSC Xi is capable with the nannies and, as I've read, DSC can't be turned all the way off. Until these tires pop, I drive the wagon the way the nannies let me. I'm happy with capable, but I'm planning to buy real snows for next winter. Let me know how your xDrive or earlier AWD works.



It had been a few weeks of quiet driving before the passenger side front brake sheet metal started clanging. I did the same drill with the washers as last month in about an hour. How many of you were waiting for that!

Mirrors Next!

Now my mirror covers are giving up. One is gone and the other got loose, but I saved the carcass. These cleverly mass produced pieces combine a mirror, motors, cast-aluminum chassis, impact foam and a plastic cover. I noted a lack of fasteners in the assembly, probably a result of bean-counter design. The covers have barbed tabs that fit into slots in the casting. The plastic fails right at the barb. I have two



posts with no barb and two posts whose barbs hold for about a millisecond. My aluminum casting is starting to look like swiss cheese. The pictures show the effect. I surfed around and watched *YouTube* where a clever guy drilled the leftover tabs and used an 8" wire tie to secure around the casting slots. I might add

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The Art of Making Mistakes

~Part 2

by Shields Bergstrom

As much as we like to quote clichés about spinning, talk about “steering into the skid,” and various other techniques to correct a big mistake, they are all wrong. Ok, to be fair, mostly wrong. All of those types of advice apply to very specific sets of circumstances you might face on the track, and are seldom a good fit for the situation you’ll find yourself in. More importantly, you won’t have the time, while spinning, to remember all of those clichés and bits of advice from instructors, friends, or other drivers. While it’s not possible to run down every possible scenario in every possible car on every possible turn to create a “to-do list” of how to correct every skid, spin, etc., we can talk about some general and practical techniques that are easy to remember and easy to put into practice.



The Skid

When you “skid” — that’s every angle applicable to the car before it’s facing the wrong way on the track

(then it’s a spin) — look in the direction you want to go. Your hands will naturally follow and your feet will typically do what is necessary with the pedals to go in the direction you’re looking.

Here come the complexities of correcting skids: for small skids (5 to 10 degrees), a steering correction is usually all that is necessary. Bigger skids (10-45 degrees) will usually require a combination of steering and throttle/brake correction.

So how do you know how much steering and how much throttle and brake to use to correct that? You can’t know. You don’t have time to pull out the calculator and do the math. You have to react using the subconscious part of your brain that handles all the parts of your driving like throttle application, brake application and steering input. What you can consciously do is look in the direction you want to go. You’re subconscious will steer in the direction you look and attempt to keep you on that path. Also remember that anything you do with the throttle and the brake should be smooth and gradual, not drastic. Maintenance throttle will maintain the attitude of the car; more or less throttle and brake will change the attitude, balance and speed of the skid.

Every Car Is Different

Because a front engine, rear drive car will behave differently from a mid-engine rear drive car, and from a front drive car, there is no rule that can apply to how much steering, throttle and brake you should use to correct a skid. You have to feel what the car is telling you and react accordingly. Sometimes what is required to correct a skid can be counter-intuitive or the opposite of what we’re usually told by instructors.

Here’s an example using two cars that I’ve driven. The **Aston-Martin DBR9** is a front-engine, rear-drive coupe with 600+ HP and a reasonable amount of down force. When the rear of the car begins to skid (oversteer) you have to steer in the direction you want to go and very slightly reduce the amount of throttle, usually in the form of relaxing your right foot or flexing your big toe. The **APR Motorsports VW Golf GTI** is a front-engine, front-drive car with



around 225 HP and very little down force. When the rear of that car begins to skid you have to steer in the direction you want to go and **add** more throttle, sometimes putting your foot to the floor.

Why the different techniques to correct the same problem? Well, it has a lot to do with load transfer, the dynamics of each car and the drive-train layout. But more importantly, each car feels different and responds differently. Developing that feel, of course, requires practice.

For obvious reasons, a track day is not the right place for that, so how do you practice skidding and recovering from skids in different types of cars? Surprise, surprise, a skid pad! It seems as though I mention practicing with a skid pad in every article. But rest assured, I am not being bribed by the skid-pad industry or being influenced by skid-pad lobbyists. It's simply the most effective, cheapest, easiest tool to practice skidding, correcting the skid, and getting to the limit without damaging your car, the track, or you!

Then There's the Dreaded Spin

Beyond the skid is the spin — this is where the car is now traveling in every direction except the direction you want to go. Here is where the typical cliché is wrong.

We've all heard, been told or repeated, "When in a spin, both feet in." While that has its applicable scenario, for a spin that is happening on the racing surface, it's wrong. When you put "both feet in" you are depressing the clutch and locking the brakes. What that does to a car is effectively change a spin into a skid that follows a straight line, effectively eliminating your influence on the direction of travel. Without the tires rotating, the car will follow the laws of physics and travel in a straight line. This may not sound like a bad option, but if you lock up the brakes at the point at which the car is traveling backwards, sideways, etc., the car will travel in that direction, backwards, sideways, etc. This almost always happens while you're traveling in a direction in which you can't see where you're going. If the car slides into a gravel trap without the tires rotating and traveling sideways at a high rate of speed, there is a possibility that the wheels could dig in and roll the car. If the car slides off-track and onto the grass at any angle other than straight-on, you will most likely begin to spin again, but now on a much lower grip surface. So what are you supposed to do?

Never give up on a spinning car until hitting something is unavoidable. Again, try to look in the direction you want to go, don't make drastic throttle or brake inputs, and remember that the friction of the spin on the track surface is slowing the car, getting you closer to the point of recovery.

While most spins involve only one rotation of the car and are over in a matter of one second or less, sticking with the car and trying to correct will usually result in a recovery and keep you out of danger from other traffic on course. Locking up the



Photographs by Mike Clemens and Ron Pace



brakes, or the much worse scenario of throwing up your hands and becoming a passenger, have a much higher probability of ending poorly for you and your car. (And of course, you can practice all of this on a skid pad.)

The Biggest Mistake

A word on crashing, the biggest mistake of all. If you get into the unfortunate scenario of impacting something much harder than your car, there are some things to remember. First, it's almost always better to hit head-on or rear first. The car and the safety gear are specifically de-

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...Making Mistakes

signed to restrain and protect you from these types of impacts. Second, if a crash is imminent and all of your corrections and attempts to recover have failed and there is no option other than to hit the wall, car, etc., take your hands off the steering wheel and feet off of the pedals. The force of the impact will be transmitted back through the control surfaces and can break hands, wrists, arms, legs and feet.

Talking to Yourself Is OK!

Now we come to the most important part of making mistakes: learning from them. If you make a mistake on the track, it's important not to dwell on it while you're driving. A missed apex, locking up a wheel, a small skid, all have the tendency to make you lose your concentration and disrupt your driving rhythm. Because you're no longer in that rhythm or flow, it's becomes even easier to make another mistake. It can be difficult to regain your flow, especially if you've just had an "Oh shit" moment. But remember that you can't change what has already happened — you can only focus on what's next. Train your focus on the next corner or talk to yourself and remind yourself to be smooth.

If you've had a spin, an off-track excursion or ended up in a gravel trap, channel your inner driving coach. Once the adrenalin has worn off, and the black flag station has discussed the mistake with you, take a moment and replay what happened. *What was the cause of the mistake?* Be honest with yourself. *Did you go too fast into the turn, did you misuse the throttle or brakes?* Recognize what was the actual cause, make a mental note and move on. You don't need to dwell on it, and certainly don't make excuses (that's why there are pro drivers, we all love to blame the "tires going off"). The cold hard reality



is, it was something that we did in the car with the controls. Yes, tires do "go off" and lose grip, but they don't cause off-track excursions. They cause you to go slower.

If you've had a "big one" and done some real damage, you should spend some time and reflect on the series of events that led up to it. This should be a day or two after it's happened (with a clearer head). Spend some time and replay the events focusing on everything that happened well before the impact — that's what you should be most concerned with, not the actual impact.

If you haven't already, start your own driving log book. Take notes on all that happened at each event, what mistakes you made, what caused them, and how you can correct them.

A final thought on making mistakes. Yoda said, "There is no try, do or do not." When you "try" to drive faster, brake harder, corner faster, etc., it is taking you out of your natural rhythm, your natural flow, and forcing you to think about everything you are doing while you're doing it. It is very typical that, when you "try," you make a lot of mistakes. Speed comes at the subconscious level, the act of doing without

trying. Speed, real speed, will come for you when you're relaxed, in the zone and driving smoothly. You can avoid a lot of mistakes by getting into your natural driving rhythm as quickly as possible and focusing on just being smooth. You'll also find that your driving becomes a lot more fun.

Wishing You Only Happy Mistakes...

So now that we've talked a bit about the art of making mistakes, you have my permission to make them, provided you stay safe and learn from them. Practice in a safe environment like on a skid pad, take notes, and always remember to enjoy the drive.

If you have any questions or would like to continue the conversation, please e-mail me at: shieldsracing@gmail.com.

bj

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Pre-purchase Inspections

by Bill Nicoud



Pre-purchase inspections are an important tool for anyone considering buying a used car. With the cost of cars on the rise, more people are keeping their cars longer and more people are opting to purchase used instead of new. And while the cost of cars is going up, so is the cost of repairs.

The Growing Cost of Convenience

More electronic convenience items along with electronic engine controls, traction control, etc., mean more complicated diagnostics. Add to this more complicated safety systems, restraints, and designed



crush zones, and you begin to understand the importance of a pre-purchase inspection.

To address this concern, some dealers and manufacturers have developed a certified pre-owned program. This means the dealer does some of the work for you. They inspect the car, update maintenance items, and make repairs where necessary. Dealers will also generally offer an extended warranty on these cars, giving you a little more peace-of-mind. Add to this the fact that BMW CCA offers a rebate program for members purchasing a certified pre-

owned BMW. This gives you one solid used car alternative.

Inspections Worth the Cost

If you're not buying a BMW or your car does not qualify for a pre-owned program, then an independent inspection is an important consideration. We are lucky to have some competent repair shops in the area that would be happy to inspect a car you are considering. If the dealer or sellers won't consent to an independent inspection, walk away. The cost for such an inspection is up to the individual repair shop, but expect to pay at least \$100. This cost is small compared to the money you would pay in unseen repairs.

Most shops will do a good job of assessing the mechanical condition of a car. However, it's important to have an overview of the condition of the body of your car, too. If your mechanic does not feel qualified to handle this, you may have to take the car to a body shop as well. Body repairs have also become more expensive. Painting a single panel can run \$300-500, and repairing previous inadequate repairs even more. Cars that have had extensive body repairs and painting may affect your safety (if not properly completed), as well as

the value of your car.

Classics a Special Case

Finally, if you are considering a classic or older car, don't even think about buying a car you, or someone you trust, hasn't checked. Many older cars, even BMWs, were prone to rust and must be checked for their condition.

If you do your homework, buying a used or classic car can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

bj

Spring Fling Update

Report by John Dohmen

The Spring Fling Tour to Galena, IL (May 3-4) is starting to come into sight with less than two months' time to our departure. In my first run, during the second week of February, my wife, Heidi, and I were confronted with a four inch snowfall on the way out along with high winds and white-outs as we endured the last leg of our trip. The occasional 20-foot-high drift walls along the roads from Dickeyville down to Galena added a little regional ambiance. I trust that the tour date will produce environmental results more suitable for our cars but, as of March 5th, I offer no guarantees!

My second and final run will have been completed by March 7th. Hugh Davies will be joining me this time to get more accurate elapsed times for each of the three stages of the route and to visit some alternative restaurants along with one other lodging option. I also anticipate that my second run will prove to be a more favorable alternative to my initial second stage route.

Despite the snow cover this is a very beautiful section of our state offering some scenic vistas, quaint old towns, and some real sports car roads — a welcome departure from the north-south, east-west grid work that we're accustomed to in the Metro Milwaukee area. I'm excited to have the chance to get back out this week for my second run even though it won't be in the 911 Cab.

Stage 1

Without a finalized start point for the tour, my first stage begins at Verona, WI. From this rest stop and fuel refill point, we'll "head for the hills" for a 43.6 mile run down to Mineral Point for an 11:45 am lunch. Mineral Point, established in 1827, has a rich history of lead mining and has retained much of its 19th century architecture.

Stage 2

After our lunch, we will meander west towards Lancaster on the second stage of the tour. This is the longest stage at 58.1 miles and approximately 1:45 duration. This will take us over one of Wisconsin's Rustic Roads. Although I couldn't quite tell due to

snow covered roads, I believe that a 1.6 mile section of this rustic route is a gravel road. I'll be taking this section fairly slowly because I still cherish my paint.

Once we arrive in Lancaster, we will take a large southwesterly arc down to Dickeyville where we will stop to stretch our legs at the Church of the Holy Ghost Grotto for a 20-25 minute

rest and tour of the site. Anyone needing gas at this point has the option of either a BP or, for the more nostalgic, a Sinclair station on the way out of town.

Stage 3

For the third and last stage of the tour we will depart for Galena around 2:40 pm. This stage is a 19.9 mile run into Illinois via some ridge roads that provide scenic vistas along the way. I anticipate arriving in Galena around 3:30 pm giving us some time to check in at our hotel prior to a private half-hour trolley tour of Galena at 4:00 pm. Following the trolley tour we're considering a reception at the hotel followed by a dinner in downtown Galena



The hotel under consideration



Downtown Galena and the old train station



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**BMW Car Club
of America
Badger Bimmers**



BADGER BIMMERS

Present their

11th Annual Car Show



Concours BMW Saturday, June 7, 2014 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

FREE for car show participants and spectators!

RAIN OR SHINE! In case of inclement weather, the show will be held indoors in Concours BMW's showroom and service area.

Awards presented in 7 vehicle classes plus People's Choice at 2:00 pm

Complimentary light refreshments will be available for everyone courtesy of Concours BMW.



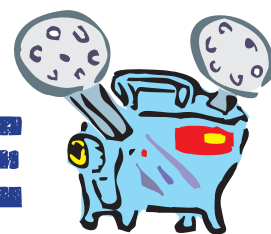
Concours BMW, 5990 N. Green Bay Avenue, Glendale WI 53209



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MOVIE



Continued from page 11

Spring Fling Update

via shuttle service. The hotel under consideration offers a hot breakfast included with your stay on Sunday morning. For those who plan to return home Saturday evening, you can still participate in any of the post-tour events: the trolley tour, reception and dinner will all be optional.

Galena was also established because of the lead mining industry. It's named for the mineral "galena," the natural form of lead sulfide and the most important lead ore. Referred to as "The City that Time Forgot," Galena offers an amazingly authentic Civil War period look. Ulysses S. Grant, along with eight other

Civil War generals, lived here in the mid-1800s.

Although the tour will officially be completed Saturday night, most of you will want to spend your Sunday morning exploring the city and visiting its many historical sites and shops, which are open Sunday morning, prior to your return trip home.

Shortly after my return from the second run I will have finalized the eating and hotel locations and will have the registration information available to you on Motorsportreg.com, courtesy of Mike Clemens.

I'm excited about getting the sports car back out for this trip on **May 3rd and 4th** and having you join us for this special Badger Bimmers event. **bj**

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Up To Speed...

that mod preemptively as the once sharp snap feature, now decayed from salt spray, is more like coral than casting. *Note to BMW:* There is a possibility that bare cast aluminum will be exposed to chemical attack.

Commitment to this car is an issue I continue to battle. Do I spend \$500 for tires that go 60,000 miles? Will this car go that far?! With so many systems getting to their lifespan, planning repairs is mostly about how to keep going until the weather is good enough to do the work. I have to remind myself that I'm keeping up a \$34k vehicle and smile that I didn't have to write that check.

I hope you've been to <http://www.badgerbimmers.org/Badger-Bimmers/Calendar.htm> since the calendar is growing with events. I'm looking forward to the Tech Session at *CS Motorsports*.

If you have an idea for an event or article, please get in touch. Our Board meetings' phone-in line is published in the meeting minutes found on the web site. E-mail addresses are there, too! **bj**

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