



New Jersey Bulletin

BMW CAR CLUB OF AMERICA
NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
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BMW CCA Club Race at NJ Motorsports Park

Photo by Brian Morgan



Thom Rossi swept K-Prepared in his E30 325is.



Students from the Westlake School were the Jersey Chapter's guests at NJMP.

Newsletter of the NJ Chapter
BMW Car Club of America
PO Box 2305
Westfield, NJ 07091-2305

June Chapter Meeting at BMW NA

As has been our custom for many years, the June Chapter meeting was held on June 19th at BMW NA headquarters in Woodcliff Lake. Over 200 people showed up to have a look at BMW's new training center and several new and soon to be introduced BMW vehicles.

This year, our host was M Brand Manager Larry Koch, a longtime friend of the club. Rich Brekus, our previous host and now National Sales Manager, handed over the reins to Larry and joined the rest of us Bimmerheads in the audience. Holding the meeting in the training facility allowed a new format that wasn't possible in the auditorium we used in years past. This year, we were able to break up in smaller groups and travel through the facility. We were guided to training classrooms, where we were greeted by both a brand manager and a technical trainer who explained the features of the vehicle standing in front of us. The four classrooms included the new Z4, Efficient Dynamics (with a 335d and an example of the new 3.0 liter turbocharged diesel on an engine stand), the new X5 M, and the recently unveiled 5 Series GT.



BMW's new Eastern Technical and Training Center in Woodcliff Lake was the site of our June meeting.



Larry Koch, M Brand Manager, discusses the X5 M. 555 horsepower and an exhaust note that will knock your socks off!

Larry made the presentation on the 555 horsepower X5 M, and the highlight of the presentation was the starting of the engine. The exhaust note of that beast is unbelievable, and it ought to have every other sporting SUV on the market crying for mercy! On the other side of the aural spectrum, we were also able to hear the diesel in the 335d, and it was impressively quiet. Zero to 60 in six seconds flat and 36 miles per gallon on the highway. Now that's an economy car!

We were also given a complete explanation of the new Z4, and a demonstration of the new two piece hardtop. Very cool. Finally, they had two examples of the 5 Series GT. One of them was positioned front and center outside as we entered the facility, and we were able to climb all over it and test out the seating and cargo features. The rear passenger area is huge, and features reclining seats and tons of leg room. There's lots of cargo flexibility, as well. It's going to be interesting to see how this one does in



Several new BMWs were displayed outside the building, including the new 5 Series GT, which will be introduced to the public later this year.

the

marketplace. It has a combination of luxury, sportiness, and utility that I don't think exists anywhere else. Some people compared it to a wagon, but no wagon I know of has the back seat room that this vehicle has. To get that kind of room you'd have to go to a gigantic truck-based SUV, and this car is going to be way more fun to drive and efficient. As for the looks, I think it looks much better in person than in pictures.

During the time we were in the classrooms, the front lobby was magically changed from an informal dining area into a 200+ seat auditorium where we gathered for the closing session. The night ended with a Q&A session and raffle drawings. Numerous lucky people went home with some pretty cool BMW swag.

The night was a huge success, and the new format was well received by everyone. We're especially grateful to Larry Koch and all the brand managers and technical trainers who spent their Friday night entertaining us.

- Larry Engel

Photos by Jon Trudel



After an informal light meal, club members congregated in the lobby to wait for the classroom sessions to begin.

The Cone Catcher



by Larry Engel

I've been doing a lot of reminiscing recently. You know, thinking about the "good old days". Despite my firm belief that the last ten or 15 years have been the absolute best time to be a car nut - I am hugely sentimental about the years of my youth in the '60s and '70s, even with respect to the cars that were in my life.

My maternal grandfather was a mechanic and he had owned a car repair business for years. Although he was retired when I came along, we shared a love of cars. My uncle (Mom's younger brother) had the bug, too. I used to read the car articles in Popular Science Magazine with Grandpa. (Anybody remember the Norbye/Dunne Reports?) Grandpa loved Buicks. Big Buicks. Aircraft carrier sized Buicks. I never told him, but I didn't particularly share Grandpa's love of big Buicks. On the other hand, Uncle George had some really cool cars. The candy apple red '69 Mustang fastback with side pipes and Boss 302 graphics was the ultimate!

Even at age five or six, I dreamed of owning a little sports car. At age nine I wanted an MG or a Spitfire. I was about ten when I went to my first family wedding. My father's cousin got married and I felt so mature to be invited! When the bride and groom left the reception, I was blown away by their car. It was a Porsche! I'd never actually seen one before that. What a car! In my teens, the next door neighbor had a TR-6. The sound of the straight six was fantastic!

My father was never much of a car guy, and when I was about eight he traded in our '58 Biscayne wagon for a '65 Olds F-85 Deluxe wagon. I helped pick out the color. He ordered it from the factory, and I can remember the sense of anticipation as we waited four weeks for it to be delivered. What made it Deluxe was lots of chrome and a better grade of vinyl to stick to your butt. It was mist blue metallic, and was equipped with whitewalls (on the base blue steel wheels with little hubcaps), an AM radio (so we could listen to the Yankees and Giants games), and an automatic (so my mother could drive it). That was it. No power anything - no power brakes, no power steering, no power nothing. The automatic was a two speed. Coupled to a V6, it wasn't what you'd call a performance car.

The F-85 was the family cruiser. It was stabled in our garage with the Fiat 1100 sedan that Dad had purchased from Walt Hansgen a few years earlier. (My memory of Hansgen is vivid, but that's a story for another day.) Dad used the Fiat to commute to Bayway every day. Of course, like all Fiats, it rusted away in no time - particularly in the sulphurous atmosphere of the refinery. He replaced it with a mist green metallic (a.k.a. "goat's puke green", as it was known in the neighborhood) '69 Nova. I wanted Dad to buy a Corvair - but he didn't go for it.

The Nova didn't stay with us for too long, for reasons that I didn't immediately understand. After only three years, it was replaced with a baroque gold (brown) Olds Delta 88. Dad really splurged on this one. It had a cream colored vinyl roof, full wheel covers, and AIR CONDITIONING. I thought Dad had lost his mind - "OK mister whoever-you-are, where is Walt Engel and what have you done with him?" A few months later the reasons for his extravagance became clear - it was the Great American Family Vacation! (The second story for another column.)

I thought the Delta 88 was the greatest family sedan ever - until one day at church I saw something that would change my thinking about cars forever. We had just pulled in to the parking lot for Sunday service and the most beautiful four door sedan I'd ever seen pulled up right next to us. It was sleek, it was athletic looking, it made really neat sounds, and it was red. Very, very red. I was shocked when I realized that it belonged to David Fratt's father, Carter. Yes, THAT Carter Fratt. (For you newbies, Carter was

Chief Driver School Instructor before Blake Smith.) It was a BMW Bavaria, and in my mind it was the ultimate family sedan! All of a sudden, the Delta 88 had lost some of its' appeal.

The second BMW I fell in love with was owned by a neighbor who taught at the Junior High School. Again, I remember the sound, even though the car itself looked sort of modest. I thought the color was spectacular, a coppery brown, with beige seats. It was a 2002 tii. I had read about the 2002 in the car magazines. They all loved it. It had a stick. I wanted one!

So, when I got my license in '74, we had the ancient F-85 wagon and the Delta 88. We were an Oldsmobile family. Dad had been transferred to New York, so I got to drive the wagon whenever I needed to go somewhere. Dad allowed me to clean it up a little. I put the rear seat down and carpeted the load floor with blue 12"x12" indoor/outdoor carpet tiles from Channel Lumber. It wasn't a Beach Boys woodie wagon, but it was the best I could do. It was a scary ride, but it was indestructible.

On special occasions, I could take the 88, but that was a rare treat. The Olds engines had a unique sound back then - they had a low pitched hum that sounded great! Although they all had three speed Turbo Hydramatics, the Delta 88 had 4 engine choices (two and four barrel 350's and two and four barrel 455's) and two rear axle ratios. We had the "economy" ratio, which I believe was a 3.73 or 3.90! We had the base model, but I could still light up the bias-ply tires of the 5000 pound tank on slightly damp pavement. Despite fun with the family V8, the brown tii across the street continued to attract my gaze.

For the next twenty something years, school and a sales career in an industry serving U. S. manufacturing kept me in mostly American cars. I had to drive a sedan or coupe roomy enough for four people, so I always tried to find the best American sports sedan I could find. (The only good one was a 1990 Taurus SHO - it was a car ahead of its time.)

When I changed careers in 1993, I wasn't bound by the "buy American" doctrine anymore, but it was a hard habit to break. For mostly financial reasons, I drove a Dodge Shadow and a Ford Contour for a total of seven years. When I had my first very good year in my new career, I headed right to JMK to talk about a real sport sedan. As hard as the wait had been for the F-85 and Dad's subsequent cars when I was a kid, there was never as much anticipatory agony as I felt waiting for my E46 328i. It took eight weeks. Eight long, long weeks. The day I picked it up, I took the day off from work and just savored it. Thankfully, Karin wouldn't let me sleep in the garage that night.

As most of you know, I still have the 328 ten years later. I've offered my kids the opportunity to drive it whenever they're home. Greg and Elizabeth are reluctant. I'm not sure if it's because they don't like driving the stick or if they're afraid of breaking one of my cherished toys. Chris has no such hesitation. He's the car guy of the group. In fact, he doesn't hesitate to ask if he can drive the M3. Every once in a while I let him drive it, too. Hopefully, he'll reflect on these times with fondness fifty years from now. As for Greg and Elizabeth, I'm still trying to get them interested in cars! It's not likely to happen, but it's something to work on. Thankfully, they both have other interests that I enjoy sharing with them. I should probably spend more time doing those things.

Thanks for being the catalyst for bringing some fond memories into focus, and until next month - keep the cones standing!

larry_engel@njbmwcca.org

Welcome New Members

Opeyemi Bakare
Joe Bongiorno
Rick Broome
Frank Coccaro
Jeremy Coyle
Peter Demboski
Steve Demyer
Monika Demyer

Gregory Dolin
Paul Emposimato
Jose Escamilla
Christian Fulmino
Meric Guvenel
Yi He
James Hildreth
Edward Hodgen

Robert Koh
John Lukaszewski
David Maher
Michael Mckittrick
Kevin Mcneill
Vincent Miralles
Ted Mirkhani
Sriram Nagarajan

Gary Shemaka
Denis Vu
Ross Wagner
Charles Wiedemer
Rainer Zimmermann



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Driver School - Thunderbolt School and Club Race

The New Jersey Chapter held one of our premier events of the year on June 8 and 9 at New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville. Over 150 club members came out for our drivers school and club race on Thunderbolt Raceway.

With a portion of the proceeds benefiting the Westlake School in Westfield, this continues our tradition of our club race serving as our premier charity event of the year. Special thanks go to our sponsors who made it possible: JMK BMW in Springfield, and BMW of Bloomfield.

The Westlake School is a program of the Union County Educational Services Commission, offering a variety of special academic, vocational and social programs for children from five to eighteen who are neurologically impaired, emotionally disturbed, multiply handicapped, or autistic. In past years, our donations have helped support their summer camp programs, funded various special projects, and purchased special adaptive equipment for children in wheelchairs to use computers.

With 40 racers coming from as far away as Canada, there was a wide variety of BMW racecars in several classes. Monday had practice and qualifying sessions, and then in the afternoon the cars took to the track for some great wheel-to-wheel driving. With multiple classes, there are many little battles happening throughout the course of the race, so the excitement is seen throughout the field. On Monday evening we were treated to an excellent meal from the catering staff at NJMP followed by raffle gifts, again courtesy of our sponsors.

The philosophy of BMW CCA Club Racing emphasizes clean driving and machinery preservation within a structure of a fun, safe, and friendly environment.

Tuesday morning's schedule came to a booming stop. Thunder and lightning accompanied torrential rains, shutting down the event for over two hours. One report was of a direct hit on the track, which glowed red afterwards. The irony of the names of the two tracks there (Thunderbolt and Lightning) did not go unnoticed.

Once we got back on track, the green flag dropped in-between the raindrops. Everyone got a chance to use their rain tires, which were a necessity if you wanted to avoid agricultural driving.

As the skies cleared, our guests from the Westlake School arrived, and were treated to a few laps around the track during the lunch break. Besides using a few instructor cars, we used our pace cars, generously provided by our sponsors, BMW of Bloomfield, and JMK BMW. The smiles on the students seemed like they were permanently affixed.

During this time, the clear skies led to more tire changing. The dry tires were put on the racecars, and everyone was ready for the feature race in the afternoon. Another great race went off after lunch, and the Westlake Students joined all the other spectators to watch some entertaining racing - hard fought battles, excellent car control, and most importantly, great fun.

So, what about the race results? We'll leave the actual race report to our own Roundel Motorsports Editor, Brian Morgan, who will give all the details in his "Racing Lines" column.

Let's also not forget about the driver school. Interspersed among the racer run groups we had a completely full school. Students got to experience a

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wide range of driving conditions from full rain to full dry to hone their skills. The permanently affixed smiles were not confined to the visitors from Westlake.

Thanks to everyone who made the event a success - we are a volunteer club, and it's a long list of characters that make it all possible. We particularly want to thank our driver school instructors. We were understaffed for this event and many of them had to work doubly hard to ensure that all our students received the instruction they deserved.

What can you do to help? Ask - there are always jobs to be done.

And... this is important: thank the sponsors and patronize them! When you do business with JMK BMW or BMW of Bloomfield, make sure the General Manager gets word that you're a club member, and that you appreciate their support. Let other sponsors of our other chapter events know this, too. Have you won a door prize? Did you thank the vendor? It really helps when they know their support is appreciated, and it helps us to have them continue their sponsorship in the future.

Next up - our combined club race and driver school at Summit Point Raceway on the weekend of July 25-26. The format is similar to the NJMP event with a Saturday night BBQ at the track. The school is filling rapidly so please check the website for availability. We expect to see all you racers out there as well - time to even the score.

Ross Karlin and Jeff White

2009 Driver School Schedule

School	Dates	Location
Driver School/Club Race	July 25-26	Summit Point Raceway, WV
Driver School/Club Race (Joint with DelVal)	Aug 21-23	NJMP Lightning Raceway, Millville, NJ
Shenandoah Driver School	Sep. 19-20	Summit Point Raceway, WV
Introduction to the Track Driver School	Oct 26	NJMP Lightning Raceway, Millville, NJ

Take Me Out to the Ballgame

Okay I don't know the rest of the words to the song but I should be able to learn them by Tuesday August 11th, the date of the NJ BMW CCA August meeting. Bring the whole family and join us at the TD Bank Ballpark, conveniently located off of Route 287 in Bridgewater NJ, to watch the Somerset Patriots play the Bridgeport Bluefish. Game time is 7:05 pm.

Admission for the game is \$8.00 per person while children 3 and under are free. We are trying to reserve a large block of seats and need to get a head count in order to do so. You can email me at neilgambony@njbmwcca.org to let me know the number of people in your party who are planning to attend while sending me a check payable to the NJ BMW CCA. Please send the checks by August 4th to: Neil Gambony 739 County Road 625, Hampton NJ 08827.

In case your wondering what will happen if it rains that night, your ticket will be good towards any other game there. Although the game is scheduled to begin at 7:05, it would be best to be there by 6:30 to pick your tickets up from either Big Al or myself. Please watch the NJ BMW CCA website should there be any changes in this information. This will be the Club's only meeting in August.

Let's root, root, root for the home team!

Neil Gambony
neilgambony@njbmwcca.org

Go West

See article on page 8



Petroglyphs



JT's Burkard's convertible

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Tired of rain? Go west.

by JT Burkard

It's that time of the year again when Sandy and I have to escape New Jersey and head west to the City of Sin for our vacation. The timing was perfect because we were sick of the endless rain that has plagued us for weeks. I wasn't in the mood to build an ark so 90 degree dry weather sounded pretty good as we got onto the airplane. Five+ uncomfortable coach seating hours later and we landed in Fabulous Las Vegas. Sun, this place has sun with no rain in sight! Ah, it is an oasis for water logged East Coasters.

We again rented a convertible for a couple days to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and headed out to other points of interest nestled in the vast Nevada desert. This time, we got a Jeep Wrangler. Its cornering abilities and 0-60 times are much less exciting than the Z4, Boxster, and Mustang of previous years' rentals. Yes its no sports car but we had plans that would require the usefulness and "Trail Rated" abilities of our choice of transportation. Plus I picked up a lifted Wrangler earlier in the year to add to our collection so it would be interesting to compare 19 years of Jeep advancements.

When we left the rental company, we headed north on I-15 towards the Valley of Fire. Valley of Fire State Park is located only six miles from Lake Mead and 55 miles northeast of Las Vegas. Valley of Fire is Nevada's oldest and largest state park, dedicated in 1935. The valley derives its name from the red sandstone formations and the stark beauty of the Mojave Desert. Ancient trees and early man are represented throughout the park by areas of petrified wood and 3,000 year-old Indian petroglyph. You can learn more at <http://parks.nv.gov/vf.htm>. We have been looking forward to visiting for several years but never made it. This was our year to find out what its all about.

The trip up was quick as it was mostly highway driving. The scenery is complete opposite of anything we have in NJ. You are able to see huge expanses of the desert with no end in sight with mountain ranges all around. We exited the highway onto the entrance road to the park and decided to fill up at the only gas station around since we don't know where the next filling station will be. Some cold beverages might also be useful as this day was going to be close to 100 degrees in the Mojave. As we crested the mountain range and dropped into the Valley, it was a glorious vision to behold. Bright red sandstone formations were everywhere dotting the land as if the desert was a pizza and the rocks were sausage and pepperoni. Strange analogy but you get the picture.

When you pay the modest entrance fee, you get a map of the sites of interest. Much to my dismay, there were signs posted everywhere warning off road driving is prohibited. What a buzz kill for the Jeep. Probably the most interesting features of the park were the ancient Indian petroglyph's throughout the different locations. What an honor it was to be able to see and touch history. The one location was called Mouse's Tank - named for a renegade Indian who used the area as a hideout in the 1890's. Mouse's Tank is a natural basin in the rock where water collects after rainfalls, sometimes remaining for months. There was a half-mile round trip trail leading to Mouse's Tank from the trailhead parking area. Inside the canyon walls, the temperature read 105 on a fellow hikers thermometer. Along the way, you pass numerous examples of prehistoric Indian petroglyphs. I was in awe. Sandy on the other hand was wishing she stayed in the Jeep. The heat did not fair well with her as we walked in the soft sand between the sandstone rock walls. As we came to the trail end, the basin was actually the size of a bathtub with about 4 inches of water in it full of flies. Not quite worth the walk for her but the petroglyphs were worth seeing up close for me.

As we wound our way out of the park hours later we entered the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Since we were near the lake, why not visit? Straight ahead was a dirt road with a yellow marking indicating it was a designated trail to drive. Finally, we get to bring this 4x4 into its element. As we slowly followed to the end we realized we were supposed to be at an overlook to Lake Mead. Instead we ended on top a 50 foot cliff overlooking a grassy plane. The lake was well below its normal levels. We then traveled back to the main road and tried the first turn off to the lake at a marina and launch ramp. We were disappointed again when we drove all the way down the launch ramp to the same grassy knoll. This place was deserted.

We finally got to the lake, miles down the road as we pulled into Echo Bay. It was a nice marina in the middle of nowhere with lots of houseboats and pleasure craft. Huge Carp were swimming near the surface. It was very strange as the school of fish followed us from slip to slip as we walked down the dock. I guess the residents feed them and they hoped we had something for them to eat. On our way out we dipped our feet into Lake Mead and then decided to head back before it got dark.

Approximately 20 miles down the road, I spotted another yellow tagged off road trail right next to a wash (water runoff area) off Highway 167. I actually turned around in the middle of the highway to go back. Sandy was less than thrilled at the notion that we were about to do some real off road driving. The sign stated "Use of Four Wheel Drive Recommended" - I guess I'll do as the sign says. Into the wash we went and back under the highway through the cement bridge structure and back out again. We probably only went ½ mile and back again but it was enough to say that I had gone off road in the Mojave Desert. Since this is not a paved road and no one else was with us, and I didn't know the trail, I think it was best we didn't go to far. Nothing like calling the rental place to tell them their Jeep is stuck on a boulder 5 miles off the highway 50 miles outside of town.

Back on the highway again, we actually passed a rattlesnake on the highway. There is something you don't get to see in NJ all the time (but we do have rattlers in our state). We turned onto Lake Mead Blvd and headed back to our hotel.

The next day we headed back out to the Little A'Le'Inn and Area 51. Along the way you will see signs that say "Low Flying Aircraft". We actually did see a pair of F18's flying at Ludicrous Speed and wondered if they were sent to check us out. I hoped to hear a sonic boom but I guess they were not in that much of a hurry. We arrived at the Inn in time for lunch and ordered up some Alien Burgers again and browsed the souvenir shop. There was another visitor named Steve from Michigan on a strange solo tour of the Southeast. He left the place about 30 minutes before us but we wound up catching up to him on the dirt road to the back gate of Area 51. Sandy and I talked with him in the middle of this dirt road for well over an hour about why we were there and what would make people like us would travel to strange location like this. He was an interesting character so we exchanged email addresses. Unfortunately, nothing highly exciting happened on this trip out to Area 51. No mystery plans, no UFO encounters, just some guy from the mid west in the middle of a dirt road miles from civilization.

As we were returning to Vegas, the sun had just set so the desert was dark. It was an amazing view as we came over another one of the many mountains and out of nowhere were lights from all of the homes and casinos spread out for miles. The interesting thing is you can see where they start, and where it stops. Right along the edge of the mountains is where these lights stop. You can see the entire cities boundaries. It was unreal.

If you plan on going out to Vegas, and I highly recommend it, I would like to make a few suggestions. First, if you plan on going out and hitting the nightlife, without a doubt go to the Voodoo Lounge on top of the Rio. This is an awesome bar located 51 floors onto of the casino overlooking the Vegas strip. The views are spectacular. If you are looking for a great dinner our number one pick is CraftSteak at the MGM. Celebrity chef Tom Colicchio owns this restaurant. The food was phenomenal and quite possibly the best NY Strip and Prime Rib we've ever had. Others we highly recommend would be Kokomo's (Steakhouse and Seafood) in the Mirage (The Prime Rib is huge at 24 oz, its best to share), Joe's Seafood, Prime Steak & Stone Crab in the Forum Shops at Caesars, TREVI (Italian) also located in the Forum Shops at Caesars, and for good Mexican food, I would suggest Taqueria Cañonita located in the Venetian with seating next to the Grand Canal. For a more casual meal, Sandy liked Wolfgang Pucks Bar & Grill located in MGM. Excellent Burgers!

JT Burkard

Send comments and suggestions to JTFormula@aol.com

Life in the Electric Lane - Part 1: Starting off on the wrong foot

It all started innocently enough. Trisha got an e-mail from MINI USA. As a registered owner of a MINI Cooper (in our case, a 2005 Cooper S in Chili Red and White), we were interested in becoming a participant in the field trial of the all-electric MINI Cooper? Participants would lease a car for 12 months, drive it in everyday use and be expected to provide feedback to MINI in response to questionnaires. The initial estimate was for 500 vehicles to be provided to drivers in Southern California and metropolitan New York (NY/NJ).

We discussed it and thought it might be fun to give it a try. After all, there were Web reports of thousands of people applying and we probably would not be picked. Trisha works in Morristown as a school administrator and science educator and so this looked like an opportunity to bring a practical science application to the classroom. Moreover, the initial driving range was estimated to be 200 miles (keep this in mind for later...) so that gave plenty of range for her daily commute from Bridgewater plus ample reserve for the daily running around between different schools that she needs to do. Trisha answered the typically MINI application with questions ranging from "Where do you live?" to "Will the car be kept in a locked garage?" to "Who would you bring with you on a road trip and why?". We have a relatively new house (and so did not anticipate any electrical upgrades) with an attached garage so we were ok there. Trisha hit the Submit button and that was it. Fast forward three months and we get a call from Morristown MINI. Not only was Trisha selected to participate, but she was the highest scoring applicant in Morristown's region! As the saying goes, "Be careful what you wish for."

We now began the second round of applications (financial, insurance) to be included in the program. The MINI-E was making the rounds on the auto show circuit with initial drives from the automotive press. The reviews were generally favorable remarking on the rapid acceleration, the way in which the car uses regenerative technologies to recharge the batteries when decelerating, good handling despite the 500+ pound battery pack and it's overall "MINI-ness". Unfortunately, I did not pay close enough attention to the fact that the car was now being billed as having a driving range of 150-160 miles (notice a pattern here?). Fast forward another 2-3 weeks and we get the word that we are approved as a participant. We are sent a final contract, including a clause that we will pay for any electric work needed beyond the "standard installation", which MINI will cover at its expense. "Welcome to becoming a MINI-E Pioneer!"

We are now in April. MINI has begun the initial house inspections in California for installation of the high voltage charger units. We need to confirm insurance and Liberty Mutual has collaborated with MINI to provide it. We only need liability insurance as MINI will be providing collision and comprehensive. No problem getting approved there and now it was our turn for the house inspection. We get a call from a local electrical contractor who is a sub for the general contractor Clean Fuel Connection located in California. He comes to the house at the appointed time, surveys the installation, takes some measurements and says that we will be hearing from Clean Fuel to make the final appointment for the installation of the high voltage line (40 amp).

It is now mid-May and this is the point in our story where things start to go downhill. We are sent a contract that states our house requires a non-standard installation because the run from our electrical panel to the site of the wall box is 75 feet and the standard installation will cover only 35 feet.

No other information is provided and the cost of the work is quoted at \$540. We now begin what has turned into a pitched battle to get a straight answer to a simple question: "What are we paying for in terms of work to be performed, materials to be used and labor beyond the standard installation?" When we send that question to Clean Fuel, the answer we receive is "We don't provide that information." Our response is equally simple in that we will not sign a contract and not be told what we are paying for. This goes back and forth for some time without resolution. It is now mid-June and we move on to the next chapter in our story.

Friday evening, June 12, we receive a call from Morristown MINI. Our car has been delivered to the dealership and when can we pick it up? We decide on Monday morning and, after some last minute calls to Liberty Mutual to arrange for insurance coverage (since we now have a VIN), we are ready. We arrive at the dealer and picking up the car goes without a hitch. It is ready, clean, and fully charged. Trisha gets a full lesson in how to operate the car, drives it around the lot, she signs the papers, pays the first month's lease and assorted fees and the car is ours to drive home.

There is, however, one important and unexpected disappointment: the range of the car is now listed at 100 miles. This is true for both the on-board computer that shows your expected remaining range and the printed owners manual. Since I am in the transaction business, I pay close attention to what is being represented in a deal and what is actually delivered. Even if we give MINI the benefit of the doubt and use the numbers provided to the press, the reduction from a 150 mile range to a 100 mile range is something that I would call a material difference, i.e., a change of sufficient magnitude that the person paying the money should be notified in advance and be given the opportunity to withdraw from the transaction. We were not provided with any advance notice in this change in forecast driving range. How important is this difference? It means that Trisha now needs to carefully consider everything she has to do each day before taking the car. Is there enough range to go to and from work, run to a doctor's appointment with a relative, go to meetings in 2 schools and come home? The answer is no. It means we cannot take the car into New York since the round trip and any reserve in case of traffic is too close to the range limit to risk running out of power 5 miles from home. It means we can't drive down to the Shore and back in one day. It means we now have a car with far less utility than we bargained for at a very high lease price.



To be continued

- Jeff White



2009 Autocross Schedule

Time to get off the Blizzaks. Time to mount up the stickies. Time to look at ads for Yoko, Kumho, Nitto or whatever. Our 2009 autocross schedule is printed below. Note the name change at the ballpark in Bridgewater.

For those who haven't tried autocross, this is the best, easiest way to experience car control at the limit with some big pluses: it doesn't cost much, you wear out only some rubber, and you get to go home and sleep in your own bed. Oh yeah, it makes you a safer driver on the street, and gives a big adrenaline rush!

For those who are regulars, I'm sorry we don't have more events, bigger venues, and earlier dates. I know you are going around muttering "vroom-vroom", just try and contain yourselves.

July	12	Autocross	TDBP
Aug	16	Autocross	EXPO
Sept	13	Autocross	TDBP
Oct	11	Autocross	TDBP
Nov	1	Autocross	TDBP

TDBP: TD Bank Park, Patriots Park, Bridgewater. Name change from Commerce Bank Park.

EXPO: NJ Convention and Exposition Center, Raritan Center, Edison

- Elihu Savad

NJ Chapter Calendar

July 2009

Friday, July 17th

Hans Zolet from the Deutscher Club has extended another invite to us to attend their "Beer Garden" festival on Friday, July, 17th. at 5:00PM.

August 2009

Tuesday, August 11th

Monthly meeting at the TD Ballpark. See details on page 7.



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MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION and LOCATION

The New Jersey Chapter's monthly membership meetings begin at 8pm and are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at the Deutscher Club of Clark. However, special topics often force a different date; please check the calendar of upcoming events (or the website) carefully.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

All membership applications, renewals and address changes can be done via the BMW CCA National website: www.bmwcca.org or can be sent to:
BMW CCA National Office, 640 South Main Street, Suite 201, Greenville, SC 29601
800-878-9292 (Mastercard or Visa)

Annual BMW CCA and New Jersey Chapter dues: \$40.00.

New Jersey Chapter Dues and Bulletin Subscription ("dual citizenship" for primary members of other chapters): \$15.30.

Please do not send applications, renewals and address changes to the newsletter, the PO Box or any of the club's officers; contact the national office! Members of other BMW CCA local chapters may additionally join the NJ Chapter by sending \$15.30 to the National BMW CCA Office.

Street Survival 2009 By Larry Engel

Once again, The Raritan Expo Center was the site of our Tire Rack Street Survival School on June 28th, and a full house of 24 students participated in this popular program. Street Survival is supported by the Tire Rack and the BMW Club Foundation, and provides training for drivers age 16 to 21 that they don't get in regular Driver's Ed.

Instead, TireRack Street Survival teaches young drivers what they should do in various emergency situations. They have drivers practice the proper use of anti-lock brakes, threshold braking, emergency lane changes, and spend time on a wet skidpad to learn first-hand how to maintain control of a vehicle. Students are encouraged to use the vehicle they normally drive, and instructors ride along in each of the exercises. Students also attend two classroom sessions to learn the basics of vehicle dynamics and to review what they learned during the in-car lessons.

Jamie Kavalieros organized and ran the event for us once again this year. About 30 volunteers came out to instruct and help run the school. Mo Karamat handled the classroom instruction. Several of the students' parents asked whether everyone manning the school worked for BMW, and they were amazed when they were told that everyone was a volunteer. We received many compliments from students and parents regarding the professional way in which the school was run



Jamie Kavalieros reviews training procedures with the instructors.



Students arrived by 8:30 am and checked in at registration to receive their wrist bands and student packages.

Photos by Jon Trudel



Jamie checks out the slalom.

BMW CCA Club Race



Race chairman Ross Karlin chases Dave Allaway

Photos by Brian Morgan



D-Mod racers Bob Ball and Ron Checca race side-by-side at NJMP.

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