

# KRYDERACING NEWSLETTER

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May, 2014

**“HELPING PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR RACING OBJECTIVES”**

## NELSON LEDGES SAFETY TRAINING DAY AND PDX

Something new was tried April 19 at Nelson Ledges Road Course. For a long time there has been an annual training session for corner workers, safety crews, and others at Nelson Ledges. Recent years have shown a continuing decline in the number of participants. This is also true at similar events around the country. A month before this year's event Bill Stewart came up with the idea of combining it with a SCCA PDX (track day). Reed agreed the idea was worth pursuing. The hope was for the PDX to draw additional people to the Safety Training Day. It worked, but like many new ideas it had some 'teething' problems.

Coordinating the two activities was the biggest issue. This wasn't a problem causing issue, just one where better coordination would have made for a better all-around program. There was some conversation ahead of time but it became obvious more would be required if the program was to continue into the future.

There were around 15 participants in the PDX and about half of them also participated in the safety training. They received a substantial entry fee discount compared to PDX-only participants. One unexpected group of entrants came from competition licensed drivers wishing to test their cars in preparation for the upcoming season. Several of them were already at the track taking advantage of annual vehicle tech and driver physicals being offered.

Track management is currently against the combined program returning in the future. If it did the driving force behind it will have to come from the safety teams. After all, the idea was to help them. It might also help (financially) if a session or two were made available to race drivers who want to test their cars. Fees collected from them could go to the track.

## TIRERACK STREET SURVIVAL – APRIL 27

It was a beautiful day, even if it was only 31 degrees just before sun-up. Later on it was sunny and 60. The third go-around for this event by the Mahoning Valley Region of the SCCA was a success for all 17 participants, their parents, and a spirited group of volunteer workers. The first event in 2012 had only 3 participants, but based on what the teenagers learned and the fulfillment we felt at the end of the day we knew we had to continue being involved with this great program. MVR is currently looking into the possibility of a September or October date. If you know a teenager who should attend a Tire Rack Street Survival, please contact us for additional information.

## “A PASSING”

This year on October 17 the 14<sup>th</sup> annual WeHo at Willow Springs will be held. Many of our readers have participated in this event in the past and we expect to see most of them again this year. But one past participant will not be present. On April 15 we received the following email from Milt Torin:

“Just wanted you to be notified and pass the word along. John Stucki has passed away. He started in the automotive business working for Shelby on the early Cobras and helped make the first successes happen in Europe. There may be people in your business that knew him or knew of him and could see the notice in the newspaper or any other messages you were able to send out. There will be a memorial service in June, here in Southern California. The details are being worked out as we speak. John really enjoyed Track Day (WeHo) and talking to the staff. I thank you for the pleasure it gave him to be there.” RIP

## QUOTES TO LIVE BY:

“Some people consider facts to be dangerous things that must be locked away and carefully guarded. But mysteries are a far greater threat. We should seek answers whenever possible, regardless of the consequences.”

“The speed of light is faster than the speed of sound. That is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.”

“An effort by me to improve you does not mean I think I am better than you.”

“Every day in your life is a special occasion.”

## UPCOMING KRYDERACING SCHEDULE ITEMS

May 2: Opening Day for the 2014 season of Nelson Ledges Fundays.

May 2-4: Blackhawk Farms SCCA Majors. Bob MacDonald has entered his Spec Miata and will be assisted by Kryderacing's Matt Carson.

May 8-10: Race #3 of the 2014 TransAm Championship. David Pintaric, Matt Miller, and the rest of the Kryderacing crew will be at Road Atlanta.

May 10: Another Funday at Nelson Ledges Road Course.

May 15-17: The TransAm Series moves north to Mosport for race #4.

May 24-25: Back-to-back Fundays at Nelson Ledges Road Course.

May 30-Jun 1: TransAm race #5 (the third in four weekends) will be held at New Jersey Motorsports Park.

Also on the same weekend is the Mid-Ohio SCCA Majors. We expect to see several Kryderacing vehicles competing.

## PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, we now have a second Spec Miata available for rent. The red #39 has received a number of updates, some new parts, and some fresh bodywork and paint since last year. It will remain the primary rental vehicle. Doug Weaver has already committed to several races during the season. But now, even if you are looking for a car on one of Doug's weekends, we will have one available.

We just printed off some additional copies of “How to learn a track”. Reed usually has a copy or two with him when he is instructing. If you want to download your own copy you can find it on the Kryderacing website. It has been well received by those who have read it.

Several readers of these newsletters spend a lot of time coaching from the passenger seat during track days. I recently read Ross Bentley's new book entitled “Brake, Brake, BRAKE: The HPDE Instructor Manifesto”. It is well worth the time spent reading it if you are one of the title individuals. It is lengthy. The good news is the cost – FREE. Go to [drivercoach.net](http://drivercoach.net).

## 2014 KRYDERACING REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

The first event was held April 27 at Pittsburgh International Race Complex. Details and point standings will be in the next Kryderacing Newsletter. If you can't wait that long, go to [www.kryderacing.com](http://www.kryderacing.com).

## CLOSING COMMENTS:

## HOW DO I GO FASTER? (Reed)

If you are a racer you have probably asked that question many, many times. Many years ago I came across a quote which says "Going faster is not a plan." It refers to a driver answering the question of what their plan is for the next session on the track. The real question should have been "How do you plan on going faster?" The possible correct answers to that question are endless. But if you are going to have any chance of success you need to limit them, preferably to three or less. There are good reasons for this limit on the number of things to try at any one time, but that's a story for another time.

If nothing was changed with the race car and you are working on driving technique, limit your focus to one or two of the turns. Pick turns where improvement can be measured by changes in shift points on the following straights, increased comfort in vehicle control, or something else which you can positively describe. Use the stop watch to determine if there was overall and/or segment improvements. It has been my (and others) experience that improvement gained by focusing on a single turn or two often spills over into the turns you are not actively focusing on.

What if you made a change to the car? First of all, hopefully you made only a single change (as the old guideline advises). Again, the stop watch is an important factor, but the driver's opinions are also important. What changed? Did the car feel better or worse? Did it improve in some areas on the track while getting worse on others? The driver must be able to "feel" these differences.

What about telemetry? It is a great tool. But it is only a tool. Comparing two drivers: Is a driver who brakes earlier than another driver doing something wrong? What if he/she gains an advantage because they can get on the gas slightly earlier in the turn and go slightly faster all the way down the next straight? What if the opposite is true for the same drivers on a different turn on the same track? It might be easy to fall back on lap or segment times, but what if there is no significant difference? And where does driver comfort level fit into all this? By the way, another way of thinking of "driver comfort" is "driver confidence" in what the car is doing.

A simple answer to the above can be found by looking at choices in shock absorber settings. Let's return to the two drivers mentioned above. The "early braker" typically prefers different shock settings from the "late braker". But I mentioned their brake usage might be reversed on another turn? How would I explain that? Perhaps their approaches to "trail braking" are different. There is no 'one answer' which fits everyone, and this is where driver input becomes important.

New drivers go faster by learning new techniques and new set-ups. They find out what works and what doesn't. Over time they become more consistent, and hopefully smoother. They also develop a good sense of feel for what the car is doing. If they ever plan on going faster they must put that developed sense of feel to good use.

Back to my example: If the car set-up were optimized to one of our drivers and the other tried to run it they might turn slower lap times, especially during their initial laps. That's common sense. But if the second driver was never able to adjust their driving style in order to be totally comfortable, then the overall result would probably continue to be slower lap times.

Does that mean the initial driver is the better driver? The answer depends on what the second driver believes. If the second driver believes only in numbers (lap times, segment times, brake points, cornering g's, suspension settings, gear ratios, and an endless list of data points from telemetry), then they will continue to try to mimic the first driver, but probably never be their equal. But if the driver is experienced, the true solution to finding the answer to "How do I go faster" may lie within their comfort level due to the confidence generated by what they, as an individual, feel. The experienced driver must add their personal "feel" to truly take advantage of all the tools and advice at their disposal.

One final question: Can you name me one championship level driver who does not do what I have described above?

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