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BMW Car Club of America Smoky Mountain Chapter



The Smoky Bimmer

September
2019

Driving Like The Wind Smoky Mountain Chapter M-Day 2019

By Richard Stouder

The fourth annual Smoky Mountain Chapter M-Day was on Saturday, September 7 at the BMW Performance Driving Center (PDC) in Greer, SC. All 32 available seats were filled with grinning, enthusiastic BMW drivers. What a time we had!!



We drove to the PDC on Friday and met up for a group dinner Friday night at Soby's in downtown Greenville. We had a great meal at this fine restaurant and were seated together in their upstairs section. We were joined for drinks by Mike Renner, the chief instructor at the PDC, who heartily welcomed us and gave us a brief talk. Mike mentioned how impressed he was that a small chapter like ours had no problem filling all 32 seats when much larger clubs often struggle to make the Chapter M-Day quota. That's a fine tribute to the spirit of our club.

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We began Saturday at 7:30 AM at the PDC and, after check-in and a fabulous continental breakfast buffet, we had a short period of instruction and overview of the morning's exercises by Johan Schwartz, our lead instructor. Johan is a bit of a celebrity even among the BMW professionals, having been the driver of the M5 in the world-record-setting longest continuous drift (232.5 miles) which took place at the PDC in December 2017 and included 5 successful car-to-car drift refuelings! If you haven't seen this incredible feat yet, read the story and check out the video on the BMW CCA website at <https://www.bmwcca.org/news/two-guinness-world-records-bmw-m5>

After the briefing, we divided ourselves into four groups and went to our cars. Each group would rotate exercises driving one of the models of BMWs provided for our club this visit in each exercise. Those models were the M2 Competition, the M4, the M5 Competition and the M850i xDrive coupe. What an exciting line up! Each group rotated through four different driving exercises in the morning, including drifting on the large wet skid pad and a rat race on the small wet oval. We all tried, with varying levels of success, to drift the M4 on the skid pad but were challenged in controlling the incredible throttle response. None of us threatened Johan's record, but we did have a lot of fun. We drove the rat race in the M850i with all driver controls turned off – the xDrive was amazing. The M5 Competition was driven in the middle of the track where we were able to appreciate the incredible acceleration and braking of this amazing machine. The M2 Competition was driven on a tight course with a cone slalom and tight turns. This course was a preview of a timed exercise coming in the afternoon.

We took a short break for a wonderful lunch catered by the PDC and then back to the classroom where we learned about the afternoon's activities before heading out to the cars. During the afternoon, each group had another turn on the wet track doing figure eights in the M850i. Driving this all-wheel-drive monster with all the driver controls off was just a thrill.

"I learn something new each time, hopefully improving my driving skills along the way. It seems like it shouldn't even be possible, but I have more fun each time I go!" -- Brian Kaldenbach



"I thought the experience was outstanding. A good time with friends and an introduction to high performance driving for an old friend of mine. I met one of the instructors (Evan York) in March at a track day event at Atlanta Motorsports Park. Evan remembered me and was very helpful during our Chapter M Day. He was very cordial and has a great instruction method. I was impressed with the entire staff and the facilities." -- Jim Allison

"I want to thank you for all your hard work on behalf of the members. I am new to the group but expect to be more active in some of your events, I can say for sure that myself and my son in law Byron Wood will be back with you for the trip next year. Thanks Again." -- Tim Neal

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We drove the M4 on a course where we had a nice straightaway, then tight turns followed by accelerating, and then more turns and back to the straightaway. The timed course in the M2 Competition was very challenging, both due to the course layout and having to end the timed run in a stop box. You got a time penalty if you hit a cone or if you stopped out of the box. My personal favorite was driving the M5 Competition in a long course where one could hit 108-110 mph in the straightaway followed by a tight left-hand turn, going $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way around the skid pad and then tight turns, acceleration, and then more turns before hitting the straightaway again.

"I just wanted to say that I had a tremendous time. This was my first experience on a track and I could not have been more pleased. Not only were the cars and instructors outstanding, but Sammy was kind enough to be my partner and help show me what to do. I can't wait to do it again. Count me in for next year and I'm going to talk my wife into going as well." -- Danny Jones



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By the end of the afternoon the braking zone was completely black from the aggressive braking.

At the end of the driving events the instructors took us on thrill rides as they put the M5 Competition through some very high-performance maneuvers. These “hot-laps” show all too clearly how far we “wanna-be” racers have to go.

We then gathered in the classroom to recognize and celebrate the winners of the rat races and the top three winners of the timed course. The winners of the rat races each received a small furry rat (plush toy) while the drivers of the time trial with the best three times of the day got something much more valuable: Bragging Rights.

We are already working on dates for next year. If you’ve been hesitating about joining our Club M-Day, next year is a good time for you to jump in and grab a seat. To show you how much fun this is, fully half of our drivers this year had attended a previous Chapter M-Day. I know I’m already saving my dollars for next year’s fun.

“This M5 is so good it even makes a Corvette driver like me look like a great driver.” -- Jeff Houser

“I use the day to drive and learn more about the technology and capabilities of the new machines in order to better serve students as an HPDE instructor. I also like the camaraderie and spending the day with so many club members.” -- Mike Washington



L to R: Sammy Cheek (silver medal), Mike Washington (gold medal), and Brian Kaldenbach (bronze medal) had the best times of the day.

“Every year that I've attended M Day has been a blast, and the cars get faster and more fun each time! Even though I've been several times. I learn more about driving techniques and car handling that I find myself applying to my everyday driving each event. The awareness that we learn from these events certainly makes us better drivers while having fun gaining it!” -- Norm Durfee

I always look forward to the time trial handling event and, while I never make it to the awards podium, each year I post a new personal-best time which tells me that I'm not yet growing too old to learn! – Chris Tighe

JOIN IN THE FUN

NEXT CLUB M-DAY

OCTOBER 3, 2020

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

"I go every year and introduce new people to M day because for \$700 I get to learn about my skill level, work on improving my skills from some great instructors, and do this all in a safe environment where likelihood of hurting myself or another person or the car is pretty small all-the-while not having to stress about law enforcement and going to court. M Day is not about safely driving to the local grocery store since the bulk of the exercises are conducted at speeds beyond normal legal road speed limits. I would consider M Day as adult version of Tire Rack Street Survival, where the instructors walk each person thru exercises that expand your understanding of you and the cars boundaries. The social aspect is also good fun. Meeting for dinner the night before is a great way to trade stories, meet new people, reconnect with friends, solicit people you want in your group (persons to compete against), and just have a good time. We have some really competent competitive people attending M Day and they are really great way to push yourself. My only regret is the day ends too quickly." -- Steve Smith

Drive Better, Tennessee

Right Turn on Red Arrow After Stop, Right? WRONG!

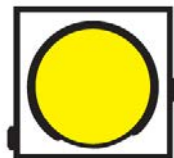
This issue's Drive Better started out as an attempt to answer a question: "If a car is stopped at an intersection where there are two right turn lanes controlled by right turn arrow lights (e.g. at N. Northshore Drive intersection with Papermill Drive or at the I-40 Exit #407 to Route 441 South), are the cars in both lanes allowed to turn right on red or only the car in the right-most lane?

The answer may surprise you because according to the Tennessee Comprehensive Drivers License Manual (July 1, 2018) issued by the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security, and confirmed by a call to the Knoxville Police Department, **NEITHER LANE MAY TURN RIGHT ON THE RED ARROW.** Here is why: The traffic signals with red, yellow, and green turn arrows are called "Protected Turn Arrows" based on the concept that when the arrow is green, you are "protected" from collision. That protection only comes from the traffic engineer's design basis that cars are only moving through the intersection where and when the green arrows allow.

What about the provision of "Right On Red After Stop"? Well, at least here in Tennessee, a red arrow supersedes that provision or, metaphorically, the red arrow pierces the heart of that provision and kills it.

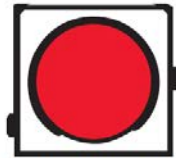
Here is the exact copy extracted from the TN Drivers Manual with underline emphasis added for your attention to the key phrases. Note that a red light assigned to your turn lane has the same effect as the red arrow.

PROTECTED ARROWS: At many intersections, you may see what is called a "protected turn arrow." When the arrow is green, you have the right-of-way and may drive the vehicle only in the direction of the arrow, after yielding to vehicles and pedestrians already in the intersection. When the arrow changes to yellow, prepare to yield to oncoming traffic. When the arrow is red or your lane has the red light, all turns are prohibited. This is true even if other lanes of traffic have a green signal and your path through the intersection appears to be clear.



FLASHING YELLOW

Slow down and proceed with caution at the intersection.



FLASHING RED

Complete stop. Same as stop sign. Look both ways, yield to traffic and pedestrians and proceed when it is safe to do so.

Sure, we have frequently seen cars making a right on a red arrow. Perhaps it's legal in another state, or perhaps they have lapsed into it because enforcement isn't as strict as for other violations. Regardless of the reason some people do it, just remember that if a car is involved in a collision while doing so, they will have a very hard time defending that they were not at fault, regardless of what the other car(s) may have been doing. That red arrow could be pointing them to a costly lawsuit or even to manslaughter charges.

President's **CORNER**



We have had a couple very active of months. At our drive outs and at our recent Chapter M-Day, I've been encouraged to see that more of our members are giving these types of events a try. This is your club and you get the most out of your dues when you participate in the club events. When we did the latest drive to Tapoco Lodge there were 21 cars! I got to meet many of you for whom this was your first club event and it was great to have you along and gratifying to meet you and talk with you. A couple of weeks later, we drove to Brushy Mountain State Prison and we had another good turnout, 18 cars! I really appreciate the efforts of Beverly Reeves for organizing our Tapoco Lodge drive-out and Lara Allison for organizing our Brushy Mountain drive-out. On Saturday September 28th, we had another drive out, this time to Greeneville, TN to visit the City Garage Car Museum and have lunch. We had 10 cars participating. I want to thank Sammy Cheek for organizing this event, and also for his frequent contribution of articles to this newsletter. I especially want to thank all of you who drove with us on these events. Your participation is rewarding to the fellow club members who took the time to organize the events and is what keeps our club vibrant and growing.

On Saturday September 7th, we had the annual Chapter M-Day. There is an article in this issue that highlights this special event including takeaways from some of the participants.

The BMW CCA Oktoberfest is going to be held October 15th-19th and there are a number of us taking the short drive to Greenville, SC for this huge event. You can go the BMW CCA website to see the schedule of events, and I'm sure you will see something of interest.

Our monthly socials are just exploding in attendance. At the September social at Sullivan's, we had 40 folks attend. I love the enthusiasm and was blown away by the attendance. I'd ask that you RSVP so that we can have enough seats for everyone. Having this level of participation will require us to rethink our monthly social locations. This is a good problem for us to have. I was very encouraged that we had 23 members attend our first-ever social in Johnson City on August 21st. Thanks to all of you who attended. We will continue our outreach to that part of our membership area with quarterly socials and our next Street Survival program that will be held November 2nd at Liberty Bell High School in Johnson City. I must attend a BMW CCA meeting in Dallas that day so I'm truly sad that I can't be there and coach. We still need volunteers for this event so if you are willing to be a coach, coordinator, or cone-wrangler, please reach out to Brian Kaldenbach at trss@smokymtnbmwcca.org.

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We are still working on driving events for October and November so stay tuned. If you have some ideas for a neat drive and would like to organize it, please contact any officer. This is a great way to be involved and have a feeling of accomplishment supporting your fellow members.

In December we are planning two events – a drive out and overnight in Helen, GA on the weekend of December 7th-8th and a Christmas Party on Saturday, December 14th.

We have two offices up for election this year, the vice president and treasurer. If you want to help lead your chapter for the next two years, you are welcome to nominate yourself. If you want to know what's involved in either of these positions, just give me a call. We appreciate members who want to give of their time and take a leadership role in the club.

Several of your board members called in to a quarterly conference call with BMW CCA South Atlantic Region. I've already told you about some of the news like dues going up at the end of the year and changes to Roundel Magazine. I'll tell you many chapters are struggling. There are many who have not hosted one event in 2019, sent out a single newsletter, or put on a Street Survival. Some chapters are having problems getting volunteers to be a chapter officer. Three Florida chapters were merged into one. Other chapters are being looked at for consolidation. I am happy to report that our chapter suffers none of these ills. We have an active membership and board and are dedicated to making our chapter better for everyone. We are putting out a high-quality and informative newsletter every other month. Our driving events this year have been varied and exciting and, as you know, for the first time, we are planning to conduct a second Street Survival in the same year. Finally, we are getting more of you interested in participating in our events. A heartfelt thanks to all of you who have chosen to be to be part of the Smoky Mountain Chapter.

If you have questions about the club, any chapter event, or have suggestions for events you would like us to hold, please email us at 4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org.

Welcome New Members !

The following members were added to the rolls of Smoky Mountain BMW CCA through August 30, 2019. Look for them at our next event and please welcome them to the club

Robert Bonner
Peyton Cherry
Joshua deLeon
Duncan Forsyth

Lynn Larkin
Lloyd Mineer
Henry Naff
Eric Nielsen

Ken Reinke
Zachary Thomas
Bobby Whitus

We are happy that you have chosen to come along for the ride!

Club Announcements & Upcoming Events

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Can you spare some time to help your club?

We are looking for a volunteer for each of the following:

- **Advertising coordinator** for our newsletter and our website.
- **Social media coordinator** to help us spread the sights, sounds, and stories of the fun we are having.

If you have interest and abilities in these areas and can spare a few hours each month, we would love to hear from you at: SMCBoard@smokymtnbmwcca.org

Upcoming Chapter Socials

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| October 10 - Chop House | 9700 Kingston Pike # 21, Knoxville, TN 37922 (<i>West Knoxville</i>) |
| November 14 – Litton's | 2803 Essary Dr, Knoxville, TN 37918 (<i>Fountain City</i>) |
| December 12 – Carrabba's | 324 N Peters Rd, Knoxville, TN 37922 (<i>Cedar Bluff</i>) |

If you have a suggestion for a good venue for a social in 2019 – please send your input to 4SMCEvents@smokymtnbmwcca.org.

Smoky Mtn Chapter Board Meeting Oct 5th

- 11AM -- Grayson BMW Conference Room
- Chapter members welcome to attend (please park in the overflow lot behind the Mini dealership)

Drive Out – Saturday December 7 – Sunday December 8 Helen, GA – Bavarian Style Village

- Approximately a 2.5 hr drive from Lenoir City
- Enjoy holiday decorations, German food, music and shopping
- Optional overnight. Check out www.valhallaesorthotel.com
- Stay tuned for more info or email questions to Laura Allison at membership@smokymtnbmwcca.org

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Next Chapter M-Day

October 3, 2020

32 spots will be available

Oktoberfest 2019

October 15-19, Greenville, SC

Christmas Party – December 14

- Covered Dish Dinner – Oak Ridge Sportsman's Club Clubhouse, 5pm
- Optional holiday music performance by Levi Kreis (recently seen in Million Dollar Quartet) at Oak Ridge Playhouse 7pm.
 - Tickets \$26.50 (free for veterans)
 - RSVP by October 20 to Richard Stouder (president@smokymtnbmwcca.org) if you want a ticket so we can purchase a block.

Upcoming in a future Smoky Bimmer:

- Experiencing 24 Hours of Daytona by *Mike Washington*
- Dirt Fish Rally School by *Sammy Cheek*
- *[Your Story Goes Here]* – Have an idea for an article? Please email to Chris Tighe at editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org or 301-748-9850

Tire Rack Street Survival – Volunteers Needed!!!!

- November 2, 2019,
Liberty Bell HS,
Johnson City, TN
- Spring 2020 – Pellissippi
State Community
College

We Thank You!!

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Grayson BMW is a BMWCCA partner in the Membership Reward Program.

Club Information

| CHAPTER OFFICERS AND CONTACTS | |
|-------------------------------|--|
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| Treasurer | Norm Durfee treasurer@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Secretary | Kyle Swift secretary@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Newsletter Editor | Chris Tighe editor@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Street Survival | Brian Kaldenbach trss@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Membership | Laura Allison membership@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Board Member At-Large | Mike Washington tri-cities@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Webmaster | Steve Smith vicepresident@smokymtnbmwcca.org |
| Club Website & Gen'l Info | www.smokymtnbmwcca.org info@smokymtnbmwcca.org |

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Special rates apply for advertising. Please inquire from a Chapter Officer. We can customize an advertising space to suit your needs.



Visit us on Facebook to see pictures from past chapter events, connect with other fellow club members, learn about upcoming events, and more. If you have suggestions for things you'd like to see on our club Facebook page, please let us know! Search Facebook for Smoky Mountain BMWCCA or visit the link below.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SMBMWCCA>

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