



# AT SPEED

## *Emerald Empire Sports Car Club*

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October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014

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### Upcoming EESCC Events

<b>Monthly Meeting:</b>	<b>Nov 5<sup>th</sup></b> <b>7:00 pm The Sizzler</b>
<b>OSI ACCO Autocross</b>	<b>Oct 11<sup>th</sup> &amp; 12<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Bald Knob Lumber</b> <b>Creswell</b>
<a href="http://autoclub.org/Web_1/curentwebinfo/OSI_Master.htm">http://autoclub.org/Web_1/curentwebinfo/OSI_Master.htm</a>	
<b>Year End Banquet and Celebration</b>	<b>Nov. 8<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Valley River Inn</b> <b>See Flyer Enclosed</b>

**2014 Year-End Awards Banquet**  
**"Do You Recall?"**  
By Bren Wamsley

**Save The Date!** The 2014 Year-End Awards Banquet is fast approaching. It's a great time to celebrate the year's events and to commiserate with your racing family. Most of the evening is celebrating YOU!

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We will be returning to Valley River Inn Saturday evening, November 8<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm. It will be buffet style and entertainment provided. Informational and registration forms are included in this August newsletter. You will also be able to register on-line via our website, [www.eescc.org](http://www.eescc.org). There will be lots of prizes including a \$50.00 cash door prize. Register early to avoid a late registration fee.

Valley River Inn is happy to extend a rate of \$73.00 per night to the Emerald Empire Sports Car Club Holiday party attendees for a deluxe guestroom. To take advantage of this special rate, call the Valley River Inn reservations line at 1-800-543-8266 and ask for the "Holiday Party Rate".

It's the best time you'll have not behind the wheel. ☺  
Look forward to seeing you there.

**READY...SET...DOH!!**  
By Dave Arata

Not even laying the start cone to rest at the very beginning of a run more often than I care to admit could deter me from a weekend of pure fun and entertainment. I don't attend autocross events as much as I like or I should, and events like these remind me to rethink my truancy. I regularly find excuses to dodge events, sighting I don't have the time, the car isn't prepared or I find the cost vs. seat time disappointing. The truth is, I'm a guy, I have a fast car and I never come in 1st. There, I said it. ( to page 3)

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I come from a road racing background and I presumed dodging cones in a parking lot to be elementary, checkers to my chess. These guys are beginners and I had years of experience driving fast cars...well, fast. I was accustomed to sharing renowned tracks with Ferraris, Porsches, Shelbys, etc. What right does a Prius, Cadillac or hybrid econobox have showing up at an autocross? As if! I'm far too good for this rubbish. I made sure to leave room in my helmet for my pretension. Wave the green flag already and let me show these dilettantes how it's done.

Wrong mister, and boy did I miss the mark. Allow me to list the ways in which I did. First, these guys and gals are good, really good! This particular group, the Emerald Empire Sports Car Club, based out of Eugene, OR understands what it takes to host a successful autocross event having done so for many years, including hill climbs. The club is comprised of ardent and diversified gear heads from the experienced who show the kind of car control I can only dream about to the unquestionable novice, mowing over cones with unabashed impunity. Second, I have used the wrong formula entirely to calculate value. Comparing dollars spent to seat time is akin to putting Ray Charles in the bombardier's seat in a WWII B-17, he's going to miss. What counts most here is the people. That's what can't be factored into the equation because their value is immeasurable. In all my years of road racing, I've never met an entire group with the caliber of character I've seen in the EESCC. They have the talent, knowledge, humor and hospitality that no amount of money can buy.

I got creamed on Saturday not only because of better drivers in my class, but also because the course seemed like the moon to me. Things happen fast on course, Jack! I missed gates and crushed cones, much to the entertainment of the crowd and the announcer who felt it necessary to make public that I had the only Mustang in my class, crusading against a sea of Camaros, and I wasn't doing Mr. Henry Ford any favors. No pressure. Sunday, I fared much better placing somewhere in the middle of my class. I had my space goggles on and successfully navigated the course much better most of the day. I've got a lot to learn and I'm certain I've found the best teachers. The CP family know who you are. Thank you EESCC!

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## Automotive Mistakes

By Matt Boatman

Anybody who has been around cars a long time has made a few mistakes. One category of my mistakes could be called "Ditches I Have Known." I have made it into the ditch at least three times, with surprisingly few consequences.

The most spectacular was driving an old '79 Chevy pickup with some Army buddies in it. We came around a corner on a dirt road in Pennsylvania and I managed to get the right wheels of the truck in a shallow ditch, but we were still moving along at a pretty good clip. No problem, right? Wrong? A milk-can mailbox suddenly appeared right in front of me. Fortunately, the all-steel construction of the bumper just sent it flying out of our way. My friends were drop-jawed for a minute, and I was hoping no one had seen me, but other than a dent on the already beaten bumper, there was no damage to the truck or to us.

Years later, I was driving a Datsun 210 from California to Pennsylvania, towing a U-Haul trailer. I was determined not to stop for a hotel, and it was January, too cold to sleep in the car. So I just kept going, but finally exhaustion got the better of me. I decided to pull over and try to sleep for a few hours in Virginia. This was during the blizzard of 1996, and I had already caused a traffic jam in Atlanta by crawling along a slick freeway with a line of cars waiting to get out around me.

I pulled off a freeway somewhere in Virginia and searched for a suitable place to snooze. I finally located a side road with a wide shoulder that appeared to have been just plowed. So I eased over to the side and the entire right side of the car and trailer suddenly dropped. I'd forgotten about the big drainage ditches in Virginia. The recently plowing had appeared to make the shoulder all level, but it was a trap. What I was seeing was level snow on top of the ditch.

I was now fully awake and figured I was screwed for a while. So I set off for the nearest house. Voila! Problem solved. The guy had a hugely jacked-up F250 that had no problem yanking the car and trailer out of the ditch. I tucked my tail between my legs, offered the guy \$20 (which he declined), and headed back to the freeway, not to be delayed again until a particularly steep hill on a snowy, spaghetti-like Pennsylvania back road stopped my momentum again. A quick pull over the top from a passing Dodge pickup set me on my way.

But easily my most embarrassing moment on going in the ditch was in France just a couple of years ago. I know this sounds pretentious, but I had driven laps on the Nurburgring with a friend of mine just two days before, and then had split off from him to explore the French countryside in a tiny rented Renault Twingo. The rental had been the personal runabout of the kid who played gofer at the rental agency, and so he had marked down every scratch, swirl, and nick in the paint of the car. The car was what the Europeans called a "city car," not really designed for long trips, but I had already taken it from central France up into Germany and back. (Its top speed was 103 mph, downhill. I checked it out on the autobahn).

It was a sunny Sunday afternoon and I'd had my fill of high-speed driving. I was tootling along a back road when a black BMW came up fast behind me. I looked for a shoulder to pull off, and selected a grassy spot just past an intersection. Bad idea. It was Virginia all over again. As I pulled off the road, the entire car tipped to the right. Except this time the car wasn't a beat-up Datsun. It was a shiny rental car in a foreign country, and of course I hadn't gotten the extra insurance coverage. Again, I figured I was screwed. The car was high centered, and the side of the ditch away from the road appeared to be a stone wall covered with blackberry bushes.

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I was pretty angry with myself and not a little bit embarrassed; the invincible Nurburgring driver had just plonked a car into a ditch at 15 mph.

The BMW pulled over (not in a ditch) and the guy and his wife got out to talk to me. My French isn't that good but I managed to get across to them that I needed a tractor. (We were surrounded by farms.) Just then a helpful woman with decent English stopped, and upon finding out it was a rental, offered to call the rental company for me. "Non, non, non." There was no way I was talking to them until I saw the extent of the damage. If I could get away without telling them, so much the better.

The BMW driver was apparently a local. He and his wife coaxed me into their car, and we set off down a dirt road. After a bit we pulled up to a large house on an immaculately kept farm. We knocked on the door and were called in by an anonymous voice. We went in to find the farmer and his wife enjoying lunch. Some quick French flew through the air and the farmer got up and shuffled towards the front door. BMW guy motioned me to go along with him. We went to the barn, but instead of getting a tractor, the farmer loaded a tow chain into a Toyota Hilux four-wheel-drive pickup (with a diesel engine!). We followed the BMW back to the scene of the stupidity and they assessed the situation for a bit before deciding how to attach the chain and which way to drag me out.

It was the work of a moment; I was out of the ditch and the car was parked on flat ground. We examined the car closely and found one scratch very very low down on the right front fender in front of the wheel. I drove the car up and down the road about a quarter mile, and it appeared to drive just fine. I still have no idea how I got so lucky. I offered the farmer 20 euros for his work and his "gazoil," but he declined. After thanking everyone, I again fled with my tail tucked between my legs.

Later that afternoon I happened to look under the car. It appeared as though I had scooped up an entire football field when I high-centered it. I located a car wash and spent many euros trying to get all the sod off the steering/engine/suspension. I was dreading taking it back to the rental agency and having Boy Wonder go over it thoroughly again, so I called and extended my rental for two days and dropped it off at the airport in Paris, the theory being that they would be so busy that they wouldn't notice some clumps of grass under the car. It paid off, plus the car return was in a dingy, poorly lit parking garage. The attendant barely glanced at the car and signed off on the sheet.

I hope that one of these days I learn from my mistakes. Maybe only pull off when I can see actual pavement. Or buy a four-wheel drive with a winch, so the next time I can get myself out of the ditch.