

APRIL 2008

DEER GASSER



CB CARES
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Gala 2008
 Serving the Community

Sunday • June 1, 2008 • 6pm • Bucks County Golf Club • Jamison

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- ✓ Purchase a \$100 ticket to enter the drawing and help CB Cares.
- ✓ Only 1,000 tickets will be sold.
- ✓ Each \$100 ticket gives you a one in a 1,000 chance to win a 2008 Porsche Boxster.
- ✓ Drawing to be held at the CB Cares Celebrity Chef and Waiter Gala 2008 on June 1st at the Bucks County Golf Club.
- ✓ But remember, it's not about the car. It's about CB Cares programs and services offered to the community.

Sponsored by

Holberts Porsche
 Warrington, PA



ENTER TODAY!



CB Cares reserves the right to cancel the raffle and refund all money should insufficient tickets be sold. You must be 18 years old or older to purchase a raffle ticket and the winner need not be present to win. Winners are responsible for all applicable sales and income tax. *Manual transmission. Colors to be selected by winner.

For more information, please call Kimberly Cambra, Executive Director, CB Cares at 215-489-9120.

Official CB Cares 2008 Porsche Boxster Raffle Registration Form

Yes, I want to help CB Cares and have a chance to win a brand new 2008 Porsche Boxster!

- Register me for _____ entry(ies) at \$100 each.
- I am sending payment (check or credit card) in the amount of \$_____.

Drawing: June 1st, 2008 at the CB Cares Celebrity Chef and Waiter Gala at the Bucks County Golf Club in Jamison, PA. You do not have to be present to win.



One name per entry form. If you have received more than one form, please pass the extra along to a friend. Additional forms are available or submit facsimiles of this form. For more information, please call Kimberly Cambra, Executive Director, CB Cares at 215-489-9120, fax 215-489-9166 or visit CB Cares website at www.cb-cares.org. Make checks payable to CB Cares. Clip and return to: CB Cares, 252 W Swamp Road, Unit 5, Doylestown, PA 18901

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

Check enclosed payable to CB Cares.

Please charge my: Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover

Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

On the Cover



Caravaners resting at the Long Trout Winery. It's time to get ready for the spring road trips. See: Coming Events Photo: Ken Souser

Editor

Maureen Sangiorgio
484-358-4590
Got2BFit@aol.com

Photography/Design Editor

Ken Souser
610-966-4391
KenSouser@aol.com

Contributing Writers

Fred Bonsall
Eric Hans
Larry Herman
Steve McMorn
Ken Souser
J. Henry Warren

Advertising

Steve Mankowski
Treasurer@rtr-pca.com

Submissions

The deadline for submission of materials is the 20th of the month preceding publication. Please e-mail submissions to Got2BFit@aol.com with "Der Gasser" as the subject line.

DER GASSER

A monthly publication of the Riesentöter Region
Porsche Club of America
APRIL 2008

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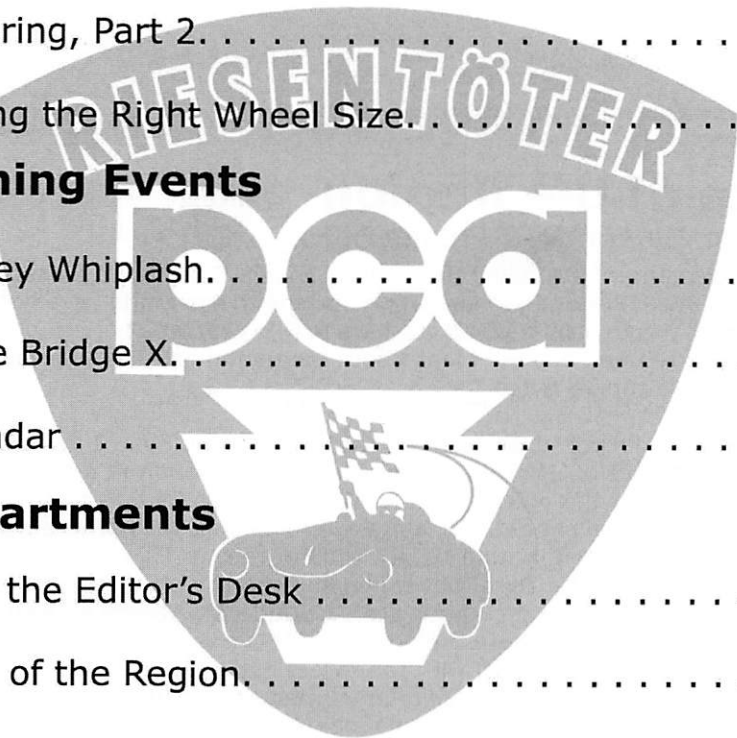
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Der Gasser is the official publication of the Porsche Club of America, Riesentöter Region, and is published ten times a year. Any statement appearing in Der Gasser is that of the author, and does not constitute an opinion of the Porsche Club of America, Riesentöter Region, its executive staff, or the editors. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication. Classified ads are free to PCA members and are printed on a space-available basis.

For the latest information, please visit the Riesentöter Region web page at: www.rtr-pca.org.

From the Editor's Desk

On a wintry Sunday morning a few weeks ago, my husband Jim and I woke up with a very bad case of cabin fever. He said a sure cure would be a quick trip out to Thunderbolt Speedway to see how things are progressing. Good Porsche wife that I am, I gulped and said, "Sure, honey. You're the boss."

We went to the web site, punched in the address to my Nav, and were on our way. Turns out the address listed was incorrect, and we found ourselves driving aimlessly around the tiny town of Millville, NJ. We called Mercedes Tele-Aide, who also gave us the wrong address. After burning (right now very expensive) gas for over an hour, my patience was wearing thin. GOD FORBID HE STOPS AND ASKS DIRECTIONS. According to Jim, you see, real men don't ask directions. We weren't "lost," we were merely finding alternate routes to reach our destination.

So we tried Nav again, and it brought us in an entirely different direction. Just as I was looking for sharp objects in the car, I couldn't believe what I saw. Parked in the front yard of a very small, white house was a very large, black van that had, "Thunderbolt Speedway" painted on the side. I screamed, "Stop the car," and much to Jim's horror, jumped out and ran up to the house.

Turns out that the guy who owns the van really does work for Thunderbolt and was there visiting his father. He not only handed us a brochure, drew detailed directions to the track, he even gave us his cell phone number in case we got lost again. Then the guys started talking cars and really hit it off. And that's when it hit me. There really is camaraderie between motor heads. Before today, the four of us were total strangers to each other living in different states. But as soon as they heard we were with the Porsche Club and were looking for the track we'd soon be driving on, they could not have been more friendly and helpful. Hey - it IS on our T-shirts, "It's not just the cars. It's the people." Lesson learned.

See you 'round the garage,

Maureen Sangiorgio

State of the Region

By Brian Minkin, RTR President



I had the pleasure of attending the Zone 2 Drivers Education at Virginia International Raceway with an enthusiastic group of fellow RTR members last week. For me this event is usually the start of the driving season and with three days of great weather on a world class track this year was no exception. Our own Tom Zaffarano was the Chief Instructor, Jack Kramer was the Class Room Instructor, and Paul Walsack helped take care of Tech. Congratulations to all for putting on a superb event.

While on the subject of Virginia International Raceway, Zone 2 has also taken on the enormous task of hosting the first 3 day club race at VIR this August 8th-10th. Although PCA Club Racing has been at VIR before as part of the Grand Am weekend this will be the first time that PCA Club Racing will have an entire weekend event on its own at VIR. The weekend will consist of 2 Sprint and 1 Enduro race. There will also be a single run group of advanced DE drivers if you are interested in running VIR without racing. This will be one of the biggest club races of the season. RTR is one of the regions in the Zone that is helping with the planning and running of this race weekend. I have taken on the role of False Grid and Hot Pit coordinator. **I need volunteers to help with running False Grid and Hot Pits. This will require 10 to 12 people.** Being part of this crew is a great way to be part of the excitement of Club Racing getting you up close and personal with the racers and race cars. Some of the travel expenses for volunteers are being covered by the Zone 2. If you would be interested in joining Terry and me for this exciting race weekend as a volunteer, please contact me via email or phone. My contact information is in the back of this issue.

RTR has been invited to attend the East Coast 356 Holiday Concours on Saturday September 6th at Grimes Airfield in Lancaster PA. There will be over 275 Porsche 356s on display as well as having a Porsche Coral for all other models. In addition Grimes Field is the home of the Golden Age Air Museum, where you can explore the past, learn how early aviators flew, see what they flew, see actual flying demonstrations, and learn about the lost art of early aircraft construction. **I am looking for volunteers to lead caravans from various locations in the region to this superb display of Porsche History.** If you can help lead the lost souls of RTR please contact me via email or phone. My contact information is in the back of this issue.

RTR is rolling into 2008 with events for all kinds of interests. I hope to see many of you at the New Members Meeting at Holberts Porsche on April 30th. New and old members come on out and meet the exec and many active members who enjoy all the benefits of RTR membership. I must remind you that all these great events are organized and run by volunteers. It can be hard work but it is always very rewarding. Enjoy your P-car and turbocharge your passion.

Get Involved! Volunteer!

Letters to the Editor

Let me add my voice to the chorus of accolades on the exciting new look for Der Gasser (note Der!). The layout, graphics, photos and copy are all first class, just as one would expect from the team of Maureen and Ken. Wonderful work! Congrats and best wishes!

-- Loren Hulber

Just went to the mailbox and was so happy to see my Der Gasser was inside. What a great job you have done for the magazine. I really like the format. My only comment is I would prefer to receive it earlier in the month.

-- Francine Knochenhauer

I think the new Der Gasser is SPECTACULAR. Great job, Maureen and Ken.

-- Fred Bonsall

Great job with Der Gasser. Glad to see the duotones back. I used to agonize over getting those just right during my tenure.

-- Rich Herzog

Address letters to the editor to Got2Bfit@aol.com with Der Gasser in the subject line. Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity. Please include name and phone number.



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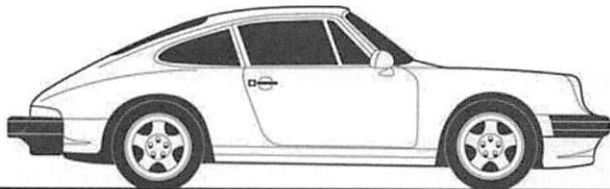


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Advertiser Spotlight

Don Rosen Imports

By Maureen Sangiorgio

Since 1991, Don Rosen Imports has offered Porsche and Audi car lines, and has grown into the largest Porsche/Audi dealer in the state. At any given time, you can expect to find hundreds of new and pre-owned Porsches on the lot. With this huge inventory, and over one million dollars in parts, it's no wonder the dealer was recently selected as a Premier Porsche Dealer. "We are honored to be one of only 25 Porsche dealers in North America, and the only Porsche dealer in the region, to earn the Porsche Premier Dealer designation," says Scott Kaminski, Marketing Communications Manager. The designation recognizes dealers for achieving the highest performance among their peers, and for routinely exceeding the expectations of their Porsche customers.

"We love the cars we sell, and we are dedicated to the customers we sell them to," says Scott. "We like to think we offer the total package of a Porsche dealership. It doesn't matter whether you're a prospective client, or you've been here before. From the sales floor, to the service department, we want to make sure the customer is completely satisfied all around every time they walk into our store. We want to form long-term relationships with our customers."

What? No Commissions?

Besides volume inventory, another distinguishing aspect is the fact that Rosen sales staff work on

salary, not commission. "We make it so that there's really no pressure on a prospective client," notes Scott. "They're able to come in and talk to the sales person and really don't feel like they're pressured. It makes the transaction easier for everyone involved. Clients can come and go as they please and not feel pressured to purchase the vehicle that day in order to help the sales person make their quota that month."

Stellar Service Department

"We have the largest and youngest fleet of loaner vehicles in the area," says Scott. "The loaners are available to anyone who has purchased a car from us. We want to make the service experience as convenient and painless as possible. We have some technicians who have been working exclusively on Porsches for thirty years. They are incredibly knowledgeable, so if someone comes in with a problem with their Porsche, we have someone who can diagnose the problem very easily."

Rosen also offers Pit Crew Service for certain quick, simple service procedures such as oil or fluids topped off. "Our customers can just pull into the service area, have their fluids topped off at no charge, then literally drive right out without ever having to leave their car," says Scott. "We know Porsche owners are passionate about the brand, and really love to drive their cars, so we aim to get them back out on the road as soon as possible."




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– *Tim Cahill*

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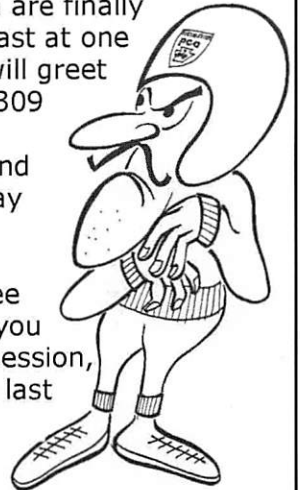


The Snidely Whiplash Eighth Annual Trek to the Track for the Faint of Heart

By Fred Bonsall

All of my devious details for a special day at Pocono Raceway on Saturday, May 17th are finally coming together. We will meet you alone or you and a guest (18 or older) for breakfast at one of the two convenient area restaurants and caravan to the track by 9:30 or so. We will greet you at 7:30 am at the Trivet Diner, 4549 Tilghman Street in Allentown, just off the 309 by-pass, and at 7:00 am at Otto's Restaurant in Horsham, one mile from the Willow Grove exit of the PA Turnpike. Here we can indulge in a great breakfast if you like, and then drive our favorite cars up to Pocono International Raceway and register for a day packed full of Porsche FUN and Driver EDUCATION!

There you can see many members preparing their cars, ask tons of questions and see many of your friends turning laps. A lunch coupon for you and your guest will allow you to dine amongst the merriment. In addition, there will be a classroom instructional session, a flagging opportunity out on the circuit, an actual tech session and finally, after the last run-group, a series of laps around the track that you drive under the guidance of an RTR instructor...All this to be followed by an end of the day get together with all the participants where you can discuss the day's experiences with fellow enthusiasts. Don't miss this neat opportunity to "see for yourself," all for only \$30.00. So don't delay...only the first 20 cars will be able to participate! For registration please go to the web site at RTR-PCA.org.



Snidely

Stone Bridge X

By Ken Souser

The tenth running of our annual spring weekend will be held on May 17-18, 2008. It's time to get out that Porsche for a spirited romp on challenging by-ways through Pennsylvania's Pocono region.

The trip will begin with a continental breakfast graciously provided by Knopf Automotive in Allentown, PA. From there we will travel through the back country and game lands to our final destination, the Stone Bridge Inn, Union Dale PA. A stop for lunch will be made at the gourmet restaurant, Torte Knox, in Hawley.

The participation will be limited to thirteen cars and the cost will be \$200 per couple which includes lodging, dinner, and a Sunday morning continental breakfast.

For registration or information please contact Ken at KenSouser@aol.com or 610-966-4391.



Photo Ken Souser

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Drivers Education Schedule

Event Name	Event Date	Opening Date of Registration for RTR Members	Opening Date of Registration for Non RTR Members
Shenandoah Circuit with Skid Pad	April 26-27, 2008	February 29, 2004	March 7, 2004
Pocono North (Advanced Day)	May 15, 2004	March 31, 2004	April 7, 2004
Pocono North	May 17-18, 2008	March 31, 2004	April 7, 2004
Jefferson Circuit/Summit Point	June 14-16, 2008	April 30, 2004	May 7, 2004
Watkins Glen	August 1-3, 2008	May 31, 2004	June 7, 2004
Summit Point	August 21-22, 2008	June 30, 2004	July 7, 2004
Pocono (South on the 19th, North 20-21)	September 19-21, 2008	July 31, 2004	August 7, 2004
Thunderbolt (Advanced Day)	September 28, 2004	July 31, 2004	August 7, 2004
Thunderbolt	October 17-19, 2008	August 31, 2004	September 7, 2004

Please note: Online registration opens at 12:01AM

DE Tech Inspection Schedule

DATE	TRACK	INSPECTING FACILITY
April 12	Shenandoah	Holbert's, Warrington
May 3	Pocono	Knopf Automotive, Allentown
May 31	Jefferson	Meenan's, Landsdale
July 19	Watkins Glen	Dougherty's, West Chester
Aug 9	Summit Point	Tilson's, Philadelphia
Sept 6	Pocono	Dougherty's, West Chester
Sept 27	Thunderbolt	Meenan's, Landsdale
Oct 4	Thunderbolt	Holbert's, Warrington

RTR Monthly Meeting Schedule

Meetings start with a social hour at 7pm

- April 30 – Holbert's Porsche, Warrington
New members meeting
- May 28 – Knopf Automotive, Allentown
- June 25 – Possum Hollow Motorsports, Phoenixville

Check out the new PCA Riesentöter Goodie Store!

Featured products include men's and women's polos, caps, and jackets. The online store just added 93 new items including top designers such as Tommy Hilfiger, Augusta, and Stormtech apparel. All items are available with the embroidered RTR logo. Please go to rtr-pca.org, click on "Goodie Store," and help support our club!

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ENGINES**

RTR AutoX April



Auto•cross (ô'tô-krôs', -krôs') n. - A form of motor sport that emphasizes safe, low-cost competition and active participation. An autocross is a timed competition where drivers navigate one at a time through a temporary course marked by traffic cones. Autocross tends to place more emphasis on car handling and driver skill than on sheer horsepower.

*By Steve, Beth and "V"
2008 RTRAutoX Committee*

2008 RTR AutoX Season Launch:

Saturday May 3rd - AutoX Classroom Session

Where: Specialty Cars, 804 North Gilmore Street, Allentown, PA. 18109-1812.

www.specialtycarsservicecenter.com Phone: 610-437-9333.

Start time: 11am – 2pm with lunch provided.

National AutoX Champion Dave Newman has kindly agreed to talk to our members about the fundamentals of AutoX; provide advice on car set up and give a practical demonstration of how to 'walk and read' an AutoX course. Dave's awesome championship-winning Porsche 911 will be on display as well. This classroom session is sure to be of great interest and very useful to anyone who wants to drive AutoX this year, whether you are a novice yet to compete in your first event, or a seasoned veteran trying to find that elusive 2/10th's that will take you from 4th to 1st place!

Please look at the forum nearer the date for other exciting non-RTR sanctioned follow-up activities at the local go-kart track after our AutoX classroom session.

Sunday May 4th - RTR AutoX Roadshow Event #1

Where: Warminster Community Park with the Philadelphia Sports Car Club of America.

Info and directions: http://www.phillyscca.com/schedule/program_schedule.htm#solo

Start time: Morning session requested – exact time to be confirmed. RTR members will compete against each other in our very own 'R' class. For those interested in competing in our 'Just for Fun' RTR AutoX+ Roadshow Championship, we will run with a handicapping system (PAX) in an attempt to keep a level playing field between different cars. The PAX scoring will be based on the Maverick PCA PAX system for Porsches and a modified SCCA PAX for non-Porsches and you will need a PAX factor to be eligible for championship points. In one of our minor tweaks to last year's rules, in 2008 championship points will be awarded according to the F1 system: 1st-10, 2nd- 8, 3rd-7 ... all the way down to 2 points for 8th place with all competitors getting 1 point for attending. The PAX calculation methods will be posted on the forum by Vytenis ("V") within the next few weeks. If you have any questions on Classing or PAX, please e-mail 'V' at RTRAutoX@hotmail.com. Finally, remember to check out the RTR PCA online forum for the most up to date AutoX news and information-<http://rtr.mywowbb.com/forum3>

For the full RTR AX schedule, keep checking the web and look for it in next month's Der Gasser! Watch this space!

WIN A PORSCHE – SAVE A CHILD

Holberts to donate 2008 Boxster

By J. Henry Warren

Central Bucks (CB) Cares, in partnership with Holberts of Warrington, has officially launched its first-ever car raffle fundraiser to help raise money for valuable and effective programs to the youth and parents in Central Bucks. The organization has secured a 2008 Porsche Boxster; all net proceeds will help to create healthier communities and neighborhoods. Raffle is scheduled to take place June 1, 2008.

CB Cares is a coalition that works with community leaders, agencies, businesses, schools and families to improve the quality of life in Central Bucks County. The organization links various community sectors through programs, resources and activities to create a healthier environment with positive attitudes, behaviors and values.

CB Cares Programs

Each raffle ticket sold helps ensure continued program development and implementation. All initiatives, such as the monthly publication "Backpack Newsflash," The Boomerang Youth Recognition Award, and Reality Rules social norms marketing program are based on the 40 Developmental Assets developed by the Search Institute. The 40 Assets are concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to raising successful young people. These Assets have the power during critical adolescent years to influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults.

Raffle Details

Here's how as a Riesentöter member you can help. You can assist funding healthier communities and youth development, AND have a one in one-thousand chance to win a 2008 Porsche Boxster. (Buy 10 tickets and your odds are 1 in 100.) Tickets are \$100 each and only 1000 will be sold. First come; first served! The winning ticket will be drawn during the CB Cares Celebrity Chef & Waiter Gala on June 1, 2008 at the Bucks County Country Club in Jamison, PA.

Tickets may be purchased by mail with your check made out to CB Cares. Send checks to: CB Cares Porsche Raffle, 252 West Swamp Road, Bailiwick Unit 5, Doylestown, PA 18901. For additional information about the organization or the Celebrity Gala contact Kimberly Cambra, Executive Director 215.489.9120.

Der Gasser Marktplatz

Automobiles

1977 924 Project car. Engine runs, will need a tow home though. 944 fenders, Carrera style scoop and spoiler, black/silver 8 spoke wheels, 4Spd., 2.0l NA, Fresh carpet and front seat upholstery. email for addl. info,pics etc. (thunder@hipplanet.com) Must be sold by May, make me an offer!

Porsche Wheels

Set 997s wheels with colored Porsche Crest and Conti 810S Winter tires all as new \$2,000 OBO. Contact David Noel @ 610-360-6333; noel@dualtemp.com

Porsche Accessories

Boxster/Boxster S Service Manual by Bentley Publishers. Covers years 1997 – 2004. Purchased new for \$66.00. Selling for \$35.00. dkoemel@comcast.net or 215-598-7333.

1991 Porsche front bumper part. \$600 OBO. Contact: Bill Feiertag @ 610-366-7208

Weltmeister Sway Bars: 22mm Front \$175, 22mm Rear \$160. Solid Sway-A-Way Torsion Bars: Front Torsion Bars 23mm \$155. I believe that the front bars will fit 911, 912, 930 (1956-1989), 914-6. Rear Torsion Bars 30mm \$185. I believe that the rear bars will fit 911/912 (1965-1986), 930 (1976-1988 4-speed). Contact Nick at nix935@yahoo.com or 609-334-7000.

Member Classifieds are free to PCA Members for occasional sales of personally owned items and run from date received for three issues unless cancelled. Porsche Vehicles for Sale may be accompanied by one small photograph. Copy and cancellations must be received in writing by US mail or e-mail. Other vehicles may be offered for sale by members at the cost of \$10 for three issues; check for payment made out to "RTR-PCA" must accompany your copy. "Commercial Classifieds" are available to businesses within the Riesentöter Region for the sale of Porsche cars, parts, or accessories; "Commercial Classifieds" are available at a cost of \$20 per issue, limit 25 words. Email submissions to Maureen Sanglorgio at Got2BFit@aol.com with Der Gasser on the subject line.



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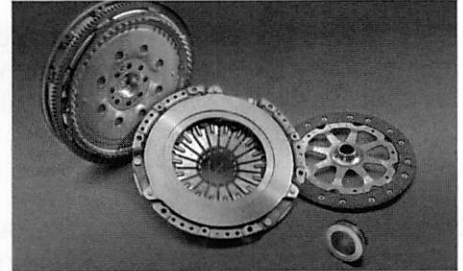
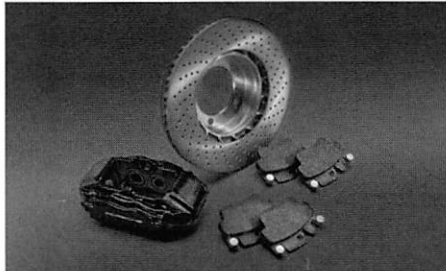
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Trailer Tips: Part Two

By Eric Hans

The trailer is only part of the trailering story; the other part, the tow vehicle, is just as important. Before you purchase your towing vehicle, bring along the following guide to see if it has the right towing features:

Does it have a wide track? Heavier, wider and longer tow vehicles are generally more stable than small, narrow vehicles. Factors that do help smaller tow vehicles are superior suspensions, and brakes. I first started towing using my 2002 GMC Yukon Denali. I never felt totally comfortable on the twisties towing in this SUV, so I acquired a 2004 Cayenne S from my wife. It has about the same weight but smaller wheel base and track, but it trailered better than the Denali. I attribute this to the better suspension, tires and brakes.

What is the towing capacity? All trucks have a maximum towing capacity and a maximum tongue weight. The tow ratings are based on frame structure of the truck, strength of the drivetrain (engine, transmission and differential), and the suspension of the truck. Maximum towing weight also includes the weight of cargo contained within your truck. If your maximum tow weight is 4,500 lbs, your car weighs 3,000 lbs, trailer weighs 1,000 lbs., and you weigh 200 lbs, you can only carry 300 lbs. of cargo.

Does it have a tow package? Towing definitely puts additional strain on your engine, transmission, differential, suspension and brakes. If the vehicle you're interested in has an available tow package (transmission cooler, larger radiators) I would recommend it. It will help improve the durability of your tow vehicle.

How big are the brakes? When you're talking brakes, the bigger the better. Better brakes on the tow vehicle help in panic stops, and on long down hill areas. If your tow vehicle did not come with tow hitch and trailer electrics you will need to purchase them.

Time to Hit The Road

Once you've purchased your rig, it's finally time to get the tow vehicle, trailer, and track car on the road. Follow these steps:

- Place your tow vehicle on a level surface and make sure your hitch ball is at the correct height.

- Grease up your hitch ball with trailer hitch grease to prevent binding and overheating.

- Make sure the trailer nose is high enough to clear the ball hitch. If you don't have someone there to help you, here is a link to a nifty device to assist you <http://www.hitch-up-mirror.com/agora/agora.cgi>.

- Lower the trailer onto the hitch ball (with the latch on the trailer in the open position), close the latch and look underneath to see that it is engaged. Make sure you insert your safety pin or lock; carry a back up in case you lose one.

- Attach safety cables in an X fashion, attach breakaway cable for the brakes, and connect the electrics. Make sure the connector for your trailer matches your truck. The tow vehicle's emergency brake should be on; jack up the trailer jack to reduce the abuse the rear suspension of the tow vehicle will take when loading.

- After driving up the ramps, tie down the car using appropriate tow straps and ratchets. Make the straps somewhat tight with some give to them. Make sure the ratchets are in their locked position.

- Tie the tails of the tie straps down so they don't flap around and fray at the end. There are a number of companies that manufacture and sell tie down eyelets for our cars so that we don't have to use D straps to go through our wheels.

- When properly loaded the trailer and the tow vehicle should be level to the ground. Make sure you have a jack (bottle jacks are generally recommended) that is tall enough and strong enough to lift your trailer in case of a flat. Another way to raise your trailer can be found at www.traileraid.com. Also bring lots of extra light bulbs for your trailer. Wheel chocks are a must, and make sure your tool kit contains a tool to remove the lugs on your trailer.

- Before your first long trailering trip (Summit Point or Watkins Glen), I would recommend driving around local roads to get a feel for trailering. When you feel comfortable it is time to try out the highway. Good luck trailering.

Picking the Right Wheel Size

By Larry Herman

Every so often someone asks me "what is the right wheel size for my car?" To that I always respond, "what are you looking to do?" Porsches run the gamut in wheel diameters ranging from 14" on some early cars to 19" on the Boxsters and 997s (Cayennes not withstanding). Changing up a diameter or 2 can have a marked impact on the performance of your car, and maybe not for the better. The trend has been upward for a number of reasons. Larger wheels mean more cooling, can accommodate bigger brakes, and can improve cornering feel and grip. Finally, larger wheels just seem to have that *look*.

The case for larger wheels

First you need to understand the effect of larger wheels, define the goal of any change, and then factor it into the setup of your car. As you increase the diameter of the wheel, keeping the tire diameter the same, the sidewall gets smaller. Increasing the diameter of the wheels impacts tire performance in several ways:

1. It causes the sidewalls to become stiffer, improving tire response. The only connection between the tread of the tire and the wheel is through the sidewall. When you steer, you impart a torque through the wheel into the sidewall, which twists the tire tread towards the direction that you want to go. The stiffer the sidewall, the faster and more positively this happens.
2. It causes the contact patch to change from longer and narrower to wider and shorter. This can make a noticeable improvement in braking. When you load the



Photo: Ken Souser

front tires, they will compress the tread and the contact patch will grow. A wide short patch will grow more than a long narrow patch, improving braking even though the static contact patch may be of similar area.

3. It makes the tire more camber sensitive. This means that the tire has to be held flatter on the road or it will lose grip under cornering. It also means that it will be more sensitive to road imperfections.

Street vs track tires

What are you doing with your car-- street driving, track driving, or racing? Each has its own requirements. For a street car, you want to stay fairly close to what was offered on the car. A plus 1 change (a 1" increase in wheel size while maintaining overall tire diameter) will tighten the tires responses without any negative effects. More than a plus 1 increase may cause a much harsher ride and tram-lining. That is where the tire tends to follow the grooves in the road.

For the track, the goal is to maximize the tire's grip on the track, period. This is where suspension technology and setup have a marked effect on what sizes to run. And there are many factors to consider. The smaller wheel diameter, though not thought of as "performance oriented," will be lighter and allow for faster acceleration. It will also be more compliant and therefore more tolerant of "less than optimal" suspension alignment. These are well suited to the older cars, with their more flexible chassis, and suspensions that do not maintain proper camber throughout their range of travel.

It is all about maximizing your contact patch under cornering load, and a longer narrower patch will work better on cars that cannot maintain proper camber. I used to run 15" wheels on my 84 Carrera race car with great results. The tires had lots of grip and wore very evenly. When I switched to 17" wheels with wider tires (same brand), I only picked up about 4/10s of a second at Summit Point. Not a lot when you consider that I had about 1" wider rubber all around.

Cars with more modern suspensions are better able to keep their tires flat on the track, and so will benefit more from larger wheels with lower profile tires. The stiffer sidewalls will maintain their shape better under greater load, and will ultimately provide more grip. Stiffer sidewalls will also better control the torque produced by the increased accelerative and braking forces from higher horsepower cars. And the larger wheels will allow room for the bigger brakes needed to stop all that.

Take that suspension and put racing springs and shocks on it, and you will keep those tires even flatter on the track. Run a racing alignment with the proper amount of negative camber and they'll work even better. One caveat here is that the larger the wheel, the heavier it will be. Even racing wheels like Fikse and BBS are much lighter in 15" & 16" sizes than they are in 18" & 19". This will have a negative impact on acceleration and unsprung weight, so you may want to give greater consideration to fitting larger wheels on lighter, lower horsepower cars.



Riesentöter Region Porsche Club of America

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Brian Minkin
bminkin1@comcast.net
120 S Bishop Ave
Springfield, PA 19064
610-626-6178 (H)
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162 Yorkshire Way
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215-674-5652 (H)
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tlamont99@comcast.net
120 S Bishop Ave
Springfield, PA 19064
610--626-6178

Membership

Marty Kocse
RTRMembership@verizon.net
3217 Burnham Ct
Center Valley, PA 18034
610-865-0550 (H)
610-216-3355 (cell)

Editor

Maureen Sangiorgio
Got2BFit@aol.com
5246 Fox Meadow Drive
Macungie, PA 18062
484-358-4590

Social

Robin Zelinskie
RobinGZ@comcast.net
644 Store Road
Harleysville, PA 19438
215-256-9357

RTR Marketplatz

Francine Knochenhauer
francinebodo@aol.com
1221 Foal Circle
Warrington, PA 18976
215-343-9464

Historians

Bill & Debbie Cooper
barrett356@comcast.net
1148 St. Finegan Dr
West Chester, PA 19382
610-793-9345 (H)

Web Master

Peter Majka
610-585-1241
rtrwebmaster@shiraz.dynip.com

Chief Instructor

Jack Kramer
1302 New Virginia Rd
Downingtown, PA 19335
jakp993@gmail.com

Community Service

Bill Moffitt
bill.moffitt.iii@smithbarney.com
610-873-8142

Tech

Larry Herman
P911racer@gmail.com
Ambler, PA 19002
215-646-6302

Autocross

Steve McMorn
stevemcmorn@hotmail.com
229 Silverbell Court
West Chester, PA.
610 389 6379

Track

Tom Zaffarano
RTRtrack@aol.com
848 King Rd
Malvern, PA 19355

Track Co-Chair

Michael Andrews
Michael.r.andrews@unisis.com
215-589-5633

Awards

John Heckman
john@grundy.com
552 Deer Lake Circle
Blue Bell, PA 19422
215-680-8468

Safety

Paul Walsack
walsack@comcast.net
625 Cathcart Rd
Blue Bell, PA 19422
610-275-5986 (H)

Rally Master

Dennis Angelisanti
dla109@nni.com

Registrar

Carol Kramer
1302 New Virginia Rd
Downingtown, PA 19335
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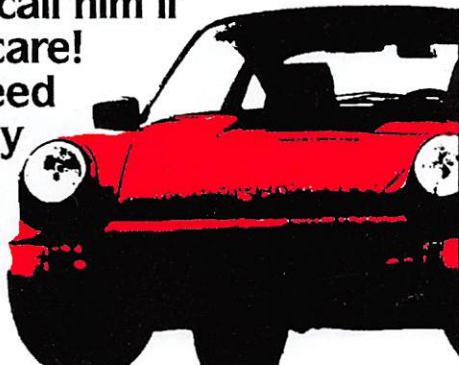
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