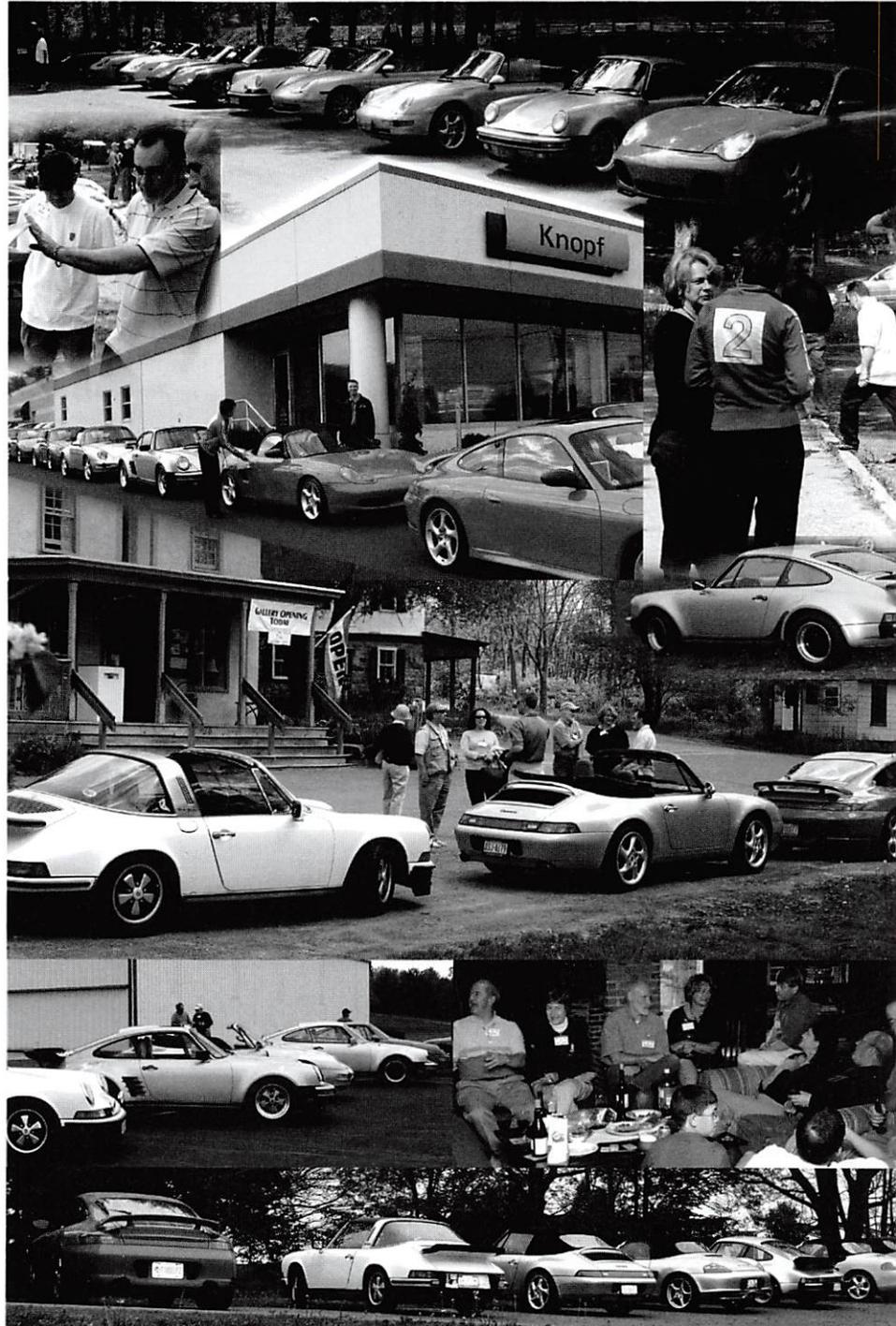


„der Gasser“

Juni 2006

**Stonebridge
VII
May 13-14**



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Upcoming Events:

- June 24 DE @ Jefferson
- June 25 DE @ Shenandoah
- June 28 Member's Meeting - Don Rosen Porsche
- June 28 Mail Registration opens for Summit Point DE
- July 2 AutoX Valley Forge Convention Center
- July 15 Tech @ Brandywine Porsche
- July 19 Member's Meeting - Performance Automotive
- July 22 Mail Registration opens for PoconoMAW DE
- July 28-30 DE @ Watkins Glen
- Aug 10 Mail Registration closes for Summit Point DE
- Aug 12 Tech @ Don Rosen Porsche
- Aug 20 RTR Family Picnic 12-5 Ridley Creek Park
- Aug 24-25 DE @ Summit Point
- Sept 3 AutoX Valley Forge Convention Center

On the cover:

Stonebridge VII

Photographer: Ken Souser

„der Gasser“ is published with the goal of being in members' hands on the 15th of the month. Editorial policy is to print as much locally produced material as possible. If we don't get it into this month's issue, we will try next issue or the issue after. Please include SASE if return is required. All material for print should be received by the Editor by the 25th of the month prior to the issue it is to appear. Copy material in electronic format is required although photos may be sent for scanning. Editorial contributions and pictures are welcomed. Address changes should be sent to both the Membership Chair & National. If you are having problems receiving „der Gasser“, contact the membership Chairperson. Classified ads are free to PCA members and are printed on a space-available basis. Ads may be mailed, e-mailed, or faxed to the Editor, are limited to auto-related items, and are subject to editing. Pictures of items may also be printed. Please send with e-mail or via U.S. Postal Service. Contact Editor for Commercial Advertising Rates. „der Gasser“ is the official monthly publication of Riesentöter Region, Porsche Club of America. Ideas, opinions, suggestions, etc. are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Riesentöter Region PCA. „der Gasser“ is published to time a year, monthly with combined January-February and November-December issues.

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

State of the Region

Tom Zaffarano, RTR President

This organization continues to amaze me....

Just days before our Pocono DE event, Fred Bonsall the father of the Snidely Trek to the Track and Mike Andrews the godfather of our track program and currently the Track Chairman were hospitalized.

Without missing a beat Club members mobilized and both programs went as scheduled.

Special thanks need to go out to all the participants of the Snidely and Drivers Education program for pitching in wherever needed and to the following:

Brian Smith

Carol Kramer

Terry and Brian Minkin

Rick Owens

and Jim Zelinskie

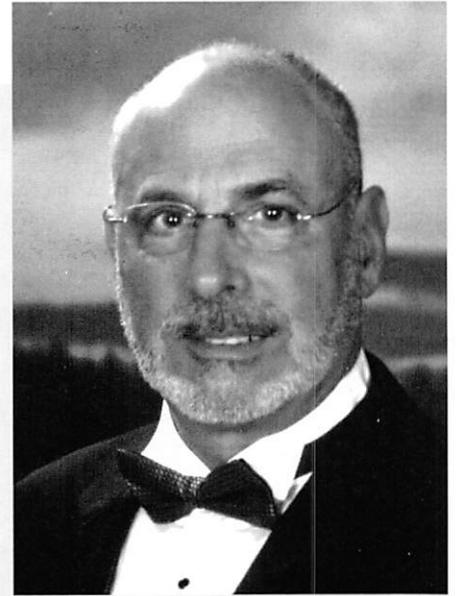
for filling in the leadership positions that made the event such a success.

Mike and Fred are now home continuing their recoveries.

This organization continues to amaze me....

Keep up the pace....

Tom Zaffarano



Reserve

the Date!

Robin Zelinskie, RTR Social Chair

Riesentöter

Family

Picnic

Sunday 20 August
12-5p

@ Riddley Creek State
Park, Pavilion #8

More details to follow, watch the
website - www.rtr-pca.org - and
der Gasser!



The adventure of a lifetime starts here.

Pre-Owned Inventory

- '99 Boxster, 5 Speed, Black/Black
- '01 Boxster, Tiptronic, Dark Green/Beige
- '01 911 Carrera, 6 Speed, Silver/Black
- '02 911 Carrera Targa, 6 Speed, Silver/Black
- '02 911 Carrera 2 Cabriolet, Tiptronic, Silver/Blue
- '03 Boxster, 5 Speed, Silver/Black
- '05 Boxster, 5 Speed, Silver/Grey

New Inventory Sample

- '06 Cayenne S, Tiptronic, Carmon Red/Beige
- '06 Carrera 4S Cabriolet, 6 Speed, Red/Beige
- '06 Cayman S, 6 Speed, Silver/Black
- '06 Cayman S, 6 Speed, Black/Black
- '06 Boxster S, 6 Speed, Yellow/Black



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Past, Present & Future

Membership Meeting News

Jeff Haas, RTR Vice President

Hi Gang,

Well, we are off and running. Brian and Terry Minkin hosted the years 1st "Not only for New Member - New Member Breakfast" at the Bob Evans Restaurant in Bensalem. On Saturday, March 25th, we will held our annual "Super Tech" at Dougherty Automotive in West Chester. Approximately 80 club members attended the event to get a primer on the RTR track program, find out about the latest in track car safety equipment and mingle with the track veterans. Instructors attending the event participated in an annual pre-track roundtable discussion. And, many of us took the opportunity to purchase new safety equipment. Bill Dougherty and Bill for

well over 150 new and veteran members attending the event. Several of the club's volunteer committee chairpersons were on hand to discuss the club's activities and offerings to it's membership. The success of any club depends on active participation by it's members. We actively encourage all members to volunteer in some manner. Holbert was on hand to discuss past racing events. Roger... as well as other...cono Drive... as held, and as... and Blue instructional... sold-out as has the pop... annual "Snidely Whiplash Trek... Track. Thank you Vince, John and Bob for a great evening.

Juni brings a very busy calendar of events. Aside from the monthly Membership Meeting on Wednesday, Juni 29th at Brandywine Porsche, we will be preparing for our first track event of the season. Beginning Saturday, Juni 15th, we have our Tech Session for Shenandoah DE at Holbert's. The Shenandoah DE is Satur-

day and Sunday, Juni 29th and Juni 30th. And, let's not forget our 2nd "Not Only for New Member - New Member Breakfast" added benefit to our caravan will be a daytrip to Hershey, PA for a Porshe Only Swap Meet, an event must event if you are a die-hard Porshe owner.

May will bring us our 2nd Tech Session on Saturday, May 6th at Dougherty Automotive in West Chester. Dyno Day at AWE in Willow Grove on Saturday, May 13th. Our 2nd Driver's Ed Track Event at Pocono, May 19th thru 21st. Our 1st Auto-Cross at Scanticon Center on Sunday, May 28th. And, we wrap-up the month with our Membership Meeting at CJ Tires in Limerick on Wednesday, May 31st.

Mark your calendars now!

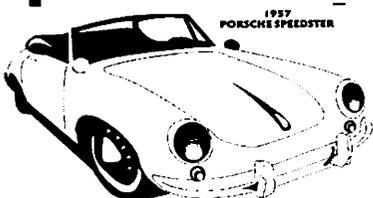
See you there.

The annual swap meeting was held at... in Warrington, PA. The meeting was our annual "New Members Meeting" where we welcome those who have recently joined our club. It was no surprise to again meet and greet

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Membership News

Brian Minkin, RTR Membership Chair

Today was the first 90+-degree day of 2006 and tomorrow is the day to register for the Watkins Glen DE. Both are benchmarks signifying that the RTR season is in full swing. I have hosted 4 new members breakfasts so far this year and met many new members who I have continued to greet at many other events. I have been to meetings, DE's, Autocross, and Tech Sessions this year and am happy to see that many of the new members who have joined Terry and I for the Not Just For New Members Breakfasts enjoying the many other events the club offers its members.

On Sunday May 7th, 9 members old and new joined us for breakfast at the Quaker-town Family Restaurant. As we waited in the parking lot we started talking to the occupants of a 944 as they headed past us into the restaurant. We learned they were not RTR members attending our breakfast but simply Porsche owners out for a bite to eat. Of course we told them all about the club, and we hope we persuaded them to join and will see them at one of our events as members. Thanks to all the other members who helped with the sales pitch. The lucky winner of the guaranteed green slot at the Jefferson/Shenandoah DE event being held in June was Tom Barfield. Our thanks go

out to Jim and Maureen Sangiorgio, Marty Kocse, Steve Mankowski, Rob and Gerry Pandoleon, Steve McMorn, Tom Barfield and Sonja Lengel for helping to make this another fun breakfast event.

The Not Just For New Members Breakfast will take a new course in July. I will host a Members Gathering on Sunday July the 2nd at the RTR Autocross at the Scanticon Center in King of Prussia. The Autocross is a great place for spectators to become acquainted with this fun event. I will greet the group at 10:00 AM in the lower parking lot. Your job is to find car #877 (clue # 1 - its red) which will be parked in the spectator area. Once the group has gathered I will explain how the event works and then you will have a great time watching your fellow members having fun with their P-Cars. Folding chairs are highly recommended for your viewing comfort. After the morning run group has finished we will hold a drawing for a guaranteed slot in the green group at the Drivers Ed August 24th and 25th at Summit Point Motorsports Park. Members participating in the Autocross who have not attended an RTR DE are also eligible to enter the drawing. The

award is for a guaranteed slot only and registration and entry fee are the responsibility of the member who wins the drawing. Those who wish to stay for lunch may order from Chez WAWA or better yet pack a picnic basket and bring it with you.

Plans for the return of the New Hope Auto Show have finally been announced. Although they will not be working with any car clubs to obtain entrants they have included Porsche as one of the marques that will compete in their own concourse group. The number of cars is limited so if you want to show your car in the New Hope Auto Show on August 13th go to their web site www.newhopeautoshow.com and follow the registration instructions. Since no registration form has been created, to create a "Make shift" registration print the pages from the web site, mark choices with a circle, write up your description, add photos, a payment check, and then mail it to the New Hope Auto Show. They hope to have an online form up shortly. Watch the July issue of Dergasser for caravan plans to the New Hope Auto Show.

2005
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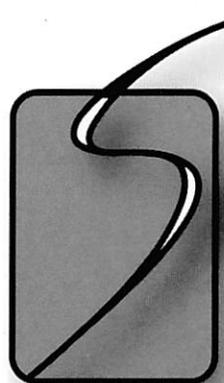
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Stonebridge VII, May 13-14 2006

Ken Souser, RTR

The rain held off and the sky cleared for a beautiful day in May. After having a sumptuous breakfast, provided by Knopf Automotive in Allentown, the participants of the seventh annual spring weekend caravan, led by "Tripmeister" Ken Souser, hit the road in twelve Porsches. The trip took wonderfully curving roads through the Delaware River Recreational Park and Pocono Mountains. As one participant put it; "...a 'spirited' ride on a German bullet train".

Torte Knox, an elegant gourmet restaurant in a restored bank building in Hawley, was

the stopping point for lunch. Sheelah Kaye-Stepkin the chef/owner provided a tasty lunch specially prepared for the group.

After lunch, the gang hit the mountain roads again. The next stop was a private airport in Cold Spring where the Porsches were allowed to take their drivers for some high speed runs on the runway. Weeee! Lots of smiles.

More curvy roads and an arrival at the Stone Bridge Inn where "happy time" ensued. The travelers gathered together in

the comfortable lounge to share snacks, beverages, and conversation with new-found friends; a good time was had by all.

A hearty dinner and more stimulating conversation was the next order of business before all retired, weary, after a full day of fun.

On Sunday, after a leisurely continental breakfast, a trip back home on more Porsche friendly byways was the order of the day.

Memorial Day Autocross

Patrick Wayman, RTR AutoX Chairman

Autocross continues to amaze me. A lot is required to attend: preparing the car the week before, waking up event day at 5:30 a.m. when the rest of the world is sleeping, shagging cones in the hot sun - all for six :45 second "shots" of adrenaline. If you attended, you probably agree that the trade-off is well worth the time and effort.

This was our largest course yet. Based on some rough math, we suspect the course was approximately 1/3 of a mile long. The course rewarded those who looked ahead and were patient in the slow sections. Attempting to scream through the first tight left-hander resulted in abused front tires and slow times. Course times ranged from the :40s to :50s depending on car & driver.

As always, the event brought wonderful participants and automobiles: old and new Lotuses, a Lamborghini, a handful of M3s, track Porsches, street driven Porsches and my personal favorite: a vintage El Camino with a NASCAR motor

(and you thought the Cayman was cool). Milla Racing sponsored the event. Great guys and an excellent resource for aftermarket performance and safety parts. Without sponsorship support, we could not run

these events.

————> www.millaracing.com <————
To those who shared the day with us, THANK YOU! We hope to see you at our next event in July. Until then, be well.

Results:			
Fastest Times of the Day	Patrick Wayman	996 Turbo	40.44
	Jack Banha	Lotus 7	40.50
	John Banha	VW Rabbit	41.49
	Bob Turgeon	993	41.81
	Greg Lepore	914/6	42.04
Class A	Patrick Wayman	996 Turbo	40.44
	Greg Lepore	914/6	42.04
	Josette Donatelli	914/6	43.03
Class B	Darren Mingus	996	42.69
	Matthew Bookler		43.16
Class C	Rick Corsaro	996 C4S	44.67
	Michael Thomas	911 Carrera	44.68
	Marty Koese	996	44.79
Class D	Bob Turgeon	993	41.81
	Brian Minkin	911 SC Euro	44.08
	Dave Coughlin	944 Turbo	44.12
Class F	Brian Tobin	Boxster	45.27
	Jim Zelinski	911 Carrera Cab	45.65
	Ben Thomson	944 Turbo	46.41
Class G	Chris Conroy	911 SC	46.36
	Mark Conroy	911 SC	47.35
	Karl Werner	911 SC	49.38
Class H	John Innaurato	914GT	57.05
Class E	Jeff Hunter	Boxster	45.44
Class J	Dion Ronio	914/4	49.88
Class X	Jack Banha	Lotus Super 7	40.50
	John Banha	VW Rabbit	41.49
	Andre Downey	Subaru WRX	43.72

Rainbows, a Stunt Bi-plane, and Driver's Ed @ Pocono

John Floyd, RTR

Not having participated in Driver's Ed since 2005, as I turned off Route 115 I had forgotten the sheer magnitude of Pocono Raceway. On the left side of the road leading to the track every telephone pole - and there are a lot of them - flew an American flag while the right side of the road is neatly landscaped and lined with uniformly trimmed arborvitae. Making a right onto Dale Earnhardt Drive and driving under the huge Pocono NASCAR sign with the numbers 12, 21, 11, & 17 arcing across the entrance - shorthand ID's of the "rockstar" drivers, everything is themed in the colors of the checkered flag - black and white. As I sat in line to sign in at the guardhouse (black & white) to my right was a meticulously landscaped plot containing more trimmed arborvitae alternating with what looked like geraniums and surrounded by a single newly painted white chain. It was then I noticed the signs hanging from the chain - DANGER - heliport - stay out!

- a reminder of the potential bloodsport that takes place here. After signing in, I drove past the traffic light signaling green, through the one lane tunnel, and emerged facing a grandstand that is over a half mile long, again in black and white. When the NASCAR 500 race is held at Pocono, the population here is the 3rd largest in Pennsylvania after Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Hence the need for "Long John", the largest toilet facility in racing, able to accommodate 1000 people at a time. As I took the left towards the black and white paddocks

I noticed what looked like huge chunks of coal 3 or 4 feet high with numbers painted on them, more shorthand ID's of drivers. Finding an empty paddock, I pulled in and started unloading my car. This was on Friday, RTR's "open track" day for the Red, Black, & White run groups. Unlike the Driver's Ed days, with scheduled sessions for Red through Green Run groups, open track is just that. You can drive as long as the track is open (it closes for lunch). This

day was different because the DE instructors and candidates were being PCA certified (more about that in another article). So open track would be for 45 minutes, then the instructors and candidates would be on the track for 45 minutes. This schedule alternated until 3:30, when the track remained opened until 6 PM. The weather at Pocono reminds me of Ireland - if you don't like it, wait, because it will change in 20 minutes. When I was ready to drive, I was grateful that the rain gods were dumping a lot of precipitation because it kept all the "big dogs" with track tires in the paddock, giving me the chance to reacquaint myself with the 5_ turns of Pocono's North course. I knew my left arm would be getting a lot of exercise this weekend giving "point-by's" or the passing signal. Earl Macomber, RTR member and instructor



Bruce Brodowski, and John Phillips all drive late 70's and early 80's 911's - the SC's (and thus these guys are my heroes). Next is the Black Group, some of whom are instructors, and most of whom also drive the faster cars. 2 early vintage cars in Black are Fred Brubaker's 1969 911, and Brian Minkin's 1982 SC. The only thing original about either of those cars is the designated year. White is the next level, consisting of



drivers who have demonstrated the ability and skill level to drive unaccompanied by an instructor. When people hear that DE is held on race tracks like Watkins Glen and Pocono, they incorrectly assume that we are racing. As stated in the Driver's Log Book that each student driver in Green and Blue receives, the purpose of PCA's Driver Ed Program is "to provide a safe, structured and controlled teaching and learning environment. Participants will experience first-hand the capabilities of high-performance

(and an SC driver) was willing to accompany me on my first run, which helped the learning curve tremendously. Everybody kept saying that my coming back would be like riding a bicycle, and they were right, except my SC was slower. For those unfamiliar with DE, the run groups are tiered by color. The Red group, all of whom are instructors, have demonstrated the highest level of driving skill and typically have the fastest cars, although John Heckman,

automobiles in a controlled, closed-course environment and acquire skills that will enhance safer vehicle operation in all driving situations. PCA DE events are not racing, preparation for racing, nor a competition of any kind". Students in the Blue and Green (novice) groups are initially accompanied by instructors. As I expected, the more the track dried out, the

cont'd on p. 11



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Snidely Participant to Snidely Assistant in 6 years

Terry Minkin, RTR Secretary (and Assistant to Snidely)

The date is May 27, 2000 when my significant other, Brian Minkin, and I set out for the first Annual Snidely Whiplash Trek to the Track for the Faint of Heart. Although the day was cold and wet, we had a fantastic time learning all that goes on at a DE event.

Fast forward now to May 20, 2006. Six years later and Brian and I are married, and that fateful Snidely day has turned my husband into what we fondly call a track junkie. So when fellow exec member Fred Bonsall, aka Snidely, asked for someone to take over the Snidely duties, when he had unexpected hip surgery, I volunteered. Since Brian was a participant in the DE event, I was already at the track the day before the Snidely day.

Tom Fitzpatrick and Ken Souser were kind enough to lead the trekkers from the Charcoal Drive Inn in Allentown, and from Otto's Restaurant in Horsham. The weather was cold and windy, but fortunately the rains from the day before had stopped. 13 cars still braved the cold, windy

weather and arrived at Pocono Saturday morning. The day began with registration, where each trekker received an armband. Tom Zaffarano gave a presentation on the Pocono facility and Francine Knochenhauer sold some of the trekker's tee shirts and hats from The RTR Marketplatz. The group then proceeded down to Pit Out (this is the section of the track where the drivers stage prior to entering the track) where they were assigned to flag stations and had an up close view of the cars on the track while learning all about flagging. Lunch at Chez Pocono Snack bar was followed by a trip to the classroom, where instructor Jim Zelinskie gave an extremely informative presentation on the fundamentals of high speed driving and introduced Carol Reynolds, one of our female instructors (yes, we have an active group of female drivers and instructors). My ever-helpful hubby, Brian, then gave the participants an overview of a track tech inspection. This was followed by free time, which allowed time for Tom Branoff, our friendly, helpful track photographer, to take a group picture of the Snidely participants. Finally the time

that all had been waiting for arrived. The Snidely drivers took an instructor for a few parade laps around the track. Then they returned to pit out and switched into the instructors cars, where the instructors gave them a birds eye view of what high speed driving is like. The comments I received when they returned from their ride proved they had a fantastic time. One participant told me "It was the ride of a lifetime". The day ended with The Snidely group joining the DE participants in a pizza party at the track.

My thanks go out to everyone in the Snidely group who attended, to the instructors and organizers of the track event, and to my many helpers who helped me make this a very memorable day for the Snidely participants. Special thanks to Fred Bonsall, for all the great work he did in advance, that allowed me to jump in with both feet and try to fill his shoes. Hope I made you proud Fred.

Stay tuned next month for an update from Snidely himself.



PCA High Performance Instructor Training

John Floyd, RTR

Having progressed slowly through the Green and Blue tiers of Driver's Ed, I've always admired the instructors willing to entrust their lives to me. And as I see newbies coming on the track in higher horsepower cars such as turbo's, GT3's, and 996's, my admiration for these folks continues to grow. Until recently, Driver's Ed (DE) instructors were trained by the individual regions. We Riesentoter members have benefited by belonging to a region preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. This almost half-century existence has enabled our DE instructors to continually refine their training program to the point where the RTR instructor training is recognized as one of the top in the country. The training has now become formalized with National sponsoring PCA High Performance Instructor Certification, to insure a high level of standard instruction across the instructor core. If RTR students participate in other regions' DE events, they should find a consistency of instruction. I had the privilege to sit in on some of the national certification training our own Jack Kramer conducted at Pocono raceway. While this certification is not mandatory, of RTR's 56 active instructors, 37 have already been through the certification program. Of the 15 attendees at this session, 9 were current instructors training for certification and because of their experience were designated mentors, while the other 6 were candidates. This certification is not a "slam dunk" - candidates have gone through the training and not been certified. Jack stated emphatically that this program tests the instructors not as drivers but as teachers. The training sessions started at 8:00 AM, concluded at 3:30PM, and as an ex-teacher I was greatly impressed by both content and procedure as the training combined classroom with on-track roleplaying. Jack began the classroom session by presenting an overview of the day's schedule; he then asked each attendee to introduce him/herself. Jack discussed instructor attributes, the importance of a positive attitude, professionalism on and off the track, the logistics of meeting with one's student, recommended hardware for in-car communication while on the track, how to continue developing one's skills, how to continue learning new cars and technologies, and the use of one's colleagues' experiences as a resource - all of which elicited a lively exchange among

participants. He also stressed the importance of feedback to help continue learning - feedback from one's student, feedback from other instructors, and feedback from the chief instructor. Also included in this session was the assessment interview which was described as the most valuable 5 minutes of the day. This is when the instructor first meets the student - a time that enables the instructor to assess the student's preparation, prior knowledge and experience, the instructor's evaluation of the car's safety equipment, and the student's knowledge of the schedule. The last step at this stage is what the instructor will be doing with the student - the vocabulary of terms, hand signals, where they will meet for the student's run group, and goals for that track session. At this point each candidate teamed with a mentor and the role playing was about to begin. The mentor was to demonstrate the 5 minute interview (before entering the car). The next step was to explain the staging orientation where proper seat and hand position, emergency procedures and hand signals were discussed. Then there was a 2 lap orientation ride to identify flag stations, run-off areas, and general track layout. After the 2 lap orientation the mentor described the methods of instruction and topics that will be discussed in the classroom, such as the line, mirrors, and passing.

It was then back to the classroom for a discussion on how to teach and how adults learn. The starting point is the student's level of competency, best demonstrated by the typical performance in each run group. I found DE to be one of the most humbling experiences of my life. As a salesman, I've put in a lot of windshield time on most of the major roads on the east coast. High speed driving on the Long Island Expressway, the Baltimore & Washington Beltways, the Garden State Parkway through the Oranges, Route 128 around Boston, Route 440 North in Atlanta - how much tougher can DE be? Think back to when you learned how to drive - DE is analogous. Green drivers are unconscious and incompetent to the techniques and nuances of high speed driving. Before you "Greenies" get your knickers in a twist with this description, consider everything that is involved in correctly driving the line - turning in at the optimum point to hit the apex of the turn, and then track-

ing out correctly, looking down the track for the next turn in point, entering the braking zone correctly while keeping the car settled, and doing this consistently through every turn for every lap, let alone at high speeds and in traffic. For most of us this can be total information overload. Blue Drivers are Conscious and Incompetent. They have learned the basics; now it's a matter of improving technique and execution, still with an instructor in the car. The White Group is Conscious - Competent because they have demonstrated the ability to execute the proper techniques to the satisfaction of the instructors and are now soloing, and at increasingly higher speeds. Finally, the Black & Red Group is described as Unconscious - Competent. Like the seasoned driver on the street, their actions are automatic - they don't have to think how close to the edge of the road they are or that they have to upshift or downshift. Jack's presentation on the process of learning was very comprehensive. He explained the laws of learning (readiness, exercise, effect, accuracy, intensity and recency). He discussed the learning curve and how one will initially experience rapid early development, then plateau, then experience regression. The optimum is slow but steady improvement in progressively smaller steps. His discussion of the 4 learning styles - of which each person is a unique combination, with one style generally dominant, was quite interesting. Some learn by doing, others by thinking and understanding, others by experiencing the "process" and others by watching and listening. And lastly he explained the barriers to learning - some of which include fear, stress and anxiety, and overconfidence and impatience. The program then continued with the discussion of teaching skills and methods. Topics covered were vision, communication, the demonstration drive, situational control, and techniques. With the end of this classroom session it was back to the track, where the roleplaying continued. This time the candidate instructed the entire session and the mentor played a first time novice student. If a certain process or point needed to be made, the mentor would suspend roleplaying to make that point, and then continue back in role.

The next classroom session was devoted to teaching content for the Green and Blue drivers. Discussed were the benchmarks

required for a Green student to advance to Blue and the Blue student to advance to White. Again it was back to the track for continued roleplaying. The candidate continued as instructor and the mentor continued as the first time novice student. Session 4 in the classroom covered the instructor's debriefing the student, which takes place after they finish each session, and the critiquing of the student. Jack explained the qualities of a critique and the critique process, noting that it should be a balance of praise on what the student did well as well as what needs to be further worked on. Goal setting was covered, with the explanation that it should be a collaborative process between instructor and student for each run session. What obstacles to learning, if any, the student encountered, and the re-evaluation of the goal(s) after each run session - what worked and what didn't. In the last part of the classroom session, Jack explained the instructor procedures, starting with the schedule and student assignments. He then covered the instructor meeting that takes place at the track while the rest of us are attending the driver's meeting (I've often wondered why there are occasional bursts of raucous laughter at these meetings). Other topics included the student "meet and greet", what is required for a student to be signed off to solo, what is required to graduate to the next run group, what is covered in the green and blue students' Driver Log Books, and then Jack opened up the floor for questions. The final on-track session had a different wrinkle. This time a different mentor acted as the novice, driving the car for the full session while the candidate gave instruction. This "new" mentor performed the evaluation, which was then returned to Jack Kramer - hopefully for certification.

As I reviewed this certification process, there were a number of RTR instructors that I had while in Green and Blue that immediately came to mind. In fact, it was as if they had written the chapters found in the PCA Instructor syllabus. In the few events that I've attended outside of Riesentoter, I was always complimented by that region's instructors on my techniques - compliments that really belong to the quality of instruction that I was the beneficiary of at RTR. The men and women who donate their time in helping us improve our driving techniques, who make our DE events safer, who teach us skills that we can use in our everyday driving deserve our gratitude. Please be sure to thank them.

cont'd from p. 7

more exercise my left arm got. Saturday and Sunday were the scheduled Driver's Ed events, and 107 drivers registered to participate- 25 in Red, 23 in Black, 20 in White, 19 in Blue, and 20 in Green. On Saturday the day began with 7:00 AM registration. It reminded me of when I was younger and trying to get into a bar. Mark Reynolds was "carding" at the door, checking that the drivers all had valid licenses. You were then greeted by the registration ladies (Carol Reynolds, Josette Donatelli, and Carol Kramer) who checked helmets for the approved SA year (helmets must have a tag indicating that they were manufactured in 2000 or newer). They affixed a RTR sticker to your helmet, and have you sign the appropriate run group roster. You then receive a wristband the color of your run group (with the exception of white, who for some reason receive a fluorescent orange band). From there you take your car to Grid Tech, where David Ehm and his merry torquesters perform an 11 point mechanical check of your car, which includes torquing of lug nuts. Should your car not pass, you are not allowed on the track until the defect is corrected. At 8:00 was the drivers' meeting, presided over by RTR president Tom Zaffarano, who described the day's schedule and then introduced the chief Pocono flag guy, who demonstrated each of the flags. At 8:45 the Green students had a classroom session, and the Run Groups began. In typical Pocono fashion the day started sunny, but it doesn't pay to expect the weather to last. With the Club's emphasis on safety and education there were scheduled classroom sessions for Green, Green and Blue, and White on Saturday and Sunday. After the track closed Saturday, there was the traditional feeding frenzy of pizzas which were arranged by flavor on either side of a trailer in the paddock. It's a good thing some people don't drive as fast as they eat.

In the Marbles...(for those unfamiliar with the term, "marbles", also poetically known as "tire boogers", are bits of debris that accumulate at the edge of the racetrack. You want to stay out of the marbles, as they can affect the car's traction and handling).

Conspicuous by His Absence - Mike Andrews' presence was greatly missed this weekend, especially with his "Welcome to your new addiction!" greeting to all DE

first-timers ...The John Phillips Sousa Award - to John Phillips, for his aerodynamically positioned ear trumpet exhaust extension...The NASCAR Runoff going into turn #1 saw a LOT of action this weekend, resulting in only 3 very 'down to earth' candidates for The John Deere South 40 Gentleman Farmer Award - Bill Moffitt, Larry Herman, and Jack Kramer - but Jack pulled away with the ploughman's share of turf...Un Casa Grande Couglin - for those that mistakenly thought the 38 foot motor home belonged to John Madden, it housed Mr & Mrs Coughlin, their 2 daughters, a nanny, and a fireplace (and I'm not kidding about the fireplace)...Who's Looking Out for You Irony - that a security guy's battery died and he couldn't start his track car...The Apple Doesn't Fall Far From the Tree - when it comes to tossing bottles into trash cans, it seems that Larry Herman coached son Dan in free throw skills...The Oscar Mayer Culinary Institute Award - to Bill Moffitt for the delicious tube steaks he prepared and shared on Saturday...2001 - A Space Odyssey - shades of HAL - seems that Patrick Wayman's and Carol Reynolds' ABS systems were coming on when they took their feet off the brake pedal. One theory for this malfunction is that the onboard computers have not be correctly reprogrammed to handle the combined 1100 HP of their cars...Dougherty Automotive technicians Jim Booth and Ken McCormick were very busy this weekend performing automotive triage'...IF You Remember the 60's - You Weren't There - an incredibly hallucinogenic rainbow appeared on Saturday as you reached the braking zone going into turn #1. What made this rainbow different was that the color bands were extremely wide and went vertically, with no arc...Why He Gave Up Surgery - Much to the Relief of His Patients Award - to the guy sporting the PCA # 1 license tag. Seems like there was a slight coordination problem when shifting gears...The Red Baron Award - to the stunt pilot in the biplane who flew straight up over the staging area, went into a stall, and then flew off...Rainbow Redux - another rainbow appeared Saturday afternoon, this time a double, showing every color of the spectrum as it arced across the sky...Snidely Tribe - it was fun talking with the Whiplashers as they roamed around the garage awaiting their parade lap. Hope they decide to participate in DE.

To Track or Not to Track

Christopher Mahalick, RTR

I had the opportunity to return to the track this past weekend. Not to drive, mind you, but to visit with some of the best people around. The RTR Drivers Ed folks. Just a fun group that really take their driving seriously. While the conversation was excellent as always, one question kept coming up. "Will you be returning to the track to drive anytime soon"? It sounds like an innocuous enough question, which I should have been able to answer easily enough. But instead, I became the proverbial "deer in the headlights" every time someone asked. Because the fact of the matter is, I am completely undecided at this point. So I answer with a noncommittal series of mumblings befitting a mental patient.

While the five seasons spent on the track will undoubtedly provide me with many great memories for years to come, I just am having trouble with the fact that my Targa is over 20 years old and has over a hundred thousand on the clock. Due to these facts, the bigger question becomes "am I feeling lucky"? As in, how long can I press the car before needing to do some expensive, dirty repairs, which will take the car off the road for an extended period of time?

But then again, it's really fun to take a car out for some "exercise".

And if I do decide to return, I would just like to review some basic rules that they never seem to teach in the DE classroom sessions.

First and foremost, Drivers Education is not racing. There is no money nor trophies to be won. This is supposed to be the au-

tomotive equivalent of a weekend spent on the slopes of your favorite skiing destination. Yet when I arrive at some events, what do I see? I see a bunch of punters arriving with pit crews, and cars that are most likely faster than the WRC cars of just a decade ago. And if that wasn't bad enough, we then are treated to endless stories of brava-do involving these "modern day gladiators" and the speeds they achieve. Which would actually contain a shred of credibility, had these same folks been out on the track doing battle in a legitimate race, competing against equally prepared cars.

A fair comparison would be the "Seinfeld" episode where Kramer goes to the Karate Dojo to compete against a class of ten year olds. So if you are driving an incredibly fast car, you'll have to forgive me if my eyes glaze over in the midst of your describing in excruciatingly painful detail how you lapped the field.

Now on the other hand, should you drive an older car fast (Phillips, Carpenter, Brodowski, Pechstein and Winsor), feel free to pull up a chair for a chat. I'll even buy the beers.

And another thing, while we're at it. I really don't think that my life will be adversely affected should I miss the opportunity to watch the video of yourself driving around the track. And I don't mean to be offensive by saying this, but the reality is that driving is a participant, as opposed to spectator activity. Have you ever visited a friend who insists on showing you all the neat things that his new computer can do? Call me odd, but the thought of standing there watching someone work the mouse for anything

over a minute is tantamount to torture. Of the worst sort. So by all means, enjoy your videos, but don't be surprised that the rest of us have other things to do. Like washing the kitchen floor, or taking out the trash.

Now on to lodging. I know we have discussed this in past columns, but recent events have shed some new light on this old topic. It all boils down to preference. The rented house versus the hotel room. So let's take a look at pros and cons of each. If you get a room at a hotel, your bed will be made by the maid, the bathroom will be cleaned, and fresh linens, soaps and shampoos will be provided on a daily basis. And the process is simple. You make a reservation, check in, and drop your bag in the room, ready to go about your business. And did I mention free HBO and cable?

As for the rented house. It begins with an exhaustive internet search. But once the house is located, the real work begins. Checks must be sent to the owners, keys must be obtained, and housemates determined. Next, you must pack your own sheets and towels. Once you finally get to the house, you are then treated to no toiletries, and the daily task of making the beds. And did I mention that there will only be one bathroom for up to eleven folks? That is most definitely not cleaned on a daily basis. Oooops, did you say you forgot to bring sheets and towels? Well, then add a trip to the store to get them. And when the weekend is over, you have the one guy that paid for the house tracking down the other folks for their share of the rental fees. That they pay for the privilege of sharing a bedroom with a smelly, snoring individual. On

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I guess it's obvious where I stand on this point.

An old rule of thumb states that if you want the best service and best food, come to the restaurant with a group of fifteen to twenty folks. It's a well known fact that wait-staff folks love to hump tables across narrow rooms in order to take orders from belligerent drunken individuals who all like to talk at once. In an overly boisterous manner. Spare me the side of spit with my steak, I'll just head out in groups of four from here on in. 'Nuff said on this subject.

So if it sounds like I am being negative towards the overall track experience, please realize that I really am not. It is still one of the most fun things you can do for a weekend. It's just that over the five years I participated, I saw things go from a bunch of fun folks thrashing their cars around the track, to what is now becoming a haven for the "tweeners". By "tweeners", I am referring to folks that lack the confidence to go

out and race, yet still have the urge to "compete". "Compete" in quotations since it now seems like the real goal here is to go out and buy the fastest car you can, and then brag about how you were passing folks left and right out on the track. With the excuse being "my car just wouldn't be competitive in the racing class I would have to run". Hm-mmm. Should have thought of that one before going hog-wild with the mods.

It's like the big fish in the small pond theory. And if you are comfortable with being just that, then more power to you. I remember when I had just gotten promoted to the Black group. A fellow member approached me and stated that now I was running with "the big dogs". Yet while we were at Jefferson Circuit that day, the SCCA was running a huge race over at the big track. After seeing four Ford Pintos side-by-side dropping into turn five, I realized that the smallest SCCA dog was much bigger than even our biggest DE dog. These guys were taking it out to the extreme. I still to this day look back upon the racing that weekend as being some of the best I have ever seen. By guys in thirty year old domestic garbage cans.

So if you really want to go to the next step in your driving, as well as your "street-cred", it is time for you to race. A bunch of our RTR guys have just started racing in the PCA Club Racing series, joining some RTR veteran racers who have been doing it for years. And the responses I have heard are all really positive. These guys may not be at the top yet, but they are developing driving skills far in advance of those who choose not to race. And racers are also the best instructors. Period. They made the step. They took a gamble.

So where do you want to be? Both sides are fine, but bragging rights are earned, not bought, in this hobby. Would you rather be the guy at the ski lodge in the perfectly matched outfit, who cruises the corduroy all day, or the guy in the duct taped ski pants that just thrashed the frozen falls in the back woods of Mad River Glen?

Either choice is fine. Just as long as you remember where you reside in the food chain.

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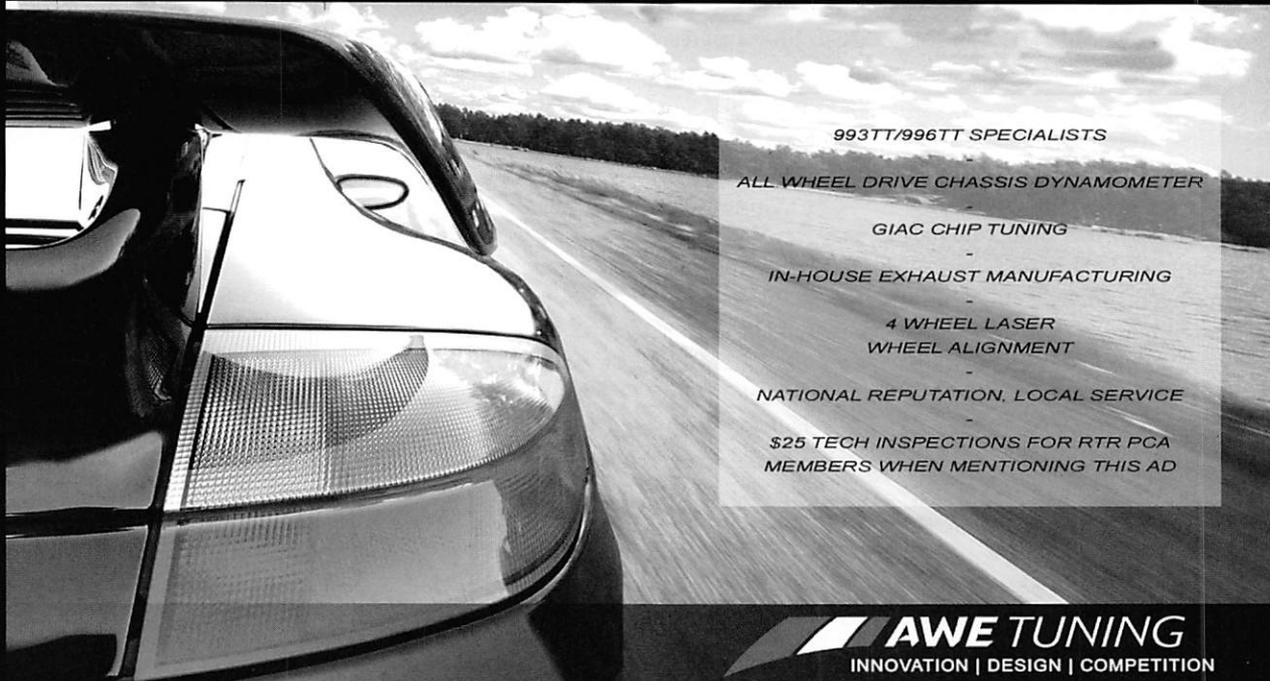
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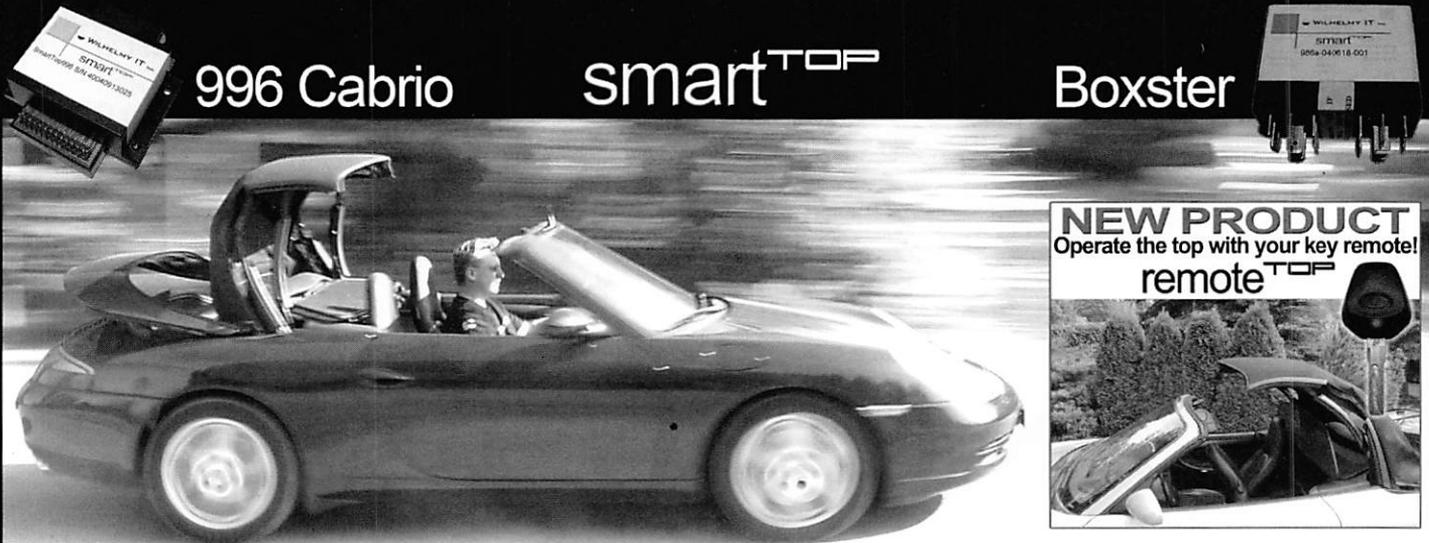


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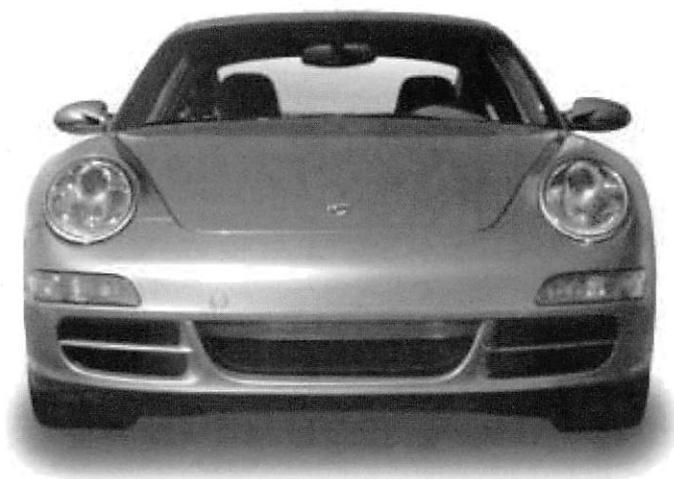
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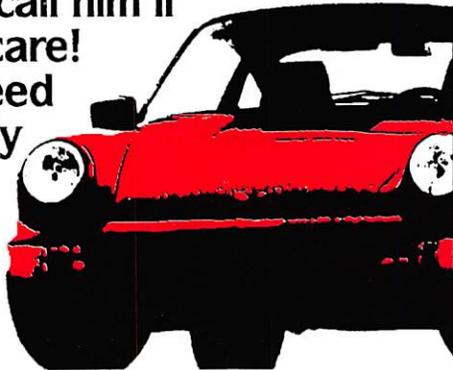
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