



DE students often ask, “what does it take to get promoted to the next run group?” The information that follows describes the basic expectations for each promotion. But a number of caveats apply:

- First, and most importantly, each driver is different with varying levels of past experience, natural ability, focus on improvement and willingness to learn from instruction. As a result, some drivers “move up” much faster than others. Others move up more slowly than others. This is normal in all sports and is especially critical for DE where safety is of paramount importance.
- Run group promotion is determined primarily by input from your instructors. That information is captured in DrivingEvals after each event. At the same time, one instructor’s input is not enough: we look for consistent feedback. If you feel that your driving needs another assessment, please feel free to ask the Chief Instructor to have another instructor and/or a Chief Instructor to ride with you. Promotions from White to Black almost always include one or more Chief Instructor rides and feedback.
- Drivers who are impatient to move up may be focused on the wrong thing. Driving on track requires mental focus, car control techniques (including smoothness and consistency), “forward” vision, track awareness (including managing traffic, observing flags) and courtesy. As a result, drivers who concentrate on technique, as opposed to speed, will progress faster.
- What follows are general criteria that do not capture all aspects of on track driving. They capture many important points but cannot possibly address every individual situation.

Advancement from Green to Yellow Run Group

Drivers new to DE can expect to spend several events in the Green Run group with, or under, observation by an instructor. However, at some events Green and Yellow are combined; at other events, the mix of students may cause an otherwise Green group student to temporarily be moved to Yellow.

To be considered for permanent advancement to the Yellow Run Group, the student must demonstrate that they:

- Know the line and drive it consistently
- Provide smooth inputs for car control (steering, braking, and shifting)
- Drive at an appropriate speed for the run group
- Can identify major mistakes and self-correct
- Have an awareness of flag stations and flag meanings
- Have appropriate reaction to “on track” situations
- Look “through the corners” and well down track
- Keep a safe distance from other cars
- Handle all aspects of passing and being passed in a safe, courteous manner
- Display full knowledge of NNJR safety procedures, flags, and driving terminology
- Exhibit a positive and safe attitude consistent with NNJR’s DE philosophy



Advancement from Yellow to Blue Run Group

Drivers in Yellow are expected to refine their driving skills, increase their confidence and judgment, and learn the next level of techniques (such as heel and toe, etc.) as a pre-requisite to being promoted to Blue. Under normal circumstances, a Yellow student should expect to spend a significant number of events in the Yellow Run group with, or under, observation by an instructor.

To be considered for advancement to the Blue Run Group, the driver must demonstrate that they:

- Drive each lap confidently and consistently on-line
- Exhibit smoothness and good car control
- Use ocular vision to properly and safely negotiate corners
- Understand the benefits of heel and toe braking/downshifting and are able to make smooth downshifts
- Deliberately deviate from the standard line when necessary (late pass, rain line, etc.)
- Demonstrate lap recall - able to remember/discuss specific areas for improvement immediately after a run group session
- Are capable of recognizing how close the car is to its cornering potential for any corner
- In corners, they are one of the faster, yet fully under-control, drivers in the yellow run group
- Exhibit patience, courtesy and maturity when following slower vehicles
- Show good judgment when encountering unexpected events (i.e. debris, incidents, etc.)
- Understand basic problems such as over/understeer, and how to correct them
- Know when PSM and/or other electronic systems are being activated by their driving (if their car is equipped with them)

Advancement from Blue to White Run Group

Drivers in Blue are expected to be capable of driving comfortably at a White run group pace. The primary purpose of the Blue run group is to help a driver get accustomed to the White run group with the assistance of their instructor. The instructor is not expecting to focus on the basics, but rather fine-tuning advice. Under normal circumstances, a Blue student should expect to spend only a small number of events in the Blue Run group with, or under, observation by an instructor.

To be considered for advancement to the White Run Group, the driver must demonstrate that they:

- Drive the line consistently, using the full track
- Brake and accelerate very smoothly
- Have mastered "heel and toe"
- Are no longer dependent on "turn in," "apex," or "track out" cones
- Demonstrate competent car control and recovery skills when needed
- Automatically use proper hand signals and sound judgment during all passing situations, and demonstrate courtesy to other drivers
- Calmly deal with speed differentials within their run group
- Do not rely on PSM or other electronic aids except in emergency situations
- Have a driving record and attitude consistent with NNJR's DE Philosophy



Advancement from White to Black Run Group

Drivers in the Black Run Group are expected to be expert in all the driving skills taught by NNJR and be capable of driving safely in an “expanded passing” group. The experienced Black driver should be indistinguishable from the average driver in the Red Run Group. In fact, some Black Run Group drivers are Instructors who choose to drive in Black to balance run group car counts or because they feel more comfortable with Black run group speeds (“fast”) vs. Red run group speeds (“faster”). White run group drivers seeking advancement to Black need to recognize that while they may be driving almost as fast as drivers in the Black run group, there is another driving dimension to master, and that is judgment, which can only be obtained through “seat time”. Therefore under normal circumstances, drivers should expect to drive in the White group for at least one to two seasons and often more; especially if the driver does a limited number of events each season.

To be considered for advancement to the Black Run Group, drivers must demonstrate that they:

- Are comfortable and capable of driving in an “expanded passing” session.
- Drive the line flawlessly and effortlessly
- Alter their line when and where necessary
- Can demonstrate the “rain line” and understand the concepts of that line
- Provide very smooth inputs at all speeds
- Demonstrate expert vision skills by looking well ahead, continuously scanning down-track for emerging information
- Understand and can carry considerable momentum through corners
- Have mastered trail braking, throttle steer, and heel-and-toe
- Can handle other cars being very close behind and in front, without losing focus
- Drive at a pace appropriate for the run group and are approaching the limits of their car
- Give prompt pass signals with enough lead time that the overtaking car does not have to slow to their speed
- Do not drive on the bumper of slower cars and avoid other aggressive behaviors
- Always drive in a non-aggressive manner and are respectful and courteous to other drivers



Criteria for NNJR Instructors

The NNJR Chief Instructors continuously observe and identify advanced drivers with the potential to become DE instructors based upon their behavior on and off the track, their ability to communicate, and their driving skills.

Candidates are observed prior to being invited to the “Instructor Watch List” as the first step toward becoming an instructor. Most drivers spend at least one to two seasons in the Black (or perhaps Red) run group before being invited to the watch list and often more.

Examples of the characteristics and abilities we are looking for in potential instructors include:

Personality and Character traits

- A “student first” attitude
- Willingness to continuously improve their own driving and instructing skills
- Excellent communications and interpersonal skills
- Treatment of all drivers as peers and with respect
- Willingness to commit to a reasonable number of DE events each season (at least 4)
- A recognition that people learn in different ways
- A mature attitude within the DE environment – maintains composure on and off track

Instructor Driving Skills

- Demonstrates continuous and total awareness of driving environment
- Drives the line effortlessly and consistently with perfect turn-in, apex and track-out points lap after lap
- Demonstrates ability to communicate while driving at Black and/or Red Run Group speed
- Knows the limitations of their car, consistently drives within that limit
- Anticipates and recognizes potential problems with other drivers and cars
- Reacts instantly to abnormal/undesirable car movements