



Watkins Glen I



NNJR “Trackside Classroom”
How to Learn a New Track
August 12, 2020



Porsche Club of America



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Disclaimer

The techniques shown here have been compiled from experienced sources believed to be reliable and to represent the best current opinions on driving on track. But they are advisory only. Driving at speed at Summit Point, or any other track, requires skill, judgment and experience. These techniques assume the reader has high performance driving knowledge and applies them as applicable to their level of driving experience.

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NNJR Agenda



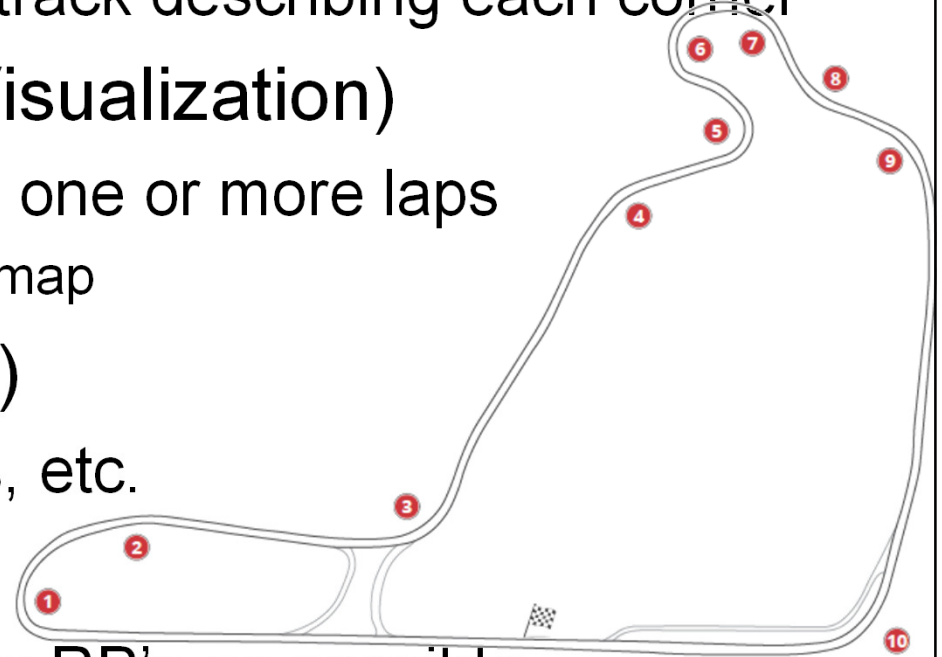
- How to Learn a New Track
 - Pre-Event Preparation
 - Prerequisites
 - Priorities / Sequence
 - Practical Steps
 - Deliberate Practice
- Summit Point
 - Turn by Turn



NNJR Pre-Event Preparation



1. Track Map
 - Test: talk someone around track describing each corner
2. “Mental programming” (Visualization)
 - Close eyes, imagine driving one or more laps
 - Then open eyes, draw the map
3. Turn by Turn (if available)
 - Make notes on map of RP’s, etc.
4. Video
 - Collect & memorize as many RP’s as possible
5. Simulator
 - Goal: consistency



Adapted from: Ross Bentley *How to learn a new track*



NNJR Prerequisites / “Pre Conditioning”



- Be Open Minded
- Trust Yourself—the most
 - Know your risk level
- Have patience and be methodical
 - This is an analytic sport
- Go slow, see a lot—the “visual photo”
 - First day: long, light braking
 - Helps get the right photo
- Avoid the herd mentality and misinformation
- Beware of gurus

--credit to Dennis Macchio, Chief Instructor Bertil Roos





- Learning Priority List (always)
 1. Exit speed
 2. Entry speed
 3. Braking



NNJR Practical Steps



1. Categorize corners
 - Typical: “turn and go”
 - e.g. Turn 1 at Watkins Glen; Summit Point Turn 3 ??
 - Fast (i.e. light braking, minimum trail braking)
 - e.g. Turns 4 and 10
 - Long (lots of trail braking)
 - e.g. Turn 1
 - Compromises (connected corners)
 - e.g. Turns 6 through 9
2. Estimate reference points
 - Start with a single arc, very late apex
3. Start adding items that affect grip
 - Elevation, camber, curbs (?)
4. Re-adjust and repeat

--credit to Dennis Macchio, Chief Instructor Bertil Roos



NNJR Deliberate Practice*



- (Re)Learn the Track
 - Reference Points
 - Track Surface
 - Safety features
- (Re)Learn the Car
 - Brake Application
 - Brake Release
 - Throttle
 - Steering
- (Re)Learn the Traffic
 - Mirrors
 - What Would I Do If?
- Sensory Input
 - Vision
 - Kinesthetics
 - Hearing

* **How you practice is more important than amount**

Do it in a focused way,
With clear goals,
Plan for reaching goals, and
A way to monitor your progress

Sources: Ross Bentley, Speed Secrets Weekly 322 and 370; Talent is Overrated by Geoff Colvin, and Peak. Secrets from the New Science of Expertise by Anders Ericsson and Robert Pool



NNJR Worksheets



Topics for Sensory Input Worksheets
Use these topics with your printed track map

Reference Points

- Not cones!
- Cracks, posts, seams, curbs, etc.
- BOB, TI, EOB, A, TO, in between

Track Surface

- Sealer, color change, etc.
- Elevation
- One new feature per lap

Safety

- How soon/far ahead can I see flag stations?
- Bail out area(s) for each corner
- Which curbs could I drive on? Not?
- Etc.

Brake Application

- Quick and hard enough? Too much?
- Does the car get upset?
- Totally consistent lap to lap?
- Get money in the bank early in the brake zone (Cass Whitehead)
- "On like a lion, off like a lamb" (Pobst)
- Etc.

Brake Release

- Modulating pressure thru brake zone properly?
- Beginning release at the right point?
- Right rate? Slow, medium, fast
- Totally consistent lap to lap?
- Come off the brakes politely (Peter Argetsinger)
- Etc.

Throttle

- Squeezing too soon? Too quickly? Not enough?
 - Pause between brake and gas?
- On floor until brake application?
- How are you using it (vs when)
- Use only the top half? (David Murry)
- Etc.

Steering

- Especially how you unwind on corner exit
- Is turn-in from track edge?
- Is turn-in crisp/flowing or gentle/progressive
 - Both correct, depends on corner
- Etc.

Mirrors

- Adjusted properly?
- How many cars behind?
 - End of back straight?
- Closing speed: is car in mirror closer or further away?
 - What color(s) is/are cars behind?
- Etc.

What Would I Do If

- I smell anti-freeze?
- Car in front swerves under braking?
- Brake pedal soft in middle of traffic entering bus stop? off camber?
- Two fast cars, you give one signal, can't see second one?
- Etc.

Vision

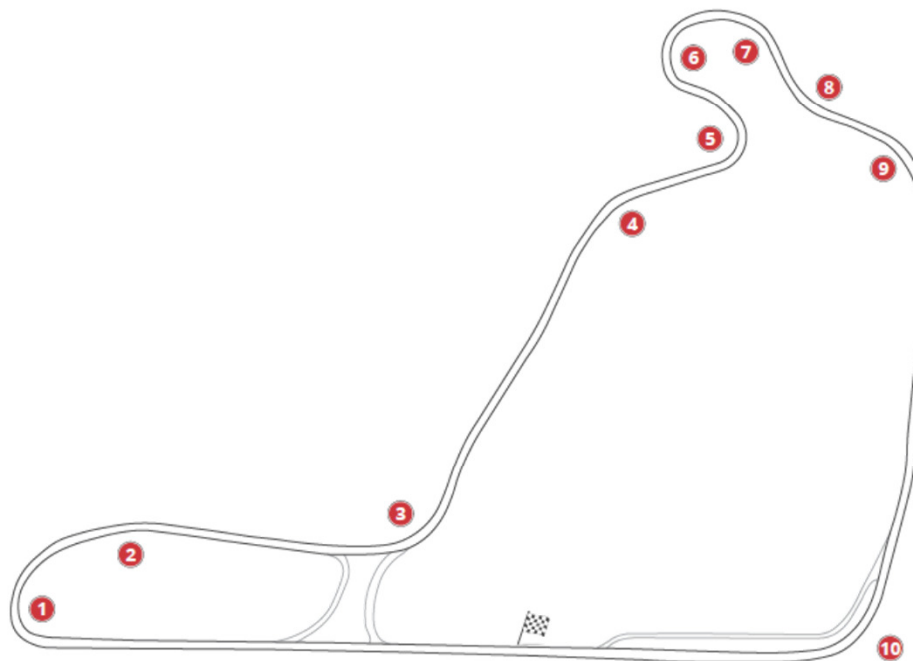
- Everything you can see on and off the track surface
 - Something new each lap
 - e.g. Horizon change during cornering
- How far ahead can you see?
- Etc.

Kinesthetics

- Steering wheel feedback
- How g-loads build; weight transfer
- Feel the track surface
- Etc.

Hearing

- Wind noise, tires, brakes
- Cornering vs. straight
- Different parts of track
- Etc.



Remember: Capture learning right away: in the first 10 minutes

- Write down what you saw, heard, felt
- Before lap times, data, video, socializing



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Slide 9





- Approach as a learning challenge
 - Admit you don't know it all
 - Do not assume “this corner is just like a corner at ...”
 - Get the mental “photo”
- Focus on:
 1. The line: corner exit
 2. The line: corner entry
 3. Braking
- Make adjustments and observe their effect
- Keep it safe!
 - Emphasize learning, not speed





“Ten Secrets to Going Faster”

1. Focus on Technique, not Speed
2. Do the Basics Well
3. Learn Car Control
4. Have an out
5. Warmup
6. Keep a stable platform
7. Focus on Learning, but Fact Check
8. Know what you don't know
9. Drive to Learn
10. Brake lighter, not later

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