

# Trackside Classroom

*Advanced Drivers...How Good Are Your Skills?*



*“The best execution of fundamental skills.”*

*--Peter Krause*

## ***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 Watkins Glen, 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.*

*High-performance driving can be very dangerous, carries inherent risks and may result in injury or death. NNJR and PCA make no warranty, guarantee or representations as to the absolute correctness or sufficiency of any representation contained herein. Nor can it be assumed that all acceptable safety measures are contained herein or that other or additional measures may not be required under particular or exceptional conditions or circumstances.*

*“The advanced stuff is just doing the basics better”*  
-- Ross Bentley

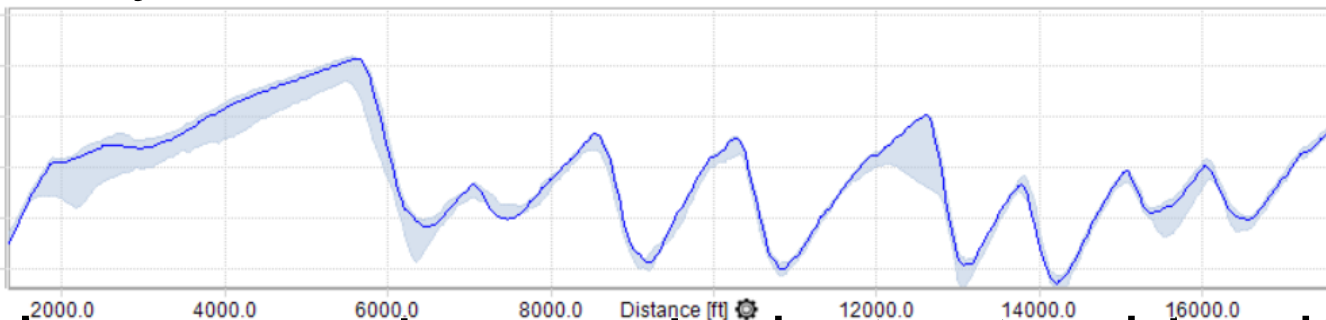
Need a list of skills?

- Review the “Advanced Driver Checklist”
  - <https://nnjr-pca.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Advanced-Driver-Checklist.pdf>
- 1. Driving Skills
- 2. Situational Awareness and Courtesy
- 3. Learning Mindset

- Rate yourself 1 to 5 on each bullet in the checklist
- Prioritize
  - Top 3: the ones I do best
  - Bottom 3: the ones I need to improve the most



- Analyze video/data

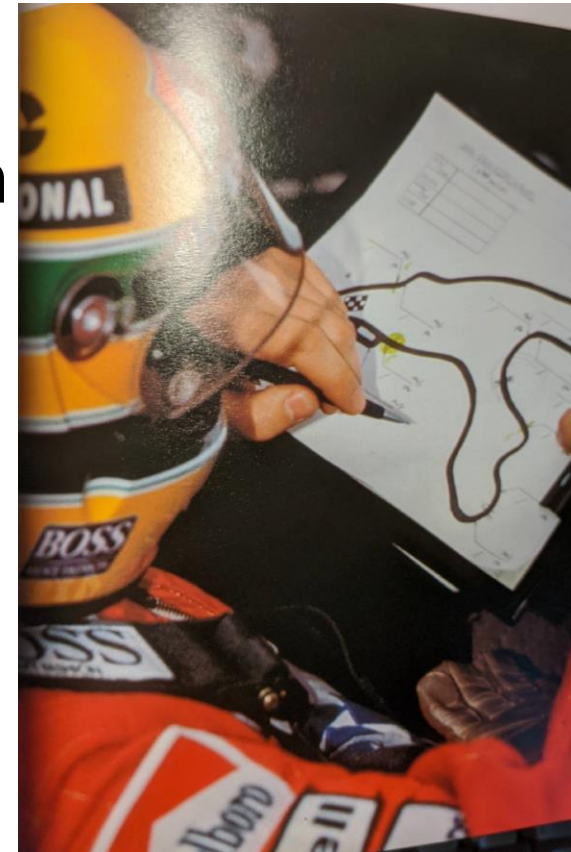


- Have a coach or senior instructor ride with you

# NNJR How to Improve?



- Pick 2 or 3 skills (no more) for focus at an event
- Write down a plan for each
- Dedicate at least one session for each
  - Be sure to debrief immediately after and write down if/how you improved



# NNJR Not Sure Where to Start?



- Focus on Consistency and Vision.
- Don't forget Track Conditions and Safety.

**Tip: Lap time should not be the focus**

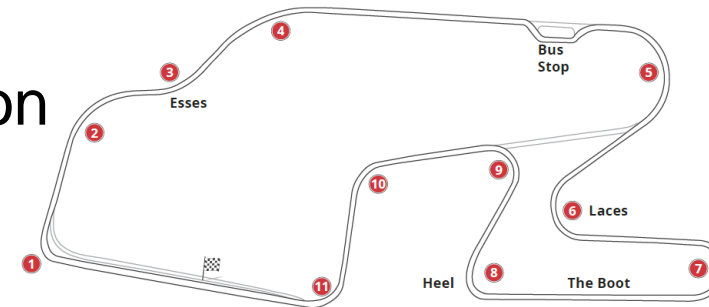


# NNJR Tips and Examples: Vision



- Add reference points for key corners
  - Not just BoB, TI, Apex and TO; add slow point, EOB, TAP, WOT
  - Write them on track map before the session / event
  - Update track map after each session

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- Sensory input session for vision
  - See at least one new item per lap; write them down after





- Do any corners not “feel right?”
- Am I “hitting my marks” every lap (+/- a few inches)?
  - If not, why do I miss?
- Is my exit speed consistent? Entry speed?
  - If not, why not?
- Review segment times: how much do they vary?

0:14.703	0:13.120	0
0:14.463	0:12.761	0
0:13.976	0:12.461	0
0:13.971	0:12.420	0
0:13.785	0:12.457	0
0:13.887	0:12.275	0
0:13.825	0:12.382	0
0:13.953	0:12.631	0
0:13.832	0:12.522	0
0:14.051	0:12.542	0
0:14.179	0:12.458	0
0:17.011	0:15.310	0





- Review track maps and written descriptions before the event
  - Write your own notes
  - Mark up the track map
- Experiment: closer to apex (brush the curb), longer apex, slightly earlier/later.
  - Am I using all of the track at track out?
  - Am I crabbing at turn in?



# NNJR Tips and Examples: Smoothness



- Is my car ever unbalanced?
  - If so, why?
- Rate your control smoothness 1 to 5 for steering, shifting and brake release.
  - Can it be improved?
- In threshold braking, does the car squat down or does it pitch forward?
  - Rate your smoothness 1 to 5 for other brake applications.
- How smooth is my brake release?
  - Can a passenger tell when I move my foot off the brake?
  - Do I vary the rate of release for each corner?



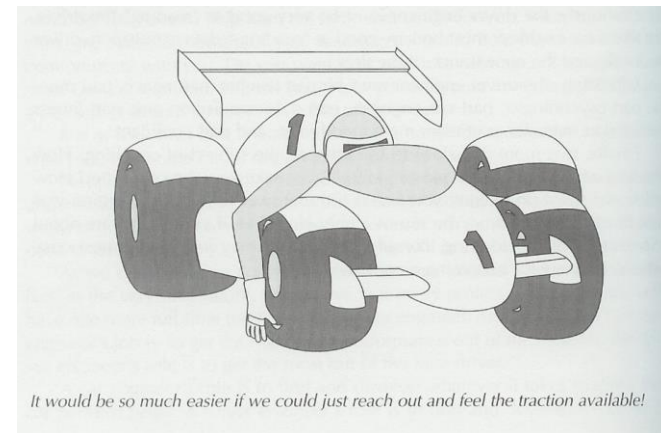
# NNJR Tips and Examples: Pace



- Have I maximized WOT for key corners (i.e. as early as possible)?
  - If yes, have I worked on entry speed?
- Do I use maintenance throttle before the apex in most corners?
  - In most corners, this indicates more entry speed is possible



- When does PSM activate?
  - How can I eliminate activation?
- Do I “feel” the car in corners? Is it “sliding”? Do I steer it with the gas?



- How often do I scan the mirrors? Have I ever been surprised by a car behind?
  - In mirror, do I recognize really fast cars in my group?
  
- Do I anticipate passes (both giving and taking signals)?
  - Have I ever given/taken a late pass? Why?
  - Have I ever chopped off another driver after a pass?
  
- Have I every been accused of aggressive driving?

# NNJR Tips: Track Conditions & Safety



- What is my “checklist” during a warm-up lap?
  - Flag stations, run-off areas, pull-offs, etc.
- Have I ever missed a flag? Why?
- Do I know the run-off areas for each corner? The marked pull-offs?
  - Have I written them on my track map?
- How soon do I see each flag station?
- What does oil look like on the track surface? Antifreeze?
- Have I ever tried to push for a lap time? Or to catch another car? If so, what did you learn? Was it safe?





- Am I focused on learning? What is my goal for this event? The current session?
- Do I keep notes? If so, on a track map? Do I update them immediately after coming off track?
- What resources do I use to get better? Coach? Instructors? Video? Data? NNJR website and YouTube? Books? Other?



1. They focus on the basics.
  - The advanced stuff is just doing the basics better.
2. They're committed to learning.
  - They make learning an objective.
  - They know the more they know, the better they will get.
3. They prepare.

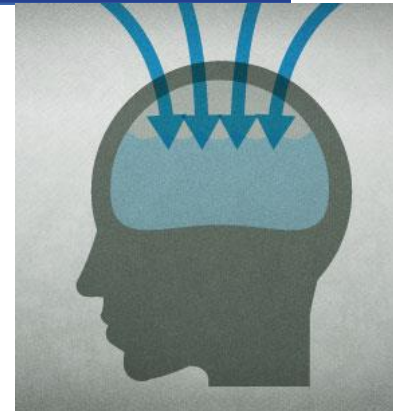


*Source: Ross Bentley, Speed Secrets Weekly 191*





1. Assess Current Skills
  - Review Advanced Driver Checklist
2. Want to Improve? Prioritize: 1, 2 or 3
3. Tips and Examples can help you start



- Don't get mentally stuck
- Remember to have fun!

# NNJR Questions? Comments?



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- See me at the track!

