



BMW Car Club
of America
North Star Chapter



Welcome to Sommer Schnell 2024 at Brainerd International Raceway

Event Dates: May 31 - June 2, 2024

This driving school is designed to teach drivers how to safely improve their driving abilities and explore their cars' capabilities. Students, using their own cars, get one-on-one instruction from experienced instructors.

This is not a racing school. Our focus is on skills, not speed, and our overriding concern is with your safety and that of your car. We select our school instructors very carefully, not simply for their technical knowledge and accomplishments as drivers, but also for their abilities to impart that knowledge to their students in a clear, concise, and professional manner.

Your BMW (or other make and model) is an amazingly capable car. At a North Star Chapter High-Performance Drive Education (HPD), you will be able to realize your car's capabilities, learn the limits of those capabilities under controlled conditions, and practice the skills needed to control your car safely within those limits.

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Welcome

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Chief Instructor: Brian Spiewak, chiefinstructor@northstarbmw.org or (651) 492-7812

First, all of the material in this document should be reviewed before coming to the track, as there will be no opportunity to do so once the event starts. And there may be a quiz!

Now, we would like to welcome you to the school! It's exciting to welcome you here whether this is your first time at BIR, your first-ever driving school, or we're already old friends with far too many track stories to tell. Please don't hesitate to contact the club representatives listed above with questions before the event; look us up during the Friday evening registration or at the track.

Our goal is simple: BMW CCA driving events are intended to educate, build skills, and promote the application of advanced driving techniques on the track and the street.

There are few thrills in life that can rival driving at high speeds. Although enjoyable, the dangers and risks of driving much above the speed limit on America's roads can have serious consequences. Modern technology has given us cars with capabilities far above those required for everyday driving. Most drivers never really get the opportunity to experience their car's driving potential or their own. This event aims to help you learn the skills necessary to explore those potentials safely while having lots of fun.

North Star Chapter BMW CCA gives you this opportunity to drive at those speeds and makes you a better, safer driver. We will use the racetrack to provide a structured, safe environment for learning but understand that this is not a racing school. Thus the number one rule of our school is NO RACING.

We will insist that all rules be followed for a safe, smooth event. We ask that you pay particular attention to the practices outlined in this document; you will be held to understanding them.

We look forward to seeing you, rain or shine, for a great experience!

Event Location

The school is held at Brainerd International Raceway, 5523 Birchdale Rd, Brainerd, MN.

We are using the 2.5-mile Competition (short) Course for the duration of this school.

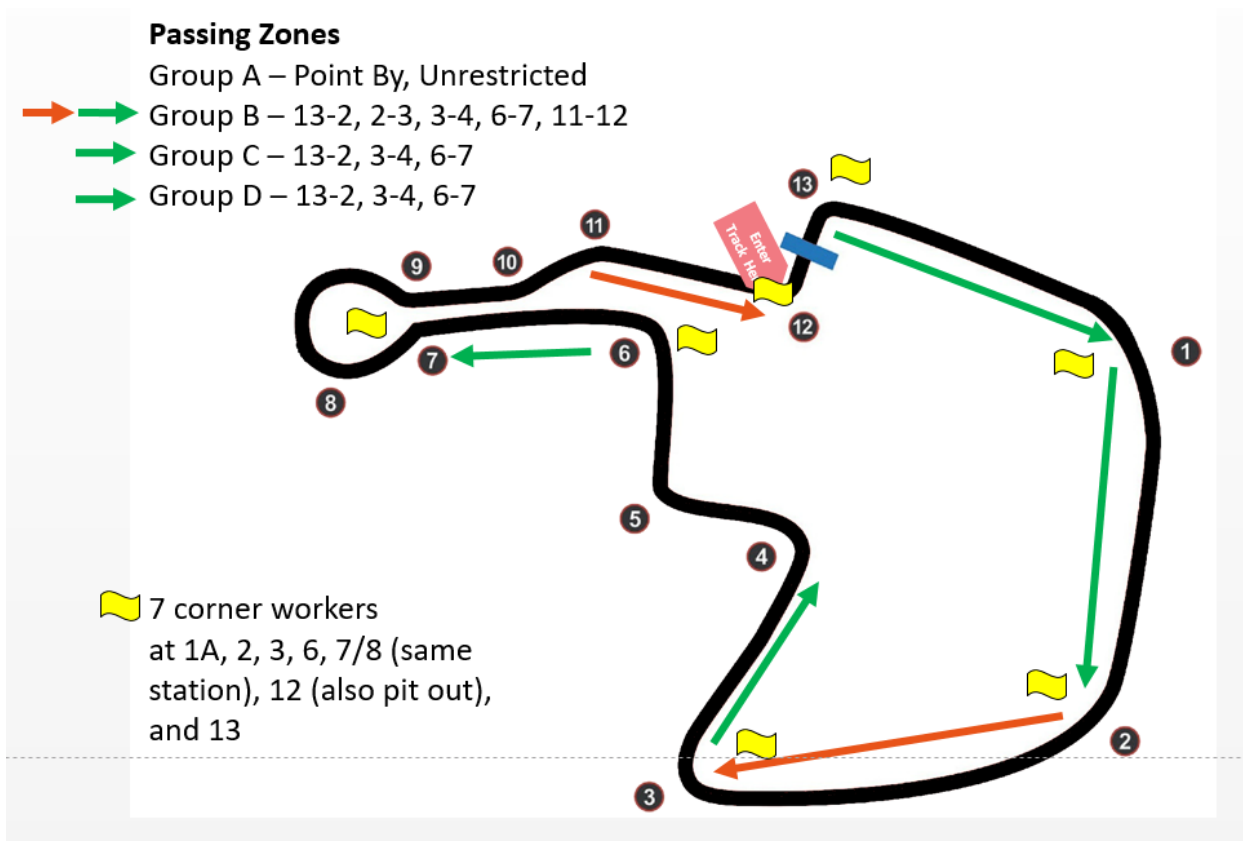
After entering the main gates at Brainerd, continue straight over a bridge just beyond the gates until passing two buildings on the right. The paddocks are located just beyond those buildings.



Track Map

This is where the driving occurs! Newcomers to BIR benefit from learning the general layout of the track and corner numbers. Also note the defined passing zones for Run Groups B, C, and D listed in the image below. When the passing zone reads “13-2”, then passing is allowed from the exit of turn 13 to the braking zone of turn 2. You will be assigned a run group on day one of the events. Learn these passing zones!

See the Passing section under Safety for details on passing.



Event Preparation

Helmets

Helmets must be Snell EA (Elite Application), SA (Special Application), or M (Motorcycle) rated years 2015 or 2020. Snell-rated helmets have a sticker similar to the one below, typically located behind some padding on the inside of the helmet. Double-check yours; it's not too late to rent one, but it will be on June 1st!



Recommended Items

- Oil, torque wrench, tire pressure gauge, spare brake pads (front and rear)
- A plastic tote with a cover or a tarp to place all the items from your car's trunk and interior. We do this event rain or shine, and everything must come out of your car at the track
- Folding chair(s)
- Sunscreen, rain gear, bug repellent, hat
- A folding canopy can provide shade or shelter from the rain and sun
- Long pants and shirts made of all cotton, no blends
 - You'll be "up north," and temperatures and weather conditions vary widely
 - Short sleeve shirts are allowed
 - Shorts are not acceptable for anyone on the track
- Rain jacket
- Shoes should have soft, non-slip soles. Open-back shoes, boots, or sandals are not acceptable
- Drinking water is provided. Bring your own sports drinks and snacks

Accommodations and Registration Procedure

Hotel

We booked a block of rooms at two nearby hotels and negotiated a group rate for the event. When making your reservations, call the hotel directly and mention that you are with the "North Star BMW Club" to secure group rates.

Rapid River Lodge - Baxter

Address: 7376 Woida Rd N, Baxter, MN 56425

Phone: (218) 825-7234

\$164.00 + tax per room per night - without waterpark

Days Inn and Suites - Baxter

Address: 14466 Dellwood Drive, Baxter, MN, 56425

Phone: (218) 829-3080

\$124.00 + tax per night (3 or more nights), \$149 + tax per night (2 nights)

Friday Evening Registration

Due to the levels of concentration necessary to drive safely for extended periods at a high rate of speed, we *strongly encourage* students to arrive on Friday rather than get up early on Saturday.

Registration is at Baia Della Italian Kitchen Friday evening from 6:45 to 8:30 PM. Call the event coordinator if you'll be arriving slightly later than registration hours! Come prepared for registration staff to do the following:

1. Review your valid driver's license
2. Collect your completed and signed technical inspection forms
3. Inspect your helmets. Snell EA (Elite Application), SA (Special Application), or M (Motorcycle) rated years 2015 or 2020
4. Have you sign a waiver for the weekend and distribute wristbands
5. Hand out Student Information Packets

Saturday Morning Registration

Late registration will also be conducted in the classroom at the track on Saturday morning from 7:30 AM to 8:00 AM. That said, you're already going to be busy preparing yourself and your car for the day, and you won't want to be stuck waiting in line to register.

Friday Morning Registration

Check-in for instructors and pre-approved advanced students driving Friday will be available at the classroom near the Competition Course paddock from 7:30 to 8:30.

Food

You will be on your own for breakfast and lunch. Breakfast and lunch on Saturday and Sunday may be purchased at the track concession stand (The Wheelie Bar), or there are restaurants within a short driving distance. The lunch period is short, and you will probably need fuel, so plan for something quick!

Saturday evening we offer dinner at Baia Della Italian Kitchen. You may sign up and pay for this dinner when you register for the school on motorsportreg.com. This is a friendly social time with other students and instructors. Good times will be had, lots of stories will be told, and some will be true!

Vehicle Preparation

Technical Inspection

A technical inspection of your car is required within four weeks of the event start date. Only cars with a technical inspection form completed by an approved facility/mechanic will be allowed on track. Failure to have your car pass tech inspection does not constitute a valid reason to cancel.

The North Star BMW technical inspection is available for download at [Sommer Schnell Tech Inspection Form](#).

A completed technical form must be presented at registration. Contact ssa@northstarbmw.org with questions concerning technical inspections.

Vehicle Modifications

Generally, there are no modifications necessary to participate in our Performance Driving Schools for first-time participants as long as the vehicle passes a tech inspection.

Schedules

Friday Schedule

We strongly urge Instructors and students driving on Friday to arrive on Thursday evening; as you're already aware, driving and instructing on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday can be tiring!

- The main gate opens at 7:00 AM
- Registration and check-in are at the BIR classroom from 7:30 to 8:30 AM
- **Mandatory** driver's meeting at 8:30 AM.

Saturday Schedule

The event is run on a tight schedule to maximize your track time and ensure that you get adequate instruction. You are responsible for being where you are supposed to be and being on time. Failure to do so will reduce track time.

The main gate at the track will open at 7:00 AM Saturday. Upon entering the track, you will sign a waiver for BIR and receive a wristband. Proceed to the paddock area, completely unload your car and get ready for the day. Everything in the car that is not part of the car must be removed. Please arrive at the track earlier than you think you need to!

- The main gate opens at 7:00 AM
- Late registration is available from 7:30 AM - 8:00 AM in the BIR classroom
- Instructor's meeting at 7:30 AM
- **Mandatory** driver's meeting at 8:15 AM

Sunday Schedule

The main gate will open at 7:00 AM, with a **mandatory** driver's meeting at 8:00 AM. The instructor's meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8:30 AM.

- The main gate opens at 7:00 AM
- **Mandatory** driver's meeting at 8:00 AM
- Instructor's meeting 8:30 AM

Safety

We intend to run a safe event. Cars and drivers not considered safe are not allowed on the track. However, the **ULTIMATE BURDEN FOR SAFETY IS YOURS**. The management team cannot foresee and codify every potential situation. Thus, the

school management reserves the right to make ad hoc decisions concerning the school's operation. Your participation in the school is contingent upon your abiding by these decisions. One of these decisions may be that inappropriate behavior on the part of a student is grounds for excusing a student from the balance of the school without a refund.

2/3 Spin Rule

We will encourage you to probe the limits of yourself and your car and also not exceed them. To encourage you to remain within these limits, we have the 2/3 spin rule. This is simply that if you perform two spins in one day or three spins over a two-day school, we ask (actually, we tell) you to excuse yourself from the remainder of the school. There will be no refunds or recourse for students dismissed under this rule. The Chief Instructor and Event Chairpersons will be the enforcers of this rule.

We also consider putting three or more wheels off the track and driving three or more wheels off the track to avoid a spin the same as a spin under this rule. If you do go off the track, you will be black-flagged. You should proceed slowly with your flashers on toward the paddock area. Your car will be checked for damage, rocks, or dirt where it shouldn't be. You will have a chance to talk to your instructor, drink water and continue breathing. This isn't a punishment - it has two purposes: it allows us to gauge your attitude and ability to continue, and it enables you to learn from what happened and discuss it with your instructor.

Instructors

People assigned to run groups B, C, or D have been assigned an instructor based on their experience and type of car. Our instructor corps is comprised of people with many schools, track, and competition experiences. We expect some drivers to be signed off and allowed to lap without an instructor. No one will be signed off for the first session of each day. The Chief Instructor, your instructor, and the Event Coordinator can remove a signed-off status if necessary.

If you are signed off, your instructor will place a "solo" sticker on your windshield. We encourage you to continue using any instructor after being signed off to get additional input on your school experience.

Because instructor-student assignments are based on the impersonal factors of a student's experience and type of car, you and your instructor may not have perfectly compatible personalities. If you feel that you could benefit more from an instructor other than the one assigned to you, please see the Event Coordinator or Chief Instructor right away and we will try to accommodate you.

Liability and Requirements

Entrants assume all risk of damage to persons and property during this event. (See all those forms and waivers you have signed).

Passengers

For insurance reasons, passengers are not allowed to ride with students.

Driver Requirements

- Driver must be at least 18 years of age or older
- Waivers must be completed
- Drivers must have a current driver's license
- Drivers must wear a minimum approved helmet or better at all times while on the track
- All drivers must wear long pants, closed-toed footwear
- Pants and shirts of 100% cotton, no synthetic blends

Car Requirements

- The car must be empty of all loose objects, including the trunk
- Car numbers must be placed on both sides of the car at all times, with recommended placement on the glass of the rearmost side windows of the car
- SUVs, vans, convertibles, Targa, and t-tops are NOT allowed at Performance Driving School events.

Safety

Safety will be your number one priority. Anyone deemed to be driving in an unsafe manner will be ejected. And, in case someone forgot, No Racing, especially not with your friends. If it starts to rain, slow down to a speed below that at which you know you can drive safely in the wet. Check the condition of your tires and brakes after every session (ask your instructor for help if you're unsure what to look for). Do not engage your emergency brake after a session. Check your oil level and other fluids before every session. Keep an eye on your schedule and be on time!

This is not a Racing School but an opportunity for new and experienced drivers to sharpen their skills on the road and the track. Drivers are financially responsible for any damages they cause to the facility and its parts. Your own insurance is the only insurance covering you and your vehicle. Do not assume that your insurance will be in force. Should there be an incident, you may be required to be checked by an EMT.

No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the premises.

Windows must be rolled down, though they may be raised entirely during rain. Sunroofs must be completely closed.

Passing

Since this is a school and safety is one of the top priorities, we strictly follow a pass-by-contract rule, with passing occurring only in defined passing zones based upon the run group. Pass-by-contract requires that the car to be passed give a clear signal

indicating a pass may occur, and until the lead car gives that signal, no passes shall occur.

The signal North Star uses in dry weather conditions to indicate permission for a pass will be a hand extended outside the driver's window, either pointing to the left or over the roof pointing to the right. The direction of the point communicates to the passing car the side on which the passing car is to go. If a driver points right over the roof of their car, then the person passing will pass on the right. Given that the signal to pass requires taking a hand off the steering wheel, drivers must wait until fully clearing a corner and entering a passing zone before signaling to allow a pass. Expect to see a demonstration of hand signals during the driver's meeting. If we expect rain, wet weather passing procedures will be communicated at the driver's meetings.

Passing zones will be defined based on a run groups' intended skill level, with Novice groups having fewer passing zones than Advanced groups. In our schools, we allow open passing zones for Advanced groups and Instructors, meaning that passes may occur anywhere as long as a point is given.

Consider passing during a session as a courtesy, not a right, extended to the faster cars and drivers. Also, understand that receiving a point to pass does not require the following driver to pass. The instructors will try to ensure that traffic doesn't get backed up, though faster drivers always have the option to exit the track into the hot pits and then re-enter the track when traffic ahead clears.

For the novice and intermediate run groups, a pass must be completed before the braking zone for a corner, and it is the responsibility of the passing car to ensure this happens. If the point-by is given late or you're unsure of the intent, do not attempt the pass. The lead car can help facilitate a pass by lifting off the throttle, though using the brakes to slow down in the passing zones should not happen.

Consider entering the hot pits to wait for open track, the **only** appropriate response when you feel as though you're stuck behind slow traffic.

Driving Rules

1. Do not tailgate, or you'll be buying that car in front of you after it becomes your hood ornament
2. Do not block faster cars; let them go by when safely possible and within the defined passing zones
3. Do not group together; focus on driving your lines, not someone else's
4. If you find yourself in a pack, pull through the pits and go right back out to let them get away from you
5. Concentrate on being smooth while taking the correct line rather than speed. With accuracy and smoothness, the speed will follow
6. Most importantly, drive your own pace, not someone else's, and do not try to compete. If you feel the Red Mist (ask your instructor...), then pull off into the hot pits

Any car going off the track must enter the pits for inspection before being allowed to restart. Extreme caution must be used when driving back onto the track after going off. Look for corner workers. If you see a manned corner station, wait for the corner worker to wave you back onto the track. Proceed slowly to the pits with flashers on.

Exiting The Track

When you want to exit from the track into the pit lane, use your left-turn signal near the end of the straight between corners 7 and 8. Drive corner 7 slightly slower than usual and stay to the left when entering the pits.

Pit Lane

Driver changes, instructor pickups, and discharges may be made in the pit lane (aka. hot pits). Find a spot in the pit lane and park on the left. Do not block traffic.

Two Feet In

Recommendations in case of trouble. If you are about to run off the track surface, drive off in a straight line. Do not make a futile attempt to hold the car on the track; this creates a more dangerous situation. If you err in judgment and lose control (i.e., spin), the best rule is “both feet in” (brake depressed, clutch totally depressed) until the car comes to a complete halt. (When you think you’ve stopped, count to three - you could still be moving!)

Flagging Instructions

The safety of this event depends upon your understanding and following the signal flags. The flags we will use are:

Green Flag



This is the fun one! It is typically used to indicate the start of a session or that a session is in progress. The track cannot be entered unless the green flag is displayed (and signaled to enter by the corner worker).

We will display the green flag only at pit out, the corner station at turn 12, where cars will be entering the track from the pits.

Yellow Flag



Caution, there is a hazard that you need to be aware of and must slow down for. The yellow flag will be used in two different ways.

1. A single stationary yellow flag will be used to indicate slower speeds are required and no passing during the opening laps of morning sessions. Details on yellow flag usage in open sessions will be covered during the driver's meeting
2. A single stationary yellow flag displayed during a session means there is a hazard ahead and the hazard is typically off the track.
3. A single yellow flag being waived indicates that the hazard is on the track surface. Typical hazards will be disabled vehicles but may also indicate other issues like animals (deer, turtles, birds, etc.) on or near the track.

You will often notice a difference in how the flag is being waived depending on the severity of the hazard. You will need to slow down in a controlled fashion, have your car completely under control and be prepared to adjust to the hazard. The most important thing to do is to remain calm and look ahead.

Once you see the yellow flag, even if you have not yet reached the corner station, you will not attempt to pass a car. Once past the flag station showing the yellow flag, you will not be allowed to pass until after the next manned corner station that is not displaying a yellow flag. *Do not presume that, just because you've passed an incident that would require a yellow flag, the road ahead is clear and incident free.* Wait for that next flag station, or you might just become the third incident and learn firsthand about red or black flags.

Yellow and Red Striped Flag



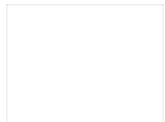
This flag indicated that there is debris on the track surface. Debris may include fluids from another vehicle, dirt, gravel, or the remains of a turtle, all of which reduce available traction. This flag will only be used briefly to inform drivers of the hazard and will be put away once all drivers have had the opportunity to see it. This does not mean that the hazard has cleared!

Red Flag



Displayed at each station and on the Starter's stand indicating extreme danger on the track, typically used to allow safe access for emergency vehicles. You must come to a quick but controlled stop at the side of the race track, though do not slam on the brakes and cause a collision with the person behind you. Preferably stop within sight of a staffed flag station on the same side of the track as the flag station, but do not leave the track surface. Watch for hand signals or a change in flags from the corner workers. Stay in your vehicle with seat belts/harnesses on, helmets fastened and stationary until directed otherwise. When the red flag is taken down, the session will likely become a Black Flag All situation which will allow you to proceed slowly to pit lane.

White Flag



Caution and take care for a slow-moving car, ambulance, or another safety vehicle on the racing surface. You should pass the vehicle, though do so slowly and safely. Exercise caution when getting back up to speed as the track ahead may be under a yellow flag condition.

Blue Flag with a Diagonal Yellow Stripe



A passing flag indicates that a faster driver is catching up to you or following closely. This flag may be displayed standing or waving, depending on the speed differential. This flag is simply a warning to you and does not mean you need to allow them to pass immediately. It would be best if you safely let them by at the next passing zone where you're comfortable allowing the pass. Whatever you do, be predictable on the track.

Black Flag



Closed (furled) Black Flag - When pointed or shaken at your car (sometimes accompanied by a number board indicating the car number), it serves to notify you that **you** are a problem on track. This flag means you must enter the pits immediately and speak to the Chief Instructor or a Track Marshal.

Open Black Flag, displayed at all stations - the session has been stopped; all cars slow down and safely proceed directly to pit lane.

Mechanical Black Flag (Black with Orange Ball)



Otherwise known as the Meatball Flag indicates a potential mechanical problem with your car, such as a fluid leak or loose body panel. Proceed directly to pit lane and speak to the Chief Instructor or a Track Marshal. You may be directed to have the car inspected by trackside support

techs.

Checkered Flag



The session is over; slow down to a safe speed such that you can avoid heavy use of the brakes so they will cool down, and proceed to pit lane and exit the track. Please acknowledge the corner workers; it shows your appreciation for what they do to keep these events safe.