

The Panic Slip

Meeting Highlights

Due to the holidays, we did not have a January meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 28th at 7 pm at 511 13th Ave South. Both members and non-members are welcome to attend; however, if you're not a current Region 105 SCCA member you will not be permitted to vote on any issues. If you have any issues or questions that require immediate attention, please contact one of our 2013 officers listed at the end of this Panic Slip.

Annual Banquet

Our annual banquet at the Amigo was a resounding success. We had 32 members and guests gather to enjoy the company of fellow racers, the complimentary taco bar, assorted prize giveaways, and "home movies" of racing events from the 70's and 80's. Culminating the evening was recognition of our regional points champions for 2012 (listed here in no particular order):

Brian Franklin – 1st Place Regional Points, 1st Place Street Touring Unlimited

Jeff Thill – 1st Place PAX points, 1st Place Super Street Prepared

Douglas Culliton – 1st Place D Stock

Michael Murray – 1st Place F Stock

Stan Howard – 1st Place X Prepared

Nathan Church – Rookie of the Year, 1st Place Street Touring Roadster

Steve Kaste – 1st Place C Stock

Loran Keller – 1st Place B Street Prepared

Dustin Ostberg – 1st Place E Street Prepared

Nick Shepard – 1st Place F Street Prepared

Bob Stevenson – 1st Place C Prepared

Brett Martinez – 1st Place Street Touring Extreme

John Kothrade – 1st Place Street Modified Front Wheel Drive

Richard Mackin – 1st Place Kart Modified



Overall 2012 Points Champion, Brian Franklin



2012 PAX Points Champion, Jeff Thill

Street Survival Program

For those who haven't been following the Panic Slip, our region is hosting/conducting a Tire Rack Street Survival program on May 11th of this year. This is a teen driving program run by the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) Regions with support from the SCCA National Offices. Its goals are to teach students the basics of car control, to enhance their enjoyment of driving and to improve their competence. Students learn how their actions govern their own car's responses and therefore become safer, more effective drivers. The program includes classroom instruction and driving exercises at and over the edge of control on a skid pad.

We have a number of volunteer positions still needing filled in order to make our event a success. Depending on your available time, we can use assistance with setting up and maintaining obstacles on the skid pad, general event assistance, technical inspection of participant vehicles, and driving coaches. If you're interested, please contact our staff via e-mail at montanastreetssurvival@gmail.com or by calling 868-8060.

Racing Tips from the Grid

This month's racing tip delves into the hidden world of tire management for your car.



One of the most basic enhancements to the performance of your car is properly managing your tire pressures. Improperly inflated tires not only add seconds to your run times; they can also wear out significantly faster (ask me about my racing tires that lasted for three runs at Helena!).

In order to properly manage your tire pressures, you should invest in a tire pressure gauge of reasonable quality. You don't need a top of the line track gauge costing hundreds of dollars; however, a digital tire gauge capable of reading pressures to the 1/10th of a pound is suggested. You'll want to keep a tire log for each race with the temperature that day, the type of tire you are running, and the pressure for each run session. This provides a great reference for setting up your pressures for future races!

Tire management begins with setting your race pressures when you arrive at the track. Regardless of whether you use racing or street tires, you'll often find that you need significantly higher tire pressures than you routinely run on the street. Pressures typically run 20-30% higher than street pressures to prevent the tire from "rolling over" onto and past the edge of the tread surface. The edge of your tread surface is typically marked with an arrow as shown in this picture:



Rolling past the edge of the tire treadline causes your tire sidewall to act as a contact surface with the track. Tire sidewalls are not designed for this abrasion and will wear down to the cords (or fail entirely) in a very, very short time.

One easy method to check for under or over inflation of your tires is to use chalk marking on the sidewall prior to each race run (see the next picture). The chalk will wear off where the tire is abrading against racing surface, providing you with a clear indicator of how far over your tire is rolling towards the edge.



There are variables in using this method that can produce false results. If you are overdriving or underdriving the potential of your tires, this method isn't entirely accurate; however, if you're cornering aggressively WITHOUT sliding in the corner, this is a reasonable starting point for tire management.

Lastly, there are more advanced tire pressure management techniques such as using pyrometers or even temperature probes. I won't go into details on these methods but they can produce even better results than chalking your tires. My best advice on this – talk to the veteran racers at an event; most are more than willing share their expertise and experience.

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