

## 3.11 AUTOCROSS MINIMUM STANDARDS

### 3.11.1 Introduction

As part of its goal of promoting driver education and safety, the BMW Car Club of America, Inc. (BMW CCA) supports autocross programs conducted by its chartered Chapters and as an element of its national events (e.g. Oktoberfest). An autocross event is a non-speed driving skill contest such as, but not limited to, autocrosses and slaloms. These events are run on short courses that emphasize the driver's ability and the car's handling and agility. Competition licenses are not required, and hazards to participants and property are not expected to exceed those encountered in normal, legal highway driving.

- a. Since an element of risk is inherent in these events, BMW CCA is providing the following minimum standards and recommendations to minimize the risk of property damage and personal injury at BMW CCA autocross events.
- b. BMW CCA Chapters and national events conducting autocross programs bear the primary responsibility to exercise reasonable care during each event. Chapters are encouraged to consult with BMW CCA to propose any changes to these standards that will improve the program.
- c. These Minimum Standards and recommendations, on approval by the BMW CCA Board of Directors, shall be included in the Operations Manual. They become effective immediately upon publication, and may be updated at any time as required in the interests of safety or to satisfy legal or insurance requirements.
- d. A copy of the most recent Autocross Minimum Standards must be present at every BMW CCA Chapter or national autocross.
- e. These standards are minimum event standards that Chapters must meet for an autocross to receive BMW CCA sanctioning and to maintain BMW CCA Chapter status. BMW CCA sanctioning is defined as use of any of the following: BMW CCA name or logo, BMW CCA insurance, BMW CCA web site, Roundel advertising, or calendar listings. Chapters may set additional and/or more stringent requirements for their events.
- f. For the purposes of this Minimum Standard the term "participant" means any person present at the event, including but not limited to competitors, drivers, staff, organizers, course workers, visitors and spectators. All participants must sign the event's Insurance Waiver (see 3.11.2.3).

### 3.11.2 Autocross Requirements/Recommendations

#### 3.11.2.1 Budgets

Chapter boards and national event staff have full responsibility for event budgeting, for the components of the event (including sponsorship), and for full accounting of the revenues and expenses involved.

**Recommendation:** Autocross is a member benefit and should be priced to be accessible to as many members as possible.

#### 3.11.2.2 Insurance

BMW CCA autocross events must be insured by a reputable company licensed to conduct business in the state in which the event is to occur. Chapters may use the BMW CCA policy or purchase coverage through the event facility (if this is available) which meets BMW CCA minimum coverage and limits.

BMW CCA must be listed as an Additional Named Insured in the policy covering the event. If the insurance obtained is other than through the BMW CCA policy, then a copy of the endorsement page or the certificate of insurance must be provided to the National Office prior to the event. All rules, regulations, and requirements of the insurance policy must be followed explicitly and without deviation. BMW CCA's minimum insurance coverage and limits requirements are set by the National Office. Contact the National Office for current minimum liability amounts. It is the Chapter's responsibility to make certain that insurance coverage obtained other than through BMW CCA meets the Club's required levels of coverage.

**Recommendation:** That an autocross not be publicly advertised as a spectator event.

*Other insurance for Accidental Death, Medical Expenses, and Lost Wages may be required by the event facility. This coverage is included under BMW CCA's policy. It is the Chapter's responsibility make sure that whatever insurance coverage provided meets the event facility's requirements.*

*The cost of insurance shall be the sole responsibility of the sponsoring Chapter or national event.*

### **3.11.2.3 Insurance Waivers**

All persons entering the event premises must sign the appropriate original printed insurance waiver. Chapters must keep original signed waivers for a minimum of seven years from the date of the event. Event premises shall be defined. Participants under age 18 must have minor consent waivers signed by both of their parents or legal guardians. Participants and workers under age 18 must have minor consent waivers signed by either parents or guardians.

**Recommendation:** Minor waivers can be an annual waiver signed for "all events" and "all dates."

**Recommendation:** The use of colored wristbands can help identify competitors, staff, workers, and guests and help organizers ensure that the appropriate waivers have been signed.

### **3.11.2.4 Liability Insurance for Cars.**

Chapters may choose to require evidence of liability and/or collision insurance on cars entered. They may at their option allow uninsured or unregistered vehicles to participate.

BMW CCA's motorsports insurance policy has no provision for payment for physical damage to vehicles.

### **3.11.2.5 Course Rules and Regulations**

All rules and regulations specified by the event facility (and as negotiated by the sponsoring Chapter with the facility) must be followed explicitly and without deviation.

#### **3.11.2.5.1 Course Design and Operation**

- a. The course design should be such that vehicles proceed in a forward motion and that reverse gear will not be needed.
- b. The course shall be laid out so that there is an acceptable distance between the course and any obstacles or impediments, such as ditches, light poles, curbs, spectator areas, buildings, fences, parked cars, or other objects. A minimum distance of twenty-five feet is recommended. This safety margin must be increased on the outside of faster corners and unobstructed spinout areas shall be included where possible. Event viewing areas should be at least 75 feet from the course boundaries.

- c. Course boundaries shall be clearly defined. Site boundaries should also be defined as clearly as possible.
- d. No cone should weigh more than five pounds and its position should be clearly marked with chalk or other temporary means to facilitate easy replacement by the course workers.
- e. The course design may be such to allow the overlapping of multiple cars on course at the same time if space and timing equipment allow. When running more than one car on the course at the same time, allow sufficient separation between cars so that competing cars never come in close proximity on the course; and, so that there is adequate time to flag a following car to a stop if the preceding car knocks down a cone or gets into trouble.
- f. Course boundaries shall remain the same for all drivers. If, while on course, a driver observes a course change due to displaced cones, they must report the course change to course personnel, at which time the driver is to safely drive to the end of the course at a reduced speed and trip the finish line timer. The driver may then be granted a rerun. A driver shall not be granted a rerun if they have already received a DNF on any portion of the course prior to the altered portion in question. Once they score a DNF their run is over and a rerun should not be granted. (DNF = Did Not Finish; essentially, a disqualification for that particular run.)
- g. Whenever a pylon is moved, it must be returned to its original position. If the pylon cannot be returned safely then any affected participant may be granted a rerun subject to 3.11.2.5.1 f. if the missing pylon either positively or negatively affects the participant's run.
- h. When laying out a course, both the size and type of the vehicles competing as well as site conditions should be taken into consideration. Speeds on straight stretches should not normally exceed highway speed. The fastest portions of the course shall be those most remote from spectators and property. These guidelines should be adjusted downward when site conditions will not safely support the speeds indicated above.
- i. The course as laid out shall be on a paved surface that contains no dangerous holes, loose gravel, gratings, oily spots, or other hazardous features. Dips that could get a car airborne shall not be included. Special care shall be taken in the location of the start, finish, staging, and timing areas. The timers and staging area must be placed well clear of the course in a safe area. The course design should allow for a safe and controlled finish. It is not recommended that competing cars be required to come to a complete stop immediately following the finish line. It is preferred that cars be required to slow to a walking speed within a controlled area before returning to the grid or paddock areas. A complete stop should be required only when unusual site conditions exist. In all cases, a sufficient distance past the finish line must be available to safely slow or halt any competing car from the highest possible speed attainable at the finish without locking brakes or wild maneuvering. It is recommended that an official be assigned to control the finish area. Particular care must be exercised in the finish area to keep it free from hazard to participants.
- j. Negative cambered turns shall be avoided if at all possible.
- k. A long straight (over 150 feet) should not terminate in an extremely sharp turn (e.g. a short radius U-turn).
- l. Except on permanent circuits such as go-kart tracks, the inner and outer limits of turns and corners should be marked by course markers, displacement of which results in time penalties. Chapters are encouraged to outline the course with chalk or other suitable means to make it easy for novice drivers to follow.

- m. Corner limits must never be marked by curbs, buildings, poles, trees, soft shoulders or other hazards likely to cause damage to a car, or likely to cause a car to overturn.
- n. Cars on the course simultaneously shall not run in close proximity to each other.
- o. All portions of the course shall be visible to at least one course marshal who can communicate through signals or by electronic means with the starting line.
- p. Entrance and exit lanes should enter the course at separate points, though they may be close together. They will be kept clear for use by competing cars at all times.
- q. Participants and/or obstacles should not be located at the end of long or high-speed straights.
- r. Participants must be kept at a safe distance from the course, particularly at the outside of turns and at the start and finish lines. Unless protected by substantial barriers, viewing areas must be isolated. Chapters shall have the authority to set minimum viewing distances from the course but such minimum viewing distances may not be less than 75 feet from the course edge in unprotected areas (e.g. those without adequate barrier protection such as concrete or tire walls).
- s. Appropriate fire extinguishers, flags and material for cleaning up fluid spills must be provided by the host Chapter.
- t. Video or still cameras are not permitted at course worker positions or other locations within the course area. Exceptions may be granted for special purposes by the event organizers only if the location is acceptable to the event chair and if the photographer is accompanied by a spotter to warn of approaching vehicles.
- u. A DNF results in no time being given for that run.
- v. The participant shall neither exit the car nor release seatbelts until the run is safely completed. Doing so will incur a DNF for that run.
- w. The Autocross Chairperson or appointee must approve course designs in advance of the event. Before the first car runs, the Autocross Chairperson or appointee shall check the complete course layout for compliance with course design standards.

#### **3.11.2.6 Car Classification**

To be determined by the sponsoring Chapter for Chapter events. For national events, classification shall be consistent with the Oktoberfest/National Events Manual.

#### **3.11.2.7 Course Design/Car Classification References**

The following references have been included for assistance to those Chapters starting autocross programs, and for general reference. This is not a comprehensive list, and these references may not all remain up to date.

- Roger Johnson's Solo2 Course Design Booklet:  
<http://www.houscca.com/solo/courses/coursedesign.zip>
- Kate Hughes's AX Handbook:  
<http://www.tirerack.com/features/solo2/handbook.htm>

- Bob Tunnell's Advice For The First Time Autocrosser:  
<http://www.tunnellracing.com/advice.html>
- The SCCA Solo II web site <http://www.scca.org/Solo/>, then click on "Cars and Rules."

### 3.11.3 Chapter Event Plan

**Recommendation:** Each Chapter desiring to conduct autocrosses must create an autocross plan with details for conducting this type of event. The Chapter plan must be in conformance with these standards and shall be approved by the Chapter's Board of Directors.

## 3.12 DRIVER'S QUALIFICATIONS

### 3.12.1 Age of Drivers

Minimum age for drivers in BMW CCA autocross is 16.

### 3.12.2 Driver's License

Each driver shall possess a valid driver's license

## 3.13 SAFETY DEVICES

### 3.13.1 Helmets

Helmets must be worn by all participants during all course runs. For helmet standards, please refer to Section 3.8.

### 3.13.2 Lap and Shoulder Belts

Lap and Shoulder Belts are required for all occupants and must be fully functional. If aftermarket seat belts are used, they must be installed in compliance with manufacturers' installation instructions. (See 2.8.2.d for kart exemption.).

### 3.13.3 Advanced Vehicle Systems, ABS, etc.

At no time should an event organizer, worker, or volunteer endorse or participate in the disabling of a factory installed safety system that is not normally driver-controllable (e.g. ABS).

**Note:** A system that has a driver-controlled switch (such as automatic traction control) may be turned off/on by the driver ONLY.

### 3.13.4 Instruction

Chapters may, subject to available time, personnel and resources, offer classroom and/or individual instruction to participants. This might be especially helpful to novice autocrossers. It is up to the individual Chapter to select/designate those instructors, who should be identified during the Drivers Meeting.

**Recommendation:** That Chapters designate one or more individuals as instructors.

### 3.14 CONDUCT OF THE EVENT

#### 3.14.1 Technical/Safety Requirements

Vehicles used to autocross must be in acceptable mechanical condition such that they do not present unacceptable hazards to participants or to the facility. BMW CCA and/or the Chapters reserve the right to reject any vehicle for any reason.

##### 3.14.1.1 Technical/Safety Review Items

All vehicles must pass a safety review prior to each event. Safety inspectors may identify defects in the vehicle, but should not attempt to fix them. Below are examples of items that could be checked by an event staff worker familiar with the safety and mechanical systems of vehicles. Beyond checking that the required safety equipment is present and that the vehicle is not leaking fluids, the extent of the safety inspection is at the discretion of the event organizer, keeping in mind that the primary consideration is to minimize hazards for all individuals at the event. The ultimate responsibility for the condition of the vehicle rests with the participant.

- a. Wheels must be safely attached and exhibit no cracks. Wheel nuts/bolts should be tightened to the manufacturer's recommended value.
- b. All loose items must be removed from the vehicle. If a video camera is employed, it must be securely mounted.
- c. Tires must show no cords, belts, or cracks in the tread or sidewall.
- d. Seat belts and/or harnesses must be properly installed and in good condition.  
**Note:** Due to their special safety considerations, karts are exempt from requiring seat belts.
- e. Brakes must be in good working order, have no leaks under pressure, and have adequate fluid in the master cylinder.
- f. No fluid leaks (fuel, oil, coolant, power steering fluid, transmission and differential fluids, brake fluid) are permitted while the vehicle's engine is running.
- g. Wheel bearings, steering mechanism, suspension, and shocks must be in good operating condition.
- h. The exhaust should be in good working order.
- i. Helmets for all occupants must meet the standards in Section 3.8.
- j. Competitors driving karts of any kind are required to wear a collar type neck brace designed for motorsports use, as well as gloves, jackets and full length pants made of leather, vinyl, abrasion resistant nylon or equivalent.
- k. Closed-toed shoes are mandatory for drivers. No open-toed shoes, sandals or "flip-flops" are allowed on course.
- l. Roll bars, if installed, must be properly and securely mounted.

### 3.14.2 Drivers/Workers Meeting

Before the first car runs, the event organizer shall conduct a meeting to explain all of the procedural and safety rules to all the competitors, staff and spectators. This should include:

- a. Confirmation that everyone has signed the insurance waiver(s)
- b. The meaning of each flag.
- c. Procedures to be followed in case of a “red flag” situation.
- d. Corner worker responsibilities.
- e. Explanation of the “down and out” rule if cones are used.
- f. Explain the use of radios and fire extinguishers if they are provided.
- g. Emphasis on safe conduct in the grid area and in the general site area.
- h. An explanation of where spectators are allowed to go.
- i. Ensuring that any children present must be supervised at all times and any pets must remain on a leash.
- j. Reminding course workers to remain alert and observant, stay standing, to watch each car as long as it is on course, and to carry their red flags at all times.
- k. Reminding all that the use of alcohol or drugs is forbidden.
- l. Reminding all that only certain individuals, as approved by the Chapter, may take passengers.
- m. Reminding all participants that all cones hit after the start will count as penalties.
- n. Reviewing any special safety considerations, policies or procedures that apply to your specific site.

In addition, the event organizers must make arrangements to cover these safety issues with anyone arriving after this meeting.

### 3.14.3 Course Inspection

All drivers should have an opportunity to inspect the course prior to driving their first run.

### 3.14.4 Site Access

The site shall be closed to non-participant traffic. The autocross area shall be clearly marked, and be separate and distinct from parking, staging, and grid areas. Only competitors, course workers, event staff, and emergency personnel are allowed to be in the course area during timed runs.

### 3.14.5 Fun Runs

Fun runs may be allowed, as long as all safety considerations in place for competitive runs remain in place for fun runs.

### **3.14.6 Passengers**

Only Chapter designated instructors or other experienced drivers as designated by the event officials are allowed to take passengers for rides during their runs. Passengers must have signed all required insurance waivers. If the passenger is under the age of 18, they must be a minimum of 4' 9" tall and are required to have the proper minor consent waivers signed by both of their parents or legal guardians. Passengers are required to wear a proper fitting helmet as outlined in Section 3.8, and each passenger must have his or her own exit door.

### **3.14.7 Consumption of Alcohol or Illegal Drugs**

Any attempt to participate in an event while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs by anyone present at the event is not allowed. Violators are subject to immediate expulsion from the event. Participants must also pay attention to the effects of any over-the-counter or prescription medications they may have taken that could adversely affect their ability to operate a motor vehicle.

### **3.14.8 Emergency Services**

The event organizers shall have access to appropriate emergency response contact numbers, including ambulance, fire, and police. Chapters shall have a written emergency response plan.

### **3.14.9 Driving Event Accident/Incident Occurrence Report**

This form must be filled out in the case of any incident at an autocross event in which a vehicle or property sustains physical damage, or in which an occupant or other event participant sustains physical injury.

This report is to be completed and submitted to the National Office within 48 hours after the end of the event. The Chapter will retain a copy. If an incident involves injury, the National Office must be notified immediately in accordance with the BMW CCA Crisis Communications Plan.

### **3.14.10 Compliance Procedures**

**3.14.10.1** BMW CCA's first priority is to encourage ongoing and safe driving events. If any Chapter is alleged in writing to have violated these specified requirements, a letter will be sent to the Chapter president detailing the issues and requesting the Chapter's response. If the allegations are true, the Chapter must prepare a corrective action plan to ensure the violation is not repeated. Driving Event Minimum Standards Compliance Enforcement Procedures are set forth in Section 3.6.

**3.14.10.2** If a Chapter wishes to propose a methodology not in compliance with these minimum standards, the Chapter must submit a detailed event plan to the National DEC. Upon review, the DEC may authorize the Chapter to conduct a test event using the proposed methodology, and may send an observer to evaluate the event.

## **3.15 BMW CCA CLUB RACING**

The mission of BMW CCA Club Racing is to provide a safe, fair and fun venue for BMW CCA members to racecars.