



Pylon Press

February 2025 Spring Series #2

SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA - PHOENIX AZ SOLO REGION

Event Synopsis



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PYLON PRESS EDITOR

It was an ideal day for Arizona autocross racing with drivers arriving at the AMP facility in the predawn light to temperatures in the 40's with clear skies and very moderate winds. The air temperatures rose gradually throughout the day to reach a high by midafternoon in the low 70's making for a great day of solo racing. The Bill Prible course was fast, allowing for five runs in the competition section of the event. A combination of some moderately technical sections, along with some short, yet fast sections, allowed for a good constant speed rate and flow throughout the course. With five runs being allowed and as drivers got more familiar with the correct line around the track, lap times generally improved with each run. This trend toward constant improvement created a lot of positive chatter and friendly competition in the staging area.

In open CAM-T, **Matthew Leon** sneaked by **Daniel Hipskind** by a .045 second margin, with a time of 44.024. In open SSC, it was the battle of Subaru BRZs: Class leader **TJ Triolo** posted a time of 45.492 and **Matthew McNulty** was very close behind with a time of 45.530. Over in the HS Open class an interesting nail-biting contest took place. In this contest **Jacob Sustayta** posted a lap time of 48.382, **Dave Crowder's** time was 48.598 and **Roman Pense** recorded a lap time 48.857. This will be a close series contest to watch in the remaining spring events.

There was some good competition and camaraderie throughout the day across all car classes.

CAR OF THE MONTH

2020 Tesla - Model S



Driven by
JAMES FRINK

James Frink's current autocross car is a 2020 Tesla Model 3 Performance which he bought this past December. It's the first Tesla he has owned and would recommend this model of Tesla to anyone who is looking to buy one. He reports it to be extremely quick on a set of sticky tires. While it is heavy, the power more than overcomes its weight. The car has approximately 500 horsepower and 500 lb. feet of torque, with no performance modifications needed. This vehicle was already set up for autocrossing. It had a Mountain Pass performance suspension already on it and came with a second set of wheels with high end performance tires on them. James has been a long-time auto crosser ever since he bought his first Subaru WRX in 2002, which came with a one-year SCCA membership! This enthusiast has autocrossed every year since, with only a small break between 2015 to 2018 when he didn't have a competitive car to use. Originally from upstate New York, James moved here to Arizona shortly after college in 1996. As a motivated entrepreneur, James started his own *Two Maids* franchise business in Tempe, specializing in residential cleaning.

DRIVER OF THE MONTH



Todd Hare & Jasper
2017 Corvette Club Sport

Todd Hare resides in Flagstaff, Arizona, yet rarely misses an autocross event in Phoenix. He, and wife Faith, who serves as the club's waiver chief, have developed an interest in the motorsport over a period of about fifteen years. Todd's introduction to autocross was driving in an event at the NAU Sky Dome in 2009; next he participated in a two-day autocross event in Taylor, AZ. From there the friends he made at the Taylor event eventually got him involved in PASR events on a regular basis here in the Valley. As to his aspirations in racing, Todd enjoys participating in autocross as a recreational activity – time away from work and to relax with his wife Faith. His goal is to participate in some more tour dates in the future and perhaps compete at the SCCA Nationals some day. As parents of two grown children, this adventurous couple now love and care for four dogs at their home in Flagstaff where Todd works for Coconino County. They are training Jasper (pictured above) to be a registered support animal.

Todd is truly a car guy! He has owned an Audi TT, a Ford Mustang GT, Mini Copper S and is currently driving and auto crossing his third Corvette, a 2017 Grand Sport. He regards the AZ solo team as a great group of friendly people who work well together and certainly plans to continue racing and enjoying his life!

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Mistakes are proof that you are trying.

Embrace errors as learning opportunities that will make you a better driver.



“ The only way to do great work is to love what you do.”

- Steve Jobs

**Enjoy the thrill of autocross;
your enthusiasm will
fuel your progress!**



MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Frank Torres



Frank Torres is a relative newcomer to SCCA autocross, however not to motorsports. He joined SCCA in Dec of 2023 and has participated in every autocross event he can get to.

His previous background before autocross was track driving experience with HPDE and Time Trials. He has served as a HPDE instructor with a couple of clubs. Although he enjoys driving on the track, the wide range of challenges with autocross makes it very appealing to him. The challenges he most enjoys are that with autocross, it forces drivers to look ahead and requires much more focus and concentration to do well.

Frank drives a 2024 VW GTI. He chose this model for better handling and suspension than his previous GTI models that he owned. He's have been a fan of VW since his first VW Rabbit in high school and has owned a wide range of models ranging from the Jetta to the GTI. It is interesting to note, all the cars Frank has owned have had a manual transmission.

This happy-go-lucky guy had been mostly working the course as a volunteer, picking up cones until this past fall when he attended the AZ Solo autocross school and was trained to be starter. He reports he really enjoy serving as a starter the most because it requires so much focus! With a big smile he shares, "The session is over before I even realize it!"

Frank lives in Anthem, AZ with his wife and kids. His oldest child is at NAU, and the other two are in 4th and 5th grades. Frank's other hobbies outside of autocross and track driving include movies, traveling, working out, and spending time with the family. Some day, he'd like to own a Porsche 718 Cayman.

Pylon Quiz

The **SCCA Nationals Tire Rack National Tour** event is held at AMP on February 21-23, 2025. **Did you know:**

- 1. Tire Rack** has been a sponsor of the SCCA Solo National Championships since 2000. Their support has played a significant role in enhancing the event and promoting grassroots motorsports in the United States.
- 2. Tire Rack** is a prominent online retailer specializing in tires, wheels, and automotive accessories. Founded in 1979, the company has established itself as a leading source for consumers looking to purchase tires for a wide variety of vehicle types, including cars, trucks, and SUVs.
- 3. Tire Rack** has its own testing facility located in South Bend, Indiana, where they conduct tire tests. This facility allows them to evaluate performance characteristics of different tires under various conditions, contributing to their reputation for quality and performance
- 4.** In addition to the SCCA Solo National Championships, **Tire Rack** sponsors numerous autocross events across the country, providing a platform for drivers to compete in a safe and controlled environment.

Tire Rack Pro Auto Events

focus on promoting safe, fun & educational events for drivers of all skill levels, enhancing their driving experience, and fostering a passion for motorsports





The Apex line in auto crossing refers to the optimal path a vehicle takes through a corner, typically defined by where the car reaches the innermost point of the turn. This line allows for the best balance of speed and control, enabling drivers to exit the corner as quickly as possible while maintaining stability. Here are some tips to help you improve your Apex effectiveness:

- 1. Understand the Apex:** The apex is the point on the inside of a turn where you should ideally be closest to the inside curb. Hitting the apex allows you to maintain speed and set up for the next turn.
- 2. Plan Your Line:** Before you even start driving, visualize the ideal racing line. This means identifying where you should brake, turn in, hit the apex, and accelerate out of the corner.
- 3. Use Trail Braking:** As you approach the turn, apply the brakes to slow down, but gradually release them as you enter the turn. This technique helps transfer weight to the front tires, improving grip.
- 4. Turn-In Point:** Identify a point on the track where you will begin turning into the corner. This is typically a few feet before the apex, allowing you to carry more speed through the turn.
- 5. Look Ahead:** Keep your eyes focused on where you want to go, not directly in front of you. This helps you anticipate the next move and maintain a smooth flow through the course.
- 6. Throttle Control:** As you approach the apex, smoothly transition to the throttle. Aim to accelerate out of the turn as soon as you pass the apex, which will help you maintain speed on the straight sections.
- 7. Practice Different Turns:** Each corner may require a slightly different approach, so practice various types of turns (tight, sweeping, etc.) to get comfortable with adjusting your technique.
- 8. Feedback and Data:** If possible, have someone watch your runs or use data analysis tools to see where you can improve your apex approach and overall line.
- 9. Stay Relaxed:** Tension can lead to oversteering or understeering. Keep your hands relaxed on the wheel and remain calm to maintain better control of the car.
- 10. Experiment and Learn:** Each autocross event is different, so use each run to experiment with your line, braking points, and throttle application. Learn from each run to improve your technique.

By focusing on these tips and practicing regularly, you'll improve your ability to hit the Apex and enhance your overall performance in autocross.