

Lessons Learned From a Rookie Racer

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This is my first year as a CenTex member, NCCC member, and participating in NCCC autocross events. By the time you read this, the NCCC season will nearly be over, with only a handful of events remaining. It has been a very busy and exciting first year. For those of you who have yet to participate or attend one of these fun-filled events, I write this to explain what you are missing.

First, there are many friendly faces and supportive racers out there that are willing to lend some advice or even a hand. When a competitor breaks down or runs out of gas, there are many people from all clubs willing to give that car a push back onto the trailer. It is not the cutthroat competition one would expect. Instead, when somebody has a good lap they are congratulated. We are all out there for the same reason: to enjoy our cars for what they were truly designed for, racing.

I know many people enjoy cleaning and showing your beautiful ride(s). And others enjoy going fast in a straight line. This year I have learned first-hand that our cars are much, much more than that. These events are safe and insured, which make it the perfect place to learn how to drive your car to your limits. At most events, the worst damage you can do your vehicle is caused by those annoying orange cones. I have heard that the marks disappear with some cleaner wax and elbow grease, but I would not know this personally.

My car's exterior color is white, which is not the ideal color for collecting tire rubber and track debris. The cure: before every event, I sit in the garage and protect my fender panels with painters tape. This tape is not as adhesive as masking tape, therefore not leaving a residue to clean after removal. It can be cheaply purchased at any hardware store. I use multiple layers on the rear fender panels to prevent any gravel from chipping the paint. With a little pre-race prepping, you can safely prevent any blemishes damaging your beautiful ride. Just think of it as a boxer taping his knuckles before a prizefight if that will help get you in a competitive mood. Just don't play Eye of Tiger, it might become too distracting.

There are many classes at these events, based on model and modifications. I compete in a class for C5's that allow some modifications, which includes race tires, performance exhaust system, and other misc. drivetrain mods. If your car is factory stock, they have a class for that too. My biggest recommendation is good brakes and tires, and a comfortable helmet. Our cars are pretty darn good from the factory. I use some cheap

\$25 dollar rotors, good brake pads, and fresh high temp brake fluid. I am fortunate to have a father who has sponsored me with his trailer for the year. This makes the weekend a little more worry free, because if something happens to the car, I know I will get it home.

I have seen men and women of all levels of ability competing. Some beautiful classics, some primed beasts, some stock, some fitted with a rollcage and removed interior, and even some new C6's. I think there are many of us eagerly waiting for that first new Z06 to make an appearance. I also hope to see some new faces at future events. I challenge each of you to attend a practice or event with the intention to either pilot or co-pilot. The only thing to fear is becoming addicted, as I have, thanks to my father and his C4 many years ago. If you have any questions, there are plenty of experienced club members who will be helpful. Even this rookie might be able to give some assistance.



Great White Racing #269
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