



Pylon Press

April 2025 Spring Series #4

SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA - PHOENIX AZ SOLO REGION

Event Synopsis

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The gloves were off for the final points race of the 2025 spring series, with several class races coming down to the wire. This event held special significance as it marked the last competition for the Phoenix, Arizona Solo Region at Arizona Motorsports Park. Starting next fall, we are scheduled to host our regular series of events at the Phoenix Raceway facility in Avondale, AZ.

The course design for this final race was both fluid and quick, allowing for seamless transitions from point to point. Thanks to minimal DNFs and reruns, drivers were granted the opportunity for five runs each, which contributed to an exhilarating atmosphere. The mood in the grid between runs was a blend of excitement and determination, with competitors eagerly checking their cell phones to compare lap times and PAX scores. The camaraderie among participants was palpable, as they shared insights and strategies while eyeing the leaderboard, fully aware that every second counted in this thrilling showdown.



Driver of the Month

Donald Lofstrom

Donald Lofstrom races for fun and has recently become more competitive in his class after equipping his 1993 Mustang LX convertible with 200 treadwear (200tw) tires. This car served as his daily driver for a few years before he decided to prepare it for racing. He replaced nearly every suspension component with parts from Maximum Motorsports, reinforced the subframes, and added ladder-style bracing from the subframes to the pinch weld rails. To accommodate wider tires, he modified the body to fit 315s at all four corners, though he's currently using 275s due to the cost of tires. He also made some unique customizations to give the car a distinctive look, including E36 BMW headlights, 240sx side skirts, a Prelude front bumper, and student-made spoilers and splitters. For now, he has kept the engine and transmission stock, maintaining around 200 horsepower, but he is optimistic about his car's competitiveness and plans to increase its power in the future.

Donald began drag racing in high school when he built a 1972 Challenger in auto shop class after selling his first car, a 1948 Plymouth sedan. Over the years, he has owned several vehicles, from CRXs to 240SXs, a 350Z, and an NB Miata, all while realizing he couldn't leave a car untouched. Now, he has come full circle by working as a high school teacher in an automotive program and helping to lead the customs and restorations program at the American Leadership Academy Applied Technologies in Mesa, AZ. Donald lives in San Tan Valley with his wife and 2-year-old daughter. When he is not building or racing, Donald sings and plays guitar for a psychobilly band called the DeVillains.

GIVE IT A WHIRL EVENT

On May 10, 2025
racers will try out the new
racing venue @
PHOENIX RACEWAY in Avondale, AZ

For more information check the
club website @azsolo.com



Bill and Cheryl Shumate
2015 Dodge Challenger SRT

In addition to their racing endeavors, the couple organizes an annual charity poker run on the last Saturday of September to raise funds for suicide awareness initiatives

While the Challenger may not be the most family-friendly vehicle, it boasts impressive specifications in the autocross arena, weighing in at 4,300 pounds. With 485 horsepower and 475 lb-ft of torque, it commands attention on the track. The Shumates run 305x30 tires on 20" wheels, equipped with K-Sport coilovers, Progress sway bars, EBC brake pads, and a racing harness, while the rest remains stock. Over the past six years, the car has seen action at Texas Motor Speedway, participated in drag races, and engaged in autocross events – including a decade-long involvement with Goodguys and now two years with PASR.

When they bought this car, their goal was simply to enjoy it wherever they went. Once they started to autocross, the competitiveness came out and so did the few changes they have made to the car. Their next goal is to return the car to its original state and road trip across the country. Their Challenger has traversed the roads of Arizona, California, Colorado, Texas, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada, and they eagerly anticipate many more journeys ahead.

Bill and Cheryl Shumate drive a car that truly stands out – and that's exactly why they chose the striking Sublime Green 2015 Dodge Challenger SRT. Their purchase was fueled by a profound purpose: to honor the memory of their son, Justin, who tragically died by suicide at the age of 19. Eleven years have passed since that heart-wrenching loss, and the Shumates recognized the urgent need to promote suicide awareness and prevention, ensuring Justin's legacy lives on. A devoted Dodge enthusiast, Justin had a special fondness for the Challenger, and green was his favorite color. One day, while Cheryl was browsing online for cars—a rare occurrence for her—she stumbled upon this particular Challenger. It was the perfect car in the perfect color, and just four hours later, it was theirs. Thus began their remarkable journey.

"The autocross community is unlike any other we have encountered. We have been embraced by countless individuals eager to learn about Justin and Team Justin Racing, and we are grateful for the opportunity to share his story. If we can help even one person or save a family from experiencing this devastating trauma, then this car and our efforts are worth every penny," the loving couple shared.

SUICIDE AWARENESS

Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide. In the U.S., it's the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 10-34. Risk factors can include mental health disorders (like depression and anxiety), substance abuse, trauma, isolation, and major life changes.

Signs of Suicidal Thoughts

- Talking about wanting to die or feeling hopeless.
- Expressing feelings of being a burden to others.
- Increased substance use or reckless behavior.
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and activities.
- Changes in mood, sleep, or eating patterns.

Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) for free and confidential support 24/7.

Crisis Text Line: Text "HELLO" to 741741 for immediate support via text message.

Volunteers of the Month



Pictured below from right to left are **Mike Hitt, Amanda Hitt, Mathew Leon, and Daniel Hipkind**—an exceptional team that forms the backbone of the PASR group's venerable registration crew. Rising early and being the first to arrive at the track in the chilly, dark predawn hours, these dedicated individuals exemplify commitment and passion.

With unwavering smiles and the precise run group information for each driver, they transform the often-chaotic start of race day into a seamless experience. Their work is marked by remarkable efficiency, courtesy, and meticulous preparation, ensuring that everyone feels supported and informed.

Week after week, they stand ready, equipped with accurate information and answers to our questions, making them invaluable to our racing community. Your dedication does not go unnoticed, and we are immensely grateful for the energy and enthusiasm you bring to every event. Thank you for being the shining stars behind the scenes—your hard work inspires us all!

Volunteering at autocross events is not just about the cars:
it's about the community, the thrill of the race, and the
passion we share for motorsports"



tech tip

SAVE THOSE PRECIOUS TENTHS OF A SECOND



The difference in solo racing results among the top three positions can often come down to just a few tenths of a second. Here are some driving tips that might help save those precious tenths, ensuring drivers maximize their performance on the course.

1. Adjusting Passing Techniques in Slalom

Sections: Solo drivers frequently tend to pass closer to the slalom cones on the driver's side of the car, as this side offers better visibility of the passing cone. However, consider squeezing in a bit more on the passenger side to create a shorter, more efficient line through the slalom. This adjustment can lead to faster times by reducing the distance traveled.

2. Avoid Wheel Spinning at the Start: While it might look impressive to spin the wheels when crossing the starting line, this practice actually hampers forward momentum. Focus on a smooth launch instead, as this will provide better acceleration and set a strong foundation for your run.

3. Navigating Sharp Turns: During right-angle or very sharp turns, solo drivers often enter the turn too quickly, leading to wide steering and an excessively long line around the cone. To improve your time, remember the mantra: "When it's slow and tight, leave little daylight." By approaching these turns with controlled speed and precision, you can maintain a tighter line and reduce overall run time.

By applying these tips, drivers can possibly shave off crucial tenths of a second, enhancing their competitive edge in solo racing. Every small improvement can make a significant difference in the final standings!

PYLON PRESS QUIZ

Most racers know lighter wheels will generally add better performance to their race cars. The reason is that less rotating mass equals more speed. This quiz assesses knowledge about the impact of weight on race car performance, focusing on the concepts of unsprung and sprung weight.

1. T or F Reducing the weight of an unsprung part such as a wheel by 1 pound will give the same results as taking 20 pounds off the car weight.
2. T or F Unsprung weight can be gained by installing lighter tires, lug nuts, brake parts, and hubs.
3. T or F As well as improved acceleration, unsprung weight can improve traction and stability.
4. T or F Lowering unsprung weight has little impact on cornering speeds and grip.

Answers

1. False. The reasoning is that there is no fixed ratio between unsprung weight reduction and overall vehicle weight reduction; the effects vary based on the specific application and context
2. True. Each of these components contributes to the unsprung weight of the vehicle, and using lighter alternatives will indeed reduce this weight.
3. True. Lighter unsprung components, such as wheels, allow for a less impactful rebound after hitting bumps, which enhances traction and stability during driving.
4. False. Reducing unsprung weight improves the vehicle's ability to maintain grip during cornering by allowing the tires to respond better to road conditions, thus enhancing overall handling and cornering performance.

In summary, statements 2 and 3 are true, while statements 1 and 4 are false. The quiz emphasizes the importance of understanding how unsprung weight affects race car dynamics.

Thank You



Arizona Motorsports Park LLC was established on June 22, 1999 – We honor the ending of a racing era and have deep appreciate for Dan & Nancy Maloney's contributions to Autocross racing and for hosting PASR for so many years.



As of 2025, several companies are leading the way in the development of flying cars, showcasing advancements in technology and sustainable designs. Here are three notable ones:

1. **Alef Aeronautics:** Based in California, Alef is known for its Model A, which features vertical takeoff capabilities and advanced electric propulsion. The Model A has received FAA certification and is priced at around \$300,000, making it a significant step toward personal air mobility.
2. **XPeng:** This Chinese company has been making headlines with its XPeng X2, which focuses on eco-friendly urban air mobility. XPeng is advancing towards mass production, aiming to integrate flying cars into urban settings effectively.
3. **Joby Aviation:** Known for its S4 aircraft, Joby Aviation is focused on electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) technology. The S4 is designed for urban environments with a range of 150 miles and zero emissions, making it a sustainable option for future transportation.