

LONE STAR REGION PCA DE PROGRAM -- GENERAL CRITERIA FOR RUN GROUP PROMOTION

For almost 20 years, Lone Star Region has held High Speed Driver Education events at Texas World Speedway.

During that time, we have introduced hundreds of students to our DE Program. Almost all began as Green Run Group students and progressed from there. That would include almost the entire Instructor Group. And today, we all still remain students trying to improve our performance.

It is fair to say that we have used the "seat-of-the-pants" method of promoting students to higher run groups. We knew a better driver when we saw him/her!

This document is an attempt to put in writing the general criteria for run group promotion that is understandable to both the student and the instructor. One of our goals is to have a concise and easy to read document. We could have gone on and on for pages and pages in boring detail.

We have divided the requirements into 4 categories:

1. **KNOWLEDGE**

When drivers arrive at the DE for the first time, they are clueless. They do not know the track, know nothing about our procedures, know nothing about flags, etc. **KNOWLEDGE IS THE STUFF TO BE LEARNED BY STUDENTS.**

2. **SAFETY**

Safety to you and the other drivers at the track is the most important thing to us. Safety in the operation of your car is to be learned. **SAFETY IS SOMETHING TO BE DEMONSTRATED BY STUDENTS.**

3. **SKILLS**

Some skills need to be forgotten, others learned. Better skills generally mean high level of competence. **SKILLS ARE SOMETHING TO BE ACQUIRED BY STUDENTS.**

4. **BEHAVIOR**

Many items fall in here. **BEHAVIOR IS SOMETHING TO BE EXHIBITED BY STUDENTS.**

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Green to Blue

KNOWLEDGE

- The Line: drives “the LSR line” correctly and with reasonable consistency.
- Understands PCA DE track procedures.

SAFETY

- Driving Speed: drives at the skill level and pace of the Blue group.
- Car Control: reasonably safe and in control of his car. His (and others) safety is of foremost concern.
- Flags: consistent flag awareness. Acknowledges corner workers on first and last lap.

SKILLS

- Driving: begins to demonstrate smooth inputs (steering, pedals & shifting) in car’s operation. Safely drives using the entire track and achieving turn-ins, apexes and track outs. Is aware of traffic and acts accordingly.
- Visual: maintains visual focus at the track and traffic beyond the car in front.
- Passing: uses passing signals correctly (including “staying on line” while being passed).

BEHAVIOR

- Instruction: follows directions of the instructor.
- Courtesy: courteous and safe to others in traffic.
- Consistent: is aware of his mistakes and corrects with help of the instructor.
- Comfort: relaxed and enjoying himself. Calm in traffic and passing situations.

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Blue to Blue Solo

Conceptually, the Blue driver is ready for promotion when he demonstrates that he understands how to be safe and courteous on-track. He has a good understanding of how to drive the track. He would be safe to be on track without an instructor (even though his driving skills are still at the “novice” level).

KNOWLEDGE

- ❑ The Line: drives “the LSR line” consistently and correctly. Can safely vary the line for debris, etc.
- ❑ Procedures & Rules: displays full knowledge of procedures, flags and driving terminology. Knows and follows “LSR” rules.

SAFETY

- ❑ Driving Speed: drives at the skill level and pace of the top of the Blue group. Always driving within the limits of his ability.
- ❑ Car Control: safe enough to drive without instructor and be in full control of his car.
- ❑ Flags: excellent recognition and strict adherence to flags.

SKILLS

- ❑ Driving: consistent with reasonably smooth inputs (steering, pedals & shifting) in car’s operation. Exhibits an understanding of what to do as a result of an error (i.e., drive straight off, don’t try to pull back, watch corner workers for assistance, etc.). Knows what to expect in the critical mistake areas.
- ❑ Visual: looks at the track and traffic far ahead; anticipates the effects of a slower car in front.
- ❑ Passing: does not follow too closely when far from a passing zone. Neither gives nor accepts late passing signals. Gives passing signals promptly without being reminded. Passes with good safety margins. Works well with other drivers in passing or being passed.

BEHAVIOR

- ❑ Instruction: responds to instruction and demonstrates continuing improvement. Is safe to drive on the track alone for himself and others.
- ❑ Courtesy: exhibits good manners, patience and consideration for other drivers.
- ❑ Consistent: makes only the odd minor driving mistake and self corrects. Keeps the car in the right place on the track.
- ❑ Comfort: comfortable in what he is doing.

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Blue Solo to Yellow

Conceptually, The Blue Solo driver is ready for promotion when he fully understands all the procedural issues, demonstrated his safety skills and excellent behavioral attitudes and can now concentrate exclusively on his driving skills.

KNOWLEDGE

- ❑ The Line: drives “the LSR line” consistently using the full track and is prepared for different approaches to corners.
- ❑ Has mastered all of the basics that are discussed in the Blue classroom and is ready to move to the Yellow classroom where advanced topics are discussed.
- ❑ Situational Awareness: situational awareness should be excellent. He should be starting to anticipate problems before they arise. Is able to analyze errors and make corrections on future laps. Displays proper mental attitude (calm, not racing, not too fast just because of yellow)

SAFETY

- ❑ Driving Speed: drives at the skill level and pace of the Yellow group. Always driving within the limits of his ability.
- ❑ Car Control: demonstrates competent car control and recovery skills as needed.
- ❑ Flags: Consciously paying attention to flagging stations and aware of cars and conditions around him
- ❑ Good Driving Record – no repeat Black Flags.

SKILLS

- ❑ Driving: smoothly accomplishes steering, accelerating, downshifting and braking (even if not using heel/toe techniques). Uses the full braking potential of the car. Carries reasonable momentum into corners. Can drive the track so smoothly and consistently, such that PSM or ABS are seldom engaged.
- ❑ Visual: good vision skills at all times.
- ❑ Passing: prompt and courteous passing signals. Excellent at passing and being passed.

BEHAVIOR

- ❑ Instruction: responds to instruction and demonstrates continuing improvement.
- ❑ Courtesy: calmly deals with faster traffic and close passing situations.
- ❑ Consistent: all laps are consistent (i.e., for corners – correct entry, apex & exit) without serious errors or mental lapses.
- ❑ Comfort: see and responds to all of the activities that will effect what he is doing on the track. Is driving the car to at least 75% of its capabilities and is comfortable doing so.

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For Yellow to White

Conceptually, the Yellow driver is ready for promotion to White when he thoroughly understands how to drive on the track and can do so effortlessly. Essentially, all “procedural” learning is over, and he can focus exclusively on improving his driving skills.

KNOWLEDGE

- ❑ The Line: drives the car flawlessly and effortlessly using a line appropriate for his vehicle.
- ❑ Driver is expected to be expert in all the driving skills taught by LSR.
- ❑ Situational Awareness: situational awareness should be excellent; he should anticipate problems early.

SAFETY

- ❑ Driving Speed: drives at the skill level and pace of the White group. Always driving within the limits of his ability. Is driving the car to at least 80% of its capabilities.
- ❑ Car Control: shows real concern about his safety and that of others.
- ❑ Flags: continued improvement on flag awareness. Subconsciously and routinely sees all flag stations.

SKILLS

- ❑ Driving: very smooth inputs (steering, pedals & shifting) both at medium and higher speeds. Instinctively controls and corrects over-steer, under-steer, etc. Carries considerable momentum through corners. Proper thresh-hold braking. Can safely vary the line in any corner (to avoid debris or to make passes without needing to return to the line). Calmly deals with cars in close proximity. Exhibits patience in dealing with slower cars. Uses (or begins to use) more advanced skills, such as left-foot braking, trail braking, throttle steering and heel/toe.
- ❑ Visual: excellent forward vision skills at all times.
- ❑ Passing: seamlessly passes with ease and expertise.

BEHAVIOR

- ❑ Instruction: has requested continued instruction and demonstrates continuing improvement.
- ❑ Courtesy: displays a courteous and respectful attitude, avoids intimidation and avoids overly aggressive behavior. Is a “patient” driver.
- ❑ Consistent: makes very few mistakes on track. Not prone to losing control. Does not rely on PSM or ABS in normal conditions.
- ❑ Comfort: will be comfortable with lots of faster cars around him. Is probably among the better and safer drives in this group.

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White to Instructor Candidate

Conceptually, the experienced White driver is probably indistinguishable from those drivers in Red

- ❑ Accomplished Driver: should be a very accomplished driver capable of driving a variety of lines through any corner. Is mentally ahead of the car and is among the better and safer drivers in the white run group. . *In other words, an individual that you would not be afraid to share very close driving space.*
- ❑ Advanced Techniques: commonly and comfortably uses techniques, such as left-foot braking, trail braking, throttle steering and heel/toe.
- ❑ Communications Skills: must have the proper attitude, desire and communication skills to be an instructor.
- ❑ Commitment: must be available for most DE's.