



Bob Bondurant, owner of Bondurant School of High Performance Driving, is flanked by Danellie Harris of Grosse Pointe, left, and by Kris

Klemek of Southfield and Beverly Dinamore of Farmington.

Some driving advice from a veteran driver

By Susan Buck
staff writer

GETTING A better feel for how your car handles can help you avoid accidents.

That's the advice of Bob Bondurant, a consumer advisor to Ford Motor Co.

Bondurant, a 14-year veteran of professional racing, is also the owner of the Bondurant School of High Performance Driving in Sonoma, Calif., at Sears Point International Raceway, north of San Francisco.

Recently, he presented a 15-minute presentation on safe driving tips at a luncheon sponsored by the Ford Division Detroit District Office, held at the Roostertail in Detroit.

"Cars have changed a lot in their handling and so has the way we handle them," Bondurant said. "The way you can get the most out of that car is through feel — arms, legs, hands — the way your hands feel on the wheel."

"When you get tense, you choke off 50 percent of your sensitivity. People don't always think about driving. They're thinking about the day's activities, what they're going to do to night, when somebody in front of them slams on the brakes... and lock the tires into a slide or spin."

Bondurant advises drivers to look ahead when they drive. "When someone does that, (slams on the brakes), lift off the gas, make a lane change and revise the situation. It's a very simple maneuver. The car will respond better, more evenly and also, you'll get more mileage. Try to feel what the car is telling you."

HE ADVISED the audience to check tire pressure every 30 days, making sure pressure is kept between 32 to 35 pounds.

Bondurant replaced the originally planned speaker, Lyn St. James, who also is a professional race car driver and consumer advisor to Ford. St. James was unable to attend because she was in a car accident recently.

St. James was to offer new-car-buying strategies to the 200 businesswomen who came to the meeting. These included members from Women in Communications, Inc. and the American Business Women's Association.

Bondurant spent 14 years as a professional racer in the European long-distance and Formula 1 circuits. He helped win the World Manufacturers' Championship in 1965 for the United States in a Ford-Shelby American Cobra. He drove for race car driver Dan Gurney's All American Racers in Formula 1 events.

He is author of "Bob Bondurant on High Performance Driving" and technical adviser to the motion pictures "Winning" and "Grand Prix." He trained the actors and did much of the driving himself.

BONDURANT'S SCHOOL teaches a variety of driving techniques including an anti-kidnapping and anti-terrorist corporate chauffeur's course (\$1,800); high-performance driving courses (\$295 for one day; \$650 and \$975 for 2-3 days); stunt driver training and police driver training.

Bondurant began offering the anti-terrorist, anti-kidnapping corporate chauffeurs course 10 years ago after he was approached by an unnamed oil company. The school offers complete confidentiality, if desired.

Most of these people (in the corporate executive's and chauffeur's course) have had threats made on them, he said. "It happens more often than you know. I call it (the course) cheap life insurance."

"I went to the FBI and the CIA to get their program to make sure I was really teaching the right thing."

And I was told by one gentleman that what I was teaching was more thorough than what they were teaching.

Enrollment escalated during the time of the Patty Hearst kidnapping a decade ago, subsided and is picking up again, Bondurant said.

"Most chases last three to five minutes. In most chases, the chauffeur gives up or is run off the road and crashes. I instruct people to keep that car moving at all costs. As soon as you stop, you're a dead man. They don't want you, they want the

people in the back seat," Bondurant said.

He is also thinking of teaching a similar personal safety course designed just for women. "They (the kidnapper or attacker) has the element of surprise. You want to turn that element of surprise back on them."

"Most people don't know how to turn corners very well. We teach them to know where police stations are. We teach basic maneuvers that are not taught in driver training classes."

She will vie for title


Christine Wiecezka of Farmington has been selected as a semifinalist in the fourth annual Miss Detroit Raceway Beauty Pageant, sponsored by Metro 25 Car Care Centers, to take place at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, June 19, in Premier Center, Sterling Heights.

Wiecezka, 22, a full-time student at Oakland Community College, will compete for the crown against approximately 100 other young women from across the state. Last year's winner, Rosanne Darnis of Fraser, will crown her successor at 10:15 p.m.

"The Miss Detroit Raceway beauty

pageant adds to the positive image of Detroit as it comes under the world's microscope during the Grand Prix," said Annalisa Sokol, executive director of the pageant. "On a local level, it provides a challenging opportunity for many metropolitan Detroit women to demonstrate their personal and physical beauty in a rewarding competition."

Admission to the beauty pageant is \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door. Tickets are available at the Premier Center box office. For further information, call Annalisa Sokol at 557-RACE.



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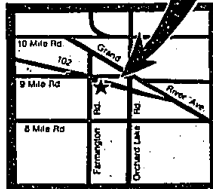
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