

Porsche Track Experience (PTX) Master's Class Review *by Carl Justice*

Last month, I put together a FAQ for anyone interested in or just getting started with DE. If you haven't seen it yet, check it out! ([Beginner's HPDE FAQ](#))

Before we dive into more advanced DE topics and tips, I have to share my recent adventure at the Porsche Track Experience (PTX) at Barber Motorsports Park, where I tackled the Master's Class alongside our fearless president!

If you're eager for track time but still hesitant about pushing your own car in HPDE, PTX is the perfect solution. What's better than stretching your car's legs on track? Burning the tires and brakes off someone else's—while getting pro-level coaching!

What is PTX?

PTX offers everything from introductory track courses to advanced programs that qualify you for an SCCA racing license. The Master's Class follows a format similar to beginner courses but ditches the lead/follow structure—you're solo on track. If you're a novice, don't worry! You'll get a similar experience but with an instructor on track with you.

As for the track, facilities, and hospitality? Pure Porsche perfection. From the Grand Bohemian Hotel to the catered meals, PTX delivers an experience that meets—and exceeds—Porscheophile expectations.

Night Before: Arriving in Style

The experience kicks off the night before at the Grand Bohemian Hotel – Mountain Brook, a beautiful hotel in a fantastic part of town with plenty of great restaurants both in and outside the hotel.

I walked into my room to find a personalized welcome note and an adrenaline-pumping PTX video already playing on the TV. Well played, Porsche.

Day 1: Let's Get to Work

The next morning, a shuttle picks us up at the hotel, along with 30 of our new closest friends, and we head to the gorgeous Barber Motorsports Park. After registration and a full catered breakfast, we go straight into a short classroom session before jumping into the cars.

The day is split into two parts:

1. Drills (off-track exercises to sharpen technique)
2. Track Time

Both morning and afternoon sessions include both elements, with a fantastic catered lunch in between.

Morning Drills: Shaking Off the Rust

We start the day with three key drills in the 992 Carrera GTS (except autocross, which we do in a 718 GTS 4.0):

1. Wet Skidpad Figure-8 – Practicing trail braking and throttle control at low speeds to correct slides and refine technique.
2. Trail Braking Course – A large section of pavement dedicated to refining braking technique.
3. Autocross – Quick reflexes, car placement, and precision on a smaller scale.

With our skills warmed up, it's time to hit the track!

First Track Session: Lead/Follow with the Pros

We head out in 992 GTS models in a lead/follow format, grouped in sets of four. Every few laps, the front car peels off to the back, and the instructor (watching in his rearview mirror) gives live feedback over the radio—yes, they're that good.

Speaking of the Instructors...

These guys aren't just great—they're world-class. While HPDE instructors are excellent, PTX coaches are the real deal with serious professional racing experience. They can spot your mistakes before you do and give instant, razor-sharp feedback to help you improve.

After a solid first session, we come in for a break, get more feedback, then head back out for another run.

Lunch break? Catered meal with the coaches and fellow drivers. A great time to refuel, swap stories, and absorb lessons from the morning.

Let's Talk About the 992 GTS... Wow.

I've driven plenty of Porsches, but this car surprised me.

- 475 HP
- Turbo torque for days
- PCCB (Porsche Carbon Ceramic Brakes)
- Rear-wheel steering

It eats up the track in stock form with a standard alignment and Pirellis (shoutout to the PTX tire sponsor). Despite all the electronics, it doesn't feel artificial—it's predictable, quick, and ridiculously capable. I now have a whole new respect for this car.

And speaking of fast cars... I can't wait for Todd to let us take his GT3 out for a spin on track after experiencing just the GTS. (Hint, hint.)

Afternoon: Taking It Up a Notch

The afternoon kicks off with another round of drills—same exercises, but adding complexity.

These drills are designed to reinforce muscle memory and refine skills that translate directly to faster, smoother laps on track.

Solo Track Time: The Real Fun Begins

Now we're going solo—just like advanced HPDE groups, with passing zones on straights.

Even better? PTX records everything. Each car has a VBOX telemetry system, and we get a USB drive with video and data to analyze later.

Coaches are stationed at key corners, watching and taking notes. After a 40-minute session, we come in for feedback from every coach, take notes, then head back out to apply the advice. Rinse and repeat.

Validation Feels Good... Sometimes

Let's be real: you'll hear plenty of constructive criticism. But when you get it right? It feels amazing.

After the first session, constantly nailing Turn 5 (the hairpin), my coach fist-bumps me and says:

“Textbook. Don't change a thing. Everyone, follow this guy if you want to see how it's done.”

I think I shed a single tear.

Then, after another session, I walk back in, and the same coach smirks and says:

“Go away, you're perfect.”

Yeah... not every corner was that flattering, but the feedback was invaluable.

Night Out with the Instructors

Dinner? Steak, beers, and stories.

We sat with Jack Joyner, one of our favorite coaches. If you ever get the chance to meet Jack, do it. He's a WRL veteran, a longtime PTX instructor, and—best of all—the guy who once passed the race leader in a Porsche pace car before slowing the field down.

Race control's only comment? "That was badass."

Day 2: Rain or Shine... Mostly Rain

The second day should have been a double repeat of our solo track sessions. But Mother Nature had other plans.

With the track soaked, we pivoted to a pro-level turn-by-turn virtual track walk—something normally reserved for the next-level class. Bonus!

Then, we loaded into vans and drove onto the track itself, stopping at each corner to watch a pro driver go flat-out, showing us the ideal line just a few feet away.

Once conditions improved slightly, we got one last wet track session—an incredible way to practice car control at lower speeds.

And Todd? Absolutely fearless in the rain. It was like he bought the extra insurance and was out to prove a point.

Final Thoughts: Sign Up Now.

Porsche even gave us a credit toward our next course since we missed some track time.

If you're on the fence about PTX, do it. Whether you're a beginner, intermediate, or advanced driver, there's a lot to learn as you progress through these courses. Whether you want to try out the track using someone else's car, or you want to hone your skills with pro coaching, or both, PTX has a lot to offer!

This experience was 100% worth it. Now... when's the next one?