

# Jersey Racing Board Drivers School Confirmation

Congratulations and welcome to the Jersey Racing Board's Competition Drivers School. This is your first step in obtaining an SCCA competition license. It is our goal to help you become the best-qualified driver possible and ultimately a safe SCCA racer. We propose to show you how to drive safely, how to be competitive, and how to finish a race weekend with your car and yourself in good condition. There is a delicate balance that must be established between your driving technique and your car's performance that can only be achieved through concentration, experience and practice.

Nobody is born with knowledge of how to race, though some people naturally have skills that help them to be successful at racing. In any case, it is necessary to practice and learn in order to perform at a high level. Opportunity, knowledge, training, and practice are needed to hone these skills. We offer all four elements at our drivers school and urge you to take advantage of them. Ask questions of your instructors. Collectively they represent literally hundreds of years of racing experience. Have them demonstrate. Watch. Listen. Absorb. Practice. The school is for your benefit. Take advantage of it.

The procedure for obtaining a competition license has been developed over a number of years by the SCCA and is considered to be thorough in every respect. In order to maintain this required level of professionalism, the Jersey Racing Board takes advantage of the experience and ability of its instructors. These instructors represent many years of racing experience against the best competition the sport offers, but more importantly, they have the ability to analyze your performance and convey information to you in an understandable fashion. Instructor assignments are made without favoritism and are usually based on similar car/class experience.

The attached syllabus will provide additional insight into the school process that isn't necessarily contained in your copy of the *General Competition Rules*. We hope that you will benefit from this information. We wish you the best of luck and hope that you enjoy the experience.

Welcome!

**Butch**

Chief Instructor

Jersey Racing Board, SCCA

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## Chief Instructor

Butch O'Connor - 973 729-2714 - bfo@spsk.com

## Group Chiefs

Group 1- Michael Schumacher (Open Wheel-Formula & SR) – MSchumacher@F1.com

Group 2- Jeff Gordon (Closed Wheel) - JGordan@nascar.net

## Acknowledgment

Much of this document and the curriculum for our Drivers School has been drawn from highly the successful program conducted by the Washington DC Region at Summit Point. They have set the standard for SCCA Drivers Schools and have been very generous in sharing their program with other regions. The Jersey Racing Board expresses their sincere gratitude to the Washington DC Region and the many individual members who have developed this excellent program.

## School Goals

The goal of the Jersey Racing Board Competition Drivers School is to Develop Safe SCCA Racers. Upon completion of this school, students should:

- Be able to safely operate a race car at high speed in competition traffic at competitive speeds
- Be able to recognize and react appropriately to all flag signals used at SCCA races
- Be familiar with SCCA race operations and worker specialties
- Be familiar with and understand how to use and abide by the SCCA GCR and event supplementary regulations.

The school is intended for students wishing to compete in SCCA Club Racing. Those wishing to compete in other sanctioning bodies are welcome with the understanding that our standards of performance are geared to SCCA Club Racing. If registration becomes oversubscribed, priority will be given to students seeking to compete in SCCA for the first time.

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## School Description

This School is an intense 2½ day course of experiential learning that is intended to satisfy half of the two-school minimum requirement in SCCA's GCR 5.5.2. Prior to the start of the event on Friday evening students are expected to:

- Arrange all race car preparation and its transport to the track
- Arrange for qualified, experienced crew for the weekend
- Acquire all needed driver safety equipment
- Obtain and study the GCR and Supplementary Regulations
- Fill out the student portion of the Grade Sheet (bring to Friday night session)
- Complete Part 1 – Rules and Regulations of the exam. IMPORTANT, *be sure to include the appropriate page and section references* (bring to the Friday night session where Part 2 will be completed in class)
- OPTIONAL – If needed, students can contact their Group Chief prior to the event. He can offer valuable guidance in preparing for the school and help with your goals and expectations.

The School begins with a mandatory classroom session on Friday evening. See the race announcement for time and location. The classroom session is a must for all students, including those with prior school and/or racing experience. Students are expected to contact the Chief Instructor or their Group Chief if they anticipate a problem getting to this session.

Starting Saturday morning students will be rotating through on-track sessions, in-classroom debriefings and receiving individual instruction. There are practice starts and races on Sunday afternoon. The event closes with a graduation ceremony Sunday evening in the tech area. See the race announcement and schedule updates posted throughout the weekend.

## Required Reading

- General Competition Rules – current edition, Sports Car Club of America
- Event Supplemental Regulations, March Lion Drivers School

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## Other Available Pertinent Resources

- The Racing Driver, Denis Jenkinson, Robert Bentley, Inc., 1964
- Driving in Competition, Alan Johnson, Bond, Parkhurst Publications, 1972
- Inner Game of Golf, W. Timothy Gallwey, Random House, 1979
- Drive to Win, Carroll Smith, Carroll Smith Consulting, 1996
- Inner Speed Secrets, Ross Bentley & Ronn Langford, MBI Publishing Company, 2000
- A Hot Lap around the Lightning Course by Tom Smith, 2008

## Evaluation Criteria

**Flag Recognition** - The Operating Stewards report any flag violations by car number for each session and instructors also observe flag recognition. Examples of particularly good flag performance are noted as well. Instructors take note of their student's car number and grade accordingly.

**Courtesy** - This is a traffic related issue. Is the student aware of faster/slower/competing cars? Does the student give way to faster cars? Give racing room to other drivers? Does the student avoid intimidating slower cars? Treat competing cars with appropriate respect? This is situational awareness.

**Judgment** - This is primarily a traffic related issue. It is a measure of the student's ability to take the appropriate action on the track. How did the student handle a spin recovery? React to flags? Handle a passing situation? To a lesser extent it is also a measure of the student's actions off track. Does the student have suitable crew? Is the student's car well prepared, reliable and suitable for the activity?

**Driving Technique** - This is the student's ability to drive the racing line accurately and consistently. Car control. Other issues such as noticeable difficulty with shifting or braking can be taken into account and graded accordingly.

**Mental Attitude** - This is the student's overall approach to the school and the instruction we offer. Is the student open and responsive? Does the student react positively to input? Does the student actively want to develop his or her skills and participate in SCCA Club Racing? Is the student mentally prepared to be a member of the SCCA Racing community?

**Comparative Lap Times** - This is a measure of the student's ability to drive at speeds approaching those of SCCA Regional competitors under similar circumstances. All students will be graded to the same standard regardless of prior schools or other experience. Therefore, it is expected that students hoping to be recommended for a competition license will be consistently closer to competitive lap times than students without that expectation. *It is NOT necessarily expected that any student be able to post lap times near the record for their respective class.*

**Reactions** - This is a critical determinant for license recommendation. It is a measure of the student's ability to handle competitive racing situations throughout a race weekend. How does the student deal with all the adversity of racing? How are emergency situations handled? Starts? Passing?

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## Grading Standards

A grade of “1” represents a failure. Any grade of “1” in the final grade represents failure in the school. This means “unsuccessful participation” and no credit towards an SCCA license.

A grade of “2” represents a poor performance but it is a minimal passing grade. Receiving “2” in all categories is a passing grade which constitutes “successful participation” and full credit for the school may be applied toward an SCCA competition license.

Students start with a grade of “3” in all categories. Individual performances throughout the weekend adjust this grade. Receiving “3” is a successful performance in that category.

A grade of “4” represents an above average performance in the category. It is expected by comparison that fewer than half of all reasonably active and experienced SCCA Club Racers would receive a grade of “4” in any given category.

A grade of “5” represents an extremely good performance. It is expected by comparison that less than one quarter of all reasonably active and experienced SCCA Club Racers would receive a grade of “5” in any given category.

Final grades are weighted toward Sunday’s performance.

Any student achieving a grade of 2 or above in all categories will be noted as having successfully passed the school. A final grade of 1 in any category constitutes failure to successfully complete the school and that the student will receive no credit for participation per GCR 5.5.2.

## Waiver Requests

“Requests for Waiver” are requests to be considered ready to race and recommended for permission to compete in Regional racing without meeting the requirements of GCR 5.5.2 B & C (*i.e. 6 hours of SCCA School track time at two SCCA approved schools*). Students with prior **racing experience** will need a waiver in addition to successful participation in a single SCCA school, the instructor’s recommendation, and the Group Chief’s and the Chief Steward’s concurrence in order to be granted permission to compete in SCCA Regional racing.

## License Recommendation Standards

The Jersey Racing Board’s instructors make recommendations, not decisions, on licensing. It is the event Chief Steward who ultimately approves the student for competition in SCCA. Our goal is to produce SCCA Club Racers who are competent, safe and fully understand the conduct of SCCA events. Ultimately each recommendation is a personal one that answers the question **“Am I willing to race wheel to wheel with this person?”** All students with the expectation of being recommended for permission to compete in SCCA Regional racing will be held to this standard regardless of prior experience or schools. Similarly, the student’s future plans will have no impact on grading or recommendations. It is possible to pass the school (*i.e. Successful Completion*) without being recommended for an SCCA competition license.

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## Instructional Standards

**Student/Instructor Expectations** - It is each student's responsibility to achieve their goals for the school. Our instructors act as coaches in helping to achieve those goals within the context of becoming Safe SCCA Racers. It is critical that students clearly articulate their goals in order for the instructor to be able to fairly and reasonably establish appropriate performance expectations. All the resources of the school are available to help the students achieve their required level of performance.

**Classroom De-Briefs** – Classroom sessions typically consist of lectures, observer comments and other content prepared by the Group Chief for the benefit of the whole group. Students are expected to promptly make their way from the paddock to the classroom for these sessions.

**Individual Feedback** – Students need specific feedback on their performances. We do this in several ways:

**Instructor feedback** – The individual instructor is the primary source of feedback to a student. This is to assure continuity and clarity. If the student has any reservations about the instructor's assessment, the onus is on the student to make the Group Chief, the Chief Instructor or the Chief Steward aware of the situation early enough in the process to make meaningful changes possible. The individual instructor will have specific objectives for the student to master in achieving the overall goal of becoming a safe SCCA racer. Since the instructor cannot observe the student everywhere around the track, we have other forms of feedback. Instructors are responsible for managing and using this feedback.

**Classroom feedback** – Classroom de-briefing time is the opportunity to get expert feedback from all around the track. Debriefing instructors may identify cars demonstrating particularly good or particularly bad examples of performance, with an explanation. This is for the benefit of all the students, and to let the individual instructors know where their students need help.

**Other instructor feedback** – Observers at various points make notes on all students' performances (see above). This information is channeled to the student through their individual instructor.

**Individual de-briefings** – Students are expected to spend time between the classroom session and the next on-track session with their instructor. This is essential for the student to fully understand the context of what is being presented in the classroom as well as what is being experienced on the track. It is also an opportunity for the instructor to assess characteristics like Judgement and Attitude as well as an opportunity to help identify and/or solve any technical problems with the car. Instructors are required to keep their students well informed on their progress throughout the school. On Saturday after the last classroom session, instructors are expected to formally debrief each student on his or her progress toward passing the school and achieving whatever goals the student may have set, including recommendation for a competition license. This formal debriefing is also repeated on Sunday prior to the practice races.