

# 2023 MCA HPDE Group Levels, Car Preparation and HPDE Rules

## 1. MCA Group Levels:

We have four HPDE groups, which means we run four groups of cars on the track in four track sessions each per day. Sessions last approximately 25 to 30 minutes, depending upon the event. Run groups are based entirely on driver experience (typically use driver history in Motorsports Reg if available) and skill:

**Group 1:** “Novice” drivers are those who have driven zero or very few track days and have not been “signed off” by an instructor for solo track driving. **We automatically provide an in-car instructor as well as informative classroom discussions for each HPDE1 driver at no extra cost.** Passing other cars in Group 1 is strictly regulated and when allowed, only on straights and only after the driver of the lead car signals that it’s safe to pass.

**Group 2:** “Intermediate” drivers are those who have driven at some track days on at least one track and have been “signed off” to drive solo by an instructor on at least one track. Signing up for Group 2 may require a check ride. Passing other cars in Group 2 is only allowed on straights after the driver of the lead car signals.

**Group 3:** “Advanced” drivers are those who have participated in a variety of HPDEs on more than one track. Signing up for Group 3 may require a check ride. Passing other cars in Group 3 is only allowed after the driver of the lead car signals but is allowed only in specified passing sections on the track.

**Group 4:** “Very Advanced” are those who have significant experience. Signing up for Group 4 may require a check ride. Passing other cars in Group 4 is allowed without a point-by signal but may be done anywhere on the track.

## Migrating from a lower run Group to a Higher Group:

To move from Novice Level to Intermediate Level is to have the opportunity to practice the skills and lessons imparted to the driver by having had an in-car instructor present in the car. Only when a student has demonstrated an acceptable track awareness, judgment and car control skill will an instructor allow a student to “solo”. How quickly a driver gets “soloed” is purely dependent upon the progress made by the individual driver.

Once a driver has reached Intermediate status, advancing from one group to another requires the MCA Chief Driving Steward approval. The Chief Steward uses a check ride, observation of the driver on track, feedback from corner workers and other instructors/drivers on track. How quickly a driver advanced to a higher HPDE level is purely dependent upon the progress made by the individual driver and the desire of the driver to advance.

## **2. Preparing Your Car for the Tech Inspection**

The technical requirements for the HPDE are just common-sense checks to make sure your vehicle is in good, safe working order. It is important for you to check out your car before presenting the car for inspection.

### **Wheels and Tires**

The wheels should be without any dents or damage to the mounting surface. The tires should be in good condition. The tread should be above the wear bars. No cords or belts should show. We recommend that the tires be pressurized to the OEM specifications. The date code on the tire must be within 5 years. Flat tires repaired with plugs should not be used as these could fail under the high stress of track conditions. Hubcaps or beauty rings should be removed. They can come off causing a dangerous situation for you & other students. The tire width must be within the rims maximum or minimum width requirements.

### **Steering and Suspension**

Check the wheel bearings by grabbing the tire & trying to move the wheel from side to side. There should not be any play or clunking sounds. The front wheels should move when you turn the steering wheel. There should not be any excess play. CV joint boots cannot be cracked open.

### **Engine**

The engine should not have any leaks that will allow liquids to fall onto the track. These fluids will cause slippery conditions on the track. This includes radiator fluid (antifreeze) which is very slippery. The battery should be secured with two (2) bolts. The battery terminals should be covered to prevent any arcs in case of accidental contact.

### **Brakes**

The brake system should be in good working order with no leaks in the system. The brake lines should not have any cracks. The brake fluid should be clear & at the maximum level. We recommend having the brake fluid flushed before each track event. Brake pads should have plenty of life left in them, as the high speeds on the track will

wear them out faster than the street. Here we recommend that brake pads be at least half life or higher. The brake lights should function properly.

### **Safety and Equipment**

Seatbelts must be in good condition. Factory seatbelts are OK. Cars without fixed roofs are required to have roll bars and be approved by MCA in advance of the event. In general, we restrict convertibles to the Novice class. *See section 9.2.* Natural fibers are recommended for clothing. Minimum allowable clothing is jeans, a T-shirt & closed toe shoes. You will be required to wear a helmet when on the track. The minimum rating is SNELL 2015 (SA2015). Newer helmets with a SA rating are recommended. Eye protection is required (face shield, goggles, safety glasses). The more and better the safety equipment you have & use, the safer you will be. All safety restraint equipment must be in good condition and installed correctly.

### **Miscellaneous**

There should be no exposed wires. The car should have a good gas cap that seals. The seats should be bolted in tightly.

### **At the Track**

Now that you made it to the track there are still a few things to do. You will want to take out everything you can. Remove your spare tire & jack. Take out all the floor mats. Any more loose stuff in there? Take it out. Clean your front & back windows with glass cleaner. There will be less glare & you will be able to see your reference points easier. Fasten any unused seatbelts. When you come off the track after a run, place the car in park or in gear. Don't use the parking brake. That will trap the heat that could cause your rotors to warp or your pads to bind to your rear rotors. Keep the engine running for a couple of minutes with the hood up. This will allow your engine to cool down & help circulate the hot fluids.

### **Things to Bring**

Here are a few things to bring that will help make your HPDE more enjoyable. The list can be changed to suit the region & climate/season. For the car: glass cleaner, wax, and a quart of oil, rags, a battery-operated air compressor, a tire gauge, a tarp to put all the stuff you took out on, and some basic tools. For you: a change of clothes, suntan lotion, drinks, a cooler, folding chairs, a shade canopy and friends to enjoy the driving with.

### **3. MCA HPDE RULES AND REGULATIONS**

#### **3.1 General Rules**

All drivers are required to operate their vehicles within the rules, and within the limits of the marked course. Failure to do so compromises the integrity of the program and will not be tolerated. The MCA administration strives to promote qualities like good judgment, responsibility, and safe driving, both on the track and on the highways.

#### **3.2 Definition and Terms**

This section contains the rules that govern non-competition groups. The terms "School," "Driving School", & "Open Track" are used interchangeably in this publication, except where otherwise noted. Often, all three terms are "generically" referred to as a "High Performance Driving Event" or (HPDE).

#### **3.3 Program Overview and Intentions**

MCA & member clubs host a few HPDE events each year. Each Club sets their own schedule, and their chosen format may vary slightly. However, it is the intent of all MCA clubs to uniformly enforce the safety, eligibility, and personal conduct rules that are listed in this document. It should be noted that each club might have certain rules or restrictions that add to, or supersede, this publication.

#### **3.4 Eligibility Requirements**

- Be at least 18 years old (or 16 years old with parental consent\*).
- Hold a current valid state driver's license.\*\*
- Have use of an automobile that meets MCA's technical requirements.
- Fully pay all applicable fees.
- Have no outstanding debts with MCA National.
- Sign all required waivers, and in particular the "gate waiver" before entering the facility.
- Have their car teched before going on track.

#### **3.5 \*Minors**

A minor release form must be filled out and be on file with MCA at every event for 16- and 17-year-old participants. All minor participants should have always at least one

parent or legal guardian present. Drivers under 16 years of age may be permitted if they have a valid competition license from SCCA, NASA, etc.

### **3.6 Non-Eligibility / Non-Registered Drivers**

Only registered drivers and officials are allowed to operate a vehicle on the track (apart from 'Parade Laps' lead by a pace car). Anyone not officially registered in the event, that is found operating a vehicle on the track at any time, will be immediately ejected from that event along with that person's guests and crewmembers.

## **4 MCA HPDE Participant Conduct**

### **4.1 Participant Conduct – Expectations**

Every participant at a MCA sanctioned event shall conduct themselves according to the highest standards of behavior and sportsmanship\* particularly in their relationship with other drivers and Officials, and in a manner that shall not be detrimental to the reputation of MCA. Failure to do so may result in harsh penalties. The term "sportsmanship," as used here, is meant to convey an expectation of conduct, and in no way implies that participants are involved in a sporting event or contest.

### **4.2 Conduct of Guests and Crew**

Drivers will be responsible for the conduct and behavior of those accompanying them to an event such as crew, mechanics, and friends. Any offense committed by the driver's crew, mechanics, or friends will be directly chargeable to the driver.

### **4.3 Property Damage**

Damage to the racetrack, its surface, fencing, paddock, walls, buildings, trailers, equipment, vehicles, etc., by the driver (including his/her friends, crew, and sponsors) is the responsibility of the driver, and said driver agrees herein to make restitution. This agreement is binding when a driver enters the event.

### **4.4 Disabled / Handicapped**

MCA has built itself, and prides itself, on being very accommodating to as many people as possible. Since different MCA Clubs host various activities at a wide variety of locations, it is impossible to maintain a consistent level of proper accommodations for the disabled. Most tracks have some accommodations for the disabled; however, MCA recognizes the need for improvements at a number of facilities. MCA will make whatever arrangements and adjustments within its powers at each event in order to better accommodate any disabled person. However, MCA cannot always anticipate what specific temporary changes would be most helpful at any given facility. Therefore,

any disabled person that is planning to attend a particular event is encouraged to contact the venue regarding accommodations available at the venue.

#### **4.5 HPDE Passenger Privileges**

A passenger is defined as any participant possessing the proper wristband or credential, riding in a moving vehicle while on track, yet is not in physical control of that vehicle. MCA Instructors are not considered passengers for the purposes of this section. All passengers must be at least 18 years old. Minors that are participants in the event should not be a passenger, unless riding with an instructor, for the purposes of instruction.

1. The ability to take a passenger on-track is a revocable privilege, not a right.
2. Passengers may be allowed in all HPDE groups, unless otherwise specified.
3. Group 1 ("Novice") participants must get specific permission from their Instructor before a passenger may be allowed in the vehicle.
4. Passengers must use the minimum safety equipment and attire as required of the driver.
5. Passengers should not be allowed in vehicles where they are sitting near or below obstructions (e.g.. "Petty bar") that may pin or trap them or cause other possible harm.
6. Anyone that is involved in a spin or off-track excursion with a passenger in the car may lose his or her passenger privileges for the day.
7. Only one (1) passenger is allowed at any given time, in any car.
8. Passengers should not commit any action as to cause interference or distraction of the driver or any other drivers.
9. Passengers should keep their arms and hands inside the vehicle at all times.
10. Passengers are not permitted to place any part of their bodies, such as their hands, in any area that is between any roll bar/cage tubing and the body panels of the interior. Doing so may result in crushed limbs. Enforcement of this rule is the responsibility of the driver.
11. Passengers are not allowed in open-top cars that do not provide rollover protection for the passenger side of the car (e.g. an original Shelby Cobra.)

#### **4.6 Responsibilities for Valuables**

Theft is virtually unheard of at MCA events however the management encourages all participants to lock up their valuables. Participants are strictly responsible for the safe keeping of their own belongings. The event facility management, MCA, and MCA Club affiliates take no responsibility for any loss, damage, or theft of any item while at the event.

#### **4.7 Alcoholic Beverages**

Consumption of alcohol by any participant is expressly prohibited.

#### **4.8 Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs**

The use of any dangerous drugs or narcotics, as defined by Federal and/or state laws, by any participant is specifically prohibited, unless prescribed by a doctor. Any driver, crewmember, mechanic, or Official found under the influence of marijuana, prescription or not, will be ejected and subject suspension.

#### **4.9 Rain and Inclement Weather**

The event will not be canceled due to inclement weather unless ordered by the Event Director. It is the responsibility of the driver to bring appropriate equipment such as rain tires, clothing, etc.

### **5 MCA HPDE Rules of the Pit lane and Paddock**

#### **5.1 Paddock Rules**

- Children must remain under CLOSE adult supervision at all times. Harsh consequences can result such as severe injury or death! Parents shall not allow their children to play around any pets that may be at the facility unless that pet belongs to that parent.
- The speed limit in the paddock is five (5) MPH for any vehicle other than emergency vehicles. This speed limit applies to all motorized and non-motorized vehicles.
- Oil, water, electrical power, and compressed air are the responsibility of the entrant.
- Fuel may not be available at the track unless otherwise announced in the acceptance letter, emailed event confirmation, and/or at the drivers' meeting.
- Entrants are urged to refuel on concrete areas if available.
- MCA reserves the right to allow fueling only in designated areas.

- Participants must keep water on hand in the paddock in case of fuel spillage. A gasoline spill can quickly destroy the asphalt surface. If not washed away with water, the bill to fix the damage can quickly add up to \$1,000 or more for which they will be liable.
- Entrant-provided boards must be placed under loaded jack stands to avoid damage to the asphalt surface.
- Any leftover trash, vehicle body parts, tires, etc. must be taken out of the facility.
- Proper parking is a must to ensure that all participants will fit into the paddock.
- Parking in fire lanes is prohibited.

## **5.2 Pets at the track**

Some tracks prohibit pets and/or have special rules regarding pets. It is recommended that all pets be left at home. However, should a pet be brought to a track that allows pets, the following conditions apply: The owner is solely responsible for the actions of his/her pets. This means cleaning up after them and being held legally liable if their pets bite another pet or a human. Additionally, all pets must be kept on a leash, in a cage, or in a vehicle at all times. No pets are allowed in the pit lane at any time.

## **5.3 Loud Engines**

Each facility has its own set of rules for allowed sound levels at all times of the day or night. It is the responsibility of the participant to check with the venue regarding decibel limits.

## **5.4 Gas Cylinders**

All compressed air bottles/gas cylinders with a pressure of over two hundred pounds per square inch (200 PSI) must be securely fastened vertically so as not to topple over or shall be fully enclosed in a structure, such as a rollaway or crash cart. Anytime a cylinder is not secured upright or enclosed in a cart there must be a protective cage or cap around the head.

## **5.5 Bicycles, Skates, Moped, etc.- (PARENTS!):**

No one without a valid state driver's license may operate any mode of transportation in the paddock. Skates, skateboards, motorized skateboards, and in-line skates are not permitted at any time.



### **5.5.1 Segway™**

Use of the following models of Segway products is permitted: i67, e67, p133, i80, XT, i2, and x2. Additionally, use of all of the following: Ninebot S, S-PRO, and S-plus; all must be used with optional handlebars, including aftermarket.

## **5.6 Minimum Attire**

All participants must wear at least a T-shirt, shorts, long pants, and closed-toe shoes. Shorts in the pit lane are permitted. Some racetracks may have more restrictive requirements.

### **5.6.1 Usage of Aerial Photography**

Aerial photography via drones is strictly prohibited without prior written consent. The operator must be licensed and bonded to operate a drone.

## **6 MCA HPDE Course Conduct**

### **6.1 Purpose and Philosophy**

The following rules apply to course conduct, as well as common courtesy and good judgment. Participants are held responsible for their conduct just as much on the track as when they are in the paddock. Any over-aggressive driving, risky pass attempts, or discourteous driving will result in substantial penalties.

### **6.2 Preparation for Course Driving**

1. Both front side windows must be completely open.
2. All occupants must keep hands and arms inside car at all times, except for hand signals.
3. Check all safety equipment, including helmet straps and belts.

### **6.3 Passing Rules**

1. Passing in "No Passing Areas," as defined by the Passing Rules (available at the drivers' meeting or Registration) is prohibited.
2. Passing under any yellow flag situation until the driver is past the incident, or past the next manned flag station that does not display a yellow flag is prohibited.
3. If an Instructor driving a car waves a car by, that does not count as a pass. (Instructors will have an "X" on their cars.) Drivers may not pass under yellow, even if they perceive a "wave by" from another participant.

4. If a car is having mechanical trouble and is pulling off the track, a pass is allowed regardless of the passing rules.
5. A driver may not pass another driver in a no passing zone or situation, even if the other driver waves him/her by.
6. The driver attempting to make a pass is solely responsible for safe outcome of that pass. Drivers making a pass should be certain that the driver ahead of them can see them before attempting to pass.

#### **6.4 Rule Violations**

Any rule violations, including spins and off-track excursions, may result in harsh penalties. The first violation will result in a warning. The second violation will result in exclusion from the rest of that session. The third violation will result in exclusion from the rest of the day.

#### **6.5 Stopping On Course**

Stopping on course is expressly prohibited unless it is an emergency. "Stopping" includes abrupt and/or unexpected slowing to a near stop. Stopping to help a disabled car is prohibited. An emergency, for the purposes of this section, is defined as only those events concerning medical problems, mechanical failure, on-board fire, or damage from an incident that renders the vehicle unfit to continue.

##### **6.5.1 Stopping in an Emergency**

Anytime a driver is forced to stop in an emergency; the first concern should be to place the car in an area where it will not cause danger to the other drivers. When stopping off course, the driver should be careful not to park on dry grass areas where fire can be a hazard.

#### **6.6 Counter-Course Driving**

Driving a vehicle on the course in the direction opposite to the normal traffic flow is strictly prohibited with the following exceptions:

- When the track is closed, or cleared, as deemed by the Chief Steward.
- When ordered to do so by the Event Director, or an Emergency Response Team Official.
- Whenever a driver must do so for a short distance, in an extreme emergency and only for the sole purposes of getting out of harm's way.
- When ordered to do so by a Course Official.

## **6.7 Spins or Off-Track Excursions**

If the driver is involved in a spin or off-track excursion, he/she shall pull into the hot pits immediately. The Officials will need to check the car and talk to the driver. If the driver spins off the track, he/she shall try to enlist the help of a Course Official to wave him/her back on safely.

## **6.8 Body Contact**

Body contact cannot and will not be tolerated. Anyone involved in body contact must report immediately to the head of pit lane. Harsh penalties will be imposed, including but not limited to, immediate ejection from the event.

## **6.9 Post Accident Emergency Procedures**

All persons involved in a major crash or roll-over, shall remain in the vehicle (unless it is on fire) with their seatbelts and helmets on, until the Emergency Response Team arrives.

## **6.10 Post Accident Reporting**

All persons involved in any "significant accidents" are required to report to the medical staff immediately. Failure to do so will result in suspension and may void personal medical insurance. "Significant accidents" are defined as: 1. All vehicle roll-overs, regardless of damage. 2. Any impact rendering the vehicle inoperable.

# **7 MCA INSTRUCTIONS FOR HPDE FLAGS**

Flags are the MOST IMPORTANT form of communication the Officials have with the drivers while they are on the track. Therefore, it is imperative that drivers know what each flag means. Some Venues operate with slightly different flagging and participants are required to attend the daily driver's meeting to fully understand the Venues flags.

**7.1 Green Flag** - Session is open.

**7.2 Yellow Flag** - Motionless Slow down. Danger ahead. PASSING is prohibited, until completely past the incident, or until past next manned flag station that is not displaying any Yellow Flag(s), whichever comes first. There may be one (1) yellow flag covering more than one incident. There may be several yellow flags before reaching the emergency area.

**7.3 Yellow Flag** - Waving Great danger, slow down. Be prepared to stop. Passing is prohibited until completely past the incident, or until past the next manned flag station that is not displaying any Yellow Flag(s), whichever comes first. Note: There may be one (1) yellow flag covering more than one incident.

**7.4 Double Yellow Flags** - Full course yellow condition exists. Be prepared to encounter a Pace Car and/or emergency vehicles. Drivers should not significantly slow down. Be prepared to encounter a slow-moving pack and other local flag conditions. Drivers shall obey the local flag conditions (e.g. waving yellow). Passing is prohibited until the Pace Car (if on track) has pulled off and the driver has passed the next manned flag station that is not displaying any Yellow Flag(s).

**7.5 Black Flag** - Open Track Officials want to talk to you. Complete current lap and pull into the pits for consultation.

**7.6 Black Flag** - Furred Warning. You are driving in an unsafe manner or you did something wrong. If you continue to do so, an open black flag will be shown to you.

**7.7 Black Flag All** - Waving All manned flag stations will display waving black flags during this condition. Some flag stations might display a sign with the word "ALL." All cars proceed slowly to the hot pits. Passing is prohibited.

**7.8 Checkered Flag** - Session is over. Complete current lap cautiously and exit via pit lane or otherwise designated end-of-session track exit point. Passing rules remain the same during the checkered flag lap as during the session.

**7.9 Red Flag Emergency** - Come to an immediate and controlled stop on the side of the track in a safe location.

**7.10 Blue Flag (with diagonal yellow stripe)** - Another vehicle is approaching quickly or following very closely and may attempt a pass. The driver receiving the Blue Flag should consider giving a passing signal.

**7.11 Debris Flag (yellow and red stripes)** - Caution. To be displayed motionless. Oil or debris may be present on the track surface or a slippery condition may be present. This flag will be taken down after several laps, but that does not mean that the condition has been resolved; just that the driver should now be taking it into account.

**7.12 White Flag** - Emergency vehicle or slow-moving vehicle is on course.

**7.13 Emergency Vehicle Flag** - (white flag with a red cross or per venue) There is an emergency vehicle on course. Pass with extreme caution.

**7.14 Mechanical Black Flag (with orange ball in center) (a.k.a. meatball flag or per venue)** - There appears to be something mechanically wrong with your car. Proceed to the pits at reduced speed.

**7.15 Pace Car (with lights on)** - Follow the Pace Car at about the same speed. Do not pass the Pace Car unless instructed to do so by the Pace Car personnel. Passing is only allowed after the Pace Car has pulled off and the driver has passed the next manned flag station that is not displaying a yellow flag.

## **8 INSTRUCTIONS FOR HPDE HAND SIGNALS**

### **8.1 Slowing Down**

Whenever a driver is entering the pits or is no longer driving at normal traffic speed, he/she must extend an arm in a vertical position with his/her fingertips towards the sky, if possible.

### **8.2 Passing Signals**

To assist another driver in overtaking you, hand signals should be used whenever possible. The driver may do this by pointing to the side he/she wants to be passed on, in such a fashion that is visible to the overtaking driver.

### **8.3 Flag Station Acknowledgement**

All drivers shall give a wave of acknowledgement to every manned turn station during the cool down lap.

## **9. Vehicles not Allowed in MCA HPDE**

### **9.1 Open Wheel**

No open wheel vehicles are allowed

### **9.2 Open cockpit Vehicles**

#### **9.2.1 Convertibles**

Convertibles (open cockpit) are generally not allowed unless they come with OEM roll-over protection and may be restricted to the Novice class. MCA reserves the right to inspect open cockpit cars and inspect roll cage installation and acceptability for use on track in higher level groups. Examples of vehicles with OEM roll-over protection are Porsche, BMW, Corvette, etc.

#### **9.2.2 Use of Arm Restraints**

MCA requires the use of arm restraints for allowed open cockpit vehicles.