

Driver Profiles

By Bonnie Mueller

In this newsletter is two new articles to continue with my series of 28 profiles. In 2020 and 2021 the drivers/cars were highlighted on our coasters. Now, hear about Alan Bowers and Bruce Harmon in their own words:



When and where did you get into autocrossing?

First actual autocross was in 2004 with San Francisco Bay Area Region SCCA. Did a teen “Street Survival” course with another organization prior to that which got me hooked on performance driving, and managed to get into a couple GM test drive events to thrash around in a corvette or two around their cone “courses.”

When did you first enter events with EESCC? How did you find out about us?

First autocross with EESCC was in 2014 co-driving a couple of cars but ran Larison Rock in 2013 (drove my Miata from CA, following Lorin if I remember right). Moved to Oregon in late 2014 and started attending more regularly.

How long have you been into autosports? What other forms of racing have you done or are a faithful follower? (Lemons, Lucky Dog, Hillclimbing, NASCAR, F1, Indy, drag racing, drifting, off road racing, radio controlled, dog sledding 😊 etc.)

Started doing HPDE/track events around 2004 as well (with a Ford Focus ZX3), and have since joined a ridiculous team (in 2011 or 12?) who thought it was a good idea to race a minivan and then front wheel drive pickup truck. Did a little drifting while stationed in Japan from between 2006 and 2008, but found out speed, grip and timed competition was more fun.

Do other members of your family autocross with you? When did they start and why? (Please answer all these questions for them too)

Dana Zimmer has dipped her toes in and autocrossed her Focus ST for a few seasons. She does enjoy it but maybe more so enjoys spending time with the great people within the club.

How many cars have you owned and autocrossed? What was your first car? Your first “race” car?

Only autocrossed a handful of my cars, starting with a basic Ford Focus ZX3. Got a more prepared SVT Focus with a supercharger (probably my first “race car”), but that turned out to be a money pit that never ran well. Eventually found the light and got a Miata, which has been pretty trustworthy for over a decade now (moving classes from STR to CSP to now DP over those years). Every now and then I drive Dana’s Focus ST in GS.

What current car are you autocrossing and / or expect to run in 2022? Any changes you are doing? Class change?

Still the Miata. No changes other than some minor stuff (which I haven’t done anything about yet). It stays reliable, so I have no need to mess with the recipe. If it blows up, Lorin has agreed to help Honda K swap it.

What wins or awards are you most proud of and why?

Helping get 2nd in the Chump Car 24-hour race at Buttonwillow in 2013 is up there. We completed 500 laps (1340 miles), while our best lap was over 3 seconds slower than anyone else in the top 10 (some of which had laps 10 seconds quicker than us).

Also really enjoyed driving Larison Rock, going sub 2 minutes and getting both CSP and DP class records.

What is the most fun about autocrossing? Our club?

The camaraderie and friendly atmosphere is the most fun thing about autocrossing and EESCC, aside from the 30-60 runs in between all that. Seeing friends, seeing cool cars, and hearing tires and engines throughout the day.



When and where did you get into autocrossing?

First event was in El Paso, TX while in the army in 1969. I did one event there got the second fastest time of day, then other duties kept me away for 30 years. Then in 1998 saw an old college chum, Tom Kotzian, and he got me into it again, this time with an 89 Corvette, which he sold me, where I ran in Super Stock and from there on, I was hooked.

When did you first enter events with EESCC? How did you find out about us?

In about 2004, after I sold my Corvette and moved to Corvallis, I joined EESCC because it was closer to me and had a nice schedule of events. I ran a 2001 Focus SVT for a couple years. I soon discovered our club is the best managed club in the state.

How long have you been into autosports? What other forms of racing have you done or are a faithful follower? (Lemons, Lucky Dog, Hillclimbing, NASCAR, F1, Indy, drag racing, drifting, off road racing, radio controlled, dog sledding, etc.)

I raced Go Karts successfully in 1959-1963, then motorcycles for two years in the late 60's, then raced bicycles off and on for the next 30 years. Then cycling took a back seat to Autocrossing in about 2005.

(I found Autocrossing a lot easier on my body.)

Do other members of your family autocross with you? When did they start and why? (Please answer all these questions for them too)

No, wife is glad to see me busy. My daughter used to come and watch at events and ride with me on a few runs.

How many cars have you owned and autocrossed? What was your first car? Your first "race" car?

First car was a worn out 1947 Studebaker. It cost me \$50. First car I autocrossed was a 1969 Datsun 510. Then 89 Corvette, 01 Ford Focus, 2007 Pontiac Solstice, 2017 Fiat 124 Spider. Also ran my wife's 88 Porsche 911 Targa couple times in 2004.

What current car are you autocrossing and / or expect to run in 2022? Any changes you are doing? Class change?

Will be running my Fiat 124 Spider Abarth in C Street

What wins or awards are you most proud of and why?

My proudest award was winning the State 50+ championship time trial (bicycle) in 1999, because of the effort made. Am also proud of winning the Silver Medal in the State Criterium championship that same year. And I'm always proud of being competitive at every autocross event.

What is the most fun about autocrossing? Our club?

The unique thing I enjoy most about Autocrossing is the unlimited challenge of running a new course every day and trying to drive it well. I love this club, its great people, superbly well-run events and all the fun in participating. Going to events at different locations is also fun, even

though necessary due to the shortage of venues. Out of town events like Willamette Pass and Roseburg are great experiences.

Other comments.

I also enjoy taking photos for everyone at events.