

VRG Driving School – 2019

Time to get into the Game!

Denny Austin

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The Vintage Racer Group will again be conducting its highly regarded VRG Driving School on May 15th and 16th as part of the annual Jefferson 500 vintage racing festival at West Virginia's Summit Point Raceway. Both students with little or no racing experience (Level 1) as well as more advanced students, including those who took our school in 2018 (Level 2) are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Level 1 students have little or no racing experience. Our objective is to get them comfortable with driving their vintage race cars on the track and make sure they do so safely in the presence of other, faster cars. Throughout the school, emphasis is placed on understanding and adhering to safety rules and situational awareness, understanding what is going on all around you, in order to make good, safe decisions. Successful level 1 graduates are awarded a VRG provisional competition license and can race in the Jefferson 500.

The objectives for our level 2 students are to reinforce all the technical and safety practices taught in level 1 and also give them an opportunity to work on the more advanced vintage racing skills needed to move up further in the pack. As always, adherence to safety rules and high levels of situational awareness are emphasized. Successful level 2 participants should find themselves well equipped to compete in the Jefferson 500 and have a good time dicing with their fellow vintage racers.

The VRG School combines on-line pre-work, classroom lecture, on-track exercises and individual coaching to fully prepare students at all levels for safe and fun wheel to wheel vintage racing. As a member of the Vintage Motorsports Council, VRG competition licenses are widely accepted by other clubs.

And those on-track exercises are everybody's favorite! A series of braking/handling exercises allows students to safely build experience with threshold braking, heel-toe downshifting and how to balance brakes, throttle and steering to optimize speed through corners. Students will once again learn the subtleties of oversteer/understeer balance at the limits of adhesion in a series of skid pad exercises led by our partners at Bill Scott Racing. On the main track, students move from simple exercises designed to learn their way around the track including locating flag stations and the basic racing line to safe high-speed wheel-to-wheel driving, passing and racing starts. Our expectation is throughout the exercises, students demonstrate safe, predictable behavior and are comfortable with high speed, wheel-to-wheel vintage racing.

Wednesday's classroom sessions focus on situational awareness and how drivers need to respond. Instructors will be showing video clips of actual on-track situations and facilitating discussion about what is happening in the clip and what the appropriate driver responses should be.

In the classroom on Thursday we will be focusing on race starts, again with video clips and discussions about how to grid, drive pace laps and the starts themselves. Starts are the most exciting part of any race and, for newcomers, they can be the most intimidating part as well! Our

objective is to prepare the students to safely and successfully participate in race starts at the Jefferson 500 and in the future.

Registration for the VRG School is open now. There are only a limited number of slots available and they are filling up fast!

For more information or to sign up for the school go to <https://vrgonline.org>

Denny Austin started racing in 1969 at Marlboro Park Speedway, and began instructing in 1974. These days he races his Zink Z10 in VRG's Formula Ford Challenge Series. Away from the track Denny is an adjunct professor of strategic leadership in several graduate-level programs.