

Inland NorthWest Region Drivers Education (DE) - Run Groups and Advancement Policy

The purpose of this document is to update previous INWR DE Program policies on Run Group Advancement that have, over time been loosely followed, poorly understood by students and instructors alike and not widely distributed to DE Program participants.

The INWR DE Program committee believes this policy will a) help ensure consistency in all aspects of our student advancements as students' progress through our INWR Drivers Education program and b) elevate the educational value as well as the overall safety of our Driver's Education events for all participants.

Students in the INWR DE program are expected to advance from Run Group to Run Group as they gain driving skills, confidence and track experience. Advancement reduces the number of students in the Novice group, reducing the number of cars on the track in the Novice Session, thereby increasing safety and also reduces the number of Instructors necessary for each DE event.

It is very hard not to make this policy overbearing; but above all our Instructors are trained to provide clear, specific feedback on the skills a student needs to work on to drive safely on the track and get promoted. Our DE events are designed to provide a maximum amount of time to practice yet maintain a safe environment. Your Instructor's notes will be documented in your motorsportsReg account so future instructors know the skills a student needs to practice in order to get promoted.

A typical track day in the Inland North West Region (INWR) Drivers Education (DE) program is organized into "Run Groups" containing students of similar driving ability, driving vehicles of similar capabilities.

Advancement through the run groups is self-paced based on each driver's abilities and comfort level. Moving to the next higher run group is achieved by a driver successfully completing checkout rides in which he/she is evaluated against a defined set of parameters that the INWR DE Program committee feels is appropriate for each Run Group. These parameters are summarized further on in this document. Only the INWR Chief Driving Instructor (CDI) or his designated instructors will be authorized to perform checkout rides.

Important Note

Your Run Group assignment within the INWR DE program is not automatically accepted by other regions nor does the Run Group in other region(s) DE programs automatically become your Run Group with INWR. Likewise, if you are advanced to a higher Run Group by INWR, do not assume that this advancement is recognized and implemented by other regions.

The evaluation checkout rides not only gain insight into the advancement student's ability to execute, at a minimum, specific items listed on the Run Group advancement checklist but they also serve to confirm a driver's ability and willingness to consistently display all of the less tangible qualities required for the Run Group for which they are being considered.

A checklist has been developed for advancing into each Run Group. The INWR instructor(s) performing the checkout rides must evaluate the driver on each item listed on the appropriate checklist. "Competence" in all aspects of the checklist criteria should be considered minimum requirements for all advancement candidates.

Driving “Solo”

An instructor has the latitude to allow his or her **NOVICE student** to **drive solo for that event** simply by informing the CDI of the trial status. Students on this **trial status for a day or a session do not advance a group, or cease to require an instructor**. One-day trials are typical when the instructor and student agree it will be beneficial for the student to run alone for a session(s), yet still require additional instruction at future events. It is possible for a novice to **request Instructor sign-off to drive solo in the Novice Group** for the remainder of the current event and for future events. The student will be **classified as Novice-Solo**.

Advancement to the Next “Run Group”

“Advancing” refers to moving up to the next level run group. This is a much more significant step than sign-off for “Solo” and therefore requires an instructor check out ride plus approval of the (CDI).

In reality, advancement can be captured with a few factors.....

- ★ Skill – consistency is a good measure of skill. At what level of spatial precision can the student consistently drive the track.
 - ➔ Not so good = novice
 - ➔ Better (a few feet) = intermediate
 - ➔ Excellent (a few inches) = advanced
- ★ Situational awareness – do they see the flag stations and are they aware of traffic, particularly behind them and do they act/react appropriately.
- ★ Pace – this is secondary to skill and situational awareness; but because of the effect on others on the track, it is a consideration

Run Group Definitions

A first-time student to an INWR DE with no driving record on motorsportReg.com or lacking an endorsement from the CDI from the most recent venue where a DE was attended will be classified as a Novice until checked out by an Instructor.

The INWR DE program uses four Run Groups: RED, RED-SOLO, YELLOW and BLUE/INSTRUCTOR.

- ★ RED = Novice. A first-timer with zero track driving experience
- ★ RED-SOLO = Novice on “checked-off” to drive solo in the Novice Run Group for the current and future events until advanced to the next group
- ★ YELLOW = More experienced drivers that run Solo in the Intermediate Run group
- ★ BLUE/INSTRUCTOR = skilled fast drivers, that are not Instructors. Advanced and Instructor run together as one run group

Note that an Instructor can go out in any session as a driver or passenger, whereas (Blue) can only drive in their assigned sessions.

Drivers new to the DE program can expect to start in the RED Run group with an instructor regardless of prior experience in other High Performance driving schools or programs.

The **RED** Run Group students are expected from the level of little knowledge or skill in High Performance Driving to the following skills.....

1. Know the driving line and drive it with consistency
2. Handle all aspects of passing, or being passed in a safe, courteous manner
3. Drive at an appropriate speed for the run group
4. Develop an awareness of flag stations and flag meanings

5. Provide smooth inputs for car control (steering, braking, and shifting)
6. Display full knowledge of INWR safety procedures, flags, and driving terminology
7. Identify minor mistakes and self-correct
8. Show good anticipation of all “on track” situations
9. Look “through the corners” and well down track
10. Keep a safe distance from other cars
11. Exhibit a positive and safe attitude which complies with INWR’s DE philosophy.

Drivers in **YELLOW** Run Group are expected to refine their driving skills, increase their confidence and judgment, and learn more advanced techniques as a pre-requisite to being promoted to the Blue Run Group. During the time spent in Yellow, the student is expected to attend at least 6+ sessions of instruction and 6+ track days to accomplish objectives.

Promotion to Blue requires 2 separate instructor check out rides plus approval of the Chief Driving Instructor. To be considered for advancement to the next Run Group, the driver must demonstrate that they:

1. Drive the line consistently, using the full track
2. Brake and accelerate very smoothly
3. Have mastered “heel and toe” (if applicable)
4. Are no longer dependent on “turn in,” “apex,” or “track out” cones
5. Demonstrate competent car control and recovery skills when needed
6. Automatically use proper hand signals and sound judgment during all passing situations, as well as courtesy to other drivers
7. Calmly deal with speed differentials within their run group
8. Have a driving record and attitude consistent with INWR's DE Philosophy.

Drivers in the **BLUE/INSTRUCTOR** Run Group are expected to be expert in all the driving skills taught by INWR and should be indistinguishable from the average driver in the Instructor Run Group. Drivers in this group should be proficient in the following skill set, most are recognized from the Yellow Run Group refined by many hours on the track.

1. Drive the line flawlessly and effortlessly
2. Can alter their line when and where necessary
3. Can demonstrate the “rain line” and understand the concepts of that line
4. Provide very smooth inputs at all speeds
5. Demonstrate expert vision skills by looking well ahead
6. Understand and can carry considerable momentum through corners
7. Have mastered trail braking, throttle steer and heel and toe
8. Can handle closeness of other cars without losing focus
9. Drive at a pace appropriate for the run group and are approaching the limits of their cars
10. Always drive in a non-aggressive manner and are respectful and courteous to other drivers

Run Group Advancement Checklist - RED to RED-SOLO

Driver Name: _____

of track days in RED group: _____

Requirements for advancing from Red into the Red-Solo run group are listed below. Instructors are required to evaluate the driver on all items listed.

Please check all items from 1 (low) to 5 (High)	1	2	3	4	5
Accepts instruction and demonstrates an eagerness to learn					
Familiar with DE procedures, staging, and driving terminology					
Demonstrates proper seat positioning, mirror adjustment, helmet & seatbelt fastening					
Knows the location of all flagging stations and the meaning of all flags used					
Understands the proper line around the track; drives it fairly consistently					
Beginning to utilize ocular driving - i.e. looking far ahead					
Uses proper passing signals and knows the locations of passing zones					
Practices smooth inputs – steering, braking & accelerating					
Demonstrates on-track etiquette and courtesy to other drivers					
Appears comfortable and confident with on-track driving					
Drives at an appropriate pace for the run group					

Recommend Advancement to RED-SOLO: __ Yes __ No

Instructor Name: (please print): _____

Instructor
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Run Group Advancement Checklist - RED-SOLO to YELLOW

Driver Name: _____

of track days in RED-SOLO group: _____

Requirements for advancing from Red-Solo into the Yellow run group are listed below. Instructors are required to evaluate the driver on all items listed.

Please check all items from 1 (low) to 5 (High)	1	2	3	4	5
Utilizes the full track and drives almost all laps consistently & on-line					
Demonstrates smooth inputs steering, braking & accelerating					
Uses ocular vision techniques (looking ahead) in corners.					
Carries reasonable momentum into corners					
Practices heel and toe braking/downshifting without serious imbalance of the car					
Demonstrates competent car control, patience and recovery skills as needed					
Quickly recognizes errors and why they occurred					
Uses prompt and courteous passing signals					
Calmly deals with faster traffic and late passing situations					
Demonstrates full compliance with Inland Northwest Region DE philosophy.					
No longer dependent on "apex", "turn-in", etc cones on track					
Drives at an appropriate pace for the run group					

Drivers cannot advance into YELLOW until checkout ride with CDI is satisfactorily completed

Instructor Name: (please print): _____

Instructor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Instructor recommends checkout ride with INWR CDI. ___ Yes ___ No

DCI approves Advancement to YELLOW. CDI Signature _____

Run Group Advancement Checklist - YELLOW to Blue

Driver Name: _____

of track days in YELLOW group: _____

Requirements for advancing from Yellow into the Blue run group are listed below. Instructors are required to evaluate the driver on all items listed.

Please check all items from 1 (low) to 5 (High)	1	2	3	4	5
Drives each lap confidently and consistently on-line					
Exhibits smoothness and complete car control in wet/dry conditions					
Uses ocular vision to properly & safely enter/negotiate corners					
has mastered heel and toe, trail-braking and throttle steer techniques					
Deliberately deviates from the standard line when necessary (late pass, rain line, etc.)					
Demonstrates lap recall - able to remember/discuss specific areas for improvement immediately after a run group session					
Capable of recognizing how close the car is to its cornering potential for any corner					
One of the faster, yet fully under-control, drivers in the group					
Exhibits patience, courtesy and maturity when following slower vehicles					
Good judgment when encountering unexpected events (i.e. debris, incidents, etc.)					
Understands basic problems such as over/understeer, and how to correct them					

Drivers cannot advance into Blue until checkout ride with CDI is satisfactorily completed

Instructor Name: (please print): _____

Instructor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Instructor recommends checkout ride with INWR CDI. ___ Yes ___ No

CDI approves Advancement to BLUE. CDI Signature _____