

Motor Racing

Dr. Edgar SHIH

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- 1987 Brands Hatch Racing School, UK (Racing Saloons)
- 1995 John Watson's Racing Centre, Silverstone, UK (Formula Fords)
- 1996 Private Instructions with Mark Goddard
- 1997 Greater China Classic Race Champion
- 2003 Roadsport Race Macau 50th GP
- 2004 Supercar Challenge Series ZIC, 2nd Runner Up
- 2005 Lotus Challenge (Asian Zone) ZIC Race winner
- 2006 Present Private Instructions with Mike Knight
- 2008 Co Host, Speed at Metro Radio Hong Kong

"This is Tyler and you are listening to Speed at Metro Radio Hong Kong 99.7MHz! Bringing to you the latest in motorsports and car test reports with LIVE in-car recordings....." (<http://www.metroradio.com.hk/997>)

So we finished another recording session for the radio programme which would come on air on the following Saturday morning from 11am to noon. Usually, we would make the recording in the station's studios, but this time we were recording live car tests impressions on track at the Zhuhai International Racing Circuit and testing the luxury grand tourers from Bavarian Motors, the M5 and M6's both sharing the same chassis, V10 engine and drive train. It was a nice day of testing with perfect weather and good organisation. The cars were immaculately prepared and all working as they should. Our co-host, Steven also had a ride for his life in one of the cars whilst recording on the fly, though his colour turned a little green when he came out of the car. I could get used to this very easily, testing new cars in excess of a cool million dollars and driving them as if I had just stolen them as they said (<http://www.104mfonline.com.hk/MetroFinance/Leisure/Car.aspx>).

It had been over 20 years since I graduated from Brands Hatch racing stable back in 1987 and what a far cry the BMW M5's was from the school Ford XR3's that we used to throw around that had to be push started because of excess engine heat after each stint. That was a time when I could still push start a car;K..Since then I had gone through a few more racing schools; driven a host of cars and raced a few more.

Motorsports is just like any other sports. One needs regular practice with proper understanding of the mechanics and physics of the equipment and the necessary mental and physical conditions for enjoyment and safety. The pleasure of motorsports to me is never about the excitement nor glamour as my other general acquaintances would try to persuade me to agree but instead, the serenity and inner calmness when I can focus completely on the job at hand i.e. driving the vehicle at

its current configuration to the best I can to find its limits and that of my own.

When one fully concentrates on driving, one reaches a higher level of alertness and your senses are on overdrive reading the machine's behaviour, track conditions and anticipate what is likely to happen so to be prepared to make corrections and adjustments when on the fly. There is a feeling of elation when one can go through a given corner fully committed and slightly faster than before knowing that one could not have done any better on the day nor anyone else. And to be able to do all that under a safe environment of a racing circuit and not on the public roads is a prerequisite instead of a bonus. We also need to learn to be a team player, cooperating with our managers, engineers, technicians, officials etc and learn to communicate effectively and to manage our precious resources effectively with a detailed plan before testing. Driver's improvement and technical knowledge become the two main areas of continued education and one starts to befriend with your trusty mechanic who looks after your cars.

Race cars are categorically built to different specifications to road cars. Most of them are custom built by either ordering a special stripped out version motor car from the factory and then built from scratch again ground up which would require the complete removal of engine, drive train, loom etc. They have extra stiffness in the chassis with welded in roll cage, stiffened suspensions and seam welds for strength. All the interiors are stripped to save weight. There is an emphasis in safety with FIA homologated race seats, race harness, HANS device to protect the driver and passenger from whip-lash injuries, plumb-in fire extinguishers, racing tyres for wet and dry conditions, uprated brakes. Race cars are not suitable for driving on the public roads nor road cars any good for circuits.





Over the years, I have had the pleasure of being put into the driver's seat of different types of performance cars. From the German perennial rear engine rear wheel driven 911's with excess power to grip which demands respect to Japanese 2 litre turbo-charged 4WD rally homologation road cars to the ultra modern everything electronic all conquering GTR's which offer exhilarating performance at a bargain. For the past few years it has been a pleasure to learn to drive in the bespoke designed and built carbon fibre chassis formula race cars with sequential gearboxes. All of them bring immense enjoyment when one begins to come to terms with their quirky characteristics and handling properties. Probably, it is because of formula racing cars that I am now subscribing to the great Anthony Colin Bruce Chapman's philosophy of lightweight cars and have started to collect and tune British roadsters with spartan creature comforts and well designed chassis with simple drive trains. They are great little cars to learn to drive in and also for honing driving skills so much so that we have established an internet forum with common enthusiasts to exchange ideas. (www.trackndrive.com)



I am only an average driver with average abilities and anyone can enjoy motorsports activities. I would recommend that one should go through proper racing school training which is available at ZIC at a very reasonable cost which provides first class training in proper formula cars, race gears, meals and accommodation over an enjoyable weekend. Even my son, who received training in Formula Renault before his 12 year old birthday, had never driven a car nor had any experience in Go-Karting before and became the youngest graduate and certificate holder from the ART Formula Renault Training Course.



I have been fortunate enough to win a few races and make a lot of friends from motorsports. Most notable would be Mike Knight who is our current driving instructor. Mike is still racing Grand Prix cars from the 60's and 70's. He was the operator/instructor of the world renowned Winfield Racing School, where he had more than 20 students who became F1 drivers and others of world class fame as well. Names include Alain Prost, Damon Hill, Jacque Villeneuve, Olivier Panis, Jacque Lafite, Rene Arnoux, Jason Plato, Andy Priaulx...



See you on track and drive safely on the public roads!