

Tips for Beginning Ice Racers

Clothing and Footwear

Dress in layers, take off the heavy coat, take off boots and wear shoes that give you a good feel for the pedals. Wear light leather palmed gloves, if desired, that give good grip and feel on the steering wheel.

Seating Position

A rally seating style is suggested with less than 120 degree angle in the elbow for full range of motion and fine motor control of the steering wheel. Optimize your seat distance to ensure you are not too close to the pedals or too far, stretching to reach.

Tractionized Tires

The brand of tire you choose is completely open, but the tire must be a winter tire and we highly recommend a soft tread. Tractionizing provides additional traction by breaking apart the tire block. Although not mandatory, it is strongly recommended.

Car Set-Up

Cars should be set up for oversteer (loose rear-end). This is accomplished by hand brake, higher rear tire pressures, more weight in the front of the car (FWD), more weight in the rear (RWD), left foot braking, heavier rear springs etc.

Understeer is Bad

When the front end of the car is pushing, sliding toward the outside bank, you are no longer racing and recovery is counterintuitive (see next segment). It is caused by not looking deep enough into the corner, carrying too much speed, wrong tire pressure, change in track conditions, too much steering input, not getting off the brakes etc.

Counterintuitive

Look where you want to go, not where the car is taking you and not at another car or incident on the track. Get off the brakes, unwind the steering wheel to leverage the optimal 4 degree slip angle.

Don't Overdrive the Car

Most new drivers use too much steering and too much braking. Work to keep hands at 9 & 3. Timing and smooth inputs are critical to car control. Coefficient of friction is very low. Jerky and overly aggressive inputs upset balance and grip. Slow is fast in ice racing.

Ice Conditions

The condition of the ice is constantly changing, every lap, and your driving must adapt throughout the race. Changes in temperature can also cause significant changes in grip. For rubber cars, you will have more grip at the beginning of the race as you follow the stud class. As the race progresses, the track will become polished and slippery. For stud classes, as your race progresses you will create more grip, so your beginning laps will be more slippery.

Controlled Aggression

You must learn to wait for the car to respond. This will vary depending on conditions and how aggressive your inputs are.

Maintain Control at all Times

Watch for the leaders to lap you, be aware of cars in your mirror, check your blind spot when entering a corner, maintain a predictable race line. Always work to avoid contact, keep your car under control, use your brakes to slow down (they do work on ice applied gradually), steer to avoid contact. If you find yourself in a situation and you have a choice of hitting a snowbank and car, pick the snow bank.

Watch leaders in other races. They are at the front for a reason, they have learned that patience, smooth driving, learned skills and calm outlook will get them there.

General Background

CASC

CASC Ontario is an association of over 30 member clubs within Ontario. CASC Ontario sanctions events, licences competitors, sets safety standards and handles administrative matters. Associate clubs organize amateur road races at Mosport, Calabogie and Shannonville, as well as rallies, ice races, time trials and autocrossing.

More info: <https://www.casc.on.ca/casc-or/history-casc-ontario-region>

About Ice Racing

Ice Racing started in Ontario more than 50 years ago and continues to thrive as an inexpensive, safe and fun part of the motorsport community. Originally held on frozen lakes and rivers, events were moved permanently to the fairgrounds in Minden, Ontario in the late 70's.

The track is laid out, then repeatedly coated with water until a thick layer of ice is built up between the snowbanks that delineate the course.

More info: <https://www.casc.on.ca/ice-racing-about>

Rule Book – Car Prep, Officials, Procedures, Results, Scoring, Schedules

<https://www.casc.on.ca/sites/default/files/Documents/2024%20Ice%20Racing%20Regulations%20-%20%20Jan%201%20%28version%20%29.pdf>

Basic Info and Protocols

Network and Communication

The ice race director will communicate if the planned event will proceed as scheduled by noon on Friday of the planned weekend. Officially, the status will be posted on the CASC website under New (<https://www.casc.on.ca/latest-news>), unofficially, it will also be communicated at the sites below. Often Motorsport Reg will also send out an email of confirmation.

CASC Forum - <https://forums.casc.on.ca/forum/casc-or-divisions/ice-race-specific-forum>

Facebook (unofficial Ice Race Group) -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1180749116107416>

Facebook – CASC -

[https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=canadian%20automobile%20sport%20clubs%20-%20ontario%20region%20\(casc-or\)](https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=canadian%20automobile%20sport%20clubs%20-%20ontario%20region%20(casc-or))

Event Registration

All registration and payment is done online at <https://www.motorsportreg.com>

If you have not used before, create an account, search for your event, submit your registration and payment details. Payment will not be processed until the event.

We also use this site to register for Pre-Tech of the cars the weekend before the first scheduled weekend of racing. This get the scrutineering complete prior to the first day which is always hectic.

When you arrive on Saturday morning, head to the green registration trailer window on the west side. Show your license, driver license, waiver and receive your armband as

confirmation of registration. Any passengers must also register online and in person at the window for an armband.

Waivers

An online waiver must be signed, even though the registration says it does not. This only needs to be done once per season. If you have any questions about registration or the waivers contact the Registrar.

Track Etiquette

Griding – Be on Time! If you arrive late you will start from the back of the grid. For your first race you can opt to start at the back of the grid if your assigned grid position is higher.

Track Entry and Exit – enter the track only when you are directed by the grid marshal. If you are entering during a race, do so only at the direction of the marshal. Stay out of the way of competing cars of the race in progress. When you leave the track, do so safely by indicating with your signal or your left hand. If you must exit the track during a race, you may only exit to the infield, marked by cones. If you miss the first one, you can proceed to the second exit if able. Be aware of traffic behind you.

Contact Avoidance

Ice racing is not a contact sport. Those who avoid contact with the snow banks and other cars tend to do very well.

Bumping and leaning on other cars during the race is not allowed. Although contact in ice racing can be unavoidable, it must not be part of your basic driving technique. Continuing this activity will result in penalties.

Being Passed

If you are being passed by a faster car, you must not impede the other car's progress by blocking or bumping. Let it go by. You will catch that car in a future race.

Technique

Being in control at all times is the best technique. Get to know the feel of your car. Know when the tires are about to find traction or lose traction. Conditions vary and understating what your car is likely to do under each condition will come with experience.

Talk to other more experienced drivers for tips. You will not win your first race, however if you finish all your races you will do quite well in the final standings. Run to finish.

If at any time you have any other questions, don't hesitate to ask any of the officials or fellow competitors.

Good Luck and Have Fun!