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"When you see things like that it makes you rethink about
taking part in that," Rudduck said. "It's not a very smart thing
to do. I don't agree with it because there are a lot of variables
that you can't control that make it dangerous for you and every-
one else."

While some people choose to race on the street, others are
beginning to realize the potential dangers of street racing and are
seeking alternatives.

The Texas A&M Sports Car Club has offered such an alternative
since 1968 with events such as auto crosses and Aggie Night at
Navasota Raceway.

Rudduck, a freshman computer engineering major, said he joined
the club because it was a great way to meet other people who are
also passionate about cars.

"We offer a wide breadth of knowledge over a diverse collection
of cars and also fun and competitive events held at legal and safe
racing environments," said Jeff Stroh, A&M sports car club president
and senior mechanical engineering major.

Stroh was also looking for an alternative to street racing. He first
joined the club in the fall of 2000 because he had always been inter-
ested in cars and was looking for a chance to race legally as well as
meet new people with the same interests as him.

Stroh gradually became one of the better drivers in the club
and now represents A&M as a driver for the annual Society of
Automotive Engineer competition at which more than 140
schools compete.

Stroh said events such as auto crosses help make people better
drivers by preparing them for emergency situations. An auto cross is
a series of timed runs on a course made up of a sequence of turns
designated by cones.

"Auto crossing can teach you car control in extreme situations
like last-minute lane changes and driving on a wet road," Stroh said.
At the beginning of every semester, A&M sports car club holds a
free instructional driving class called Offensive Driving 101, in
which attendees can learn the basics of auto crossing.

Jay Kannaiyan, a graduate mechanical engineering student,
said he thinks Offensive Driving 101 helped him feel in control
of his car.

"It taught me to be a smoother driver," Kannaiyan said. "I know
the car's limits now, I know what can and can't be done in it."

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Life in the fast lane

The Texas A&M Sports Car Club seeks out alternative racing environments

By Jose Cruz
THE BATTALION



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

Texas A&M Sports Car Club members congregated off Texas Avenue after their meeting Wednesday night to admire members' cars and trade tips.

For those people who prefer to race in a straight line, the car club
also hosts Aggie Night at Navasota Raceway on the first Wednesday
of every month.

Stroh said Aggie Night is a drag racing event with a discount-
ed rate for A&M students. At Aggie Night, the one-eighth mile
track, which is usually dominated by high horsepower race cars
with racing slick tires, is instead devoted to street cars with regu-
lar street tires.

This specially prepared racetrack is a way for people to race their
cars without having to worry about getting a speeding ticket or caus-
ing a potentially fatal accident.

Apart from scheduled events, Stroh points out that the sports
car club is as much a social organization as it is a club.

He said he thinks a common misconception about "gear heads"
is that their lives revolve around cars and there is nothing more
important to them than going fast. However, Stroh said people
would change the way they see "gear heads" if they were to spend
some time around them.

"We are looking to have a good time with other people. We use cars
as the medium through which we get together, not the cause," Stroh said.

The sports car club has more than 80 members with a diverse se-
lection of cars ranging from Corvettes to Camrys and even trucks. Club
members are united by a common passion and gather to take part in
events that celebrate that passion.

The reason the sports car club is one of the few officially recog-
nized car clubs is because of its commitment to safety and
organization.

"Most universities have risk management and liability issues," Stroh
said. "The reason we are the largest officially recognized collegiate
motor sports club in the nation is because we have a long track record of
safety and look to keep it that way."

New members such as Kannaiyan are relieved to find an officially
recognized car club when they arrive at Texas A&M.

"I think the sports car club is great," Kannaiyan said. "Most universi-
ties usually don't have them. The car clubs I've seen are reckless and
race on the streets."

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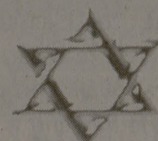
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Texas A&M Hillel Services for
Rosh Ha'Shannah and Yom Kippur

Friday, September 26th
Rosh Ha'Shannah Services at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 27th
1st Day of Rosh Ha'Shannah
Services start at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, September 28th
2nd Day of Rosh Ha'Shannah
Services start at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, September 28th
Tashlich Services
CS Police Department Pond at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 5th
Kol Nidre Services at 8:00 p.m.

Monday, October 6th
Yom Kippur Services start at 10:00 a.m.
Yizcor about 5:00 p.m.

Break-the-fast after sundown
following Nallah and Havdalah Services

Please contact Hillel for more information at 696-7313
Names for Yizcor must be received in the office by October 3, 2003