

## A Lap of Roebling Road Raceway

With Jon Krolewicz

Roebling Road Raceway is one of the fastest road courses in the country, and one of the most popular tracks for club racing, track days and testing in the southeast. It is a great track for such events because of its large runoff space, and the technical demands of its fast flowing corners. Different types of cars have different lines here, but for a general idea, here is a lap of this beautiful 2.02 mile road course. *(Ed. note: The track has been repaved since the photos were taken.)*



The front straight at Roebling is one of the longest in the country this also makes it one of the fastest. The braking zone for turn one is about 1000 feet away in this picture and the driving line is on the left side of the straight.



Depending on the car, you may arrive at the braking zone for turn one at anywhere from 110 to 150 mph. The brake markers are spaced out 100 feet, and are there for reference. It is best to look through the corner past the station (seen on your right) to get a better idea of speed and distance. Use the markers out of the corner of your eye to pick your braking point. The turn in point for turn 1 is almost to the grass past the "1" board. *(Ed note: Downshift to 4<sup>th</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> depending on gearing.)*



Turn one is a fast right hander, it also leads off what will be the case with every corner at Roebling. A late turn-in followed by a super late apex. The apex of turn one will be at the end of the rumble strips on the right, and after hitting the apex you will track out across the track for the turn in point at the entrance to turn two. While tracking out you will use that space to brake and downshift for turn two. *(Ed note: I disagree with the downshift here, especially with drivers without much experience. There is too much going on to try to downshift here.)*



Turn two is tighter than turn one, and you can really think of turns one and two as a big decreasing radius corner. Again turn two is a super late apex almost to the next straight and a very late turn in is needed to set up for it. In this picture you can see the rumble strips on the drivers left, and they are there for a reason...that's where the fast drivers are. Your turn-in point for turn two should be near the end of the rumble strips, and your apex is at the end of a set of rumble strips on the drivers right by the corner station.



Once you apex turn two you should let the car track out to the drivers left and to these rumble strips. Your next corner is turn 3 at the end of this straight. Turn three is a left hander, and therefore you will want to have your car on driver's right for the turn-in. If you look at this picture you can see the dark line as it slowly works its way across to the right side of the track. For drivers Ed and Solo groups this is passing zone #2. If you're being passed, stay left and give a point by.



Turn three is one of the fastest corners at Roebing Road, and needs a lot of discipline to be done right. The turn-in point is past the corner station. (Which can't be seen in this picture) If you look you can see the dark line and see how far the cars are going before they turn in. The apex to turn three is all the way at the end of the corner, almost on the straight between turns three and four.



You can see the apex for turn three here very well by looking at where the dark rubber laid down meets the end of the rumble strips. Notice that you don't actually track out all the way here, but only let the car drift about 1/2 way across the track to set up for the turn in of turn four. As the car settles coming off of turn 3 it gives a chance for braking on entrance to turn four. The braking zone for turn four is the hardest braking spot at Roebing.



Turn four is a long sweeping right hander. Like the other corners it is a late apex, and to make things harder the apex is out of sight when you enter the corner. By knowing where to be you can diminish the effect of having the apex so far ahead. After coming out of turn 3 you will bring the car back to drivers left and brake as the car settles, once you brake you can trail off the brakes and start your turn-in for the apex. The turn in will be slow, and for the first half of the corner will keep you on the left side

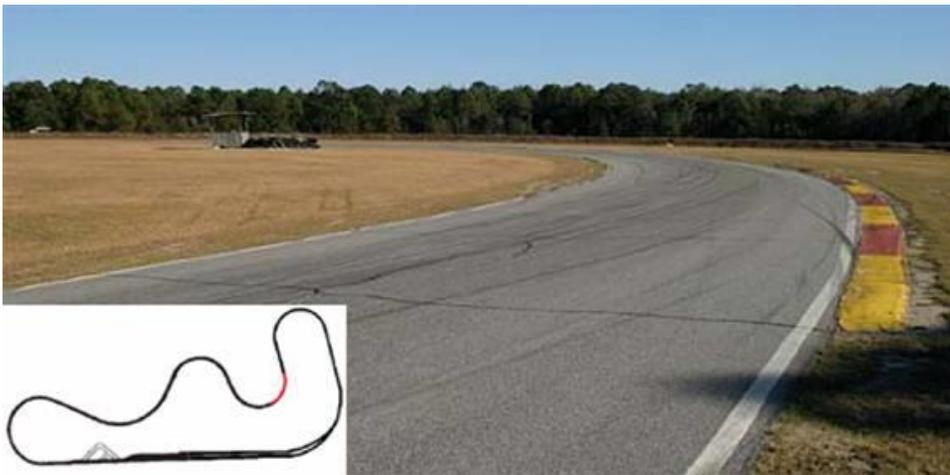
of what would be the "center line" if there was one. Once you get about 1/3rd of the way through the corner you will be able to see the apex which is at the far end of a set of rumble strips on the right.



Here you can see the end of the rumble strips for the turn four apex here, notice the dirt on the right and how much its torn up, this should give you an idea of how close to be. (Though I don't recommend the grass) Looking ahead from there you can see that the next turn is a left hander, and because of the short distance between turns 4 and 5a, do not let the car drift all the way across the road to drivers left, one of the reasons for such a late apex is so that you can keep the car on the right, and set up for turn 5.



The next turn is the slowest corner on the track, and is a left hand corner. Turn 5, with the shallow left hander leading into it is 5a. 5a can be taken one of two ways, without much difference, if any, in speed. You can stay to the drivers right here and ride the rim around the outside, or as I do cut across 5a putting your left wheels on the rumble strips. I do this section "flat" meaning no lift of the throttle and after apexing at 5a brake as I drive the car across the track to my turn in point for turn five.



I heard a driver say once "If I get turn 5 right before I die I will die happy." Because of the tricky entrance and late apex this corner can be one of the most daunting at Roebing. You will see a street light pole with a metal box in the photo. Aim for it. Watch the rumble strips on the right and the turn in should be at the end of the second set of those. By turning in there it will set up for the apex, which is on drivers left past the corner station.



After you apex turn 5, you will let the car track out to the rumble strips, Notice the extra room and all the dirt where the grass has been killed. Also notice the skid marks going off to drivers left if you a) snatch the car back after running off, or b) bind the car up on exit causing it to spin. This straight is short, but its critical that you get the car over to drivers left for the entrance to turn 6.



Turns 6 and 7 are a “NASCAR” style pair of corners, meaning that it is really one corner but we give it two numbers. *(There are 2 flagging stations, which is why it gets numbers. You can see Station #6 here).* These corners can be done in two ways: one is to do a very long slow handed turn in with a single apex at the exit of turn 7. The other way is a double apex, where the first apex is by the corner station on the right, and then let the car drift out, and aim for another super late apex at the exit of turn 7. Either way

because of visibility blocked by trees and the ground being raised on the right, looking as far ahead as possible is critical here to driving the correct line.



If you choose to do either the single apex to turns 6 and 7, or the double apex you will still find yourself in the middle of the track at the “entrance” to turn 7. If you look at this picture you can see the tires on driver’s right near the end of the corner, these tires block a drainage pipe for an access road and that road should be used as the apex for turn 7. At the point of the corner pictured here, you should be at or near full throttle.



Once you have apexed turn 7, you will let the car take itself over to driver’s left, and almost to the rumble strips (which are hard to see in this picture, by the shadow of the tree) You will keep the car to the left. *(ed note: I upshift at the top of the ‘hill’ so I have the revs available to get through turns 8 & 9.)* For Solo and DE groups, this is passing zone #3. Stay left and point the faster car by on your right. The Pit entrance is also over the crest of the hill. If you are going into the pits, pull to driver’s

right, and raise your left fist out the window to signal you are slowing.



Turns 8 and 9 are a pair of corners that is treated as one very fast long sweeping right hander leading onto the front straight. It is critical not only to speed, but safety that you get the right apex for turn 8/9. For a DE the turn in point is when you can see the rumble strips at the entrance to pit road.



This is the pit entrance that is just before apex at turn 8/9. I have included this picture to give you an idea of where the entrance is, and also to give a good shot of the turn in point, which is at the rumble strips that are just past where the track splits.



This shot gives a close up view of the end of the apex rumble strips, and you can also see the darker racing line in this shot. Notice that it is a very smooth transition from apex to track-out. The end of the apex rumble strips is the safest apex you can take. That black mass between the track and pit road is a tire barrier to protect the pit wall.



Finally we are at the track out of the final corner and back on the front straight. The start/finish line is 6-700 feet ahead. This is the most dangerous part of the track. The grass on driver's left is in soft sand and if you run off, **KEEP THE CAR STRAIGHT**. You can see the skid marks on the right from drivers that didn't. Notice that they end in the wall. There is plenty of grass to get the car slowed down and safely pull back onto the track here. If you get the late apex right for turn 8/9 however, sliding into the grass is usually a non-issue. For Solo and DE groups this is passing zone #1. Keep left and point the faster car by your right.