

So you're thinking about starting ice racing?? Well if you have got this far you are on the right track. The TBAC has been organizing ice racing for longer than any other club in Canada and has a very loyal member following. Ice racing is a very unique form of motorsport that will teach you a great deal about car control and discipline. In fact it's one of the best driver education opportunities out there.

First off, it's important to clear up a few things before you take the mental and financial plunge into this unique form of motorsports.

Firstly, you must be very clear as to why you want to participate. This may sound fundamental but if you are doing it for the wrong reasons you will not have fun and you will not be willing to put the time in that it demands.

Second, You MUST establish what your budget is. If you can only afford \$500 dollars a year you should be making all your decision making based on that number (or take up a new winter hobby). Racing is and will always be an expensive sport, but this is by far the cheapest way to get your feet wet. But you can and will spend as much money as your budget allows for, so don't bluff your self. (Else you could be sleeping in the garage with the car instead of in your house with your wife!!)

Once you have decided that this maybe something that you would like to participate in the first thing you should be doing is reading the rule book. I say it again READ THE RULE BOOK!!!!!!! In there you will see the general car preparation requirements for each class and a prescriptive rundown on what can and can't be done to your ride. You should also use this information to decide what class you want (and can afford) to participate in. Most Drivers start off in Rubber to ice as it provides the cheapest way to get your feet wet and offers a comfortable speed in which you can learn about car control.

Now we can start talking about how to get started and what needs to be examined before you begin pushing the loud pedal.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

HELMET

This is by far the most important racing investment you can spend money on. Before you go out and drag your old snow machine or dirt bike helmet out of the shed. Ask your self this question: How much do I value my head? If you think you have a \$50 head then by all means buy a \$50 helmet. But what ever you use it must be in good condition and be certified as per the rule book.

PERSONAL GEAR

It is also highly recommended (and mandatory in Studded) that all drivers wear appropriate fire resistant clothing. This can be easily found by searching online, or asking a club member.

Foot wear is another important personal item. For the most part flat soled runners will work well. If you have the money proper fire resistant racing shoes can be purchased but are not totally necessary. But what ever you do, don't try to drive in big winter boots

RACING HARNESS

The second bit of kit you will need is a five point racing harness. These can be easily sourced online or from you local dirt track racer who needs to replace his every few years. Another excellent source would be on e-bay.

TOWING

Before you think about buying a car you must figure out how to get it to the track. Unlike many of the clubs in southern Ontario you man NOT leave you car at the track. This means you must figure out a way to tow it too and from the races. The cheapest way is with a homemade tow bar, the most expensive way is a nice enclosed trailer.

CAR

You may wonder why this category isn't first. The answer is simple if you cant afford the above safety items you cant afford to race.PERIOD.

When looking for a car, try to find a small lightweight car in fairly good condition. I cant tell you what car you should buy because there is no right answer, just read the rules and try to find the best car for the class you want to run. But always bear in mind that no matter how awesome your car looks you will still look stupid if you get to the track and it wont start..trust me

I know from personal experience!! Make sure it is a strong mechanically sound base before you start working on it. It will save you a tone of time and effort. At the very least you should always be aware of how much effort it will require to make it reliable. Think of spending between \$200 and \$5000 for a reasonable car

Once you have a car in your possession you can start to think about preparation.

CAR PREPARATION

Step 1) ATTEND A CLUB MEETING. At this meeting you can make contacts with people who will help you through your first year of racing. But remember they have jobs and there own cars to prepare so they wont do it all for you. But they can be a good source of information. At this meeting you should also pay your club dues, this will get you a license that will be required to race as well gives you the opportunity to vote on important club issues.

Step 2) vigorously remove the beautiful interior!!!!!!! The only thing you need in there is a steering wheel three (or two) pedals a shifter and some form of a dash. Every thing else should go.

Step 3) At this point you should start to think about how you're going to get a cage welded in. Any local welder should be able to handle the job with ease but be sure to ask around for the best price. Also vary often some of the club members will be happy to weld up a cage for a nominal price.

Step 4) Once your cage has been installed you should then look at installing all your safety equipment and insuring the car is legal for which ever class you chose. The car will need a 100W amber light at the rear, fire extinguisher, and racing harness installed. Make sure you follow the rules to install each item properly. Also, all your headlights must work as should you windshield wipers.

Step 5) Now is the time to worry about performance modifications. You might choose to weld the diff. to help you with traction. You might also want to remove you front sway bar. Whatever you decide is going to be your secret weapon make sure it is safe and reliable.

Step 6) Now that your car is ready to race you can go out and buy your tires. The club will have a source for discounted tires that you can or must use for racing. Consult you friendly neighborhood ice racer for more information.

Step 7) Make the car look pretty. This part is truly optional but it will make you feel better about your investment as well as keep you looking fast on the track!!!! And everyone needs that. The easiest way to give you new ride some colour is rolling on some Tremclad. Its a bit crude but it works.

Step 8) Once your car is ready to go you will need to take it too the annual tech inspection as well as all your racing equipment (helmet, fire extinguisher, etc.) Should anything be wrong with your car you will be asked to fix it and have it ready for re-inspection before you race. You will be told when the annual tech inspection takes place at the club meetings.

YOUR FIRST RACE!!!

Get a good night sleep!!! You cant concentrate if you're too tired or hung-over.

Try to get everything ready the night before you race so you don't forget anything!! Like your helmet.

Make sure you get to the track early to get your self registered and find a pit spot were you can show off your new ride. You should really warm up your car for a good long period before you hit the track. And, make sure you have a drip tray under your car to catch that oil and coolant before it hits the ice. And, if you need to change your tires now is the time to dot it.

Before you start to think you're going to put everyone to shame with your unsurpassed driving ability its time for a reality check; you will not be fast your first time out, and most likely not even you're second or third. It doesn't matter how many years you have spent doing doughnuts in parking lots this is entirely different cup of tea that takes practice. Go out slow for your first couple sessions and follow other drivers, you will find the fast drivers don't look like they are working very hard at all. They car always stays all neat and tidy under them.