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**OCT 08**

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## GRANDEE GRAND PRIX THE FILTHY RICH FIND A PLACE TO DRIVE KIND OF FAST. (AND YES, WE'RE JEALOUS.)

BY TED WEST

» You own exclusive access, bought and paid for, to one of the most complex and challenging road-racing circuits in the country. Any time you want, you can race your pristine vintage competition car around its 22-turn, 4.1-mile faux-Nürburgring length, fast as you can go.

Fat chance, you berk. Nobody's that rich. Or that lucky.

Except maybe Porsche racing freak Jerry Seinfeld. He could have each put down \$100,000 to join Monticello Motor Club, an hour and a half to the northwest from New York City. (After June 1, the entry fee jumped to \$125,000.)

Monticello is the brainchild of enthusiast Bill McMichael, 41. After amassing a tastelessly huge fortune in health care, McMichael found that no matter how much he paid, he couldn't get onto a commercial racing circuit at a time and in a way that was convenient for him. "That's why I got involved in Monticello," he says. "I don't like waiting."

Since that realization, and for about a year now, McMichael has been resolutely not waiting for this uniquely high-end racing facility to take shape. In final form, it will have luxury clubhouses, overnight facilities, a four-

star restaurant, vast garage complexes, and full-scale track maintenance for members' cars. And should Monticello's pampered coterie tire of its own priceless racing and road cars, the club's motor pool of rental exotics is available to all.

This unspeakably grand Catskills project, supplanting the tiny, and tinnily missed, Monticello Municipal Airport, was budgeted at a hefty \$95 million, but that was last year. This year, the budget is \$40 million, says, still smiling, "It'll be done."

And did we mention McMichael loathes waiting? "I have a specific date in mind for opening day. When I told the paving contractor about it, he said, 'Oh, that depends on the weather.' 'Fine,' I said. 'We'll go to 12-hour shifts, six days a week.'"

The members of this ultra-exclusive club will get their money's worth. The track includes a straight three-quarters of a mile long (with optional bus-stop chicane), one of the longest in the land; a miniature of Spa's upward thrusting Eau Rouge curves; a Daytona banked turn; and countless other challenges. Membership, now around 100, will be limited to 500 extremely carefully vetted enthusiasts, total. So get those \$125,000 checks in the mail!

### Monticello Motor Club

