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CTS-V vs. M5
 GUESS WHO WINS



ROAD & TRACK

Corvette DRIVING THE MOST

King for a Day

2009 Cadillac CTS-V vs. 2008 BMW M5 SMG

BY SHAWN BAILEY // PHOTOS BY NABE CHIRANI



Monticello Motor Club



MONTICELLO, NEW YORK—The announcement that is the only way to describe this showdown between BMW's legendary M5 and Cadillac's all-new CTS-V. The Cadillac and BMW accepted our invitation to pick the drivers and put their own special twist on a neutral site for hot laps and winner-takes-all bragging rights (spoils vehicles to whom these cars pass on in the sport-compact hierarchy).

Cadillac, in the heavy challenge, making no secret that it has benchmarked the M5 in producing its new 150-hp CTS-V, right down to specifying the same Michelin PS2 tires. So heavy, in fact, that it signed to the famed "five weeks before it would allow any journalists (including me) to drive the car."

BMW knows it holds a card all others wish to emulate. It also knows it has a new M5 in the works. Still, the company is game to put the 20-year-old M5 to the test, bringing two versions, a 6-speed manual and 7-speed Steyrer model, to the track. BMW racing ace, Bill Auberke, Cadillac driver up with a check, so back CTS-V with Performance Vehicle Operations Director John Henrick as the designated pilot.

It's done and we're at the Monticello Motor Club, 90 miles north of Washington. The club's road quality is in two days. Outside of a few workers who are being in an hour to do hot laps before 10:30 a.m. Jason Bonomo, the track looks for better than "the an occasional glow."

The track and very green. To learn the track and begin studying to tomorrow's road cars. A rolling obstacle consisting of track staff and a inter-oveny lane that has been coming out that some from Jays of Thomas. They're flagged to follow the metal cars passed.

The massive construction around the grounds has left a lot of dirt on the track. It's a new surface and will take a few race days to become smooth. John and Bill are a little apprehensive about some wear on the back side of the track that's to wide and also the environment that that seems to be overlooked in the surface. They don't seem to worry much as they reach just shy of 130 mph down the main straight on their first run. The last corner goes for 20 seconds and the five second track record is approximately set by the CTS-V at 2.10 seconds, 47.35 seconds. Henrick has counted hours behind the wheel of the car and is right at home. He also an experienced driver—his driver. The driver track and choice of Karl Vosters, 40-year-old Auberke race veteran. He has been racing BMWs for years, but hasn't been in an M5 for four years, yet got oriented quickly. He switches cars from the 6-speed manual to the 7-speed SMG, experience car and runs out a 2:40.36 and the Cadillac crew averages 1:58.68 in repeating runs.

Henrick is confident his 6-speed manual V can run with the all-new paddle-shifted M5. Looking at the stats, the V has a big advantage with 30-hp horsepower, 180 lb-ft more torque and sits at 110.8-weight pounds. It puts the power to good use and stretches the legs of his V to 149.39 mph and runs a 2:45.11. Our Veeva GPS data shows that track drivers and cars are performing nearly identical laps. With the same maneuvering and the way weaving the track surface, both drivers start running coast-down laps between fast laps. It's the last corner and it's too close to call. Auberke runs two hard laps and comes in first with a time. The time between runs he did a 2:45.36 and the GPS data agrees. Henrick is off out and Karl Vosters of Cadillac's communications is reporting. The V is flagged in, Swift's stopwatch says it's done. The V car three fast laps, each one faster than the previous by a tenth

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of a second. The final one is a 2:44.23, just under a half-second faster than the BMW. Could the M5 go quicker? Maybe. But for now we'll have to let the track get back to its construction.

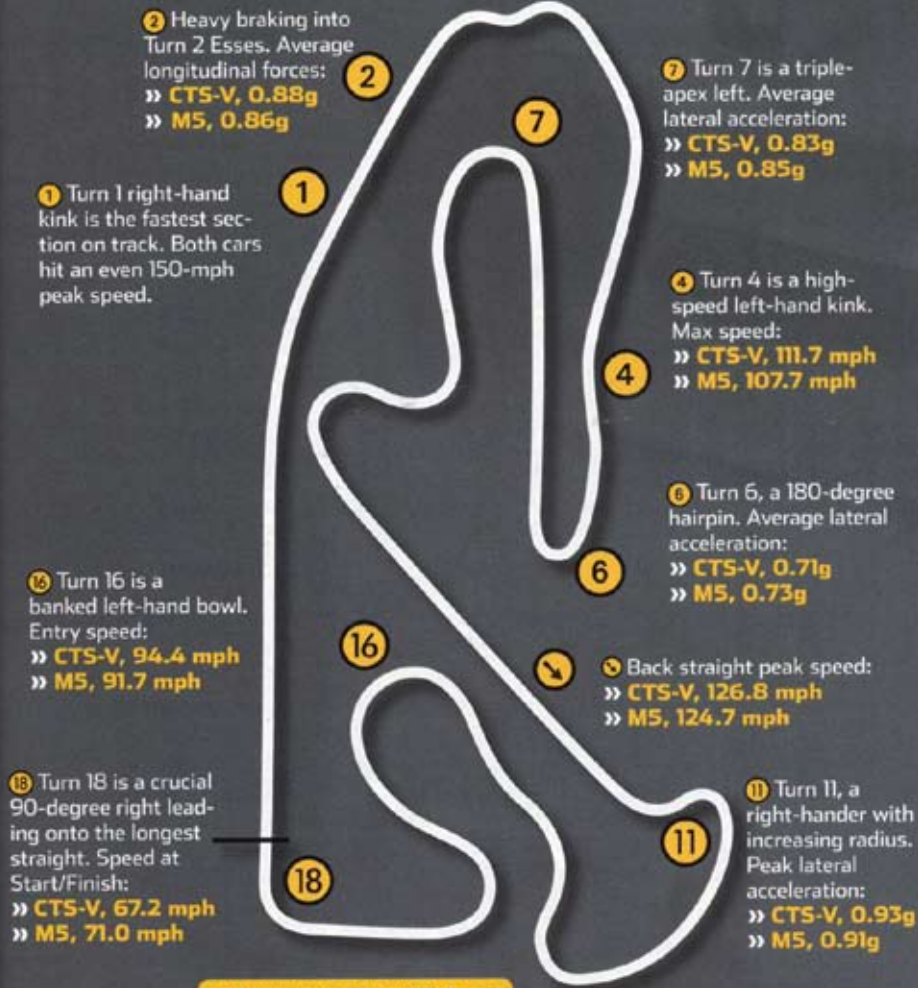
Cadillac won by the skin of its teeth and all the participants walked away happy.

Cadillac has made a CTS-V that can best the BMW M5 for likely the cost difference of a Chevy Malibu, while BMW knows its 3-year-old M5 is still close competition for the newest CTS-V. I'm sure BMW will be glad to raise the bar again with the next M5, but for now the V is king.

» Bill Auberlen and John Heinricy use up all the track piloting their respective rides around Monticello Motor Club's 3.4-mile road course. Dust on the track is in part from the ongoing construction, but also the track's current lack of curbing. Clipping apexes also dragged dirt onto the track.

Monticello Motor Club

The Monticello Motor Club is just what it sounds like—a place for car guys to hang out. But unlike those dirty, sweaty, your-girlfriend-doesn't-want-to-go-there type of places, the MMC will be an exclusive resort. One that caters to expensive cars, and the people who like to drive them fast. Membership is limited and currently costs \$125,000. The track is essentially done, while the support buildings are scheduled to be finished next year. As it is, drivers are already clamoring for a track event there, but only members can drive the full 4.1-mile track. Non-members are relegated to the southern two loops. (We used the 3.4-mile layout shown here.) Being only 90 minutes from New York City, it's a big hit already with all the car buffs who reside in the area. It may also be a wise investment, as the memberships are limited, meaning they may be tough to get later.—SB



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