

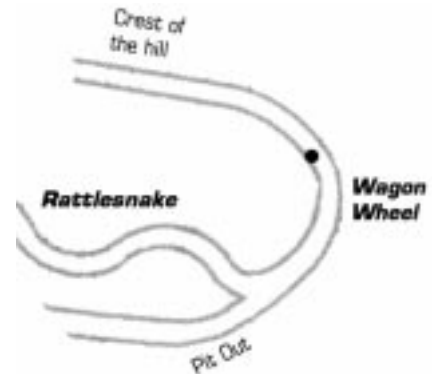


# at MotorSport Ranch II

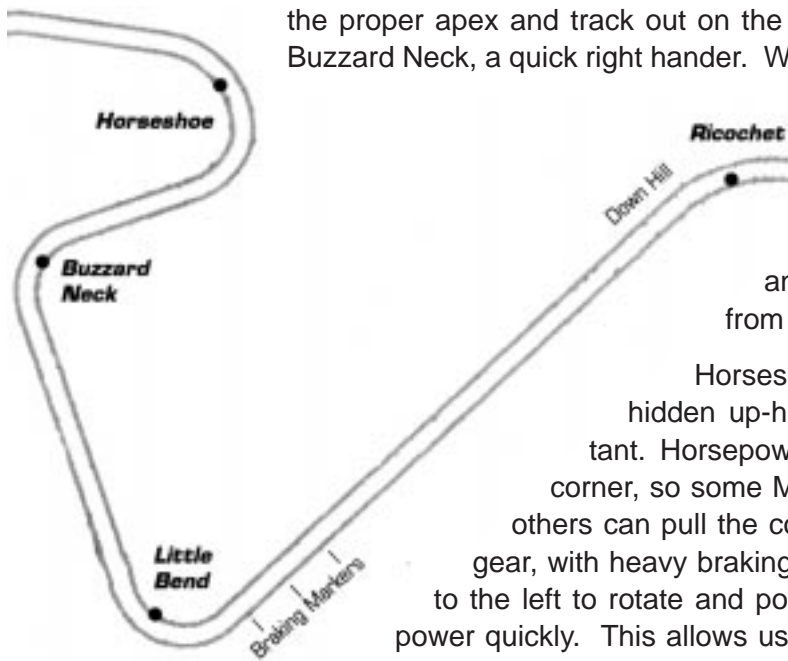
Saturday and Sunday, March 17 and 18, 2001

## A Miata Hot Lap at Motorsport Ranch

As we exit the hot pit in a counter-clockwise direction, we check back over our left shoulder for traffic coming through Rattlesnake (the esses). The track is clear, so we enter the course on the far right edge of the track and roll on the power in second gear. Halfway through this one hundred and eighty degree turn that we call Wagon Wheel, we aim for an apex on the left side of the track just about the point where the elevation begins to increase. We are also nearing redline, so we shift to third gear while still in the turn. Now we let the car drift completely out to the right edge of the track just before the top of the hill. We crest the hill, continuing to accelerate, staying on the right edge to set up for Ricochet.



Ricochet is a fast downhill left sweeper leading on to the back straight. The entry is blind until the secondary elevation change down the hill, where we up-shift to fourth gear to get the car settled before turn-in. It appears that Ricochet is off camber, but with a slightly late apex, we track out far down the hill just as the track flattens out. Depending on tire grip, a slight lift of the throttle may be necessary to help the car turn in, but with 'R' tires, the right foot stays planted and the drop in elevation allows us to accelerate quickly down the back straight. Hard on the power, we begin a smooth transition to the left side of the track, looking for the braking markers before Little Bend. Our braking begins just past the second marker and ends with a downshift to third just before turn-in which is deep into the corner. We trail brake a couple of car lengths into the corner, then begin rolling into the power as we aim for a very late apex, about three-quarters down the curbing. Being the long corner that Little Bend is, it is easy to early apex this corner and find ourselves dirt-tracking off drivers left. Having been there a few times, we now clip the proper apex and track out on the left edge where we will stay for the entry into Buzzard Neck, a quick right hander. We can't see Buzzard Neck until we crest a small



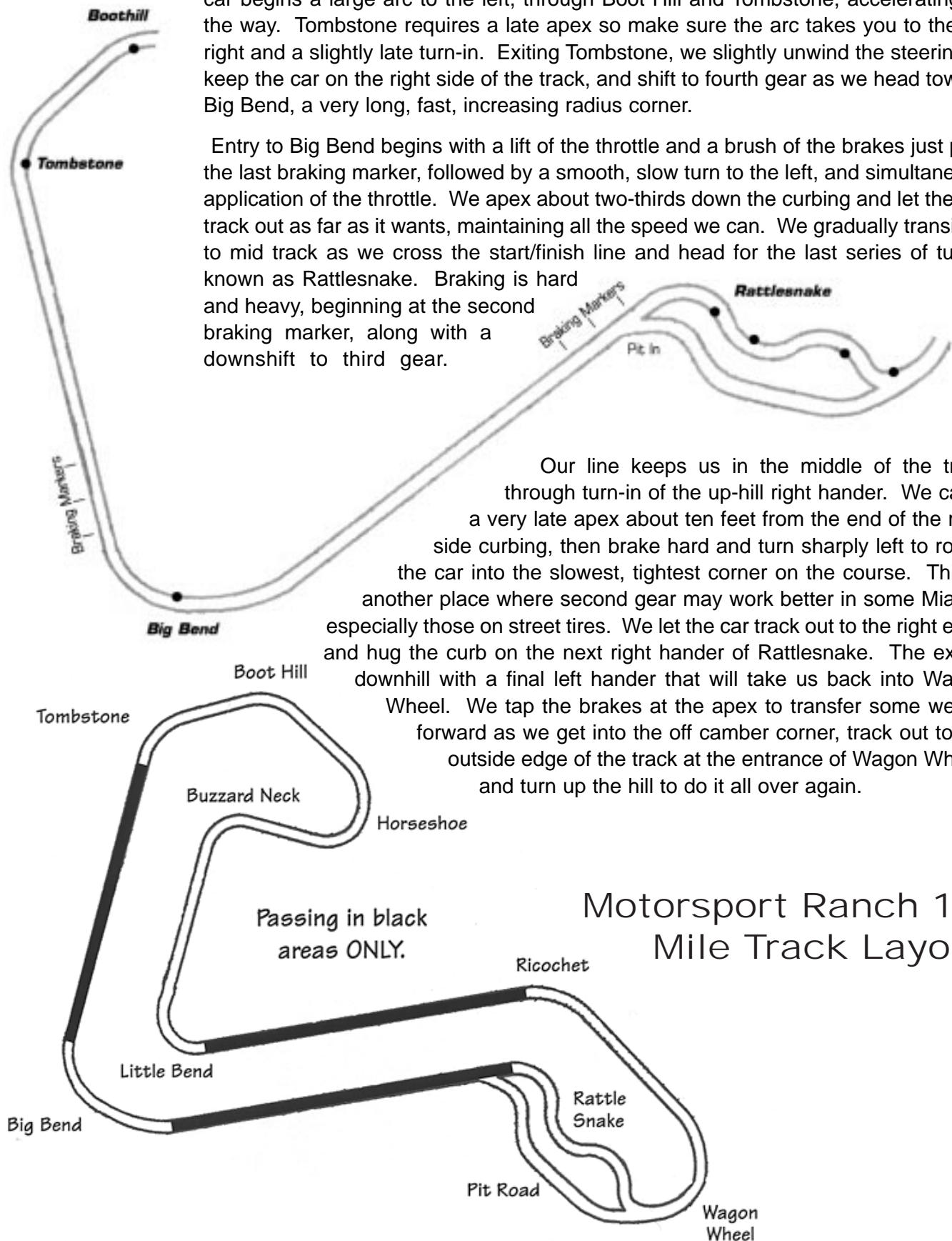
rise in the track, about one hundred yards before turn-in, so it is very important to be on the left edge of the track. We brake slightly on the entry, wanting to carry as much speed as possible. Track out all you need to the left and then smoothly move right about a car length from the left edge for entry into Horseshoe.

Horseshoe is a significantly off-camber corner with a hidden up-hill track out, where speed is extremely important. Horsepower, torque, and grip determine the entry into this corner, so some Miatas will do well to drop to second gear while others can pull the corner in third. We will enter the corner in third gear, with heavy braking early into the corner, followed by a sharp turn to the left to rotate and point the car toward the inside curbing, applying power quickly. This allows us to clip an apex just about the point the elevation begins to increase. We hold the inside line almost to the crest of the hill, at

which time we allow the car to begin to track out slightly. Had we allowed the car to track out immediately after the apex, we would have found ourselves on the right edge of the track at the crest of the hill, heading for the dirt! We are still in the turn and can now see the track ahead. With minimal steering input, the car begins a large arc to the left, through Boot Hill and Tombstone, accelerating all the way. Tombstone requires a late apex so make sure the arc takes you to the far right and a slightly late turn-in. Exiting Tombstone, we slightly unwind the steering to keep the car on the right side of the track, and shift to fourth gear as we head toward Big Bend, a very long, fast, increasing radius corner.

Entry to Big Bend begins with a lift of the throttle and a brush of the brakes just past the last braking marker, followed by a smooth, slow turn to the left, and simultaneous application of the throttle. We apex about two-thirds down the curbing and let the car track out as far as it wants, maintaining all the speed we can. We gradually transition to mid track as we cross the start/finish line and head for the last series of turns, known as Rattlesnake. Braking is hard and heavy, beginning at the second braking marker, along with a downshift to third gear.

Our line keeps us in the middle of the track through turn-in of the up-hill right hander. We catch a very late apex about ten feet from the end of the right side curbing, then brake hard and turn sharply left to rotate the car into the slowest, tightest corner on the course. This is another place where second gear may work better in some Miatas, especially those on street tires. We let the car track out to the right edge and hug the curb on the next right hander of Rattlesnake. The exit is downhill with a final left hander that will take us back into Wagon Wheel. We tap the brakes at the apex to transfer some weight forward as we get into the off camber corner, track out to the outside edge of the track at the entrance of Wagon Wheel, and turn up the hill to do it all over again.



## Motorsport Ranch 1.7 Mile Track Layout