

The Gateway

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Byron Collins

Poor and car-less Business students R. J. Iler (left) and Kevin McKee may have to practice their driving skills in the HUB arcade for now, but if they attend former race-car driver Gary Magwood's seminar today, they will have a chance to do the real thing. Students from the audience will be chosen to get an in-car defensive driving lesson on the week-end.

Driving students become student drivers

by Randal Smathers

You've got the top five scores on every Pole Position game on campus, but you want to try out your moves in the real thing? If you're lucky, you'll get a chance this weekend, courtesy of Ford and Labatt's.

Labatt's is sponsoring a program called the "Road Scholarship," which is a different kind of driving school for university students. Taught by Gary Magwood, who is the road test editor for *World of Wheels* magazine, and a corps of local racers, the course teaches students survival skills behind the wheel.

The course includes a seminar today in Myer Horowitz theatre, from 4:30 to about 6 p.m. From the seminar, 95 students will be selected for a four-hour in-car lesson on

Saturday or Sunday in Northlands parking lot.

"We're making it fun," said Magwood, "It's a no bullshit deal. We talk straight to students. . . 19 to 26 year olds are going to screw up behind the wheel. They're young and crazy; they take the odd chance. Hopefully we'll eliminate the mistakes. . . whittle down the crashes."

University age drivers are the most collision-prone drivers, and therefore the ideal targets for this type of program. Magwood carefully avoids the use of the word "accident." "Accidents are things over which we have no control. Most people have crashes or collisions—things they can avoid."

He is enthusiastic about the program, and the response. "The look on their faces when they realize the steering wheel is not something

to keep them in their seat. You don't need to be an astrophysicist to drive a car."

Not surprisingly, as someone who opened one of the first racing schools in North America—in the early '70's at Mosport, Ontario—Magwood is not happy with current standards of driver training. A specialized skills course like Magwood's can cost from \$350-\$800. "Most people spend the money on guitar lessons or golf clubs. They think they know how to drive. . . but you can't fall off of a guitar and kill yourself."

"It's expected that you'll learn by osmosis. If you're a male, it's assumed you know how to drive, that Dad figured you just needed a little experience. If it's a daughter, then they get driving lessons, but once they know how to parallel

park, make three right turns and a left turn (so they can get a license), that's the only requirement. Then they put you on a crowded, four lane highway in the rain at dusk, and you're supposed to know what to do."

Magwood compares current driver education to learning to type on a manual typewriter, "You're taught keyboard skills." However, driving a modern, high-tech car in traffic is like operating a word processor with only those skills, "It would take six months to a year to figure everything out by yourself, but you don't have that opportunity in a car."

There is a drinking-and-driving message in the program, but it's not what Magwood terms the "body bag movie" approach of driver ed classes. "All those teach you is not to eat lunch before you go to

Driver's Ed class. We're saying, 'Here's how to do it sober, but if you're impaired that all goes out the window.' The students realize that. The chances of crashing are greater sober; the vast number of crashes involve sober drivers in good weather, but the chances of dying go up exponentially when you're impaired."

Current automotive technology, like anti-lock braking systems, front wheel drive, and better handling cars have not helped reduce collision statistics. "In the old days, the car would break loose at 40-50 m.p.h., but now the car sticks better, handles better, and it's going that much quicker—maybe as much as 90, but (definitely) more than 50—when it goes. We're saying, 'Here's what to do to eliminate crashes. It doesn't matter diddly what car you're driving (this system will help).'"

Changes to make student awards permanent

by Pat Kiernan and Dawn Lerohl

In an effort to create a student awards program that "will exist in perpetuity" the Students' Union plans to put a funding question to a campus-wide referendum.

At a news conference held Wednesday, the Students' Union unveiled an expanded program to

reward students for outstanding involvement on campus.

Suresh Mustapha, Students' Union V.P. academic, says there are two significant shortcomings with the current awards program. The means of funding is uncertain from year to year, and he believes there are not enough awards.

The present funding for the involvement awards comes from the standard SU operating budget. A total yearly contribution of about \$14,000 pays for the administration expenses of the program, and for a series of scholarships.

Mustapha claims that more funding is needed, and wants the money to come from a guaranteed source. He said the "Students' Union hasn't always been as profitable as it is now" and notes that a decline in revenues could force a future council to cut the awards funding.

Mustapha said the issue "must go to a referendum to create permanency." Under the SU proposal, students will be asked if they are in favor of a one dollar per year fee increase, providing the money goes directly into a scholarship endowment fund.

Students won't be the only ones asked to fund the expanded program. Two corporate donors have already been secured, and others are said to be receptive to the idea.

Students can also make an indirect contribution to the endow-

ment by purchasing a "Students' Union Ticket Pak". The discount coupon books are being sold for six dollars. One third of the price goes to the scholarship program.

Mustapha realizes that the referendum will be a tough sell. "We know that fee increases are very unpopular," he said. He is confident that there would be a definite increase in campus involvement, because "students would realize that sort of thing is really recognized here."

The perception that the awards are only accessible to an elite group of Students' Union activists is far from the truth, according to Mustapha. The scholarships are available to reward any type of campus involvement, from Students' Union and faculty association contributions, to volunteer work and fraternity activities. If the program is well publicized, Mustapha believes it can create a kind of spirit that "feeds off itself."

Mustapha cautions, however, that the awards program is just one component in an overall effort to

increase student involvement, and notes that the total goal can't be accomplished without effort in other areas.

Mustapha personally believes the involvement awards program "is very worthwhile," and hopes that other students will agree when the referendum question is presented on March 8 and 9, 1990. But the opinion is only his own.

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Yogi Berra, on receiving a cheque inscribed 'Pay to Bearer'—"This ain't the way to spell my name."



Chancellor Tevie Miller