

# School for Chauffeurs

by Gary Witzenburg

A huge corporate limousine cruises on a curvy section of pavement, its lights plying the misty darkness like twin-search beams in a deserted seacoast harbor. Uphill and down it goes, around a sweeping left-hand turn followed by a tight right hairpin. A straight section of blacktop is followed by a fast left-hand "dog-leg" curve with only a thin ribbon of railing between the long black car and a twenty-foot drop-off on the right.

But the limo driver is in no particular hurry, motoring along through the silent central California blackness as if waiting for something to happen. Suddenly a second pair of eyes blinks open in the night, and a sinister black sedan roars out of the bushes, tires scrabbling for traction in the dirt then squealing impatiently as the car fishtails onto the pavement and gives chase.

The chauffeur reacts instantly, plunging his right foot to the floorboard and glancing nervously in his mirror as the approaching headlights grow larger. The heavy limousine accelerates slowly but surely. . . 50. . . 60. . . 70. . . 80 miles per hour, but it's no match for the lighter sedan. It lumbers around a fast right-hand turn, the sedan nearly climbing its bumper, then brakes hard and drifts neatly, incredibly, in a controlled slide around a tight, right-hand bend.

The sedan pulls inside to the right, but the limo driver squeezes it off against the edge of the pavement and it has to drop back behind. A fast left turn leads to a steep uphill section where the sedan's superior acceleration brings it alongside and then ahead. Then it cuts in front and forces the limo to a stop. The driver's door opens and a man jumps out and runs toward the limo, but the chauffeur has already jammed the big car's transmission into reverse and floored the gas.

As the limo gains speed backwards down the hill, tires spinning and smoking and burning twin black streaks into the pavement, its driver coolly cuts the wheel and guides it through a reverse 180-degree spin. Without losing momentum, he throws the gearshift into low and he tears off back the way he came. Meanwhile, the sedan's driver

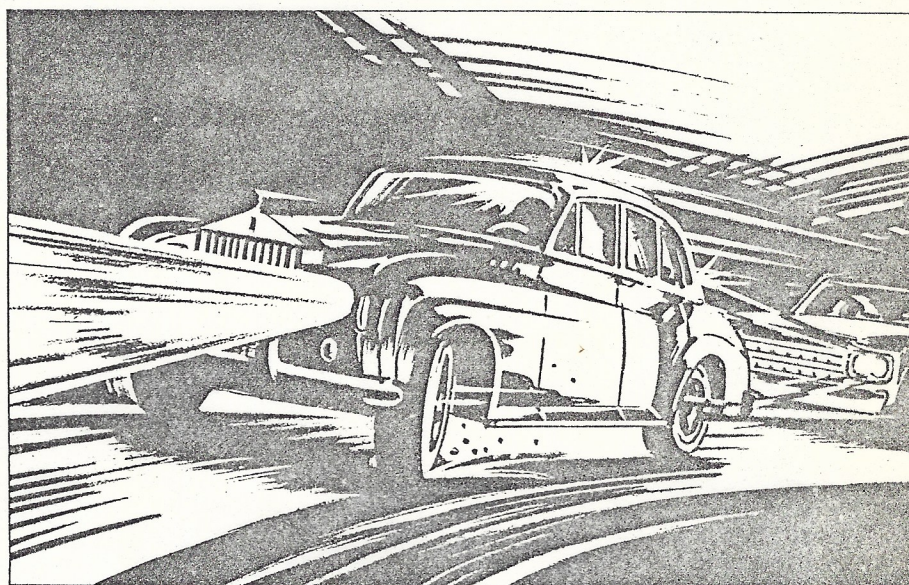


Illustration: Steve Miller

has jumped back into his car and the chase resumes.

A few turns later, the more agile sedan is again on the limo's bumper, but the chauffeur skillfully executes a 180-degree "handbrake" turn and hurries away in the opposite direction. Just as skillfully, the sedan driver duplicates the maneuver and chases the big limo down again, this time forcing it into a small ditch where it can't escape. Again the driver springs out of his car and rushes toward his prey.

Reaching the front of the limo, he raises both hands in the air and slaps them down on the hood. "Gotcha!" he yells, with a sly grin; and the limo driver, chauffeur's cap in hand, climbs out, wipes the sweat off his forehead and reaches nervously for a cigarette. "Some fun!" he gasps, shaking his head.

He has lost the chase, but then Bob Bondurant's students usually do. In this instance, the chase conducted on the Sears Point International Raceway, in Sonoma, California, was the final exam in Bondurant's unusual corporate chauffeur's antiterrorist, antikidnap, antiassassin driver's school. But had it been the real thing, the chauffeur and his VIP passenger would likely be dead and/or in the shaky hands of a political terrorist group or a gang of extortionists.

With terrorism on the rise all over the world and increasingly likely even in this country, more and more corporations are sending their top executives' personal drivers to Bondurant's school to learn the art of high-performance pursuit driving—just in case. The four-day course costs \$1,000 per student, plus some wear and tear on the car and one well-used set of tires, but that's a small price to pay indeed for the protection of employees' lives, not to mention the large sums of money and unpleasant publicity likely to be involved if a company officer does get kidnapped.

Bondurant himself was one of the country's finest racing drivers in the 1960s before a bad crash left him with a permanent limp and a desire to direct his considerable skills toward training others in high-speed driving techniques. His school, located in Sonoma, just north of San Francisco, offers a plethora of driving courses in addition to the chauffeur training described here.

Aspiring race drivers can take his five-day "Grand Prix" curriculum, and experienced ones can sharpen their skills in a three-day advanced-road-racing course in the school's own sedans, sports cars and open-wheel single-seater "formula" racers. Nonracers wishing to

Continued on page 9



improve their abilities—or just to get more enjoyment out of driving—can bring their own cars (or rent a school car) for high-performance driving training including skid control, emergency handling and accident avoidance. And there's even a stunt-driving course (available on request) for movie and TV chase-scene drivers.

Scores of the country's best racing drivers have trained with Bondurant and his instructors, as have many Hollywood stars: Paul Newman, James Garner, James Coburn, Robert Wagner, Clint Eastwood, Gene Hackman and Candice Bergen, to name a few, have attended the school at one time or another.

The chauffeur course, like the others, begins with intensive classroom discussion and demonstration, then progresses through wet- and dry-skid pad training, an intricate maneuverability course, an egg-shaped "handling" track (with a sweeping turn at one end and a hairpin at the other) and a three-lane accident simulator that uses pillions and traffic lights to teach reflexive emergency avoidance reactions and emergency car control. Students are first taught a portion of the Sears Point road and later the entire course to learn the proper lines through various types of turns, not to mention the fine art of collecting big, heavy, American cars at high speed on the difficult race track. The final test, as mentioned, is the high-speed night pursuit.

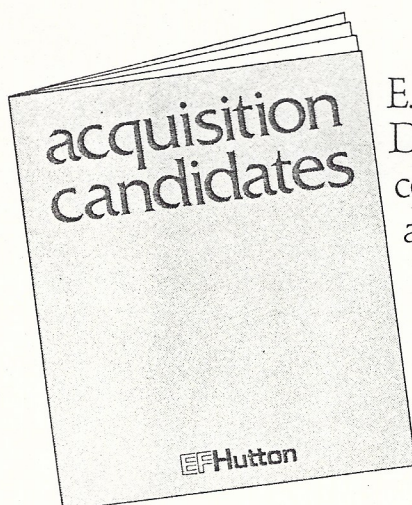
Most chauffeurs have been used to piloting their charges around as smoothly as possible, with little more expected of them than maneuvering through city traffic without denting any expensive fenders or spilling any dry martinis in the back. But most take to flinging the big cars around surprisingly well, according to Bondurant.

Everything from correct seating position and hand positions on the steering wheel to confidence levels—getting comfortable with what a car will do at its limits—as well as driving skills themselves are emphasized in every Bondurant course.

"It's unlikely that the guy at the wheel of the terrorists' car has had any professional training, so a little edge in skill can make a lot of difference," Bondurant explains. "I tell a student that as long as he's moving his life is valuable. But as soon as he's stopped, it's worth nothing." It's an unfortunate fact that chauffeurs are normally considered expendable by terrorists and are killed as a matter of course. This provides a lot of incentive for not being caught.

"I never thought being a chauffeur would come to this!" one middle-aged student exclaimed while trying to come to grips with the Bondurant course of instruction. But for him and his colleagues, it unfortunately has. ■

# EF Hutton talks about take-over candidates.



E.F.Hutton's Investment Research Department has uncovered 20 companies which we believe are likely take-over candidates.

High cash flow or high cash position characterize some of these firms. Other companies have good growth records but have escaped market attention and are selling below book value. Several are good speculations whether or not they're ever taken over.

While we can't predict that any of these companies will be acquired, we do believe that their intrinsic value merits your consideration. Such undervaluation is eventually recognized.

For further information on these carefully selected take-over candidates, just send us the coupon below.

Yes, I want more information on E.F.Hutton's take-over candidates.

Name

Street

City  State  Zip

Home Phone  Business Phone

My EFH Account No. is  /  /  ☐ I have no EFH Account.

26-11R-11

**EF Hutton**

E.F.Hutton & Company Inc.  
One Battery Park Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10004  
(212) 742-5000. Attn: Adv. Dept.

## When EF Hutton talks, people listen.