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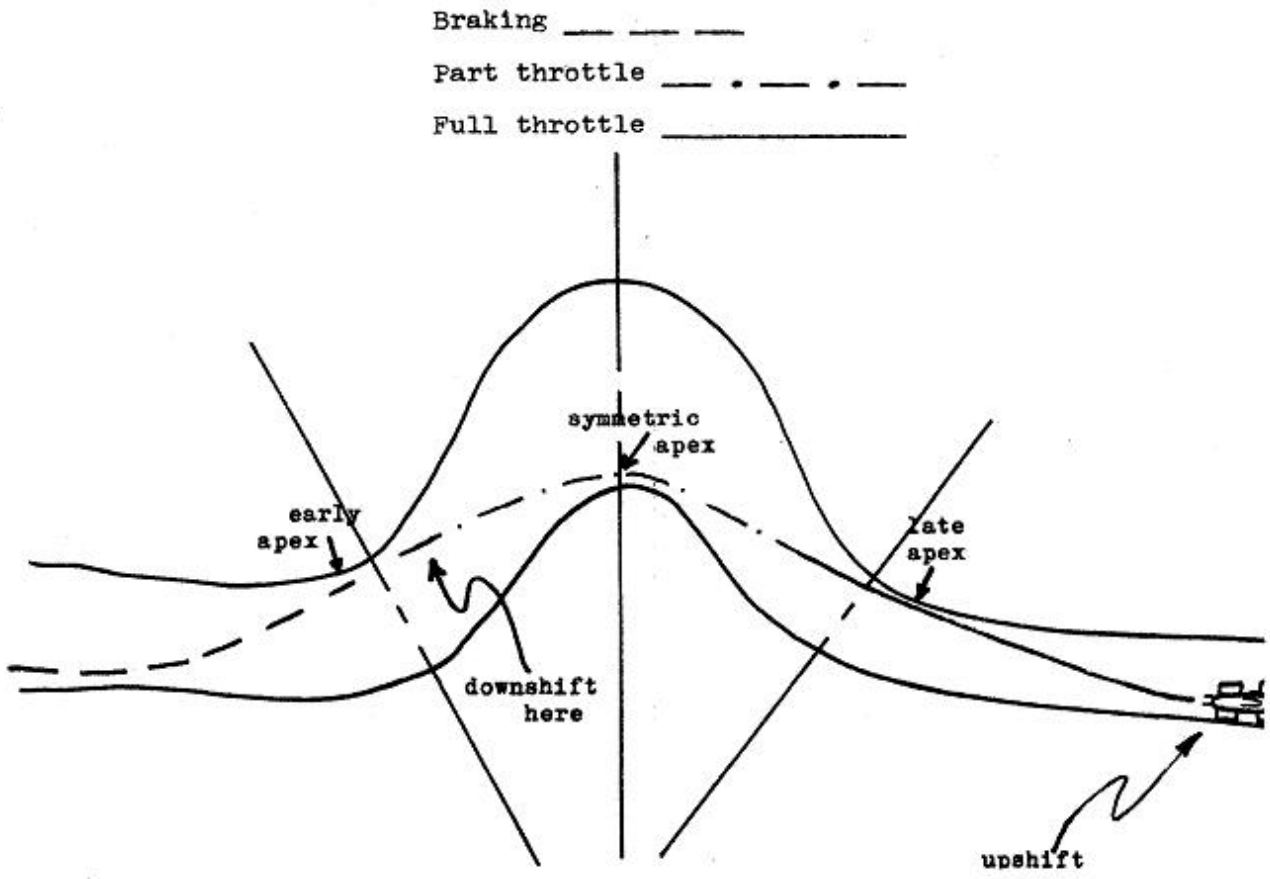
SLALOM TECHNIQUES

by Jim Gallagher

I am not knocking road racing, dirt bikes, or go-carts, but for my money, nothing offers a driving challenge in street automobiles like slaloming does. Slaloming has been a stepping stone for great drivers like George Follmer, and has helped thousands of others become better street drivers through knowledge of their vehicles. I hope the Lotus/West closed slalom will be an interesting, instructive and exciting experience for all of you there.

We will have novice classes for those who have never slalomed before, and it is for you novices that these notes are primarily directed. Novice or expert, there are some basic driving principles we must review from time to time. You must always remember that a locked or spinning wheel cannot turn the car. What this means in slaloming is that all your braking must be done before getting to a turn and all accelerating should be done in as straight a line as possible. It also makes sense that leaving a turn with an extra 5 mph, which carries you down the straight quicker is worth more than the extra 10 mph deep in the turn which botches your exit from the turn and causes you to be slower on the straight. Here are the three types of turns and the proper driving techniques for them: