

ERRC at Fern Bay Green: Track Guide

The next event in the Electronic Road Race Cup finds our drivers racing at Fern Bay Green. ERRC racer and Live for Speed veteran Dan 'danowat' Watkins has provided us with a guide to racing this circuit in the FXO Turbo. What follows is a great introduction to the track for the uninitiated, and it also contains some invaluable tips on how to be fast around here.



Welcome to Fern Bay, a race circuit situated on the island of Jamaica. This guide will be focusing on the "Green" configuration of this circuit, which has a total length of 1.9 miles.

I will be writing this guide using the FXO Turbo as the base car. The FXO is a reasonably powerful FWD (Front Wheel Drive) car, the main handling characteristics of which are its turbo lag, its power-on understeer and its lift off oversteer.

Fern Bay Green is a tough, unrelenting and unforgiving track; it demands your utmost attention at all times. There are very few - if any at all - places where you can relax. It contains many technical sections, along with a number of tricky chicanes, if you want to be fast on this circuit then you need a good clean line with no mistakes.



The first corner you will encounter at Fern Bay Green is the tricky, fast left-right chicane. This can be taken very fast if you have balls of steel. Try to stay as far to the right till as late as possible, use the corner countdown markers as indication of your brakepoint, at this corner I like to brake just at the 100m mark. I try to maintain a speed of around 85-90mph, you can take quite a liberty with the kerbs on this chicane as the LFS engine doesnt punish you quite as much as it should here.



Turn two is quite a nasty corner, its very deceptive. On entry it looks faster than it really is, and even an experienced driver can take it too fast and end up in the kitty litter. A good line through here is quite important as it can set you up nicely for the uphill, off camber T3, which in a car like the FXO is tricky because of the inherent turbo lag that can happen should you be off-boost.



Be careful with understeer here, as the uphill, off-camber nature of this corner will see you plough on into the rough if you dont feather the throttle. At T2 I like to brake at around the 75m mark, and maintain a speed of about 55-60mph, then lift slightly for T3 and clip the apex at about 65mph then power on, but being careful not to understeer off.



T4 is another left-right chicane. This can be taken flat out but be careful with the kerbs here as they are very high and will knock you flying if you take to much of them.



T5 is my "corner of hate" number 1 for FE Green. Every track I drive has at least one. Why do I hate this corner? Because I can never take it at the right speed, I am either too fast and end up on the outside in the dirt, or too slow and lose a lot of time here. This corner can make or break a good lap, but you need to be careful of the FXO's tendency to oversteer in power off conditions here as it will see you in the dirt in no time. To be safe here, I like to brake at the 2nd billboard on the left hand wall, turn in almost immediately at a speed of around 85mph, then power-on, again being careful not to power-understeer off.



T6 is a fast sweeping left hander that can be taken flat out. Get right on exit to set you up for T7 & T8 - another tricky little chicane type left-right hander.



Be VERY careful of the kerbs here, you WILL tip over if you hit them too hard. The braking point I use for T7 is the beginning of the kerbing. I brake hard here - banging down the gears to help with braking - to about 55mph, then nip the apex, but not so close that you hit the kerb or you will be at best on 2 wheels at worst on your roof. T8 requires no braking, I just lift here, tight into the kerbing, but not on the kerbing as it seems quite slippery and will push the front end off. I like to try and maintain at least 65mph through here.



T9 is a left hander into the bridge area. I like to cut this as close to the apex as possible, then power out for the run up to the last left-right corner before the finish. Again the prevalence of the FXO's power-on understeer rears it ugly head here. I try to maintain about 70mph through here with only a slight lift at corner entry.



T10, "corner of hate" number 2. It's hard to get a decent line here; you need to take care of the kerbs, they are quite high and can unsettle the car if too much of them is taken. This chicane is quite important to get right as speed gained here can be carried up the short start/finish straight. Try to brake as late as possible. I use a short shadow on the ground as a brake point, but this is tricky as when racing is is VERY easy to miss. Make the line as straight and as smooth as possible, if anything taking some of the kerb on the right hand side, and use as much of the track overrun as possible on the exit but be careful not to get the tyres dirty, as dirty tyres and the upcoming T1 chicane do not make good bed fellows.

My splits on this track are 24.00, 46.00 and 1:18, which isn't overly fast, but I can maintain this over race distance. I am in no doubt that the faster guys will be lapping in the low 1:17's maybe even the 1:16's.