

## My Favorite Course Roger Johnson's Favorite Nationals Design

**R**oger H. Johnson (The "real" Roger Johnson from Houston, not "the famous" one from Ohio) has designed several Tire Rack Solo II National Championship courses. While some competitors say they loved his 1999 North Course, Johnson

says his favorite is the North Course he designed for the 1995 Solo II Nationals—the first year the event was held at Topeka's Forbes Field.

"It seemed to be well received by most and was a good balance of sweepers to slaloms; it had

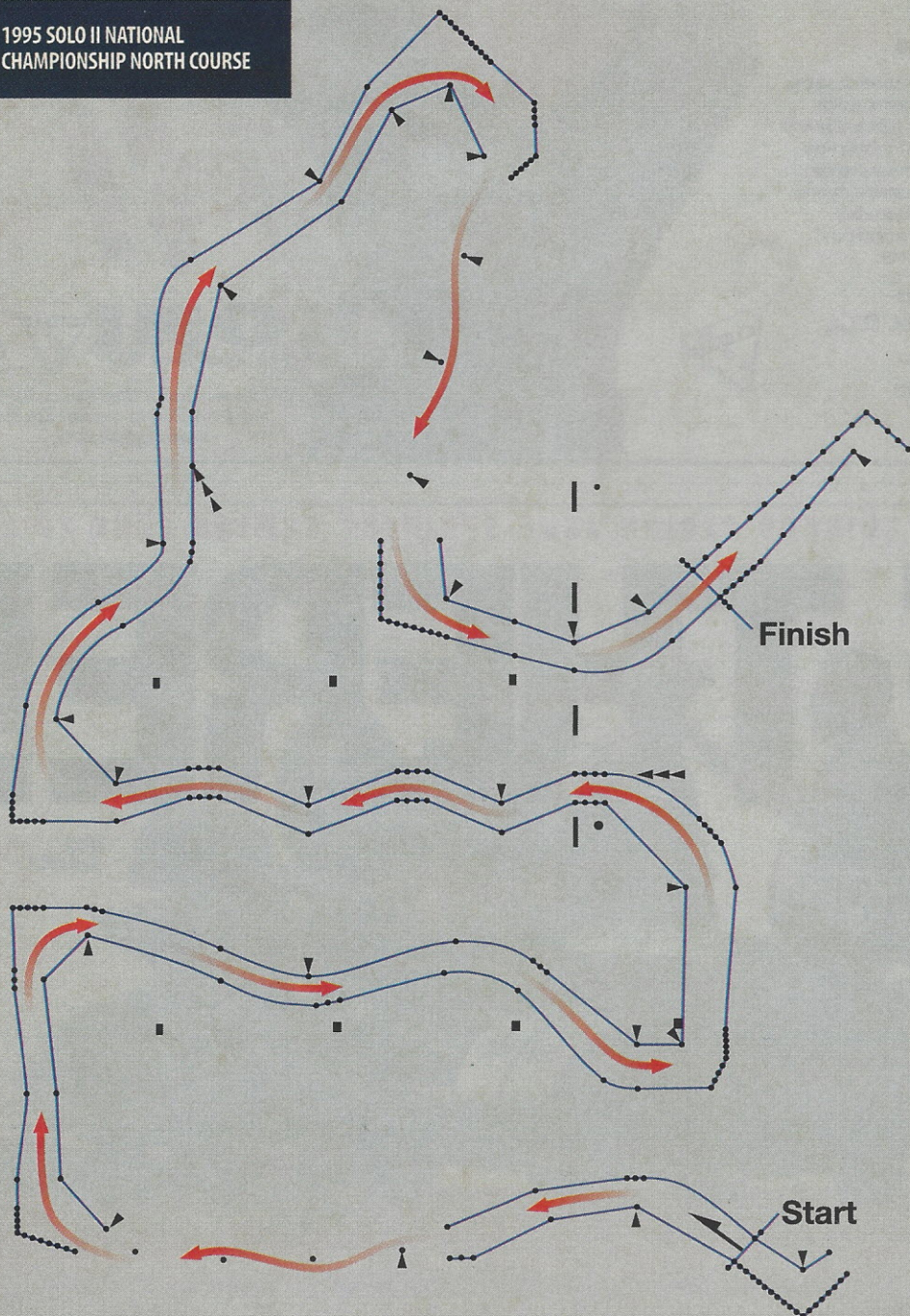
low- and high-speed sections, difficult to do correctly; and was a real adrenaline rush," he says.

That course was a collection of slaloms connected by sweepers. The trick was that all the slaloms save one were entered from the "wrong" side; that is, competitors

were required to go around the first cone opposite from what feels natural.

Johnson employed another favorite trick in making the sweepers wide; but rather than leaving more room on the outside, he left more on the

### 1995 SOLO II NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP NORTH COURSE



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inside. Rocky Entriken's description of the course in our November 1995 issue details the subtleties:

"So often on Nationals courses, the designer has created a turn and then drawn a wide outside boundary for that turn. Johnson seemed to create turns on which the outside boundary was just about where you needed to be, but then pulled the inside boundary way in to suck the unsuspecting driver off line. Drivers choosing the tight line always had an impossible exit." The apex of the fast lines through these turns was actually somewhere in the middle of the course.

The course had two traditional slaloms—single cones laid out in a row—but also had several that didn't look like slaloms but actually were. One was a series of alternating four-cone-wall gates and single gates; but the key cones were in a straight line, creating a variation on the slalom theme.

Altogether, it proved to be an entertaining course, but one drivers said was very difficult to master.

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