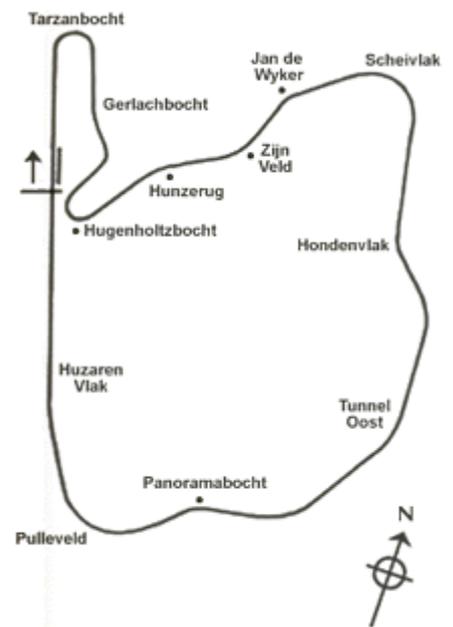




THE 2.605 MILE Circuit van Zandvoort is one of the most challenging circuits in Grand Prix Legends. It flows over and around the hills of Holland in a never-ending test of concentration. A lot of the turns are blind or change elevation as they go. Each one leads right into the next, leaving you no time to relax. Even the front straight has a kink in it just to make sure you pay attention there as well. If you make an error in one turn, you will probably have to wait about half a lap to get back into your rhythm again. But once you're in that rhythm this track is fantastic!

CAR SETUP:

Think downhill skiing when you set-up for this track. You need to be able to change direction very quickly, but smoothly. If you have to brake to do so, then you will be slow. Your aims are to be able to take most turns with out braking - use the engine. Also you can't have much oversteer or you'll be flying off over the hills. Then when you stop you won't even be able to see the track - much less get back to it quickly!



Gearing is highly important here. Because of the constant turning required to get around the turns, you do not want to be shifting all the time, especially in the turns. I use third and fourth gears for most of the track. Fifth is reserved for the front straight. Set it up so that you max out the revs just before you need to brake at the end of the straight. Then third and fourth should be spaced so that you just hit red line in third or fourth at corners where you have to back off, or are able to shift into fourth before the corner and keep going through that corner in fourth. What you don't want is to have to shift into fourth just before getting to a turn, and then have to downshift almost immediately into third again. That'll just wear your gearbox and provide more chance for an error.

Clutch and ramp angles are tricky here. You need to set them up so that both rear wheels are turning when you exit the corners. If you are spinning the inside wheel on exit you will lose a tremendous amount of time, seeing as you are exiting corners for a substantial part of the time. However, put too many clutches on and you spin out - a very bad thing at Zandvoort. So 3 is a good starting point. Then depending on your driving style and car you can either add or subtract one. As always you want the ramp angles to be as high as possible, without losing control. As the engine is doing a lot of the work here, a slightly higher ramp angles could shave a few tenths off your lap times.

Suspension, like everything else here, is difficult. You need a fairly stiff car. If it's wallowing all over the place you won't have the confidence to push it through the turns. But if it's too stiff it'll just slide off the road, as well as being slow onto the front straight. So I go for a medium shock setting with stiffer anti-roll bars. This still gives me the vertical travel that I want, but also lets the car change direction fairly quickly.

Brakes here aren't really important. There is only one hard braking area - into turn one - and it's dead straight. The rest of the track uses virtually no braking. So you can push the brake balance forward here. Use turn one as your test for this.

LAP TIMES:

You lap times will most likely be slightly faster during qualifying. This is due to fuel load and also the amount of concentration needed to do a fast lap here. It's ridiculously high. Chances are that you won't be able to keep it up for more than a lap. This isn't to say that you won't be able to do a couple of 1:25.x laps during the race. But it's not a realistic goal to try and do them consistently. A good aim is to be able to do 1:26.x all day. Then during qualifying you can work your way up to a 1:25.x after a few laps.

GOALS:

You should aim for a qualifying lap of about 1:25.20 to 1:26.20. That should put you pretty far up the grid.

During the race you should aim for 1:26.0 to 1:27.0 for your lap times if you don't encounter traffic.

THE RACE:

Zandvoort is tough. You need the utmost concentration to get around it quickly and flawlessly. It's not that hard to do if you're alone, but in traffic it's much harder. On top of this there are very few passing opportunities. The best is the end of the front straight. Then possibly into the hairpin. Anywhere else on the track is extremely risky, so don't try it unless you're positive you can make it. As it takes so much concentration to drive this track, it is extremely tough to drive and keep someone behind you. So if you just worry the guy ahead they are likely to make a mistake and go wide, missing an apex, then you can make your move. Also you need to know when you've pushed too hard through a turn and need to back off in order to make the next one. It's better to lose a few tenths than go flying off through the hills. Remember to watch for yellows, although at this track if you lose it on a turn you usually go flying off never to be seen again. So if you go by a yellow, you may never see the car that caused it! But be careful nevertheless.

Tarzanbocht:

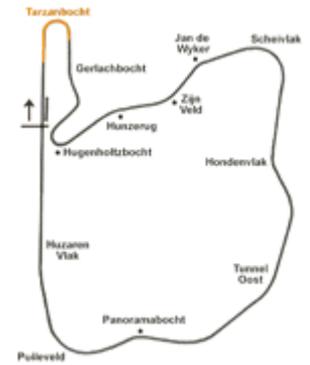
Entrance speed: approximately 180 mph [290 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 55 mph [88 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 1.54 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 8.90 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 10.44 seconds



Tarzanbocht. Why is it called that? Well bocht is Dutch for turn, but Tarzan? I don't know. This turn is the only one with a major braking zone, and therefore offers the best overtaking opportunity. It also means that you shouldn't tailgate someone into it, as you don't know where they will be braking. But your aim here, assuming no traffic, is to brake as late as possible, in a dead straight line, and then use the brakes to help turn the car into the corner.



You'll be approaching this turn flat out in top gear. The left side of the track is where you want to be. Personally I don't like being right against the edge of the track, because any slight movement to the left means you're on the grass and spinning. But that is personal preference. The bails of hay at the end of the pits offer a great reference point for your braking. Just after you pass them brake as hard as possible. Remember to continue in a straight line or you'll be facing the wrong way really fast.

As you are braking, start to shift down. You need to get all the way down to 2nd. I find that going to first gear is a waste, as you can't use the extra revs exiting because you'll just spin the wheels. Also the lower the gear you get into under braking the more chance you have of breaking the rear wheels free and spinning. So for those reasons I shift down to 2nd. But, again, I don't reach second until I'm about to turn in.

The biggest mistake I've seen at this turn is people driving straight off the road because they can't turn in soon enough. The brakes are a big help here. As you start to turn in continue to brake, but as a lesser extent. This trail-braking will help turn the car in by sliding the rear wheels out a little for you. To compensate for this drift, use the throttle to balance the car as you go around the turn. You want to hit the apex about a quarter of the way into the turn and hold the car against it as you go around.

The track is slightly cambered here in your favor. So once you are against the curb, the car will want to drive over it, rather than away from it. Use the throttle to push the car away from the curb. This will help you get round the turn faster as well as preventing you from running over the curb. Be careful, though, because if you let the car drift out too soon, you'll have a bad exit. Conversely if you hit the curb your car will bounce off it, losing a lot of traction.



The exit of this turn is also quite hard. The temptation is to floor it as soon as possible on the exit. This is probably because you'll have caught up significantly with the guy ahead in the braking zone and you don't want to see him driving away from you on the exit. But that's a fact of driving, and it doesn't mean that you're losing ground. If you floor it too soon, you'll just lose the rear end and finish up in the fence.



So as you start to exit the turn, gradually, but quickly apply the throttle. Aim the car for the left side of the track. This provides you with the straightest possible exit, as well as providing you with a little room in case you spin the rear wheels and end up sliding left. Get back to full throttle as soon as possible and continue on towards the Gerlachbocht 'chicane.'

Gerlachbocht:

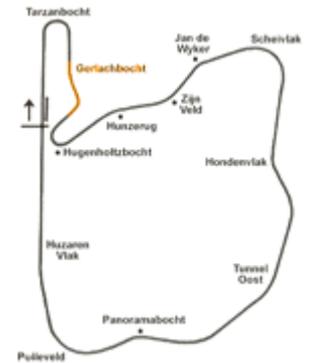
Entrance speed: approximately 110 mph [177 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 60 mph [96 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 13.44 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 4.10 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 17.54 seconds



This corner is like a drawn out chicane. It has a fairly fast left hander entrance, which crests a small hill as you hit its apex. Then you have to slow down slightly for the flatter and slower right hand exit. It is quite difficult to get right because if you enter too fast, the combination of the crest of the hill and the camber of the road gives little opportunity to slow down much. Then you're off for another spin in front of the crowd.



You'll be approaching this one under full acceleration. You should be able to get into third gear before reaching it. The racing groove is right against the left side of the track for the entrance. However, I prefer to stay towards the right side of the track as I enter this one. I feel that being on the right provides me with a flatter entrance into the corner, and therefore more speed and control. So, in my opinion, set the car up on the right side of the track for the entrance.

This left hander is deceptive. The first few times through you'll brake before entering it. I think this is because of the slight brow that you go over. It blocks your view of the track ahead, so braking is the natural reaction. However, once you learn the track, it is obvious that braking isn't required. As you bring the car into the apex, which is taken right at the top of that brow, just ease off the throttle slightly, and shift down to second gear. This will transfer the weight of the car towards the front, and prevent you from losing the rear end. Then, once past the crest, get back on the throttle slightly as you continue towards the second part of this chicane.



Losing the rear end is the biggest concern of this turn. Therefore you can't brake very hard here. You are so close to losing the rear wheels, that almost any braking will set them free. There is a short moment when you are going straight, just after the left hand entrance and just before the right hand exit. The racing groove is darker here. Use this respite to apply the brakes slightly and lose a little speed. Then back off the brakes a little as you turn into the right hander for the exit.

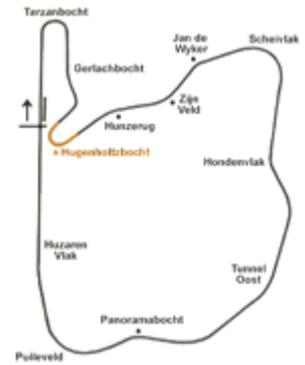


You will need to use the throttle in a similar fashion to that of Tarzanbocht. As you are braking slightly on the exit, the rear wheels will start to break loose, so applying a slight amount of throttle will balance that out. The results is that you can get through the turn slightly faster as you haven't had to do all your braking beforehand.

The exit of this turn is a smooth transition off the brakes as you press down more on the accelerator. You will be in a small drift as you exit. Power the car out of that towards the left side of the track. Then start to move over to the right as soon as you can.

Hugenholtzbocht:

Entrance speed: approximately 85 mph [137 kph]
Speed through the corner: approximately 45 mph [72 kph]
Arrival time at the corner: 19.24 seconds
Time to negotiate the corner: 5.67 seconds
Exit time of the corner: 24.91 seconds



Now on to the hairpin. This is the slowest turn on the track. Even though it is so slow, it doesn't require much braking. What is important is the exit. A slow or messy exit will plague you for another three turns. So no matter what your entrance is like, make sure you get a good exit.



Get the car over to the right as much as possible before you enter this turn. On the short straight after Gerlachbocht you will not have gotten out of second gear - unless you have really strange gearing. Not much braking is required here. The turn has a lot of camber to it, so as long as you don't go wide, you'll be able to hug the curb quite easily. Also the braking zone starts just before the turn-in point, so if you do brake hard you'll lose traction at the front and just go straight.

Just before reaching the darker patch of the racing groove start to brake carefully. Then shift down to first gear and turn the car in. You will probably ease off the brakes a little, but not too much. Then once you have the car turning in well, get off the brakes and do the rest of the turn on the throttle. Like Tarzanbocht, the camber of the turn will throw you into the curb, so you need to use the throttle to push the car away from it as you progress round the turn.



Using as much throttle as possible continue towards the exit. You do not want to leave the apex too soon. Aim for about three-quarters of the way through the turn. If you start leaving it before that back off the throttle. An early exit from the apex will most likely put you onto the grass on the right side of the road, and kill the rest of your lap.



The main thing to remember on the exit is not to let the car get too far to the right. The following turn is a right hander and if you are too far to the right on its entrance you'll hit the curb and be all over the place. So aim for the right of the middle as you exit. Increase your acceleration quickly, but firmly. Remember that you are in first gear, so you can spin your wheels very easily. If you begin to spin them, ease off. A straight exit is imperative here.

Hunzerug

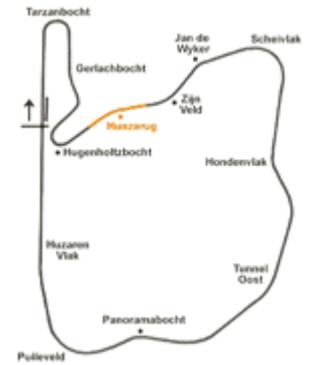
Entrance speed: approximately 110 mph [177 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 115 mph* [185 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 27.99 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 1.50 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 29.49 seconds



Now that you've finished the last three rather technical corners, the fun begins! Starting with Hunzerug and continuing until you reach the front straight, you will be turning almost constantly, and almost never braking. It's great fun, and takes consistency and skill to do it right lap after lap.

This slight right hander is situated at the top of a hill. This does two things, first it makes the turn blind, and secondly makes it impossible to take flat. Make sure you are not too far to the right when you start cresting the hill. If you are you'll end up either going way off to the left or riding the curbs, and getting all out of shape. So start fairly near to the middle of the track. You'll be in third gear most likely.



When you reach the top of the hill, ease off to keep traction. This also helps you to turn into the corner, most of which happens right as you crest the hill. Then as soon as you clear the hill, get back on the gas again. You'll have to shift up almost right away. That's ok, as the turn is now fairly straight. Hold the car against the curb as you go around. You should be on full throttle now.

As you exit make sure that you don't go too far to the left. The next turn is a fast left hander, and if you get too far to the left, you'll be very slow through it.

*You actually speed up through this turn.

Zijn Veld

Entrance speed: approximately 135 mph [217 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 125 mph [201 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 31.72 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 2.36 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 34.08 seconds



I think that Zijn Veld is the coolest sounding name for a corner. It definitely goes with this corner, as you have zero time either before it or after it and it is quite fast, and therefore very cool.



You'll be in fourth as you enter this and should be able to stay in that gear the entire time. Start your entrance from the right side of the track. The racing groove is an excellent guide here. Just before it darkens, let off the gas slightly and start to turn in. You want a late apex here to insure a straight exit. So make sure you don't ease off the gas too much, as that will pull the car into the turn very quickly.

You'll probably be on about half throttle all the way through the turn.

Then as you near the end of the turn, start to try and get back up to full acceleration again. This can be difficult because the camber of the road is changing and you are also changing from a slight downhill run to an uphill climb. But the added acceleration will help to slide your car over to the right, which is where you want to go eventually. Having fun yet? If you start to lose the rear end, back off and collect it before you get into the following turn, or you will definitely be off for a trip through the grass. The ideal exit will allow you to be on full throttle aiming towards the right side of the track.



Jan de Wyker

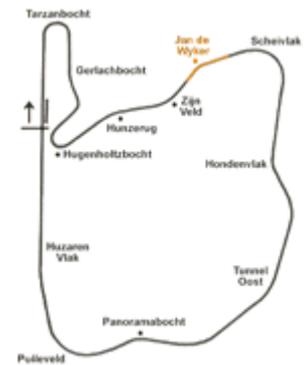
Entrance speed: approximately 125-130 mph [201-209 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 105 mph [169 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 34.98 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 2.38 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 37.36 seconds



Well about a millisecond after you finish Zijn Veld, you'll be starting Jan de Wyker. This one is probably one of the hardest turns on the track. It's blind, and you crest a fairly steep hill just when you're starting to exit. So make sure you are pointing dead straight on that exit.



You'll be in fourth gear as you cross from the exit of Zijn Veld towards the right side of the track. Make sure you don't get there too soon, or you'll have a very early apex and won't be able to make the exit. You are looking for a middle apex here. A slight amount of braking is useful on the entrance as well. The curb is a useful guide as to when you should start braking.

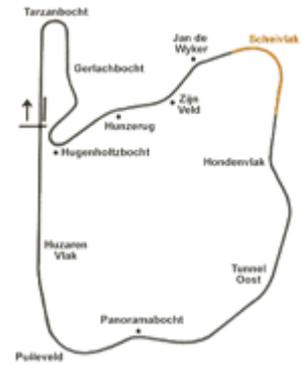
Just before you pass the curb, brake very slightly and shift down a gear. The rest of the turn is done on the throttle. As you pass the beginning of the curb, you should be getting right against it. Hold the car there on the throttle. Make sure you don't try adding too much throttle as you go round the turn. Everything will seem fine, until the exit, where you'll just fly off to the left. So a little less throttle than you think is better here. And also, be smooth. If you are constantly adjusting the throttle the car will be unstable, as it shifts from understeer to oversteer. Again, another thing that will kill you on the exit.

As the turn begins to straighten out and you can see the top of the hill, let the car come away from the curb. Slowly start to increase your acceleration. Your goal should be to hit the crest of the hill just when you are a little left of the middle on the track. As you crest the hill the car will get light and will want to oversteer. Make sure you are pointing in a straight line now. If you are still turning the oversteer will be intensified and instead of sliding a little to the left and hitting the proper racing line, you'll be facing backwards going about 120 mph. After the crest of the hill continue to accelerate and shift up if you can. Then take a slight breather. You have half a second before the next turn.



Scheivlak

Entrance speed: approximately 115-120 mph [185-193 kph]
Speed through the corner: approximately 85-90 mph [137-145 kph]
Arrival time at the corner: 38.78 seconds
Time to negotiate the corner: 6.37 seconds
Exit time of the corner: 45.15 seconds



Scheivlak is one of the longer turns at Zandvoort. Compared to most of the turns it is also quite slow. Because of this I've seen a lot of people trying to take it too fast and then understeering off the track. You need to make sure you don't try and rush this turn.



The beginning of the turn is just past the crest of the hill coming out of Jan de Wyker. You should be able to get into fourth gear before you brake for the turn. Make sure you are over towards the left side of the track or you'll have to slow down too much to avoid either the curb or understeer off the track. Just after the racing groove darkens brake softly and shift down a gear. This will help you turn in as well as keeping the revs high enough to push the car around the turn.

Right after you're done braking, which is basically right after you start as not much is needed, turn into the corner. You want to get to the curb fairly early and then stay right against it the entire time. If you start getting too close to the curb, press down more on the throttle. Conversely, if you start to understeer, back off slightly. You should be able to get round the turn successfully on the throttle this way.

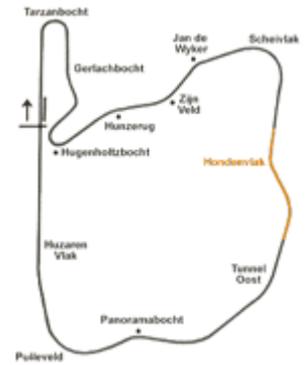
As the turn begins to straighten out and you can see the road beginning to climb up the hill, start to increase your acceleration. This will help push you away from the curb and towards the left side of the track. You should be up to full acceleration by the time you are half way across the track. The road crests a small hill here and makes a slight left. Get the car right against the left side of the track as you hit the crest of the hill and you'll be set up perfectly for the following turn. Too far to the right and you'll be off the road after this hill. Just before you reach the crest you should also be able to shift up to fourth gear.



Hondenvlak

Entrance speed (left hander): approximately 135-140 mph [217-225 kph]
Speed through the corner (left hander): approximately 130 mph [209 kph]
Arrival time at the corner: 49.00 seconds
Time to negotiate the corner: 1.63 seconds
Exit time of the corner: 50.63 seconds

Entrance speed (right hander): approximately 130 mph [209 kph]
Speed through the corner (right hander): approximately 110 mph [177 kph]
Arrival time at the corner: 51.43 seconds
Time to negotiate the corner: 2.01 seconds
Exit time of the corner: 53.44 seconds



Hondenvlak is really two turns. They are very close together and how successful you are at the second one is linked with how good your exit from the first one is. So talking about them together makes sense.



You'll be in fourth gear as you approach the beginning of the left hander. You don't need to brake for this one. A slight lift will get you through it just fine. The main thing to remember is that you need a late apex. If you get into the curb too soon, you'll have a really bad exit that most likely puts you off the track. So don't get into the apex too soon.

As the groove darkens continue on under full acceleration and begin to turn in slightly. Then after a beat, back off the throttle about half way, and turn in more. This reduction in throttle will help point the car for you as well. Hit the apex late, then let the car drift away from it slightly. Make sure you don't get too far to the right or you'll run over the curb going into the right hander and lose it.



The ideal line will allow you to get back to full acceleration slightly between the two turns. But if you are too far to the left or right, don't blow a good lap by not backing off.

The right hander requires a slight amount of braking. Well, maybe. If you can do it entirely on the engine, then you'll be a tad faster. But usually I find that I need to brake for a millisecond as I shift down to third. Then I go for a middle apex. Hitting it too soon will launch you off the hills on the far side of the road, as will hitting it late. It's just a matter of which direction you prefer to be going when you drive off the road. But assuming you want to stay on the road, go for a middle apex.



Hold the car against the curb, and when you are just past half way start to increase your acceleration to full. Let the car drift out to the left side of the track as you exit down the following straight.

Tunnel Oost

Entrance speed: approximately 140 mph [225 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 125 mph [201 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 56.92 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 2.25 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 59.17 seconds



The Tunnel Oost right hander is quite fun. The rails of the bridge seem a little forboding at first. However, after a couple of laps you soon realise that it can be taken with just a slight lift, very similarly to the beginning of Hondenvlak.



You should be up to fourth gear by the time you reach this turn. Position the car on the left side of the track for the entrance. Then follow the racing groove through the turn. It is the best guide. As it starts to darken continue under full acceleration for a moment. Then back off to about half throttle and power the car through the turn.

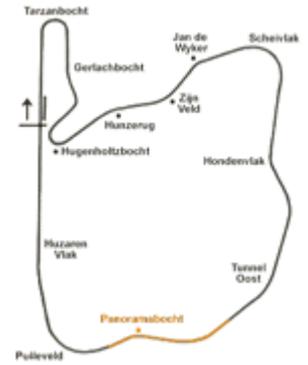


This corner lets you get into a slight drift. Make sure you are aware of this as you exit. If you are not you risk driving onto the grass and losing the rear wheels. When you pass the end of the bridge on your left get back up to full throttle quite quickly. Let the car move out to the left. But remember the drift and be prepared for a little opposite lock as you exit.

Panoramabocht

Entrance speed (right hander): approximately 145 mph [233 kph]
Speed through the corner (right hander): approximately 110 mph [177 kph]
Arrival time at the corner: 1 minute 1.23 seconds
Time to negotiate the corner: 3.12 seconds
Exit time of the corner: 1 minute 4.35 seconds

Entrance speed (left hander): approximately 125 mph [201 kph]
Speed through the corner (left hander): approximately 110 mph [177 kph]
Arrival time at the corner: 1 minute 6.17 seconds
Time to negotiate the corner: 2.54 seconds
Exit time of the corner: 1 minute 8.71 seconds



This left hander is fairly quick and is not as critical to a fast lap as some of the other turns. It is preceded by a right hander, which is almost more difficult than the main left hander.



You'll be up to fourth gear by the time you get to the right hander. Start on the left side of the track and then pull the car into the turn hitting the apex during the second half of the turn. An early apex will mean that you have to slow down too much to make the following left hander. Likewise, riding the curbs will also send you flying off as well. You do need to brake for this turn, however. Just when you get to the darker racing groove give a short stab on the brakes to slow slightly, along with a downshift to third gear. Turning in at the same time will help you make the apex properly. Then try to get back up to full throttle as soon as possible after the apex.



You'll be able to get into fourth gear before the left hander. The only real requirement here is to take a late apex. This will set you up well for Pullenveld. Again, a slight amount of braking is needed, but nowhere near as much as the right hander needed. There are a few bushes on the right hand side of the track as you approach this turn. Assuming the gardener, or another car, hasn't mowed them down, they'll make a good reference point for braking.



When you reach them, brake slightly and downshift to third. Then start to turn in and make your late apex. By the time you get to the apex you should be back to full throttle. Exit the turn towards the middle of the track.

Pullenveld

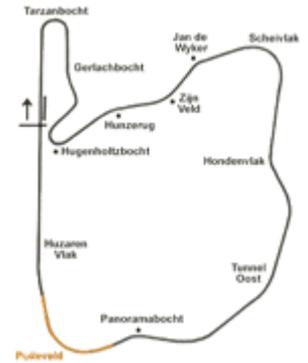
Entrance speed: approximately 110-115 mph [177-185 kph]

Speed through the corner: approximately 90 mph [145 kph]

Arrival time at the corner: 1 minute 9.18 seconds

Time to negotiate the corner: 5.63 seconds

Exit time of the corner: 1 minute 14.81 seconds



This right hander is the last turn on the track. Well, sort of. You still have that slight kink in the front straight which can catch you out if you're not paying attention. The important part of this turn is the exit. You can be all over the place on the entrance as long as you're exiting dead straight. Of course a good entrance doesn't hurt.



You'll most likely be in third gear as you come into this one. Just about the time you near the top of the slight hill - you'll be going between the spectators on the right and the tower on the left - quickly shift down to second and apply the brakes for a split second. Then power into the turn.

You want to get to the curb early and stay there through out the turn. Use the throttle to push the car around the turn. You'll be able to increase your speed as you go. The turn is an increasing radius turn, sort of like Monza's Parabolica. So as you continue through it, you'll have to shift up a gear. Just make sure you don't do it too soon, or you'll risk loosing the rear end. The flag pole on the right near the exit is a good guide. By the time you reach this you should have been in third gear for a while. Also you should be up to full acceleration by this time.



On the exit make sure you don't get too far to the left as the track continues to turn right slightly until you are past the kink. You don't want to spoil a great lap by putting a wheel onto the dirt. There is also a slight hump to the track as you exit the turn which can upset the car a little, so be prepared for that. Then continue down the straight, shift up to fourth gear, get around the kink, which is just about the time when you're pit board comes up. Then power down the straight and take a breather for five seconds before doing it all again!