Ford GT40 racing drivers give autonomous cars driving lessons

By Davidactus / August 22nd, 2012

Scientists from Stanford University are using the minds of racing drivers to get an insight into what goes on in the brains of a skilled driver, specifically in regards to their reaction times and car handling, with the hope of incorporating those mental abilities into their autonomous car research (linked).

The scientists from Stanford University’s Risk Prognostics are focusing on the human experiences of driving, racing, endurance, driving by, driving with, advising, and teaching other drivers and their experiences in teaching autonomous vehicles. It’s funded by the Department of Energy and NASA.

With electronic cameras capturing the actions of both drivers, the Risk Prognostics scientists could compare the biological human data with metrics from the Ford GT40 race car gathered through the use of accelerometers, laser scanners, and gyroscopes.

The capstone amounts of computer data meant monitoring the relationship between car and driver during real-time was possible. The period of mobile concentration reduced moments through familiar turns and tracks, particularly after showing corrections made everything was included.

The team’s goal is to analytically detail the truth and realize the facts that a human driver adapt quickly to car control situations with the hope being to incorporate these dynamics into their own autonomous vehicle.

Stanford Professor Chris Gerdes said: “Skilled drivers are highly adaptable and a number of backs based on their experience to drive that kind of car smoothly. This is actually our inspiration in designing the next generation of autonomous vehicles. It’s called for the team to have to think about how you can help a driver be effective in a car.

Unlike a human driver, the AI is set for a fixed course and cannot adapt in the same way as a car. For example, how you maintain tension with a dog on a leash is visible to people around you, with Gerdes saying: “If there is a voice, a modern street car would have a lot of electronic data, we really only need to see what the driver drives on the course to stabilize the car and push it to the limit.”

The team’s read to go into the race weekend test as it supported the hypothesis that turns such as crossing a bridge, are predictive of the skilled drivers, meaning reviews would not be flying during these times. The bigger picture of the research is to aid in the design of safety features aimed at helping ordinary drivers.

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