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ALL NEW LOCATIONS



A driver tries to weave through cones in a cop car during the CODE ZERO program. ARLEN REDEKOP — THE PROVINCE

## Police clinic tests 911 driving skills

BY CARMEN CHAI  
STAFF REPORTER

now in its second year.

The sirens blared as the police car screeched to a halt.

Those inside were jerked forward, then forced back as Sgt. David Bruce-Thomas of Vancouver police stomped on the gas pedal.

He swerved around a row of pylons, slightly tipping the car as he turned sharply while accelerating at more than 60 km/h in an empty Richmond parking lot.

"This is better than a Playland ride," said *Province* photographer Arlen Redekop as he slid around in the passenger seat.

Redekop was next in line to get behind the wheel for a simulated car pursuit.

Yesterday, the media got first-hand experience of the driving skills taught to officers during an emergency-response clinic.

The Justice Institute of B.C. hosted a shortened version of its CODE ZERO program, which is taught to the public by former officers and is

The demo will be showcased during the 2009 World Police and Fire Games in B.C., which begin next week and will see more than 10,000 police officers and firefighters from around the world compete.

"We're going to showcase our program to all of those people," said Andrew Field, CODE ZERO general manager. "We're the only program like this in the world."

The course trains drivers to react quickly to the unexpected, said Bruce-Thomas, an instructor who helped design the course.

He warned students they'd face stress behind the wheel. "When you're really stressed, your natural instincts lead you to make the wrong decision, an automatic reaction," he added.

Redekop admitted he wasn't very stressed, though. "But I can only imagine being a cop hearing dispatched information and you'd have to make decisions right away in a pursuit," he said.

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