

SCCA REGION 105

PO Box 850

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The

Panic Slip

March 2006 SCCA Montana Region 105

Club News

Annual Banquet

The club held its annual banquet this year at the 3rd Club in Great Falls. Over 60 people came to enjoy the fun, with a few traveling here from Big Sky region as well. A white elephant gift exchange kept the evening alive with smiles and lots of fun. It was a great time enjoyed by all who attended and gave the club a chance to recognize some of the members for their service. Some very nice jackets were handed out to Ed Austin, Jerry Rukavina, and Paul Heppner as a club thank you for their efforts as our past board members. The top drivers were also recognized. A "hat trophy"

was awarded to the top five finishers. James Rowan also received a nice jacket as the top points finisher of the season. Several club members were thanked for all of their volunteer efforts. The top 15 points finisher were rolling in the cash as the club awarded them their checks for a great season. The banquet had some nice added touches to it in terms of great door prizes and very nice flower center pieces at each of the tables; thanks to Darryl Schamp and Tom Masterson. A final thanks to all the members who attended and made it a fun place to be. See you at the banquet again next year.

Cell Phones at Malmstrom

Effective January 15th, 2006, all vehicle operators, both military and civilian, driving personal or government vehicles on Malmstrom AFB are prohibited from using a cell phone unless the vehicle is safely parked or they are using a handsfree device. Additionally, the wearing of any other portable headphones, earphones, or other

listening devices (except for hands-free cellular phones) while operating a motor vehicle on Malmstrom AFB is prohibited. Citations will be issued and violation of this policy may affect your driving privileges at Malmstrom AFB.

Solo II Rule Books

With the clubs new adoption of the National Vehicle Classification rules, each member will be responsible for classing their own vehicle. The club has ordered several rule books and they are available to members. If you wish to compete at the Regional/National levels, it is required that each driver own a rule book. It is a great idea to get started early on your vehicle's classification. The test/tune day at Helena on April 8-9th, 2006 will also be a great opportunity to iron out bugs and have questions answered about classification. Contact Paul Heppner at 452-8301 to get your rule book. Cost is \$18.50

If you need more information about anything contact one of the board members:

Jim Messick 899-4544 jamesbmessick@hotmail.com

Rick Cummings 454-1812

Zan Brady 362-4146 zee@linctel.net

New Committees for 2006

With the clubs classification system changing, a few new committees have been formed and will need volunteers to staff them for a smooth race season. There will be 2 - 3 positions for each committee. Members can contact Jim Messick to be placed in the committee of their choice.

! Safety Inspection Team - This team will safety inspect only and not classify vehicles.

! National Vehicle Classification Team -

This team will be made available as a resource to the club members to help classify their cars in the correct class.

This team will also help solve disputes with classification, answer classification questions and resolve problems before competition begins. Members of this team will have to have knowledge of the National Rule book.

! Montana Region Classification team -

This team will classify cars based on the old classification system.

\$ BUCK RUNS \$

Sign up for “ Buck Runs” (now called “Fun Runs”) will be early in the day. Fun runners will run after all competitors get four competition runs, and will consist only of participating drivers and cars that have been safety inspected on the day of the event. Fun runners will be the “course tear-down and clean-up” crew at the end of the day and they will still be part of the group from which regular course workers will be drawn. The usual run groups and worker groups will continue to be formed and utilized.

Season Points

Only membership card carrying SCCA members will accrue points at Montana Region events. The current point system will continue in 2006.

Cars in class Point Per Position

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

1 12

2 13 11

3 14 12 11

4 15 13 12 11

5 16 14 13 12 11 10

* Classes with more than 6 vehicles will earn 1 point less in points per position after

6th, i.e. 7th earns 9 , 8th earns 8 etc.

Each member will also add:

- 2 points for each fast time of day.
- 2 points for each event entered with an attempted run.

At the end of the season, each member will drop the points from their worst finish of the season. All of these points will be combined for season totals at the end of the racing season.

National Scene

Along with five members from Big Sky Region, our very own Tom Masterson visited the Regional Convention in Reno, Nevada, this past month. It was a jam-packed few days with lots to do and learn. Participants chose from over 20 different seminars where they could learn more about the SCCA and hone their skills in their areas of choice. Discussion at the regional level ranged from the number of regional events to simplifying and streamlining Solo II vehicle classification rules. Our club was involved in the silent auction which raised about \$ 4,600 for the regional organization. As a NorPac board member, thanks to Tom Masterson for representing Montan Region 105 at the big meeting.

First Event -

Test/Tune with SW Montana Region

The season is soon to get underway and

Montana Region 105 first event will be a test and tune weekend at the Emergency Services Facility in Helena. Mark your calendars for the 8th and 9th of April. The testing and tuning will take place on Saturday the 8th. There will be different parts of the track set up for different tuning situations. Sunday will be an autocross event for points. Gates will open early at 7:00 am and registration will end at 9:00 am. This will be a great event to shake off the winter cobwebs and get geared up for a fun season.

Monthly Meetings

The club will hold its monthly meetings the last Thursday of the month. The meeting is from 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the room adjoining the Coca Cola Caf  at the Community Center located at 801 2nd Ave. N. This is a great location with a room large enough to hold all of the members that are starting to attend. Some of the items on the agenda for February's meeting will include:

- Season point totals
- Event prizes
- Transition to national vehicle classifications
- Upcoming events
- Club finances

Come a little early and enjoy the comradery!

For all club members that needs scales to accurately weigh and class their vehicle per the new classification methods, a scale will be at the April 8 and 9 test and tune day. This will be the only time during the season that we will have access to scales at an event. Come to the first event and take advantage of this great opportunity!

This 'n' That

Have you taken the time to visit the club's website???? You can find it at www.mtscca.com. It has been updated and is fast becoming a go-to-place for club information. Thanks to Drew Lovec for his efforts. The state has several other SCCA clubs with websites as well. Drop by and check things out.

www.bigskyregion.org - Missoula

www.swmtscca.org - Bozeman

www.yellowstonescca.com - Billings

www.scca.com - National site

Speaking of the national site, a free CD rom is available that discusses the ins and outs of installing driver seat harness properly. Don't be the one who has damage caused by an incorrectly installed driving harness. Learn all you need to know from Dr. Hubbard's free CD.

Classified Section: If there are any club members with items for sale, trade, or items wanted... The Panic Slip will include a "classified" section for all members. Information needs to be sent to Zan Brady at zee@linctel.net by the last Friday of every month.

There will be a membership list at the event registration tables. Filling this out at registration time will give the club an updated and current list of all club members. Room for your email address will also be available. Look for it at each event.

New Look - The Panic Slip has a new look!!!! The same trusted and valued information, just a new editor. Zan Brady has relieved our dedicated director, Jim Messick, of this activity. A big hearty thanks goes out to Jim for all the work he did putting out the Panic Slip last season!!! Anyone wishing to submit news, tech tips, editorials, pictures, or general information for the club newsletters can contribute. Please submit your information to Zan by the last Friday of the month at zee@lintel.net or call 362-4146.

EDITORS NOTE:

The issue of equity in racing is as old as the sport and reaches from autocross to Formula One. Who is the best driver is generally the question trying to be answered. This issue is at the base of several race series around the world. Race series will spec mechanical limitations on all things from what type of vehicle, which types of tires can be raced, the size of the motor, and even grades of fuel. This is all done to try and level the mechanical playing field. Any driver can win the race if they have a large enough mechanical advantage. The reason for mechanical restrictions in any race league becomes obvious... to try and level the mechanical playing field and show forth the driving skill. Every year, mechanical creativity of race teams brings new rule changes and scream of "foul" by the teams that placed outside the championship. That is the way it has always been and the way it will always be with racing. Some racing series have had better luck at keeping the mechanical playing field even and budgets in tow than others. It is a great race to watch in which evenly matched cars run nose to tail and the outcome is decided by a brilliant driving maneuver set up and executed in the last series of turns at any course.

SCCA is a great organization and has done their share of trying to level the mechanical playing field as well. As one settles in with the SCCA handbook and tries to class their vehicle, one becomes aware of how daunting that task can be. There seems to be a rule about everything and anything related to any and all parts of a vehicle. It is all there because we all want to win.

Very few of us can win if we are competing against a vehicle with a mechanical advantage. It seems that no one wants to win more than those kind of people who like to go fast!!! It is a rip to have to race against someone that you know you can't beat just because they have a faster car, or stickier tires, or sweetly tuned suspension. "Hey.... if I had all that stuff on my car.... then I could win too!!!"

It seems that there are just a couple of facts of life. #1. There is always a faster car than yours somewhere, someplace, no matter how much you spend. And #2, that cool car we always wanted to have will be owned by someone else and we will only see it in the pages of our favorite auto magazine.

Hopefully, our club membership will not get too bogged down in the issue of trying to level the mechanical playing field. With our limited resources and volunteer work force, we all have to accept the fact that we will only be able to do so much. Just look at the SCCA handbook and all the green pages and see how much time, effort, and money goes into leveling the mechanical playing field. We do a pretty good job now, and hopefully, we can always do what is within our abilities to do better.... but it will never be perfect.

But what is really a treat to see, is anyone, in any vehicle, that maximize its potential and can drive a clean line.

Every one of us gets a huge grin on our faces when we come in 5 tenths of a second faster on our last run. That always feels good and keeps us trying to drive the best line we can. And who doesn't love that day when we get to have six runs instead of four, or hooking up that slalom sweeter than we ever have before, or that lap where the car just carved the course.

First and foremost, we all enjoy having a place where we can drive our cars fast and fun. Maybe we shouldn't have any classes at all. No points. No trophies. Just a list of everyone and all their times with all of us trying to go as fast as we can. Someone will have the fastest time of the day and someone will have the slowest.

Maybe the driver with the smallest amount of time difference between all four runs is the winner?

Maybe the driver who shaves the most time off between the first run and the last run is the winner?

Maybe we have the same course each weekend and the driver with the least difference from slowest to fastest lap time is the winner?

Maybe the club member who completes the most laps at the end of the year is the winner?

But just maybe.... the guy or gal with the biggest grin on his/her face is the true winner.

Membership Notes

Contributed by Jerry Rukivina:

It is the Law of Unintended Consequences. This law has proven to be 100% unpredictable. And it may jump up to bite you at any time without warning. Witness the recent Montana Region vote to either retain our old rules or move to SCCA National rules. Seemed simple, and the vote was pretty clear in favor of the National rules.

Now comes the Law of Unintended Consequences. The suspicion is that people just did not know exactly what they were voting for or that they did not fully understand the real consequences of the vote or that the vote was at the very least a bit too vague. The National rules are complicated (like no flex fans, required overflow containers, perhaps no trucks allowed, tear-downs, mufflers, fuel restrictions, protest committees, just to name a very few), they require a very thorough knowledge of a costly and nearly 300 page rule book, they require for some classes the utilization of vehicle weight scales that the club does not have access to - the list goes on.

None of this means that the rules are somehow wrong or impossible to enforce, nor that the vote to utilize these rules was out of order. But the simple fact is that these rules will necessitate a HUGE increase in the number of people required to inspect, class, score, and monitor participants. More committees will be required to make all this stuff happen, and if folks do not step up when asked to help, the club will have no recourse but to revert to the old simple rules that we know we can enforce.

2006 Calendar - Autocross events

Montana Region - Great Falls, Montana

April 8-9 Helena EFS w/ SWMT

May 28-29 Expo Park 2x Points

June 25 Malmstrom Air Base

July 9 Expo Park

July 30 Malmstrom Air Base

Aug 19-20 Helena ESF Top Gun 2x Points

Sept 10 Expo Park

SWMT Region - Bozeman, Montana

April 8-9 Helena ESF W/MT REGION (Emergency Services Facility)

April 23 Helena ESF

May 21 Helena ESF

June 3 MSU

June 17 MSU

July 2 TBA

July 16 MSU

July 23 TBA

Aug 5-6 Helena ESF

Sept 24 TBA

Big Sky Region - Missoula, Montana

April 1- 2 Big Sky High School - Annual test and tune

April 30 Jor Manufacturing (Ronan)

May 14 Helena ESF

May 29 Jor Manufacturing

June 9,10,11 Nor Pac Divisional - Helena ESF

June 25 Jor Manufacturing

July 9 Helena ESF

July 23 Jor Manufacturing

Aug 6 Jor Manufacturing

Aug 19-20 Region 105 Top-Gun Event Helena ESF

Sept 4 Karl Tyler Chevrolet

Sept 17 Helena ESF

Oct 1 Helena ESF

2006 Calendar - Autocross events

Kalispel Club -

April 22-23 Flathead Community College (FCC) - Annual test and tune

May 21 FCC

June 18 FCC

July 16 FCC

Aug 13 FCC

Sept 17 FCC

Oct 8 FCC

Yellowstone Region - Billings, Montana

2006 Solo II Schedule

Please note that the Yellowstone Region SCCA has two dates (pending confirmation) for the Lewistown facility, one in June and one in August.

May 14 MSUB (Vo-Tech)

May 29 Skyview High School

June 11 MSUB (Vo-Tech)

June 25 MSUB (Vo-Tech)

July 4 Skyview High School

July 16 MSUB (Vo-Tech)

Aug 6 MSUB (Vo-Tech)

Aug 20 Black Otter Hill Climb

Sep 4 Skyview