



**SCCA**  
Sports Car Club of America

**GREAT LAKES**  
Division  
Sports Car Club of America

# BACKFIRE

A publication for, and by, the members of the Western Michigan Region of the Sports Car Club of America.

**November, 2006**

## Lance Knupp wins the T1 Championship at the Runoffs



In addition, eight other WMR drivers participated in the 2006 Runoffs:

Chris Crisenbery, Dayle Frame, Rob Futch, Mike Solley, Andy McDermid, Freddie Heatherwick, J.R. Marchand (not pictured) and Jonathan Start (not pictured).

Congratulations to all who participated.  
(images captured and donated by Dayle Frame, Melinda Frame, Mark Boudoucies and Greg Matthews)



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### - changes made this month

The Backfire is a monthly publication of the Western Michigan Region of the Sports Car Club of America. The editor must receive items for publication no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month to be included in the next month's edition, provided space is available. If space is not available, it will be published in the following month. As the Backfire is a publication for and by the members of WMR/SCCA, the editor is pleased to publish letters, articles, and opinions of its members, provided that: 1. They are signed. 2. They are edited for grammar and some expletives. 3. The content is not libelous and / or unsupportable. Articles may be reprinted without permission, provided credit is given to the author. Submit articles to: Dayle & Melinda Frame, 703 Pine Ridge Drive, DeWitt, MI 48820 or to webmaster@wmr-scca.org

## RE Report: Phil's Philes

Race season is over, it's actually snowing as of this writing. We had a great race season this year, and will be looking toward a better season next year. Since it has been a while since the last edition of the Backfire, there is a long list of items that you should know about:

### Sue Bailey

Sue Bailey (Registrar, Trophy hunter, Banquet planner, meeting planner, and just about everything else!) has recently decided to back out of club happenings. This will affect many of us. Many of us took her commitment to the club for granted. I know I was guilty. Sue saw that our region needed a Registrar. She then went and figured out how to do it, and did a wonderful job at it. Her commitment enticed Kendra to get involved and get her Registration license. This led into many other 'jobs' as Duane and I were also Race Chairs. Things like mailing about 2000 entry forms for each of our races. Getting the Backfire printed and mailed each month. Setting up all of the meetings. Setting up the banquets. Not to mention race specific 'jobs' like trophy hunting. Sue helped us find the most unique trophies and worker gifts.



Sue was a big reason that I got deeply involved in the club. Her integrity, perfectionism, personal commitment, and desire to make everything better is what made me want to help more and more. I can just hope that Sue will take a well deserved break from some of the huge burden of club work, and come back to enjoy the club as it should be.

### Lorrie Wandell-T&S National Worker of the Year

Lorrie Wandell has been the chief of T&S this year for all WMR events. She has also been chief for one Detroit national, one INR national, one driver's school as well as was scheduled to be chief for the failed FWR event at GingerMan. Beside that she was chief for the VSCDA event at Grattan that was assisted by our region. She also assisted at the other local VSCDA event and at the Indy national. All this might be considered par for the course if you did not take into account the delight of the stewards and the NA with the speed and accuracy of the results and the fact that it was her first year as chief and, as a matter of fact, her first full season in T&S.

Lorrie was a divisionally licensed corner worker for our region, assisting in many of the training duties, when she found out about our desperate need to have someone qualified to head up T&S. In the course of a single season, working with our region's personnel and with the NA of T&S she worked our events, traveled to other regions and clubs, learned the equipment and the skills, and gained the time and experience necessary to perform as chief for all the above-named events.



In the middle of this season Lorrie made the personal decision to help an ailing co-worker by going through the testing and operation necessary to donate a kidney. She scheduled the operation so as to not interfere with her commitments to the club and, in fact, had her first race after surgery before she returned to work.

If you check with the chief and operating stewards of the races that Lorrie was in charge, I believe you will find them unanimously in agreement that Lorrie, indeed, represents everything that the club should hold as a standard of professionalism and personal commitment to one awarded the honor of Worker of the Year.

### R.J. Pruitt-Bringing the club back together again

## RE Report: Phil's Philes

In an attempt to continue to grow this club as a single club, RJ Pruitt has accepted the position of Assistant Regional Executive. I want to thank Steve Brown for the past year of service and helping to integrate Solo II back into the club. RJ will continue to manage our Solo II side also. With RJ's new position, we will work towards better cooperation between the Solo and Club Racing sides of the club. Hopefully no one will tell RJ what he really has signed up for until it's too late!

### Runoffs News

Congratulations to everyone at the Runoffs. We had a pretty good showing this year, as usual. I did not go this year for the first time in a while, but from what I hear:

Lorrie Wandell was named National T&S Worker of the Year

Lance Knupp won the T1 Championship.

Chris Crisenbery (4th in HP), Jonathon Start (5th in SSC) and Rob Futcher (6th in FP) all got medals for being in the top six.

Juan Marchand (7th in FM), Andy McDermid (7th in AS) finished in the top 10.

Mike Solley finished 11th in T1.

The one downer from the week was Freddie Heatherwick got a DNF.

Last but not least, Dayle Frame finished 11th and got the 'Hard Charger' award in HP.

### Regional Champ Series

Congratulations go out to Lenny Basaj of Whitehall, Michigan. Lenny took our region's only Regional Champ Series trophy with a 2nd Place in Improved Touring B. Lenny drives a very familiar red #76 Volkswagen GTI.



### Barnaby's World

Special thanks to Gerry Barnaby (WOTV ch. 4) for coming out to Grattan Raceway for our Labor Day event this year. I had been emailing back and forth to Gerry for months, and we could finally get the schedule right. Gerry and his photographer came out for a few hours during the Friday test day of our Memorial Day weekend Regional at Grattan. Marty Doane (ITS #13) was a great interview, much better than I. It was a quick story entitled "Ever Want To Be A Race Car Driver?" The final cut is only a minute and a half, after running around with them for a few hours, but here it is: <http://www.wotv.com/barnaby.php?id=595>. I don't have the planned air times, but I don't think it has aired as of this writing.

If you have any ideas on ways to publicize our events, please contact me at [pwgreen@centurytel.net](mailto:pwgreen@centurytel.net).

### Roundtable Meetings

The 2006 Great Lakes Division Roundtable will be held Sunday, November 5, in Columbus, Ohio. As a new Division starting in 2007, this is a very important meeting so we can discuss and plan for the coming year. We will have some news from the Roundtable in the next Backfire edition.

### Great Lakes Division News

As you may already know, the Central Division has officially split. You are now part of the Great Lakes Division (GLDiv) of the Sports Car Club of America. GLDiv encompasses Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, and part of West Virginia. GLDiv has approximately 7,000 members. There was a lot of animosity about this change, but we must look toward the future to make this a good change. To ease your mind a bit, there was a schedule conflict with a National event at the Autobahn Country Club and our National at Grattan in Au-

## **RE Report: Phil's Philes**

gust. The Executive Stewards of the two divisions worked together as planned and fixed this issue before it became a real issue. The agreement was that neither side would step on the other's "traditional" dates. Area 5 (CenDiv) stood by their promise and made a change to their schedule to fix the conflict. My personal thanks goes out to Steve Harris (GLDiv Executive Steward) and the folks of the Central Division for making this happen.

### **Next Years Race Schedule**

The local race schedule for next year is very similar to years past. Western Michigan Region's schedule will remain as it has been for years. We will have a Double Regional on both Memorial Day Weekend and Labor Day Weekend, and a National on the second weekend in August. Detroit Region will host a National at Grattan in May. INR will have their race in the early spring at GingerMan, and a few yet undecided other races at GingerMan. The schedule should be tentatively set at the Roundtable.

### **Next Backfire Editions**

We are looking for authors for future Backfire publications. We would like to see "How-To" articles on different race and solo specialties. I would like to highlight one or two specialties each month. Do you have a race story from this summer you would like to share? How about a working article on winter car prep? Really, if I can write an article, I'm sure you can! Let's make this thing more interesting! Contact Dayle or myself.

### **Final Remarks**

This is YOUR club! Not my club, not the BoD's club, not Topeka's club. Please let us know how we can make things better. Have an idea for a meeting? Have an idea to make an event better? Want to get involved? We can't work in a vacuum. Just call or email me. I would be happy to hear from you.

Phil Green  
WMR RE

## **Solo Report**

I wanted to put down some thoughts on this past season and give everyone an update on what is going on from the Solo side of things of this club.

As many of you know, we only did two Solo II events this year. This is not enough to keep the Solo program going. We need to be able to put on more events that attract more competitors if we want to keep doing Solo II in this region. There are a lot of contributing factors to this light season, not the least of which was my busy personal schedule. (Feb. 20 move, Feb. 27 close on old house, March 3 welcome new baby, April 27 close on new house, May 20 move into new house) My life was literally filled to the brim during some of the most important season planning months. I am not looking for sympathy or any understanding, I just want you all to know that I do feel I wasn't able to do as much on the early planning of events as I had hoped to do. I volunteer to do this because I do think that Solo II is worthy pursuit and we should be taking advantage of all the activities that the SCCA offers to us.

The two events that we did have went pretty well. We went back to Wings Stadium in Kalamazoo this year for a mid-July event. We had just over 50 competitors that braved the heat and had a good day of skilled driving. If you recall, that day hit a high of 93° F with a humidity approaching 75-80%. All in all I think the day and the course proved to be challenging yet entertaining and fun.

We had planned on going back to Sparta High School this year at some point in August, but due to changes in

# Solo Report

the upper ranks at the district we were not able to secure that lot this summer.

We were able to go back to Grattan Raceway for our annual Labor Day Solo II event. We had perfect weather, great competitors and a challenging course. I hope that we all left that event with a new appreciation of what the club racers do on a regular basis. Putting a good run together meant being able to concentrate and negotiate course elements for a full 65-70 secs. We had 116 competitors, and we were able to get 4 runs for pretty much everyone.

If there is one thing that we don't lack in the Solo world it is people willing to help during the events and helping to setup the course and clean up afterwards. At both events this year we actually had more people show up early, the night before for Grattan, than we could really use. I appreciate everyone one of you that showed up, helped set up and helped throughout the day to keep the events running. I can't do that alone. I especially appreciate Paulis Austrins who has been great at getting trophies on short notice the past couple of years. He has also helped immensely during the events and as a Solo Safety Steward. Also, thanks to Steve Brouwer for his continued support of this club and Solo II events. I would also like to thank the Furrin Group and their speed events for picking up the slack and keeping autocrossing going strong in this area.

Planning for next year needs to start soon. I know that many of you are able to help with the planning activities. If we want to grow the WMR Solo Program I am going to need help. I need people to step up and volunteer for the following positions:

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Role description:</b>
Event Chairs	Help with single event planning, trophies, work assignments, etc.
Timing	Help during the event running the computer and editing and posting results
Site Acquisition	Contact prospective sites for events and work with the club to get sites that want to have us come do events

Currently I am basically doing all of this planning and coordination on my own. I cannot do more than 2 or 3 events per year without it interfering with the rest of my commitments. There has been help here and there but we need good consistent go-to people if we want to keep Solo alive. I think we need no less than 5 committed individuals to make this all work how it should.

Do you all want to have national or at least divisional caliber events? I know I do. I would love to see more than just one or two competitors go to the Solo Nationals from our region (see below). That won't happen unless we start fostering good strong competition regionally. We need to get events that draw in more people and more top competitors from across the division. At some point I would like to see WMR hosting at least a divisional level Solo event.

With all of that being said I hope that everyone that participated this year had a good time and I hope you all look forward to next year.

Lastly, huge congratulations to our two regional competitors that made the trip to Topeka for the Solo Nationals. Dave Heinrich performed great in his EVO to take his 7<sup>th</sup> place trophy home out of 48 drivers in STU. Mike Fellmer also did well to place 30<sup>th</sup> out of 45 drivers in CP in his Camaro. Congratulations to both of you and thank you for representing all of us.

R. J. Pruitt  
Solo Chair

## WMR at the Runoffs®

Driver Name	Car Class	Qualifying Position	Finishing Position
Chris Crisenbery	H Production	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Dayle Frame	H Production	19 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>
Lance Knupp	Touring 1	6 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
Mike Solley	Touring 1	15 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>
J.R. Marchand	Formula Mazda	7 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
Andy McDermid	American Sedan	7 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
Freddie Heatherwick	American Sedan	24 <sup>th</sup>	DNF
Jonathan Start	Showroom Stock C	14 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Rob Futcher	F Production	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>

Once again, the WMR racing team had a stellar performance at the Runoffs. Lance Knupp won the T1 championship. There were three other medalists (Crisenbery, Start and Futcher) as well as two other top 10 finishers (Marchand and McDermid). This author was lucky enough to win the Hard Charger award for my performance in the HP race. Many congratulations to all of those who attended. I know first hand that the weather, a new facility and the long journey made it a very long week.

### Lorrie Wandell receives award

Our own Lorrie Wandell received the Advan Tire Timing and Scoring Volunteer of the Year award for 2006. To quote the official press release from SCCA headquarters:

“New software and technology for timing and scoring races has created challenges for many volunteers in this specialty. It is one thing to deal with computer problems in your every day work, but coming to the track to be faced with less than ideal conditions and software challenges will test the patience of any one.

Our award winner this year has come through those challenges with flying colors. This person chiefed nine events in the first year with a National License, and resolved timing loop problems at two tracks.

This Scorer also creates GCR results that are compliant and timely which keeps many a steward happy.

Adaptive, a quick learner, and efficient. Please join in congratulating *Lorrie Gaunt-Wandell of the Western Michigan Region*

the ADVAN Tire Timing and Scoring Volunteer of the Year award for 2006.”

### SpeedTV Runoffs® broadcast schedule

C Sports Racing	11/7 @ 12PM	Formula Ford	11/28 @ 1PM	Spec Miata	12/12 @ 1PM
Grand Touring 2	11/7 @ 1PM	Grand Touring 3	11/28 @ 2PM	Grand Touring 1	12/12 @ 2PM
Showroom Stock C	11/14 @ 12PM	Formula 500	11/28 @ 3PM	Formula V	12/12 @ 3PM
Formula Continental	11/14 @ 1PM	Touring 2	11/28 @ 4PM	E Production	12/19 @ 12PM
Showroom Stock B	11/14 @ 2PM	F Production	11/28 @ 5PM	D Sports Racing	12/19 @ 1PM
Formula Mazda	11/21 @ 12PM	American Sedan	12/5 @ 12PM	G Production	12/19 @ 2PM
Sports 2000	11/21 @ 1PM	Spec Racer Ford	12/5 @ 1PM	Formula Atlantic	12/19 @ 3PM
H Production	11/21 @ 2PM	Touring 1	12/5 @ 2PM	-	-
Touring 3	11/28 @ 12PM	Grand Touring Lite	12/12 @ 12PM	-	-

# Wounded Turtle Racing at the Runoffs

There had been a great many changes to the team in the last 12 months. We got a new trailer, a new tow vehicle and made dramatic changes to the car itself. That being said, the Runoffs is always a challenge but this year would have an added level of complexity due to not only these changes but to changes in the event itself. No longer would the event be held at Mid-Ohio, a short 4 hour drive from home. Now it would be held in Topeka, KS at Heartland Park Topeka, a mere 14 hour drive from here.

The season long battle for points in HP in CenDiv was tough (the final spots weren't settled until the last weekend with some drivers going out of division to try and get points). There are many top shelf drivers in our division. To win the June Sprints (our first national win) and qualify for the Runoffs was quite the prize. Some really good drivers (fourth and fifth from last years Runoffs) were staying home this year. Going into the dance, I was sure that CenDiv drivers would capture seven or eight of the top 10 spots. But we'll get to that later.

The drive out was loooooong and boring. Melinda and I picked up a friend (Jon Craig) in Grand Rapids. He would be our crew for the week. Jon was a long time friend who liked the racing thing and this was his first trip with us to the Runoffs. I had made arrangements with three other drivers to share a large compound at the track. The plan was to meet Rob Futchter down in Springfield, IL and caravan the rest of the way together (safety in numbers, ya know). We would meet the other two drivers (Rob Bax and Matt Brannon) when we got there. Together we would create a common area that would serve as restaurant, lounge and garage. It would be a blast. When we all got there we arranged all the trailers, canopies, etc. so that we would have a large covered area (again, safety in numbers). The weather forecast was not looking good so we had to make this compound rain and wind proof. On Sunday we had some friends from college (Steve and Jana Donnelly) come in for the day. It was great seeing them and we got Steve to put a wrench on the car too. For dinner Sunday we had a big steak cookout with all the trimmings. The idea was to have a really nice meal before the action started on Monday. With the compound set up the next thing to do was get the cars ready, get the lay of the land and take a drive around the track. None of us had been there before and we all needed to know how to drive this thing. The good news is they let me out on track with my golf cart for the track walk. We got three laps in before dark so we got a tentative 'look' at the track.

The racing week started on Monday with a qualifying session early in the morning. I worked my lap times down to a 2:07 but after reviewing the in car video, I realized that I made some huge mistakes. I had a better idea of what to do on Tuesday. However, Tuesday would be WET. The three of us HP guys (Brannon, Bax and myself) decided not to go out as, since the weather report for race day was sunny, we would gain nothing. So it was a lot of standing around. Wednesday was cool and sunny. Since the temperature was down, I decided to get softer, stickier tires. I was ready to rock. I had reviewed the video and knew what changes I wanted to make in my driving line. In addition, the car was in top form. It was also the only day HP would qualify alone. All the other days we would go out with GP and the track was waaaay full with 54 cars. Only one problem....a stupid move on the out lap. Only a minute out of the pits and I had spun in front of traffic and been hit. I limped the car back to the pits where Rob and Jon looked at the damage. I was done for the day. Major repairs were needed on the RF suspension. I borrowed a part from a fellow competitor, John Salisbury. It would take Jon and I four or five hours to do the repairs but the car would be good as new. I found the driver I spun in front of and apologized and, I must say, he took it better than I would have. However, I did not have the worst day in our compound. Bax had backed his car into the wall at T3 and caved in the last couple of feet of his car. It would take a dozen guys and some borrowed tools to fix the car over the next 12 hours. As an aside, this is one of the great things about production drivers. We are a close knit bunch and when word spread that Rob had banged up his car, several guys came and spent their free time to lend a hand.

With my attitude properly adjusted (red mist quotient removed) I was ready for the next session. Thursday would dawn bright and warmer. I went out cautiously so as not to do anything stupid again. I worked my lap time down to a 2:06 and was really feeling things come together when we got a 'black flag all' notification. We only had three laps in the books when the session was checkered. As a result of my stupidity, a BFA and the weather, I had only 11 laps on the track all week. Tomorrow was race day and I was confident that I had learned enough to do well tomorrow.



# Wounded Turtle Racing at the Runoffs

Race day was long as we were race number eight. This did, however, give us a chance to watch the first couple of races from the T1, T2 area. I wanted to know to what to expect when we went charging in there on the first race lap. When the time came, we went back to the paddock and started to get ready. The last things to do were choose the right carb needles and set the tire pressures. When we got to the false grid, we were interviewed by one of the SpeedTV pit reporters. He asked about the Wounded Frog team name. After correcting him, I told him the story. He also asked about the June Sprints win and I gave a good cliché answer about how any one of us has a chance in this race. Ya, right. I also said that the leaders would probably run away and hide and that these guys (pointing at the several of us with 2:04's, 5's and 6's) would have a fun day....assuming nobody anything stupid on the start. I was a little nervous walking around the false grid. I like to chat with the guys before a race and, like usual, this calmed me down. Once we got belted in and the motor was running, things sorta quieted down and I relaxed a bit.

Once the race got started I took it easy, too easy, on the first lap. Too many guys behind me got past me and at one point, I was 22nd in a 24 car field. But that changed quickly. One of the competitors lightly touched my car in the chicane on the back straight (the bus stop). He got by and then another got by. At this point I got pissed at myself and started to stoke the coals. By the end of the next lap I had passed four cars and was starting to get into a rhythm with the car. The field had settled out and I was now in a fierce battle with two other cars (the Datsun 510 of Gregg Ten Eyk and my buddy and compound mate Rob Bax in his Sprite).

Rob had spun in front of Gregg and me on lap eight. After that I had passed Gregg but Rob was working furiously to catch us. Gregg caught and passed me on lap nine. But he was really flogging his car around and I figured that he was pressing too hard and would make a mistake soon. Sure enough. Two laps later he spun in T10. He was now no factor and I tried to keep pressing hard as Rob was closing fast. He had gained several seconds on me and by lap 12 he was all over my tail and filling my mirrors. Rob is a better driver than I am and he had better cornering speed. But I knew I had more power than he did. Several times he would pull along side me coming onto the front straight but I had a little more power and would pull out a few car lengths by T1. In the end, I held on for 11th place by 0.607 seconds. Rob had beaten me like a bad mule on several occasions so to hold him off was a great personal victory. We had a good laugh about it later. Good, clean, hard racing at its best. Once the race was over the second round of fun began....the post-race bench racing with some of the other drivers. A few beers may have been involved too. I downloaded the in-car video so we could watch it while having dinner at a local pizza joint. The video was awesome with lots of spins and passes.

There were a few tasks left. One, make sure our lone FP driver (Rob Futcher) was ready for his race on Saturday and, two, break camp so that when Rob's race was over, we could get out of town right away. Rob's race Saturday was pretty uneventful....at least from his standpoint. After a few laps he was 15 seconds behind the guy in front of him and 15 seconds in front of the guy behind him. He may have finished the last 12 laps without even seeing another race car. Probably not as fun as it could be, but he brought home the car in 6th place in a very competitive class.

As for the drive home, again, it would be a two day trip home and the farther we got on Saturday would make the Sunday portion easier. Bax and I would be driving together part of the way home (he lives in Cincinnati so we would run together until we got to Indianapolis) at a great rate of speed. Each of us have big pick up trucks with turbo diesel motors and we averaged 80+ MPH going home. We got all the way to Collinsville, Il where we stayed the night. The next day was an easy drive home although the three of us were completely spent. I backed the trailer into the driveway and walked inside. We would unpack tomorrow.

Back to the final results for a moment. They reflected the strength of our division and its high level of competition with CenDiv drivers taking five of the top six spots and eight of the top 12. I am proud to say that I was one of those who helped elevate our divisions' record. We'll see how GLDiv does next season. A vast majority of the HP cars in CenDiv are from Area 4 so GLDiv will be just as competitive next season.

As for us, it looks like I want to rebuild the car from the ground up. It has been run pretty hard for the last six seasons and a frame up restoration is in order. A re-tooling of the suspension wouldn't hurt either. We'll see how it goes.

As always, thanks again to Duane, Phil and Rob for all the help this season (as in seasons past). As usual, they're the brains of the outfit and I appreciate everything they do for me.

Dayle Frame



# Western Michigan Region of the Sports Car Club of America

## Next Meeting:

- Date: November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at 7:30PM
- Site: Days Inn
- Location: 3825 28th Street, SW / Grandville, MI 49418 / (616) 531-5263
- We'll supply the soda pop and snacks; come on out for the fun and visit with your friends

*Happy Thanksgiving*

Don't forget to visit the WMR web site at <http://www.wmr-scca.org>

## WMR-SCCA Backfire

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