



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.

October 2009



Congratulations to Juan Marchand The 2009 SCCA FM Champion

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- changes made this month

To obtain a copy of the Region's corporation By-Laws, please email the editor (frameh@msu.edu) or go to the BoD page on the regional website (<http://www.wmr-scca.org/j60BoD.htm>) and download it from there.

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 15th 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 frameh@msu.edu

RE Report by Bruce Beauvais

As you read through this newsletter, you'll see that we had a busy summer. Dayle reviews the four weekends of Solo II activity. Verne will recount our 3 race weekends. We also assisted at two Vintage Sports Car Drivers Association races.



We had four general membership meetings at the Corner Landing in Ionia. It was also the location of our annual meeting in January. I won't say that the General Membership meetings were well attended- in fact it was a poor turnout most of the time. It's a tough thing to try to get back in the habit of reserving the 2nd Saturday of the month for a meeting. It's a time to refresh the old friendships made over the summer, set some dreams for the upcoming season and swap a lie or two. The food is good, prices reasonable and about as close to a central location to most of our members as we can find. Please reserve the second Saturday from October to May.

Looking ahead to 2010, the board has set some ambitious goals. With our national racing partner, South Bend Region, Memorial Day will see a Double National race at Grattan. Then off to GingerMan for the Bert Olson Memorial race. The WMR double regional will move to the second weekend of August. Solo II will try for four events in Lansing and perhaps more westward if locations are secured. Racing in West Michigan should also see two VSCDA events and a move of the Indy Regional to GingerMan.

All of this provides lots of opportunity to participate in your favorite part of SCCA without a great deal of travel. Solo II at your fingertips. Remember that each day spent as a club race volunteer gives you a credit towards membership renewal. It really doesn't seem like much until the renewal bill arrives and you see how much it doesn't cost.

The Board has received a nominating petition for the 2010 Board. The following list of members have been nominated:

RE - Verne Wandell
Assistant RE - Dayle Frame
Secretary- Mary Ellen Sickles
Treasurer - Jai Deagan
Director-at-large- Bobbe Orr

2009 Club Racing Report by Verne Wandell

This has been our best season of club racing in a few years. All three SCCA events we participated in this year were successful, both as racing events and financially. We all know that WMR paid a heavy price for the BOD decision to split Area 4 and 5 into two different divisions. Combined with the current economic crisis that fell on the heels of that decision and last year's high fuel costs we had a perfect storm to weather in order to come out the other side. It was a very rough passage and it probably isn't over yet but, if this season is any indication, the club can be very proud of the efforts put forth by its members and we will survive where other regions have had to turn from once profitable racing programs to other pursuits.



Traditionally we have two events; a double regional that takes place over the Memorial Day holiday weekend and a national in the middle of August. The regional weekend "Race, Race, Race" double continued in its novel format whereby qualifying for the second race was set by a 7 lap sprint race on Sunday morning, gridded according to the fastest lap times set during Saturday's race. The car count averaged about 80 each of the two days and was sufficient to offer some outstanding racing throughout the weekend. The corner worker turnout was quite good with 28 on Saturday and 21 on Sunday, with good division-wide participation.

Over the past off-season we entered into an agreement with the South Bend Region to cooperate on our two national events we co-hosted their "Bert Olson National/restricted regional" at GingerMan in July and they assisted us for the "Dog Days of Summer" National/restricted regional at Grattan. We both decided to offer the same type of event with an IT restricted regional and offer a \$50.00 discount to anyone participating in both events. The pre-entries looked pretty close to last year's and we went into the event with some trepidation but, in both cases, the walk-ons were great. South Bend ended up with over 120 cars and WMR had just under 110, both events exceeding last years counts significantly. WMR workers and chiefs turned out for the July race in good numbers as did the SBR workers and chiefs for the Grattan event. All-in-all the season was a wonderful example of what can be accomplished with inter-region cooperation. The worker turnout for the two nationals was outstanding with numbers ranging from 25 to 30 and an average of over 13 workers/day from outside the hosting region.

Of course, a big part of every racing season is WMR's relationship with VSCDA. We again participated in two events this summer with the wonderful historic and vintage cars that VSCDA brings to the track. Staffing the "Spring Brake" driver school/race is always hard but the folks from GingerMan have become a fine and effective group and it was a pleasure to work with them again. The driver school had a great attendance and that bodes well for future participation in VSCDA events. The August "Vintage Gran Prix AuGrattan" event was the 23rd in the series. The Furrin' Group had an absolutely wonderful turnout and the event could not have been a success without them. Both the racing and the summer parties were absolutely top shelf.

2009 Solo Report by Dayle Frame

The 2009 WMR Solo II season was one that will be forever etched in my mind. This season built on a single even we ran in 2008 with the Michigan State University Racing Club (MSURC) folks. They supplied the lot and we supplied the know how. The event went off very well and we decided to expand the program this season. The WMR brass realized we needed to expand our Solo program. This was a way to draw new blood into the region. I sat in on a Solo Safety Steward training course at the Spring Training meeting and have since earned my Solo Safety Steward license. Yes, I'm a Club Racer, but WMR needs more folks to step and support the club not just their specialty. After a summer of Solo, I'm glad to say I really enjoyed the events and look forward to next season. It's a facet of the club that I had not participated in and am glad I decided to do so.



With the success of the 2008 event in mind, we met during the course of the winter and formulated a plan to run four weekends this summer. It was a learning curve for sure. R.J. Pruitt had been running the program on his own without any support for a while. Under his guiding hand, several of us on the BoD stepped up and learned how to put on an event. With any luck we'll remember how to do this next season.

As for the events themselves, we had four sprinkled throughout the season all went off fairly well. The firsts a school / race weekend in May. The second was a pair of single day events in June. In July we hosted a single day event and in August we co-hosted a two day event with the folks from SVR. All of the events were held in MSU parking lots. They were pretty well attended and, as a bonus, they garnered a few new members for the region. The goal was to get the program off the ground and get some new, enthusiastic members involved in the club. I think it succeeded on all counts.

As we expand our series next summer, one thing we could use are different venues. If you know of a suitable location, please contact Verne Wandell or myself and let us know about it. Any parking lot that is 400 feet on a side (or greater), is fairly smooth and has few, if any, objects in the middle of it (light poles, curbed islands, etc.) will do. Maybe you (or no somebody you know) work at a location that has a large lot that would do. Maybe you know somebody that manages a location (Fifth Third Park for example) that would work for us. The possibilities are endless. Look around and give us ideas. We would really like to get an event or two over on the west side of the state. Keep your eyes open for possible venues.

Next season promises to be great and we look forward to getting this program flying again. With your support, we'll be able to rebuild this into a top shelf program. If you're interested in helping out, again, contact Verne myself and we'll get you into the fold. The more the merrier, right?

General Membership Meeting Minutes by Sue Beauvais

WMR General Meeting
Corner Landing, Ionia, MI, April 11, 2009

Meeting was called to order by RE Bruce Beauvais at 8:03 pm.
There were 10 members present.

Minutes of the last general meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer: Jai Deagan was not present. We have approx. \$1450.00 in the treasury. The Sanction fee for the May double regional is \$750.

Preparations for the double regional were discussed (during the meeting, postcards for the double regional were stamped by the attendees). The entry form has been approved, pending receipt of a sanction number. All stewards have been set. Assignments have been juggled around. Bruce has contacted the trophy supplier. Worker gifts will come from existing stock.

Dayle Frame talked to John Petersen about our emergency plan. We need to update some information on it and get it sent off. Bruce will assume that responsibility. Melinda Frame has a paper copy, and Kent Williamson may also have a hard copy. Bruce will check.

The possibility of adding a restricted regional race to our August National race was discussed. An entry fee of \$450.00 was discussed, also which group to invite. SBR is doing large IT cars for its' restricted regional at the July national. We should probably do the same. Someone needs to contact SBR about making a "restricted regional series". Discussion followed.

Solo II : Dayle Frame reported on progress for the upcoming Solo series at MSU. The MSU car club and Saginaw Valley Region SCCA met with Dayle and plans were set in motion. The website has a special page for the Solo II series with rules and regulations and equipment needs. Some discussion followed. We need to do an organizational meeting before May 16/17. Single-marque clubs have been contacted for the 2nd weekend, June 27/28. The third weekend will be July 25/26, and the last will be in conjunction with SVR Aug. 22/23. Bruce and Dayle will go to SVR's April 26th Solo II event to learn the ropes.

Verne has not heard back from the software supplier for the new Solo II software. Discussion followed regarding a solution.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06.



My Trip to the 2009 Runoffs by Dayle Frame

After a really long few months, I decided to take a week off and go to the Runoffs. I wasn't competing, I wasn't there as media, I wasn't there working. Technically I was there as a crew member but my driver needed no help so I was on my own. I was just there to schmooze and hang out. What a novel concept. I haven't been to a race to watch racing in so long I couldn't remember.



I arrived Saturday (9/19), parked my trailer and began cruising the paddock to see who was there. I ran into several old friends (workers and drivers). The Runoffs is a unique circumstance in that there are quite a few folks you only see once a year. Its great visit and bench race about past events and speculate about the race coming up.

I would host the Prod Party on Tuesday night so the first couple of days I was there, I needed to coordinate volunteers, collect donations and get everything ready for the event. We prod car drivers have had a party at the Runoffs for several years. We collect donations from the drivers and all extra money goes to the workers. This year we raised \$750. We invite all workers and a couple of dozen showed up. It's a great way to bring the two groups together. But this party does not run itself. I rustled up 280 brats, 200 hamburgers, two kegs of beer and all the trimmings for the expected crowd of 200. The weather cooperated (it rained all day and stopped a couple of hours before the party started) so everyone had great time.

With the party over, it was now on to having a good time and watching race cars cruise this magnificent circuit. If you haven't been to Road America, I highly recommend it. It has it all: Its a fast, technical track and is a blast to drive. For spectators, it has several great viewing locations. It's a storied facility with an unmatched history. The locals are friendly and supportive. Like I said, it has it all.

There were plenty of folks we know from our area competing (Andy McDermid, Fred Heatherwick, Jonathan Start, Jason Vinkemulder and others), so I was trying to keep track of how they were doing. No one did better than Juan Marchand. He was on the pole for the FM race and lead flag to flag for a dominating win. Many congratulations to him on his fine performance.

I'll back next year as a driver. But until then, its great to remember this one.

Member Anniversaries

These WMR members celebrated membership anniversaries in October:

One Year: Jeffrey Aulerich, Alexander Schlesinger

Ten Years: Paulis Astrins

Fifteen: Joseph Lourigan

Twenty Years: Catherine Lourigan

Western Michigan Region of the Sports Car Club of America

Next Meeting:

- Date: October 10th, 2010 at 7:00PM (the room will be open at 6PM for dinner)
- Site: Corner Landing Restaurant
- Location: 128 West Grand River Avenue / Ionia, MI 48846 (northwest corner of M-66 and Grand River Avenue; on M-66 just north of I-96) / 616.527.2169
- Come on out for the fun and visit with your friends.

Happy Halloween

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

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