

# Lone Star *Draft*

News for Racing Enthusiasts in Central Texas

February 2002

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## Let's Go Racing

The Southwest Division Club Racing season is about to get underway with the a double national event at Texas World Speedway, hosted by the Texas Region. For the past few years, this event has drawn competitors from near and far, being one of the earliest big weekends of the year. This year's event is scheduled to run from Friday through Sunday, February 15th - 17th. Thursday will be a test day hosted by Texas World Speedway.

In other Division racing news, Cabaniss has been re-opened to SCCA competition, after being declared off-limits to civilians in the heightened security environment adopted after September 11th. So, once again, racers will be headed south for regional/national weekend, in April.

After telling racers "no thanks, we don't want you back," the powers that be in Abilene have realized just how much their local businesses and charities will lose. According to Southwest Division Executive Steward, Jack Marr, we are once again welcomed back to the Abilene airport. In fact, if the Navy had not re-opened Cabaniss, Marr told the Draft that Abilene could have been the back up plan for this year.

The Texas Region, due mainly to the efforts of their Regional Executive Don

Howson, are close to completing a deal to go racing at Texas Motor Speedway, in Fort Worth. The track has hosted IRL, stock cars, and ALMS races since operations began a few years ago. For SCCA road racing, it is proposed that the track will run clockwise with an infield section entered and exited on the front straight, and with two chicanes on the back straight. This is similar to the ALMS course, but in the opposite direction. If SCCA's "track layout experts" approve the course, Texas region will host a race in July, two weeks prior to the Houston region's event at TWS. It will make for a busy July, but a new venue is much needed in Texas.

Finally, the Lone Star region is working on a proposal for its May race that will allow regional-only racers to participate on Sunday. Lone Star's board of directors will be developing a plan for presentation to the Division's Executive Steward at the February double national in College Station. The format could be a short sprint race, with the grid to be determined by Saturday's results. The challenge is to come up with a plan that leaves national classes unaffected and doesn't extend the volunteers' hours on Sunday evening.

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## Solutions... Not Problems

As President & CEO of SCCA, I have the privilege and luxury of attending the SCCA Divisional Mini Conventions

and Round Tables across the country. I recently attended the Northeast Division Convention in Harrisburg, PA. A very diverse mix of our members from all across the Northeast attended the convention.

The highlight of the convention for me was the enthusiasm and focus of our members in the development of solutions for the perceived problems our Club faces. Four sessions alone focused on the SCCA Strategic Plan and how the Northeast can support the plan and prosper because of it.



It seems as though this approach is becoming the norm and no longer the exception. Everywhere I go, our SCCA members are focusing on the solutions that will enable our Club to grow well into the future.

Your spirit, attitude and enthusiasm is contagious. Thank you all for doing what you do!

Sincerely,  
Steve Johnson



**Exclusive Photo: Aerocar launches low cost space shuttle program.**

## **Nur B. Ali Wins of 2001 SW Formula Mazda Regional Series**

by Sandy Magrath

The Southwest Formula Mazda Regional Series concluded at Motorsport Ranch on December 1-2. There were 11 Formula Mazdas in the competition with 7 battling for Series points.

Going into the weekend, the chase for the Championship was so close that any one of the top four (Tom Woodman, Nur Ali, Bob Stallings, Kevin Dutton) were capable of taking it. Unfortunately, Tom Woodman suffered some bad luck in Saturday's Qualifying session and was unable to participate in Saturday's race due to incomplete repairs. This pretty much eliminated his chances for the Championship. Bob Stallings started Saturday's race on the pole with Kevin Dutton in 2nd. Dutton went off in the "rattlesnake" early on and was moved

back to 7th position overall. But, Dutton worked his way back up to the front and passed Stallings on Lap 20. Dutton won the Series competition with Stallings 2nd and Ali 3rd. Saturday's race was filmed by Dallas Community Television and will be aired at a later date on Dallas cable channel 27.

After Saturday's race, Bob Stallings led the points race with Nur Ali only trailing by 2 and Kevin Dutton by 5. So, for Sunday's race, the pressure was high. Bob Stallings again qualified on the pole with Kevin Dutton 2nd and Nur Ali 3rd. To say this race was exciting would be an understatement. The drivers put on a great show for the many spectators. On lap one, Stallings spun out leaving Dutton in 1st and Ali in 2nd. On Lap 7, Dutton & Russ Wiseman got together. Dutton spun out and Wiseman was able to continue. So again, Dutton was forced to work his way back up to the front of the pack. In the meantime, Stallings had worked his way back up to 2nd behind Ali. Stallings went for a pass around Ali

and spun again. Dutton passed Stallings on Lap 22 but Ali had too good a lead. A very ecstatic Nur B. Ali won the race and the 2001 SWFM Regional Series Championship.

Following the race on Sunday, the Series held it's awards banquet in the Motorsport Ranch Drivers Lounge. Cash and prizes were awarded to all 8 drivers in the Series. All Series race results can be found at [www.texasautosports.com](http://www.texasautosports.com)

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## **SCCA Takes Another Stride Toward Membership Satisfaction**

The Sports Car Club of America, Inc. has announced a new customer service initiative that will provide its members additional membership and licensing verification on Saturdays.

The added customer/membership service plan will be effective Saturday, January 12. An SCCA staff member from the licensing or membership departments will be on hand at the National office, in Centennial, Colo., from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Mountain), in order to cater to weekend needs.

"The addition of a Saturday presence in the National office will compliment the ongoing commitment to customer and membership service that the SCCA is striving for," said Steve Johnson, SCCA President and CEO. "This new program makes our national membership and licensing staff more available in crucial times, such as the beginning of a race weekend."

"We look forward to the opportunity of providing this much-needed service to our valued SCCA members," said Wendy Grillo, SCCA Director of Customer Service. "This is the first step toward many new endeavors our department will be undertaking in the near future."

To reach the licensing and membership departments Saturdays, call: 1 (800) 770 2055, ext. 357

## SCCA 2002 CLUB RACING SCHEDULE

JAN	12-13	LSR	S/R	TWS 1.8 CCW
JAN	18-21	OD	NN	PHOENIX
FEB	15-17	TEX	N/N	TWS 2.9 CCW
MAR	9-10	HOU	R/N	TWS 2.9 CCW
APR	13-14	OD	R/N	HALLETT
APR	20-21	STB	R/N	CABANISS
MAY	25-26	LSR	R/N	TWS 2.9 CCW
JUN	1-2	OD	R/N	HEARTLAND PK
JUL	6-7	OD	R/N	HALLETT
JUL	27-28	HOU	R/N	TWS 2.9 CCW
AUG	17-18	OD	R/N	HALLETT
AUG	24-25	TEX	R/R	TWS 1.8
AUG	31-1	OD	R/N	HEARTLAND PK
SEP	16-22	SCCA	RUNOFFS	MID-OHIO
NOV	2-3	TEX	S/S	TWS 1.8 CCW
NOV	23-24	HOU	E/R	TWS 2.9 CCW
DEC	7-8	STB	S/R	CABANISS

## OTHER 2002 EVENTS

JAN	26	HOU	SWDIV MTG	HOUSTON
APR	5-7	WORKERS	NASCAR RACE	TMS
JUN	7-8	WORKERS	IRL & CTS RACE	TMS
JUN	8-9	SWDIV	DIVISION SOLO II	TBA
JUL	13-14	SWDIV	DIVISION SOLO II	TBA
JUL	TBA	TBA	SWDIV MTG	TBA
AUG	10-11	SWDIV	DIVISION SOLO II	TBA
SEP	13-15	WORKERS	IRL & CTS RACE	TMS

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

LSR	LONESTAR REGION
TEX	TEXAS REGION
HOU	HOUSTON REGION
STB	SOUTH TEXAS BORDER REGION
S	DRIVING SCHOOL
R	REGIONAL RACE
N	NATIONAL RACE
IT	RESTRICTED REGIONAL RACE
E	ENDURO RACE
OD	OUT OF DIVISION RACE
TWS	TEXAS WORLD SPEEDWAY
TMS	TEXAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY
CW	CLOCKWISE
CCW	COUNTER-CLOCKWISE
SWDIV	SOUTHWEST DIVISION SCCA
MW	MIDWEST DIVISION SCCA
IRL	INDY RACING LEAGUE
CTS	CRAFTSMAN TRUCK SERIES

## REGISTRARS

LSR	PAULA TAYLOR	512.472.2383
TEX	JOYCE McKINSTRY	214.350.3033
HOU	CHERI FERGUSON	281.328.5388
STB	ROSEMARY KAY	361.729.1464

## WEBSITE ADDRESSES

LSR	LONESTARSCCA.ORG
TEX	TEXASSCCA.ORG
HOU	HOUSCCA.COM
SCCA	SCCA.ORG
TWS	TEXASWORLDSPEEDWAY.COM
TMS	TEXASMOTORSPEEDWAY.COM
HALLETT	MAVIER.COM /HALLETT
SPEEDVISION	SPEEDVISION.COM (television schedule)
ATLAS F1	ATLASF1.COM (Formula 1 coverage)



## Thanks, Cecil and Ann

One can never say THANK YOU too often, that's my theory. Cecil and Ann Rupe have contributed their all to the Lone Star Region in the past years. Now, keep in mind, Cecil is a racer first and foremost. Yet, he still found the time and energy to give his all in the often thankless jobs of Regional Executive, Race Chairman, newsletter columnist, and on, and on.

With even less motivation, other than just sharing her time and being with Cecil (I guess that must have been part of it), Ann has devoted many hours to making races happen. We owe both of them a round of applause.

Now Cecil will have more time to just get out there and bang doors in his Z car, and perhaps in that vintage Formula Ford with CVAR someday. And I'm sure he'll use his newly found spare time to dress up in his Confederate Civil war garb and shoot them damn Yankees..

No doubt, they're both chuckling at the thought that I was naive enough to run for (you cannot believe how far and fast I tried to run) Regional Executive. Fortunately, the Lone Star region has added some new energy to its board, and I think my job will be made quite a bit easier because of the enthusiastic efforts of Greg Lakomski, Darrell Matocha, Chuck Swayne, and the rest of the board, along with expert advisors like Gregg Matocha, Steve Toth, Paula Taylor, and Mark Stone.

I'm looking forward to working with them all, and to serving you, the Lone Star Region members, well in the coming year.

**Now... Let's Get Ready to Rumble!**

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## LSR Officers and Directors

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## Classified Advertisements

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### Cars For Rent

Formula Fords, Swift DB-1, Viking and Formula Continental, Swift DB-3. Contact John Hancock at 512-243-0642 or e-mail: hanc78@aol.com

### Cars/Parts Wanted

5-speed gearbox for Datsun 240Z/280Z. Contact Greg at 512-848-3917

### Trailer

1999 Big Tex 18ft. metal deck car hauler, 6 recessed tie-downs, chrome wheels with matching spare on rack, extra set of side-load aluminum ramps, used 5 times. \$2,200. call Steve (512)694-4602

### Car For Sale

DSR, LeGrande, modified Kawasaki ZX-10 eng., dry sump oil system, Mikuni flat slide carbs. comes with very aerodynamic can-am type body and also original body. You can race SCCA &/or Vintage. with custom trailer. Extremely fast, many wins in Calif. \$15000. Will email photos. Tim Bass, 512-825-8558, timbass@email.com,

### Car For Sale

GT3 Dodge Shelby Charger. Previous SWDiv Regional Champion and National Contender. Very strong and dependable car with excellent racing history. Two (2) fresh 2.2L engines with aluminum heads, two (2) transmissions, custom headers by RaceFab, Mikuni 44mm, Tilton, ATL, MSD, Kirkey, K & N, 4 piston front calipers, full instrumentation, Lexan throughout, fresh paint, mounted slicks and rains, and tons of other spares. Also have open trailer for sale. Moving to Late Models and must sell ASAP. \$7,500.00. David Lewis, 713-436-2220, davidlewis@mdanderson.org (HOUS)

### Car For Sale

1987 Toyota Supra Turbo. Will rent for weekend. Great DE car & SCCA ITE car. Fully prepped and ready to run. Richard Ford, 225-921-7522, rftoy@bellsouth.net (Baton Rouge).

### 1994 E Z Go Golf Car

New batteries, heavy duty springs, recently serviced. \$1,400 obo. call Steve 512-694-4602

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## **Wrenching Experiences**

One of the areas in which I'm relatively weak in the racing game is in making changes to the car setup while at the track. Since, more often than not, I go to the races without any help other than my fellow racers, it is down to me to make changes to the car in order to get it "dialed-in" for each session. Typically, when I buy a new car, I'll call on all the expertise available to get the car in the ballpark in terms of overall grip and balance. This can involve consulting with the previous owner, consulting with any friendly competitors who have successfully driven the same make and model car, and consulting with a good shock man, normally someone familiar with the racetracks in my area. Although my two current Formula Ford cars are completely different - a pushrod, narrow track, side radiator English car (the Jamun), and a Swift DB1 - when I first raced them the problems encountered and the adjustments we made for my driving style were similar.

I was banging the outside front corner of the frames of both cars on the ground when braking into tight turns. We handled the problem in the Jamun with stiffer (twenty-five percent) front springs and an adjustment to the bump setting on the front shocks. In the Swift, the problem was solved with increased bump resistance on the front shocks. The rear of both cars exhibited a tendency to lose grip well past the apex of the turns, with the rear moving sideways near the track out point. The cars responded well to shock absorber adjustments at the rear.

Once I have decided a baseline setup for the car, that becomes my starting point for each race weekend. Then begins my search for the magic screw. In the Jamun, getting the balance right on a weekend is simply a matter of changing the rake of the car. It is so incredibly quick and easy that it has spoiled me for any other car. I haven't found the single

magic screw yet for the Swift, if one exists. Fortunately, with decent tires on the car the handling has always been good and consistent throughout a race.

Of course, I also gear the car appropriately for the circuit, and check the nuts and bolts. At least every other race weekend, I'll go through the top end, cleaning up the valves and ports.

I try to leave nothing for the track, so that I can just unload, set up camp, get in the car and drive. My hands are full with driving, managing the tires, the fuel, and the battery, and making sure nothing falls off. Unless the car is not competitive due to a handling problem, I tend to avoid, like the plague, adjustments to the car. This is partly because I am the world's slowest mechanic, and partly due to the fact that I'm lazy. Getting hot and dirty, and rushing about to get the car ready for action takes away from my enjoyment on a race weekend, and probably adversely affects my driving. It's a different story when someone is along with me to turn the wrenches. Then, I am more open to experimentation, but I still agree to try new things somewhat reluctantly. I guess I'm afraid of dialing the car right out of the ballpark and then not having a sufficient number of sessions left to get it back in the game. I know a number of racers who seem to enjoy tinkering with the car on a race weekend, but it's just not for me. Different strokes for different folks.

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## **Start It Out Right**

Why does it ever go wrong? Seems so simple. Having said that, there are a few keys to getting the race started successfully. The first step is warming up the motor so that when the green flag falls the water temperature is in the proper range. Normally I will warm up the motor at my trailer before donning my driving gear. Quite frequently, in the Southwest Division we go racing in pretty warm conditions. I like to get buckled in a bit early so there's no rush, but then I will stay parked under my awning so that

I'm protected from the weather, rain or shine. No matter how close I try to cut it, most of the time I'm on the pre-grid with around seven minutes to go before lift off.

Once the cars roll onto the track, the next order of business is warming up the tires and brakes. Once upon a time I would get heat into the tires with really violent back and force gyrations, almost to the point of jumping the rear of the car from side to side. Then I twisted an axle into two pieces, so I quit that nonsense. Nowadays, my side to side movement is much smoother, and I supplement that with bursts of acceleration and hard braking, keeping a close eye on the following car, to make sure I don't surprise the driver. If the driver happens to be a visitor from another division, then I'll normally warn him beforehand.

If I'm on the pole, I let the pace car pull far enough ahead so that I can bring the field up to the start according to my plan. I slow up the field to make sure they're all in contact before the final turn leading to the start line. Then, pulling onto the main straight, accelerate smoothly up to the bottom of the power band and hold it there with just the slightest squeeze on the throttle so you're accelerating, but imperceptibly... you want to maintain pressure on the throttle. One advantage of starting from pole is being able to control the speed coming up to the green. My Formula Ford motors hit ninety-nine percent of maximum power at around 5800 rpm. That's the minimum engine speed I want to see as I approach the starter.

Getting a good start is made easier by knowing how many rows of cars are in your race group, which will give you an idea of when the last cars should be lined up on the straight. Some tracks, such as Hallet, have a short run up to the starting line leaving some rows still in the corner. In this case, it's important to bring the cars up as slowly as possible with very little, if any, acceleration. Otherwise, the starter will not be waving the green.

**- continued on page 6**

Whether I'm on the front row or deep in the field, my main focus is on the starter, while my peripheral vision keeps tabs on the adjacent cars. If I am at a new track or an out of division race, I'll usually make a point of checking out the starter's technique as he starts another race group, preferably one with about the same number of cars as my group. That gives me a rough idea of where I will be on the straight when he drops the green.

Getting a killer start is difficult from the front row, because early acceleration is so obvious. I always feel that from the front row, especially outside front row, it's more a question of not getting swallowed by the cars behind. From row two and back it's easier, just leave a gap so that you have a shot at accelerating earlier than the car in front of you.

I love starts because they're so incredibly exciting, with the brain ratcheting right up into full adrenaline mode as you jockey for position through the first couple of corners. Having a simple plan and technique goes a long ways toward getting your race started successfully.



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