

March 2005



Lone Star Region
Sports Car Club of America
PO Box 302648
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LONE STAR DRAFT

2005 Lone Star Region
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REview

Danny Benzer and I have just come back from the 2005 SCCA national convention in Kansas City, MO. The convention provided some great technical information, and some good insights into the way the club works.

Speaking exclusively for myself, there is a lot that is good about a club that allows me to show up anywhere in the country on a given weekend and be able to go racing (i) in a safe environment, (ii) under standard rules, (iii) with hospitable folks. That is a pretty tall order to fill, and the organization that it takes to fill it took a long time to evolve.

It is in considering the deployment of resources to influence future evolution that some concerns surface, for me personally. To the point, I believe that there is an inherent conflict in having professional (read "hired") management running a membership organization.

- Clubs are a group of people banded together to further specific common interests, and members are generally more concerned with having those specific interests served than in mutating for the sake of survival of the club.
- Professional management can become interested more in self-survival than in the specific collective interests that it was put in place to serve and, hence, can become more interested in ensuring that there is some con-

stituency to serve than in the staying true to the interests of the present members.

A fair amount of energy and resources are spent at the national level in addressing the issue of the 'greying of the club', and the new factions of the automotive interests (street car tuning and drifting, to name two) that club management feels must now be pursued in order to ensure a supply of 'new blood' and membership growth.

Again, speaking personally, I am not all that interested in the club's survival for survival's sake. I am interested in having the club (i) continue to be a vehicle to serve the interests of its current members, (ii) continue to welcome new members of like mind, (iii) work as a buyers' cartel for containing the costs of racing, and (iv) explore creative possibilities for creating new places to race.

On the other hand, if the club shifts focus to other activities, in order to sustain and grow membership, who is served - the membership or the paid managers?

Am I opposed to professional management of the club? No. To do what the SCCA does, on the scale that it is done, professional management is needed, but it needs to operate under clear directives from the membership (via the board of directors), and management compensation must be linked to the organizations true goals and objectives, and not simply to putting new names on the membership roster.

REview (continued from page 1)

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, pay attention to how this is supposed to work. Your national board of directors is empowered to set the goals, objectives, and policies for the club, and the standards for measuring the performance of our hired managers in executing those directives. YOU are

empowered to select who represents you on the national board of directors, and to see that your interests are served by the (i) directives your board implements, (ii) the standards that professional management is held to, and (iii) by the goals that management is incented to pursue.

We have a good thing here, but if you and I don't pay attention, it is too easy for management to run the club for management's benefit, and not for the *members'*.

Cliff

The Draft...



Would you like to get your *Draft* quicker? And in **COLOR??** (Checkout the *Draft* on the website – it really IS colorful AND you'll be able to tell who's in the picture on the right!!) If so, let us know – we'll send you an email to either get a pdf file BEFORE it goes to Kinko's for printing and mailing or the link to the website – AND you'll save the region printing and postage costs! What a deal for both!!

If you'd like the electronic version, please let us know – send your email address to lonestarregion@hotmail.com.

Would you like to see a membership directory that would be available online? Or maybe start a membership listing that folks can add themselves to online? Let us know that, too – send comments to lonestarregion@hotmail.com!

ALSO: PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE think about writing an article for the *Draft*! Don't you think you could do better than the current editor???

Cliff is doing a great job getting me something every month. Danny Benzer has written an article about some very interesting seminars he attended at the convention. Jim Averett has submitted several articles about race officials. But what about you? Don't you have a good story about what happened to you at an event? What about the last trip to Topeka for the Solo II championships? Did NOTHING happen?? Send your contributions (a word document is perfect!) to: racemom13@hotmail.com. Submission deadline is the day of the board meeting. Thank you for your support.

Racing News

May isn't far away—Have you volunteered to make this our best event ever?? What would you like to see the Saturday party be? What kind of T-shirts would you like us to do? What worker perks can you donate or get from your sponsor, friends, etc.?? So many ways to help, so little time. Maybe you or your organization would like to help with the financial side of the event. Contact any board member (check the listing on page 1 of this issue or go to www.lonestarscca.org) to comment, volunteer, ask questions.



Lone Star Region wants YOU!!

WHO ARE THOSE GUYS? ...

Jim Averett, SOWDIV Executive Steward
Second in a series

I began racing in 1979 and ran seriously for about ten years and not so seriously for about ten more. Until I became a steward in 1994 I had no idea what stewards did. Oh, I knew some of them, and knew they would want to talk to me if I did something wrong, but that was about it. This article is an attempt to help you understand a little more about whom the stewards are and what we try to do. Failing that, it should at least help put you to sleep if you have troubles with insomnia!

Most of the stewards in the SOWDIV are former racecar drivers. The rest are experienced race workers from other fields. We go through a licensing progression like other workers and drivers, with only the most experienced being allowed to be Chief Steward of a National race. I'm going to use the masculine gender in this article for simplicity. We have several excellent female stewards in this division and I do not want them to feel left out.

Our race organization is set up much like our national government (remember high school government classes) (me neither). We have three branches: Legislative, Judicial and Executive. The Legislative branch in the SCCA is represented by the GCR, from the Board of Directors and Club Racing Board with input from members. This branch will not be dealt with, since they are not actively at our races.

The Stewards of the Meet (SOM) perform the function of the judicial branch. One steward is assigned as the Chair SOM (CSOM) and must have at least one other SOM member. The SOM represent the SCCA and see that the event is run by the rules. They generally do not take an active roll in the event. They resolve disputes between drivers, between drivers and officials and even between officials. Yes, officials can protest one another!

The Steward a driver or worker should have the most contact with is the Chief Steward (CS). He is charged with running the event (the head of the Executive Branch). Depending on attending stewards, he will have several assistants (ACS) who all have the power of the CS. Some of these positions are: Black Flag, Safety (sometimes these two are combined), Operating, Tech, and just plain ol' Assistant. These stewards have many duties that overlap but all are directly responsible to the CS.

Guess which steward you will talk to if you get black flagged? Right...go to the head of the field! The Safety Steward (as his name implies) oversees safety aspects of the event. He is in charge of the ambulances and emergency vehicles as well as any other items that he feels are a safety concern. If you have safety concerns and cannot find the CS, talk to Safety.

The Operating Steward(s) are located in race control, usually in the tower (I have operated from the front seat of my Yukon!). They are responsible keeping on track sessions running smoothly and timely. The Operating Stewards do not call for yellow, slick or "passing" flags as those are done at the discretion of the Corner Captain. They do however call for all manner of black flags, red flags, and double yellows. Most of their information comes via radio from the corner workers. If there is an on course incident with track blockage the Corner Captain might call for a wrecker, ambulance and pace car. The Operating Stewards almost always comply. One instance when they might not is if the incident occurred with one lap to go. He would of course dispatch the wrecker and ambulance, but might not get the pace car out because by the time that happened, the race would be over. The Operating Stewards can shorten a race in the interest of safety.

Very rarely do we have the luxury of a Tech ACS, or just plain 'ol ACS. The Tech ACS takes action based on reports from Tech Inspectors (Tech Inspectors can only report discrepancies). The ACS just helps the CS in whatever duties need to be accomplished at the time.

If you are still awake, I hope you now know a little more about the stewards and what we do.

Convention Seminars

Greetings, fellow Lone Star Region members. Recently Cliff Maxwell and I were given the task, or opportunity as it may be, to attend the SCCA National Convention. It really wasn't that bad once you got past the political fluff and award luncheons. The Westin Hotel was very nice, not to mention several very good restaurants within walking distance and a free wireless Internet café in the adjoining mall. Well that's enough fluff from me, now for the some of that Kansas City Beef. Of the many seminars we could and did attend, there were three I attended that, from a drivers standpoint, were very educational.



Dr. Hal Fenner was there representing the Snell foundation. He and his assistant gave a very descriptive overview of how the foundation tests helmets and what it takes for them to pass the very stringent safety requirements. For instance, if a helmet has a major impact it could look perfectly fine on the outside, but the inner foam liner may be compressed or have a substantial dent in it rendering the helmet useless if not dangerous. The add on spoilers and air foils I'm sure you all have seen on some helmets are not a problem as long as they break away from the helmet easily. That way there's nothing on the helmet to snag and cause additional injury in case of a skidding type accident. The one other major concern several other participants had including me was the drilling of holes in our helmets, such as for radio wiring or drink tubes. According to the foundation, this is not a problem as long as it is no bigger than 3/8 of an inch in diameter. They went so far as to say you could drill a hole anywhere on the helmet and as long as it was under that size it wouldn't be a problem. However, do your own due diligence before you alter your helmet.

The Shafer Enterprises Corporation, maker of the Cool Shirt, presented a safety symposium on the effects of heat and race drivers. They showed video of independently run university experiments taking people to the brink of heat exhaustion, raising the body's core temperature. They found that for every degree of core temperature increase the amount of mistakes made by that person dramatically increased. For example, in the racing environment, with an ambient air temperature of 90 degrees and 50% humidity, a race driver is exposed to a heat index of 133 degrees. With a normal body core temperature of 98 to 99 degrees, heat exhaustion occurs between 99 and 103 degrees and heat stroke between 103 and 110 degrees. When the body reaches core temperatures over 100 degrees the number of mistakes made performing routine functions increases dramatically to as many as 80 mistakes per hour with a core temperature of 103 degrees. Of course next came the sales pitch for the Cool Shirt. The speaker however made a very convincing argument for the effectiveness of the Cool Shirt over other types air or water-cooling devises. The key is to control core temperature thermostatically and not freeze one part of the body, such as the head, neck or chest. Most products, like vests with ice packs, tend to over cool the body when they're first put on, tricking the body into thinking its cold, which will make the blood retreat into the body decreasing its ability to dissipate heat. Then when the ice packs melt, the vest can super heat the body, accelerating heat exhaustion. So the moral of the story is; to Go Fast, you got to Stay Cool.

David Redszus from Precision Automotive Research was scheduled for an hour and fifteen minute seminar and when he clicked over the 3 hour mark, I believe every person that was there when he started was still there, many on the edge of there seat. This guy knew his stuff, he broke down the chemical composition of gasoline, described how each component changed the way it burned and effected engine performance. He explained how using pump gas is a crapshoot when it comes to the performance of your engine. The chemical composition changes constantly because the base stock, being from the Earth, is not consistent. Think of it this way, the end product you get at the pump is derived in a way similar to brewing beer, (I knew that would wake you up), there are a million different ways to end up with a quality product, but no to brands are the same. The main problem with pump gas is the byproducts left in it by the refineries. Rather than spending millions trying to dispose of the undesirables it's left up to the catalytic converters in our vehicles to burn it off, and I guarantee the performance of your engine doesn't benefit. Feeling overwhelmed with the amount information presented, wishing I had a video version of David's presentation, I did get a little satisfaction stumping him when I asked if all this information applied to rotary engines the same as piston engines. He looked at me and flatly said, "no". Virtually all their information was derived from testing piston engines, (nothing like being the red headed step child). Never the less, I believe the underlying principles apply to all combustion engines.

Well that's my report on the National Convention. I hope something was of interest or value to you. Thanks for sending me as a Lone Star Region representative. See ya at the races.

Fast and smooth,
Danny Benzer, Assistant RE

From the mailbox:



My name is Bill Dennis.

I want to introduce myself and <http://www.roadracecar.com> to your region. I am an 18-year SCCA member in the Buccaneer Region of SEDIV, and a Formula Vee racer. Professionally, I am a Webmaster and a College Instructor.

At the track I have heard racers complain about wanting one place to buy and sell racecars, parts and supplies. To address that need, I created <http://www.roadracecar.com> where SCCA racers can easily display pictures of their racecars and their racing equipment, using only a computer.

And, there is absolutely no charge to SCCA members for this service!

I am sending this email to Regional Executives, Asst. REs and Webmasters in every region of SCCA. Come and look at what we have done for Florida Region. Let us provide a special area for your Region, too. Please feel free to link to us from your Region website, and let us display your racecars!

Thanks, Bill Dennis <http://www.roadracecar.com> 904-573-1250

We've double checked with Bill and there is no charge for non-professional advertisers. SCCA members and Regions are free to list race cars at any time. The site is nice looking – check him out!

NEXT MONTH:

What's going on in Lone Star Region? Look for more on these topics in the coming months:

- How much does it REALLY cost to go racing? From the ORGANIZERS side. Be ready for some eye opening info! And see if you can help lower those costs.
- Minutes, minutes, minutes. Read what your board is up to! Better yet, come to a meeting!
- www.lonestarscca.org—what's there, what's new, what do YOU think??
- Where can you get a lanyard to keep your credentials with you? What about a water bottle that will help start conversation?

Read about all this and SO MUCH MORE in the next few DRAFTS!!

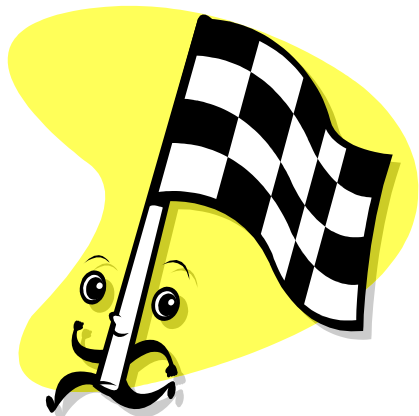
HEY! You in the Nomex!

Did I see you at the late race? Did I know you? Did you know me? I've been involved with this region for close to 30 years (I know, I don't look old enough but it's true). I was really surprised how few drivers I knew on the entry lists at our January event and this past Houston Region event. Lone Star Region is made up of race drivers and solo folks. I don't know many in the solo community—it's a great group, but I haven't been involved with the solo program in 25 years. But the racing side... well, that's different. I wish I knew each of our drivers—I'd love to watch your races, come see you at impound, bring you a bottle of water, know who your significant other was so I could visit with them either while you were working on your car or out on the track. I'd LIKE to get to know you—and I hope you'll introduce yourself to me at our next event. I've missed you at the last few social functions we've had. Do come to the next one!

Paula Taylor

Currently: Editor of the *Draft*, Registrar, mother of a Spec 7 Driver

It's never too late to Volunteer!



DON'T FORGET:

Board meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of each month and **ARE OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS.**

Meeting are currently held at Athena Manufacturing (thanks to Bill Johnson!).

Check the website for updates and additional information.

Lone Star Region
Sports Car Club of America
PO Box 302648
Austin, TX 78703-0045

We're on the web—
www.lonestarscca.org—
check out the latest on activities!!

Coming Up:

April 2-3—Regional/National races, TWS, hosted by Houston Region

April 6 – Lone Star Region Board Meeting (www.lonestarscca.org for details)

May 4 – Lone Star Region Board Meeting (www.lonestarscca.org for details)

May 7-8—Regional/National races, TMS, hosted by Texas Region

May 28-29—Regional/National races, TWS, hosted by Lone Star Region

June 1 – Lone Star Region Board Meeting (www.lonestarscca.org for details)

June 25-26—School/Regional races, No Problem Raceway, hosted by Houston Region

July 6 – Lone Star Region Board Meeting (www.lonestarscca.org for details)