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## Information for Area 4 Members

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Hello my fellow members. I have just returned from my first meeting of the SCCA Board of Directors, December 1 – 3, 2011 at SCCA headquarters in Topeka, Kansas. This was the last meeting of the current (2011) BOD. As such, it was an opportunity to have an orientation for me and fellow incoming new BOD member Brian McCarthy, observe the finish of the current board's business and be welcomed in for the first official business of the 2012 board (about an hour to elect officers).

Before I give you a recap, I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to represent you. I will do my best to listen, assist and answer your questions. This is a member driven club; your ideas are always solicited to make improvements. Email works best; call if you need to.

### Marcus Merideth

I want to thank Marcus for his service to the club these past 3 years and for the honorable way he conducted the election. Marcus is a gentlemen and a sportsman. He has been very supportive in the transition, even collaborating with me on some key votes as the 2011 BOD finished its business. Thank you, Marcus.

### The 500 LB Gorilla in the Room – Club Racing Part One

The BOD is very concerned about the decline in membership and more importantly, participation. Changes to our National Racing Program, our classes and the Runoffs are all on the table. This is so important that I was met at breakfast Thursday morning by Bill Kephart, Chairman of the BOD Planning Committee. Bill explained a new pilot program that is being considered for the less populated Divisions. I cannot detail the program now as it is still being fleshed out, but I met with Bill again early Saturday morning to go over the details of the program a second time. It is innovative and exciting and surely has merit. You will see the PR release soon.

### Club Racing Part Two – Class Management

I am firmly committed to reducing the number of National Classes and so is the BOD. At the same time, some new car configurations are having considerable success in other clubs and we must stay nimble to serve developing markets (by the time you read this, there will be a press release out about STL). Working with the CRB, a realignment of some classes will begin the reduction process. Before you light up my phone to see if your car will continue, let me assure you, it will. The skill will be to move cars while keeping your investment competitive. We are getting ready to add B-Spec cars – an exciting new specification that fits into SSC, soon to be renamed T4. Rest assured there are some very savvy people working very hard to improve our product. It will be a very important and productive year.

### Club Racing Part Three – The Runoffs

A new format and qualifying system is on the horizon. There is also a forward looking plan concerning venues and locations. Again, we must wait for the official announcements before I'm allowed to detail these for you. Suffice to say, I do like the direction and the thought going into this plan as well.

### Club Racing Part Four – Alternative Driving School

In October, the BOD approved a method to allow racers with experience an easier path to achieving their SCCA Competition License. After thinking about this, Club Racing has asked for more formal sanction procedures to better control the program. I support this. As the Chairman of the GCR Advisory Committee, I wrote a letter to the CRB and BOD questioning certain aspects of the Alternative Driving School. Apparently, the letter was read. We cannot allow this method to undercut our traditional schools. We were also concerned about allowing novices into the program and mixing novice drivers with National drivers on a Friday before a National. The need for sanction now assures some uniformity and control to the program.

## **SOLO**

There will be a small increase in Solo fees in 2012 from \$5.50 to \$6.00 per car. It goes up slightly because insurance recovery for costs was one of the "holes" in the 2011 budget and this is an attempt to fill that hole and build a slight buffer for future possible increases (Club Racing insurance cost was also similarly adjusted). The SEB did not have any action items required for the BOD meeting other than confirmation of appointments for 2012. Most of you are aware that Pace Trailers went out of business leaving the status of the trailers used in the National Solo program in question. The SCCA was able to purchase these trailers so they are now ours. You will also see some good news soon regarding the Tire Rack National Solo Championships at Lincoln Airpark. Closer to home, thanks to Velma Boreen for providing me with a list of important events that are scheduled in the Division in the coming season. I will be attending and hope to see you at a few of these.

## **Rally**

The RallyCross National Championship received some good news. The site at Tulsa Raceway Park (TRP) has been secured again. So, the 2012 RX National Championship will be back at TRP in October.

## **Time Trial**

The Time Trial Administrative Council (TTAC) is looking for more leaders and participants. This body was set up to develop rules for Time Trial events independent of the CRB and SEB. It has been floundering a bit and could use more attention. If you have an interest, let me know and we can connect you into the National and Divisional scene.

## **BOD Committees**

I was honored to be asked to join the *BOD Planning Committee*. This is where we can have the most influence in the strategic direction of the club. I have also been appointed to the *BOD Compensation Committee* which oversees staff salaries. For 2012, the *BOD Race Track Committee* has been disbanded. This will not affect our plans for Bluegrass (below).

## **Bluegrass Motorsports Park**

We have been very active gathering information and talking with potential stakeholders about BMP. I spoke with the owner, Brad Poppell two weeks ago. Brad indicated that nothing can be done until the lawsuit against Nation's Bank is resolved. That will not start until late March and it is hard to know how long it will drag out. Brad is very supportive of SCCA's potential involvement in ownership, but we will need to wait a bit. In the meantime, while at the BOD meeting, I reviewed the financials from High Plains Raceway (+\$\$\$\$,\$\$\$\$) with Bill Kephart who helped put the deal together for the SCCA. Bill offered to assist us in any manner required.

## **General Info and Membership**

We are seeing many new members sign up, but even more members are dropping out. The result is a decline in membership. Ironically, our retention numbers are about the same as other marquee car clubs, but it is still unacceptable. The retention numbers are worse among new (< 2 year) members. These are people who joined SCCA and, for one reason or another, did not find what they were looking for. The other groups leaving the SCCA are dissatisfied with our people and/or our products. The National Convention will have a number of sessions dedicated to addressing and stemming this tide. I will also have more to say on this topic in future newsletters.

## **Some Good News**

There is a rainbow within the cloud. Despite a general decline in membership, the club is financially healthy and well managed. Our cash assets have grown remarkably despite the economy through smart planning and expense management. The staff is first class; we are fortunate to employ so many fine talented people. A survey done for SCCA showed the staff is motivated and they rate the club as an excellent place to work.

I began this letter saying we are member driven. We are, so please don't be shy. Participate and Communicate. Please let me know how I can help you.

Yours for a better SCCA,

*Steve*

Steve Harris

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