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Information for Area 4 Members

January 16, 2012

Hello Area 4 Members,

This is the second installment of the Director's Newsletter. Just because we are not racing doesn't mean we are hibernating. There is quite a bit of news so let's get to it.

The "Majors" – A New Initiative for Club Racing

This week, there was an announcement about the "Majors". This is a pilot program that will be tested in the Midwest, Rocky Mountain and Southwest Divisions in 2012. I'm not going to focus on the mechanics of the pilot program; you can read that in the Press Release. The question is "why?"

Over the years, the SCCA has allowed National Classes to proliferate to the point where many classes cannot fill a podium at a National event. To accommodate all the classes (which we must do) Groups were created that sometimes had some very unnatural pairings - FV and SRF for example - that creates a poor racing experience for all.

As an old S2 driver, I would have preferred to race with 30 other Sports 2000's rather than the FA, FB, FC, FE, FM, CSR, DSR, etc. mix of wings and things. I'm sure you feel the same about your class. In an ideal world, if every car meant a position, the racing experience would be better.

Since 70% of our National racers participate within our top 10 (by number of entries) classes, the purpose of the Majors is to serve those members with a better racing experience (more track time; better competition), while at the same time serve the 30% racing in the 19 less subscribed National classes with their own excellent experience. This will be done by separating the top 10 from the other 19 into their own race weekends and clustering competition within several Divisions. I want to make this perfectly clear – this is an all-inclusive program for all current classes. The intent is to make racing better, build larger fields and provide more track time for every competitor.

This is a pilot program for 2012 restricted to several Divisions. The success or failure of this program will determine whether it is expanded nationwide for 2013. Before you ask, the success criteria are still being developed. The Club Racing Department and many other interested parties will be watching this closely.

This is a good segue into the next topic.

Club Racing Part Two – Class Management

One of the rumors I hear is that we are only driving class reduction because of the Runoffs. That is absolutely incorrect. We want class reduction for the reasons above – when you cannot populate a podium for a given class, it brings into question whether we are providing good competition. Our National Championship Racing program should provide top level competition; not just a win by default.

We have 29 National classes now. We know we can get to 24 without much drama. Would 18 be even better? It's hard to say. And yes, fewer classes would make a National Championship at the Runoffs more exclusive. But better racing and a better race weekend experience with more track time for our members is the goal.

The CRB will present the 2013 realignment plan to the BOD at the Convention. There will plenty of opportunity to vet the plan with our members. We must do this for the long-term health of the club.

One last thought on class realignment - **we should strive to consolidate classes in such a manner that all cars remain competitive** (obviously easy to say; challenging to do).

SOLO

There have been some changes in the administration in the Solo/Rally Department. Deena Rowland and Brian Harmer have been assigned new responsibilities that include support of SOLO events on a National and Regional level. You can read the details on the SCCA website.

It is going to be an exciting season in Great Lakes Division. Besides the normal hotly contested Regional and Divisional events, we will have a couple of prestigious top level events:

1. Pro Solo event in Toledo July 28th at Toledo Express Airport
2. Northern States National Tour August 4th at the Grissom Aeroplex

Volunteers are always welcome. Come on out!

Rally and Rally Cross (RallyX)

I have been appointed a BOD liaison to Rally and RallyX this year, so I have listened in on both their monthly conference calls – still learning all the terminology. While I have participated in Rally with WOR, I have yet to try RallyX. If there is anyone out there who wants to educate their Director on the nuances of RallyX from the Driver's seat, let me know. For someone like me who always got lost on the SOLO course, the idea of following tire tracks sounds pretty good. RallyX has been added to the bucket list.

Time Trial

Bob Smith from OVR has been named the 2011 GLD Time Trial Participant of the Year and is GLD's nominee for the Rich Shafer Award as National TT Participant of the Year. The award winner will be announced at the Convention and we all think Bob has an excellent shot to win it. Congrats Bob on getting this far - stay tuned.

Convention

The SCCA Convention is March 1, 2, and 3 in Las Vegas. The South Point Hotel is a very nice place – food is good, rooms are cheap, the seminars will be informative and the camaraderie is always exceptional. There are generally low airfares to Las Vegas. If you go, take an extra half day and visit the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area west of the city. It is spectacular.

Spring Training

Please don't forget our annual GLD Spring Training seminar, March 10, 2012. This year's seminar will be at the Grand Plaza Hotel in Toledo, 444 N Summit Street, Toledo, OH 43604 (formerly Crowne Plaza). This is a good opportunity to do a little bench racing with your friends, find out what is new, and sharpen your skills for the upcoming season. Registration Forms are available at the Great Lakes Division website <http://www.greatlakes-scca.org>.

BOD Planning Committee

I will be heading to the Convention a bit early (Monday night) to take part in the BOD Planning Committee meetings. I am currently preparing three Agenda items:

1. Programs to reduce cost for our Volunteers making their weekend experience better.
2. Programs for SOLO to attract more first time participants to our club via advertising and social media.
3. A Program that would provide supplemental income to SCCA that would lower costs for our other programs.

Your thoughts are always solicited. Participate and Communicate. Please let me know how I can help you.

Yours for a better SCCA,

Steve

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