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Information for Area 4 Members

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Dear Area 4 Members,

Here is Newsletter Number 5 and it is loaded with news. I participated May 17 – 20 in an intensive BOD Planning Committee meeting in Colorado and an equally intensive May 30 – June 3 BOD Meeting in Topeka. Let's get right to it:

Road Racing Part 1 – The “Majors”, “Festivals” and Class Realignment

I had an epiphany moment during the Planning Committee meetings concerning the “Majors”. To refresh your memory, the “Majors” will restructure our National Racing Program by staging “Invitational” events for our top 10 National classes and “Festival” events for all remaining National classes. Since almost 70% of our entries come from the top 10 classes, we will be able to provide more track time and a greater competition experience to all of our members by separating the weekends. The “Majors” also clusters competition by racing within Zones (more about that in a minute).

The epiphany was that reducing classes is not as important a topic as once thought. All classes will be well served under the new plan so there is no reason to eliminate any class, except when sizing the Runoffs. Instead, we are working with the CRB to realign car classes. The Touring categories and GT categories come to mind here. Sports Racers will also be realigned (more about that under the CRB section below). A letter addressing the specifics will appear today on the SCCA website.

The BOD voted to approve funding in support of the “Majors” and “Super Tour”. We will be adding staff to improve publicity, support and handle contingency opportunities for our drivers. The SCCA contingency program in the past year was over \$19,000,000. If you are asking “How come I didn't receive any of that?” you have the answer to why we are adding staff. We want these contingency programs to reach more drivers. Racing with the SCCA needs to be a better value and we want our Regions to enjoy profitable events.

“Festival” events feature our classes outside the top 10 by volume. We envision adding specific celebratory events (like the upcoming 50th Anniversary of FV) to these signature happenings. We are also looking at adding Vintage classes to our Festivals and are working with our insurance carriers to allow these racers to easily join us. *The obvious* – we only have so much time at an event. There will be a need to balance the schedule to accommodate all.

Road Racing Part 2 – Zones

We have decided on a phased rollout in 2013 for the “Majors”. To cluster competition in 2013, we will have 3 zones:

- 1) West Coast (including NPDiv and SPDiv);
- 2) Middle (including RMDiv, SWDiv, MidDiv and CenDiv)
- 3) East Coast (including GLDiv, NEDiv and SEDiv).

Each Zone will have 4 to 6 events. So, for us, we will be clustered with two rather large Divisions. The venues need to be within a day's drive for most involved. Likely tracks include Mid-Ohio, VIR, Road Atlanta, Barber, and perhaps even Watkins Glen. Remember, this is an “opt-in” program. I will be working with our Regions to determine who wants to participate. There is a lot of work to do, but I can tell you from the pilot events this year that the drivers really like the new program. We need to make sure our Regions, workers and all of our stakeholders feel the same way. They are winning me over. I now see the positive attributes of the plan clearly. Nothing is perfect, but this is not bad.

Road Racing Part 3 – CRB

As I said, this was a very intensive meeting and we made good progress on a number of issues. Here are the highlights as they relate to the CRB and Rules:

- The BOD voted to amend the Operations Manual and add a 7th member to the CRB. Their workload is enormous (try 4 hour conference calls). I supported this plan to help spread the work and make sure every class is well represented. Tony Ave was added to the CRB.
- The BOD directed the CRB to NOT combine FE and FM. These are both popular classes and can stand independently.
- The BOD directed the CRB to combine CSR and DSR for 2014. We felt the classes have morphed together in recent years and a common set of rules made sense. They now have enough time to equalize these cars.
- GT Drivers organized their own meeting to reorganize their classes. The BOD discussed and endorsed their report and directed the CRB to align GT classes in accordance with the wishes of the participants.
- We discussed adding STL as a separate National Class in 2012 (they currently run within STU). I was pleased that the BOD is getting serious about enforcing a rules season and voted this down. In many parts of the country, the racing season is pretty far along. Changing the rules now would not be fair to our competitors. We will support this for 2013. The Touring classes are being restructured. Again, see the letter on SCCA.com posted today.

Road Racing Part 4 – Helping the Regions

As the “Majors” goes forward, we want to allow more flexibility to Regions and Divisions for scheduling races. I was on a sub-committee to review the GCR and modify sections that impede a Region and Division in their schedule making. We submitted a detailed list of items that, when enacted, will provide more flexibility. This will be vetted by the Executive Stewards, then go to the GCR Committee for proper wording. There is a lot in this package. We have relaxed things like the minimum number of race groups; the requirement to check two additional items in Impound; the Divisional approval procedures for Double Nationals; permission to schedule National races on 3 successive weekends; etc. Read it carefully and if you have any questions, please call me.

The BOD also approved a fundamental change when sanctioning races. Sanctioning fees needed to be paid 45 days before the race. We will now allow Sanctioning Fees to be paid 14 days after the race. This should help the Region’s cash flow and avoid surplus payments based on the type of entries.

SOLO

More entries are received for the National Solo Championships in Nebraska than for the Road Racing Runoffs in Wisconsin. In fact, we get almost double the number of drivers. The report from the SEB says all is well. There was little else on the Solo agenda at these meetings.

SPORTSCAR Magazine

The staff presented detailed information about our contract to publish *Sportscar* magazine. The contract runs through the end of 2013, but we are exploring all of our options now. One thing is certain, the members do not want a digital only magazine and neither do I. We will publish something useful and of value to our members.

Insurance RFP

Insurance is our single largest expense. The BOD was briefed on plans to bid our insurance. We have engaged some of our members with knowledge and experience in the industry to guide us. This is very positive and the BOD was very pleased to see the staff take an aggressive pro-business approach to this important component of our programs.

SCCA Enterprises

Steve Spence from NEDiv was appointed to the Board of SCCA Enterprises to replace the late Andy Porterfield. You don’t replace a man like Andy easily. But Steve will be a welcome addition and has an ideal business background. The BOD was also briefed by Erik Skirmants, President of SCCA Enterprises. There are many upgrades coming for SRF including a new engine program and ECU. A letter from Erik will be issued this week with all the details.

SCCA Foundation Board

The BOD voted to expand the SCCA Foundation Board from 3 to 7 members. We want to see more fund raising for the Foundation and we also want to see more support for the Tire Rack Street Survival Program.

Tiered Membership

After some discussion, we have tabled the Tiered Membership proposal for now. It needs more work to decide the value per level and the impact that an unpredictable income stream would have on planning. Current new programs offering multi-year memberships and renewals, as well as auto renewals, are being utilized by our members.

Website Development for Regions

The BOD believes that every Region needs to communicate with its respective members. In addition, the SCCA website needs to be constantly updated to make sure it is accurate and informational. We have encouraged the staff to develop tools that could be shared by Regions such that every Region would have a website. We have looked at many current websites (including Indianapolis Region, Cincy Region and OVR, I'm told) and have found patterns that seem to work well. The goal is to offer every Region a template for setting up their information and the skills to manage it. We are even looking at offering common hosting services. More on this topic will follow in the future.

Bluegrass Motorsports Park

Discussions with the current owners continue. Brad Poppell and I have spoken many times the past 30 days. While in Colorado, I met with some of the principals at High Plains Raceway and tried to understand how they structured their ownership group (includes SCCA). We need to start moving this ball forward if we intend to race at BMP anytime soon.

Whew. That is quite a bit for one month. As always, if there is anything you need, please drop me an email and I will answer you promptly.

Yours for a better SCCA,

Steve