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Information for Area 4 Members - October, 2012

Dear Area 4 Members,

It has been a very busy month. I took part in a 5 day BOD and Planning Committee meeting in Topeka last week, in which we solidified plans for the Majors and did a lot of other quality work. Here is Newsletter Number 7 with the details:

Road Racing – The “Majors”

I delayed this Newsletter until the announcement was made about the US Majors Tour. You probably have many questions. Let's start with these:

- **“Why the Majors? Why not just promote existing Nationals?”** - The National race program has grown to 86 races in 2012, while the number of drivers participating has remained stable or declined. Some Divisions, west of the Mississippi, have almost no National program. Also, 86 races are too many to sell to a Sponsor. We need a program that provides better competition on the track, and provides our members a better value for the weekend.
- **How will the program start?** – In 2013, certain existing races will have the opportunity to join the Majors program. Butch Kummer has been hired to put the schedule together. He is contacting Regions to see if they want to opt in to the program. Current “Super Tour” events will become part of the Majors. There will be (4) four Conferences across the country. Each Conference will hold (6) six races, so there will be 24 Majors events nationwide.
- **The Schedule** - We are in the Northern Conference which consists of Great Lakes Division and Central Division. Competition will be “clustered” together, but any nationally licensed driver may compete in any Conference. So, we should anticipate that drivers outside our normal area will want to come to Majors events. At this time, the tentative schedule shows:
 - May 25-26 Grattan or MIS (yes, see below)
 - June 1 -2 Mid-Ohio
 - June 15-16 Road America (June Sprints)
 - July 13-14 GingerMan

When you see the entire tentative 24 race schedule, you realize that we are the heart of the schedule. There is a race scheduled out west on Memorial weekend, but no other Major event is scheduled on our dates. Drivers who want to compete over the prime summer months will attend our events.

- **The Events** – All events will be run according to the GCR. There may be exceptions to accommodate the schedule and race groups. Butch has put together many different groupings depending on the race entries, but it is anticipated that events will be Double Nationals. There will be a Series Chief Steward that will stay with the Majors races in a given Conference. When a Region agrees to be part of the Majors, they will agree in writing with the National Office to the responsibilities each will deliver. This includes the infrastructure for live timing and scoring; victory laps, a track announcer, and winners circle ceremonies. We will use the “Phoenix model” where all cars are impounded after the race and the winners circle ceremony will take place while the next race is started. This will maximize on track time for competitors.
- **The Runoffs®** - The Majors will provide a pathway to the Runoffs by providing more points per race than a traditional National and awarding points down to 20 places. Drivers can also get to the Runoffs in 2013 by complying with the GCR (finishing 4 National events, etc.). In 2014, we anticipate getting to the Runoffs through the Majors, or being at the top of your Division. You will be getting the “official “word on this soon.
- **Club Racing** – While the National Office will be more involved with the Majors, we will provide Regions more flexibility in running their local programs. The GCR will be edited, relaxing some of the restrictions on Regions. Divisions can structure Division Championships as they please. Other than that, Club Racing will continue pretty much as it currently stands.

If you will be at Roundtable, I will be more than happy to answer any other Majors questions you may have. Or, email me.

There were many other items of interest this month. Here are the highlights:

Insurance – The BOD was briefed on the status of our insurance RFP. For the first time, we have engaged members of the club with specific expertise in insurance to develop a Request for Proposal. Over 20 insurance companies were solicited to respond to the RFP. Responses are coming in now. Insurance is one of our highest costs in the club and burdens all participants. A lower insurance cost helps everyone. We will select a supplier soon with new (lower) insurance rates to go into effect by the first of the year.

SOLO

Steve Hudson, Chairman of the SEB, briefed the BOD on plans for next season. There are some initiatives for next year that involve sponsorships, contingencies and new participants. They will be made public soon.

Marketing and Branding

Trozzolo Communications Group presented their report on our marketing and Branding initiative. I like the direction we are heading here. You will start seeing some of the product of their work soon.

SportsCar Magazine

Paul Pfanner briefed the BOD about his vision for a new, revised, SportsCar Magazine. It was quite impressive. We are committed to a paper magazine, but we are performing our due diligence by looking at all the alternatives on the table.

Strategic Plan

I was honored to have helped craft a new Strategic Plan for the club. Unlike most plans in industry that are 1, 2 5, and 10 years, the SCCA plan is focused on a dozen items that are achievable within 2 years. President Jeff Dahnert will present this plan at the National Convention

Other, non BOD meeting events:

Michigan International Speedway

MIS has a road course (two actually), but it has not been certified for SCCA use. Thanks to the efforts of Verne Wandell and Dayle Frame, we will be conducting a track review at MIS on Saturday October 27 to determine what will be necessary should the SCCA decide to race there. I am joining the expedition along with GLD Executive Steward Dan Hodge, John Peterson, and a few others. I have asked for and received a commitment from the National Office to fund the expenses for one of our official Track Inspectors to make this visit. Ed Ozment has been hired by Topeka to join us which should expedite the track certification process.

Bluegrass Motorsports Park

I did have some contact with Dr. Poppell Sr. this month. More significantly, we got “track acquisition” into the Strategic Plan to get some traction toward this project. The BOD is very receptive to SCCA track ownership. We will keep at this.

Roundtable

See you November 3 in Columbus, Ohio for the 2012 GLD Roundtable. Information and Registration forms available on the Great Lakes Division website: <http://www.greatlakes-scca.org/files/2012%20Great%20Lakes%20Roundtable.pdf>

As always, if you need any assistance, let me know how I can help.

Yours for a better SCCA,

Steve