

At@Speed



www.sjr-scca.org

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Racing Overcomes Uncertainty and Hardship

Having first piloted a race car in 1988, and having followed it closely for years prior to that, I've seen racing go through many highs and lows. Remember oil embargoes, fuel shortages, and shortened races? Seen the huge impacts on the sport during times of economic slowdown due to reduced sponsorship? Witnessed declining entries in the face of tough economic times at the club level?

There are those of you who remember many of these times. I remember region members Jim and Pat Briody talking about going up to retrieve member Stan Peters and his ruined race car after a wreck at Lime Rock. They borrowed a hearse, yes a big old Cadillac hearse, to tow Stan's rolled car back from Lime Rock (he had driven it up there to race!), and had to stop at every rest area on the way back for gas because gas was rationed then to \$5 per purchase during the height of the 70's Arab oil embargo. Stan slept in the back of hearse, much to the surprise of a NJ Turnpike rest area fuel attendant when Stan woke up while the car was being refueled ...

We are in challenging times today. Persistently high unemployment. The incredible effect that certain small countries in Europe have had on the global financial system by choosing to borrow more than they can pay. The possible effect of the same here in our own country. A nearly complete lack of political leadership, accountability, and responsibility in democracies around the world.

In past times of hardship, racing has paid a big price. Yet today, we see signs of stability and growth. Many of the premier professional series are not only stable, they are growing in terms of financial support and events – think of Formula 1 for instance.

Witness the courage and resilience of our friends at NJMP, who experienced intensely the pain of the US economic slowdown which occurred just as NJMP opened. Yet under the leadership of Lee Brahlin and Brad Scott NJMP emerged quickly and in good health from restructuring proceedings with events at the track unhindered thanks to their acumen and commitment.

Our racing entries and season continued to grow, thanks to the vision and acumen and commitment of our region leadership and the Race Planning Committee.

I want to highlight a series that deserves the spotlight. I have seen many classes ebb and flow over the years, and was fortunate to compete in high points in Improved Touring and Club Ford racing when fields in a single class would fill an entire race group. Imagine days when ITS or ITB or Club Ford would fill an entire race group.

Watching the ProIT race at Watkins Glen on October 9th, it occurred to me that this may be the best SCCA racing series I have ever seen. All season long I watched the TreadZone ProIT series entertain competitors and fans with close, fair, and challenging racing among a diverse group of cars. I can reflect with fond memories on 'hey-days' of various groups, but honestly I don't know if any equaled the spectacle the ProIT series has offered consistently for several years now.

Our John Hainsworth finished 4th OVERALL in the ProIT championship, 3rd in ITS. Think of the names at the top: Marc Cefalo of Planet Miata, Rob Driscoll and Jeff Henderson of AutoTechnic who are a class act if there ever was one, then John Hainsworth and AutoTechnic's ITR champ Rob Thiele. That's as strong a field of champions as I have ever seen, with our man right in the thick of it. These guys raced nose to tail all year long, and did it with style, skill and sportsmanship. Well done my friends.

Here's to racing in 2012, and forget the headlines, it's on ...



Your Humble Scribe, Tom Smith

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So much Racing to Report ...

On October 9th, Laps to Conquer MS and Scuderia Frenzinta Racing (friends-into-racing, get it?!) combined forces to run the *Last Chance 4-hour Enduro* at Watkins Glen in NY. Meg Meyer, David Teal, and Don Colanero drove Meg's ITC Honda Civic, and Val Heun, Brian Heun, and Mike Allenbaugh drove Val's ITR Honda S2000. Meg filed the following report:

"For the Team Laps to Conquer MS Civic, the weekend was awesome! I drove first in qualifying, then Dave, then Don got a few laps in qualifying us 32 of 37 cars which actually was a great result - let's face it, ITC is the slowest class in the enduro.

Don drove the first stint, very consistent. He came in a little early due to a faulty gas gage, and we had some trouble on the pit stop which ended up being 11 minutes long. I went out under full course yellow and never saw the incident which caused it, only to learn later ...

I ran consistently on our pace, and I have to say it was great to be back behind the wheel of my car and racing again. Time flew by, and when I noticed the car was beginning to stumble as it got low on fuel, and came in for David to take over for the last stint and to change a left front tire.

Unfortunately when I got out of the car I learned that the Scuderia Frenzinta Racing Honda S2000 had been the cause of the full course yellow. Late in her stint, Val had spun and the rear of the car backed into the wall, with just enough damage to be done for the day. That was a huge disappointment not only for SFR but for our whole effort.

Back on the track, David was blisteringly fast – I have to slow him down before he breaks the ITC track record I have held at Watkins Glen for several years now! We finished 1st in class and 22nd overall, earning us each checkered flags a Glenora Alpine White wine."

Thanks Meg for the great update, and here's the gang, with photo courtesy of Geoffrey Hall at HotLap Photo:



The 2011 Jersey Road Racing Classic (JRRC, aka 'The Jerk') was a tremendous success. Any time you get 156 entries for a late October race in the Northeast, you are doing something right, so thanks to all the organizers on our Race Planning Committee and to NJMP for making this possible. Two region members set lap records – Pete Seabrook broke into the 1:04's in Formula B and Lee Brahin into the 1:01's in CSR. That's some serious speed folks – over 110 mph average speed around Lightning.

We had so many region drivers with great results it won't all fit in this column so I'll just touch on highlights.

The Spec Racer Ford field was intense – Steve Thomas, Greg Falcone, Kyle Robertson, and Mike Thomas all battled for the lead and finished 2nd-5th respectively when the weekend was over.

Our National Champion Matthew DiRenzo won in Formula Ford and Mike Allenbaugh ended up with checkers in F500. We were all happy to see Alex Mayer and David Lapham both walk away from the very scary accident they had battling for the lead in Turn 1.

It had to warm the hearts of big-metal Mopar muscle fans to see James and Robert Benson out there with their vintage Dodge V8 iron, finishing 2nd and 3rd in SPO.

John Hainsworth schooled them in ITS leading the whole weekend. It was awesome to see John Redden part 3 (aka Johnny 3 Sticks, or Woody) running so well throughout the weekend, and to see he and his dad John Redden (aka Chief) running together near the end. Their 8th and 9th place finishes do not do justice to the pace of Dual Red Racing this weekend.

In the very fast wings and things field, the lovely and talented Lee Brahin set a new CSR track record at over 110mph average on his way to the win, and Joe Tauro battled him the whole weekend taking Formula Atlantic honors. Pete Seabrook won in Formula B, setting a new track record in FB, with brother Ivin just behind. The Seabrook's are showing great pace so early in their SCCA careers – as former go-kart racers, it shows the value of starting early to learn our craft.

Jason Rabe went very quickly indeed in Formula Mazda on his way to a victory over Bruce 'The Rocket' Crocket.

Tosh Desai returned to competition after a season with limited running (we miss you Tosh) and he stuck his Spec Miata in 5th in this very competitive class.

And a special shout out for Ed DelMonico, who ran as high as 3rd in Club Ford before packing it up with minor mechanical problems. We're fortunate to have he and wife Rose join us, with Ed running the old-school Avon treaded FF tires, and smiling from ear to ear every time he gets a chance to bring his beloved Formula Ford out to race.

Remember, above are just the highlights, there were many more region members out there racing. This is truly a golden age for racing in South Jersey.

Our 2010 Rookie of the Year Forrest Hull in his first year of Pro Racing

By Brandon Hull

Following our last report, the F1600 Championship Pro Series rotated to Lime Rock Park in Northwestern Connecticut, where they don't race on Sundays, and start the racing day with 2 minutes of silence in memory of Paul Newman. Oh, and finally the F1600 Championship Pro Series is at a track that Forrest has raced on before! We prepared with high hopes.

The weather forecast was clear and cool with no threat of rain, which was another hopeful sign as we prepared. The car itself required a new front left corner after the round at Mid-Ohio. When you hit oil at 120mph, even if all you hit is a row of traffic cones serving as brake markers, it is enough to bend the control arms.

We also had the top end of the engine refreshed, and Matthew (Matthew DiRenzo of DiRenzo Racing) completed work on some trick new bodywork modifications. Other than a single on track session at NJMP in August, Forrest had not sat in the car since the events at Mid-Ohio.

To cut to the chase: in race 1, he qualified 5th, set fastest lap, and finished in 4th after running as high as second. In race 2, Forrest qualified 4th, got set back by a wreck directly ahead of him while running 3rd, then crashed the car at the top of the uphill with two laps remaining as he was charging to catch up.

For once we had working video which is available on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtAEzHxzDhw>.

Forrest was the best on the track under braking, and very accurate and fast in the high speed corners. We could not defeat understeer in the slower corner, and ultimately this was his downfall as he dropped two wheels which put him several seconds behind the lead cars. However, when you consider the competitors he was facing, I can say with an enormous amount of fatherly pride that I was proud of the kid for how fast he was and how he conducted himself in tough competition.



Our 2010 Rookie of the Year Forrest Hull on track and in the paddock preparing. Photos courtesy of the F1600 Formula F Championship series and justifiably proud father Brandon Hull!

For race 2 we had very high hopes. Forrest was starting from the second row. The series allows you six tires per event, so we had opted to mount two new slicks on the front in order to combat the car's slow speed understeer. We had already shown we were as fast as the front row guys. Unfortunately, racing fate struck a few laps in. We were running in 3rd when the leaders tangled. Forrest had no where to go, and managed to avoid being involved in the contact, but spun while avoiding the incident and the car stalled.

Much of the field had passed by the time he got the car refired. He continued to drive a great race, setting second fastest lap of the race, but pushing too hard several laps from the end he overcooked the high speed uphill turn and put the car into the tire wall.

Fortunately Forrest was uninjured except for a few bruises, but he was very disappointed with the DNF result. I regret not having radioed him during those final laps to let him know just how few laps were left and that he had made it back to 5th, which would have been a fine finish. Perhaps he wouldn't have been pushing so hard if I had given him the information. But hindsight is 20/20.

Thanks as always to Matthew DiRenzo who has completely re-engineered and continuously improved our 1998 Van Diemen such that it is capable of running with a beating some of the best F1600 cars on the planet.



South Jersey Region's Solo II Program Challenges You to Master Bader

After a lengthy sabbatical as we searched for a new site for our Solo II (aka Autocross) program, the 2011 South Jersey Region Solo series has returned with a vengeance to run at Bader Field in Atlantic City.

Our most recent event saw 53 cars enjoy 8 runs each. That's a whole-lotta-runs. Well done folks. Detailed results are available at www.scca-sjr.org/solo.

The next event is November 13.

From the Atlantic City Expressway East, take Exit 2 toward Ventnor/Margate/Longport/Hilton/Tropicana. Merge onto Albany Avenue (which is 322 and 40). Bader Field is on the left. Entrance is by the Flyers Skate Zone on Route 40.

Solo II is an excellent way to enjoy competition and driving in a safe, fun environment. A course is designed using cones set up in a big open lot. Cars run one at a time against the clock through the course. Each participant gets several runs during the course of the day, and the best times are used to determine class winners as well as winners selected using an index of performance formula.

It is a great way to enjoy your car at speed for low cost.

And Bader Field is proving to be a fantastic facility for Solo II.

A typical day consists of Registration between 8-9:30am. Registration fee is \$35 for SCCA members, and \$50 for non-members including their \$15 temporary membership. This \$15 temporary membership can be applied towards a full SCCA membership within 60 days.

Technical inspection is from 8:45-9:45am. Details are available on our website www.sjr-scca.org via the Solo link.

Come out and enjoy the fun!

Dave Rose Scholarship available for March 2012 Drivers' School

Dave Rose is a talented driver and racecar engineer who lost his battle with cancer at age 36 in 1994. He is a dear friend and inspiration to many. His family bequeathed a scholarship in his name that the region and JD King have safeguarded to this day. We are proud to announce that we will be offering the Dave Rose Scholarship to a lucky recipient or recipients for our 2012 Drivers School. The winner or winners will receive free entry for the school. Interested entrants should send an email to SJRAtSpeed@comcast.net. Applicants will be evaluated based on the standards Davey epitomized. He was instrumental in making it possible for many people to race, including your humble scribe early in his career. He was always there to help drivers, teams, and the region. He was a beloved and genuine character who wouldn't miss chance to be part of a racing effort. And he loved to drive whenever the opportunity presented itself.

And speaking of good friends and racers who not only make racing possible for all of us, but who are also fierce competitors, here is a picture of the Laps to Conquer MS / Scuderia Frenzinta Racing endurance racing team enjoying a pint at the famous bar at Seneca Lodge in Watkins Glen. Fay Teal had hoped to run into Stirling Moss but ...



Pine Barrens Express Rally Nov 19th – Don't Miss It!

You need to be part of this event.

This fall, one of the most exciting SCCA Rally events in the US will have its 14th annual running, the 2nd under the auspices of our region.

The Pine Barrens Express, or PBX, is a completely unique event.

PBX combines the time-speed-distance challenge of traditional road rally events - rewarding precise car control, navigation, timekeeping, and problem-solving – with the incredibly twisting, rugged, and endlessly-varied terrain of New Jersey's treasured jewel, the Pine Barrens.

You know you are offered a truly unique rally experience when the flyer states "The Pine Barrens Express 2011 features over 150 miles, mostly on unpaved roads. The event will be run in both daylight and dark. Cars entered should have an above-average amount of ground clearance. Registration will be capped at 70 cars, so pre-register early."

A rally. 150 miles. Mostly unpaved roads. Need ground clearance. Only first 70 cars accepted.

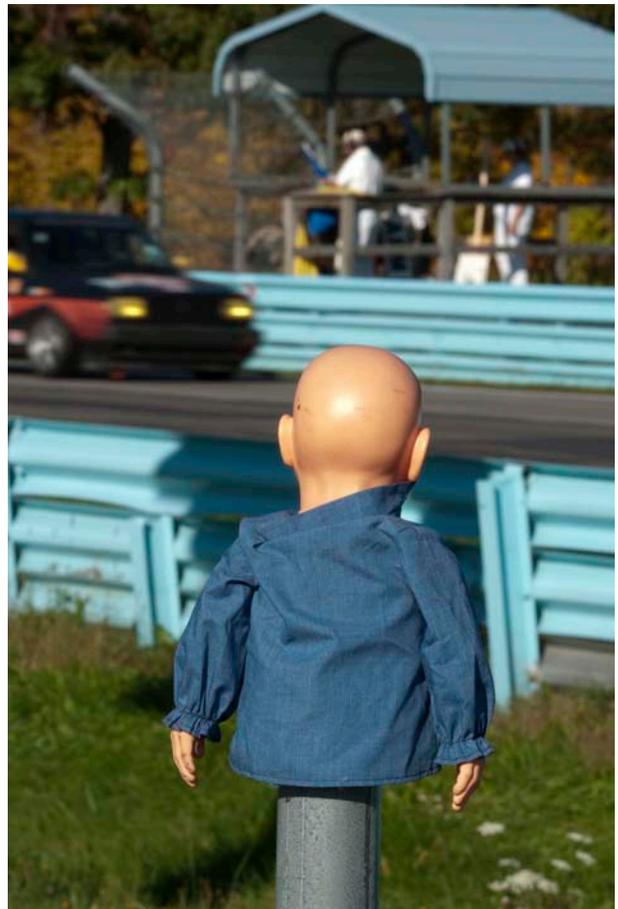
Holy Understatement Batman.

Whether you enter, volunteer to help the organizers, or just come out to take in this remarkable one of a kind event, this is an experience not to be missed.

Registration opens at 12:30pm on Saturday November 19th at the Howard Johnson Hotel on the White Horse Pike in Hammonton NJ. The first car is off at 2:01PM. All cars are expected to finish by 9pm, unless the Jersey Devil snatches them along the way – he is a rascally Devil to be sure.

Jim Wakemen Sr. is the Registrar. Contact him at jwakemen43@aol.com or 856 228 9249 for inquiries.

Where oh where did Little Man go? He went to Watkins Glen to observe the art and science of Flagger and Communications. Evidently, he also earned pole position. Check out Little Man's campaign to earn South Jersey Region's Little Worker of The Year Award for 2012 as we enter next season ... and don't forget to rub sunscreen on his head if you see him. Photo courtesy of the artistic genius of Geoffrey Hall/HotLap Photo





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Web site: www.sjr-scca.org

Member meeting: November 9 @ Uno
Chicago Grill, Route 73 Maple Shade.

Solo II Autocross at Bader Field November
13

*Don't Miss – Pine Barrens Express Rally
November 19*



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