

the ***Snarling Exhaust***

June 2008

In this issue:

Columns by Club Officers!

Solo Results!

Calendar of Events!

NEDiv Championship Aug. 8-10!



Monthly Membership Meeting:

Wednesday, June 11, 7:00 PM

American Legion Hall, Liverpool

A publication of the Central New York Region of the Sports Car Club of America



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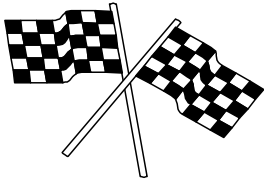
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CNY Region Contacts

Regional Executive

Mike Donofrio
315.451.7169
miked@cny-scca.com

Secretary

Rex Franklin
Gosolo2@aol.com

Activities Chair

Mike Mollura
315.453.2032
mikem@twcny.rr.com

Points Keeper

Lori Newcomb
315.635.4894

Parliamentarian

Lee Hidy

Webmaster

Evan Haas
haas.evan@gmail.com

Rally Chair

Frank Beyer
315.676.2021 X222

Solo Program Chair

Mark Bizzozero
315.247.8588
boz998@twcny.rr.com

Solo Board

Tina Reeves
585.429.7613

Jay Cartini

Jason Farr

Mike Donofrio

Anthony Donofrio

Assistant R.E.

Jon Coffin
315.469.9946

Treasurer

Jay Cartini
315.676.4776
jpcartini@aol.com

Membership Chair

Joe Kramer

Merchandise

Rex Franklin
Gosolo2@aol.com

Flagging/Communications

Mick Levy
315.673.0891
mickanddot@juno.com

Competition/Licensing

Joseph Zingaro

Newsletter Editor

Karl Hughes
315.687.5799
khughes@cnyira.com

Area 10 Director

John Sheridan
John12009@aol.com



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Sports Car Club of America

the

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CNY Region website: www.cny-scca.com

SCCA National office: 1.800.770.2055

The Snarling Exhaust is published 11 or 12 times per year as a service to the membership of the Central New York Region of the Sports Car Club of America, Inc.

The deadline for submissions is the 25th of the month. This deadline still applies to the R.E., even though he's busy working on one of the Miatas.

All editorial opinions expressed in this publication are solely the opinions of the author, and are not necessarily representative of the policies of the Central New York Region or of SCCA.

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Graphics assistance courtesy of Alex Fairbank.

Cover photo by "toneloc1958". Rich Mogle heads off the starting line in his "Ram" A-Mod Special.

From the Editor:

After I put the finishing touches on the latest issue of the Snarling, I print out a copy and browse through it to look for typos, goofs, and other Bad Stuff. I also look at it to see how the photos and graphics come across, whether the content is "fun", and how it represents the club.

I try to make sure that there is plenty of "member" content each month, whether it be articles, photos, results, or op-ed "columns".

One thing that stands out for me is the predominance of Solo-related content. This is not due to an autocross bias on the part of this editor, but rather because most of the time that's what I have.

I'd like to see this balance change, but I need your help. If you attend the membership meetings regularly, you know that club members are doing other things besides autocross. Unfortunately, much of this interesting information on who is racing where, how they did, how the event was, etc., doesn't make it to the pages of the Snarling.

Add to that all the members who are out there driving, working events, and so on, and don't make it to the meetings, and this means a lot of material which this editor ought to be seeing.

So, once again, I'm appealing to you club members out there: Send stuff in to me! I would love to have articles about racing, course working, rallies, rallycross, or any other club-related activities you're involved in.

Send me photos, or post them on the club website in the photo gallery where I can cherry-



Bob Purgason photo

pick them for the newsletter. Help an editor out, here, people! Share your stories and photos with the club!

As I've said before, this club is about the people, and this newsletter exists to communicate with the people about the people. With more and different stories, the newsletter will only be more interesting and more fun to read.

Be seeing you,
-Karl



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Funny Fuel

From the R.E., Mike Donofrio



As gas reaches \$4.00 a gallon and diesel reaches \$5.00 I can't help but think of alternatives. Not only for your daily commute but also in the world of motor sports.

The IRL has ethanol, ALMS have the Audi diesels, and there is the VW TDI cup. A century's length of motor sports has proven that one form of racing or another has been a proving ground for concepts that change the way we drive. More appropriately this testing changes what we drive.

Many manufacturers have tested their equipment on the race track. Not just for notoriety, but most importantly to test performance and reliability. As many have now heard of or seen the Tesla Roadster, a spin off of a Lotus Elise with battery power. I can't help but wonder how long it will be before we see race teams changing batteries during pit stops instead of fuel. Before too long you will find powered by Duracell bumper stickers instead of Sunoco.

Gas electric hybrid technology in motor sports may not be nearly as green as in street use, but it does have some degree of practicality. Electric power could be used during pit entry, exit, and safety car periods. However I am surprised that diesel has not been more popular even in club racing applications, or solo. The low rpm torque would pay off in tight corners.

The Tesla Roadster cup would be the series to see, if it existed. 30 minute races, zero fuel consumption, and max torque at 0 rpm's. The

only downside is the only noise you hear would be tires.

The evolution of the automobile and auto racing has created a worldwide phenomenon. Over 100 years of the automobile and I have a feeling the next 10 may be the most interesting. I am just glad we are here to experience it.



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Ramblings from Rex



As most of you have heard by now, on the first weekend in May Karl Hughes, Jon Coffin and I traipsed down to race up the hill at the Hershey Vintage Hillclimb. Nice drive, low-key event, everyone friendly, decent weather. Karl and Jon were driving Karl's race-prepared BMW 2002 and I was driving, of course, my old faithful Midget.

Saturday was beautiful, warm, just right. The road up the hill was decent, mostly smooth, some bumps, except a 4-5" dropoff at the edge of the pavement. If you dropped a wheel off, it was "Katie bar the door"! Nothing but rocks and trees. No problem! We all had uneventful runs, then enjoyed a catered cookout in the paddock. We had a good night's sleep and awoke to find it had rained during the night, although not a real hard one.

When we got to the track, we found it was damp but drying out. I made one easy run and decided not to chance any attempts at a fast run and so I put my car on the trailer. On Saturday I had the fastest run of the day and didn't think that anyone would beat my "King of the Hill" status.

Karl and Jon made several runs, the track had effectively dried out and they were having fun. Karl was making his last run when the "other shoe dropped"! At the absolute fastest spot at the end of the straight approaching a slight right and then a hairpin left, he let off the gas and his throttle struck wide open! So with locked brakes, foot on clutch, engine screaming, he found the only spot on the whole course he could miss the big trees, of course it was up a stream bed, a very rocky stream bed, with the smallest rocks basketball-sized, and mostly bigger, but they stopped the car, right side up. Karl was ok, no injuries at all. Fortunately, he was experienced enough, quick thinking enough, and reactive enough to turn a potentially big accident to a no injury, relatively minor vehicle damage event. The Bimmer looks great from the

bumper up!

A slight change of subject. As most of you know, I'm no

technophobe (whatever that is). Computers! Bleaugh! Just a passing fad, like hoola hops! Cell Phones! As bad as my computer, and not much different. Little tiny buttons, 6 million functions, 600 pages of instructions and it even takes pictures! Why go to all the effort to put names and phone numbers in the stinking thing, then have to figure out how to scroll through for who you want to call! If God had meant you to do that, he wouldn't have made little pieces of paper to put in your wallet! It's no damage to my hands to write out this article, only to get carpal tunnel syndrome entering it into the computer! I'm sure there's some master plan at work!

As everyone can see, the Snarling has been late for the last 2 or 3 months. I blamed Mike Donofrio because he mails them; Mike blamed Karl Hughes for getting the disk to the printer late; Karl blamed me and Mike for getting our articles to him late. So --- Karl, Mike and I got together and realized who were the real culprits! We decided to put the blame on Mike Mollura and Bruce Parker! So - now you know!!



SCCA RoadRallySM



Exhaust Pipe Dreams

From the Assistant R.E., Jon Coffin

When I dream, I'm usually looking ahead, imagining what might be in the future, not reviewing what was in the past, and certainly trying to stay away from what might have been.

But looking back sometimes is fun and fine with me. Certainly the older I get, the longer I've had to have been fast. You've heard that cliché, "The older I get, the faster I was." Looking back, I've owned my silver Rabbit GTI from new, taking delivery in early January, 1983, and this is the latest in the year since then that I've put plates on it.

So I haven't driven it yet this season, but I will soon. There's an autocross weekend at the old Seneca Army Depot the end of June; the weekend before that, the Sports Car Club of Vermont is running at the big go-kart track in Morristown, and I'm instructing for the BMW CCA at Watkins Glen the middle of the month. I'd like to run at all those places.

I just got some new pads from RACESHopper.com, good source, good price. I've gotta get some tires, and I'll be shopping at the worst time for tires, high demand. I've done this to myself before; how come I haven't learned yet?? So I'll be able to stop, and stick, how 'bout the go?

Well, I'll be going about as fast as I have before, but I have to accept it probably won't be faster. And, many others will be going faster than they have been, as they learn to drive better, and the cars are faster. It's amazing how much more powerful and better-handling (some) cars keep getting.

And, tracks, too! Have you seen the work done at



- Jane Quinn photo

Cherry Valley Motorsports Park yet? The new operators are following their dreams with action and money. The place is much improved (although I'll long have a soft spot for Junior's enthusiasm allowing us to keep running there.)

We'll be running at CVMP July 20th, and that's something for many of us to look forward to. And, congrats to Rex Franklin for his (again) "King of the Hill" runs at the Hershey Vintage Hillclimb in Pennsylvania in May. I'll leave dreaming of being as good a driver this year as Rex Franklin is now, even though he's much older than I am.

-Jon Coffin



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Membership Korner

From the Membership Chair, Joe Kramer

It's been a month or two since my last membership column, so some of this is catch-up and some of it is new. One of the big changes this year is the Weekend Membership program. In order to compete in SCCA-sanctioned Solo or to participate as a club racing crew member, non-members are required to purchase a weekend membership for \$15. Up to 2 weekend membership fees - \$30 - can be applied to a full SCCA membership if the weekend member decides to join later. This means that the cost for a non-member to participate in a CNY Solo event is now \$35 (\$20 entry fee and \$15 Weekend Membership fee). A side effect of this new policy is that the non-member entry fee for our Solo events has been eliminated since every entrant must be a member.

OK, now for the monthly membership content. First, let me welcome to the CNY region the following new members:

New Members:

- Remy Audette
- Francois Audette
- Mathieu Audette
- William Murtha
- James Quattro III and Amanda Quattro
- Adam J. Earle
- Daniel Maschinsky
- Dave Maschinsky
- Dunstin Bennet Ehrlich
- Timothy David Slusarczyck
- David Michael Mushynsky
- Mario Villeneuve



- Sebastien Durand
- Jacques Cadorette
- Daniel Wayne Modesitt
- Chris P. Wysokowski
- Daniel J. Cech
- Matt Brown
- Nathaniel Steele
- Andrew Schmitt
- William Meyer
- Stephen Lerman

And now for some significant anniversaries:

Anniversaries (through 5/2008):

- 5 Years:
 - George Nagle
- 10 Years:
 - Tina Kelly Reilly, Jamie Reilly, and Derek Reilly
 - Marie T. Zingaro
 - Richard A. Mogle
 - Art Gallinger
- 15 Years (or 35 or 40 or whatever):
 - Rex Franklin
- 25 Years:
 - Hubert A. Minor

Region Events Calendar

May 14	Membership meeting
May 18	Solo - Fairgrounds
June 8	Solo - TBD
June 11	Membership meeting
July 20	Solo - Cherry Valley
July 9	Membership meeting
August 3	Solo - Fairgrounds
Sept 6	Solo - Cherry Valley Night
Oct 5	Solo - Cherry Valley



Membership meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at the Liverpool American Legion Post 188 205 Cypress St. in the village of Liverpool

Getting' Schooled

By Joe Kramer

I had been struggling with the Big Bend turn at Lime Rock Park all morning. I'd either miss the first apex and nail the second or nail the first and miss the second or miss both badly or...oh, well. This was a school after all. I was here to learn. It was 1975 and my friend Steve Johnson, race car driver and builder, had given me the opportunity to learn what this racing thing was all about by allowing me to take his nationally competitive F-Production Spitfire to an SCCA driver's school. I'm still not sure what possessed Steve to make me an offer I couldn't refuse. But here I was, at the wheel of a for-real race car on a for-real road racing course.

And here was the Big Bend coming up fast again. Nobody in front; check the mirrors; nobody behind; watch the markers 200, 150 - BRAKE-TURN - Nailed first apex...drifting wide...going to be way late on second apex unless...

And just that quickly blue tire smoke was curling up around the car as I locked up the brakes, looking directly back into the exit of ol' Big Bend as the Spitfire spun off the track backwards. It was at about this time that I remembered one of the main points Steve had made before setting me loose in his race car.

"Don't lift off the gas. Once you get into a turn, don't lift. You can accelerate. You can feather it through the turn. But don't lift your right foot or that thing will swap ends faster than you could believe." But, of course, for the smallest fraction of a second I had forgotten and lifted just a bit trying to hit that second apex.

The car came to rest in the grass on the outside of the turn. I got the engine fired up (it had stalled when I locked up the brakes during the spin), and got the car turned around and ready to re-enter

the course. I saw the flagger who would wave me out at the proper time. He gave me the count: 3-2-1-GO. I dumped the clutch and got back out onto the track. There were other cars near me, so it was hard to hear the Spit's engine. I got through the left-hander of the esses when it felt like I was losing power. Damn! I had forgotten to

out of second and the engine was over-revving badly. So I shifted and kept going, hoping that I hadn't done any serious damage. Steve had to drive this car tomorrow in a race. I finished the session without further incident and headed for the paddock.

"I spun it in Big Bend", I confessed to Steve as I got the helmet off and unbuckled the harness, my hands still shaking from the rush of adrenaline.

"I know. I saw you", he said. "What happened?"

"I lifted", I said, ready for the admonishment that was sure to come, hoping that he'd let me continue driving. "That'll teach you", was all he said. And with that I headed off to join the other drivers for our instructor's critique as Steve and our friend Buddy Norton tended to the car. I didn't mention

the over-revved engine. And although the Spitfire had a 'tell-tale' tachometer that held its highest reading and I know that Steve must have noticed it, he never said a word. But when I returned I stole a glance at the tach: the tell-tale had been reset.

Steve had given me instructions or, more accurately, restrictions for driving his car at Lime Rock:

1. Don't go over 7200 rpm in 4th gear.
2. Only pass on the downhill leading into the main straight or on the main straight itself.



Membership meeting minutes

(Courtesy of Rex Franklin)

CNY General Membership Meeting Held on May 14, 2008 at American Legion in Liverpool, NY

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm by RE Mike Donofrio.

RE - Discussed new track layout at Cherry Valley Kart Track.

Asst RE - Jon Coffin - not present.

Treasurer - Jay Cartini - not present.

Solo - Mark Bizzarro - April Solo a success, good turnout, good weather, good course. Possible Solo site at ESM High School.

Secretary - Rex Franklin - Nothing to report.

Activities - Mike Mollurra - August 13th - Picnic/Meeting at Onondaga Lake Yacht Club. 50/50 Raffle.

F & C - Mike Levy - NY to Beijing race delayed due to troubles in China. RSI may boycott SCCA non-pro events at the Glen due to an insurance dispute.

Old Biz - None

New Biz - Discussed a possible solo trials event at Seneca Army Depot.

Moved and Seconded to close meeting at 8:35 pm.

Submitted by Rex Franklin, Secretary.

The Northeast Divisional Championships will be held at Seneca Army Depot on August 8-10th. Information regarding on-line registration, lodging, event schedule, entry fee, etc will be made available as soon as possible.

Regrettably, these dates conflict with some regional events and in particular the Al Holbert Memorial in Philly Region. It is my understanding that in the future there will be new incentives to host the divisionals in the Northeast and that the date will be set at an earlier time and will be better prepared and better supported.

In the meantime, we hope that competitors from areas that are not facing scheduling conflicts will attend the Northeast Divisional Championship event which is being planned with an eye toward maximum enjoyment of the attendees.

Sincerely,

Jim Garry

<http://www.nedivsolo.org/08divisionals/>



Solo Results

Final Results, #2 - Autox #2 - Fairgrounds - May 18, 2008

Total Registered: 60, with Times: 57

'A Stock' - Total Entries: 3 Trophies: 1 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	45	Semper, James	2008 Honda S2000		41.417	40.982	40.335	40.335
					40.683			-
2	47	Chris, Wysokowski	2002 S2000		41.449	42.159	41.551	41.449
					43.052			1.114
6	7	Stempowski, James	Honda S2000	CNY				DNS
'B Stock' - Total Entries: 2 Trophies: 1 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	69	Lerman, Stephen	88 Porsche 911		43.234+1	43.970	45.379	43.970
					45.627			-
2	76	Eichelberger, Shaun	2007 Mazda RX8		OFF	46.816	48.046	46.816
					46.867			2.846
'C Stock' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	83	Donofrio, Mike	Mazda Miata	Silver CNY	39.669	39.550	39.680	39.550
					41.633			-
'D Stock' - Total Entries: 4 Trophies: 2 Car Color Region Times Total								
1Tm	68	Izyk, John	2003 WRX WR	Blue CNY	40.440	41.675	51.640+2	40.440
					52.671			-
2T	274	Shebat, Cole	Mazda Mazdaspeed3	black	42.892	41.702	43.310	41.702
					43.691			1.262
3	1	Dolan, Chris	1998 Mazdaspeed 3		47.970	44.676	43.752	42.732
					42.732			1.030
4	247	Tracey, Ashley	2008 MazdaSpeed 3		49.104+1	44.057+1	OFF	44.774
					44.774			2.042
'E Stock' - Total Entries: 2 Trophies: 1 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	11	Cuda, Greg	1990 Mazda Miata		53.866	50.186	47.961	47.109
					47.109			-
2	17	Cuda, Susan	1990 Mazda Miata		76.934+DNF	56.680+DNF	54.097+DNF	DNF
					53.517+DNF			47.109
'F Stock' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	88	Hampton, Coty	1994 Ford Thunderbird		49.298	47.270	46.412	46.412
					47.091			-
'G Stock' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	14	Elve, Charlie	Mini cooper s	red/white CNY	42.238	41.626	40.608	40.185
					40.185			-
'H Stock' - Total Entries: 10 Trophies: 4 Car Color Region Times Total								
1T	22	Weaver, Jeff			41.968	40.721	40.888	40.335
					40.335			-
2T	711	Bizzozero, Mark	Mini Cooper	Red CNY	41.390	41.005	43.204	41.005
								0.670
3T	3	Hargrave, Michael	06 Mazda 3		43.425	44.454	42.525	42.525
								1.520
4T	38	Quattro, James	Toyota Yaris	Blue CNY	44.710	44.498	44.384+1	44.498
					46.571+2			1.973
5	34	Bhagalia, Zarosh	1999 VW Beetle		45.205	45.017	44.663+1	44.875
					44.875			0.377
6	67	Hunt, Peter	1992 Honda Civic		536.103	45.630	44.941	44.941
					47.018			0.066
7	8	Sky, David	01 Honda Civic		45.300	50.546+DNF	45.106	45.008
					45.008			0.067
8	167	Hunt, Bradfurd	1992 Honda Civic		46.057	46.529	OFF	46.057
					49.060			1.049
9	137	Mushynsky, Dave	2008 Scion xD		47.736	48.624	47.692	47.430
					47.430			1.373
10	4	Bhagalia, Ashley	1999 Volkswagon Beetle		51.865	48.249	49.531	48.249
								0.819

Results continued...

Results continued from Page 11

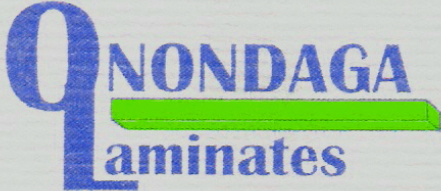
'BSP' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1T	13	Ehrlich, Dustin	Subaru Sti Blue	CNY	40.727	41.813	40.606	39.896	
					39.896			-	
'CSP' - Total Entries: 2 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1T	8	Newton, Scott	Porsche 944 Red	CNY	40.022	40.199+9	40.004	39.392	
					39.392			-	
2	98	Cosentino, Joseph L.	1989 Honda CRX Si		44.495	43.618	OFF	43.618	
					44.042			4.226	
'ESP' - Total Entries: 3 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1T	92	Hudson, Craig	Subaru WRX Red	CNY	39.322	37.579	40.160	37.579	
					41.034			-	
2	9	Sauginas, Justin	2006 Subaru WRX		40.122	44.338	41.929	41.255	
					42.311	41.419	42.205	2.543	
3	75	Brown, Matt	Subaru WRX Black	CNY	41.875			41.419	
								1.297	
'F Prep' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1T	47	Darminio, Mike	1973 Porsche 914		45.175	45.390		45.175	
								-	
'A Mod' - Total Entries: 2 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1Tm	4	Mogle, Richard	2006 Ram		43.785	43.661	42.629	42.615	
								-	
2 m	14	Mogle, Caye Kart			61.128	60.093	48.668	47.519	
					47.519			4.904	
'D Mod' - Total Entries: 2 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1Tm	22	Franklin, Rex	1962 MG Midget		38.299	36.941		36.941	
								-	
2 m	122	Franklin, Tammy	1962 MG Midget		44.479	41.042		41.042	
								4.101	
'F Mod' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1Tm	8	Quinn, Michelle						DNS	
'Street Touring (Tire)' - Entries: 3 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1T	168	Hirschey, Pete	Impreza RS 2.5 White	CNY	41.950	41.562	42.671	41.562	
					45.280			-	
2	1	Stout, Ryan	99 Subaru Impreza 2.5		43.414	42.396	42.345+1	42.396	
					42.942			0.834	
3	68	Sawyer, Leo	Subaru 2.5 RS Yellow	CNY	44.162	45.559	43.374	43.374	
								0.978	
'Street Mod' - Entries: 5 Trophies: 2									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1T	79	Gravius, Mark	Camaro Black	CNY	39.714	38.935	43.147	38.935	
					42.509			-	
2T	23	Slusarczyk, Tim	VW GTI Black	CNY	41.947+1	39.856	57.949+DNF	39.856	
					40.150			0.921	
3	42	Hutchinson, Richard	Impreza WRX STi	Grey FLR	41.307	41.420	40.293+1	40.648	
					40.648			0.792	
4	462	Sgarlata, Robert	Subaru SVX Pearl White	CNY	42.074	41.874+1	42.439	42.074	
					43.191+1			1.426	
5	83	Cech, Dan			44.100	45.247	43.826	43.714	
					43.714			1.640	
'F125 Kart' - Entries: 1 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1Tm	11	Cartini, Jay	Kart		41.454	40.410	39.036	37.615	
					37.615			-	
'Jr Kart 1' - Total Entries: 2 Trophies: 1									
			Car Color	Region	Times			Total	
1Tm	3	Cartini, Hollie	Kart		46.505	45.297	46.114	45.297	
					45.383			-	
2	2	Cartini, Halie	Kart		63.972	61.833	56.423	56.423	
					79.935			11.126	

Results continued...

Results continued from Page 12

Jr Kart 2' - Total Entries: 1 Trophies: 1 Car Color			Region	Times		Total	
1Tm	181	Mogle, Jonathan	Kart	44.775	43.562	46.099	43.562
				43.998			-
'Novice (pax)' - Entries: 11 Trophies: 4 Car Color			Region	Times		Total	
1T	HS	89 Hunt, David	1997 Subaru Legacy	44.034	43.419	42.898+1	34.387
				44.721			-
2T	STS	28 Earle, Adam	Mazda RX-8 Black CNY	44.118	42.571	42.459	34.418
				42.179			0.031
3T	HS	189 Hunt, Jeff	1997 Subaru Legacy	46.419	44.508	45.762	35.250
				45.870			0.832
4T	STU	15 Devendorf, Matt	2008 Subaru WRX	45.637	44.135	43.428	35.499
				42.770			0.249
5	AS	7 Maschinsky, Dave	2006 Honda 2006	43.838+1	42.544	43.385	35.822
				43.027			0.323
6	SM	21 Lopez, Matt	1991 Nissan 240sx	50.888	45.021	42.942	36.774
				42.761			0.952
7	ES	46 Maschinsky, Daniel	Toyota MR2 White CNY	45.125	45.344	46.535	36.867
				46.159			0.093
8	STS	99 Koch, Albert		48.559	47.142	47.247	38.467
				49.490			1.600
9	AS	688 Suchon, Edward	1988 Chevrolet Corvette	55.115	47.381	47.184+1	39.894
				49.112			1.427
10	HS	77 Alberts, Laura		54.564	54.954	53.854	42.224
				53.314			2.330

Top Times Of Day	Time	Class	Car Num	Driver
Raw time	36.941	EM	22	Franklin, Rex
Stock	39.550	CS	83	Donofrio, Mike
Street Prepared	37.579	ESP	92	Hudson, Craig
Prepared	45.175	FP	47	Darminio, Mike
Modified	36.941	EM	22	Franklin, Rex
Touring	41.562	STS	168	Hirschey, Pete
Street Modified	38.935	SM	79	Gravius, Mark
Kart	37.615	F125	11	Cartini, Jay
Junior Kart	43.562	FJ2	181	Mogle, Jonathan



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Getting' Schooled continued...

Continued from Page 9

3. If you crash it, you own it.

#1 was meant to limit my top speed. #2 was to keep me out of trouble since this was a school and some strange things can happen out there. #3 was really a notice of indentured servitude to Steve if I somehow wrote the car off. He knew there was no way I could pay him for it.

One consequence of #2 was that I was often taking what might at best be called an unorthodox line through the turn onto the main straight. I would pass as many cars as I could on the downhill section, then get on the brakes hard and just sort of drive around the turn without worrying about apexes and such. Steve took this as an indication that I needed some personal instruction and waved me in. He had insisted that I install a passenger seat and harness earlier in the week for just such an occasion. With Steve at the wheel we headed back out. Steve would show with hand gestures where the car should go as we approached each turn, then would put it right on the line he had indicated. On about Steve's fifth lap, the car suddenly lost power and the engine sounded sick. Steve got it around to the pits and pulled off. We pushed it to our paddock spot and started to investigate. When the valve cover came off, our problem was plain – the engine had swallowed a valve. It looked like the driving was over for this school, but the real work was about to begin.

Steve had the foresight to have me drive his street spitfire to the track while he and Buddy towed their cars up. Since both of them raced Spitfires, having a parts car handy seemed like a good idea. And that was what the street car had now become. Its short block needed to get into the race car and be ready for Saturday's race.

All three of us grabbed tools and descended on the two cars. Among us we had extensive experience with British cars, and Spitfires in particular. Even so, it was impressive that with a few hours of hectic activity we swapped the street engine into the race car and it was running. The only problem now was that we had a disabled street car and no way to get it

home. It was Buddy to the rescue. He called his dad, Omer, who had a tow vehicle and trailer available. Omer abandoned whatever other plans he had for Saturday to drive to Lime Rock to rescue the street car for Steve.

Steve was rightly concerned about the motor. 60,000 miles of wear and tear had accumulated on it over the years, and now he was going to ask it to take the abuse of 20 laps of harsh racing conditions. On Saturday morning he went out for a practice session. When he came in after about 10 minutes his only words were "where's the duct tape?"

"What's wrong?" Buddy asked.

"The gauges are doing bad things", Steve answered. "I don't want to look at them. The tach's the only thing I want to see." When the duct tape appeared, Steve used it to mask all the gauges, leaving the tach visible so that he could see it for shift points, since he wasn't going to be winding this tired engine as tight as the racing one. A small group of curious onlookers gathered, several of whom snapped pictures of the dashboard.

Although the Spitfire was down on power, Steve drove the wheels off it and managed to hold 2nd place. On the final lap of the race, as he approached the checkered flag, a plume of blue smoke belched from the car – the street engine had just bitten the dust. But it had powered Steve to the finish line, earning him valuable championship points. We gathered up our broken machines and made for home.

It was sometime during that next week that a racing acquaintance of Steve's stopped by the shop. Steve was relating the weekend's travails when the acquaintance asked if we knew what caused the broken valve on the racing motor. I held my breath, sure that he knew what might have caused the failure, and who was responsible.

"Random failure", he said, shrugging it off.

Yes, sir. I sure learned a lot from that weekend.





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