

KNOCK **ff**

Official Publication of the Mohawk-Hudson Region Sports Car Club of America

MoHud recognizes 2009 Solo drivers, racers & workers at Annual Year-End Meeting!



Photos top left: Bob Karl Sr, Jack Hanifan; top right: Russ Burckhard; bottom left: Ernie Riggi, Jack Hanifan; bottom right: Tom Campbell, Roly Heacox and Jack Hanifan; bottom right: dinner group tables listen to award presentations.



NATIONAL NEWS

**Jerry Wannarka Named
New SCCA BOD Chairman;
2010 Board & Committee
Appointments Announced**

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The KnockOff is the official publication of the Mohawk-Hudson Region, Sports Car Club of America. Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the Mohawk-Hudson Region or of the Sports Car Club of America.

The general membership meeting is held on the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm at The Orchard Tavern, 68 No. Manning Blvd., Albany, NY.

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REREPORT January 2010

First, Happy New Year to all and congratulations to our many members who had a successful season in 2009. Russ and I will highlight them in our respective articles. I want to give a special congratulations to our Worker Award recipients – Russ Burckhard, Gene Tricozzi, Eric Smith, and Roly Heacox. I was lucky enough to receive the Lewis Award.

In 2010 the region is scheduled to host a National Race at Lime Rock Park, May 14, 15. Northern New Jersey Region will assist us in this endeavor. Our plan is to follow the same schedule as the 2009 event which, thanks to the work of our members, was profitable. We will once again be calling on all to assist.

Some questions have arisen about Region finances. Our treasurer, Chip Van Slyke, will be giving us a breakdown on our loss/surplus issues over the last 5 or so years at the January 6th meeting.

I attended the PRI (Performance Racing Industries) show in Orlando the weekend after our banquet. Bob Wright was on my flight down, other MoHud members in attendance were Pete Smith, Wayne Yetto and Thom O'Connor. The show is really for engine and car builders. Enjoyable!

The region is still in the need of a Secretary. Any interested candidates please contact me or any member of the executive board.

FYI: Our first meeting of 2010 will be 7:30 pm Wednesday January 6 at the Orchard Tavern. Please attend and see what you can do to help the region in 2010.



Here's one of the many reasons Charlie Campbell received the Dave Riggi Memorial award. L to r: standing Denni Sheridan, Jude Sheridan, Diane Smith, Glenda Tricozzi, Jack Hanifan, Tom Campbell, John Sheridan, Gene Tricozzi, Jim Sheridan, Jimmy Sheridan, Bob Karl Sr., kneeling below, Lisa Hanifan with Kerry, their black lab rescue, Charlie Campbell, and Pete Smith. One of the many good times at Watkins Glen in 2009. Photo credit: Pete Smith

MoHud Awards dinner enjoyed by all attendees!



Figarsky brothers Max & Adam enjoy a bit of the pre-dinner fare.



Tom Campbell, Lester Figarsky, and Dave Wachtel chat before dinner.



DJ McArdle sets up the photo display he put together for the party.



Kay, Ernie and Debbie Riggi take in the party sights. (Jennifer Riggi also attended but is missing from photo).



Chip VanSlyke has a big smile for his daughter, Ana Marisol, while Angie sits nearby.

Trophy winners accept their awards from Solo Chair Russ Burckhard. Below, Arn Beebe, right, Eric Smith.



Chip Van Slyke accepts his drivers t-shirt from Roly Heacox as Jack Hanifan looks on.



MoHUD PHOTO GALLERY



Christmas at the Hanifan house & Santa Kerry.



Bob Henderson celebrates the holidays in sunny Florida.



MoHud members Pete Smith, Thom O'Connor, SSM driver Joe Plunkett, and MoHuder Wayne Yetto take a break at the PRI show (Performance Racing Industries) in Orlando in early December.



Decorating for the holidays down south is the same as up north. Bad taste abounds!



Bob Smart, Adam Figarsky, TJ Hanifan and Michael Lo take time for a photo op at Watkins Glen.



NYSRRC award winners Jim Sheridan, Charlie Campbell, Gene Tricozzi, and Adam Figarsky attended the awards banquet held at Watkins Glen race track in November. All were recognized with trophies for their great season in 2009.



2010 January Competition Report from Jack Hanifan

The biggest change for 2010 is the new rule that will allow any driver with 4 National finishes to enter the Runoffs. The hope is that this will increase participation at the Runoffs. The effect on National racing will hopefully be an increase in entries.

National Racing- At the MiniConvention in Pittsburgh all Double Nationals were voted down. This means that unless the regions change their mind at the Roundtable in March, there will not be any Double Nationals in NeDiv in 2010.

This includes Pocono and the proposed Double at Watkins Glen. The Glen Region wanted to host a Double National to showcase the track and entice track management to bid on the Runoffs. I voted for the motion which would have allowed the Double National at both tracks but it only takes 25% of the Regions to defeat the motion.

2009 Road Racing Award Winners

MoHud members had a very successful season and were recognized with a slew of awards at the Mini Convention, the NYSRRC Banquet and the MoHud Banquet. More will be presented at the NARRC Luncheon held in conjunction with the Roundtable March 13th in Floral Park, NJ.

Special Congratulations to Tom Campbell who was awarded the Stevens Memorial Trophy by the Glen Region at the NYSRRC Banquet.

Congratulations to all of the following:

NeDiv Formula Ford Champion – Jeremy Treadway

NYSRRC Awards

NYSRRC Driver of the Year- Charlie Campbell

NYSRRC Champions AS- Jim Sheridan, SM- Charlie Campbell, SSM Adam Figarsky, FP Tom Campbell, STU Gene Tricozzi.

NYSRRC Top Ten Overall

1st Charlie Campbell, 4th Alan Lendrum, 6th David Lendrum, 7th Adam Figarsky, 9th Michael Lo.

Other Trophy Recipients in NYSRRC

FC- 2nd Hilton Tallman

SM-2nd Alan Lendrum, 3rd David Lendrum, 4th Michael Lo.

STU-2nd Jack Hanifan

NARRC Champions

AS- Jim Sheridan, SSM Adam Figarsky, FP Tom Campbell, STU Jack Hanifan

Kryder Racing Champion- Charlie Campbell- SM

MoHud Awards

MoHud Co- Rookies of the year

Hilton Tallman- FC and Demetrius (Mickey) Mossaidis- ITA

Paul Hacker Memorial Driver of the Year- Adam Figarsky.

2nd time recipient of the Dave Riggi Memorial Trophy-Charlie Campbell

Mohawk Hudson Regional Championship

1st Place – Michael Lo.

The NYSRRC awards dinner, held at the Watkins Glen race track, attracted some notable folks from MoHud. Denni and John Sheridan, Jude Sheridan, their friends Dick and Pat Jones, along with Jim Sheridan enjoyed the evening of presentations.



NYSRRC awards dinner attendees: MoHud members Gene Tricozzi, Adam Figarsky, Lester Figarsky, and NYC region member Hal Kahn shared a table.



From SCCA Director John Sheridan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



New BOD Chairman
Jerry Wannarka

Wannarka Named New SCCA BOD Chairman; 2010 Board and Committee Appointments Announced

TOPEKA, Kan. (Dec. 9, 2009) – In its final meeting of 2009, the Sports Car Club of America Board of Directors selected Jerry Wannarka, of Glenwood, Md., as its chairman for 2010. The Board also approved appointments for the various SCCA boards and committees that will govern the organization throughout 2010.

A Washington DC Region member currently in his third year as the Director for Area Two, Wannarka's interest in motorsports began with autocrossing, rallies and ice racing in Minnesota. He joined SCCA in 1966, earning his competition license in 1967, which he still holds to this day. Wannarka has several Regional and Divisional Championships to his credit. He has also been heavily involved behind the scenes, stewarding since the 1980's, serving on the DC Region Board of

Directors and most recently acting as Secretary for the SCCA BOD in 2009. A veteran of the U.S. Army, Wannarka holds a Ph.D. in Pharmacology from Purdue University and has specialized in medical research and development. After retiring from the Army at the rank of Colonel, he held positions at the Vice President and Senior Vice President level with several pharmaceutical companies. He is currently a consultant to the pharmaceutical industry.

"It is a great honor to be named Chairman of the SCCA Board of Directors," Wannarka said. "I look forward to strengthening our fine club with an emphasis on increasing participation, and ensuring that every member enjoys his or her time with the SCCA as much as I have."

Wannarka will assume Chairman duties on January 1 from outgoing Chairman RJ Gordy who did not seek re-election.

A full list of board and committee appointments follows:

Board of Directors Appointments

Board of Directors Officers

Chairman: Jerry Wannarka

Vice Chairman: Lisa Noble

Secretary: Todd Butler

Treasurer: Michael Lewis

Fifth Member Exec Committee: RJ Gordy

1st Alternate Exec Committee: R. David Jones

2nd Alternate Exec Committee: John Sheridan

Board of Directors Liaisons

Solo Events Board: Bob Lybarger, Richard Patullo

Club Racing Board: Marcus Merideth, John Sheridan

RoadRally Board: Michael Lewis, Todd Butler

Enterprises Board: Bob Lybarger

Stewards: RJ Gordy

Court of Appeals: R. David Jones, Robin Langlotz

SCCA Foundation: Bob Lybarger

TTAC: Marcus Merideth, Todd Butler

Regional Executive & Operations Liaison: Robin Langlotz



Board of Directors Committees

Budget & Finance: Mike Lewis (Chair), Bill Kephart, Marcus Merideth, Phil Creighton, RJ Gordy

Compensation: Lisa Noble (Chair), R. David Jones, Todd Butler, Phil Creighton, John Sheridan, Michael Lewis

Director Dujour: Lisa Noble

Planning Committee: Bill Kephart (Chair), Lisa Noble, John Sheridan, Dick Patullo, RJ Gordy, Michael Lewis

Race Track Committee: Dick Patullo (Chair), Bill Kephart, Robin Langlotz, Bob Lybarger, RJ Gordy

Subsidiary Boards

SCCA Enterprises: Andy Porterfield (Chair)

The SCCA Foundation and SCCA Pro Racing Boards will be appointed at a later date.

Program Boards & Committees

Club Racing Board: Jim Drago, Chris Albin, Bob Dowie, Jim Wheeler, Dave Gomberg, Fred Clark

Executive Stewards: Dave Nokes (Chairman), Mike Engelke (Central), John Peterson (Great Lakes), Ken Patterson (Midwest), Gary Meeker (Northern Pacific), Earl Hurlbut (Northeast), Bill Metcalfe (Rocky Mountain), Bob Horansky (Southeast), Barbara Knox (Southern Pacific), Tom Brown (Southwest)

Time Trials Administrative Council (TTAC): Matt Rowe (Chairman, Northeast), Tony Machi (Central), Jerry Cabe (Great Lakes) Ed Settle (Midwest), Dave DeBorde (Northern Pacific), Josh Hadler (Rocky Mountain), Mark Rothermel (Southeast), Steve Stavely (Southern Pacific), Ken Carter (Southwest)

National Administrators: Guy Ruse (Driver Licensing), Ann Hefty (Flagging & Communications), Leo Baker (Emergency Services), Marina Kraft (Race Administration), Wanda Cecil (Registration), Toni Creighton (Scrutineering), Wayne Briggs (Sound), Larry Kurkowski (Starters), Carla Heath (Timing & Scoring), Peter Hylton (Archivist/Historian), Gayle Lorenz (Grid/Pit), Dr. Jim Butler (Medical Administrator), Ed Zebrowski (Chief Driving Instructor)

Court of Appeals: Mike West (Chairman), Jack Hanifan (at large), Jack Marr (at large), Rick Mitchell (alternate), Stephen Harris (alternate), Sue Roethel (secretary)

Solo Events Board: Tina Reeves (Chair), Erik Strelnieks, Steve Hudson, Bryan Nemy, Mike Simanyi, Iain Mannix, Dave Feighner

Divisional Solo Stewards: Todd Farris (SW), Robert Lewis (SE), Sam Karp (CE), Tom Berry (SP), Keith Brown (NP), David Newman (NE), Lindsay Wilson (RM), Donna Hill (MW), Marlene Obenour/Velma Boreen (GL)

Solo Safety Committee: Kathy Barnes (Chair), John Lieberman, Arouch Poonsapaya, Brian Robertson, Cal Craner, Jan Rick

RoadRally Board: James Wakemen Jr. (Chair), Lois Van Vleet, Jeanne English, Sasha Lanz, Eva Ames, Mark Johnson

Divisional RoadRally Stewards: Bob Ricker (SE), Larry Scholnick (SP), Mike Bennett (GL), Mike Thompson (CE), Ted Goddard (NE), Rich Bireta (MW), Stu Helfer (NP), Sasha Lanz (SW)

RoadRally Rules Committee: Jeanne English (Chair), Mike Thompson, Jim Friedman, W. David Teter, Dave Kolb

Divisional RallyCross Stewards: Richard Miller (SW), Z.B. Lorenc (GL), Brent Carlson (CE), Jerry Doctor (MW), Scott Beliveau (NE), Paul Eklund (NP), Charles Wright (SE), Jayson Woodruff (SP)

RallyCross Board: Bob Ricker (Chairman), Tom Nelson, Mark Utecht, Jayson Woodruff, Brent Blakely, Karl Sealander



Cone Clips SCCA Solo News December, 2009

Solo Community,

I wanted to take this opportunity as the year winds down to give you a glimpse into the coming year. However, first and more importantly, on behalf of the SCCA Solo Department here in Topeka and all the folks from around the country that serve as part of your National Solo Field Staff Team, I want to wish you and your families a very cheery holiday season and a Happy New Year. Secondly, we all want to thank you for your support of the SCCA Solo program and all that you contribute to make it so successful.

Obviously 2009 was a VERY challenging year on the economic front and we did not really know what to expect. However, the Solo program came through these difficult times in fine fashion:

- Regional participation overall was even with 2008, although some areas had significant attendance problems.
- The Tire Rack National Tour participation was off a few percentage points, but most of that was attributable to some scheduling experimentation, including giving up at least one successful event so it could serve as a Divisional Championship.
- The Tire Rack ProSolo Series participation was actually UP by nearly 12%.
- The new site at Lincoln, Nebraska helped us get to within a few entrants of a record attendance at the 2009 Tire Rack Solo National Championship.

One of the areas of concern has been the safety record of the Solo program in recent years, specifically a couple years ago with incidents in finish areas. Since last year we saw a reduction in the cost of Solo insurance fees, a number of folks took that as a sign that all was OK. WRONG!!! What was not realized was that the overall SCCA insurance costs had gone down for a variety of reasons (bidding, insurance market status, etc.) and the reduction in the 2009 Solo insurance cost was actually less than other areas of the Club due to those incidents. Now that some of those incidents have worked their way through the system a little farther with regard to claims and legal proceedings, the fiscal impact becomes a bit clearer. The overall SCCA insurance costs are going up for 2010 and those incidents are a major contributing factor. Therefore, the insurance rates for Solo will be going up for 2010 by 10% or 50 cents an entrant.

The ability to mitigate future increases is in all of our hands; Safety Stewards, course designers, event officials, and entrants. We all have to be vigilant in being sure we have taken appropriate precautions to ensure fun and safe events. I know that for our part, we will be taking an even closer look at the way we operate National Solo events this coming year and we are hopeful that this will help set the tone for all levels of events.

Moving on to another topic, for many years I have been bothered by the requirement in the rules for showing a rule book at Divisional and National events, particularly after the rules started being posted on the SCCA web site. Also, this bit of bureaucracy hardly seemed in sync with the new Club motto of "Make it Fun, Make it Easy". However, there was a fiscal (there's that word again) component we could not avoid; the revenue from rule book sales was a significant contribution to cover the cost of rule development and management, including tech services to handle member inquiries. Therefore, the status quo continued to win out year after year.

Well, for 2010 we took the plunge and the requirement goes away. However, this does not diminish your responsibility to know and comply with the rules. In other words, no "the dog ate my homework" type excuses will be acceptable when a rule compliance issue (car prep or event op) arises. Therefore, we are strongly recommending that competitors still have a rule book at hand; either a "regular" rule book (they will still be available for sale) or a downloaded version.



You might ask how we solved the fiscal issue. Since the rules touch all levels of events, it was tempting to replace the needed revenue with a small increase in the Regional sanction fee along with an increase in entry fees at National events, but given the insurance issues mentioned above, we dropped the sanction fee increase idea. Therefore, we will be raising the needed funds with a small increase in the entry fees for National Solo events and the development of a new optional Solo License with a benefits package that should be of value for some within the Solo Community. Again, this license will be optional and NOT required. More details on this after the first of the year.

Just a few more quick things:

- The 2010 National Solo Rules will be posted on the web by January 1, 2010. The “real” rule books will be available by February 1st.
- The 2010 ProSolo Series Rules will be posted by January 8th. By the way, very minor changes will happen with those rules, but we know folks are eager to see the new Index factors.
- The 2010 Tire Rack National Solo schedule has already been posted, which is significantly earlier than in the past. We pressed to get this done early for a variety of reasons, but the primary objective was to get it done early to allow Regions and Divisions to get their schedules done earlier and avoid conflict with National events. We would like to thank all the National Solo event coordinators for working with us so diligently to get this done.
- The 2010 schedule includes some changes in the scoring for the Solo Triad Award, which was begun this year. If you missed that information, you can read about it at <http://www.scca.com/newsarticle.aspx?hub=3&news=3823>.
- By the time of the SCCA National Convention in late January, we will have information regarding expanded communication efforts, including a new electronic National Solo monthly newsletter that will cover topics for all levels of the Solo program. One of the many things that are still up in the air is a name for this electronic rag. If you have a suggestion, please send it to me at hduncan@scca.com. If we select your suggestion as the name of the newsletter, and you are the first to submit, you will win a free entry to the 2010 Tire Rack Solo National Championship. So give this some thought over the holidays.
- If you are a Solo official of any stripe, you would find the SCCA National Convention interesting, informative, entertaining and worthwhile. Check with your Region leadership to see if there are funds available to assist you in representing your Region and your sport. More info at <http://www.scca.com/event.aspx?hub=6&event=14461>.
- Finally (really), a word on contingency programs. Virtually all National Solo (including those posted for Divisional Championships) require the driver to sign up in advance. It is your responsibility to understand the programs and to do what is necessary. You can review the programs at <http://www.scca.com/contingencies.aspx?hub=3> and I would suggest doing so regularly, as well as confirming that you are in fact signed up properly. To assist in this, we will soon have an on-line sign up system, so keep an eye out for this. However, if there is a program available now that you are interested in, I would recommend signing up right away the old fashioned way.

Well, that is it for now. Once again, on behalf of the Topeka Staff and the National Solo Field Staff, we wish you a Happy Holiday season.

H. Howard Duncan SCCA, VP, Rally/Solo

SCCA RallyCross National Challenge Schedule Released

TOPEKA, Kan. (Dec. 18, 2009) – The 2010 SCCA RallyCross National Challenge schedule is now available, though several dates remain tentative. The schedule is highlighted by a return to Fountain, Colo., for the 2010 SCCA RallyCross National Championship, which moves to August.

The 2010 SCCA RallyCross National Challenge season is composed of a dozen events which span the entire continental U.S., from New England to the Pacific Coast and from the Midwest to the Deep South. Several dates and sites have yet to be secured, so participants are encouraged to keep checking the SCCA Web site for updates.

The RallyCross National Championship will return to the U.S. Truck Driving School in Fountain, Colo., in 2010. To avoid the snow and ice of the 2009 event, the 2010 RallyCross National Championship will move to a summer date, Aug. 20 – 22.

“We enjoy the elements in RallyCross, but what we experienced at the RallyCross National Championship this year was a bit extreme,” SCCA Rally Manager Pego Mack said. “By moving the event to August, we can expect more comfortable weather. Plus, those that bring their families with them can turn it into a summer vacation trip.”

The U.S. Truck Driving School was chosen to host the RallyCross National Championship for a second year in-a-row thanks to its excellent hardpack under gravel surface that offers minimal degradation. The site is also near Colorado Springs, which offers plenty of lodging, dining and attractions. Many comments were paid to the Colorado and Continental Divide Regions, whose combined efforts allowed two courses to be run simultaneously.

“The Colorado and Continental Divide Regions did a tremendous job with last year’s Championship,” Mack added. “Ken Cashion and crew were also key to the success of the event and I know Ken and his team are already plotting for 2010.”

2010 SCCA RallyCross National Championship Schedule

Date	Location	
Jan. 16 - 17	Stafford Speedway	Stafford Springs, Conn.
Feb. 27 - 28*	Site TBA	Florida Region
March 27	Miller Motorsports Park	Tooele, Utah
May 22	<i>Eastern States Challenge Championship</i>	
	Lenawee County Fairgrounds	Adrian, Mich.
June 12 - 13	Summit Point Motorsports Park	Summit Point, W.V.
June 19 - 20	<i>Western States Championship</i>	
	Site TBA	San Diego Region
June 26 - 27*	Washington County Fair Complex	Hillsboro, Ore.
July TBA	Corcoran Lions Park	Corcoran, Minn.
Sept. 11 - 12	Tennessee Roberts Field	Manchester, Tenn.
Sept. TBA	Gateway International Raceway	Madison, Ill.
Sept. 25 - 26*	National Trail Raceway	Hebron, Ohio
TBA	Site TBA	San Francisco Region

2010 RallyCross National Championship

Aug. 20 - 22

U.S. Truck Driving School - Fountain, Colo.

* - Tentative

Lesson Learned, Lincoln, Nebraska

Size matters! (But so does quality.)

For nearly 3 decades the SCCA Solo National Championship event had been held in either Salina or Topeka, Kansas with one year in Chicago (1982, my first ever Nationals!). In Salina there were actually two sites; both were Air Force style concrete, large and grippy. The earlier site was a 150' wide runway. Then from 1986 through 1994 the site was a very large apron on the newer airport across town. But by the mid-90's, the south end of that site was breaking up due to tractor trailer traffic as the site became industrialized. In addition, the city was selling off pieces of the site bit by bit and so SCCA deemed it necessary to find a more stable site.

Moving to Forbes Field in Topeka for the 1995 Nationals (with the National office soon to follow), the site was about the same vastness as the later Salina location and about as grippy. But at the north end of this site was the lowest elevation in the area and when the water table would rise, groundwater would push upward on the concrete, heaving huge slabs and also breaking up much of the concrete slowly. By the mid-2000s it was time to move again.

The 2006 through 2008 National Championships were held on a huge parking lot at Heartland Park Topeka (HPT) racetrack, about a mile from Forbes Field. Well, huge is a relative term. For any regional autocross event, the site would have been nirvana. But for the Solo National

Championship, it had many shortcomings. Originally promised as two large separate lots, it ended up being just one that was only slightly larger than one national course at Forbes Field or Salina. So the courses had to be shorter. To maximize course space, the grid had to be off the main parking lot. This meant competitors could not see what was going on and simply waited in grid until told to go. The drive from grid to the start line could take up to 3 minutes. Huge legions of safety workers were employed to direct traffic and pedestrians. To top it all off, the contractor added large quantities of sand to the asphalt mix. Sand would come up out of the asphalt all day long for the entire week of competition. Anyone straying off the line by more than a foot or so was doomed to a lost run. Some competitors lost control and slid a lot farther than they had ever experienced.



After the 2008 Nationals, Nebraska Region proposed a new site, yet another former Air Force

base. It has a huge paddock area off the main runways which are still in use as a municipal airport. Without being given the entire available area, we were still gifted with at least 35 acres of course area, 6 acres of grid space, and 17 acres of paddock space. Wow! And the concrete is in mostly good shape.

Road Trip & Arrival at Lincoln

Ken and I embarked on our trip to Lincoln on a Thursday morning. After years of traveling the NYS Thruway to I71 to I70 we had a new route to adventure forward upon. We stayed on I90 and then to I80, skirting the southern edge of Chicago and on through Illinois, Iowa, and into Nebraska. Speed limits were relaxed out west with 70 mph being the standard in Iowa and 75 mph in Nebraska. Interestingly, as we drove through that part of the country, the flat to hilly open landscape was dotted by large numbers of wind turbines. They were nearly everywhere we looked.



By Friday around noon we arrived at the event site. As we drove to the registration tent we were floored by the vastness of the place. Over the decades we've been to some large event sites but this was awe inspiring. The course area is huge. The grid area is huge. The paddock is huge. And at the end of paddock there's a 40 to 50 second permanent practice course. Beyond the practice course the concrete extends so far that we couldn't see to the end of the site.



We were assigned our paddock spot and as we were making ourselves at home I wondered how in the world would I find the fellow who had brought a go-kart from California for me to pick up. This place is enormous! That's when I overheard the fellow in the next spot over tell one of his friends, "I don't know how I'm going to find this guy Jim Garry." I walked the 8 feet to where he was standing and introduced myself. We both laughed and shook our heads. What a great coincidence.

At both Forbes Field and HPT, the practice course shared space with the Pro Solo finale. The courses were set up for the weekend and down they'd come to make way for the Nationals

courses. At Lincoln, the Pro courses were set up and taken down for the Nationals courses but the practice course was left open all week long. Accordingly, Ken and I took our share of practice runs.

Pro Solo Finale

Not entered for the Pro Solo, it was still a fun event to watch when we weren't on the practice course or socializing. Saturday proved to be interesting when dense fog delayed the start of the event by an hour or so. At one point we were standing near the start lights when New England Region's Chang Ho Kim emerged out of the mist like a ghost. As he passed by, I offered "the courses won't look the same when the sun comes out". Chang flashed his famous smile and replied, "that's OK, I don't look ahead when I'm driving anyway!"



These were the longest Pro Solo courses I've ever seen both in time and length. And they didn't come close to utilizing the available space. It was a fine event.

Walking, and more

As usual, Monday was the day to walk the courses. I hadn't really appreciated the fact that at HPT you could get a lot of walks accomplished on each course because they were on the small



side (for a Nationals course). At Lincoln, the courses were once again long, not to mention fun and challenging. It took quite a while to complete a walk through. And in the 90+ degree heat, it was good to bring a water bottle along and then stop for more water between walks.

With the practice course still open (and to remain open until Wednesday afternoon) we mixed in a few more runs with the walking. This is when we broke in our Nationals tires. Nice to do so on the same surface we'd be running in a few days.

On Monday evening, the entire club was invited to attend a rare open session at The Museum of American Speed, <http://www.museumofamericanspeed.com/Collections/Collections.shtml>. What an amazing place! We toured their working machine shop, had dinner, and saw several floors of automotive memorabilia and cars, lots of cars, old cars, modern cars, classic cars, and race cars. There were all types of engines, lots of history and more. Wow! They'll do it again next year and the trip to Lincoln is almost worth this evening alone.

The '09 Season, Lessons Learned, Forgotten, Re-learned

Let's take a look back on the regular season now. Getting my Formula Ford to the physical point where it could be driven quickly had been the culmination of years of blood, sweat, and many tears. Although I'd won the C Modified National Championship titles in 2007 and 2008, I was aware of some areas of my driving that could be upgraded. So for 2009 I dedicated myself to making further improvements as a driver.

And that folks, ironically enough, is how my chance to do well at this year's Nationals was ruined! Here's how ...



Despite the plan to work primarily on my driving skills, Ken and I did make some shock absorber adjustments at the first two test and tunes of the season. We tried a range of stiffer adjustments, made the car feel better, and got faster times. But keep in mind that a huge problem with autocross test and tunes is that despite the large number of runs offered, most people still are learning to drive the course by the end of the day. So picking up a few tenths of a second might be due to a change made in suspension adjustment, or it may be due to unconsciously

learning something about the course that you might not have grasped earlier in the day. In contrast, if you do a test day at a race track on which you've driven hundreds, if not thousands of laps, you can be pretty sure that a three tenth of a second pick up is significant.

At any rate, due to my philosophy for 2009 to not make many changes to the car, except for known pavement needs, those stiffer shock settings were not altered for the rest of the season except to go up or down one click to customize transitional handling for a particular site. The "be a better driver" mode unconsciously blocked some thinking about the car, but more on this later.

Regardless of all this, the season was a lot of fun. We ran some SCCA regional level events at Seneca, and SCCA, BMW, and PCA events at Devens. Did the National Tour at Seneca Army Depot and the Divisional at Devens. Ken and I had initially thought we would run the Pro Solo

events in DC and Toledo in order to qualify for the Pro Solo Finale prior to the National Championship in Lincoln, Nebraska, but scrapped the idea.

On a personal note, as the first event approached I had some misgivings about the coming season. Was it the long drives to Devens and Seneca? Nope, I realized I've come to enjoy the long drives because they give me the opportunity to think with no outside distractions (except for keeping civilians from running me off the road).



So then I wondered if perhaps I wasn't enjoying autocrossing anymore. To check this, I made an effort to really keep track of how I was feeling at my first two events and realized that I was having a great time! So what was it, I wondered? Turns out that I came to understand I was not happy about the idea of being away from my family for so many full weekends. The moment I made the decision to skip the two Pro Solo events and alter plans for 2 day regional events into one day events, my negative feelings disappeared and so did my negative feelings about the season.

Everything seemed to be on course to not only enjoying myself, but having a reasonably good shot at a "three-peat" at the Nationals, although my competition philosophy is centered only on being "in the hunt". So how did things go? Even though the car was balanced, there were signs all season that something wasn't quite right.

* At a May test and tune at Seneca, I did something I'd never done before in all my years of autocrossing: I hit the timing lights at the finish. And Finger Lake Region goes out of their way to protect their timing lights, encasing them in steel. I bent a trailing arm but had an old one I keep as a spare in my trailer and was able to continue the day without losing more than a couple of runs. The damage to the fresh paint job was something else.



* In late June I wrote in my autocross journal that I was sensing something wrong with the car, that although the balance was very good, something wasn't quite right. Thinking back, it was the good balance that helped to distract me from the real problem.

* This year we added a throttle potentiometer to our DL1 data acquisition system. What an eye opener! There were times I would have sworn on the threat of water-boarding that I had not

lifted in a particular section of a course but was proven wrong when we looked at the data. You cannot hide from the DL1. In thinking about this issue I concluded that the discomfort that was forcing the lifting was driving-related only and not due to a suspension problem because, after all, the car was so nicely balanced.

* At the Tour and Divisionals I took first place (a first for me at a Divisional!) but my factored times versus all other cars were not as good as they were the year before. And the car just felt ... off. I could not put my finger on the reason why, and those doubts stayed with me all the way to Lincoln and even through the test course runs there.

Meanwhile, back in Lincoln

At Lincoln, Ken and I took practice runs on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. With the new all-week test course, no longer can the Nationals be known as “2000 miles for 6 runs”. The car continued to feel perfectly balanced, which should have fostered confidence. But it didn’t. I experimented with lines and driving styles. I could get the car to rotate beautifully in any corner. I noticed that a few key competitors in my class were a tick slower than me, but I had many more runs and felt my times should have been better based on my many runs on the test course. I tried to push away those thoughts as unneeded pessimistic thinking but they persisted.



After our last practice runs on Monday, I felt that the car had been a bit off on power that day. We decided to adjust the valves and when the plug wires were pulled, we discovered a broken spark plug! It was replaced, with relief, and the valves adjusted as Bill Gendron offered help and his wry sense of humor.

Tuesday and Wednesday were days to watch other classes (I had volunteered to write an article about A Modified for North American Pylon), walk the courses, socialize, take photos, and try to keep from getting exhausted (we ARE older now!). Socializing is always big in autocross, but at Nationals it's even more special simply because of the huge numbers of people available to socialize with. You can't go more than a few hundred feet without running into someone you know. That person may be someone you see dozens of times a year at local events or he may be someone you see only once a year. Deciding whom to have dinner with is sometimes a difficult choice! And this year old timers Davie and Joyce Looman came back to Nationals after a decade away, but only to visit and sell Dave's [books](#).



Dave told me an old story about how he and Chuck Sample (another old timer) once took time out from a two day CENDiv event to participate in a voluntary anti-drunk driving demonstration put on by the State. Volunteers were given a car to drive through an autocross course and

establish base times. Then they'd take a drink, wait for it to settle in, and drive again. Then more drinks and more timed runs. As expected, drivers would get slower and slower and hit more cones as they got drunker. But not Davie and Chuck! Nope. Those two were hard drinkers AND national champions. They just kept getting faster and faster until the administrator of the program asked them to please leave because they were messing up his results!



Thursday finally arrived and I felt excited as we moved the car to grid. This excitement is something that had eluded me during the years I didn't have my car handling right. The Nationals during those years was essentially a test and tune because most years I knew going in that the car wasn't ready. Knowing you have a chance to do well, adds another layer to the experience of Nationals.

C Modified hit the east course in heat 2. The weather was great. Ken took a run and said the car felt fine. I buckled in, Ken double checked tire pressures, and I moved to the start line. About 1/3 the way into my run, the car felt horrible. It was pulling hard and the chassis was scraping on the ground in many places. For the first time ever during an autocross run, I actually took my eyes off the course to look for broken suspension bits. My time was about a second behind Ken and I was dumbfounded. Then I looked at the left front tire. It was flat!



We fetched a spare tire/wheel from the trailer and slapped it on. Ken went out and improved his time a little. I went out and expected a huge reduction in time. After the finish line it is not possible to see the timing display so workers are assigned to hand out time slips. I was handed my time and looked at it. I looked at it again. I stared very hard at it. I could not believe the time that was written. Despite having a flat tire on my first run, my second run was less than 0.2 of an improvement! I was dumbfounded for the second time in 15 minutes.

I pulled back into our grid spot, checked the tires, checked the time on the posting board, and just couldn't believe it. I was now 0.9 off of Ken and another second off of first. Huh?

Third run. Chance to get close. Ken's 3rd run was no better for him. I had concentrated on the



course very hard and knew exactly what I needed to do. I hit the course and drove my game. The car was not great but I felt I had improved significantly. The finish line worker handed me my timing slip and ...

Have you ever heard a dog howling at night when its owner locks it out of the house on a cold winter night? That's about the sound that came out of my throat. I looked at the slip and it

showed an improvement of only a little over two tenths of a second. How could this be? Over the course of my runs I had improved only 0.4 over a flat tire time. The pain! The indignity! The confusion!

Later that day, a New England region member told me, "I saw your third run ... or rather, I heard your response to it." Yup.

The day was over and there was no chance for me to finish well at this National Championship. I was in 9th place, about 0.7 behind Ken who was clinging to 6th place, the last trophy in class.

After impound, we put the car to bed in the trailer and walked the west course. All we could hope for was to move up a bit. After a few walk-throughs we cooked dinner at our paddock spot to save time, and some money. Corn, burgers, potato salad, some veggies. Ken's a good paddock cook. As we ate, we talked about the car. We brainstormed for quite awhile until it dawned on us that even though grip was higher than at Heartland Park, our shocks were just too damn stiff and probably had been all season.

You gotta wonder how the human brain works. Well, mine anyway. All season long there was a nagging feeling that something about the car wasn't right. The fact that it was balanced certainly threw me off. And given my overriding goal for the season of concentrating on my driving, I had closed myself off to deep thinking about the car. What a dope! When I finally sat down with Ken over our dinner it seemed so clear that the shocks were wrong. And this explained all those niggling doubts during the season and why I was confidence lifting everywhere. Stiff shocks often make the car feel good but can rob tons of grip and this suddenly explained our entire season.



The next morning we softened the shocks a bit. And sure enough, my first try got me the top time in my class for the first set of runs. The car felt better for sure. I moved ahead of Ken but was still a bit back of 5th place. But on my second run I improved just a bit. Ken turned a time much closer to me and pulled back ahead of me overall for 6th (last trophy in class) and the rest of the class figured out how to drive the course. I no longer had my fast time in class.

Thinking hard with 3rd runs approaching I wasn't going to blame my driving this time and therefore softened the car some more. During my last run the car felt very good and as I drove from corner to corner it slowly dawned on me that with that last shock softening I was under-driving the course. It took me until the last two corners to figure this out. By that time, the run was over and my time, although better, was still off by a bit compared to the leaders.



MoHud's John Sheridan (and SCCA Director) offering advice in Lincoln

Ken had taken last trophy and I was a tick behind him. After impound, we loaded the car, watched some more runs, and then drove the rig back to the motel to get ready for the banquet.

As I went to take my shower, I reminded Ken that last year I took away first place from him at Nationals and this year he took last trophy in class away from me, so I suggested we were even. Chuckling as I closed the door behind me, I could hear him arguing from the other side of the door that, "it's not the same thing Jim; it's not the same!"



Former MoHudder Jim Fossum at the Nationals banquet

The banquet was nice, we talked with friends from all over the country, said our goodbyes, and headed back to the motel for a good sleep to prepare for the long day and a half ride home.

The return trip is a great time to think and debrief each other. Ken's thoughts were that during the season we had been content, matching each other's times, winning the Tour and Divisionals and not doing so badly on the RTP factors. The car had felt balanced and compared to the horrible push or oversteer of the pre-2007

years, everything seemed fine. But there were no other cars to serve as a yardstick because our only NEDiv C Mod competition in '09 was a relative newcomer to C Mod who is currently working on his setup. We let our guard down, said Ken.

But why was I so slow compared to Ken on that first day? Ken suggested that he is still somewhat of a stock category driver who takes what he can get from the car the way it is. Having come from the stock category myself, I remember those days. Ken is driving more adaptively

whereas I am driving almost in test mode, expecting to get a certain amount even if it is not there. Thus, when the car isn't right, I don't drive the car as well as it could be driven. The plus to this is that I'm able to determine push/loose more quickly but not, apparently, lack of grip.

The trip home was OK. I've gotta say, it's not so bad getting creamed at Nationals after you've just won a few times.

The postscript to the season is that after coming home I attended the last MoHud autocross of the season, followed by an NER event at Devens. Setting the shocks even softer than at the end of Nationals, I took top RTP factor on only 3 runs at MoHud (retiring after the first heat due to the bumps scraping my rub blocks off), and second in PAX at the 127 car NER event at Devens. The car felt absolutely wonderful. It had a ton more grip. At the long, fast Devens course, the car kept telling us that it wasn't at its limits so we kept pushing harder and harder and the car just hung in there. On my last two runs I made big errors and was still able to improve my times with each run. What fun to be able to turn good times without having to be mistake free!



So you know what? Despite the negative aspects of screwing up the car back in May for the season, it was a positive experience overall. I re-learned a lesson about shocks that I will never forget again, having it hammered home in such a strong way. And lacking grip this season forced me to drive well out of my comfort zone in order to get reasonably quick times. I got scared on a good many occasions and that's what you need to go really fast. Ken and I are looking forward to having even more fun next year.



SOLO SOLO SOLO **SOLO Report** by Russ Burckhard

January 2010 SOLO Report

Well that was weird, writing the year 2010. This is the first time I had to do that. Hopefully you are all getting familiar with it by now as well. 2009 was another good year for the Solo program. For those of you who made it to the banquet, this article will be a repeat of what I said that evening. For those who didn't make it, this is what you missed.

Welcome to the 2009 SOLO Trophy presentation

We had another busy year this year; eight points events and three Test and Tunes, plus helping with the annual charity event held by the Adirondack Corvette Club up in Lake George. All of this happened in the span of six months. Prior to all this, the Solo Advisory committee put in the time to schedule all of these events, set the budget, and make sure the supplemental rules were up to date. This year's committee members are Andy Furlong, Bert Huiest, Bruce Kosakoski, Eric Smith, Jeff Kanetzky, Joe Sell, Lyndon Peck, Tom Hansen, and me. During the events we have a lot of people who step up to make everything run smoothly and make me look good. I'd like to take a moment to recognize them. Byron and Danielle O'Hara get us going with registration with help from DJ McArdle. Bert Huiest works his magic by designing and setting up great courses. Dan Walden is always eager to help him out. Tom Hansen makes sure the cars are safe during Tech. He has outdone himself by doing his bit as Tech Inspector even when he wasn't running a car. I give Tom a lot of credit for doing that – I'm not sure others would have stepped up like that. Eric Smith is in charge of timing and scoring. John Danese has been working with him this year, as well as keeping us on schedule in the mornings. This is the first time in years that we actually have come close to following our published schedule. John also stepped up to run the Adirondack Corvette Club's autocross when neither Eric nor I were available to do so. Lyndon Peck has been making sure everybody does their fair share as the worker chief. Bruce Kosakoski, Arn Beebe, and Phil Reddington are the best when it comes to keeping us safe as the Solo Safety Stewards. Tom Moeller has been very helpful in getting everything setup this year. This is the first time in years that we were actually on time. Jim Garry took equipment out to Seneca for a test and tune he organized. He is a one man show by just about doing it all out there.

There is something that we need at each event, that without it, we would not be able to hold our events. That thing is the site. This year we were blessed with five sites.

The OGS parking lot at McCarty Ave. We have been fortunate to have been here for the last three years. Chris Busone continues to allow us to use this facility. We had three events and a Test and Tune there.

Adirondack Community College. Anthony Palangi was very receptive to my call this spring and allowed us to use the north lot for three events plus a Test and Tune. While the majority of the lot had been paved after the new building was put in, we are hopeful the rest of the lot will be paved soon. Even without the paving, this is our best site for our local events.

The Clifton Park Center. I met with Jeff Townsend again this spring and he was looking forward to our return to the Center. A week before the event, the lot we were to use had debris in it from construction elsewhere on the facility. Jeff was extremely helpful getting the lot cleaned up. He was out there the day before our event with a broom sweeping up. He was happy again this year with the way the event went and would like us to return next year.

The Wilton Mall. Last year the Electric City GTO Club held a national event that included an autocross at the Wilton Mall which we helped with. I got a phone call this spring from Leah Palmer from the mall expressing interest in our return. We held one event there and it wound up being our most highly-attended event of the year. We made another good impression and are welcomed back again next year.

The Seneca Army Depot. Jim Garry was the lead on setting up and running the Test and Tune again this year, as he has done in the past. This is a great site; it is just unfortunate that it's so far away.

SOLO Championship trophies:

Specialty Trophies. Each year it gets harder to pick the winners of these trophies. The number of people that stood out as potential winners seems to have doubled or tripled. A couple of these were easy to pick, but most were close battles. This is the first time we had a three way tie in one of the categories. We processed some more info and re-voted to get a winner. Two other categories were won by a single vote.

Female Driver of the Year. This was a good year for us with the women competitors. We had a total of 16 different women participate at our events. Of those 16 women, two ran most of the events. While one finished towards the bottom of her class at each event, she did pretty well on the adjusted times. The other did pretty well in her class but also did well on the adjusted times. This year she was almost competitive with her co-driver. At two events, she was around six tenths behind her husband and he has always been one of our top competitors. This year's winner was the seventh place finisher in the Street class, **Danielle O'Hara**.



Novice Driver of the Year. This year's novice battle consisted of four drivers who stood out above the rest. They all showed a steady improvement throughout the season with their driving abilities. This was one category which was won by a single vote. It just goes to show the level of talent that's coming in. This driver came from the heavily populated Stock class. Even though this driver only attended four events, it was enough to finish in 12th place in the standings. She was the runner up in the Female Driver of the Year category. This year's **Novice Driver of the Year is Sue Cuda**.

Hard Luck Driver of the Year. This is the first year we have given this one out. Not that there have not been others that deserved it. Last year it would have been close between Andy Furlong and Tom Hansen. This year we had one driver stand out. He needs to get stock in an axle company. At two of our events, he needed to get towed home. The first time, on his first run he came around a tight lefthander and blew the CV balls all over the parking lot. The other time, he was able to get two runs in before it let him down. If I remember correctly, two other cars had to get towed that day as well. He also went to a few Performance Driving Schools. The one at Limerock claimed a CV boot and also rendered his motor mounts useless. The other PDX at Watkins Glen went very well until the last five minutes of his session. The car developed a horrible shudder under braking. After inspecting it, he found another CV boot had eaten itself. He did what he could to get it so he could make it home and got somewhere on Rt. 88 before the axle broke. I think we should try to get AAA to sponsor him. This year's winner of the **Hard Luck Driver of the Year**, if you want to call it "winning", **is Zeke Wright**.

Most Improved Driver. This one was the hardest to choose. One of the drivers has competed here and there over the last few years, and this year he attended every event and had some great results. The next driver is in his third season and has done well from the start. The last driver has been around for a long time. The first driver, while having some impressive finishes this year, didn't have a good baseline from last year to show improvement. The next driver had a great year this year. He also had a good year last year as well during his first full year of competition. That did not go unnoticed as he was last year's novice of the year. But the last driver seemed to pick up the pace just

a little more than the others. He has been at this a long time. Even though his class is not well attended and his finishing positions are about the same as they have been the past few years, his times have showed a vast improvement from last year. I believe I am a consistent driver and his times have gotten closer to mine. He almost beat me at one event this year. That is something that he was not close to doing last year and I don't believe I am slowing down. This year's winner finished 3rd in points and is the owner of the car I co-drive. **Arn Beebe is this year's most improved Driver.**



Driver of the Year. Where to start on this one? This had the most nominees of any other trophy. Four different drivers got at least one vote. Three of the drivers won their class. Two of the drivers claimed three of the fastest PAX adjusted times of the day and one of the drivers set the fastest time of the day three times. While each of these drivers has had an impressive year, we only have one winner. The winner is the champion in his class. He has one of the fastest PAX times this year. He has seven wins in his class and one 2nd. He has set the fastest time of the day in three events. He is also my assistant tonight. This year's **Driver of the Year is Eric Smith.**

Worker of the Year. This is a trophy that is hard for me to give to one person. There are a lot of people that go above and beyond at the events to make them successful. There are others that help with the planning of the events as well. I would like to call out a bunch of people that without, we would not be to the level that we are. Those attending tonight are Andy Furlong, Arn Beebe, Bert Huiest, DJ McArdle, Eric Smith, Jeff Kanetzky, John Danese, Lyndon Peck, Phil Reddington, Tom Hansen and Tom Moeller. Others that are not here include Byron and Danielle O'Hara, Bruce Kosakoski, Dan Walden, Joe Sell and Will Schambach. There are many others and I apologize for not mentioning them but thanks to them as well. Now back to this year's Worker of the Year. This guy has stepped up and really made a difference this year. This was an easy choice. Because of the way that he has helped out, he was the only one that got a vote. Whenever we asked him to do something, he did. When he saw something that needed to be done, he did it or asked to have it done. Every year we help out with the Corvette Charity Event up on Prospect Mountain. This year both Eric and I had other plans and could not make it. This guy allowed us to volunteer him into basically being the Event Chair. I heard nothing but praise from the Corvette Club on what he did to get the event off. He made sure we stuck with the schedule this year as well. This year's **Worker of the Year is John Danese.**

Closing statement. We had a great year and are looking forward to another one. We have tentatively set up another eight event season plus three Test and Tunes / Schools. All of the sites seem to be happy with us, so I don't see any trouble getting the dates. I personally have a few people to thank: Arn and his wife for allowing me to drive his car, and my wife, for allowing me to dedicate so much time to the club. I would also like to thank Joe Sell for his service on the Solo Advisory Committee and welcome Will Schambach as his replacement. Thanks to all of the spouses for allowing us the time to go and play. Thanks to the Board of Directors and all of the members of the region for all of their support with the SOLO program. And finally, thanks to all of you for coming tonight.

Monthly Membership Report 12-19-2009

New Member Report

From: 09/22/09 to: 12/19/09.

Please welcome these new members to the region.

Name	Joined	City	State
Harold Travis Bryant	09/23/09	Cohoes	NY
Austen J. Levesque	11/18/09	Delmar	NY
Robert Joseph Parker	10/13/09	Hudson Falls	NY
Charlie Petteys	12/01/09	Mechanicville	NY
Philip A. Shoemaker	10/20/09	Scotia	NY
Patrick C. Strohmeyer	09/22/09	Minerva	NY

Interests Report

Pro Racing

Austen J. Levesque	Delmar	NY
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Rally

Austen J. Levesque	Delmar	NY
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Solo

Harold Travis Bryant	Cohoes	NY
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Robert Joseph Parker	Hudson Falls	NY
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Anniversary Report 2009

Name	Joined	Years
	November	
Joseph M. Evers	11/17/94	15
	December	
Connie Ware	12/17/04	5
Mitch Ware	12/17/04	5

2010

Name	Joined	Years
	January	
Thomas E. Dolin	01/01/80	30
Denise Martin Sheridan	01/29/85	25
Kurt A. Weiss	01/17/85	25
Robert F. Smart	01/25/95	15
Byron O'Hara	01/19/00	10
Danielle O'Hara	01/19/00	10

There are 341 members in the region. Last Year: 365 – Down 24 or 6.6%

Membership By State excluding NY

Connecticut	10	Oklahoma	2
Mass	9	Colorado	1
Florida	8	Georgia	1
Vermont	4	Maryland	1
Pennsylvania	3	Minnesota	1
New Jersey	3	New Hampshire	1
West Virginia	2		

Total excluding NY 46

14 States inc. NY No Canadians this year

Web Report

Problems with the message board have been sorted out by Richard Welty.

Updates to the Message board software are coming.

Thanks to Eric Smith and his merry band of moderators for keeping “interesting” spam off the message board.

Eric has a password and will be exercising some webmaster functions.

Thanks to Richard Welty for hosting our site.

Dave Wachtel
Membership Chair/Webmaster

NESCCA™

The 2010 NESCCA schedule can be found on their website at www.nescca.com The MoHud National races scheduled for May 14-15th is not on the NESCCA schedule but is planned.



The “Fun One” at the Watkins Glen race track in October.