

## Annual Banquet Photos

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## And a look ahead to 2013!

**Go-Karts!**  
Plans for more adventures!



**Report on NY Safety Track**  
Davenport, NY

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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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January 2013 RE Report

## *Happy Holidays*

One thing about writing an article for the KO is that it has to be in a couple of weeks before the beginning of the month. For those that don't know, I am always late with my article and have to thank our editor, Lisa Hanifan, for her patience with me. So even with the extra few days that I had, I realized that I forgot to wish all of you a Happy Holiday season in the last Knockoff.

We had our Annual Banquet at the Troy Elks Club. There was a mix up on the dates, but they still made room for us in the bar area. The room was a little small, but that did not dampen the spirit of the event. We have requested the first Saturday in December for next year and they have assured us the large room. If you have not gone to a banquet before, it is a good way to meet up with some old friends and leave having met some new friends. There were a few new faces this year and I hope that they had a good time and will continue to attend.

At the Banquet, we held an election for the 2013 officers. The 2013 slate was presented unopposed to Ron Bass. 1 vote was cast to officially elect your officers. There is 1 change from last year, Todd Boice will be replacing Chip VanSlyke as Treasurer. We would like to thank Chip for his service as Treasurer since 2006.

As for information on the winter go-kart series. This is from a Mo-Hud Facebook page from Eric Smith *"Official MoHud karting schedule will be announced sometime after Christmas, and will be held at Checkers Out in Johnstown, and perhaps an outing to a new facility in Syracuse. Look for events to be held in January, February, and perhaps March, similar to last year."* Keep an eye on the forum or Facebook page for more info.

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/94013471822/>

<http://www.mohud-scca.org/forum/index.php>

## January 2013 Solo Report

Happy Holidays! I forgot last month to wish everyone. I hope everyone is having a good off season. It is not too early to begin preparing for next season. I am not talking about getting your car ready; I am talking about getting you ready. Bad driving habits are hard to break and you need time to make the changes to correct them. Here is your winter assignment to prepare for next season.

**1). Seating position.** Do you drive like you are sitting in a recliner? Move that seatback up. Get closer to the wheel. When sitting, your wrists should be resting on top of the steering wheel without having to reach. You have better control of your steering inputs when you are closer to the wheel.

**2). Hand position.** One hand on top of the wheel and the other on your phone, really, I hope you are parked for this. Both hands need to be on the wheel, and yes at the same time. 10 and 2 is a good place to start. This can be adjusted a little based on steering wheel design and your comfort, but try to stay close. Work on the hand over hand maneuver in tighter turns.

**3). Left foot braking.** Now is the time to work that left foot. Get a feel for the brakes. Next snow storm, go to an empty parking lot and work on threshold braking. Get a good feel of that pedal and how a slight change can make a big difference in how much your car slows. See how much brake you can apply without the ABS turning on. See how much brake you need to let off to get the ABS to stop working. Please work on this when it is safe to do so until you get comfortable with your new abilities and then still be careful.

**4). Don't forget your right foot.** You can still teach this foot some new tricks. If you have a stick shift, work on getting some heel/toe experience. These slippery days can also teach you throttle control. If you can get through a snow storm without spinning your tires, you are getting better with throttle control.

**5). Hand inputs.** Work on smooth inputs and not over-steering. Slippery roads are a great teaching tool. How you control the wheel could make the difference between going home or going in a ditch. When you can safely do so, try to find the edge of grip and no grip. Make small corrections to keep yourself on the border between the two.

**6). Your eyes.** Look ahead! Work on using your peripheral vision, and keep your eyes moving. If you have to focus on one thing, you are missing a lot of other things around you. Be aware of your surroundings. Look to where you want to go. Here is a possible example; you just finished texting your friend, looked up and realize the car in front of you is stopped. You stare at the brake lights and run right into the car. You did not look to see if you could change lanes because you were focused on the stopped car. What should have happened; because you were looking ahead you started slowing down before the car ahead of you because you saw the kid run into the street before they did. You also pulled to the right because the car behind you was too close and you were able to allow for that as well. You knew you could do this

because you had a mental map of what was around you. Being able to make a plan is better than trying to react to a bad situation.

These are a few things that you can work on and they can help you for Solo, PDX, Road Racing, and normal everyday driving. There are many more things you can do, but this can help get you started. Please be careful as you work to perfect these skills.

For those that missed the banquet, here is a copy of my speech. If you won a trophy, please contact me to make arraignments to receive it. [russtduck@nycap.rr.com](mailto:russtduck@nycap.rr.com) or 518-928-4049

### **2012 SOLO Trophy Presentation**

Welcome to the Solo portion of the 2012 Mohawk Hudson Awards Banquet. 2012 was another good year. We held seven point's events, 1 test and tune, a Solo School and 2 Street Survival events. The point's events averaged close to 50 participants again at each event. This is about the same as last year. We did a good job on the dates as the weather was pretty good this year.

I would like to thank our site owners; First off, is the McCarty Ave OGS lot. This continues to be a great site for us. We were surprised at our final event this year to see that the majority of it had been repaved. While it is a small site, it gives the competitors a closer look at what other drivers are doing and by comparing the different styles of driving. Those watching can potentially improve their times. I expect to hold another 3-4 events there next year. Our other site is Fortitech. This was our third year at their facility. We held 3 points events, 2 Street Survivals and the Solo School there this year. This is clearly our biggest and best site. The relationship with the staff at Fortitech is outstanding. You may have heard that Fortitech was bought out by a larger company. After speaking with the staff, I was assured that this will not affect our relationship and we will continue to be welcome there. Wilton Mall had been great to work with even though it was our smallest site, it usually had the biggest draw. Due to an increase of rent that was too much for our budget, we were not able to come to terms with them and could not hold an event there this year. Maybe next year it will be possible.

There are a lot of people I need to thank; Our Safety Stewards are Bruce Kosakoski, Arne Beebe, Phil Shoemaker, Tom Moeller, and Phil Redington. DJ McArdle took care of Registration with the help from Phil Shoemaker. Bert Huiest and Jeff Grossbard combined to set up some great courses. Eric Smith continues to do a great job with Timing and Scoring. Carmine Russo did a great job again as Chief of Tech. Will Schambach is Chief of Waivers. Also thanks to everyone else that has helped out with the events. I would like to thank my fellow Solo Advisory Committee members. Andy Furlong, Bruce Kosakoski, Bert Huiest, Eric Smith, Lyndon Peck, Jeff Kanetzky, Tom Moeller, Will Schambach, and Phil Shoemaker for planning the season and deciding who gets the awards. Jeff Kanetzky has stepped down this year to make room for Phil Shoemaker. Thank you Jeff for your service and welcome to you Phil.

The two new classes, Street tire and Novice, which we added last year, continue to grow. The Street Tire class was added to help accommodate competitors who don't wish to deal with the expenses and complexities of R-comps, and the Novice class was to help better position new attendees with drivers of similar experience levels.

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Before we get to the trophies, there are a couple of people I need to thank; Arn Beebe and his wife Diane for allowing me the opportunity to co-drive their Mustangs over the past 5 seasons. And my wife Tracey, she allowed Arn and me to co-drive her car when the Mustang was getting repaired.

### **CLASS TROPHY WINNERS**

#### **Stock**

3<sup>rd</sup> Place BS —Philip Redington

2<sup>nd</sup> Place CS —Jeff Grossbard

1<sup>st</sup> Place HS —Bill Bennett

#### **Street Prepared**

6<sup>th</sup> Place DSP —Tracey Burckhard (no trophy)

5<sup>th</sup> Place CSP —Tom Moeller (no trophy)

4<sup>th</sup> Place CSP —Greg Cuda

3<sup>rd</sup> Place SSP —Steve Jones

2<sup>nd</sup> Place DSP —Bruce Kosakoski

1<sup>st</sup> Place FSP —Lyndon Peck

#### **Prepared Modified**

3<sup>rd</sup> Place CP —Arn Beebe

2<sup>nd</sup> Place CP —Russ Burckhard

1<sup>st</sup> Place BM —Will Schambach

#### **Street**

5<sup>th</sup> Place STC —Carmine Russo

4<sup>th</sup> Place SM —Phil Shoemaker (no trophy)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place STX —Bert Huiest (no trophy)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place STF —Ian Wallace

1<sup>st</sup> Place SM —Eric Smith

#### **Street Tire**

5<sup>th</sup> Place BSP —DJ McArdle

4<sup>th</sup> Place AS —Scott Cherry

3<sup>rd</sup> Place SM —Devin LeMoine

2<sup>nd</sup> Place ASP —Paul Severino

1<sup>st</sup> Place DSP —Nelson Guay

#### **Novice**

6<sup>th</sup> Place STR —Paul Bishop

5<sup>th</sup> Place HS —Scot Carpenter

4<sup>th</sup> Place GS —John Rogers

3<sup>rd</sup> Place SSM —Gregory Pecora

2<sup>nd</sup> Place ES —William Dergostis

1<sup>st</sup> Place DS —Russell Gorman

### **SPECIALTY TROPHIES**

#### ***Novice of the year***

The Novice of the year winner always seems to be one of the hardest to pick. The 2012 winner

was the toughest pick again this year. We had three nominees that made impressive debuts. Our first nominee won the Novice Points battle. While he never placed first at an event, he never finished worse than 5<sup>th</sup>. Russ Gorman was strong from the start and was consistent all season. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> nominee finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the points. John Rogers ran a car that even he could tell you was not up to the challenge to win in his class. He showed improvement throughout the year and had a best finish of 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our final nominee finished 5<sup>th</sup> in points. Scot Carpenter is a quick learner. In his first event he had earned a 10<sup>th</sup> place finish about 2.3 seconds behind the winner. The next 3 events he finished first in class by at least 4 tenths of a second. The Novice School before the final 3 events showed improvements in all of those that attended, but not as much as what Scot had improved. In a close vote, the 2012 Novice Driver of the Year is Scot Carpenter.

### ***Most Improved Driver***

The nominee for this year's Most Improved Driver had shown a pretty good improvement from last year. While he was not bad last year, all of his 2011 finishes were either 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 6<sup>th</sup>. Last year his points finish in class was 4<sup>th</sup>. This year he improved to 2<sup>nd</sup> in a very tough class. This year his finishes went from 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup>. This is further proof of his improvement. He wound out the season 2<sup>nd</sup> in his class. The 2012 Most Improved Driver is Ian Wallace

### ***Female Driver of the Year***

This year we had 5 female competitors at our events. Unfortunately only 2 went to more than one event. And one of those had only made 2 events. So we only had 1 driver that was eligible for the Female Driver of the Year. Now don't get me wrong, it was not from lack of trying on my part. I am very active in trying to recruit more women to compete. That said, I don't want to take away from the accomplishments of this driver. With one of her 3 Tire classed events, she posted a best of a 5<sup>th</sup> place finish. Sticky tires were added moving her from that class and the future plan of a set of springs netted her another 5<sup>th</sup> place finish in Street Prepared. The install of the springs brought the car closer to her new competitors and she finished the year out with 4<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> place finishes. This gave her a 6<sup>th</sup> place Street Prepared points finish despite missing the 3 events that she was in the different class. The 2012 Female Driver of the year is Tracey Burckhard.

### ***Driver of the Year***

This year's Driver of the Year had some impressive finishes. He had finished the top of his class at every event. His closest competitor was a quarter of a second slower at one event and that gap spread to close to 2 seconds at others. Not only were his times fast for his class, they were also very good on the PAX. His Pax finishes were 2<sup>nd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> for an average finish of 2.1. No one else was even close to him. The 2012 Driver of the Year is Bill Bennett

### ***Worker of the Year***

This is the hardest award for me to give out because we have to narrow it down to just one person. There are many that help out throughout the year and the program would not be what it is without all of the help. No job is too small and every job is important. I would like to take a moment to thank everyone that has helped with the Solo program this year. This year's winner has been a huge help at all of the events. He helps out before, during, and after the events. He has even taken jobs home with him to prepare for upcoming events. There is nothing that he will not help out with and takes it on himself to look for potential problems

and comes up with solutions before they become problems. The 2012 winner of the Worker of the year is Tom Moeller

### ***Street Survival Appreciation Award***

This year in association with the Patroon BMW Club we held 2 Tire Rack Street Survival Event. For those who do not know what that is, it is a program that is geared to helping young drivers the opportunity to learn how to drive their vehicle under some extreme conditions. The training includes driving and class time that takes over where driver's education leaves off. It gives the students the opportunity to see what their vehicle will do when it is pushed to its limits in a controlled environment. These are situations that more than likely will arise at some point while driving down the road. These students now have a good idea what will happen and what to do when it does.

Some people to thank; Fortitech allowed us to use their site again this year. Auto Solutions / Storage Solutions provided a tractor trailer for one of the learning exercises. Miguel Teixeira provided Dunkin Donuts for breakfast. North Country Imports provided an airbag for a demonstration. The State Police for their roll over simulator. The Patroon BMW Club and their members.

For the last two years, this person was at all of the events. Not only did he help out during the event, but he also helped with the planning and preparation. I can honestly say that without the efforts of this person, our events would not be as good as they are. The way that he captures the attention of his students and keeps them interested and involved is a talent all in itself. It is my pleasure to award Chief Instructor, Brian Bailey with the Street Survival Appreciation Award.

### ***PDX Appreciation Award***

This award is to recognize an individual that because of their efforts, the event is raised to a higher standard. This is the third year in a row Mohud has put on a **P**erformance **D**riving **eX**perience. This was the second year in a row that it was held at Lime Rock Park. This was my first PDX as a participant. Instead of observing random portions of the event as I had done for the previous event, I had the pleasure of seeing what the students see firsthand. The staff assembled was truly professional. We, as participants, had a full day's mix of classroom training, driving time, and down time where we could absorb what we were being taught. There are many who were at the event deserving of this award, but this person stands out amongst them because of his passion and dedication to the program. He is responsible for making sure that all of the students are matched up with instructors that would best suit their needs and for making sure that the students are in the correct run groups. It is my pleasure to award the Chief Instructors, Kevin Belden with the PDX Appreciation Award.



# 2012 Annual Banquet





# COMPETITION REPORT Jack Hanifan

## 2012 Road Racing Awards

**New York State Road Racing Championship-** The following were awarded trophies at the NYSRRC Award Banquet:

EP Champion—George Kline

FP Champion—Jack Hanifan

HP Champion—Thom O'Connor

SM2 Champion—Bob Karl Jr. 2<sup>nd</sup> Place—BK Karl

NYSRRC Most Improved Driver—BK Karl

SSM—TJ Hanifan

## Mohawk-Hudson Awards

**Dave Riggi Memorial Award**—This award is presented to a participant who has demonstrated their dedication to the sport by assisting competitors with their race cars. The 2012 recipient was **Dave Reynolds**. Dave a former MGA G Production racer has returned to the sport as Crew Chief for his son Tyler, a FV competitor. In addition to helping Tyler and other FV drivers, David spent a good part of an afternoon at Watkins Glen assisting a GTL Mini Cooper driver.

**Mohawk Hudson Regional Road Racing Championship—TJ Hanifan**, TJ accumulated the most points closely followed by Bob Karl Jr.

**Paul Hacker Regional Driver of the Year—TJ Hanifan**, TJ dominated SSM winning every race he entered including the MoHud race at Lime Rock. He also set a Lap Record at Watkins Glen on Sunday at the Fun One.

**Paul Hacker National Driver of the Year—Charlie Campbell**, Charlie had a great season winning NESCCA Championships in both SM and FP. Charlie was named the NESCCA Driver of the Year; previous drivers who have won that award include Mark Donahue and Tommy Kendall to name a few. At the SCCA Runoffs Charlie was as high as 2<sup>nd</sup> place in his FP Miata when he was forced to retire due to transmission failure. He also had a good race in SM.

**Worker Awards**—DJ McCardle, Jim Bucci, Gene Tricozzi, Russ Burckhard and Jack Hanifan accumulated enough points to receive awards.

**McClumpha - Lewis Award—Will Shambach** was competing at Road Atlanta and was not present to receive his award. Will among other things: attended every meeting, worked the Solo program, attended the National Convention and The Street Survival Summit, worked the race, attend the NeDiv Roundtable and chaired our Tire Rack Street Survival programs. Will will be presented with a jacket and his name will be engraved on the Trophy which is on permanent display in the **Mohawk-Hudson Region section of the Saratoga Auto Museum**.

## COMPETITION REPORT *CONTINUED*

**Christmas Toys-** Congratulations to the members of MoHud, the toys you brought to the Annual Meeting helped the needy kids assisted by Unity House.

**New York Safety Track-** I recently had the opportunity to visit the New York Safety Track which is located in Davenport, NY. The track is 65 miles from Albany, to get there I took I88 to the Schenevus Exit and went south about 10 miles. I took a little over an hour to get there from my house in Albany. I would estimate towing time to be less than an hour and a half. The track is now paved but they expect to add another layer in early spring. The pits have to be lengthened and a false grid has to be added. They are presently working to enlarge the paddock and support buildings still have to be located. FIA berms and flag stations have to be added. Runoff is greater than it appears on videos on their website. Tire walls will have to be added in several locations. I have contacted SCCA National and we are in the process of helping the track make arrangements to be certified for SCCA completion. There are no plans to race there in 2013 but we would like to race there in 2014. There is a possibility we could have a PDX in 2013. It is hoped that we could run the track both clockwise and counter-clockwise. Clockwise is a little more interesting with a blind lefthander. Go to [NYSafetytrack.com](http://NYSafetytrack.com) for more information.

### Will Schambach's Reaches Out to Members – & Gives a Report on the Solo Nationals

Before my summary, I would again like to reach out to the MoHud membership in the hopes that you all attend an event that you wouldn't normally attend. Autocrossers, spectate (or better yet, volunteer to work) at a Club Race. Club Racers, bring those race cars out to a Solo event. Go out and compete in another region. Regional-only Solo competitors, if you can't make the commitment to attend Nationals, at least get out to a Tour or Pro when they come into the Division. Heck, even just come out to a monthly Membership meeting, held the first Wednesday of each month at the Orchard Tavern in Albany, intense bench racing starts around 6:30 or 7:00.

At one point during the event in Lincoln Nebraska, I looked around at all the cars and competitors and thought that this would be a very very cool car show, being able to watch the tight competition is icing on that cake, and then being able to be in the thick of that competition, it's just an epic event! Kudos to all the competitors that went to the event.. Every single time I'm lucky enough to come across a fellow club member, I am struck by their dedication to our hobby, regardless of how that dedication materializes, and at Solo Nationals this is evident on a very large scale.

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It's been said before, but it's worth repeating that it's the people that make doing this motorsport thing possible and fun. I owe a big thanks to my wife and kids for giving their encouragement for me to participate. It's not always easy to say goodbye to them for the weekend or week, but the homecoming almost makes it worth it. I'd also like to thank my car owner, friend and co-driver Jim Garry for allowing me to work with him and drive this very special machine. Jim's reputation as a really amazingly committed car-tinkerer and adjuster is well-founded, and even a bit under-rated! In the past with my own cars, I've been loathe to make some substantial but well-needed changes, perhaps just out of laziness or frugality. Jim will be sure to make as many well thought-out changes as he feels necessary, right up to and during an event. At times the changes have not helped to the degree we had anticipated, but everything has been done with a purpose, at times it's just been educational. The sum total result of all the work done on the car has been many many incremental changes that have made the car more comfortable to drive and faster on course.

Thanks are also due to the following people, all for a large variety of reasons, but all whom encouraged me greatly while competing at the 2012 Solo Nationals: Arn Beebe, Kathy Barnes, Bill Goodale, Ken Hurd, Alex Shchipkov, Olga Bogdanova, Anthony Defiore, Allen and Denise Kugler, Jeff Hurst, and Chris Travis. I also was encouraged by some folks wishing me well from home, by text, phone, or facebook: EJ Smith, Darren Darby, and Ed Jeffries. It was truly awesome to know that there were people out there rooting for us to do well, the effect of this cannot be minimized.

Upon arriving on the Nationals site on Saturday afternoon, Jim and I almost immediately ventured onto the practice course, which was to be our first time on a concrete surface with this car. It was pretty nice to have the Saturday time slot on the practice course, as there were relatively few cars there, so we could just work on our program. I found the car to be pretty much the same as it's been in all late-season runs, still great in transition, but still very prone to understeer in steady state. Also in these initial runs, I wasn't very optimistic in the outright speed of the car on course, and I went into the evening not feeling so great about things.

We had a few more slots scheduled for the practice course on Sunday, and we had a plan to try a few adjustments and also to scrub in our new set of tires for Nationals competition. During these sets of runs, the car was again pretty much the same as it had been on the asphalt, but the good news upon bolting the new tires on it was that the overall grip level went up a modest but noticeable amount. Furthermore, although not all of our competitors were present during these sessions, at least by initial impression we had pretty comparable speed to a couple of the BMod cars that were there. Granted, the race doesn't occur on the practice course, but my fragile constitution needed some reassurance that I was at least faster than a Stock Class Corolla!

The rest of Sunday, we spent watching additional cars on the practice course, and I was feeling better and better about our car's outright speed at that point, as our raw times were pretty comparable to the rest of the BMod runners that we saw on course.

Fast forward to Nationals competition, I felt that the course we were running on our day one, which was the West Course, would suit our car better than the other course, as I felt it was more open and flowing and less technical than the other course. On my first run of this course, I felt I had a really good run going, and pretty much hit all my marks. Until the last corner, that

is! I had convinced myself that the exit of the last slalom, which exited into the finish, could be taken flat out. It couldn't, and I found myself staring down all the "stuff" driver's left at the finish (cones, timing lights, etc)! I practically stopped the car to avoid the stuff, ending up clean but not so fast.

I was bummed, but still hopeful. That hope was pretty much shattered on the last two runs on day one, as on those two runs I missed the first-to-second gear shift on both runs, both leading into the most important power section on the course. The car literally coasted on that beautiful straightaway for a 'one Mississippi' count...I'm not so happy at this point. Now granted, I think at this point both Jim and I were somewhere among the top half of the field, but sitting on that one crummy run after day one was not all that I'd been dreaming about all year!

For day two, I resolved to resurrect the most out of my Nationals experience: go fast and stay calm on the more technical and brainy East Course. First run was kind of a strange one, I ended up feeling lost coming into and through the strange 'Tilt-a-Whirl' section. Pulling back to grid, I'd more or less assumed I was off course here. In fact, I wasn't, and on the contrary, I was receiving the accolades of my fellow competitors on what they considered a really fast run! Cool! At this point, I took the opportunity to study the course map a little more, and also watched some cars on course to figure out where I'd gotten "lost" out there. Second run, it ended up being more of the same. I felt lost again, but I still wasn't off course, and I was relatively fast.

At this point, the nerves were coming back. I wasn't altogether sure where I was standing, but I knew I had been able to claw back well into the trophy spots. With one last run left, I thought I may have been able to pull off some sort of Miracle. I also got some quiet secret encouragement/coaching from a Mystery Coach, and I went out with speed in mind. And to be honest, I really did piece together one helluva run there. I didn't even get "lost" again! I transited the fast sections flat out, I killed the slaloms, I nailed the up-down-up shifts, and I knew I was putting in a flyer. And then I hit THE CONE. I was thinking more about my success than what I was doing. I fogged out. And I hit THE CONE. Given the speed I knew I had, and the times of the guys that went before me, I thought I had given away the big one.

With some relief, I later learned that even had I not coned that run, the eventual winner would have still won. But man, what mixed emotions! A super fast run on a really really difficult course, it was, in the end, pretty satisfying.

Overall and in retrospect, for Jim and me to go into the winter with a pair of Solo Nationals trophies after our first year campaigning the car, it is not a bad result whatsoever.

–Will Schambach

# 2012 SOLO NATIONALS

*from Arn & Diane Beebe*

Third time's the charm...right? That all depends on your perspective. 2012 was our third year with the black Mustang and our third trip to Lincon, Nebraska. The trip out was trouble free and we even spotted last years wrong turn or more accurately, missed exit ramp, before we had reached Gary Indiana. Like the people who go round in circles say, 8 wheels work better than 4.

We arrived in Lincoln early Saturday afternoon, checked in at our hotel and went out to get the rental car and check in at registration. I usually leave the truck and trailer hooked up and parked in my paddock space for the duration, because trying to park the truck in a restaurant parking space is so not fun that I try to avoid it at all times. The paddock system was brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century this year (someone computerized it). Seemed like an improvement to me and I imagine next year it will be even better. So the first person I see is Ken Hurd as the human interface with paddock registration. Then you go to the other side of the tent for event registration and receive your work assignment where I greet two of the women that I know from CP Ladies autocross events. I've been here less than 10 minutes and the first three people that I meet are all people that I know. There is so much more to Nationals than 6 minutes of driving.

Our paddock spot is in the same row as Jm and Will (thankyou for making that happen Will) just a couple of spots down from them. While waiting for Diane to find our row I'm able to hear some of the commentary from the Challenge round of the Pro Solo Finals and I hear Alex Schipkov win and move on to the next round, this is off to an excellent start. Only been here an hour so far. So that's about it for today, now it's time to think about where to have my first steak for this year's trip.



Monday is busy for a day without any driving, first is to unload the car, put the slicks on and get it to tech inspection and don't forget to get it weighed on the official scales. I haven't put any gas in it since the start of my last outing 2 weeks before at Devens MA so I hit the scales at 2755 lbs. Less than a gallon of fuel above the minimum but legal. I better remember to fill the fuel cell right to the rollover valve last thing before going to grid both days. While I'm doing these little housekeeping jobs Diane is handling the important stuff, like getting the golfcart so I will be able to walk unassisted dinnertimes after walking the course (almost 20 times this year).



*Mark and I discussing the car. The blue Mustang on our left belongs to Don Slevin, a friend from NNJ region, with my beast to our right.*

2012 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Solo Nationals and one of the special events this year was the Ladies of Solo Luncheon that Diane went to. I told her that she has put in so much time and effort into Solo events that she certainly belongs there, and this year she agreed to be my crew during the competition. When I picked her up after the luncheon she said she shared a table with Deedee and Liz, 2 CP Ladies class competitors that we knew from previous years and that they had enjoyed themselves very much. Several women talked about the earlier days of racing and the beginning of the ladies classes. Even though many of them wanted to run in the open classes, they were offered fully funded rides only if they ran in the ladies classes and also if they ran on specific



*Ladies Solo Luncheon*

brands of tires. The food was good, the gifts (pink T shirt and coffee mug) were inspired, and everyone had a good time.

Monday evening was the traditional CP party where all of us who care to, get together to share some good food, adult beverages, be careful with the Jello shots, and trade stories and tall tales. In the records that SCCA keeps there are a group called the 100 percenters, 8 of them total who have been to all 40 Nationals and 3 of them run CP cars. Good conversations indeed.

Tuesday I spent hours at the site of the test n tune area trying to figure out the course without having walked it even once because I have booked a session for myself later that day. I plan to scrape the new off my slicks and after talking with Mark Daddio, offer him a few runs in the



Mustang, to which he graciously agreed. Test n tune at the Nationals is really uniquely useful because you have no duties or responsibilities other than to drive the car and try to learn as much as you can. You get 1 hour to put in 4 timed runs and you can adjust the car to your hearts content, and no work assignments. I had a plan with an objective this year. There were timing problems on the practice course that afternoon and I'm not exactly sure how many runs we ended up making then but I parked the car because the water temp was way high, Mark had already declined more runs because he didn't want to be the one who blew up the now failing differential, preferring to leave that honour to the owner. Before we parted ways for that day we had a good debriefing and Mark told me that if I fixed 2 problem areas, he felt the car would be solidly in the trophies!!! During the subsequent week I have never had so many people come by and look so intently at my car. It turns out that when talking with other people, Mark had said really good things about my beast! I was able to get my helmet on by the time CP ran at the end of the week. It's only Tuesday and I have gotten more out of this nationals than in all my previous Nationals combined and I will surely learn even more (I stole that from Matt Murray) but now it is time to contemplate tonight's Nebraska steak. Looking forward to next year's Nationals



– Arnie and Diane

**Remember...**  
**Next Membership Meeting**  
**Wednesday, January 2**  
**7:30 pm**  
**Orchard Tavern**  
**Albany, NY**