

Snow Comes to the Competition School at Thompson



Pitfalls of early events in the northeast. Stalwart Mohudder's helped out at the school. Visible in the background is Jim Cutler's Mazda 3 (light blue) and Sal Baisley's Ford Focus (dark blue/red).

The REport

Hey all,

As usual I am creating the REport after the official deadline, but once again that helps decide a topic for discussion. Before I decided that I wanted to go all in with Miatas for road racing I talked with Chip about what goes into racing his Formula Ford. He gave a long list of tasks that those fragile machines require between each event. At that point I knew that a production based car was for me, as was



made clear at the drivers school where I realized I never even checked the tire pressures on the car that hadn't been set for over 6 months prior. This is a bit extreme, but I know that there's a part of everyone's fleet that is forgotten while we are

getting our race cars ready for the season: the tow vehicle and trailer. Up until this past weekend I have



not had brakes that worked on my trailer for about 2 years now. The tail light on one side

was zip tied on after learning what the cement barriers are used for at gas stations, and I still have my fender held on by a ratchet strap (which will hopefully be resolved by the time this is published). In all the work on my vehicles I neglected the vehicle that actually gets everything from and to the track.



But as I spent my Monday evening working on the Mohud bus I was reminded the importance of checking tire age. Years ago when I was still a volunteer firefighter we were coming back from an event and had a call on the way causing us to have to carry some speed on the highway in our brush truck (a HD silverado with a water tank and pump in the back). The next week I was driving normally to get some hose pressure tested when I heard a thumping coming from the rear end. Eventually the tire tread completely came off the metal tire carcass, throwing it as a single piece into the oncoming traffic.

continued



Upon inspection the tires, with only a few thousand miles on them, were around 10 years old and original. Come to today, and while on the way to do maintenance on the bus EJ mentioned checking the tire dates. Before I can even look, Russ mentioned that we would at least need 2 tires as we can see the dry rot on the rear. Upon inspection I found that the rear tires were manufactured in 2011 while the



fronts that look brand new (as they were put on the bus when we acquired it) were made in 2015. So this is your reminder to check your tires not only on your race cars but tow rigs and trailers alike. All DOT tires will have a code on one side of the tire consisting of 4 digits, if you don't see it from the outside you might need to peek on the inside. The first 2 digits are the week of the year that the tires were made while the last 2 are the year they were manufactured. Checking that along with the pressure in your tires will save you a lot of excitement down the road.

See you all at a future event/the May membership meeting back at The Hedge,

Sal

Editor's note:

Tire aging is a particular problem for our tow vehicles and trailers. Our street and race cars usually wear out or heat cycle to death long before they age out. But environmental factors such as exposure to UV light will age a tire even when it is not being used.

According to Tire Rack, tires can age out in 6-10 years while Ford and GM both recommend tires be used no longer than 6 years.

And don't forget the spare!

https://www.tirerack.com/upgrade-garage/how-does-age-affect-tires-part-1?gclid=Cj0KCQjwiLLABhCEARIsAJYS6ulweeFDN28zjb20WgWSgAkprCCy0c82nujW8j4GeQ6aD1XLhx_9P4aAlzcEALw_wcB&ef_id=Cj0KCQjwiLLABhCEARIsAJYS6ulweeFDN28zjb20WgWSgAkprCCy0c82nujW8j4GeQ6aD1XLhx_9P4aAlzcEALw_wcB:G:s&s_kwcid=AL!3756!3!386427243778!!!g!!&gclidsrc=aw.ds&&affiliate=HM5&gad_source=1&qbraid=0AAAAAD_rH_9ctPrJFBeHx0H-kzB4DsVQc

From the Editor

We did it again! Around this time last year SCCA made the cover of the Summit Racing catalog and we have done it again with Aaron Quine's TA2 Chevy Camaro. I wonder if a club car will make it someday?



My neighbor getting them started right.



In other news I will be coordinating the Mo-Hud contingent to the Spring Auto show **May 10th at SAM**. We try for a mix of road racing and Autocross cars. Please contact me at chipv87@gmail.com if interested in displaying your car. You won't be officially entered in the show but it's free.

Otherwise it's \$10 for spectators, gates open at 9 and runs till 2 with trophies usually around 1.

<https://www.saratogaautomuseum.org/events/2025/5/10/spring-auto-show>

What's Happening

May 7, 2025 **Monthly membership meeting at the Hedge Bistro, 2350 Western Ave, Guilderland (go in the entrance to the Western Tpk Golf Course)**

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/icQBqkfXNZgEdPKC6>

May 10, 2024 **Spring Auto Show, Saratoga Automobile Museum, Avenue of the Pines Saratoga NY. Contact Chip Van Slyke (chipv87@gmail.com) if interested in showing.**

Sept 1-5, 2025 **Solo National Championship – Lincoln Airpark, NE**

Sept 29-Oct 5, 2025 **The Runoffs National Championship – Road America, Elkhart Lake, WI**

Check out the full regional calendar at:

https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=4l0pcskqj0sbmtq8scke5et658%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America%2FNew_York

Tales from the Track

Not at the track yet but we're working on it! Tech Party on April 12th. Thanks to Rich Welty, George Harmuth, and Sal Baisley for checking gear, inspecting cars and issuing logbooks to keep us safe and on track!



Hosted by North Country Subaru in Queensbury, NY



2017 P1 National Champion Johnathan Eriksen and our gracious host Jared Lendrum

The weather was not delightful but fortunately NC Subaru has plenty of room in their service shop to accommodate the cars and keep the participants dry. Only one car had to be teched outside (at a lull in the storm) yours truly.



Vince Gentile, Jim Cutler, and Max LuxRamos stand next to Jim's C-Spec Mazda 3

A great day for British cars (i.e. rainy). Scott Stickle's E-Type Jaguar occupies the back bay of the North Country Subaru service shop



Rich Welty and George Harmuth work on getting this new build a logbook

A Cautionary Tale For Our Time

-by Greg Rickes

Our colleagues at the Adirondack Motor Enthusiasts Club (AMEC) have gone through the soul-searching process of what the future holds for their club. AMEC has been the prime group organizing ice races in our area since the mid 1960s. A series of mild winters has put their future into jeopardy. But it's not the weather alone which has taken its toll; there's also the dilemma of a lack of people ready to do the work of putting on events.

I encourage you to thoughtfully read the comments of long-time AMEC President and Event Chairman (and also a MoHud member) Dave Burnham. The existential challenge to AMEC is not that far removed from what MoHud could face in the future.

"AMEC had our in person monthly meeting last night at Tops Diner in Rotterdam. It was pretty well attended with about 15 members present. We discussed the future of AMEC and here is what we discussed. It was pretty clear that we really have no clear path forward. It was agreed by all that we will not have ice racing as our primary focus until the climate is favorable again for us. It was also clear that most everyone in attendance was not willing or enthused to lead the club into anything new. Unfortunately, (while) AMEC has a lot of people who say they will help, but no one who'll take the lead right now. A club always needs a couple of extremely motivated and driven people to take the lead and make things happen. Having said that Tom Compoli will poke around a little bit to look into doing a rally cross and Tim Cotrofeld will help to do an autocross at Edinburgh but not until the fall.

We have people willing to show up to race, and we have people willing to show up on race day to help but nobody is super willing or motivated to do any of the pre setup and leg work to make events happen. I kind of knew this immediately after everyone showed up. Because most everyone that came were the clubs' same old guys. Don't get me wrong we had a great time reminiscing about the "good old days" and we did talk a lot about what to do, when to do it, etc. But nothing will happen anytime soon unless somebody dives in headfirst to take a lead role. It is what it is, and most all clubs are having the same issues.

So, in May we will have another zoom meeting then in June we will have another in person meeting. But what it looks like is AMEC will probably not do much over the summer. We will have our January 2026 election of officer's banquet which will probably be free to all AMEC members past and present, and this meeting will be more like a racer's reunion than anything else. So, unless anyone new out there is willing to take the ball and really run with it, AMEC may settle into an old racers club that had tons of fun in the past. This is not a bad thing, nothing lasts forever. We had a good run of 71 years so far and the club is not shutting down we are just not doing much. Feel free to leave some comments but we don't need more ideas on stuff to do. We need people willing to make the ideas happen"

Times have changed and participation and volunteerism are not the same as generations ago, but if you've taken the time and money to join MoHud what's holding you back from getting involved? The leadership of the region and our various programs make a genuine effort to extend a welcoming environment, but the initiative has to start with each member. Any contribution of your time and enthusiasm is welcome, we all started out getting involved in some small way: spend an hour or so helping to set up for our Tire Rack Street Survival, join us for one of our summer ice cream social get-togethers, grab a partner and try our next Road Rallye, send some photos of your garage project to our Facebook page and/or The Knock-Off newsletter, come down to Lime Rock Park and find out what a "Paddock Crawl" is all about. Our aim is to have fun with cars, and the people who drive them. All we need is you 😊

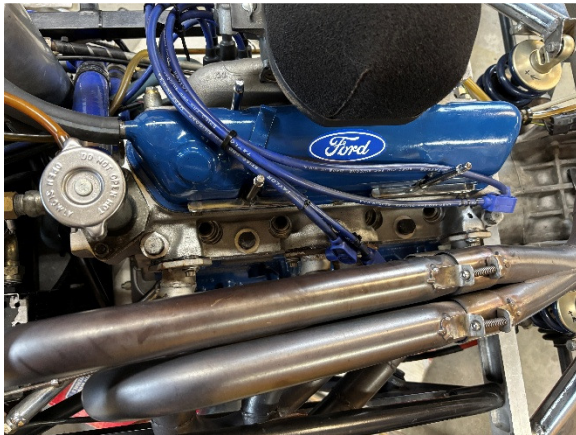
The DIY'er

By Chip VanSlyke

Project Kent build this month: First Fire

First fire is always tense since there are a bunch of things that can go wrong. Mostly unexpected leaks. Many of these problems will require removing the engine. I was particularly worried about the rear crank seal. Very troublesome in the past, last year I had finally found the formula to keep it from leaking. It involved applying RTV to both sides of the gasket, effectively using it as glue to keep the seal from shifting from when the sump is bolted on. I usually use as little RTV as possible because I hate the cleanup (since I know it's me who will be taking it apart). This time around I didn't allow enough time to let the RTV cure and I could visibly observe mis-alignment of the seal. I decided to chance it. By the time it was fired up the RTV would be cured and the seal shouldn't be able to move any more.

I would also like to cite most of my knowledge of FF engines and the first fire procedure come from "How to Build and Maintain Competitive Formula Ford 1600 Engines" by Jake Lamont and Tom Andreson.



The goals of first fire are 1) ensure the motor works and has no major leaks. 2) set the ignition timing 3) warm the engine to make the final valve lash adjustment. And finally, 4) to break in new components which are primarily the piston rings, cam lobes and tappets. In this case, I am re-using the cam and tappets which are only one season old.

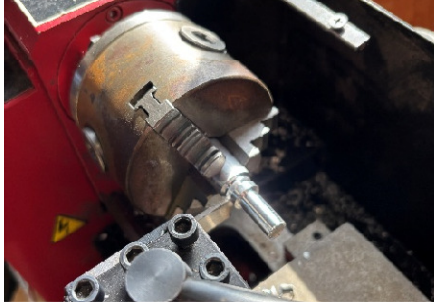
Before cranking, the engine should be primed with oil. After putting oil in the reservoir and sump this involves, with the ignition coil disconnected and the spark plugs removed, cranking the engine until you can see some oil pressure. Some books say 20psi but it really doesn't matter. The point is if you get any pressure at all that means the system is primed. I would only worry if I couldn't get more than 10 or so. Note this is also a best practice on any motor that has been sitting a while: like your first fire of the spring after the winter break.

And speaking of oil, the reservoir was filled with two quarts of break-in oil which is touted to lubricate while promoting seating of the new components. One quart was poured in the oil sump just to keep it from running dry.

For a non-alternator so called "total loss" system like a Kent, a battery charger is left connected to maintain voltage. And my latest enhancement, a leaf blower pointed at the radiator to maintain temperature. I have found with this setup I can run at 2000 rpm pretty much indefinitely.

Hope for the best and prepare for the worst: have a fire extinguisher handy. It's also not a bad idea to have the car on the floor with wheels attached and a clear shot out your garage door. If it was to catch fire you would hate for it to take your garage down with it.





But wait, one more side project. I noticed the original dipstick hole in the block was still open and no plug was provided. On the old motor they had tapped that hole out and added a pipe plug. But I don't want to cut chips on the assembled motor so instead, fabricated an aluminum plug and held it in place with RTV.

Now it's ready. The timing is also always a guess so I would be lucky to get it to fire up right away. In this case it turned out the timing wasn't too bad; the problem was the cold. It was only in the low 40s which is the low end of the operating range for this

carbureted car with no choke. So after a few tries and some (unnecessary) tweaking of the distributor, it came to life. Immediately, while holding the throttle with one hand, verify oil pressure and look for leaks. For old cars with a screw idle adjustment its best for now just to prop the blades open until you can get it warm and timed.



Good news: no leaks! Next priority is setting the timing. For the Kent race engines, full timing is set (versus static timing that is used for most street cars). This means bringing the engine up to an RPM where all mechanical advance is dialed in which is around 4000 RPM.



The Crossle configuration makes it difficult to use the timing window at top dead center on the flywheel so I have fashioned an easier view with special marks on an exposed area of the lower bell housing. The value we are looking for is 39 +/- 1 degree. Details such as head material, compression ratio, and fuel octane can vary this number and the only way to optimize it is on a dyno. But the 39 degree value gets us close. Because I have aluminum heads I do try to shoot for closer to 40 degrees.



With that taken care of, next on the list is valve lash. This can be done once the engine has reached full temperature. This is done with the motor shut off and the valve cover removed. I also recommend removing the spark plugs to make it easier to turn over by hand. Adjustment is done with the valves fully seated so that's at TDC of the cylinder's ignition stroke. With an iron head, the cold adjustment gets you pretty close and not much adjustment is needed but with an aluminum head with its different expansion coefficient, the difference is significant.

With the valve lash done, the next step is to complete the break-in. Many references will tell you this is best done at part throttle through an RPM range of 2000-3000 rpm. Since this is essentially how you drive on the street, if your car is registered then that's ideal. Otherwise, you need to do it on a dyno which is what a builder would do. I'm not going to go through that trouble and expense however so my plan is to accumulate around 1 hour of operation at 2-3000 rpm in the shop.

Admittedly this won't fully break the motor in. As a gage of how well the motor is broken in, leak-down testing can be used. Leak down testing applies a pressure, usually 100psi, upstream of a 1mm orifice and measures the pressure on both sides of the orifice with the lower pressure applied to the cylinder.



This is essentially an orifice flow meter but instead of using units of flow (like CFM) we typically use the pressure differential as a benchmark. Since 100psi on both sides would be 0 leakage that's considered perfect. Good motors should read 95% pressure differential or better.

The motor should be hot. Then test each cylinder at top dead center of its compression/ignition stroke. (make sure to put the car in gear and block the tires so the engine doesn't try to turn over).

The first test showed high 80s and low 90s indicating the rings are not quite broken in yet. One variable that

complicates this is valve seating. I'd like to think these valves are well seated since I did a valve job right before the last race of '24. But the test data showed only 60% on cylinder 3 and I can hear it out the exhaust. The problem is the motor has been sitting all winter and there may be corrosion on the seats. This also makes the other measurements suspicious. I'm hoping this will improve as the motor actually runs in the real world. Ideally the % difference will continue to climb until it reaches a peak which we can say is that motor's peak level of performance for that build life, then slowly drop off as it gets used. I plan to measure after the first event (or first on track session of possible) then probably after each event this season, then at the end of each season thereafter.

This is the last official installment of the Kent build project. Thanks to all the positive feedback that you folks have given me. It is quite the motivator you know the articles are being read. I have found this project very satisfying especially firing up with no issues. Look for updates on the engine's performance in the editor's notes as we go through the year.

Mohawk-Hudson SCCA Treasurer's Report – May 2025

At the end of March 2025, the checking account balance was \$28,152.23.

April banking activity was busy with the Waving Grass GTA Rally, MoHud Bus Insurance payment, Road Rally expenses and SCCA membership dues reimbursement for March 2025.

As of April 20, 2025, the checking account balance is \$27,215.59.

We are waiting for the remaining transactions for GTA Rally – Waving Grass:

ACH transaction to SCCA for Social Event Fee and Weekend Membership registrations,

EFT reimbursement transaction from Motor Sport Reg for on-line registrations.

These transactions are expected to be processed by end of April.

"Thank You" to Harry Adalian for the donation of the Road Racing Tech Stamps!

"Thank You" to Diane Malecki for the monetary donation toward breakfast at the TRSS event!

Looking ahead...

April's Tire Rack Street Survival (TRSS) will bring both income and expense transactions.

The TRSS students, and parents, come away from the event with a new knowledge of how their personal vehicles react under certain conditions (wet, braking, maneuvering through cones), and classroom discussion. If available, there are other very cool experiences. And, of course, breakfast and lunch are provided!

Since the MoHud Board and Membership (April meeting) approved moving MoHud SCCA's funds to Broadview Federal Credit Union into interest bearing accounts, paperwork will be set in motion to transfer monies from Citizens Bank to Broadview FCU to open a Money Market/Checking account and short-term CD.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 3/02/2025

Meeting was held at The Hedge Bistro on 3/02/2025 Meeting was called to order by Sal Baisley at 7PM

A motion to accept the minutes as published in the Knock Off for the month of March was brought by Diane Malecki and seconded by Sheri DeJan

MEMBERSHIP REPORT - JIM GARRY

- As of the 2nd of April, membership totaled 327 with 12 of them being new and returning members
- See the membership report published in the Knockoff for more details related to new members and important anniversaries

KNOCKOFF - CHIP VANSLYKE

- Anyone looking to add anything to the Knockoff, please have submission to Chip by the 20th of the month

TREASURER'S REPORT - PAT CLAIR

- As of the 2nd of April, balance in the account was \$28,152.23
- Pat has investigated the possibility of switching from Citizens Bank to Broadview. She has discovered that Citizens Bank is not very business friendly compared to Broadview. Another benefit of switching to a business account through Broadview is gaining the ability of collecting passive income based on the amount in our account
- A motion was brought by Diane Malecki and seconded by Rich Welty to allow Pat Clair to make the switch from Citizens Bank to Broadview at the end of May. All present members voted and the motion passed
- A motion was brought by Rich Welty and seconded by Phil Dejan to make only Pat Clair and Sal Baisley signers on the club's bank account. All present members voted and the motion passed
- The wait for the account switch is due to a busy April and the board has decided to wait until the end of May to make the switch easier on all involved

SOLO - RUSS BURKHART

- The hunt for new sites is still ongoing
- We have 4 events on the calendar: 7/13+27 and 8/10+24
- More solo events are being held in our area, check the calendar for events dates and information

TRSS - SAL BAISLEY

- The Spring TRSS is being held on 4/27 at the Saratoga Auto Museum
- As of the 2nd, we have 13 instructors and 18 students
- Due to unforeseen events, we will be looking for either a new Event Coordinator or a Chief Instructor for the fall event on 10/18. Anyone looking to fill either of these roles, talk to Sal

RALLY - KEN RELATION

- The rally held on 4/13 will start at the Park and Ride off Exit 27 of I-90

TRACK - SAL BAISLEY

- There are many local track events, all of which can be found on the official calendar MoHud SCCA

ROAD RACING - SAL BAISLEY, RICH WELTY

- The Tech Party at North Country Subaru will be held on 4/5
- The Tech Party at Jim Glass Corvette will be held on 4/26
- The Drivers School at Thompson will be held on 4/11 Competition Drivers School
- NER is holding a Track Side Experience for anyone interested in becoming a volunteer for their road racing events. These will be held at the race at NHMS on 5/24 and the race at Thompson on 8/15

OLD BUSINESS

- Volunteers for the 2025 financial audit have been found and the audit will be held, date TBD. A report from this audit will be presented at the May membership meeting

NEW BUSINESS

- The club is looking for cars to be displayed at the 2025 Saratoga Auto Museum. We are looking for around a dozen or so cars of varying disciplines. Anyone with any interest in displaying their car, contact Chip or Tracy. As a reminder, the club gets special parking in front of the museum and we don't have to pay the show admission fee. This is the link for the car show if anyone is looking for more info: [Spring Auto Show — Saratoga Automobile Museum](#)
- Anyone in need of a HANS device, contact Bruce Kosakoski. He has one he is looking to sell

A motion to end the meeting was brought by EJ Smith and seconded by Russ Burkhart at 7:40PM. All members present voted and the motion passed
The next meeting will be held on 5/7 at the Hedge Bistro at 7PM

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