



November 2026 Issue

THE KNOCK OFF

The Publication of the Mohawk-Hudson Region SCCA



Find out why Jared is pointing up, page 16

Pictured: Jared Lendrum, Vince Gentile, Sal Baisley, Max Lux-Ramos

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www.mohud-scca.org



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MoHudSCCA/>

From the Editor

This month the Knock Off says goodbye to a friend. It would be difficult to be around MoHud for the last 30 (or 20, or even 5) years without having some interaction with DJ McArdle. Probably the first Mo-Hud member I met when fresh out of college in 1994 when I competed in an autocross. One word that stands out about DJ was "leadership". In later years I'd see him as the pit boss at Patroon events or serving on the BOD or just rising to the call when we needed a PA system. Ever generous, without solicitation he loaned me his trailer to get my car to my 2nd driver's school. Then later as my student at a Patroon event in Kevin Belden's Camaro or later in his Datsun 510 (it could do the bus stop at WGI without brakes) he was a natural on track. DJ, you will be missed and remembered.

This month the Knockoff re-runs a 2020 interview Greg Rickes made with DJ (thanks to Greg and Pat).

But don't stop there because its another jam-packed issue where you can read on subjects varying from the most famous Soviet era car to Jared Lendrum's latest attempt at the Runoffs as well as some updates on the completion of the NERRC & NEDIV racing season and our latest Street Survival. Not to mention an event on my bucket list: the Okemo hill climb. EJ adds his perspective on Track Night in America.

Thanks this month to contributors Harry, Pat, Greg, Paul, Theresa, Jim, Matt, Nathan, and EJ.

What's Happening

Nov 4, 2026 **General Membership Meeting. 7pm (dinner at 6). Metro7 Diner. Route 7, Latham NY.** <https://metro7diner.com>

November 28, 2026 **Racing Memories. 10am-4pm, Saratoga Automobile Museum**

December 2, 2026 **Annual Meeting. 7pm (dinner at 6). Metro7 Diner. Route 7, Latham NY.** <https://metro7diner.com>

January 16, 2027 **Annual Awards Banquet. 5pm, The Factory Eatery and Spirits, 20 Prospect Street, Ballston Spa NY**

January 15-20, 2027 SCCA National Convention. <https://www.scca.com/pages/nationalconvention>

Check out the [full regional calendar](#) on Google Calendar.



MoHud Tai Chi? Members running from a rabid raccoon? Nope! It's the GTA "Revolutionary Rally", story coming next month in the Knock Off.

- EJ Smith

RACING MEMORIES 2026



**SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 28, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

RACING HISTORY | SPECIAL GUESTS | MEMORABILIA | VINTAGE RACING HATS

**SARATOGA
AUTOMOBILE
MUSEUM**

**PLUS ENJOY THE MUSEUM'S CURRENT EXHIBIT
MERCEDES-BENZ 140 YEARS**

The Sound of the Paddock will Never be the Same

Remembering DJ McArdle

A Life Well Lived

- By Harry Adalian



DJ lived a life filled with the things he loved: cars, motorsport, good friends, and the experiences that brought them together.

For decades, he was part of our Mo-Hud region. He drove, competed, instructed, organized, volunteered, and enjoyed the company of people who shared his passion. Along the way, he made friendships that lasted a lifetime.

DJ had his opinions, his humor, and his own way of doing things. Those who knew him will remember all of it. The conversations in the paddock, the time spent working on cars, the dinners after the events, and the countless stories collected over the years.

His life also touched people he never met. Every new driver who discovers the sport, every volunteer who becomes part of a club, and every friendship that begins at an event is part of a community DJ helped build and sustain.

That's something worth remembering.

There will always be more events, more cars, and more stories. The friendships will continue, and new ones will begin. But for those of us who shared those years with DJ, something will always be missing.

We will miss his presence, his knowledge, his opinions, his laughter, and most of all, his friendship.

DJ spent his years doing things he enjoyed, surrounded by people who mattered to him. And in doing so, he gave many of us memories we'll carry for the rest of our lives.



We spend much of our lives looking forward to the next event, the next adventure, the next opportunity to spend time with friends. Only when we look back do we realize that those ordinary days together were what made life extraordinary.

DJ had a lifetime of those days.

He lived a life worth living, and we will miss sharing it with him.

This month, the Knock Off re-prints an article from July 2020 where Greg Rickes interviewed DJ McArdle on the various cars he's owned and his history in motorsport. Thanks to Greg Rickes and Pat Clair for their research assistance.

-Ed.

The KnockOff Journal

This Month...

- DJM

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DJ McArdle - Man of Many Cars

...Interview by Greg Rickes

Some auto enthusiasts latch onto one brand of car and make it a long-term relationship. Others seem by design or happenstance to explore the broad variety that the market offers. Some even have to search their memory for all the different cars they've been involved with. That would be D.J. McArdle. So let's hear the story from the beginning...

"How did I get involved? I blame (thank) my brother in law Kevin Belden. He was dating my sister and was into cars. My interest was growing as well, as a 12 year old kid I attended some races at Malta (Albany-Saratoga Speedway) and Lebanon Valley.

Kevin drove a yellow Ford Capri (this was the car where I'd learn how to drive manual transmission) and used to Autocross at the Peripheral parking lot (on Washington Avenue); this was back when the pavement ended just past the bus stop. I went with a camera and took photos and was also a "pit crew" for him -taking bumpers off the Capri to make him more competitive against some guy named Skip.

Kevin also brought me to Lime Rock for the Memorial Day races, Watkins Glen for F1 and the 6 hour race. I got yelled at by security for being up against the guardrail taking photos (*this would not be his last encounter motorsports authority figures- Greg*). Then Kevin decided to do a track day with COM Sports car club. A friendly corner worker took pity on the bored kid shooting photos so I was waving flags at a station at the age of 15 at Bryar! (Bryar is now the site of New Hampshire Motor Speedway).

That was it for a while as I did not have my own car and rode bicycles everywhere. I did a couple of Ice races at age 19 or 20 in a Fiat 850 Spider and remember being terrified when with the 49 Cubic inches of sound and fury, a certain Citroen Maserati which had been cut in half came screaming by (*editor's note: the C/M was built and driven by Dave Burnham, who'd cross paths with DJ again at many events*). The FIAT was my boss's car at the time. We really didn't know what we were doing and further Ice racing adventures were put on hold. It was time for me to focus on school and work."

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DJM, con'td

"I used to do laps of SUNYA perimeter road and the State office campus on my bicycle. One day I heard motors revving and tires squealing. What I discovered was cars in Indian Quad parking lot running around at an Autocross. It was too late to enter that day, but made up my mind to make it to the next one (can't recall if it was Empire or MoHud event). I ran events here and there for a bit with a Dodge Shelby Charger ; after the Dodge I got more serious with a Mercury Merkur XR4Ti. Jim Garry convinced a group of us to go to Harrisburg for the Divisional Autocross Championship. That required being an SCCA member, so in the summer of '89 I joined Mohawk-Hudson Region.

The next few years were good and bad for me. I volunteered to be the Solo 2 chairman (I think from 90-94), did some Ice racing in a Plymouth Horizon (the Pizza Baron car) –until I rolled it, damaged beyond repair."



"Significantly I did my first track day at Watkins Glen in 1990 (this was before the Bus Stop Loop at the end of the long uphill straight coming out of the esses) with a group called "Bobby Rahal's Track Time" in the Merkur. Around the same time, through Empire Motor Sports Club, I had been working at Patroon BMWCCA events at Lime Rock (starting in '89).

Looking for something different to drive I picked up an old Datsun 510 GT4 race car which I used for autocross and track days. There were also some dark days for me personally in the 90's but I stayed playing with cars. Mid 90's I did a couple of terms as Assistant RE and was very involved with Patroon BMW Club and their schools. Somewhere in there I also served as MoHud's Race Chairman for a year or two. We also had an autocross site known as The Drop Zone where we hosted the Divisionals for a couple of years (1993 and 94) and was involved a lot with that." (editor's note: DJ has also been the recipient of MoHud's Lewis Trophy, which has now been renamed The Spirit of Excellence award).



Foreground: the 510.

Background: Bruce Kosakowski expressing something to Tom Hansen

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DJM, man of many cars...

"Somewhat after that I remember shocking the hell out of a bunch of SCCA stewards when we ran a "DE" (Driver Education) track-day type group at LRP during a Mohud race weekend. The traditional SCCA stewards were jumping around like crazy about people driving too fast without rollcages etc (*another editor's note: this was long before SCCA had anything like Experiential Programs or Track Night in America*). I also organized the first (and I think only) SCCA PDX (Performance Driving Experience) event at Monticello Motor Club, as well as some other PDX's at LRP for MoHud. By now though my "real" job was demanding more and more of my time."

For the last 10 years or so I have mostly focused on HPDE's and Time Trials, instructing with multiple clubs and Time Trialing with COMSCC and now the new SCCA Time Trial Tour format. I've enjoyed driving on a wide variety of tracks in the eastern US and Canada (20+ tracks and the Tail of the Dragon a few years back). It has been a great journey filled with some really fantastic people. I'm looking forward to more great driving experiences and I hope the Time Trial Tour type events keep growing in the northeast."

You sometimes hear the phrase "... found my way back to SCCA"; In DJ's case the good news might be SCCA found its way back to him.

...Greg, and DJ

The Cars I have owned –

1975 Toyota Celica ST (1st car I owned)
1972 Saab 99
1980 Ford Fiesta
unknown year Mitsubishi Colt twin stick Ice
racer ---
Never finished a race
1984 Dodge Shelby Charger
1987 Suzuki Samurai
1968 Datsun 510 (old GT4 car)
1972 Datsun 510 (sitting in garage now)
1990 Nissan 240sx (with swapped CA18DET
motor)
1988 Merkur XR4ti
1995 BMW 318ti
1990 Neon ACR Race car – only got to drive it
once at Calabogie for 1 session
2008 Nissan Nismo 350Z (crashed at LRP)
1991 BMW 318is -with an M3 motor –
my current track day/time trial car
2001 Porsche 911
Subaru WRX (leased it for a couple of years)

Support/tow vehicles –

1985 Chevy Astro Van
(old KT motorsports vehicle)
1978 Chevy K10 Truck
1973 Chevy Suburban Ambulance
1987 Nissan Hardbody pickup
2001 Dodge Dakota
2004 Jeep Liberty
2011 RAM 1500
2019 RAM 1500

Fun cars Kevin let me drive on track

1988 Porsche 944 Turbo S
IROC Z American Sedan SCCA race car

More >>>

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More of DJM's Many cars...



A Perfect Car for a Ken and Michelle Rally

Interesting cars always have an interesting story that follows them. Here's an example of what seems the perfect car for those wet Spring and chilly Fall rallies that the Relations design. This car rides high over rough roads and is as sturdy as a Soviet Belarus MTZ-50 tractor.

A few weeks ago I was into dinner prep when the doorbell rang. My neighbor across the street, the hardworking contractor from Georgia. The real Georgia. He was standing on the stoop, smiling.

"I'm moving my car up to our place on the lake. I'm storing it there from now on. I thought you'd want to look at it before I drive up." He didn't have to say which car was going North. It could only be his single toy in life. A late '60s Soviet Gaz-21 four-door sedan, Robins' Egg Blue.



I hadn't seen the car for three or four years, so I followed him without even stopping to swap my Crocs for real shoes, to his driveway.

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Gaz-21 cont'd 02

No the Gaz-21 is not a copy of a 1952 Ford Mainline, but the influence of Ford products weaves through Gaz history, starting with original GAZ plant in 1932, established in Gorky to assemble Ford Model As.

Although separated by Oceans and ideology, researching the history of Ford and GAZ from the 1930s through the 1960s might give the impression that they were Bliznetsy, razluchennyye pri rozhdeni (twins separated at birth).



Following WW II Gaz introduced the modest M-20 Pobeda, the visual cousin of a 1939 Ford sedan, for civilian use. But the 1956 introduction of the M-21 "Volga" gave post-Stalin Russia something quite different. A car that was attractive – remember this was Russia – and a car that was attractive to the outside world; or at least that part of the world that had poor roads and few mechanics. A good-looking tractor.

Designer Lev Eremeev took styling clues from US cars built by Chevrolet, Plymouth and Ford, settling on the Ford Mainline for an overall shape. That shape was meant to be eye candy for a high-riding, solidly-built, easy-to-repair vehicle that also included some perks such as a standard radio and foldable front seats that turned your car into a sleeper/camper in the manner of a Nash AirFlyte.



Spiffy, da?

Note the choke, pull starter, lighter, and low-fi speaker. The digital readout is a modern retrofit. In Russia today, G-21 car clubs are all over the place, just like Mustang Corrals in the US. Look for G-21 fans on Youtube and other media.

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Gaz-21 cont'd 03

More than 600,000 M-21 Volgas were built in the Soviet Union and other countries around the world.

The Volga became a Russian status symbol as well as a touchstone in popular culture. Search the internet for references to "The Black Volga," an urban legend about the evil tool of the NKVD and/or the Devil. Or search for clips of the grunge music video "Du Hast."

In 1959 Gaz-21 Volgas ran in the Finland Thousand Lakes Rally and the Acropolis Rally in Greece. The high-sitting and solid 21 would take the pounding that came with poor roads and poor weather so loved by route designers. And in 1964, three factory Volgas were entered in the Monte Carlo Rally, running again in 1965. Depending on the firewalls set up between you and the servers, there are lots of Russian rally fan sites or videos on the internet that can be watched, and heard, showing Gaz-21s in rallies from the 60s to current times.



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Gaz-21 cont'd 04

Now that we know more about Gaz-21s, we return to my neighbor's Gaz-21 Volga "Baleen."



How do we know it's a Baleen? The three series of Volgas were nicknamed based on their grilles. The first was a "Star," based on the Soviet star in the center. Then came the "Shark" with nine vertical slats. "Baleen" was obvious.

The car's builder plate includes the build date and confirms the Gaz factory origin. Unfortunately I didn't think to take a photo before the car went to its new garage. It has both current NY plates and older plates from Georgia.

My neighbor must have been a pre-teen, around 1970, when he started to imagine owning a Volga.

Time passed. He was a good worker and became good at construction work. With Russian and Georgian political winds blowing in confused directions, he managed to move his family to a calm harbor in Israel, and then to Albany.

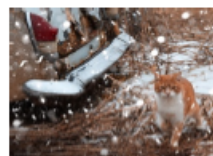
Building a reputation for quality work, he prospered. And when he built a home for his family, he erected, at the back of the lot, a small shed with a garage door.

Now enjoying the good life, he started looking for a toy. He connected with a guy in Georgia who had two Gaz 21 Volga "Baleens." One for work, one for play. A deal was made and one of 21s went into a shipping container, eventually winding up on the docks in Boston. How did he get it to Albany? Easy. It's a Gaz-21! Just fill the gas tank, jump-start it, and drive it home via the Mass Pike and Thruway!

Then it sat in the small shed for 8 years. I got him to at least clear the stuff off the roof a couple of times, but despite my exhortations, he never ran it. Until a few weeks ago. It didn't start right away, but another neighbor relaced the coil, checked the oil level, and with a splash of good fuel, got the engine ticking over as if it was brand new.

Don't be surprised if you see it at a car show in Lake George next year... and if you see it, you'll be able to impress the owner with your new-found expertise in Gaz-21 history!

PS: As you know, all postings via the Internet are required to include a cat. Here, from Russian car fan site, is a rusting Gaz-21 being inspected...



~ Paul M.

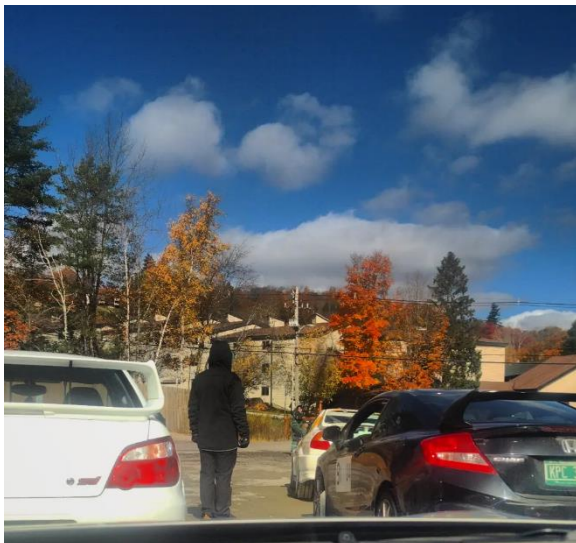
Okemo Hill Climb

- By Nathan Hodson

There are many numbers you could use when describing the Mt. Okemo Hillclimb. 2.7 miles. 1900 feet. 60 competitors. But numbers merely describe the experience, they don't define it. And it's only by hurtling through the woods in a car you sincerely *hope* you put together properly, inches of tarmac and air separating you from the error of your ways, that you get a true sense of what the Mt. Okemo Hillclimb is, and by extension hillclimb racing as a whole.

"Evolution never prepared us to go this fast" is a statement I hear semi-frequently when people discuss auto racing, and it has its merits. For two days I hurtled through woods my body was not prepared to impact at speeds my mind was not prepared to comprehend, in spiteful defiance of the natural order of things. To say I loved every second of it is an understatement.

My adventures in pushing the bounds of my mortality began on Friday, when I drove the two hours from Clifton Park, New York to Ludlow, Vermont to get my Scion FR-S teched. As it turns out I had spent a week fretting over the quality of my fire extinguisher mount (a F4Fabrications product, if you're interested) only to have it passed over with a glance, a quick shake, and a comment. From there came the rookie orientation.



Traveling up the mountain riding in the back of a rusty pickup truck, I found myself tempering my natural anxiety with a cold determination. "I have bitten off more than I can chew" I thought to myself, as veteran rally driver Emmanuel Cecchet described all the risks of driving the potholed road, "but chew it I must." And as my car hurtled through those same woods the next day, regret never entered my mind.

Hillclimb racing is much like any other time-trial format, cars compete one by one to get the fastest overall time through a course, fastest time of the day wins. Only in exceptional circumstances, preferably avoided, do two cars meet; so no wheel-to-wheel action here. Two unique points stand out though.

The first is the route, which winds up the side of a mountain to the summit. Grades at Okemo range from 12% to 20% with an average grade across the whole course of 10.5%, ascending to a peak of just over 3,000 feet above sea level. This demands light but powerful cars which can haul themselves uphill at speed, and the angle of the road places FWD cars at a significant disadvantage.

The second is the course itself. The surface is covered in potholes which in some spots reach deep enough to expose gravel, often kicked up into the road by passing cars. And the runoff area is nonexistent. Misjudge a corner or make an error in your inputs and you'll be hurled into - at best - a ditch or - at worst - a tree.

Incidents and damage are not uncommon. In a season spanning almost twenty autocross events I can remember only one mechanical failure, a BRZ that spun a bearing at Devens. At Okemo there were four crashes and two mechanical losses, including a car being ditched on Saturday's B group familiarization run and a car popping open a coolant line on Sunday.

But the damage to drivers was minimal, bumps and bruising and some embarrassment, and all present took it in stride. For my part the danger is what made it thrilling, hurtling down the fastest part of the course at over 90 miles an hour and hitting the braking zone for the following left-hander with hundredths of a second to spare. Autocross challenges the technical skill of the driver, and track days their endurance, but it is Rally and all her children that puts the very spirit to the test.

I did not conquer the mountain that weekend. Inexperience and fear yet unconquered stayed my right foot, and season-worn tires and a failing cylinder 1 coil pack sealed a final time of two minutes and fifty-eight seconds. Not terrible, certainly, but nowhere near the best time that car was capable of.

And as I drove off on Sunday into the New England sunset to notes of Pink Floyd's *Time*, I resolved to return next spring and beat the mountain.



Tales from the Track

SCCA RUNOFFS 2026: September 30th- October 2nd.

Drivers and crew from across the USA came out for the 3rd and final in the series Runoff races at Road America in Eckert Lake, Wisconsin. Mohud's very own 2025 Spirit of Racing Champion Jared Lendrum was on track for the Runoffs. Aided by his crew (Sal Baisley, Vince Gentile, and Max LuxRamos) the group drove out over two days to be prepared for a test day on Wednesday September 30th. For his second time at this track, Jared chose his 2017 Subaru STI #28. Grid for qualifying on Thursday was set by Super Tour points placing Jared in the 5th position. Once the green flag flew, Jared quickly moved up into 3rd place and by the end of the steady rain session Jared sat in the pole position despite some "hydroplaning into the Kink and Canada Corner". Lighter rain continued as the second qualifying session was held in the afternoon. Jared continued to claim the provisional pole position and was awarded as the feature photo for the SCCA news article listing qualifying leaders after the first day. The track was dry for the final qualifying session taking away the advantage Jared had in the STI cementing his starting position for the race in 8th place. After completing some maintenance, the car and driver went to sleep ready for the race in the morning.



Race Day:



T3 was the first group of cars on the track at 8:15am on Saturday October 3rd. The day opened with sunny blue skies and a starting race air temperature of 48 degrees. Jared was positioned in the second half of the pack in Row 4 in 8th position out of 12 cars.

Jared battled early for 7th place taking it in the first lap of this 4-mile-long course. His opponent battled back taking the spot and moving Jared back into 8th on the second lap. Around the halfway mark, of the 13 lap or 40-minute race, car #109 locked up coming downhill from Turn 4 and drove straight at Turn 5 into the tire wall prompting a local yellow caution when Jared passed. The car was able to move behind the wall quickly for a return to green flag racing for Jared's next go around. Car #109 had exhibited some smoke during the first lap that seemed to dissipate in later laps. In the same lap, further down the track car #15 pulled off between the Kink and the Bluffs and was able to drive off the track on his own into the pits thus not interfering in racing. Up front the leaders White

#0 and Hammann #41 were hitting traffic. The race leaders lapped three cars never catching up to

Jared. In the final lap, leaders changed positions twice and had some side contact three times around Turn 14 and up the straight as they fought for position on the track. In the end, White crossed the finish line taking the path of least resistance on track while Hammann drove through the grass and Mission sponsor signs coming to a stop against the wall never crossing the finish line. Jared showcased his clean and steady driving skills, completing 9 laps and crossing the finish line in 5th place fully intact. Post review prompted by a protest followed by an appeal would overturn the finish for the leader and Jared officially landed 4th place; his personal best. Qualifying and Racing videos were streamed live and can be watched on YouTube.



MiataCon at Lime Rock got into the spirit of the season. Several MoHud members participated, either as flaggers or drivers: Peter Kroth & EJ Smith flagged, and at least Ed Zemeck was noted as a driver. Anyone else?

Track Night in America: LRP & TSMP, October 8 & 20, 2026

- By EJ Smith



EJ's Civic Type R coming out of turn 4 at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Track. Courtesy Clarus Media

I'll admit it: I've been a snob about Track Night in America events. I've grown up on BMW CCA HPDE events run by our local Patroon Chapter and have held them in high esteem due to their classroom & in-car coaching that helps a driver learn right from the moment they put a tire on a track. Disclosure: I'm a graduate of BMW CCA's Instructor Training School and instruct for Patroon Chapter. DJ McArdle was a driving force behind my joining Patroon Chapter, from encouraging me to come out to a "High-Performance Driving Event" (HPDE), to helping DJ run and organize the events for Patroon. I've driven all over the Northeast with BMW CCA & with DJ – Lime Rock Park, Watkins Glen International, Palmer Motorsports Park, Calabogie Motorsports Park, Canadian Tire Motorsports Park – and I'm just impressed with the level of attention to safety and fun Patroon provides. I've done that since 2006, when DJ recruited me to come out and try it. I told him I was concerned that I'd be using up a lot of brake pads & tires if I did. "No, you won't. It's easy on both tires & brakes" was his reply. So... I did my first event at LRP, discovered my street brake pads weren't enough and ended up upgrading to some more performance-oriented pads. After a few events, I realized I needed new tires and brakes, as I had used them up on my Evo 8. I confronted DJ about this, and asked him what's the deal? DJ just smiled and said, "I knew you'd be hooked even if you found out I was lying, so I just did what I needed to do to get you to try it." Hate to admit it, but DJ was right – I was hooked.

Fast forward to this season, and I was going to have minimal track time with my relatively new-to-me Honda Civic Type R (3 years old and it only had 4k miles on it beginning this summer). Then the scheduling conflicts came up: a luncheon my wife and I attend to meet the recipient of the college scholarship I established to honor my late father was happening the same weekend as the April Patroon

event at LRP. OK, I can hit the August event with Patroon at LRP. Except the Scotland-Ireland trip we'd been discussing with my wife's cousin & his wife finally got put on the calendar, and while we came home 2 days prior to Patroon's August event, the day after the August Patroon event was a Mohud autocross. I knew better than to even try surviving those 3 events back-to-back-to-back, so I skipped the Patroon event. The issue now was, without those two events, this would be the first year since 2006 I wouldn't get to drive on track.

I knew there were some late season Track Night in America event's happening, so I decided to check them out. I was able to attend both the October 8 Lime Rock Park event, and after having so much fun at that event, I really wanted to try to get to the October 20 Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park event. As it happened, I got a text from the contractor stating his start date would be October 21, so I was about as excited as Ralphie in "A Christmas Story" trying to convince his parents to get him a BB gun as I asked Pat if she minded if I attended the Thompson TNiA event.

NER and Kathy Barnes et al put on fun and entertaining events at both venues. I know LRP like the back of my hand, both from driving it for decades and from working for LRP as a flagger for their pro events, so I was only concerned by how traffic on track in the groups would do without any formal instruction. I can't speak for the Novice and Intermediate groups, but the Advanced group was very good, with excellent track manners. Plus, being it was Lime Rock Park and the weather was fantastic, I was able to drive down on my R-comp tires and made it a true arrive-and-drive event. As a bonus, Aashish Vemulapalli came in to enjoy his new Civic Type R (twinsies!), so I had someone to hang around with and talk to. Aashish introduced me to some of his buddies in attendance, and we had some great discussions about the track, our equipment, and various technical issues and how we overcome them. Loved it.

At Thompson, again I knew the track as a flagger pretty well, but being a longer drive on interstate highway, I decided to go on my street tires and put my R-comps on there. To make sure I could safely jack my car, I decided to rent a garage bay – at \$50 it seemed like a bargain. The weather was great again, but much cooler and breezier than LRP was – so I was happy to have a bay to keep me out of the wind. I was a bit concerned that I appeared to be the only attendee that had rented a garage bay, but fortunately "Rich" arrived in his Lexus, parked next to me, and we quickly became friends. He had driven at TSMP before, so he was willing to share some quick tips. Salvatore Baisley gave me a complete rundown of his racing knowledge of the track that was very detailed – so much so I was having problems remembering it all. I boiled it down to what I believed were the must-know parts to keep me safe, and off I went. Kathy Barnes and friends were once again friendly and efficient. The Advanced group at this event was a lot busier, and the cars were a lot faster. I debated whether I might have been better off in the Intermediate group so I was watching my mirrors all the time, but that dissipated after the first session, which only featured a two-wheels-off tracking out of turn 1, and a momentary four-wheel drift coming out of turn 4 when the tires were struggling to get up to temp.

My 2nd and 3rd sessions were pretty entertaining. I let a faster car by, then decided to try to follow them as best I could. Kept up with a fast Porsche 911 during the 2nd session that made me feel pretty good. The same thing happened in the 3rd session, but the faster car decided they'd had enough of me following them after a few laps and gave me the lead back. That was satisfying.

So, would I attend another TNiA again? Absolutely! It was fun just being a "cog in the wheel" rather than being an organizer & instructor with a lot of other responsibilities during the event. The only downside for me was the TSMP event required a nearly 5 hr round trip for what felt like a too-short three sessions on track. The LRP was nothing but upside for me and seems like a no-brainer in the future.

Would I recommend a TNiA event for a newbie? I'm not sure. There are a lot of benefits to formal instruction at a BMW CCA HPDE, which helps keep bad driving habits from becoming ingrained in your track day driving. However, if you're on the fence about becoming a track driver to begin with, you can't find an easier way to get a taste of the track day life than participating in a very friendly Track Night in America event. Hope to see you at one soon!

Treasurer's Report

Mohawk-Hudson SCCA Treasurer's Report - November 2026

By Pat Clair

On September 30, 2026, the accounts totaled \$26,874.47 –

• Checking/Money Market	\$11,746.78
• 6 Month CD #1 (Matures 11/05/2026)	\$ 5,072.21
• 6 Month CD #2 (Matures 03/09/2027)	\$ 5,011.65
• 6 Month CD #3 (Matures 01/04/2027)	\$ 5,042.83
• Savings	\$ 1.00

Banking Activities (To Date):

- SCCA Membership Dues (August 2026) income.
- Purchase Lime Spreader (Solo Equipment).
- September interest.
- Championship Travel Subsidy (Formally known as Tow Fund).
- Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation donation – In Memory of DJ McArdle.
- Tire Rack Street Survival (TRSS) at Saratoga Auto Museum (SAM) (10/18/2026) expenses.
- SCCA Membership Dues (September 2026) income.

As of October 20, 2026, the accounts totaled \$25,820.56 –

• Checking/Money Market	\$10,692.87
• 6 Month CD #1 (Matures 11/05/2026)	\$ 5,072.21
• 6 Month CD #2 (Matures 03/09/2027)	\$ 5,011.65
• 6 Month CD #3 (Matures 01/04/2027)	\$ 5,042.83
• Savings	\$ 1.00

Upcoming Financial Transactions:

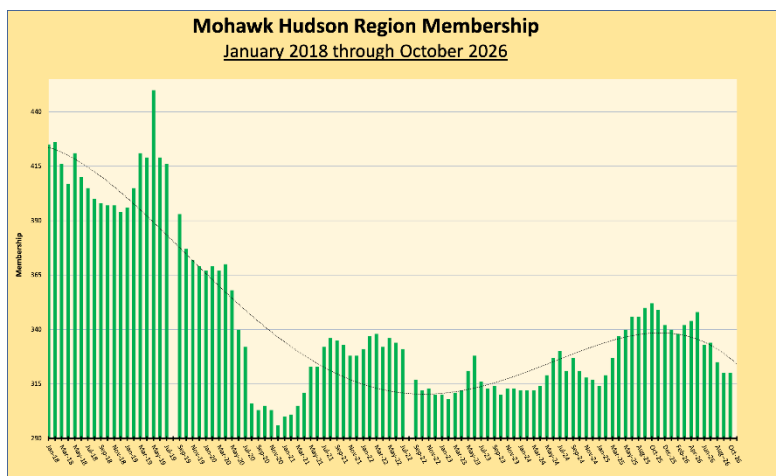
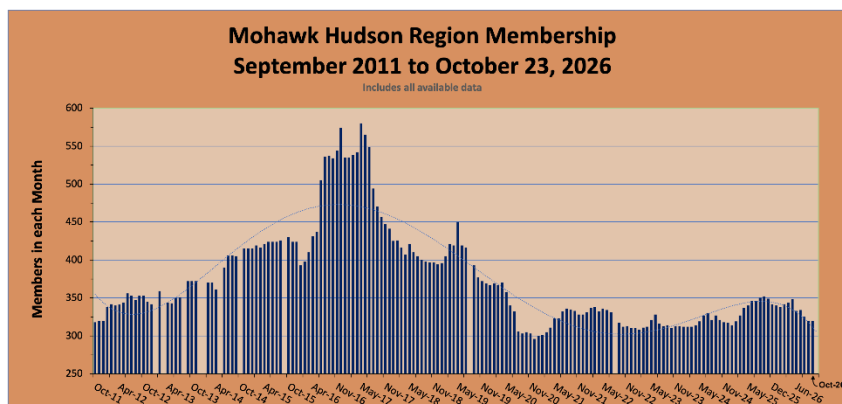
- TRSS at SAM (10/18/2026) – finalize income and expenses.
- GTA "Revolution" Rally (10/25/2026) – income and expenses.
- October interest.
- CD #1 matures 11/05/2026.

Once you've raced, you never forget it...and you never get over it.

— Richard Childress

Membership Report

There are 320 members in Mohawk Hudson Region as of Friday, October 23rd. This is the same total as this time last month. Looking back over the past five and a half years, our membership reached a high mark in October 2025 and has declined since then although we had a highly successful 2026 autocross season and our rally program continues to offer highly enjoyable events. We also have many dedicated, talented, active race workers and road racers.



New Members

So far in 2026 we have 31 new members including two in October:

Robert Rodd, Amsterdam - Robert has been an SCCA member since 2003. He began as a MoHud member and then joined Finger Lakes Region for a few years, then Glen Region before returning to MoHud this month. Welcome back Robert.

Austin Dehnert, Troy - Austin is a brand new member and we welcome him to Mohawk Hudson Region. He's been active with the Adirondack Motor Enthusiast Club (AMEC).

Significant Anniversaries in November

Five Years

Bruce Nichols - Bruce drives a 2003 Corvette in autocross events.

Ten Years

Kevin Separy - Kevin's region of record is NER and he has a dual membership with our region. Kevin holds licenses in Regional Registration, Grid & Pit, Timing & Scoring, and Flagging & Communication. He's also active in Track Days & Time Trials with licenses as a Driver Coach, Event Lead, Safety, Tech Insp and Comp Dir.

Fifteen Years

Dave Cowie - Dave is listed in the database as a 15 year member but actually joined in 2000 and had a short lapse in membership. An enthusiastic autocrosser, he is seen frequently at our events in his 2006 Miata. He's also made appearances in our Track Day program.

Twenty-Five Years

Michelle Burnham - Michelle is spouse of Dave and has held offices in AMEC.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Meeting Minutes from Membership Meeting on 10/8/2026

Meeting was called to order by RE Sal at 7:00 PM

Motion to accept minutes as written in KO, Chip, seconded by EJ. All for.

Membership Report- See Membership Report Published in Knock Off for more details.

Knock off Report – Current issue is out, and is a larger issue, thirty-one pages. Please have all entries to Chip by the 20th of the month.

Treasurer's Report - See the Treasurer's Report Published in the Knock Off for details on the club's financial and CD accounts.

Solo Report- We did it! Had a great season.

TRSS- Down to fifteen students. Event is on 10/18/2026.

Rally –Next GTA is October 25th, 2026. Registration begins at 9:15am and goes until 9:45am. First car is off at 10:01am. Begins at Park and Ride off exit twelve near Malta Commons. Currently we have six or seven teams. It is a beautiful scenic route.

Track – Nothing new. Unofficially it was stated TT NATS might be help locally again.

Activities – Help is needed for planning and paying for events to make them happen. It was mentioned we could have MSR charge right away. It was mentioned that we would need dates for events far in advance to help ensure we can meet any minimums required for events.

Road Racing – Final New England race is the weekend of 10/17/2026. One MoHud member went to Road America. Some members are going to ARC – Champ ITA. It was further mentioned that rules are changing on how you qualify. This should allow for more inclusion of people with less monetary support.

Old Business – Need to get old bus to scrap yard. We received one quote for \$650. Jim was told he could take the diesel out of it. Before scraping all four wheels need to be removed. Question was asked about last year's Audit. Remarks were made that it went well.

Election Committee – Committee consists of EJ, Jim, and Oscar.

New Business – Donation for DJ was discussed. It would be sent to the foundation on his obituary. The amount of \$250 was discussed and brought to a vote. Sal, EJ seconded, Finally All were in Favor.

It was mentioned that if anyone is in the market for a 2000 Miata Arnold Beebe's neighbor has one for sale.

A motion to end the meeting was brought to a vote by Rich and seconded by Jim. All present members voted and the motion passed "All for."

The meeting ended at 7:43 PM

Regional Directory

Board of Directors

Regional Executive

Sal Baisley
MoHud.RE@gmail.com

Assistant Regional Executive

Vince Gentile
MoHud.AsstRE@gmail.com

Secretary

Matt Fraley
MoHud.Secretary@gmail.com

Treasurer

Patricia Clair
MoHud.Treasurer@gmail.com

Director

Russ Burckhard
russtduck@gmail.com

Director

Chip VanSlyke
chip87@gmail.com

Committee Chair Persons

Solo (Autocross) Chair

Russ Burckhard
russtduck@gmail.com

Road Racing Co-Chair

Paul Malecki
paul@altamontracing.org

Tire Rack Street Survival Program

Matt Fraley
Matt.Fraley@gmail.com

Road Racing Co-Chair / Scrutineer

Richard Welty
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Track Events

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Membership

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Road Rally Program

Ken Relation
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Social Activities & Events

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The Knock Off (Newsletter)

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Merchandise

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Race Flagging & Communications

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Webmaster

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