

March 2007

I went to the National Convention and met the future of club racing. Jesse Prather won the Mark Donahue Award, our own Andrew Caddill won the Fitzpatrick Trophy, and Mike Miserendino won the Presidents Cup. What is refreshing is that at least two of these fine young gentlemen can still qualify for membership in First Gear. The future does look bright.

For those of you who have not heard, young Andrew went on to win "the biggest prize in club racing history." Mazda had a post Run-Offs competition and our young man won hands down. So now Andrew has a new MX-5 to move up to the Pro series with this year. He will do so with all the best wishes and wishes for good luck from everyone in NORPAC. He will do us proud.

The brightest part of the week was the BMW Foundation /United Spinal Association "Street Smarts" teen driving program in which our club is partnering. The pilot plan for this year is to present this program in six regions, with a rollout to the entire club in 2008. The interest in the program was so great that the room was packed with overflow out into the hall. This is a program for regions of all sizes with little or no financial risk. This is the bridge program that regions need to do community outreach and satisfy the educational requirements of our charters. And if teens become "taken" with solo, rallycross or club racing along the way
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A HUGE tip-of-the-helmet goes out to Tire Rack for backing this program. Far and away Tire Rack is an excellent partner to our club. Speaking of great partners, Pace Trailers will be giving away a trailer at the Solo Nationals and the Run-Offs this year.

Cheryl Babbe was the hit of the rally / solo lunch again, playing along with master of ceremonies Peter Hylton with assistance from K.P. Jones of the BOD. Cheryl also accepted the Regional Rally Achievement Award for Artic Alaska.

For once all three units of SCCA finished the year in the black. Although one unit did so with a loan from Inc., so far little more than half of that loan has been used and we are promised that is it. This year World Challenge raced before a million spectators and TV viewer-ship passed five million total. The renewal of the TV contract this year is a high priority.

Bob Wildberger the new president of ProRacing attended the club racing luncheon and won over the crowd with his explanations of past losses and his plans for the future. He also won over the "clubbies" when he awarded Andrew Caddill a free season (no entry fees) in the MX-5 cup series.

The next day when Pro had a breakout in a smaller room, Bob made his Power Point presentation and asked for questions. There were none so the meeting finished in half the allotted time.

The new Volkswagen program came about from Bob's work. From start to signing it was less than 120 days. The VW spec series for Pro looks like a winner already.

The Run-Offs survey was a HUGE success with 65% of the participants responding. Look for a detailed article in the May SportsCar. Club racing reported 74 national, 239 regional, nine hill climbs and 24 PDXs in 2006. The Run-Offs drew 567 workers from 67 regions. Colan in Membership reports that 99% of all licenses and renewals are done in five business days.

PDX sanction fees were reduced to one hundred dollars for a stand-alone event or fifty for a PDX held in conjunction with another event.

RallyCross put on 152 events last year (up 10% from '05) and Road Rally sanctioned 171 events up 5% from the previous year. Forty-seven regions put on Road Rally events this year. The new GTA series was a success, scoring was revised and the season now ends with the United States Road Rally challenge, which was in Topeka last year and will be in Pittsburgh this year.

Good news. Tasha Marlow will stay on as an independent contractor for the National championship Solo tour. Also in solo news Doug Gill was promoted to Solo Competition Manager. This will be the thirty-fifth Tire Rack Solo Nationals this year.

The always-sharp crew over at Enterprises has a 2007 FE (that's Formula Enterprise / see the SCCA spec formula car), national championship backed by FormulaCar Magazine. The series has stops at Thunderhill in March, Button Willow in April, RoseCup in June and Laguna in September.

This is the vehicle to make FE a Run-Offs class in 2008. The sales figures are: 850 SRF's, 111FE's, and 11FSR cars sold. They personally brought twenty-five karters into the club as first time racecar buyers this year.

Also if you want to checkout a non-profits IRS form 990 (a thumbnail financial) go to guidestar.com.

More from San Antonio next months column until then:

Duck-Out