



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF M.E.T.A.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

EDITORS' SOAPBOX

(Wherein we get to say whateber we want. Letters-to-the-Editors, either in approval or rebuttal, regarding the contents of this column are welcome.)

First, a note of thanks and recognition to Robin Holloway for undertaking the production of this newsletter over the past four years. Your efforts exemplify the spirit of participation in META beyond that expected of our members in the normal course of the racing season. If we can all follow your example of contributing that little bit extra META can only get better and stronger; something in which we can all be proud of being members.

While we're doling out the thanks, a hefty handful are due to Roger and Grace who, while acting as cooks, entertainers, hosts and den-mothers, ensured that an excellent time was had by all at the annual December META non-meeting. If you weren't there you missed a glorious party.

Even Jo and Dave Adair drove all the way up from California to attend. (Photos and recordings of certain antics may be purchased from the editors, but we shall, of course, retain original copies in the event that our finances again run low.) Thanks Roger and Grace for such a good time.

To close out the Soapbox we'd like to wish the new executives of both META and SCCBC good luck in the forthcoming year and to all of you best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

"We" are, and can be reached at:

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Publishers' Note

It is the intention of the editors that each issue of "Mayday" be ready for mailing no later than a week after a monthly META meeting. Therefore, all contributions and submissions should be in our hands by the end of said meeting in order for them to be considered for inclusion in the next issue.

Thanks.

REPLY TO THE "UNKNOWN SCRIBER"

First, thanks to the Scriber for raising what I perceive to be the issue of professionalism, a subject which has prompted similar thoughts in me for some time. I'm afraid I can't be controversial as far as the previous article is concerned as I am in total agreement with it. Sure we're there because, in spite of long days, rancid food for the unprepared and inclement weather, it's fun for us. We enjoy participating. But, and this can not be stressed strongly enough, we are there to do specific jobs, protecting all those participating in the sport. As such these jobs have clearly defined duties and tried and tested ways of performing same. By understanding and using proper techniques and concentrating on what we should be doing a more enjoyable time can be had by all since we can trust the next person and not have to spend more time keeping them on their toes doing their own job. As "the Scribe" also points out this includes being mentally and physically prepared to do the work, whatever the conditions. It's so much easier to have a good time off-track when the day is over knowing you've done a professional job on-track keeping racing safe for everyone. This is not to say that a certain amount of individualism or creativity is discouraged. Only by seeing and trying new ways of doing old things do we improve the quality of our work and our effectiveness.

So let's have fun, get involved but, for heaven's sake let's remember always why we're there.

Rick Smale

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TIREWALL

In the last issue of the Mayday the ex-editor asked for comments on the article written by the "unknown scriber". Well, I just thought that maybe you would like to hear a driver's view. Okay, maybe not, but here goes anyway.

First of all, I would like to say that from what I have seen, the marshalling at Westwood is as good as, or better than anywhere else in North America. This is an unbiased opinion and I would like to thank everyone of you for it.

In the past 8 years I have driven quite a few tracks in North America; Edmonton (Where, when I stuffed my Formula Ford into the Turn 9 wall, I had 2 cornerworkers fight over whether I should have my helmet off and get out of the car. They did this by one trying to lift me out, and the other pushing me back in - OUCH! This went on for 20 minutes while the P.A. kept announcing for the doctor and ambulance to go to Turn 9 - they were at the front gate getting their wives in for free); Mosport (Where, when cresting the hill into the blind, flat-out-in-fifth, 140 MPH sweeper with the car already beginning to drift sideways, I found two cars spun out and blocking the track. Meanwhile, I noticed out of the corner of my eye, two

workers sword fighting with their flags!); Circuit du Gilles Villeneuve (Cornerworkers think they're Le God); Trois Rivieres (They don't even know how to speak!); Mid-Ohio (No comment - otherwise Dennis won't let me jump the starts); Elkhart Lake (No complaints); Long Beach (Didn't see any - they all hide behind cement walls); Willow Springs (I didn't know anything myself when I was there); various oval tracks in the Pacific Northwest, and of course Portland and Seattle.

Although I think you're all great, there is still room for improvement. And mainly in the "having fun" department. It seems to me some workers feel their jobs are so important and serious that they forget why we all go racing - to have fun and enjoy ourselves. I suppose this is mainly aimed at the "higher ups", but everyone could gain by less regulating, officialing, politicking, and bossing. We get enough of that Monday to Friday.

Some drivers feel they are God and everyone is there to serve them. Some workers seem to feel the same way! Let's face it, if it weren't for the other, neither one of us could go racing.

Now this may seem like a contradiction to what I've just said, but I think the workers should perform professionally. I don't think it is impossible to have a club-y, fun atmosphere socially and yet be professional in the work. I think the workers, on a whole, are heading in that direction. Especially with the motorsport situation as it is in B.C., we have to prove to the government, business community, and public that we aren't just a bunch of wankers. It may be unfortunate that this is how it is these days, but if we want to do what we all love, (racing - remember?) then that's the only way.

I suppose I should stop boring you with my views now. Maybe more in a future issue. I would be interested in hearing any comments any of you may have on what I've said. (I have a secret source for getting a copy of the Mayday).

Again, I would like to do something that I think every driver would like to if he had the time and opportunity (it sure has taken me a long time to do it!) during racing season - and that is to thank every worker involved, once involved, sood to be involved, etc. for everthing they do for us and the sport.

Ross Bentley

P.S. - A request: several students during driver training have commented that they would appreciate the workers coming and talking to them at lunch and at the end of the day. Remember, they are the newcomers and would probably appreciate any insight you seasoned veterans may have.

RECRUITING NEW WORKERS - (do it and keep these thoughts in mind)

One thing we've heard and talked about time and time again is the importance of bringing out new workers, and letting them know what to expect.

I know that when I started working at the track one of my concerns was, what if I don't like this, am I committing myself to a whole season? Now we all know that this isn't so. As much as it's great to have people come to every race, we do, of course, appreciate the efforts of people who can make it to only a few.

Something else that is important to stress to all those new workers that you're going to bring out is that they are not going to be asked to save people from all those wild accidents you've been telling them about until they have had the experience they need. We always have the option of not doing something that we're not comfortable with.

Last, but as we all know, not least, make sure your friends have proper gear from day one. Come up with proper rain-gear, sunhats, boots, gloves etc. etc. We all know that it can be sunny, rainy, or hailing in any given day.

So give your friends the benefit of your experience at the track and let them know that it is a fun way to spend a weekend....if you are prepared.

Joanne Henderson

"THE GREAT CRASH"

(Information gathered from "Sports Car" - Official publication of SCCA)

Submitted by Robin Holloway

I know, through the years that every worker has his/her tale of an unbelievable incident. I've heard many and told a few myself, but here's one that will need something unusual to top it.

Road Atlanta is the scene of SCCA's run-offs each year. A special honour it must be to marshal, as these racers who are invited are the cream of the crop. One of the many anticipated events was the GT 1 race, with the likes of Ken Slagle, Jim Fitzgerald, Frank Emmet and Jerry Hansen the first four qualifiers.

The race was just over halfway completed - Fitzgerald in the lead, with Jerry Hansen five seconds behind, when a light rain began to fall at Turn 6. All of a sudden - a torrential downpour. The corner is a blind left-hander with 200 - 300 yards before a 90 degree right hander. At approximately 130 mph, Fitzgerald didn't have a prayer and slid 60 feet or

so on the grass and hit the guardrail. Now stop - imagine you are a flagger, communicator or safety on this corner. Fitzgerald's okay, unbuckles, and hits the kill switch when Hansen's car does the same and hits Fitzgerald just in front of his door. Fitzgerald stays put. One by one, every car but 5, careens off the course, hitting the guardrail, the other cars, some flipping over into the woods. The last, number 18, starts a fire as it hits the trees. This all took place in 30 seconds.

Needless to say, the workers had their experienced hands full. Luckily the injuries that occurred were not too serious. A broken leg and back pains were sustained by two of the drivers. A few others were treated and released from hospital. Three workers were treated for heat exhaustion, smoke and CO2 extinguisher powder inhalation.

That was a biggie - imagine what you would do if 18 cars took 30 seconds to destroy themselves in front of your eyes.

A story to be told and retold.

ANNOUNCEMENTS...ANNOUNCEMENTS...

Due to the diligent efforts of our Executive we now have a roof over our heads for the next META meeting to be held on Wed. January 23, 1985 at 8:00 p.m.

The location is Century House in the Moody Park Rec centre in New Westminster. There is parking as you enter off 8th Street between 6th and 8th Avenues. The entrance is across from the Baskin and Robbins on 8th Street just past a crosswalk. Signs will then direct you to Century House. We are meeting in the Music Room. (How very cultured.) Chairs will be waiting for you and coffee or soft drinks are available at nominal cost. No booze. Let's get the new year started right. See you there.

To those of you who get this in time just a note to remind you that the Driver's Meeting for the 1985 Variety Club Telethon will be held Wed. January 16, 1985 at 7:00 p.m. at the Renfrew Community Centre. If you feel that you have the time to donate a couple of shifts driving on February 9th and/or 10th you will want to be at this meeting. A fun time is usually had by all who participate in this behind-the-scenes support of a good cause and your contribution further enhances META's good name.

A further (further) reminder that membership fees for 1985 are due and payable at the meeting on the 23rd. Bring money.