

the official newsletter of the Motorsport Emergency and Turnworkers Association

MAYDAY

JULY 1992

SPEED READING

July 3-5	(SCCA) Regional/National	PIR
July 4/5	(SOVREN) Vintage Race	SIR
July 10/11	(SCCA) Regional	SIR
July 11/12	(SCCBC) Drivers' Training	Mission Raceway
July 11/12	(SOVREN) Vintage Race	PIR
July 24-26	(IMSA) GTP/Lights/GTS,GTO,GTU	PIR
July 24/25	(IRDC) Drivers' Training	SIR
August 14/15	(SCCA) Regional	SIR
August 22/23	(IRDC) ICSCC Race	SIR
August 28-30	IndyCar/Lights/F Atlantic/Player's GM etc.	Vancouver
August 29/30	(SCCA) Regional/National	PIR

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ADVERTISING

Size:	Full page	1/2 page	1/4 page	Bus. card
Per Year:	\$130.00	\$85.00	\$50.00	\$25.00
Per Issue:	\$80.00	\$45.00	\$20.00	\$10.00

Non-business classified ads are free to members.
Maximum length is three lines.

All opinions expressed in the Mayday are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Mayday staff, the club executive, or the members of the Motorsport Emergency and Turnworkers Association.

Deadline for newsletter submissions and advertising for inclusion in the next issue is the 21st of the month. Advertisements should be camera ready. Articles will be accepted typed, handwritten, or on diskettes (3.5 or 5.25 inch). Ideas and suggestions are welcomed, and should be directed to the editor.

MAYDAY: JULY 1992

VOLUME 17 NO. 7

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLUB MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS: Thursday July 23, *no meeting in August*, September 23, October 28, Moody Park Recreation centre, 7:30 pm, Oak Room. Meetings in September and October are on Wednesday.

Included in this issue is a reprint of an article written by Ross Bentley. Thanks to Robin Bentley for providing us with it. Despite his busy schedule, Ross has frequently contributed to the Mayday in past years.

This year, he has participated in IndyCar races at Surfers Paradise, Detroit and Portland and is confirmed to run in Toronto and Vancouver, and tentatively at Laguna Seca. Congratulations to Ross on his results thus far and best wishes for success in the remaining races.

Lightweight summer jackets in white are available for approximately **\$20.00**. To order, call Jo Adair, 255-9285.

Help will be required with **fence cutting** on Thursday before the Vancouver Indy. Call Dave Forster the week of the race for information. 942-2350

META Membership List 1992 - Updates

NEW MEMBERS:

TIBBITS: Gay	10346 149th Street, Surrey BC V3R 4A2	H	589-4830
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RENEWED MEMBERS:

BENTLEY: Robin	#104-525 Wheelhouse Square, Vancouver BC V5Z 4L8	H	873-0766	W	222-7295
STROUD: Tony	3947 Pimlico Place, Port Coquitlam BC V3B 6L1	H	944-1451		

CHANGES

MITCHELL: Irene	10346 149th Street, Surrey BC V3R 4A2	H	589-4830
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DB's \$.02 WORTH

BY DANIELLE BRANDFORS

We had hoped to be racing in Portland June 27 and 28: Olov's mom is visiting from Sweden and she has never seen him race. But our bank manager says she'll have to go on looking forward to it for a while yet. So we made do with various races on TV and video...

Although it is now receding into the past we are still rolling our eyes over the Canadian Grand Prix. More specifically, over the commentating: who is this Jackie Stewart character, anyway? Isn't he supposed to know something about Formula One? The barrage of miscalls was depressing and distracting. No, that engine isn't dead - those belches of flame from the tailpipe ought to tell you that while the engine is alive and well the transmission has shuffled off this mortal coil. No, Nigel isn't signalling the pack to the far side of the track as they pass after his misadventure with Ayrton - he is letting Mr. Senna know precisely and concisely what he thinks of him. And Michael Schumacher is not shaking his fist at his former teammate and close friend Karl Wendlinger, who was certainly not blocking him - merely a friendly wave in thanks for letting him through at the first sensible opportunity. By far the best part of the entire broadcast was when they had a partial power outage and we heard no commentary, only the thrilling sounds of the race cars. Every so often we get out the tape -feed it through the stereo speakers, crank it up, and do a couple of laps with Herr Schumacher. Beautiful.

On the "up" side there was young Atlantic driver Patrick Carpentier. I was impressed by his driving, as was everyone, but even more by his character and attitude. It is refreshing to hear a professional driver talk so spontaneously and happily about his relationship with his sponsors, and his opportunity to drive. I hope that things continue as well for him as he deserves. Young Canadian drivers are frequently mentioned as possible successors to the Villeneuve legend: character is as essential as driving talent in earning such admiration and respect.

The Indy race from Portland provided much entertainment. It is gratifying, though in a rather selfish way, to see that even some of the highly paid household names in racing will occasionally make a silly mistake. Sometimes they will make the same silly mistake several times in succession: poor Danny Sullivan was thoroughly out-manoeuvred by the new chicane.

Okay, by now we're getting square-eyed. Time to turn off the TV and get back to work on the race car! Hopefully we'll see you all at S.I.R. on July 25 for the Driver's School - workers always needed - and again in August, when our car will NOT draw attention to itself in such an unseemly fashion.

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META MEETING

June 24, 1992

Meeting called to order by Roger Salomon at 7:41pm. There were 28 members and 3 guests Gay Tibbits, Krys Mitchell and Sheryl McLaren present. Minutes adopted as read by Barb, seconded by Irene.

Treasurer: Rick

General Revenue \$3775.18 and Equipment fund \$3337.38.

Correspondence: Dani

Vantage newsletter, SCCBC letter and wedding card for all to sign for Bernie and Cathy.

Social: Joe

Beer, posters of Vancouver Indy, hats and other odd 'n' sods. Has \$50.00 for general revenue.

Mayday: Mikko

Needs advertisers and the July issue is full.

Membership: Jan

64 members and 7 honorary.

Historian: Joe

Albums are here and yes, Roger STILL has the pictures.

Race Chairman: Bruce - Absent

Old Business:

- Policy and procedures: Rick S. went over the suggestions submitted by club members. Discussion and ensued. Rick will implement changes discussed and they will be re-printed in the Mayday; to be voted on at the AGM.

Break: 8:36pm - 8:49pm.

Course Marshall: Dave

Call him the week before Driver's Training times of morning meetings and other pertinent information. Fill out the form at the front table if you wish to work Vancouver Indy and return to him tonight. On the Thursday prior to Indy weekend, there will be a work party as usual. Call for more information.

Vice-President: Dave

Worker Manual is not finished but it is slowly coming together.

New Business:

- Irene nominated Gay Tibbits as absentee member, seconded by Barb. Voted in with one abstention.
- Sandy nominated Sheryl McLaren for membership, seconded by Dave. Voted in unanimously.
- Jo Adair said the Gary and Cathy Frasier's son has been stricken with cancer and is undergoing treatment which is very expensive. Sheryl and Tim from Portland have set up a trust fund to help them pay their medical bills. Jo made a motion that META give a gift donation of \$100.00 towards the cause. Seconded by Vic. Passed unanimously. Gift to be made c/o Tim Stanley.

President's Report: Roger

- Gave a few highlights of the Portland Rose Cup and Indy races.
- Vancouver Indy coming up so brush up on your skills. Read your manual.
- July meeting on Thursday not Wednesday.
- August meeting cancelled.

Good & Welfare:

- Jo Adair visited Bill Halsey in Seattle. Is in good spirits and wants to go back to the racetrack.
- Dani: Don't forget to call & leave message if you plan to work Portland Conference this weekend or Seattle Vintage next weekend.

Swap & Shop:

- Lori still has microwave for sale.
- Sandy has some Dunlop tires.

Raffle:

Genevieve Hat & poster
Jo Beer
Margaret Hat & poster

50/50: Irene

Motion to adjourn at 9:15pm by Vic, seconded by Ann. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Dani Kasburg
Secretary

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ANTICS AND SEMANTICS

1992 PHOENIX CART WEEKEND

BY ASHLEY PACKARD

"There are no yellow or red cars on an oval course." They are either "canary" or "crimson", according to Gary Barnard, Chief Course Observer for CART. There are about twenty of us at the early morning turn workers meeting on Friday of the Phoenix IndyCar race. Only two of us have never worked an oval course before and we are getting our first exposure to the meaning of the term "Course Observer". We will not be waving any flags this weekend, nor jumping over walls to respond to incidents. Instead we will wear head sets and carefully watch for loose parts, spilled fluids, rule infractions, and spins and crashes. The slightest mention of the word "yellow" from a turn will bring on the lights and all the action will slow to a full course "yellow".

A typical Comm. exchange might go something like this:

"Control Three."

"Go ahead Three." From central control.

"Car 8 canary, spraying, center rear."

"O.K. Three. All turns watch car 8 canary for spraying center rear."

If, on the other hand a car were to spin at Turn 3, the Observer at Three would call, "Yellow! Yellow! Yellow! Turn Three." The lights would come on for a full course yellow and then Three would be asked to explain.

IndyCars at Phoenix are lapping at over 170 mph. This is a one mile tri-oval with steep banking all around and an elevation change just to complicate matters. Billed as the "world's fastest one mile oval", the cars circulate in just over twenty seconds and the

slightest hesitation in making a call could result in catastrophe.

I was fortunate to be paired up with Ted Cary on my first morning on Turn Three and later with Dr. Bruce Opperman, his wife Ellen and son Keith. Their other son, Tony was on Turn Four. Ted works at the University of Arizona and has been a Course Observer at this track for several years. The Oppermans are from Fort Worth, Texas and work races all over the country. They are in the advertising business and were transacting business at trackside by cellular phone during the breaks.

We all took turns on primary and secondary headsets and closely watching the cars race by just a few feet in front of us. We were located right on the outside wall next to the track. From this location on the back stretch we could see virtually the entire track and grandstands of the front straight. You could never buy a ticket for a seat this good.

Most of the action, in the form of spins and crashes, took place between Turn One and the crossover. The intrepid crew on Turn Three were responsible for a good many calls concerning spilled fluid, bottoming, lost parts and scrap metal on course, and several passing under yellow calls.

I think we all had a great time of it standing under brilliant blue skies and glaring sunlight. The schedule was extremely busy with IndyCars, Indy Lights, Formula Atlantics and our first exposure to the Shelby Can-Am "cheese wedges", as Gary Barnard likes to call them. Carroll Shelby

was there to present his series creation and exuded the youthful vigor of his return to health after a heart transplant operation. He had been close to death until the operation but was now back, reincarnated in the form of the Carroll Shelby of old with yet another ambitious project. The cheese wedge drivers put on a great show all weekend and managed to crash six cars at the start of their race. One of them threw a tire clear through the letter "d" in a Budweiser sign about twenty feet off the ground.

John Andretti, A.J. Foyt, and Jimmy Vasser also managed to demolish their respective cars on this same part of the track. After being X-rayed Foyt vehemently denied that the broken shoulder was indeed broken and maintained that the lines on the X-ray plates were residuals from an old battle scar...Right! Rumor has it that CART would like him to voluntarily retire before they have to pull his competition license. They are apparently worried about the negative publicity of his recent propensity to crash.

I talked to the crew chief of John Andretti's car at breakfast on the morning of the race. John had stuffed it hard in qualifying the day before. When I asked him how 8X was doing, he said, "A lot better than car #8." He confirmed my suspicion that #8 was totalled by responding "Oh yeah, pretty much so."

I had been looking forward to see how the rivalry of the brilliant driving techniques of Vasser and the ill-fated Jovy Marcelo would

translate from Formula Atlantic to their simultaneous upgrading to Indy cars, but it was not to be. Vasser was very hot right out of the box and then he crashed. Marcelo had stuffed his oval track car in testing earlier in the week and the black #50 Fendi road racing car simply would not perform. He was put into the awkward position of motoring around on the apron with a sick engine, trying to stay out of everyone's way. I saw him in the garage area after the race with his usual smile, even after being subjected to a weekend of fist waving.

Rahal won the race and Michael had gearbox problems. With his placing in Australia, it was starting to look like it might be Bobby's year. Of course there is also Fittipaldi and Sullivan right in there. Mears was having fuel system problems during practice and qualifying so Penske got him up really early on race day to demonstrate what money can do. They rented the runway at a local airport and did some hot runs to try and solve the problem. I guess it didn't work (he placed 8th).

Doing my first oval race in the Arizona desert was like a return to my roots. I come from an old Arizona cattle ranching family and there was something very comfortable in being back in the countryside where I had spent so many happy times in my childhood. The people in the Arizona Region of the SCCA were very hospitable and put on a mean barbecue and beer party. They also put on a great race and a fine time was had by all.

Ross Bentley On:

DRIVING AN INDY CAR

The most frequent question I am asked these days is "What's it like to drive an Indy Car?" Gooooood question! I thought you might like to know, step by step, lap by lap, what it *is* like.

Part of my mental preparation for the Molson Indy Vancouver is to frequently visualize laps of the circuit. Consequently, I know it by heart. So here's what it looks like from the driver's seat.

As I cross the Start/Finish line in 6th gear at about 160 miles an hour, the pit crew is but a blur on the left hand side. However, it's surprising, even to me, how I can pick out my crew and read the pit board - getting information like lap times, position, laps remaining, etc. As I'm going past the pits, I'm also checking the gauges on the graphic readout on the dash, checking for boost pressure, oil temperature, water temperature, oil pressure, etc.

Approaching Turn 1, I brake hard and downshift from 6th gear to 4th gear. Braking in an Indy Car is almost indescribable. The braking forces are enough to practically pull you out of the seat, even when you're strapped in with a 6-point harness. After slowing the car down in 4th gear, I turn in towards the cement wall on the left hand side, starting to squeeze hard on the gas pedal and letting the car drift out toward the wall on the right hand side. I try to let the car come out to within a couple inches of the wall. Turn is taken at approximately 100 mph.

Accelerating out onto Pacific Blvd., I quickly shift up into 5th, then 6th gear. Moving over to the left hand side, I avoid some of

the bumps on the track. Once again, I check the gauges, the main one being the boost pressure and probably making and adjustment with the boost pressure knob. At this point, I'd also consider making changes to the handling of the car, reaching down with my left hand and changing either the front sway bar setting or the rear sway bar setting, to make the car understeer more or less. Got that?! Depending on the fuel load of the car, I may also consider changing the brake bias, adding more brake to the front or the rear of the car.

Down past B.C. Place in 6th gear, cooking along at about 180 mph, I get the car set up for the slight right hand kink before the hairpin. To do that, and to avoid a fairly large bump at one of the manhole covers, I have to set the car up very close to the wall, within six inches on the left hand side. Even then, my right wheels bounce over the manhole cover, which unsettles the car and makes it wiggle around. At 180 mph and six inches from a cement wall, hanging for dear life becomes necessary! I start to ease it right to straighten out the kink as much as possible, then back out to the left, then **HARD** on the brakes, shifting from 6th down to 1st gear and getting it set up to turn into the hairpin.

I turn into the hairpin, trying to clip the wall as close as possible, getting hard on the throttle as early as possible, making the car start to slide around the corner, using the 750 horsepower to break the rear wheels loose to help make the car steer. Indy cars don't always turn on a tight radius, so on a hairpin like this, I need to use the horsepower to help pivot the car, by getting

wheelspin coming out of the corner. Hard on the gas now in 1st gear. Accelerating in an Indy car actually blurs your vision, to the point that your eyeballs feel pushed back into their sockets.

Still hard on the gas (in spite of the bouncing eyeballs!) up into 2nd, 3rd and 4th gear, moving to the right hand side of the track, setting up for the first chicane. Approaching the chicane, I brake hard and downshift to 1st gear. Turning into the chicane, to the left, to the right around the little kink, back on the throttle again, letting it slide out towards the wall, then accelerating hard in 1st gear out onto the straightaway under B.C. Place Stadium. I move up through 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th gears through the tunnel. Entering the tunnel at that speed, it takes a second or two for your eyes to adjust from the bright sunlight to darkness. Going through the slight bend in the tunnel, in 5th gear at 150 mph, the car actually tries to slide out to the left. I have to fight to keep it to the right line, to get set up for the second chicane.

As I approach the second chicane, I brake hard, then shift from 5th to 2nd gear, leaving it late to turn into the corner, to the point where I can almost see around it, turn it in, clipping past the wall on the left, hard on the throttle again, accelerating in 2nd gear past the wall on the right hand side and letting the car drift out into the middle for the big, long, sweeping corner. I accelerate up into 3rd gear going into the right hand bend, holding the car in, and shifting up into 4th then 5th gear through the turn. This is really difficult to do - cornering around that right hand corner, holding it in at 140 mph, with all the G-forces pushing the car and your body to the left because of the incredible aerodynamic downforce of the car. As this is happening, I have to take my right hand off the wheel to 3rd to 4th, then 4th to 5th. The strength in my left arm is certainly tested after two hours of that - it takes quite a beating!

Heading into Turn 6, Quebec Street, there's a major bump. I'm coming into a 90 degree right-hander, so I'm particularly careful to check my mirrors all the way through here. In fact, it's always good practice to check the mirrors at points all the way around the track, whether you are leading the race or not! I'm in 5th gear at this point, then brake hard and shift down to 2nd gear, getting the car set up to turn in, clipping past the wall on the right hand side of the apex of the corner. Hard on the throttle again, letting the car drift out to the wall on the left. The road here has a slight negative banking effect, which makes the car slide even more. This part is really fun, because you come underneath the viaduct and you can hear the sound of the car echoing off the walls, as the car drifts out with the back and sliding around.

Then, it's quick acceleration up to Turn 7, then a quick jab on the brakes, getting the car settled and pointed into the corner turning right. Bouncing over the bumps, the car actually begins to lift wheels as it skitters across the top of the bumps. An Indy car does not provide the softest ride in the world and when the wheels are bumping off the ground, it's a touch comfy!

Getting hard on the throttle (no easing on the throttle at this track!) letting the car drift out towards the wall on the left, accelerate up into 3rd gear, then 4th, 5th, and 6th gear again going past the pits. Again I check the gauges and make some further adjustments to the chassis, boost, brakes, etc. In fact, on every lap and every corner for over 100 laps, I have to consider how the car is handling and making slight variations to my driving style, compensating for the car or conditions. I have to think of ways to improve the car through my actions as mentioned before, or by advising the crew by radio of changes they can make (a wing adjustment, for instance) when I come in for a pit stop.

I also have to make sure that the engine is running at 45 inches of boost pressure at all times. There is a gauge on the graphic readout which tells me the approximate boost, but that can be anywhere from 1/2 an inch to 1 inch out from what the "pop-off" valve will allow. The best way to know is by what you might call a "low-tech" mechanism. A plastic tube runs from next to the pop-off valve to inside my helmet, next to my ear. The pop-off valve has a spring calibrated to the turbo-charger building up 45 inches or more of boost. Over 45, and the valve opens to release some of the pressure, which results in a hissing noise, audible through the tube. When that happens, I have to make an adjustment with a knob in the car, turning it back so that the spring will re-seat itself and return to 45 inches or less of boost. Then it's a matter of adjusting by small increments to get the most boost without going over the 45 inches. Each time I get in the car, I have to adjust the boost to get as close to 45 inches as possible.

As I mentioned before, on almost every lap, I take a quick look in the mirrors to find out who is around me, who is behind me. In an oval-shaped mirror approximately 1 X 1 1/2 inches vibrating constantly, it is difficult to see anything at all. But it's amazing how when you are travelling at those speeds, with the experience that a driver has, you almost have a sixth sense about other cars around you. You know where they are, when you have to move over or take your own line into the corner. Some drivers are better at it than others!

Driving an Indy car is very demanding physically. A driver experiences well over 2 G's in corners and up to 3 G's under hard braking. When I get out of a car after a race, it feels like I've been in a fight! Bruises on arms and legs from the centrifugal forces in the corners pushing your body against the cockpit are not uncommon.

Holding my head up becomes a major job in

a two hour race. The combination of a 3 pound helmet and 2 to 3 lateral G's makes for about 75 pounds of pressure against your head. Try pushing against 75 pounds for any length of time and you'll understand why Indy drivers have to have such strong neck muscles.

The goal when driving an Indy car is to be as fast as possible, put in consistent laps and make quick, decisive moves in traffic. You must be either aggressive and hold your line or move out of the for drivers with faster equipment. The wisdom is in knowing when to do what.

For the entire 2 hours that you are on the racetrack, your heart rate would be between 160 to 200 beats per minute. You must have an extremely fit cardio-vascular system to cope with this. Not only are you expending a great deal of energy, you are generating a lot of heat. Which in a four layer fireproof suit, fireproof shoes, gloves, balaclava and helmet, (the only skin showing and getting air is around your eyes), sitting in a cramped cockpit, making all your various manoeuvres, makes for an efficient sweatbox. Drivers routinely lose 5 - 10 pounds a race!

On the Vancouver Molson Indy track, a driver will have to make over 30 shifts every single lap. In the race, that makes around 3,000 shifts in 2 hours. No wonder many drivers get out of their cars with blisters on their right hands!

This may have taken you over five minutes to read, but it all takes place in just over a minute. And then it has to be done over 100 times, consistently perfect every single lap, knowing if you lose concentration for even half a second, you could be into a cement wall at over 150 mph. Having said that, I can't think of a bigger challenge or anything more enjoyable than driving an Indy car.

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