



MAYDAY

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

VOLUME 14 NO. 5

MAY 22, 1989

The collaboration has begun. Danielle is fully on board with the MAYDAY and is already contributing in many ways (not the least of which are philosophical discussions about the meaning of racing, specifically, and life, generally).

The time is ripe to tell you about a few new additions to the MAYDAY. As suggested by Joe Proud, a former MAYDAY editor himself, we will henceforth include highlights of the previous meeting's minutes. As Danielle cannot usually attend the Meetings, she will review the Minutes and publish the pertinent points.

This issue marks the beginning of the ProFormance Driving Tips provided by none other than Ross Bentley (I think I know him!). Just think, we're getting the benefit of his professional wisdom gratis - pity the unfortunates who have to pay for such pearls. There are advantages to being married to the boss! And by the way, Ross would be delighted to hear how these tips work (or don't work) for you.

Finally, in addition to the report on our M.E.T.A. Against Substance Abuse program, a poem, a copy of which was given to Lori at the Coquitlam Youth Counter Attack meeting, is reprinted in this newsletter. It's sobering....which I suppose is its intention.

I do have one additional announcement. Shari Forster has also joined the MAYDAY staff by generously offering to type our ramblings. She is a dear, sweet girl for doing so (though I wonder if she knows what she's in for!) Thank you, Shari - however long you decide you wanna do this - we're happy to have you.

Editor Robin

It seems a very long time ago that I first arrived at Westwood, in a torrential downpour, to be greeted by Robin Bentley, as cheerful in person as she had been on the phone. I thought she must be either very enthused about her work or certifiably insane: the Sports Car Club could have improved their financial picture that day by renting out the paddock to the local rowing club for practices.

Robin took me in tow and introduced me to race working, for which I (if not MY friends and family!) will be forever grateful. Now just over a year later, I find myself again tugging at her sleeve, as she has once more subjected herself to teaching me something new. I hope that I can show some of my appreciation for Robin lightening her enormous workload a little this way - and perhaps make some practical use of my education in the process! Exams are now receding in my memory; less vivid are that pungent odour of smoking neurons, that loss of

speed and agility of composition, that deterioration of manoeuvrability through tight prose, which signify the severely flat-spotted brain. It will be refreshing to sit down to write without some red-eyed academic vulture perched on the back of my chair, gnawing on a red pencil and muttering evilly to himself.

As a relative newcomer to both racing and reporting, I welcome reader response. I would rather hear something twice than not at all, so don't hesitate to give me your opinions, news, calls for volunteers....And when you get your MAYDAY, make sure you read it through - if your budgie is a race fan, put something with pictures on the floor of his cage!

Co-Editor Danielle

MAY 27TH - TOYOTA ATLANTIC BBQ

Just a note to say - "Whatever you eat - it's bring your own meat!". Other goodies will be supplied (beverages). At the 2nd Atlantic BBQ on August 5th, all refreshments and dinner will be provided.

Now that you are well into the partying mood, perhaps you can be persuaded to slip your pants off...Danielle needs old jeans to make flag bags. Though not glamorous, these are good protection for your flags, and provide a place to put your patches when your Jacket weights 45 pounds. If anyone wants one, pipe up - they are \$5.00 each.

Once again Jan is accepting donations for the Flea Market, to be held July 15. Now that your Jeans are gone, you might as well toss your T-shirt and hat in, too...

PRE-REGISTRATION REMINDER

Please remember to pre-register with Nick Roche at [REDACTED] prior to any race weekend - but especially for Pro events. If you are not on his list for the Pro races tough you-know-what. Jan will have to send you down the hill or send you to the gate to pay.

DID YOU KNOW?

M.E.T.A. is 20 years old this year! Have any novel (paperback size will also do fine) ideas on how to celebrate? Let's hear 'em.

M.E.T.A. AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE

As you may or may not know, this program is expanding to include the Coquitlam Youth Counter Attack group sponsored by I.C.B.C.. The idea is that we help the kids with their program like Police Week at Coquitlam Centre (our display was there and members such as Jo Adair helped out) and they will in turn come up to Westwood to help man our booth. Hopefully, we'll attract some new racing fans, both of our groups will reach people we otherwise wouldn't and we'll raise the profile of responsible teenagers and motorsport enthusiasts. What a combo! We'll keep you posted on how it's working out...

TRAINING COMMITTEE

Two emergency "basic" sessions were scheduled to answer requests for training prior to the last April and first May race weekends. Consequently, we have 5 more new workers trained who plan to help out at May's Pro Race. Three of these workers are a result of our article in the ProFormance Advanced Driving

School newsletter. Darlene & Don Henry and Kevin Kochi are all ProFormance Grads - they are definitely enthusiasts, looking to be involved in the sport without actually racing and I guess that's what we offer, isn't it?! Nice to have them aboard.

Other workers to welcome enthusiastically are Dave (I forgot his last name!) friend of Bruce Yeo; Bob Allinson, former racer and son of Al and Elsie Allinson; Carol and Jennifer Duggan, wife and daughter respectively of Tuffy Duggan (who is racing Acura owner Barry Duggan's brother - complicated, eh?) and Steve Simmons, who sent in one of our information forms. Glad to have such keeners!

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN...

Robin has asked me to write on the reaction of a relatively new worker to a major incident, and after discussing it with Dani Kasburg I have tried to express our similar feelings about it. Our appreciation goes out to everyone who commended us on our performance: we needed to hear that! No matter how calm we may have sounded, anyone who cares to look among the bushes will find a little pile of bricks at Turn 3, and another at Deer's Leap....

Over a month has passed since the accident which destroyed Robert Kreeft's Formula Libra and put him in the hospital. His crash has become one of those frequently referred to but rarely thought about events in track life, and we all continue working, driving, caring of cars....But reacting calmly to such an incident takes conscious effort, and filing it under "experience" in the back of one's mind is accompanied by some strong emotions. Every new worker must eventually confront his or her fears, both of a crash itself and of his/her ability to respond effectively: for racing is, with all due respect to our stringent safety standards, potentially lethal. For myself it was Robert's crash which brought home the responsibility and the potential of any job on the course, and the experience has left me both more confident and humble in my approach to race working.

During my first season as a worker at Westwood I found myself developing an almost blase' attitude toward automotive mishaps: After all, it's impossible to blue flag properly if you look around every time you hear squealing tires! None of the drivers I attended to suffered anything worse than bruised pride and financial lacerations, and there was a satisfying sense of danger evaded or averted. Yet behind the calm, confident exterior lurks the uncomfortable knowledge that someday, inevitably, you will look up just in time to see all Hell break loose...And what will you do?

I had begun that day by picking up a radio for only my second time on a race weekend, and I felt a growing sense of insecurity. At the very least this seemed a prime opportunity to make a fool of myself, and at worst....So I passed a few spare minutes reviewing the communications pages in the turn book, and sent a psychic message to all drivers to behave. (Someone's batteries were low.)

The technical details of the incident have been taken apart more times than my carburetor, and there is little I can add now. There is something graceful, almost beautiful, about an airborne race car....the landing forces a jolting return to reality. My first thought as I watched the Libre bouncing wildly, shedding body parts like confetti, was a calm, simple, "Oh, shit. What a mess." A dreamlike detachment, yet at the same time awareness that the play was over, and now we were in deadly earnest. And a strange exhilaration that comes with having to do your best under pressure; no excuses, no outs. So I shoved down the emotional response - like taking the cat to the vet in a cardboard box: push its little furry face in one side, and two seconds later

three claws and some whiskers appear at the other - and did my best.

The details of the incident have lost their immediacy. but I remember vividly, and will (I hope) for a long time, my biggest mistake. I called the incident as an Alert, and then looked up again...."You idiot", I thought "no one could ride that out uninjured. That's a Scramble!" And I spent the next three hours praying that my error would not cost a racer his life or health. I'm not quite sure what went on in the back of my mind during those three hours as I continued as much as possible as though nothing has happened, but I know that my attitude toward race working has subtly changed. My concern for the drivers is a little sharper, my respect for my fellow workers a little deeper. I realize that in our work we live with the risk, the stress, the natural emotional response, and the need to subdue it. And I realize that there's nothing frivolous about all those hugs! I have a little more pride in what I do, yet a little more humility about how I do it. And I wouldn't give it up for all the chocolate in Belgium.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION...

...is cheaper than diapers. It is also a big part of our Job, and while procedural reminders may seem redundant and dull, they help us keep our standards up, and our members and racers healthy. Some points to remember:

- * practice night workers please take a fire bottle out with you.
- * practice nights require proper flag procedures; the atmosphere may be casual, but with many classes of cars, and both novice and experienced drivers, sharing the track, we cannot afford to be slack. A standing black flag with a "one lap" signal will be used at Start/Finish to end the session, accompanied by standing yellows on all corners. As soon as an "old" starter's set is made available to us, we'll use by-the-book flagging procedures.
- * also on practice nights: an accident involving a driver out after session, and almost involving a worker returning to the pits, reminds us that until all workers are in, no one else should be on track! The M.E.T.A. member at Start/Finish should close the re-entry gate when practice is done.
- * on race weekends: remember to place fire bottles according to the course map in the turn book, and make sure everyone in the turn knows where these standard locations are. A bottle in the hands is worth two in the bush!

PRACTICE NIGHT SCHEDULE FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE

May 25 Kerry Hutchings, Glen James, Dani Kasburg, Kiaao Kauppi
June 1 Kikko Kauppi, Vic Kennedy, Grace Lassen, Bob Leduc
June 8 Al Leighton, Brian Meakings, Raemor Mitchell, Russ Mitchell
June 15 Barb Moewes, Larry Nerada, Lori Nerada, Rick Neyedli
June 22 Fran Pelletier, Nick Roche, Roger Salomon, Rick Smale
June 27 Dallas Smith, Al Stewart, Jo Adair, Danielle Baxter
June 29 Robin Bentley, Jeff Blake, June Blake, Charmaine Defry

WRAPPIIG IT UP

From the M.E.T.A. Meeting of April 26, 1989, come the following items of note:

- * Name tags are in: they are \$4.65, and Rick Saale has them
- * ProFormance/M.E.T.A. sweatshirts are also in: if you haven't picked yours up yet, take your \$13.00 to Shari, and get cozy! (with the shirt - calm down, Dave.)
- * Wallet-size race schedules are now available - make sure your mother has one. (and your friends, neighbours, postman...and the officer who causes you heart failure by pulling you over to point out that you have left the baby on the roof of the car.)
- * Lori reports that our second application for government funding for M.E.T.A Against Substance Abuse was rejected: she will try to talk to the minister responsible.
- * If anyone has not yet written letters in support of the proposed Matsqui Motorsport Facility, now is an excellent time to do so! The publicity attendant at the car show open house has dwindled, but we must maintain as consistent a level of pressure as we can. So, put pen to paper and express a little of your Atlantic-weekend enthusiasm to the following people:

Mayor Dave Kendal and Council
Municipality of Mataqui
200 - 32315 South Fraser Way
Clearbrook, BC V2T 1W7

Peter A. Dueck/Herry De Jong
Matsqui's MLA's
106A - 2760 Trethewey Street
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3R1

Honourable Elwood Veitch
Minister of Regional Development
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

BUT YOU DIDN'T

Remember the time you let me drive your car
And I dented the fender
I thought you'd kill me
But you didn't
And remember the time I met your new girlfriend
You know, the one you were crazy about
And she became my new girlfriend
I thought you'd floor me
But you didn't
What about the time I forgot to tell you
The party was black tie, and you wore Jeans
I thought you'd never speak to me again
But you did
You remember the time I want to go to the concert
But you said it would be boring
We went and it was
I thought you'd scream "I told you so"
But you didn't
Remember the time we went to that disco
And I picked up a new girl while I had my girlfriend
I thought you'd give up on me
But you didn't

And remember the time I was drunk and driving
You told me I shouldn't drive
But I insisted
You came along to make sure I was alright
I crashed
When I woke in the hospital
and saw our beds side by side
I decided I would say all this to you when you awoke
...But you didn't

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 26/27/28	Players Ltd./Toyota Formula Atlantic/GM Motorsport/Honda Michelin Challenge/Canon Yokohama Formula 1600/etc. Westwood
May 27/28/29	SCCA Double National, Seattle
June 3/4	Conference Race, Seattle
June 3/4	F1/Toyota Formula Atlantic, Phoenix
June 4	Motorcycles Westwood
June 10/11	Conference Race, Portland
June 16/17/18	Rose Cup/SCCA National, Portland
June 23/24/25	CART Portland 200, Portland
June 24/25	Players Ltd./GM Motorsport/Honda Michelin/Canon Yokohama Formula 1600/etc., Calgary
June 28	M.E.T.A. Meeting - 8:00 p.m. Moody Park, New Westminster
July 1/2	30th Anniversary Race/Honda Michelin Challenge/3 Hr. Enduro Westwood
July 8/9	GM Motorsport/Players 500, Calgary
July 8/9	SCCA National, Portland
July 9	Motorcycles Westwood
July 15/16	Conference Race Westwood
July 15/16	SCCA Double Regional, Seattle

The first in a series of tips for the High Performance Driver by Ross Bentley, Chief Instructor for ProFormance Advanced Driving School Inc.

HIGH PERFORMANCE DRIVING BASICS

First, let's define what being a "High Performance driver" really means. It certainly doesn't mean racing around the streets at high speed. It doesn't necessarily mean being a race car driver. And it doesn't mean you have to drive a Porsche or Corvette - you could drive a Lada or VW Beetle!

Being a "High Performance driver" means many things: driving in control of your vehicle and the situations and conditions around you; driving smoothly and with finesse; driving with confidence and respect for your vehicle and the other drivers on the road; and always thinking about what you're doing behind the wheel.

Your mental attitude is extremely important in developing your driving skills. It is necessary to keep an open mind about driving. You should always feel there is something more to learn. The best 'High Performance drivers' are always the ones who are ready to learn something new every time they get behind the wheel.

Driving in control means being aware of everything and everyone around you, especially in congested areas. Not only should you be watching in front of you, but also knowing what is beside and behind you. Use your Mirrors regularly. Being aware of the conditions behind and beside you may allow you to avoid potentially dangerous situations by anticipating or by reacting quickly.

Which leads us to vision: or should I say vision leads us.

If a rating figure could be placed on the various human systems required to drive a car, your eyes would have to rank number one. If you cannot see, you cannot drive. At least ninety percent of what takes place in our vehicle is a result of what our eyes report to our brain. So, rule number one is: Never overdrive your vision!

One of the first steps in refining your driving skills is learning to look further ahead. Although your hands and arms steer the car, your eyes tell you what to do. Your eyes actually lead your physical movement. Therefore, focus your eyes where you want to go, not where you don't want to go or where you are! If there is an object on the road you want to avoid, such as a rock or manhole cover, don't look at it - if you do, you'll hit it. Focus your eyes just to the right or left of it and the car will automatically go there.

As you drive, sit up and keep your head in a normal position. When you turn, move your head from side to side, but do not lean, or tip it. Your brain is used to receiving information from your eyes in the normal position. If this is changed, you are mentally fooling your brain. Curbs, pedestrians or other cars are not actually where you perceive them to be, and can often end up under your car.

And finally, do not concentrate on any one particular object in front of you. Look well ahead, and watch for anything coming into your overall field of

vision. Pay attention all the time. And don't just look farther ahead, think farther ahead.

How that we are using our vision more effectively, let's look at where to drive. The fastest, and safest, way through any given corner is achieved by driving a line formed by the largest possible radius. Basically, you straighten the corner as much as possible. But this is not necessarily the correct route down a road - not the ideal line.

The 'High-Performance driver' is not dealing with one particular corner, but rather a series of corners connected by straightaways. Considering this and the fact that a car's brakes are more powerful than the acceleration capabilities, superior exit speed and balance is far more important than corner entrance speed. In other words, it is far better to go into a corner slow and come out fast than vice versa.

Any given corner can be divided into three segments: Entry, apex area, and exit. Each segment can be dealt with separately, but the ultimate goal is to combine all three into a smooth, fluid line through a corner.

The entry is probably the most important part of a turn, as this will dictate all that follows - where, how fast and how balanced you exit. Basically, this is the part of a road where you do your braking, downshifting and initial turning into the corner. The initial turn-in point is determined by where you want to apex the corner.

The apex of a corner is actually an area of the corner, not just a point, where the inside wheels run closest to the inside of the road. The apex can also be thought of as the area of a turn where you are no longer driving into the corner, but are now driving out.

Where you apex is directly related to where and how you enter the turn, and it will affect how you exit it. The ideal apex for a corner can be either early in the turn, in the middle of it, or late in the turn.

As a general rule, most corners on the road are late apex turns.

The way to tell if you drove the correct apex or not is very simple. If you come out of the corner having to apply more steering to keep from running off the road, then you had too early an apex. If you chose too late an apex, the car will not be using all the road on the exit - it will still be too close to the inside of the corner.

To properly exit a corner you want to use up all the road (obviously, "all the road" means all the road legally available to you within your lane). Allow the car to come out wide to the edge of the lane or roadway. This allows the car to smoothly and gently balance its weight and achieve maximum acceleration.

And remember, as I mentioned earlier, let your vision lead the way - sight your line well in advance and let the car flow through the corner. Do not drive from point to point.

Driving the ideal line is something you can, and should, practise on the road everyday - no matter what your speed.