

# First an apology, then thanks

**A**s this is being written, I was supposed to be in the air winging my way to the Solo nationals.

Once again I must again offer an apology to the Solo community, as a family situation prevented me from attending. I really look forward to the Solo Nationals. They are low-key fun and include many of things that club racing used to be. Not to mention that there is a record entry for this year's event! The Solo gang does know how to party, and I really wanted to see how Team Zebra did the golf cart this year. I hope they win the prize that they earned last year.

Great news for the rally world, there will be a "Great Race" class in SCCA Rally now.

The MX-5 cup (Pro Miata) will be on Speed TV (finally!) this December.

Speaking of TV, yesterday Pro Racing got the go-ahead for another season of Speed World Challenge. The TV pact, including the Runoffs, has been extended for another year. Our management team is working towards making this an extended deal for another two or even three years.

ProRacing is tracking close to the projected budget and is unlikely to need money from the Club side to make ends meet at year's end. The revised Pro Racing Board (of which I am a member) has worked wonders in less than four months. Oversights, cost controls and other measures never seen before are in place to hold down expenditures and contain costs.

Right now the future looks brighter for Pro Racing than it ever has. In fact, Herb Fishel has been given the green light by the entire board to explore the possibilities of a series. A "paddock committee" has been formed from three of the teams. This committee will give the Pro board input to enable us to make more informed choices and steer a better course for the series in the future.

Jim Julow has put one of his Detroit contacts on the series sponsorship hunt. Julow is also close to a settlement with a company that backed out of a signed sponsorship commitment. If the agreed upon settlement does come to pass, then Pro is likely be in the black for 2006. The current projection for 2007 is that Pro will turn a profit and be self-sustaining. This is a more conservative projection that is based on real numbers without

## Directly Duck

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any "blue sky" than I have seen in my three years on the board.

Jeff Dahert's staff has worked overtime to produce this complete and honest picture. This budget includes a salary for a Pro president, which would free Julow to return most of his time and efforts to the club side. Stay tuned; Pro Racing is not out of the woods yet but at this point it does have a future (possibly very bright by 2008). To this end a tip-of-the-helmet is due Julow, who has secured a healthy sanction fee from a NASCAR venue in North Carolina to stage a "super event," which will include Pro Racing events.

Speaking of staying tuned, this is my last call for your vote. In coming to this job, one of my promises was to end the "Secret Car Club of America." I would like to think these monthly columns have helped achieve this goal. I have tried the best I can to pull back the curtain of secrecy to educate and inform you, the members, of the current state of affairs and the future of the club. I hope you agree and will vote for another three years of meeting like this every month.

Now, an update on the financial side of the club. At the end of August, sanction and service fees came in below budget. A savings in race activities expense offset this. Insurance revenue came in strong for the month due to "true-ups" by the regions. The margin loan has been paid down to the \$150,000 range, which is a point of pride because it is now projected that it will be paid off in full before the end of the year. This was not the projection at the beginning of the year, which led to a huge concern for the club.

Dahert and his crew are to be commended for their efforts. The forecast for the end of the year is for an operating income of approximately \$100,000. The original figure was for a \$40,000 income for the year. With four months to go in the year, and the two biggest events of the year yet to happen, this figure could quite possibly increase.

At the August meeting, the BOD voted for the 24 national class format for the Runoffs. The BOD then agreed that 25 classes would appear at the 2007

Runoffs. This decision was due to the late action in 2005 to make T-3 a national class for this year. At the meeting, the board also agreed to four new national classes. A new T-1 will appear in 2007 that will be primarily for World Challenge cars and cars like the Viper competition coupe. What is now T1 will be T2, T2 will be T3, and T3 will become T4. A Formula 1000 class is approved for a low-cost formula car powered by a motorcycle engine. Word comes to me that a well-known local sports car builder-designer has such a car already on his drawing board.

Now back to the 24 classes at the Runoffs rule. This was a gauntlet thrown down by the CRB to the BOD. The BOD has answered the challenge and now the CRB has the job to combine current classes to achieve this 24 number. Rumored combinations mentioned are: CSRS2 (possibly with a single inlet restrictor), SSB and SSC into Touring, FSCCA and FM together in 2008 and GP combined HP.

So now is the time to read Fastrack every month and be ready to write letters to the CRB (and to me) with your ideas and concerns.

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Until next month, Duck out



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