

SCCA finances improving

There are many tips of the helmets to send out of this month.

Let's start with Jeremy Thoennes, head of technical services at the home office in Topeka, Kan., and Stan Clayton from the club racing board. They attended the recent Regional-National in Portland, Ore., and held an excellent question-and-answer session for the racers in attendance.

I finally had a chance recently to get into the backlog on my Tivo and discovered that our SEB representative, Ron Bauer, is a star on SpeedTV's "Set-Up" series. Did I see "Team Zebra" acting as Ron's crew?

Best wishes go out to Artic Alaska's R.E., Cheryl Babbe, whose father is in poor health. Everyone here hopes for the best for you and your dad.

At the recent BOD meeting in Topeka, President Jim Julow reported that Pro Racing's spirit "has infused new energy throughout the building." Pro now has several other options in the field to capture sponsorship and marketing partners. Pro and Inc. have retained a professional "headhunter" firm to do this. The payment will be made based on deals delivered. Negotiations on the new TV package will begin in Charlotte, N.C., the Friday morning after the World Challenge GT round at Lowe's Motor Speedway.

All is quiet on the financial fronts and the forecast suggests that budget is close to actual.

Early expenses and revenues are in balance with the business plan.

A small decline in membership is ongoing. For the record we stand at 51,400 members, which is an increase of 317 since January. With three programs in place, there is reason to hope this will soon turn around. One of those programs, First Gear, just added 126 members, which brings First Gear memberships up to a record 926. A separate First Gear program aimed at college students is in the works. Also once the staff gets over the licensing renewal hump, they will be contacting non-renewals to find out why they did not renew. I have some copies of the new brochure, which has a tracking number in it. Cost to the regions is minimal and improves the normal cost of copies.

Solo and Rallycross are both expand-

Directly Duck

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ing, with Rallycross ahead of last year's entries by 50 percent to date.

Speaking of Solo, changes are in order at Heartland Park after the feedback from Solo Nationals competitors. The paddock parking and organization will be managed by SCCA. HPT will also have bleachers on the east course, and the vendors will be relocated to a more accessible area.

Information on the 2008 National Convention is now on the Web site. The redesign of the Web site with Haymarket is moving on with launch promised as NO later than championship time (September). MySCCA.com has not gone as planned due to problems with the developer but the launch is still planned soon.

Colan Arnold reports that the membership breakdown is: Club racing 55.2 percent, Solo 29.6 percent, Pro Racing 9.6 percent and rally 5.5 percent with 10 percent not marking a box on the membership application.

Competition licensing for 2007 is off by 12 percent from the same period last year.

The BOD agreed on the new Weekend Membership program for Club racing effective Aug. 1. It will replace the temporary membership program. The temporary membership program was a failure. It was not being used as it was planned to be, and it caused huge headaches for registration. Less than 2 percent of the people who were given temporary memberships ever converted to full memberships. The weekend membership program will be valid for one weekend and will cost \$15 (with \$5 to national). Regions will not have to purchase weekend memberships in advance. Implementation of the program for Solo and rally is still under study by the staff and the BOD.

Arnold also reported that 10,000 new members joined the club last year, with 307 of those being issued new worker licenses. Unfortunately, 550 members with worker licenses left the club during the same period.

Jeff Dahnert checked in to say the

margin loan was paid off. At this time last year it was "considerable." The Mize-Houser audit with a clean opinion was approved by the board without any changes, and will be published in SportsCar soon. The form 990 and 990-T should be on Guidestar.org soon.

Pego Mack and the Rallycross office got a huge hand from the board for the contingency support program secured by the marketing department for national Rallycross.

The BOD also approved a Club Racing Volunteer Incentives program and details will follow next month.

Now for the bombshell of the month, this was NOT a matter of if but a matter of when. The BOD agreed in principle to adopt the FIA flagging rules for club racing. NO date of implementation has been announced. This was due in part to pressure from three partners on the ACCUS board, Champcar, ALMS and NASCAR (Grand-Am). The SCCA was the lone holdout. ACCUS is expected to approve \$100,000 at its July meeting to finance this changeover and pay for new regional flag sets. Most of the worker base is more than familiar with the changes as they already use FIA flagging at the above-mentioned events. As always the hard sell will come with the drivers.

Stay tuned, until then, Duck out.



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