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MOHAWK-HUDSON REGION

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THE MOHAWK-HUDSON REGION KNOCK-OFF

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Which Came First, continued...

back on track (pun intended) and get the drivers involved in the administration of the club:

- A: Get them while they're young. New drivers often slip through the cracks when it comes to teaching them about the club. Too many drivers know little of the SCCA, what it does and how it works. They are too busy racing. Having a driver work a corner is helpful, but not as important as having him or her understanding the how to propose rules changes, or how to file a proper protest. We tend to think of knowledge as power, and pride ourselves in knowing the ins and outs of our system. It should not be that hard. If a person never uses a system, the system breaks down. If something is too difficult to accomplish, nobody ever tries. The Club stagnates.
- B: Establish more communication. We used to have a drivers newsletter. It is time to realize that the needs of the drivers are different than the needs of the organization in general. There needs to be a channel of communication for those who need it and are willing to pay for it. In trying to give all members more information, our magazine has had to give some a little less. Fastrack is a good idea which now is confusing, with race entries and board meetings, and the print keeps getting smaller! The concept of printing protest appeals started off with good intentions, but has degraded into "beat on the driver". Most of these appeals would not have been filed if the driver had been properly counselled in the first place.
- C: Drivers and workers, especially Stewards and Tech Officials, should work closer with drivers and review problems away from the racetrack. There is no way a sane discussion can take place on the tech line with 2 minutes to go before the first qualifying session. At the end of the day everything is forgotten until 2 minutes before qualifying at the next race! This should be done on a divisional level so as to maintain some consistency in the division. How this is to be set up would be up to the region, and the results of these discussions would be made available to both the Comp Board and the Board of Directors.

These are some ways to bring the club back to the drivers without losing all the valuable input from the other members. It is not an overnight fix, and the drivers must make an commitment to involvement on their part to make it work. They are not however; "their own worst enemy" as one official has said. Either they are the reason for club racing's existence, or the we should get out of the practice of organizing racing events.

Chris Zarzycki 11/90

WHICH CAME FIRST? THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG?

Here is a test. Who is more important when it comes to SCCA amateur racing, the drivers, corner workers, or officials? The answer should be obvious. Unfortunately, knowing the correct answer does not give any insight to the current problems we face.

The most important person in SCCA amateur racing is the driver. The only reason for the existence of any other function at a race is subordinate to the drivers. Having said this, and probably getting some members angry, let me elaborate.

If we start from scratch, say there are thirty drivers who all want to race at the same time. (This scenario assumes that they have solved all of the problems of securing a place to race.) Since they can't work the corners if they are all racing, they invite some of their friends, or hire some people, stationed around the track, to help the drivers when they have problems. As new situations come up, the drivers explain to the workers, how they want the problem to be handled. They soon realize that not all of the workers are good, so they appoint someone to supervise the workers. His or her job is to weed out the bad workers and act as a focal point for information from the drivers. Now the drivers want to spend all their time driving but they find that too much of the time is spent ensuring that the other competitors are not cheating. So they pick the most technically minded non-racer and ask them to check all the cars.

The racers soon get bored, racing on the same track, against the The want to race at other tracks, but they find that the rules and standards are different everywhere they go. So they choose someone to coordinate all the different areas, standardize rule, train all the workers in a coordinated manner, and while they are at it, take care of all the minor paperwork that interferes with the pleasures of racing. Everything goes well until one day, when the drivers realize that the people they appointed, think they know more than the drivers. Oops! So if they can't change the system, they start all over again. Maybe they do things right, maybe not. someone comes along and tells the drivers that he understands what the drivers want. He will be glad to oblige them if they will just pay him to do the job. As a businessman who wants to stay in business, he learns to listen to the majority, while not being afraid to ignore the troublemakers. Here, the drivers are not always happy, but they feel they are being treated fairly, so they accept the situation.

By now you should be able to pick out the SCCA, "outlaw" car clubs, and IMSA/NASCAR. Each has it's good and bad points. Certainly there is no consensus of opinion as to which is the best. However the SCCA is our club, how can we make it better? First we must go back to the premise that the driver (or participant if you may) is the most important factor in the equation. Because they cannot do everything themselves, they must give up some control, and give some respect to the people they entrust.

The problems today, are a direct result of the corner workers and the officials not getting the direction and respect they need from the drivers. Unfortunately the answer is not drivers becoming workers and officials. In order to be an effective worker, you must give up racing in order to devote your time to your duties. It is then very easy too loose touch with the drivers. On the other hand, if you try and do both, you often find that you compromise too much, and everything suffers. So here are some suggestions on how we can get

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SCCA VIRGAR BACING in 1991 N.E. Div. regionals? Worth a try? Sure. One region has given a (very) tentative OK. But I need to show a significant number of interested vintage drivers. "Interested" means you are (i) potentially willing and able to show up at a rabe with (ii) a vintage car that will pass appropriate SCCA GCR tech inspection and with (iii) a current SCCA license. Write/call, now: Michael Mulroney, Villanova Law School, Villanova, Pa. 19085, 215 645 7043.

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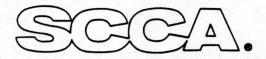
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November 14, 1990

Steven L. Petty Vice President Club Racing

Greg Rickes 25 Comely Lane Latham, NY 12110

Dear Greg:

As we turn our attention to the new racing season, we should realize that 1991 will not be business as usual. Nick Craw's recent editorials, the survey, your election/re-election, and my appointment guarantee that the new year will bring either excitement or controversy, improvement or further decline. You, collectively and individually, are a large factor in which scenario proves accurate.

Accordingly, Nick and I thought you might find the enclosed reprint of the SCCA Member Satisfaction Survey useful. This important document deserves regular re-reading. I, for one, have relied heavily on the survey in completing a package of suggested improvements.

This package will be presented to the Board of Directors at their December meeting. Assuming the Board approves, I will be visiting as many of you as possible to discuss each area of improvement, explain my thinking, and incorporate your opinions and criticisms. Together, we can produce a final list of actions by early spring and work over the summer towards full implementation by the 1992 season.

Please don't misunderstand. This is not some little, pollyannish collection of nice ideas. I will argue for changes that will substantially alter Club Racing for the better. There will be difficulty with those who find and focus on the one negative-to-them change but our job is to focus the majority's attention on the many positives. The final plan we devise will not be perfect but, it will be better than stagnation, discord, and continuing deterioration of our racing experience.

Yes, I am ahead of my blocking. No one expects you to commit before you see the package of improvements or before that package has been thoroughly dissected and reassembled. However, at the same time, I have spent my entire career working with elected officials of one kind or another. I have watched many in your position struggle with the difference between being a leader and being Dear Abbey. In addition, I have yet to meet the recently ousted official who did not wish for one more term to complete that really important project which was sidetracked by a loud but misdirected minority.

Whether you like it or not, Nick Craw (with the support of the Board of Directors) has given us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to move Club Racing forward. In fact, you, I, and a few others are the only ones who can take advantage of that opportunity because time is short and the opportunity will have passed before our successors arrive. Let's get together, let's make it happen, let's make Club Racing better for the majority of participants.

Sincerely,

Steve Petty

TO 13036947391

11.15/1990 14:26 FROM

Mr. Mike Sponsky Regional Executive Lone Star Region - SCCA, Inc. 9500 Dessau Road #511 Austin, Texas 78753

Dear Mr. Sponsky:

Your resolution of September 25, 1990, has just come to my attention. I am amazed that members of the Lone Star Region would endorse such a vitriolic publication and allow it to be distributed nationwide under their corporate name and by their C.E.O.

Your resolution puts you personally, and your Board of Directors of the Lone Star Region, in a position that borders on libel of a prosecutable nature.

To show you how wrong you are on this whole revolution you are attempting to foment, I (with a large bucket of racing experience and education) made application for the position and was very fairly beaten out for the job. For some reason, I don't see Mr. Petty's hiring as you do. Anybody who can beat me out of a job has to be one great applicant and I wish him all the best.

Yes, Sir! It's our club and our elected Directors run it. If you want to complain, do it in a representative government manner and speak to your elected Director, Mr. Ray Herndon. Don't be trying to inflame the membership with uninformed rhetoric.

I happen to be fortunate enough to have been elected to the Directorship of this club for three terms, served on its Competition Board for many years, and have held various National and International SCCA offices and I can tell you without fear of contradiction that Mr. Nick Craw is far and away the best Chief Executive Officer this club has ever had. I just hope that inane efforts such as yours do not cause him to remove himself from our employ. My God! I hope not. If he did we might end up with someone of far less ability than that possessed by Mr. Craw.

Let me close by suggesting that helpful and kind suggestions go a lot further in helping mold the club to one's desires than the venomous attitude contained in your resolution. Let's give Steve Petty a Chance!

Sincerely yours,

Word C. Tallaksen

David C. Tallaksen

cc: All R.E.'s

Lone Star Region B. of D.

B. of D. SCCA



Steven L. Petty Vice President Club Racing

October 30, 1990

Mr. Mike Sponsky 9500 Dessau Road #511 Austin, Texas 78753

Dear Mike:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter to Nick Craw. Unfortunately, I do not "understand" your reasons for distributing such an inaccurate, divisive, and unprofessional missive.

To begin with, I resent the implication that I accepted a position for which I was unqualified (your admission that you would does not impress me). I have almost twenty-five years of business experience and three advanced degrees. More importantly, I am accomplished in the areas of finance, marketing, management, law, member relations, government, insurance, contract negotiations, computers, and communications. These areas impact Club Racing each and every day. Whether you agree or not, I am qualified to manage Club Racing and your elitist attitude regarding Club racing experience is just that, an elitist attitude which displays ignorance of the real job at hand.

In addition, I resent your statements regarding my priorities. Again, I am not impressed that you would place the pursuit of a sport in front of family or educational objectives. Moreover, your assessment of my automotive experience is inaccurate. How many frame-off re-builds have you completed? How many engines have you torn apart? Did you race motorcycles or crew three different drag-racing efforts and two dirt track operations? How many modified vehicles have you owned? I am willing to bet that I have more hours under cars and more bruised knuckles than half of SCCA's members, including you. I am tempted to bet that I've attended more races than you. The fact that my interests did not include the SCCA is more an indictment of SCCA's moribund recruitment and marketing programs than my lack of interest.

To date, I have met approximately 200 SCCA members. You have the privilege of being the first that has not offered positive suggestions. Many warned me of a small, fractious, and mean spirited group of members that placed personal, hidden agendas in front of a better SCCA. Some even attempted to apologize in advance for letters such as yours. I had hoped them wrong.

Mike do yourself a favor: next time, get your facts right and keep your criticism constructive.

Sincerely,

Steve Petty

Nick Craw Letter, continued...

4) Mr. Petty is a member of SCCA and already holds a competition license. While I would generally agree with you that competition experience would be helpful to understanding the problems of the grass roots racer, I would also point out to you that most successful sanctioning executives did not hold competition licenses but were extremely qualified as managers and problem solvers: John Bishop (Founder of IMSA) never held a competition license, Bill Stokkan (Chairman of CART), Bill France, Jr. (Chairman of NASCAR) and many others did not need competition experience to be extremely effective. We went looking for the best qualified manager we could find and afford, to which competition experience would have been a nice complement. Since such an individual did not step forward from amongst our membership, we were not willing to compromise that standard.

We are a participatory organization which should provide for a great deal of room for differing opinions. We also have the obligation to conduct ourselves in a responsible and considerate manner and I would commend that standard to you in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Nicholas W. Craw

NWC:1m

cc: Lone Star Region BOD

Nicholas W. Craw President & CEO

November 7, 1990

Mr. Mike Sponsky Regional Executive Lone Star Region, SCCA, Inc. 9500 Dessau Road #511 Austin, Texas 78753

Dear Mr. Sponsky:

SCCA expects its staff and officials to be reasonably thick-skinned while dealing with dissenting opinions but your letter (enclosing a box of Preparation H) goes well beyond the bounds of good taste. I would not expect such conduct from an SCCA member and expect it even less from a Regional Executive, who is expected to represent the Board-approved policies of SCCA.

While you appear to have already made up your mind rather conclusively, there are some facts you did not avail yourself of:

- 1) The Operations Manual does require (for insurance and other reasons) that all traveling staff members be members of SCCA. This is not a prescription that candidates for employment be members of SCCA or even after they are employed. However, 86% of the staff in Denver are members of SCCA.
- 2) While we fully hoped to recruit an SCCA member to this important position, and so stated that preference in the ads and communications with the RE's and the membership, the unfortunate fact is that the highly qualified managers who also hold SCCA membership simply didn't apply. Perhaps they were unwilling to put up with some of the abuse which your letter unfortunately represents. Of the six finalists, three were SCCA members: One took another job, one was unwilling to make the economic sacrifice from his present position, and the third was not as qualified as the other finalists.
- 3) The selection process and Mr. Petty's hiring were reviewed and endorsed by the Board of Directors and he is also proving to be a solid asset in addressing the challenges and opportunities facing us.

-continued -

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See the new NR-10 Snow Tire

86' Toyota MR2 - Showroom Stock C

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- Professionally maintained
- All top 6 finishes in 1990 Nationals
- with spares tires/brakes etc.
- Available after Valvoline Runoffs

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Come 1991 I am resigning as Mo-Huds Solo II Chairman after 6 years. Between my duties on the Solo Events Board, rebuilding a dump...I mean old house, and my "real" job, I don't have enough time left over to do my Regional job as well as I should. We are looking for someone to step in to take over this relatively easy job. It entails contacting the owners of the two event sites we use, setting up a schedule, sending in the insurance forms, chairing an event or two, finding a chairperson for a few others, and writing an occasional article. If you want to do some extra work you can beat the pavement and write letters to potential event site owners but this is optional. Between Jim Bishop, Keith Martens, and myself you'll receive alot of help. It's a great opportunity to get to know the inner workings of the Solo program and serve your club for a year or two. Please call me if you're interested.

One last note: ANYONE WHO ATTENDED THE SOLO SAFETY SEMINAR LAST SPRING MUST CALL ME BEFORE JANUARY 1,1991. My number is 439-3107.

SOLO SPINS
By Jim Garry

The NEDiv Mini Convention held on November 17th and 18th was based at the Sheraton hotel at Pittsburgh's Station Square, a refurbished train station. All the seminars, lunch and dinner ran right on schedule. The standard seminars included discussions on all the race worker specialties, the usual stewards meetings, an RE session, and the Solo session. In addition there was a competition set-up and prep session, a competition tire session with a Yokohama rep, a Pro Rally set-up and competition talk and a visit with Kay Kelly who runs SCCA's Risk Management group. The Scheduling meeting was unusually calm (are we getting more civilized or just older?) and the Drivers versus Workers session, uh, I mean Drivers meet the Workers session, was quite amicable. Finally, there was a competition Town Meeting where some unusually boring and/or trivial discussion took place. All I can say about the questions asked in this session is that if they represent the burning issues in Club Racing today then things are going pretty well.

Topics of note in the Solo meeting were:

There will be 6 hillclimbs in the Division this year. Mo-Hud will publish the dates and places.

New England Region will have a triple header at New Hampshire Speedway in October of 1991. Over a three day period they will hold a Solo I, a Solo II, and a Regional Race.

The Divisional Solo I program will receive extra support and we will attempt to help it grow.

The Solo II Divisional will be in Harrisburg once again. Tentative dates are August 3-4.

Some items of interest I picked up in the insurance session are:

The participant accident coverage is triggered ONLY by signing the waiver.

The plan pays the first \$5000 of accident related medical fees even if you have other health coverage. Everything after that is decided between SCCA's insurance company and your own.

Both the particpant accident and liability coverages are "event specific", that is to say if there is no event there is no coverage. You must be at an event and signed in.

Among the 1991 changes please note that every accident that MIGHT give rise to a claim requires the injured party, regardless of how slight, to report to event medical.

The Saturday night banquet was held aboard one of the Gateway Clipper boats. I discovered that the secret to having a more relaxed dinner aboard these boats is to eat on the upper deck. The engine vibration through the floor is nil and you get to throw things down onto the lower deck people. The food was very good and plentiful and the after meal entertainment was easily ignored.

After having been to about a dozen of these things I have to rate this one very high. I hope Mo-Hud can do as well at the Roundtable scheduled for this spring here in Albany.

On to Solo matters. We're STILL looking for a centrally located autocross site. If you know of one please call me. Better yet, we could use an inside contact at a place like GE, Picotte, Tafts, etc. Despite having a 5 million dollar insurance policy most businesses would rather not have the hassle of hosting us. We need some friends to help us.

The (Motor) Sporting Life

by A.N. Other

Last Call....

Long after everyone else had packed their racers away for winter FV builder/driver Don DeLapp had the urge to try outhis new motor, so he ventured down to Lime Rock on a cold November Monday for the RCCA program.

After a rush trip to stock car racer Tony LaPorta's shop in Copake for a muffler (this event ran under Lime Rock's strict noise regs), Donald got back to find that he was the only Vee that had showed. So RCCA put him in with the FF Novice group.

Don said it was near impossible to get the race tires heated up for any grip at all, but the air-cooled VW loved the chilly conditions. When all of the penalties and disqualifications for sound violations had been sorted out, Don came out the winner!

Rumor has it that in spite of the trials and tribulations he encountered with SCCA homologation procedures, Don is ready to try building a new car for FV, incorporating some of the ideas he picked at the June Mo-Hud meeting when Brad Buenting had his AFV-02 on display.

Maybe he should call the next car The Donald, and see if he can get D. Trump interested in a little sponsorship.

... And Early Start

While the rest of the family is ice racing, Ian O'Connor will reportedly head to the Sunshine State to get a couple of early Nationals under his belt.

Ian is still smarting a bit from a late season surprise which saw him bumped out of an invitation in SSC to The Valvoline Runoffs, and aims not to miss out in '91.

Not To Be Overlooked

Last month's K-O carried final points for the New York State Road Racing Championships (NYSRRC), but didn't include drivers region. Congratulations to Dave Reynolds (G Prod MGA) and Michael Weir (D/Sports Racing Weir Mk. III) for their title winning performances.

MW, by the way, is still working away (albeit with time consuming distractions like being 1990 race chairman) on the Weir Mk. IV, also destined for D/SR.

Also congrats to Kurt Weiss, who won ITA in the very competitive NARRC series.

All for Now. Cheers

1990 AWARDS DINNER A HIT!

The MoHawk- Hudson Region of SCCA held its annual awards dinner on Saturday, December 1 at the Ramada Inn in Albany. About 70 people attended the festive event that featured the installation of officers, awards and a Chinese auction.

Officers elected for 1991 were Greg Rickes, Regional Executive; Jon Handy, Assistant Regional Executive; Dick Stewart, Secretary; Jim Bishop, Tresurer, and Tom Campbell and Mike Weir, Directors.

During the awards portion of the event, the following members were honored: Ira Gelber and Don Jurusik, both IT drivers, shared "Rookie of the Year" honors; Kurt Weiss won the "Outstanding Performance" award for the show he put on at the Little Lemans race at Lime Rock and Paul Tariello won the "Most Improved Driver" award.

Tom Campbell was named "Driver of the Year" for his great season in GT1 which put him at the SCCA Run-Offs in Atlanta.

In Autocross, awards went to D.J. McArdle, Bill Hudson and Keith Martens. Honorable Mention went to Paul Tiesche, Greg Rickes and Tom Schilde.

Mike Weir was awarded the Lewis Trophy for having the most workers points. Other members presented awards for worker points included Jim Garry, Jim Bishop, and Pete Smith. Harold Cameron, Mary Cameron, Roly Heacox and Mike Weir were honored for their extra efforts in putting on the Mo-Hud race at Lime Rock in August.

Music at the dinner was by Robert Aronstein — The Piano Man. Another highlight of the evening included a Chinese Auction, masterminded by Pete Smith. You had to be there to enjoy it!

For Sale

- Two Yokohama AOOIR size 175/70-13 tires, 5/32 of an inch tread depth. Cost - \$60 for two and get a third one free!
- Two Semprit 155/80-13 studded snow tires, 8/32 of an inch tread depth. Cost - \$50 for two.
- Two Pirelli 155/80-13 snow tires, 13/32 of an inch tread depth. Cost \$60 for the pair.
- For any of the above, contact Keith Martens at (518) 235-9037 anytime.

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1. Events believed to be spectator events are in all CAPITAL LETTERS. Please advise if incorrect.
2. Symbols used in the Regional Race column: MARKS-# MYSRRC-\$ MARKC-\$ MERKC-\$
3. Miscellaneous column primarily for identifying potential schedule conflicts from professional sanctioning bodies and other SCCA divisions. Please check original sources for up-to-date information.
4. PMA - Pennsylvania Millelim Assn.

Mohawk-Hudson Region Motorsports Calendar

Dec. 23 Lime Rock Vintage Fall Festival

Sun ESPN, 4:00 p.m.

Dec 26 - 30 World Karting Association Championship Races

Wed - Sun Daytona International Speedway (FL)

Jan 2 Mohawk-Hudson Region membership meeting Wed Albany Ramada, 1228 Western Ave. 7:30 p.m.

Jan 6 Ice Race, Warners Lake, East Berne NY

Sun NYSIRA (518) 797-3610

Jan 13 Ice Race, Wells NY

Sun AMEC

Jan 20 Ice Race, Warners Lake, East Berne NY

Sun NYSIRA (518) 797-3610

Jan 27 Ice Race, Syracuse area

Sun

Feb 2 & 3 Daytona 24 Hours IMSA Camel GT Sat Sun Daytona International Speedway

Feb 3 Ice Race, Sacandaga Lake

Sun AMEC

Feb 6 Mohawk-Hudson Region membership meeting Wed Albany Ramada, 1228 Western Ave. 7:30 p.m.

Feb 17 Ice Race, Warners Lake, East Berne NY

Sun NYSIRA (%18) 797-3610

Feb 21 -23 SCCA National Convention

Thu - Sat Stouffers Harborplace, Baltimore

Feb 24 Ice Race, Location TBA

Sun AMEC

Mar 3 Ice Race, Warners Lake, East Berne NY

Sun NYSIRA (518) 797-3610

Mar 6 Mohawk-Hudson Region membership meeting Wed Albany Ramada, 1228 Western Ave. 7:30 p.m.

Mar 8 -10 SCCA Northeast Division Roundtable hosted

Fri- Sun by Mohawk-Hudson Region, Sheraton Turf Inn

Wolf Rd, Colonie

REgional Ramblings

Movable Feast

The NEDiv. Convention in Pittsburgh was a pivotal meeting for Mohawk-Hudson Region as far as race scheduling for 1991. The calendars for NARRC, NYSRRC, NEDiv Nationals and Drivers Schools is listed elsewhere, but as far as Mohawk-Hudson's race date, there are actually two possible scenarios.

Plan B is reflected in the calendar, with our NARRC/NYSSRC race at Lime Rock moved to June 14 & 15.

This puts us a week after a New York Region event at Lime Rock, but was preferable to the first draft, which had us in our traditional third weekend in August slot, which also happened to represent the sixth race in five weeks, a situation everyone involved (officals and racers alike) was unhappy with in 1990.

Plan A (Lime Rock's top priority) involves a special opportunity for the track to host a massive four day Ferrari festival on Independence Day weekend. To do so will require that one unmuffled race be dropped.

After discussions with Walt Huber of Northern New Jersey Region and Dave Hall and Phil Rosette of Lime Rock, I (in consultation with Comp. Chairman Jack Hanifan) agreed to drop the Mohawk-Hudson race date, for 1991 only. To keep the Mohawk-Hudson Region involved in race organization and administration, if plan A becomes a reality we will co-host (with Northern New Jersey Region) the August 2-3 date at LRP.

We'll keep you posted as matters develop.

I'm happy to announce that a volunteer has stepped forward to fill the position of Activities Director. John Broadhurst, well-known for his Sports 2000 endeavors, fills the slot which rounds out the region's executive committee.

The Last Word

Elsewhere in this issue you will find the official response(s) to the letter which appeared last month questioning the credentials of the new V.P for Club Racing.

While not wishing to pass judgement either way, could Mr. Craw have defused some of the questions about Mr. Petty's suitability by highlighting the latters extensive motorsports experience (i.e. bikes, drag racing and oval track) in his initial letter introducing the new V.P. for Club Racing?

A Good Time Was Had By All

Kudos to Assistant R.E. Jon Handy for the stellar job in organizing the annual awards dinner. Almost eighty people were on hand for awards presentations, socializing, and a rollicking Chinese grab bag guided (more or less) by Peter Smith.

We'll waste no time getting 1991 rolling with our first membership meeting on January 2 at the Albany Ramada. Hope to see you there.

BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON SUPPORT THE SPORT

Greg Rickes