

The Mo-Hud

Knockoff



NEWSLETTER OF THE MOHAWK-HUDSON REGION SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA (MoHud)

June 2018

The REport

Let'er rip, 'tater chip

Our 2018 competition season is in full swing. The first event of the NYSRRC series scheduled for Memorial Day weekend at NHMS. Several MoHud drivers registered. Look for results in the Club Racing report in the July issue.

Best of luck to our MoHud Solo competitors and organizers on their first event of the year being held the weekend of June 2-3 at our new site at the Empire State Aerosciences Museum.

Dinner with the Director

Please join us for our next monthly membership meeting on Wednesday, June 6 at The Orchard, 68 N Manning Blvd, Albany. Our special guest will be SCCA Area 10 director Earl Hurlbut. Earl says "I would like to attend and visit with you guys. I don't have any specific business, just like to interact with the members." Dinner on your own and bench racing starts at 6:30pm. Formalities start promptly at 7:30pm. Hope to see you there.

For the good of the sport,

Jim Bucci

Regional Executive

Eds Note: The phrase "let'er rip, 'tater chip" traces its origins to the hot-rodding and street-racing scene in Texas, and has been popularized by the Gas Monkey Garage (Dallas) through its use in the "Fast 'n Loud" series for the Discovery Channel. In no way is this phrase related to the sad and mournful "Let'r Rip" performed by the Dixie Chicks.

Coming Events: June and...

- **June 2-3:** Saturday – Test and Tune; Sunday – Event 1. MoHud Solo season starts at Empire State Aerosciences Museum, adjacent to the Schenectady County Airport, Route 50, Glenville.
Pre-register at < <http://msreg.com/MoHud-2018-ESAM-June> >
- **June 6:** Wednesday, 7:30pm. MoHud Membership Meeting. Orchard Tavern, 68 North Manning Boulevard, Albany.
We start gathering around 6pm to share time with our fellow members. SCCA Area 10 Director Earl Hurlbut will be on hand
Contact: Jim Bucci hdjimb@gmail.com
- **June 8-10:** Friday – Sunday. SCCA Solo Championship Tour. Sampson/ Seneca Depot, Romulus, NY. MoHud solo drivers nestled snug in their beds, visions of low PAX times dancing in their heads.
- **June 11:** Monday, 4 to 9. MoHud at Capital Cruisers Night; Guptil's Roller Rink, Route 9, Latham.
- **June 25:** Sunday. The Great Race stops overnight in Troy. Chat with John Corey. Lunch stop in Bennington at the Hemmings HQ on Monday the 26th.
- **August 1st:** Wednesday. 5-8. MoHud Family Fun Night at Funplex.
- **August 9th:** Thursday, 8-4. MoHud Annual Golf Tournament.

The MoHud Tool Raffle – getting down to the wire

The prize:

An Astro 40SLMAX rechargeable LED slim light with XL battery. (a \$60 value).



Tickets:

Tickets will be \$1 each, 3 for \$5. Available at the June 2nd and 3rd Solo Autocross sessions. Drawing to be held at the close of the June 3rd Solo Event #1.

Club Racing- June 2018

Jim Bucci/ Jack Hanifan

A number of Mohawk-Hudson Region club racing drivers are entered in the New England Memorial Day weekend event at New Hampshire Motor Speedway. Those scheduled to compete are:

Jason Smith	American Sedan
Tyler Reynolds	Formula Vee
Bill Dergosits	B-Spec
Jared Lendrum	Touring 4
Jim Bucci	F Production
Dave Ferguson	Spec Racer Ford 3
Doug Garrison	Spec Racer Ford 3

132 drivers are entered; MoHud is the biggest contingent outside of the New England Region. Look for complete results in next month's Knockoff.

PS: Check out this month's Journal for several early season reports

Track Night in America

We again point out that SCCA's *Track Night in America Driven by Tire Rack* is a great opportunity to taste the fun of driving your street-going car on a true race course. Tracks within a few hour's drive include Lime Rock in the Northwest corner of CT, Palmer just east of Springfield Mass, and Thompson in the Northeast corner of CT.

For a complete schedule of 2018 *Track Night in America Driven by Tire Rack* events go to:

<https://www.scca.com/articles/2009036-calendar-for-18-track-night-in-america-driven-by-tire-rack>

A bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the Malamute saloon...

Meanwhile, out on the course, Diane was learning how to keep a bunch of snapping Alfas at bay...



Lime Rock, May 18th; a bunch of MoHuders served as instructors at the Patroon-BMW school

Membership Report - June

For the first time in a year our membership count increased from the previous month. We zoomed from 407 to our current 421 as of May 22. That's a welcomed change! The increase came from 11 new members and 3 old ones who allowed their membership to lapse and then rejoined. Don't ignore those renewal letters folks!

New members

Our eleven new members are mostly Street Survival students with parent who for whatever reason weren't counted in last month's Street Survival tally. The last two on the list came to us through the conventional web site inquiries. Yes we lose the vast majority of our driving school students but I'll take an increase whatever way we can get it.

Aaron Brethower
Mark Brethower
Isabella Diaz
Kimberly Diaz
Griffin Parks
Alia Sater
Diane Sater-Wee
Hayley Ward
Sean Ward
Ronald Miller
Sam Abusen

Interest: Club and Pro Racing
Interest: Club Racing and Solo



Significant Anniversaries

FIVE YEARS

Steven Spinicchia
Marisol Van Slyke
Oscar Van Slyke

TEN YEARS

Jacqueline Farbman

FIFTEEN YEARS

Adam Figarsky

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

James Sheridan
Judy Sheridan

THIRTY YEARS

Dave Guerrieri
Maggie Guerrieri

FORTY-FIVE YEARS

Jon Van de Car

That's 195 years of SCCA membership right there! Congratulations to Steven Spinicchia who is interested in Club Racing, Rally, and Solo. A big wave to Chip Van Slyke's beautiful children Marisol and Oscar who come with dad to the membership meetings every month. When you look at Jacqueline Farbman's or Adam Figarsky's ten and fifteen years it seems like a long healthy membership but then you see the Sheridans at twenty five years and think "Wow!" Keep scanning down the list and the Guerrieri's show up at the big Three Oh. Phew that's a long time! Finally we see Jon Van de Car with his nearly half century of membership and we're blown away. Congratulations everyone!

- Jim Garry

Board of Directors Meeting, March 26, 2018

Orchard Tavern, Albany, New York; Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

Solo - A new site has been secured, the Empire State Aerosciences Museum. First event will be ~~Saturday, April 21 with a Test and Tune. Solo race will be Sunday April 22.~~ We're tentatively scheduled for seven events. The Museum is proposing that we join the Museum as an active member. The SCCA van does not need any special work done on it at this time.

Jack Hanifan has resigned as Activities Director. We will be reaching out to the membership to solicit interest for a replacement. Alternatively, Jim suggested that the Chapter form an Activities Committee to develop proposals.

Treasurer - Paul Malecki summarized previous month's income and expenses.

Chapter Officers - Jim Bucci is requesting that Officers prepare job descriptions for their position. Jim also suggested that Officers begin to think about succession planning, including having an interested member "shadow" them and perhaps "deputize" them to show them the position functions.

Raffle - Jim Garry has three tools that he will donate to the Chapter for a raffle. Total value for all three items is approximately \$200. Tickets will be offered to the general membership and solo attendees.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 am

- Ron Bass

Notes from the Editorial Staff

- **Evan Karl**, according to our sources, doing a summer internship with Joe Gibbs Racing. Will he forsake Spec Miata for a ride in Spec NASCAR?

- **Jim Garry** has been appointed Divisional Solo Safety Steward for the Northeast Division stepping in for Brian Reeves who served admirably for many years.

- **May 20th a busy day for MoHuders.** A PAX of autocrossers journeyed down to Kingston to help and compete with the Poughkeepsie Sports Car Club (a satellite of the New York Region) at the premier event held at Tech City. Among other items of interest, **Jonathan Burckhard** transitioning from karts to big wheels in his "new" Honda Si.

Up in damp Saratoga, the **Buccis** and **Maleckis** served as judges at the SAM Spring show, while **EJ Smith, Ian Wallace, Diane Malecki, Lou Pirro and his wife, Bruce Kosakoski,** and **Andy Furlong** showed their racing machines in front of the Museum.

- **Formula 1 watching:** In 1958 the results of the Monaco Grand Prix were long in coming to a Stateside fan. A short paragraph on the last page of Monday's New York Times sports section listing the top three finishers; then Bernard Cahier's article in Road and Track in our mailbox six weeks later. In 2018 we are watching Free Practice 1 live, streaming via WatchESPN on an iPad. We miss Bernard, but gotta love the SKY TV boys.

Membership Meeting, May 2, 2018

Orchard Tavern, Albany, New York; Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm.

Minutes from previous month's meeting accepted unanimously.

Treasurer – last month's expenses and income summarized. Motion made to have the Club secure a credit card to replace the Club's debit card. This will be a corporate credit card with a maximum of \$5000. A credit card is more secure than a debit card. Motion approved unanimously.

Membership – the Club currently has 402 members. Member anniversaries also summarized. Solo – first solo is scheduled at the Aerosciences Museum. It is a "trial" event to insure we mesh with the museum.

Tire Rack Street Survival – unfortunately, the school had to be canceled because of inclement weather – very icy conditions. The next school is scheduled for October. First preference will be given to students who were registered for the April event.

Activities – we're still seeking a replacement for the Activities Director. Anyone interested in helping should contact Jim Bucci.

Knock Off – reminder that submission deadline is the 15th of each month. Members are invited and encouraged to submit articles for publication. Submissions can be submitted to Paul Malecki.

Club Racing – Jack is recovering and continues to be in good spirits. Visitors are welcome. The Icebreaker was at Thompson a couple of weeks ago. Evan Karl won the Spec Miata. Palmer is May 5-6. Several Mo Hud members will be attending. Upcoming events – Lime Rock Park Track Night is June 14th and Club Race June 15/16. Tom Campbell described his recent experience VIR.

Old Business – Saratoga Museum Auto Show is May 20. Members are welcome to display their cars at the show. Eric Smith is coordinating. Please contact Eric if you would like to bring your car. Draft ByLaws are ready for presenting to the general membership for review and approval. They have been initially reviewed by the National Office and no substantive comments were offered. Jim reminded the Officers that their job descriptions were due to the Regional Exec April 15.

New Business – a drawing will be held at the first Solo for an Astro rechargeable LED work light. September 6 and 7 at the Glen – Jaguar is the marque for a Glen tour. Over 600 cars are expected to attend. Funplex Kart night is August 1 at 6:30. August 9 is the golf tournament at Burden Lake. Jim suggested a challenge of solo vs. club racers. More details to follow.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

- Ron Bass

Mo-Hud Officers and Contacts

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Scrutineering (Tech)

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KnockOff

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For more information about the Mohawk-Hudson Region SCCA, and membership in the Sports Car Club of America, go to < <http://www.mohud-scca.org> >

Membership meetings of the Mohawk-Hudson Region SCCA are held on the 1st Wednesday of the month, excepting July and August, 7:30pm, at the Orchard Tavern, 68 North Manning Boulevard, Albany.



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The KnockOff Journal

This Month...

- Campbell Racing Starts Their Season
- Yuven Sundaramoorthy at Road Atlanta



Campbell Racing 2018 - Race Report Number 1

Virginia International Raceway (VIR) April 13 - 15

This past weekend was the opening event of our 2018 season, once again at VIR. It is a good place to start, even if it is a 12-hour drive. While we were enjoying sunny days and 80 degree temperatures, back home it was in the 30s and snowing.

The event continues to be one of the best run and at one of the best facilities that we see all year. And the track is also excellent. In fact, it was recently announced that the 2019 National championship race will be held at VIR in the fall of September 2019. We are really looking forward to that.

As usual, we arrived at the track a day early in order to do the Test Day on Thursday. Although there were a couple of new things I wanted to actually "test" it was really a shakedown day for both cars, Charlie's Spec Miata (SM) and my F Production class (FP) Miata. The day went well with both cars. We found a few loose nuts and bolts, leftovers from the winter overhauls etc. Nothing serious. It is also an important start to the season for the driver after a long winter off. Charlie did 4 half hour sessions, two in each car, and by the end of the day was back on form.

Friday morning was official practice and then the first of two qualification sessions in the afternoon. The second qualification run would be on Saturday morning. Both cars continued to run well. The SM was mid pack out of a large field of 46 cars. This is a combined Northeast and Southeast Conference event and all the top SM cars from both are here. The FP car ran well in a field of 32 cars in the race group, 9 in F Production, a good field for this class. We really used the session to break in a new set of tires so only did 5 laps. The tires then come off and are allowed to "cure" for 24 hours before we use them again, in the first race on Saturday afternoon.

In the first qualifying session, Friday afternoon, Charlie was a little quicker in the SM car, but then so were a lot of others. However, about half way through the session the transmission stuck in 4th gear and it was necessary to retire to the paddock.

In the FP qualifying session, all went well and we were marginally the fastest in class until the very last lap when one of the others was able to put in a really quick lap the take-over first place. Our time, however, was about a second slower than last year's best so, perhaps, we could find the cause and be in a better position for the Saturday morning qualifying session.

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Campbell at VIR. cont'd...

Mazda brought in one of their professional drivers as a coach for the weekend and Charlie was able to spend a lot of time with him, reviewing video and car performance data I download from my data acquisition system. He thought Charlie was doing quite well but had some specific points where he thought improvement was possible. Also, our brake supplier was at the event and took some brake temperature data from the car at the end of the qualifying session and suggested that there was too much rear brake bias set into the car and recommended be adjust that before the next session. And, finally, after a review of the data and a lot of thinking, I decided that we should make a transmission change on the FP car. I had left the transmission with the gearing we used at the Indianapolis Runoffs in October in the car, thinking it would help at a couple especially slow exit turns at VIR. While it did as expected, the unintended consequence was that it caused the car to lose time all the way down the three very long straights. I make the decision about 2:00 am Friday night while going over and over the tradeoff trying to get to sleep. Finally got up at 6:30 and started the transmission change.

The morning session for the FP car was scheduled for 10:15 so there was enough time to do the change (remember we had changed the transmission in the SM car the night before and they are essentially the same. And you may recall, we change transmissions on these cars a lot). Got the trans out and put the new one in, started reinstalling the rest of the systems and found that the new one wouldn't shift properly. This was a fresh rebuild, the first time it as in the car. Luckily, I was able to reach the transmission builder at his home in Illinois, and he diagnosed the problem as the transmission had shifted itself into reverse gear during shipment (rough handling) independently from the position of the shift linkage. There as a way to fix it with the transmission still in the car but it involved laying on my back, working through a 1 inch diameter hole in the top of the case, by looking in a mirror, trying to catch an edge of a shift yoke, and lever it back into place with a small screw driver. I have a renewed appreciation for the coordination and training it takes to be a dentist! It took a few minutes but I was finally able to get it into the correct position and all was then working well. We finished the reassembly and were able to get the car to the grid only because they were running about a half hour late to the morning schedule.

But it paid off. The car was definitely quicker with the new transmission gears and with the adjustments to the brake bias. Charlie took over a second off his time from Friday and was on the class pole position.

While I was finishing the transmission change, Charlie went out for the second qualifying session with the SM car. He was a bit quicker and would start 32nd for the race in the afternoon.

The first race for the SM car went well. Good racing for the full distance, he was about another second quicker than in qualifying and was able to advance to finish 24th. He is driving well.

The FP race, later in the day, got off to a good start and Charlie was able to get into third overall, behind a couple faster class cars, and continued to open a nice gap over the rest of the FP cars. However, around half distance, the car started to oversteer, getting progressively worse, and the lead began to go away. Some lapped traffic slowed Charlie at one point in the next to the last lap and the second place FP car was able to catch him and get past. Charlie made a couple attempts to get back in front but wasn't able to hold it with the ill-handling car. He ended up second – not bad but disappointing.

I went through the car Saturday evening and made a few changes which should help the handling problem, although I wasn't able to identify why it was ok at the start of the Saturday race and degraded as badly as it did.

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Campbell at VIR. cont'd...

The weather for Sunday was forecast to be bad. It was windy all weekend but thunderstorms were coming in the afternoon. So the organizers decided to shorten the races and drop the lunch break in an attempt (which was successful) to beat the storm.

The SM race was a rerun of the race on Saturday. Charlie started 25th, based on the improvement in his best time during the Saturday race; had a good clean race; was busy and challenged throughout the run and was able to take another 1.5 seconds off his best time and advance to 18th place. He was very pleased with having come from a 32nd place qualifying on Saturday to an 18th finish on Sunday. Not a mark on the car and ready for the next outing. And he set his personal best time for this track during the Sunday race.

The FP race was a different matter. The race started well. Although he started in second place because of the times in the Saturday race, he made another good start and was leading by the end of the first lap and building a good gap. But as the race went on the oversteering continued and the gap started to close. Then, with about 4 laps to go the car got away from him and went off course on the last turn onto the front straight. After a bit of an excursion through the dirt and grass, he got it back on track but in 6th place, and with some damage to the air dam on the front of the car. And that is how he finished.

So I have some work to do on the FP car, to repair the body damage and, most importantly, to find the cause of the handling problems.

Next race is at Summit Point, West Virginia on April 28-29. Nine working days to go before the rig hits the road again.

Until next time, Tom and Charlie

Race Report Number 2- Summit Point Raceway, West Virginia, April 28-29

A much more pleasant report to write this time!

First, I am happy to report that I found the cause of all the handling problems two weeks ago at VIR. The lower suspension control arm on the left front had cracked and was progressively failing through the weekend. The crack was in a very difficult place to see. I suspect it started to fail during the race on Saturday afternoon. When I didn't find the crack, I adjusted the suspension to compensate. Sunday's race started well but the failure got much worse early in the Sunday race and the car was just about uncontrollable by the end of the race. Back home a more thorough inspection found the problem and a spare control arm was installed and everything was back to normal.

We left for Summit Point on Thursday, planning to do the test day on Friday before the actual race event which was on Saturday and Sunday. This weekend was going to have its own special challenge because the FP car was in the first race group and the SM car was in group two. We have run back to back before but it is a challenge in both logistics and driver stamina. But the officials were most accommodating and the weekend went off without a problem. And, in this case, we would be able to be packed up and on the road home early Sunday afternoon.

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Campbell at Summit Point. cont'd...

On Friday morning it was raining so we set aside any testing plans until the afternoon and then, when the track remained wet and cold we decided to not bother going on track at all. There wouldn't have been any meaningful test information and Charlie knows the track well and didn't need any low value seat time.

Saturday morning it was warmer but it had rained overnight and the track was damp. Qualifying in group one was quite slow but, of course, the same for everyone. Charlie qualified the FP car 4th on the grid behind the faster GT cars, but first in class. All of the cars in class were also at VIR so it was good to see that we were back at the front of the grid. The SM group was very small this weekend, only 7 cars showed up. Charlie qualified 4th, on a drying but still slick track.

By the time the Saturday races started after lunch the track was dry and the weather warmed up significantly. Charlie got off to a good start, was running in third overall, behind the two faster GT cars, at the end of the first lap and the three of them were pulling away from the rest of the field. All went well and that is the way they finished, our first victory of the new season. The track had been repaved over the off season and we had hopes of getting under the track record but the best time was 3 tenths of a second short.

The SM race was immediately next. I had staged the SM car on the grid during the FP race and a member of the crew took Charlie by golf cart from the first race impound to the grid while I stayed with the FP car during the impound period. Since they award the trophies at the end of impound, before the next group ends its race, I got to stand-in for Charlie on the podium and accept the winner's trophy – been a couple years since I was up there!

The SM race was rather uneventful. Charlie started and ended 4th. He had a bit of a close race with the 5th place car for a while but in the end was secure in 4th. The car ran well and needed only a fresh set of tires for the race on Sunday.

The post-race inspection of the FP car and review of the in-car data system showed that the alternator had failed early in the race and was running at about 17 volts. This affects the engine management system and will reduce the power output a little. I replaced the alternator with the spare and all was back to normal.

The first Sunday race was scheduled for 9am, and it was sunny but quite cold. It was in the 70s on Saturday but Sunday started at 40 with a good wind-chill. We still had hopes of getting under the track record. The cold air, and the new alternator, would help make good power and I made a fuel mixture adjustment to better use the cold air. We decided to put on a new set of tires (you only get one chance at "new pavement") and made a suspension adjustment to help the handling on a cold track as it was going to be difficult to get the tires up to the optimum operating temperature. We also did three laps during the available morning warmup period. We don't usually do this but because the car was so cold it would be good to warm the oil in the engine, transmission, and differential and it would stay there since the race was only a few minutes later.

Charlie started third this time, based on the results of the Saturday race. As on the day before, the first three cars pulled away from the rest of the pack. The first two were racing each other so Charlie stayed a little back to not interfere. Within a few laps they managed to get together and go off, one with a flat tire. So Charlie took the overall lead which he maintained all the way to the end. Charlie was almost a full second under the lap record within the first few laps and consistently ran there for a few laps then backed off a little when he was running out front by himself.

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Campbell at Summit Point. cont'd...

But then the now leading GT car started to catch him and he decided that he really wanted to be the first car under the checkered flag so he picked up the pace to stay in front. And he brought the lap record down even further, ending the race with a best lap time of 1.7 seconds under the old record.

After the first race another "driver shuffle" got Charlie back on track for the second race in the SM car. Here, as yesterday, he started fourth and was running fourth, racing those immediately around him when he felt/heard a front wheel bearing starting to fail (like the one that took the FP car out at the Indianapolis race last fall). So, with only two laps remaining, he decided to retire the car rather than risk any major damage. Disappointing but, still, the SM car ran well all weekend long.

So, home again, but this time with two victories in the FP car and a new lap record. The car now holds the track record at: Summit Point, Pittsburgh, Pocono, New Jersey, VIR, and Watkins Glen (short course). Very satisfying.

10 days at home to prepare the car, motorhome and trailer and leave for the next race at Pittsburgh International Race Complex on May 12 - 13.

Tom and Charlie

Yuven Writes About Road Atlanta, April 21, 22:

Good Start to the F1600 Pro Season Despite Challenges

Overall, I'd say it was a good weekend at the F1600 Championship series season opener at Road Atlanta this past weekend. We managed to come home with a 3rd place podium finish, but there was a lot thrown at us for sure.

To start with, out of the blue, I ended up with high fever last week, and had to miss school for a couple of days. There was a point when we weren't even sure if I will be healthy enough to travel and race. Thankfully, my fever only lasted until Thursday, so we traveled to Atlanta with cautious optimism. It was a compressed 2-day event, so being healthy and getting quality track time were critical.

We did well in the two practice sessions Saturday morning and qualified 4th. Race #1 was Sunday morning, and it was cool but dry. It was a good, clean, close, typical F1600 race. We ended up finishing 3rd.

Then things changed, and it started raining. We started race #2 on outside pole, but in the first 2 laps, I got hit from the back causing us to spin, moving us all the way to ninth. We didn't know at that time, but our right-rear suspension rod was bent in that contact. I raced very well despite the wet track and the bent suspension. Got all the way to 3rd. However, in a bizarre twist, they showed the white flag twice. Even my crew was confused and thought the race was over. After crossing the line in 4th, I slowed down, losing 2 spots, ultimately finishing 6th. Lesson learned, I guess!

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Yuven at Road Atlanta. cont'd...

Race #3 was even more rain. With all that spray, it was impossible to see when trailing any other car. I started mid-pack but made it from 9th to 3rd in just a few laps then ran 3rd the whole race, just barely behind the two lead cars. Conditions were tough, and due to lack of visibility I drove off track in turn #1 with 2 laps to go and finished 5th. Still not too shabby given the conditions.

I am feeling very optimistic about our chances of being a championship contender this season. Next up for us is round #2 at the famous Watkins Glen, May 11th-13th. It is only 3hrs away from home, which would make it a 'home race'!

We would like to thank K-Hill Motorsports for a car that ran great in both dry and wet conditions. Especially, our sincere appreciation to Jake, our lead mechanic and Tonis, our engineer and coach. I am also very excited about having great teammates - Tyler, Dario and Baylor. You know this is going to be a tough team to compete against!!

Thanks for all the support. Talk again after the next round.

Yuven



Check out < <https://www.yuvenracing.com> > for more...



A Cool Book
<<<

An Even Cooler
GT-40 in a Garage
Near Here

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Campbell Race Report Number 3- Pittsburgh International Race Complex, May 12-13

We started the weekend with the usual pre-event test day on Friday. Charlie went to the track on Thursday afternoon but I had some personal commitments on Thursday and had to make the trip Friday morning. I left Saratoga at 3am and arrived at the track about 11:30. Charlie did the two morning sessions in the Spec Miata and then we were able to switch to the FP car for the afternoon sessions. All went well with both cars. We tested some suspension and brake changes from Summit Point and dialed in the proper starting tire pressures for qualifying on Saturday morning.

Saturday morning started out well. The FP car was first up and, although it was cold, the car was working well. Charlie had it qualified on the pole with a time a few tenths under the track record. We came into the pits near the end of the session to check tire pressures and right at the end were surprised when one of the other cars went even faster on his last lap of the qualifying session. It was going to be a good race. Charlie then went out in the SM, again the two cars were in back to back race groups. Unfortunately, this didn't go well at all. A couple laps in, still on cold tires, he went wide on the first turn, got the right side tires off into the wet grass and spun. After a wild ride (it is a very fast corner) he ended by going straight into a substantial tire wall. The nose of the car was heavily damaged and it was done for the weekend.

The weather in the afternoon was dry and cool even though they were forecasting showers all day long. The pole car, a Lotus Super Seven, got off to a "good" start (perhaps a little early?) and took the lead which he never relinquished. Charlie tried his best and the car was working fine. Both cars were under the track record several times. So we finished as we started, second. You just can't win them all.

The rain did start later in the afternoon and made up for the delay by presenting us with a real downpour. The last two races of the day had to be postponed until Sunday morning. There was supposed to be another round of qualifying on Sunday morning but that was cancelled to make room on the schedule for the leftover races and to get an early start on the Sunday races since it was again supposed to rain most of the day.

And it did rain most of the morning. The FP race started in the rain about 10:30. Although the rain let up shortly after the race started the track was very wet and there were streams of water running across the track at several locations. The race winner from Saturday elected to start from the back of the pack because of the rain, so Charlie started from the pole. He decided to start on the outside pole and, in hind sight, that was a mistake. Going into the first turn the second place starter got inside him and after going side to side for a bit Charlie lost traction and got a bit out of shape allowing two cars to get by. He didn't lose control or go off track but ended up in third by about 10 seconds. For the rest of the race he tried to close that gap but all three cars were turning about the same lap times. By the end of the race (these races are about 50 miles in length, 17 laps at Pitt) he had closed to the rear bumper but ran out of time to try to try any passes, so he finished third. He did set the fastest lap time of the race although it was about 10 seconds slower than the times they were turning in the dry on Saturday.

So, again, the weekend gets mixed reviews. One car wrecked, but repairable; one car in good shape and performing well but not finishing as well as we had hoped for. But that's racin'. If you win them all it gets boring. Next up is the Super Tour event at Mid-Ohio the first weekend in June. It will be another three-day event (four with the test day) and will have a really big entry. I have three weeks this time to try to find some more speed and better handling. The search never ends. And, of course, Charlie has three weeks to get the SM car back together again.

Tom and Charlie