

January 2023 Issue

MOHUD ON  
FACEBOOK



MOHUD ON THE WEB



# THE KNOCK OFF

## THE REPORT – *Eric Smith*

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from your Mohawk-Hudson Region leadership! I know Santa is bringing me some track-oriented brake pads and a cold air intake for my new-to-me BMW, and hope you are having or have had a good holiday.

We are still planning our Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet at the Saratoga Automobile Museum. If you're planning to attend, now is the time to register as time is short for doing so. Please visit <http://msreg.com/mohud-2023-banquet> to do so. Cost is \$30 per person, and \$10 for children 12yrs and younger. We are hoping to get at least 50 people out, but we only have 20 registered as of 12/24.

After the holidays, there are a few SCCA events you should consider attending. SCCA is once again holding a virtual national convention (Jan. 19-27). It's a very convenient and cost-effective method of getting some insights to what the National staff are doing to promote our motorsports interest. [The schedule has been published](#) and registration is now open.

On the heels of the National Convention is the NEDiv MiniCon (Mini Convention), being held in-person in Scranton PA, on Saturday, February 11th. Once again this year, I have a travel conflict and won't be able to attend, but I'd encourage MoHud members to attend as it's a great way to get a feel for the pulse of the Division. I'm hoping to entice at least one of the region leaders to attend, but I'd encourage MoHud members to attend as it's

a great way to get a feel for the pulse of the division Details and registration can be found at:  
<https://www.motorsportreg.com/events/2023-scca-nediv-convention-radisson-lackawanna-station-northeast-division-943449>

I hope to see you at the Annual Meeting & Awards banquet!

- Eric Smith, Regional Exec  
[MoHud.RE@gmail.com](mailto:MoHud.RE@gmail.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 14 – Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet, SAM, Saratoga Springs, NY. [Registration is open.](#)

Jan. 19-27 – SCCA National Convention (virtual). [Information here.](#) [Registration here.](#)

Feb. 10-12 – Northeast Division Mini-Con, Scranton, PA. [Registration and details here.](#)

March 10-12 – SCCA Solo National Tour, Cecil, GA; South Georgia Motorsports Park



## MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Jim Garry

Our membership count as of December 27<sup>th</sup> stood at 310. As mentioned in previous reports, our present numbers rival those from the mid-pandemic. We recovered a little after that but now have fallen again. Can you talk about SCCA to your friends, family, and colleagues? Tell them about our activities and mention SCCA.com.

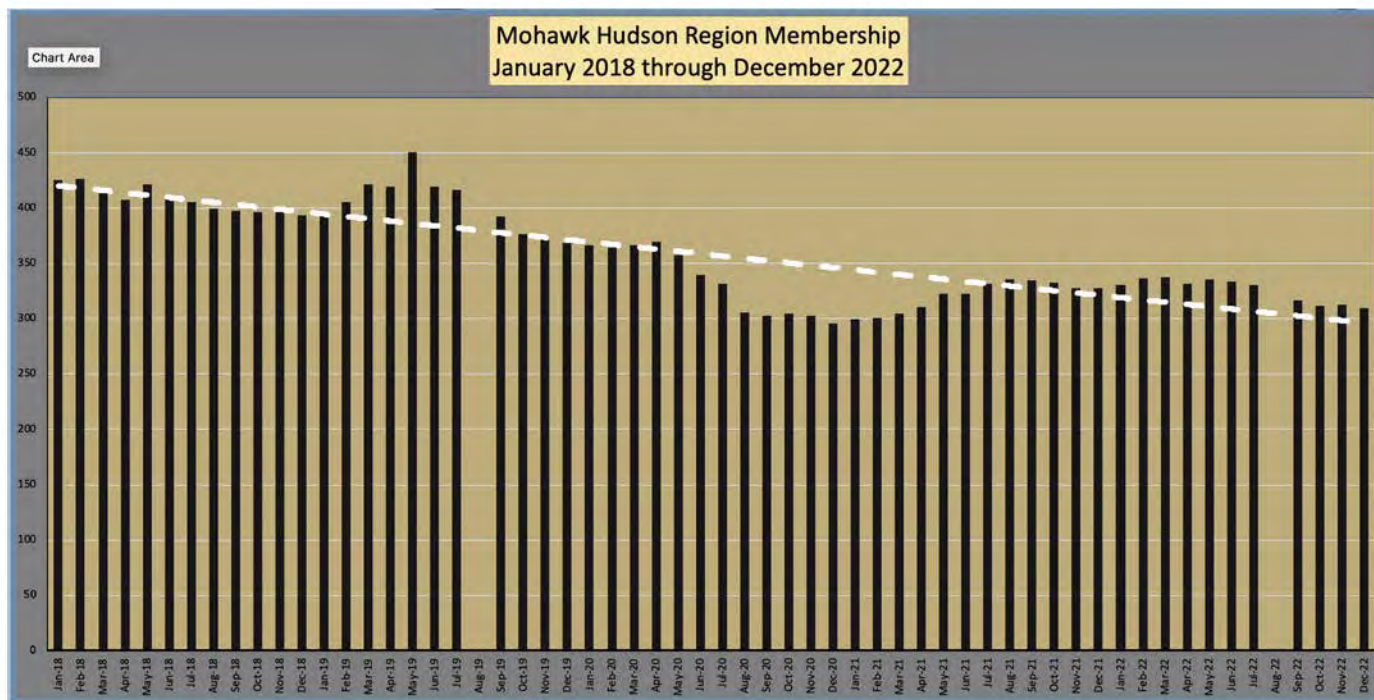
New Members in December:

None

Significant Anniversaries:

William Fish – 5 Years

Sue Rogers – 45 Years



## TREASURERS REPORT – *Paul Malecki*

As of December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the MoHud balance in our Citizen’s Bank account is \$29,630.80. There are no outstanding bills, and there has been no significant income since December 1<sup>st</sup>.

A formal report for the fiscal year will be presented at the Annual Meeting, and a “program review” for the activity year will once again be presented to the Board of Directors in March.

There has been no change in our Bitcoin holdings in the last 27 days.



## SOLO REPORT – *Russ Burckhard*

I hope everyone has had a safe and Happy Holiday season and hope to see you at the annual Awards Banquet at the Saratoga Auto Museum. There is not much new to report. The Solo Advisory Committee met recently to tie up the 2022 season. The trophies have been selected and will be presented at the banquet on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

We also went over the supplemental rules. A discussion about possibly changing the way the events are scored happened. We are looking into possibly making our events scored as if they were two-day events. This would not change the way the event is run. Competitors would still run two heats as we always have (except for the Covid-era events). The way that points are awarded is the big difference. The best time from the first heat would be the result for that heat and then it would be added to the best run of the second heat. The combined total would be where the points would be assessed. This style of event requires more consistency throughout the day. Look for more info on this as we get closer to the season.

We have also had a change of our Solo Advisory Committee members. I would like to thank Sal Baisley, Miguel Teixeira, and Adam Wright for their service and want to welcome Nigel Boyce, Tracey Burckhard, William Fish, and Ken Relation for coming on board.



## **Tire Rack Street Survival for Teens: Real World. Hands On.**

**- Diane n' Paul Malecki**

When a teen driver attends a Street Survival school, they are taught to control a car in unpredictable situations based on the car's handling limits. They master the application of driving physics using their "daily driver" car. They learn how to make good driving decisions and react more quickly. They become more road-aware and learn how to begin anticipating the actions of other drivers.



Nicknamed TRSS, the national school program has its roots in the BMW Car Club of America Foundation and the cooperation of SCCA, with strong support from Tire Rack and others. Locally, in recent years the program has been put on by the cooperative efforts of MoHud, the Patroon BMW chapter, and the Saratoga Automobile Museum.

To MoHud members who have been involved, and there are many, TRSS schools have been a great way to guide teens in responding to real world driving situations that require confidence in the way their car can handle the unexpected.

To MoHud members who have never been involved, we invite you to join us in 2023 as co-workers in an event that will leave you with a good feeling in how your driving skills are being passed along to a new generation of drivers.

To all, mark your calendars for April 23<sup>rd</sup>, and October 22<sup>nd</sup>, at Saratoga Automobile Museum and environs, as our 2023 TRSS dates.

< [paul@dianenpaulmalecki.org](mailto:paul@dianenpaulmalecki.org) >

< [diane@dianenpaulmalecki.org](mailto:diane@dianenpaulmalecki.org) >

## RALLY REPORT – Ken Relation

On Sunday, November 20th, MoHud put on the Roundabout Rally. The rally was a Time, Speed, Distance (TSD) rally requiring drivers and navigator teams to follow detailed driving instructions to precision.

The day began for many waking up to a dusting of snow. Fortunately, the TSD event path did not receive any frozen precipitation to deal with. Six brave Mohudder teams battled the cold and wind registering for the rally at “13 North” in Malta. Each team was assigned a team number, starting order, and start time. Teams received a safety brief and instructions along with their rally road books. The road books were filled with details to travel a specified distance at a certain speed and perform a turning movement, travel another specified distance at a certain speed and perform another turning movement, etc. Teams were penalized for arriving at checkpoints too late, ...or too early.

At their prescribed start time, each team departed the parking lot of “13 North” headed North on US route 9. Teams traveled alongside Lake Lonely and down to the white cap covered Saratoga Lake passing Checkpoint 1 at “The Furniture House”. They turned left and enjoyed a countryside trek around the town of Saratoga before looping back to Saratoga Lake and Checkpoint 2 also at “The Furniture House”. Teams were blessed with a gorgeous view as they toured NY9P along Saratoga Lake to the Stewart’s Shop at the South end for their first break period ending stage 1.



Stage 2 began by climbing the hill of Lake Rd (CR76) visiting the town of Stillwater and City of Mechanicville. Teams were challenged to keep their cars at the prescribed speeds as they climbed numerous hills and manage their momentum as they descended on the other side. Eventually teams arrived at the Stewart’s Shop in Round Lake for their 2nd break period ending stage 2.

The final stage, began with a trip to Coon’s Crossing. Teams travelled several back roads back to Round Lake passing Checkpoint 3 at the Zin Smith trailhead. They skirted the Village of Round Lake, across

the bypass and into a Roundabout misery. Teams then got dizzy in Luther’s Forest as they maneuvered another six roundabouts. Some teams struggled to hold back to 29mph on the tire debris, donut, and burnout marked four lane Luther Forest Boulevard. These Mohudders made their way down Plains Road (CR108) back to Saratoga Lake. Once again on NY9P, they traveled up through the S-curves to the final checkpoint and finish at “The Ripe Tomato” restaurant in Malta.

Inside the restaurant, the teams, Rallymaster Ken Relation, Road Rally Safety Stewart Michelle Relation, and Assistant Eleanor Paris gathered for a delicious lunch. Paired with story telling of today’s exploits was the presentation of trophies. Congratulations to all teams for braving the cold to come out and have #funwithcars!



First Place • Jim Garry and Joe Garry, father and son, Team The J's (photo top left)

Second Place • Salvatore Baisley and Shelby Lee Blanchette, just friends out for a drive, Team It's Not A Shelby (photo top right)

Third Place • Nigel Boyce and Sarah Boyce, husband and wife, Team No Names (photo bottom left)

Fourth Place • Rick Fish and Bill Fish, father and son, Team 3 Fish

Fifth Place • Tracey Burckhard and Russ Burckhard, married couple, Team Ducks and Bunnies

Sixth Place • Greg Burckhard and Luke Tarbay, friends giving rallying a try, Team Intimidating Teggy

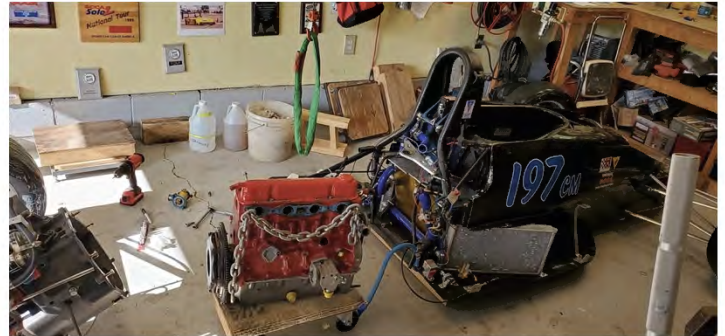




Are you kinda, sorta, maybe thinking you'd like to volunteer to help your club but you worry you might step on toes if you inquire? Or do you worry you might not have the skills to be a program chairperson or a specialty chief or assistant? Stop worrying. Our leaders and chiefs would be happy for "new blood" in our corps. We need members to help out at all levels. You will be mentored at whatever learning curve desired. The most obvious position at this time is Editor of the Knock Off, which is the publication you are reading right now. Since late last year that position is being filled by four temporary editors who are rotating the responsibility. But help is needed at other positions also. Please inquire with our Regional Executive EJ Smith, [MoHud.RE@gmail.com](mailto:MoHud.RE@gmail.com)

## Race Car Update - Jim Garry

Some friends have asked me about the status of my for-autocross 1994 Citation Formula Ford 1600. I had purchased it as a bare chassis in February 2020. It had a new fuel cell, new floor, and came with bodywork, some wheels, and miscellaneous parts. It was missing an engine, transmission, drive shafts & CVs, shocks, most of the suspension, and other nice things. It wasn't ready to go until this past May (27 month build). In '23 my partner and I drove it at 15 events and despite some difficulties it was fairly reliable for a car built up from nothing. However we had to withdraw from the National Championships in Lincoln due to transmission woes. Then in late September the engine began making troubling sounds and we parked it.



*Engine and transmission removed in September*

Not wasting any time, the engine and transmission were quickly pulled from the car. After some scary shipping issues the transmission returned from race car transmission guru Scotty Young in Texas ready for duty. It is now in the process of being reincorporated with the bell housing and suspension to reassemble the transaxle. The engine awaits work.

During the season we felt some difficulty in transitions, especially slaloms. A test & tune event in August revealed that even with shocks at full soft, the car's transitional characteristics were poor. Later that month, we used in-car videos from the Citation and compared them with a friend's videos from his well set up Reynard FF (thanks Josh). This reinforced the feeling that the shocks were overwhelming the suspension. The shocks will go out for revalve once I & old friend Gary Godula (long time CMod and FF driver, Ford engineer, & deep thinker of shocks) put together some words to help dialogue with the shock re-valve expert.

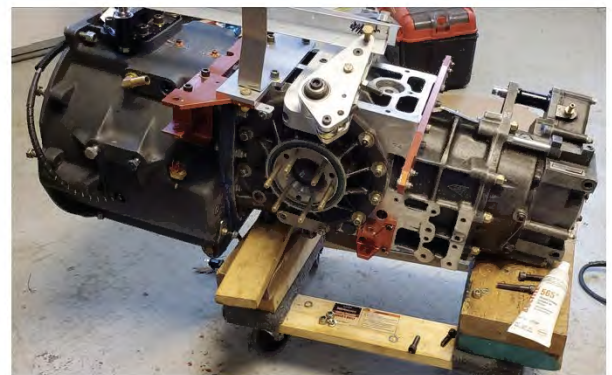


*Here's how it looks at the moment*

A new, lighter (and FF legal) aluminum head has been acquired which allowed 17 pounds to be removed from the rear of the car and onto the front. Front ballast comes in the form of a new heavier battery installed under the driver's legs. It takes care of two problems at once. Not only does it serve as ballast over the front of the car but the more robust

battery will alleviate mid-event charging (the Kent-engineered FFs are "total loss" electrical systems, using no alternator).

Miscellaneous jobs include: Better heat shielding has been added on the fire wall to try to reduce cockpit temps. Removing the slop from the steering shaft (thanks Bob Bownes). Getting a new clutch pedal offset to the left which will allow a larger left-foot-brake pedal extension (thanks Bill Gendron). Installing an improved heel brace in the foot box. Powder coating some suspension pieces that had previously only been painted (and thus scratched up). Attempting to remove some "stiction" from the front suspension. Hard wiring the on-board camera so that stop/start can be done from the dashboard instead of contorting our aging bodies to twist and press the button on the camera above and behind us. Hard wiring the camera power source to the new large on-board battery. Possibly repairing and re-painting the rear bodywork which hasn't been touched in 25 years. And some other small things.



*Suspension mounting brackets and other stuff being installed*

The basic suspension set-up of the car won't change other than the shock valving because the car's balance felt pretty good after making several spring and anti-roll bar changes over the first half of the season. It's a little sad to see the car in a semi-disassembled state again but this is the price of progress. We're hoping for an early season start in March, possibly at the Meadowlands and soon after at Devens.



## The Car & Driver Showroom Stock Challenge: Small Cars, Epic Tales by Greg Rickes

How could it be that this is the Jubilee Year for the Car & Driver Showroom Stock Challenge? In some ways it seems like only yesterday, and in other ways it was a lifetime ago. In Lime Rock's voluminous history this event seems to get little notice, but in its day (1972-76) it was one of the most anticipated dates on the racing calendar. By now it's a time recalled by fewer and fewer of us, so for posterity I'll try to re-capture the allure.



The Car & Driver Showroom Stock Challenge was motorsport with a bit of a still-fresh Woodstock vibe. In those days before the Internet car magazines (aka "buff books") were a big deal, it was the primary way new cars got reviewed, race results promulgated, and enthusiasts across the spectrum linked.

The two top circulation publications were Road and Track (out of California, Bond Publishing) and Car & Driver, based in Manhattan and part of the influential Ziff/Davis publishing empire. In spite of its West Coast roots Road and Track was the conservative traditional sports car publication, dedicated to factual reporting, with nary a discouraging word. Car & Driver was more akin to the "gonzo journalism" first associated with Rolling Stone. C&D could be irreverent, controversial, even cynical. It did not always play well with its automotive advertising base, or even its considerable readership (whom it referred to on occasion as "rabble", "balloon feet", and "jock sniffers"). To gauge the significance of these magazines consider this: the monthly PAID circulation for C&D in 1972 was over 600,000! How's that for being an "influencer"?

Against this backdrop the Sports Car Club of America was in one of its periodic crises over the cost and complexity of its amateur racing program. What emerged in 1972 was a new concept that harkened back to the club's roots. It was called Showroom Stock Sedan. Selected for their parity of performance were a half-dozen or so economy sedans, which were to be raced essentially as they came off the dealer's floor. These were not high-performance cars, they were basic transportation, and were priced accordingly. The SCCA, often noted for lengthy and complex rules, went against character and squeezed every detail of SSS onto one page. No modifications, no performance parts. Full street equipment, lights, interior, exhaust system including mufflers. The only adaptations were (minimal) safety requirements: roll bar (hoop, not full cage), seat belt and shoulder harness, fire extinguisher (hand held, not piped-in system). Total cost to prepare a car, on top of its purchase price, was probably on the order of \$250.



The concept started off slowly. Needless to say there were plenty of skeptics who predicted mayhem, and worse. The first few cars that came out were slow, and ungainly. They leaned way over on their pliant suspension; with mufflers in place the primary sound was the squealing protestation of tires designed for high street mileage, not the rigors of racing. They were skinny, and hard. No one had any relevant experience so as they groped in the unknown racers dealt with tires that chunked, delaminated, and such.

Along the way someone at C&D (the answer is lost in the sands of time. It could have been editor Bob Brown, the irascible Brock Yates, or maybe wunderkinds Pat Bedard or Don Sherman) cast an eye at the concept, and went all in. First came a comparison test of all the eligible cars (Austin Marina, Dodge Colt, Datsun 510, Ford Pinto, Chevy Vega, FIAT 124 sedan, Opel Manta & Kadett, Toyota Corolla, even the VW Beetle), with reams of data as well as a few subjective judgements. Contenders were ranked from top to bottom.

But they didn't stop there. Having proclaimed their own driving prowess in print, they challenged readers to an honest-to-god race. They did so in their own inimitable fashion, basically inviting their readership to come and get their asses kicked by the acknowledged experts. And to back it up there was money to be won, a notable amount, and in direct contrast to the SCCA's hallowed amateurism ethic.

With a bully pulpit every month the gauntlet was flung. Being just a short drive from Manhattan it was natural that Lime Rock Park should be the venue for this fateful Fall showdown. As an added incentive there was the promise of copious amounts of Schaefer beer, free with the price of admission!

## 1972 Season



On October 14 1972 a partisan crowd flowed through the gates and populated Lime Rock's verdant hillsides. The racers showed up in force too, drawn by the promise of intense competition, an unheard-of entry fee of just \$1, and the potential for fame and fortune.

There were more than enough cars to fill the field, and to keep things interesting the C&D format included short-track style heat races rather than road-racing's traditional time trials.

The C&D crew was confident, if not quite outrightly dismissive, in the match-up with "weekend warriors". One anomaly was that Brock Yates, the most experienced actual racer on the masthead (though Pat Bedard and Don Sherman had plenty of laps at both Lime Rock and Bridgehampton, they'd only earned their SCCA licenses earlier in the year) was not behind the wheel, even though he'd done a few races in an SSS car earlier on the year. His last-minute sub was Sport Editor Jim Williams. For the contest Sherman would have the "Project Reader Beater" Ford Pinto, Bedard was in a well-travelled Opel Kadett, and Williams took over the Yates Dodge (nee Mitsubishi) Colt.

One of the hot topics, in a sense literally, in the Showroom Stock ranks, was tires. They had to be DOT approved street tires, and their contact patch was minimal. Early races had been punctuated by the sound of exploding tire, and thrown treads. Being inventive the racers quickly learned that upping the tire pressure was a balm.




**This man is Car and Driver's Technical Editor Don Sherman. The car is C/D's "Project Reader Beater"—a Showroom Stock Sedan Pinto. And we've put up \$5000 that says you can't beat the combination. ... or Brock Yates in "Tom Matie"—his SS/Sedan Dodge Colt ... or any of the rest of the C/D staff that can get ready in time and still meet deadline.**

**PICK UP THE GAUNTLET ... OR SHUT UP**

The Car and Driver SS/Sedan Challenge will be held at Lime Rock, Connecticut on October 14, 1972 in conjunction with a Sports Car Club of America Regional. And for all you readers and writers who've been heaping sarcasm, cynicism and invective on this staff, now's the time to put up or shut up. We've come up with a format that counters every cog-out. There is no excuse for you not to be there. (Besides, there's no SCCA showdown for SS/Sedans at this year's American Road Race of Champions and this is as good a substitute as we can think of.)

**DETAILS ON C/D'S THROWN GAUNTLET**

- Open to all SCCA Competition License holders
- Open to all SCCA-approved Showroom Stock Sedans (in the May issue of C/D we even told you which car is the best SS/Sedan racer ... and if you want more help, take a look in June where we tell you which tires will work best—and if that still isn't enough, turn to page 60 where we outline exactly what has been done to create Project ReaderBeater)
- \$1.00 entry fee (probably the lowest entry fee in history)
- \$5000 purse (that's the minimum purse ... we're trying to con some extra as well)
- Pay back through 15 places (even if the entire C/D editorial staff is ready in time, they can only lock-up the first seven places—which still leaves eight paying positions for the rest of you to fight for)



**ADVANCE SALE TICKET ORDER FORM**  
(PLEASE - CHECK OR MONEY ORDERS ONLY)

**MAIL THIS COUPON TO:**  
CAR AND DRIVER SS/SEDAN CHALLENGE  
c/o Ed. Bob Woodward, One Park Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10005

Noting Car and Driver is going to run heat races on October 14 with all the racing on hand! To make sure you get your official one! Schaefer's Goodies is a check for \$5.00 which entitles me to 10 cups of Schaefer's Advance Beer (total of \$4.00 value). Send to home and other SS/Sedan Challenge Advance sale or cottage getting staff to:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

The they made the discovery that as the tires wore, less tread meant less heat buildup. If a little wear was good, more had to be better. Pretty soon tires that still had that fresh smell were having their tread shaved down to the bare minimum before the cord showed through. There was no consensus on a single brand, and off-beat names like Semperit, Kleber, and Vreedenstein all had their advocates alongside Michelin, and Dunlop and Continental.



As the day's events unfolded Bedard, Sherman, and Williams all made it through to the finale. There were more than a few partisans among the assembled masses who still held out hope that the uppity scribes would get their clocks cleaned.

It may be hard to fathom in this day and age, but even with lap times in the 1 minute 15 second range, the racing was intense as the econo-boxes lurched and swayed, the abuse being dished out to the tires easily heard since all the cars had full exhaust systems in place.

It wasn't long before things went awry for the C&D crew. Bedard got sidelined with a flat tire, perhaps aided and abetted by some car-to-car contact. Sherman was in the thick of the battle for the lead when he too had some bumper-to-bumper contact,

to the detriment of the Ford's radiator. Only Williams survived to the finish, a humbling sixth.

At the end of the day the win went to a journeyman racer from Voorheesville NY by the name of Bruce Cargill. Cargill had started his career in a lumbering Jag XK120, then later was one of the pioneers in single-seat Formula Ford, in spite of bulky build that made him look like the car had been built around him. By 1972 his racing adventure would have been side-lined had it not been for a local Dodge dealer, Ken Goewey (of "What A Guy" fame) who got the racing urge and finagled a Colt off the floorplan.

With lap money, prize money, and contingencies, the pay day was sufficient to a cover the cost of the car.



Mohawk-Hudson Region had its place in the spotlight on a national stage.

Chastened by the experience, but also impressed by the overall ambiance, publisher Marty Touhey proclaimed that in spite of getting their asses kicked on the track, C&D had actually made money on the promotion. It was inevitable that there would be a re-match.

(1972 photos: Greg Rickes & Joe Corbett Archives)

# 1973 Season

For 1973 Car & Driver was deep in motorsport with a variety of project cars. While Showroom Stock was not front and center for them, the track time in a variety of venues made for a more seasoned squad. Bedard was back with the Opel, Sherman thought he had dark horse with a Toyota Corolla, and Williams switched to FIAT 124. The C&D squad was bolstered by ad men Don Cooke and Ken Heath, who'd put their salesmanship talents to personal use. Overall the entry was even larger than debut event.

While Sherman fell afoul of the officials, having been caught with oversize wheels just before the start of the feature race, Bedard was not to be

denied and this time took the Opel right to the Winner's Circle, after having to battle back from an off-course excursion.

In a way Bedard owed the win to Norm Hill, who flipped his Datsun in the middle of the Esses, to the exclamation of the hillside spectators. The blocked track brought out the red flag, which narrowed the gap between Bedard and the front of the field.



Mo-Hud's Paul Hacker made his Challenge debut with a fourth-place finish in his Dodge Colt.

Bruce McCall's rendition of the day's events would run under the title "Beer and Loathing At Lime Rock", which tells you about all you need to know.



This block contains a collage of text and a photograph. At the top, it says "So we lost... It was only a race, right? So we had to eat a little humble after blithely throwing words like 'Balloonfoot readers,' 'mewlers,' 'wimps,' etc. So we lost \$5000 SO WE'RE SORE!". Below this is a black and white photograph of a white Opel race car with the number 055 on its side. To the left of the photo is a section titled "SORE ENOUGH TO DO THE WHOLE DAMN THING OVER AGAIN..." followed by several paragraphs of text. To the right is another section titled "AND FOR THOSE WHO DON'T WANT TO RACE US BUT STILL WANT TO BE ON HAND TO SEE IF C/D WILL EMBARRASS ITSELF EVEN MORE THOROUGHLY THAN LAST YEAR..." followed by more text. At the bottom, there is a photograph of a woman in a white dress and a section titled "ADVANCE SALE ORDER FORM" with a list of items and prices.

## 1974 Season

With the score now even, a tie-breaker was a must. For Challenge III Sherman would take over the winning #00 Opel, Williams would be back with the FIAT, and Bedard scoured the back lots for an unlikely dark horse, settling on a Chevy Vega GT.

Notable no-show was the tongue-in-cheek Pinto entered by photog Burge Hulett for Mark Donohue. As a testimonial for the reputation of the event as the “de facto” National Championship, the entry continued to grow. And the beer was still free.

In an unlikely scenario, Bedard overcame potential fuel starvation and a wheezing engine to deliver the Vega to Victory Lane. Post-race the aluminum block engine drooled fluids and emitted an endless chorus of creaks and groans.

A true “junkyard dog”, the Vega would never run another race.



(1973 and 1974 photos: Clark Nicholls)

**That's not the end of the story.  
Our saga continues next month**

