

# THE KNOCK OFF

October 2024 Issue

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## THE REPORT

Hello all,

As we close out September, we are just under halfway through the SCCA championship season. To kick off the festivities is the Pro Solo Finale in Lincoln Nebraska, shortly followed by the Solo National Championship. Thousands of drivers make the trip out each year, including about a handful of Mohud drivers. Credit to all of the drivers who make the 1,300 mile trip each year, prepare their vehicles over the course of the year, then demonstrate their skills in just a pair of 3 runs against some of the best autocrossers in the country.



*Jim Garry (far left) accepts his trophy at the Solo National Championship in Lincoln NE*

As this will be published others will

be making their way out to the Runoffs at Road America, which is about 300 miles closer than Lincoln. I am making my way out this

year with Jared and the rest of the crew that has assembled to support him running in both B-spec and T3. This is my first time heading out to Road America but if a fraction of the excitement that was seen down at VIR makes it out there, I will be more than satisfied. From the start of racing Friday morning until the very last race last year I had the stream running and got to witness some of the best racing I have ever seen. Unlike pro series with insane aero packages on their cars there are a lot of back and forth lead changes in these races, especially the massive classes

like SRF3 and SM where there are over 50 drivers. So for anyone watching from home, pray for rain on Sunday October 6 so the Subaru can pull out that underdog victory.

Afterwards (and about the same distance as to Road America) the RallyCross Nationals will be held down in Hollytree, AL. I don't believe that any members from the region will be making their way to this event, but if you ever get a chance to enter one in our neighboring regions, I would highly recommend it. In my track/street Mustang it was easily the most fun that I had in a car up until I started wheel to wheel racing. There is nothing quite like racing on mixed surfaces, going from pavement to dirt back to pavement. And unlike Autox, all of your times from the day are added together, so you need to nail every run you put down with the added surprise of the course slightly changing throughout the day.

Next is an event at a track that I have attended, Time Trial Nationals is back at the National Corvette Museum (the closest of the national events). If you ever want to test your brain, run at a track with 23 counted turns; but in reality, closer to 25. Add in 3 total configurations run over the event and you have plenty of excitement. When I attended in 2021 it was the first Time Trial that I ran and only my 4th time out on track. Unfortunately, at that point the event was held in mid-June and it never went below 70 degrees even at night, possibly contributing to the brain fade that led to me merging my poor first Miata with the armco. Good news for next year, this event will be moved to Pittsburgh International Race Complex, about 7 hours from Albany and another amazing track, so expect to see a lot of Mohud track rats out at this event.

Capping off the National events is the United States RoadRally Challenge. As this event is going to be run in California I do not expect to see many (if any) Mohud members signing up for this event, but if you want to run a road rally I have great news for you! Our rally master Ken Relation will be holding another GTA rally in the area this fall, stay tuned in future KOs for more information.

Congratulations to all of our members that made it out to Lincoln this year and best of luck to those attending national events (and any other events) going forward. Another reminder to all, we will be hosting our Fall TRSS at SAM October 20th and can use as many volunteers as we can get, if you have any questions, please reach out to me. Unfortunately, I will miss out on seeing everyone October 2nd at the Metro 7 diner as I am out in Wisconsin, but you will be in the capable hands of our treasurer Paul Malecki for the monthly meeting.

See you at a future Mohud function,

Sal

## From the Editor

The season flew by again. OK, it's not completely over but there's that chill in the air and for me at least, probably no more races.

Last weekend I competed in what should serve as a great cap-off to my season. A 3-day vintage event at Watkins Glen. With 50 cars entered, all FFs!, by far the largest field I have ever competed in. Suffered some mechanical woes including a loosened bolt leading to my right rear radius rod dropping out (see photo) and a failed starter solenoid. But with eight on-track sessions still plenty of track time. In general, a successful weekend. 23<sup>rd</sup> of 48 in the feature but only due to my avoiding a collision with an overly aggressive dive into the bus-stop. I call that a win. On Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> place out of 35 starters and a good battle for 6<sup>th</sup> place the whole race.

The whole event was livestreamed and available on YouTube.

Sunday's race (recommended because I ran in the top 10) can be viewed here, (go to 3:20 for FF):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIsETtSA0qw&t=12226s>

Saturday's race as well is here (go to 6:24 for FF):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxgYcR5waCs>

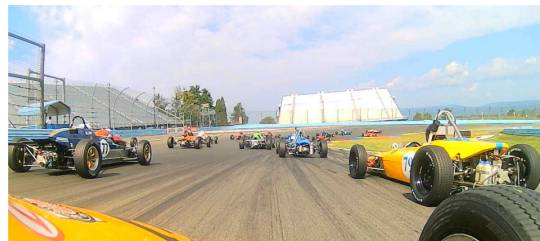
That much action should satiate me for the off-season. Time to start tearing the motor apart.

Look for an article in an upcoming Knockoff comparing a typical SCCA weekend with my experience with the VRG/FFFCS vintage event.

This month's KO is all about the Solo Nationals and specifically our own Jim Garry's experience. I am proud to have had a hand in this since Jim needed some welding done before going and it seems to have helped his competitiveness.



*Don't forget your bolt checks*



*Saturday Feature- A glorious sight*



*Sunday Finale- redemption*

# ***What's Happening***

- Oct 2, 2024            Mohawk-Hudson Membership Meeting, Metro 7 diner  
<https://metro7diner.com/>, Latham social 6 p.m., meeting at 7
- Sept 28-Oct 6 2024    The Runoffs National Championship – Road America, Elkhart Lake  
WI
- Oct 20, 2024            Tire Rack Street Survival, Saratoga Automobile Museum  
<https://www.motorsportreg.com/events/mohawk-hudson-scca-24-2-saratoga-automobile-museum-tire-rack-street-survival-453268>
- Oct 24-27, 2024        Tire Rack SCCA Time Trials Nationals – NCM Motorsports Park,  
Bowling Green KY
- Nov 30, 2014            Racing Memories, Saratoga Auto Museum  
<https://www.saratogaautomuseum.org/events/2024/11/30/racing-memories-with-ron-hedger>
- Jan 11, 2025            Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet, The Factory Eatery and Spirits  
Ballston Spa, NY

Check out the full regional calendar at:

[https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?src=4l0pckqj0sbmtg8scke5et658@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New\\_York](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?src=4l0pckqj0sbmtg8scke5et658@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New_York)

## ALBANY-SARATOGA SPEEDWAY “ASPHALT ERA” SEGMENT ADDED TO 2024 RACING MEMORIES PROGRAM

Saratoga Springs, NY.

The 2024 Racing Memories program at the Saratoga Automobile Museum may well be the best-ever, with a segment recalling the NASCAR asphalt era at the Albany-Saratoga Speedway recently added to the original schedule.

“We don’t really know if the speedway will close in 2025 after some 60 years of racing as announced this summer, but it seems high time to look back to the early days with drivers whose careers started there,” said event organizer Ron Hedger. “We’ll interview a few drivers from that era, recall highlights and rivalries and discuss some of the stars who are no longer with us.”

Drivers on the panel will include Brian Ross, Nick Ronca, Phil Spiak and Jack Halloran.

Set for the traditional “Saturday after Thanksgiving” date, November 30th, the Racing Memories program will feature a wide variety of racing personalities and topics.

“The Motorcycle Guy,” Mark Supley, will do a segment on sidecar motorcycle racing while Area Auto Racing News columnist and racing historian Herb Anastor will discuss Indianapolis 500 winner Roger Ward’s triumph in the Formula Libre race at Lime Rock Park, where Ward topped a bevy of world class sports car racers with Ken Brenn’s Offy midget. As an added attraction, owner Keith Majka will be on hand with the restored Brenn car.



Ken Parrotte will present “Triumph from Tragedy,” a look back at a fire during the Indy 500 that preceded a Johnny Rutherford/Bobby Unser battle for the win. Additionally, Hedger has two interviews on tap, one with promoter Brett Deyo and the other with DIRTcar modified star Demetrious Drellos.

The Saratoga Automobile Museum, located on the Avenue of the Pines in the Saratoga Spa State Park, opens at 10 am. Enthusiasts are encouraged to bring memorabilia to share between opening time and 11:45, when the formal program will begin. Display tables will be provided.

“I am moving the start time for the presentations up from past years as we have a full slate and I want to leave time for the audience to interact with our presenters at the conclusion of each segment,” offered Hedger.

**Lunch will again be available in the museum lobby. Tickets are available online at <http://www.SaratogaAutoMuseum.org> or can be purchased at the door. As always, the event is free to current museum members.**

# Tales From The Track

Plan your Runoffs watch party today!



## Runoffs Viewing 2024

<b>HAGERTY. RACE DAYS</b>			
<i>Championship Races: 13 Laps or 40 min., whichever elapses first. Race times are cars on course times.</i>			
	<b>FRI., OCT. 4</b>	<b>SAT., OCT. 5</b>	<b>SUN., OCT. 6</b>
<b>8:00am</b>	Anthem		
<b>8:15am</b>	B-SPEC	T4	F600
<b>9:15am</b>	FF	STL	EP
<b>10:15am</b>	GTL	AS	FV
<b>11:15am</b>	T1	SRF3	GT2
<b>12:00pm</b>	LUNCH BREAK	HAGERTY LUNCH	LUNCH BREAK
<b>1:00pm</b>	SM	SMX	FE2
<b>2:00pm</b>	T2	FP	T3
<b>3:00pm</b>	HP	P2	GT3
<b>4:00pm</b>	STU	GT1	P1
<b>5:00pm</b>	FC	FA	

Live Stream URL: <https://www.youtube.com/live/FwqAk6oMvnA?si=x4RBbhDhbgalhkBg>

Tune in to cheer on MoHudders from Team Campbell Brothers (FP) and Jared Lendrum (B-Spec and T3) from team North Country Subaru.

# Solo Report

*WARNING: The following article had been test-read with a time of 20 minutes. Please use caution as the gripping suspense may keep you isolated from society for some time. -Ed.*

## 2024 SCCA Solo National Championships, My 30<sup>th</sup> appearance

By Jim Garry

In 2023 I had worked my rear off trying to find a set-up for my 1994 Citation Formula Ford which I compete with in C Modified. Nothing would eliminate the understeer. The car wouldn't rotate and would only get sideways with a wild input. It wasn't a pleasant car to drive. At the 2023 Nationals last year the car did not suddenly come to life and carry me to an agreeable result. Instead, its handling left me disappointed and bewildered. Something had to change. And so my work for the 2024 National Championships began during the ride home from Lincoln in September 2023 which included a great deal of time on the phone (when it wasn't my turn to drive the van).

### THE WORK

By the time I got home a good plan had started to form. I ceased autocross for the year and got to work immediately. Over the next six months the car changed drastically. This included a telephone book sized list of projects advocated by a few people and one very smart friend. The most critical included narrowing the front suspension, reducing suspension motion ratios, stiffening shocks and springs to move away from a ridiculously soft philosophy, increasing droop front and rear, and fabricating new steering arms to improve Ackerman and quicken the slow steering typically found in many road race cars. There was a lot more in terms of maintenance and ease of operation but those were the major performance related tasks that we hoped would result in a major gain.



*Lincoln, 2024*

Winter allowed me to complete the list plus much maintenance. May came along and Ken, my co-driver, and I were cautiously optimistic we'd find improvement at local events, finishing in the top ten or fifteen percent of overall PAX positions. Since CM rarely has a full class locally, using

PAX is useful to get a rough idea of where we stand. It is far from perfect but if you assume a half second imprecision on either side of your best time, it's functional.

## THE '24 SEASON

My primary guru told me to take the top PAX of the event and divide it by my PAX time. The resulting percentage shows how far off you are from the top of the order regardless of how many or few cars showed up. A car that could vie for a win at Nationals should allow its drivers to be at 97% or more of top PAX, says the expert. That number is arrived at by checking results of Tour events versus the National Championships.

Armed with this simple piece of arithmetic I went over many of my 2023 events which showed that I was consistently finishing at about 95%. Rarely higher, sometimes lower. That might sound like a nice number ... who wouldn't be satisfied with a 95 on an exam? But when using it as an indicator of competitiveness for a good position at the Nationals it's subpar, seconds off.



*Lincoln, 2024*

We anticipated that 2024 would be a different story but that was quashed as Ken and I continued finishing in disappointing PAX positions. At regional events and at the two Tour events we attended we were at about 95% or a bit less except for a few lesser attended events. What was going on?

True, the car felt better in several ways but the consistent understeer was killing the ability to drive this low horsepower car

quickly because it was always scrubbing speed, never able to carry pace into and through corners. We tried many combinations of the easy suspension adjustments camber, toe, caster, and ride heights. Nothing helped the woeful car. And with some adjustment sets it was quite a bit worse.

Then there was a test and tune (T&T) in June right after receiving a new and softer set of front anti-roll blades<sup>A</sup> when we thought a break-through had been reached. The car felt so good. It went where we steered it and seemed balanced. After about 7 runs each we thought the car had reached a turning point. But at the event the very next day the car inexplicitly reverted to its old ways. It took a few days to think it through but the car didn't change between the T&T and the regular event. What happened is the drivers got up to speed with the new configuration and



were now driving the car to its new, mildly higher limits. When we did that, it exhibited the bad old understeering trait again. We couldn't go softer because the car was at its limit of soft at the front.

**A** For an explanation of “blade”-type anti-roll bars see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djXQBnHblBs&t=122s>

To fully explain what happened next it's important to introduce you to the designer of my car, Steve Lathrop. I've known him since about 1999 when I owned a 1984 Citation. We came to know each other fairly well and I even organized some for-profit race car engineering seminars in the northeast for his partner and him. Nowadays he's about 80, not building cars but still helping his Citation race car customers. Over the past few years he had explained that the original design of the 1994 Citation had a flaw in which the front bell crank pins were installed at an inefficient angle. These are the steel pins the car's bell cranks swivel on and allow the pushrods and shocks to control the wheels. Steve told me this poor angle created a great deal of friction and bending in the front shocks, springs, and pushrods. This in turn created understeer.

#### THE RECOMMENDED FIX

Steve recommended using a “fixture” he had fabricated to modify the angle of the bell crank pins. His instructions were to cut the pins from the chassis, load the new pins in the fixture, mount the fixture onto the chassis in the correct alignment, and then weld the pins onto the chassis.

Steve first suggested I address this issue back in 2022 during my first season of driving the car (after 27 months of assembling the thing). But a previous owner of my car told me that the job had been done. So I didn't undertake the task.

Steve mentioned it again during 2023 but the discussion fizzled because I still believed the job had been done. But in May of 2024 after listening to me gripe he insisted on sending the fixture to me along with a new pair of pins. I brought it to a very bright fabricator I've known for many years. He's got lots of racing experience and is very clever. But after looking over the situation he convinced me that the job wasn't needed. He said Steve's description of how the pin angles should look matched what was there. So I returned the fixture to Steve and continued to struggle to make a positive set of adjustments. Ken and I continued to struggle with driving the car.



If you talk to racers of any type, from autocrossers to rallycrossers to SCCA club racers at all levels, to professionals and F1 drivers ... they'll all tell you there are times that things get so bad with their cars that they question their driving skills. Lewis Hamilton is one of the more recent top drivers to admit to this, having endured a few years of a terrible Mercedes machine but has had better results in the middle of this year. So I feel no shame in admitting this about my own small, grassroots motorsport effort. And I honestly felt I hadn't lost it yet behind the wheel. It was the engineering aspect where this was all failing. Have I mentioned that I'm not an engineer?

In mid-August after another set of discussions, Steve got a bit annoyed and in no uncertain terms told me he's going to ship the fixture to me and *"you'd better replace those gd pins, otherwise you'll NEVER get rid of the understeer no matter what you do to the car"*.

Well if you put it that way, OK.

The fixture and pins arrived a few days later. He jumped me in line ahead of a road racer who needed it because I had told him I'm going to the Solo Nationals in two weeks. Really nice of him. I set up a date with my trusty engineer, welder, Formula Ford racer, and KnockOff Editor Chip Van Slyke. Side note ... back in the late 90s into the early 00s Chip & I co-owned the 1984 Citation FF mentioned earlier.

And so on August 19<sup>th</sup>, ten days before my scheduled departure for Nebraska, Chip and I were staring at the pins, me wondering if this was a good idea. We mounted the fixture to the existing pins and sure enough, it didn't fit correctly. Proof the pin angles were wrong. Then we set about cutting off the existing pins amongst a shower of sparks. More sparks ensued as the remaining stumps were ground down. The new pins were mounted into the fixture and while I did my best to hold the contraption at the correct angle, Chip commenced welding. The project took about five hours. Ken and I would find out whether this was a good idea later in the week.

#### FIRST EVENT AFTER THE MODIFICATION

We attended a T&T at Seneca Army Depot that weekend, the 24<sup>th</sup>. Ken went out first because a second Solo Safety Steward hadn't yet arrived so I had to serve. Ken left the line and I waited in tense anticipation as he made his first circulation of the course. After crossing the finish line he pulled the car up to where I was standing, flipped up his visor and said something about how the car was trying to kill him. But it wasn't because of understeer it was because of all the oversteer!

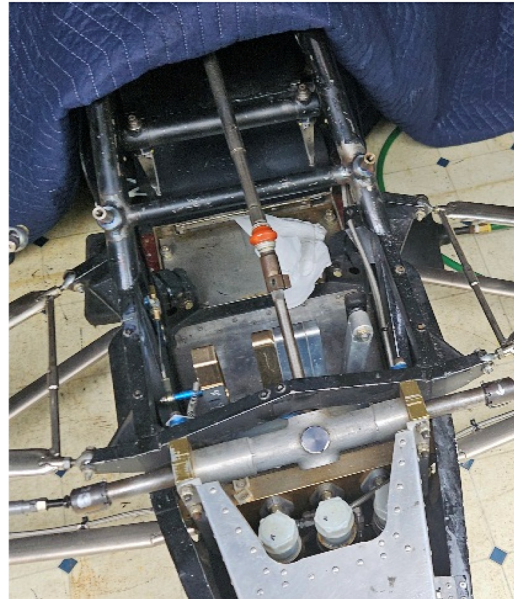


*Cutting off the old pins. I was kinda anxious at this point!*

This was great news! All of the previous adjustments that were made in order to loosen up the rear had failed but now with the new bell crank pin angles in place, the front suspension was finally working resulting in the car being very sideways. Woohoo!!!



*Fixture is loaded with the new pins and being pointed in order to obtain the correct angles*



*New pins welded on*



*Chip is a man of many talents*

Over the course of the next hour the excessive oversteer was dialed out of the car. Each time Ken took another run he was more and more pleased and I was getting more and more excited every time he returned to the trailer with his thumb held high. When it was my time to get into the car I left the start line with the knowledge that this was gonna be perfect. CRAP! The steering was so heavy I couldn't turn the steering wheel with any speed!

This was due to the high amount of caster we had dialed in a month or so earlier in the attempt to eliminate the understeer. It hadn't helped but because the steering hadn't felt difficult I just left the caster as it was. NOW, however, with the front end working, the high caster came heavily into play.

Seems Ken is a little stronger than I am, at least in the shoulders and he didn't mind the caster much. He was focused on sensing the balance of the car so the steering weight didn't really register. It took me, the weakling, to feel the excessive caster.

It was midday now but I proceeded to realign the car. Good thing the toe bars and camber gauge decided to come along for the ride. It took about an hour so we had lunch after finishing and then it was my turn to drive.

Within a few seconds of leaving the start line it was very clear that the steering effort was within reason and the car well balanced. It would be difficult to try to describe the relief and exhilaration I experienced at that point. The car could finally be balanced nicely through a corner. Rotation, previously unknown in this car, was a thing again. When Ken got back in the car an hour later he agreed that the caster change had been needed.

The next day we competed in the regional event and continued to dial the car in. They ran the National Tour course that had been used 3 weeks earlier. It was a lot more fun to drive the car this time around. My time was about 1.5 seconds faster than three weeks ago. Yeah sure, I know more practice was involved but the ease with which the car negotiated the course and the extra grip it provided was the main reason for the improvement. Using the past results from the Tour my PAX percentage went from 94.5% to 97%. More joy.



*Seneca Army Depot - last event before the tow to Lincoln*

## LINCOLN

A few days prior to departure for Lincoln I brought my trusty van to M&M Automotive, owned by long time autocrosser and all around great guy Mark Van De Carr. It had been down on power and my local mechanic had recommended a new engine after doing a compression check. I knew that was wrong so I called Mark and he immediately recognized the problem as being related to injectors. Driving the car to the mechanic at 30 mph on local streets, the bad injectors had “washed” the cylinder with too much fuel which left too little oil in the rings. That was the cause of the poor compression.

I chose to drive the 90 minutes to Mark rather than have another local shop fumble around. He lent me his very noisy WRX rally car with one license plate, no AC, and no cruise to get home. Mark's guys got the van engine running well again. Interestingly the spark plugs and wires that I had paid the dealership to replace 29,000 miles earlier (at the 100,000-mile maintenance) were in terrible shape. The gaps were all burned open, the plug wires were falling apart, and one spark plug was partially broken. Mark's opinion was that this equipment was 129,000 miles old, not 29,000. Or it could be that the bad injectors wrecked that stuff. Impossible to know now.



*A dragon floating across the sky late in the day in western Ohio*

So off Ken and I went on our 2,700 mile round trip to Lincoln, Nebraska (longer for Ken since he comes down from Vermont to join me). You've probably read about the enormity of this event, both in terms of entrants (~1,300) and size (~6,500,000 square feet). Lots of parties & activities, lots of food, lots of friends. But please forgive me when I say for me the event is still primarily about the competition. I hope this doesn't cause much head shaking.

We arrived in Lincoln on Saturday afternoon August 30<sup>th</sup> and picked up the rental RV which would be our on-site home for the next 5 days. Total cost was only a small amount more than a decent hotel would have been, plus we cooked our own food, had a cool and comfortable place to retreat to, and saved a lot of time by not having to commute to & from the site each day. The weather was wonderful, sunny but no more than about 80° at the hottest, not like the 100° days last year. We were paddocked with New England Region so we had friends to visit and chat with.

### TEST AND TUNE

Sunday we took some runs on the smallish T&T course. It's not really representative of the characteristics of the real courses both in design and grip but grip is closer than anything else would be. Typically, cars understeer more as pavement grip increases. The grip at Lincoln is so much higher than at Devens or Seneca Army Depot that the car should have just understeered on the T&T course but matters were complicated because it also oversteered, which was

confusing from a set up perspective. Because of this I never made significant changes, just some mild anti-roll bar and shock adjustments. An important note: because this chassis is so stiff the car is extra sensitive to changes in surface characteristic. So this owner/engineer (hah)/driver must try to stay on top of things from site to site.

## WALKING

Monday is course walking day. My app says we walked about 12 miles over an eight-hour period, mostly on the course we were to run first, the West Course (or “corn side”). But we did get three walks on the much longer East Course (aka “plane side”). By my estimates the East was about 0.84 miles long while the West was just 0.62 miles in length. We drank a lot of water.



*Far away from the courses in the “lower 40” of the paddock there’s more room to stretch out*

## THE NATIONALS

Tuesday dawned and we were to drive in Heat 3 and work Heat 1. This provided us with a good look at the course in action. Then we rested, ate a little, got the car out of the trailer, and took it to grid. We had already parked the van full of equipment near the grid early in the morning. People often talk about how they feel on grid as they ready themselves to drive at this event. I don’t think what I feel is nervousness any more. Perhaps the best way to describe it is edginess, which seems to produce good focus.

Unfortunately, although much improved from last year, the car understeered on all three runs in spite of adjusting the rear anti-roll bar (front was already full soft). I did improve my time each run, my last run being my best but a major understeer event exiting the tight corner before the very long flat-out “slalom” (named “Say When” on the map) ruined the run, as did one other



*The Nationals courses. Photo taken near the eastern part of the East Course grid.*

significant but lesser push event in the following sweeper. This happened because I attempted to drive as fast as the car had felt at Seneca Army Depot. I think I lost at least a second on that fastest run. If so, it would have elevated me to second place instead of 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>. Woulda, coulda.

There had been no oversteer or neutral handling on this course so now we had a bead on the needed handling changes. We also knew there was to be a lot of course walking that evening on the long East Course. So while cars were still circulating on the courses, we took the opportunity to make car changes. Steve Lathrop has always preached that a major handling change results from adjusting the rear ride height and recommends making changes in 1/8" increments since that seemingly small amount has a large impact on handling. He had been telling me this for years yet it never made a difference with the car because, as I now know, the compromised front suspension overwhelmed it. This time though we were hopeful it would make a difference and we were looking forward to it.

Since there might not be time to make ride height changes between runs of a two-driver car on a National grid we increased rear ride height by 1/4", hoping the one double change would be enough but not too much. In addition to ride height, after telephoning my guru we decided to make a relatively large change to front toe for reasons I won't attempt to explain here. Happily on this car, that adjustment doesn't impact the camber setting.



*Tuesday morning looking out over the runway. V for victory? A sign? So thought about 600 people. Only a few were right.*

We took about five walks that evening on the East Course which was much more complex and difficult to memorize and visualize. At one point I wasn't sure I'd be able to do it but eventually it clicked. Normally on local courses 2 or 3 walk-throughs is enough. National level courses are another creature and I walk them a lot.

On Wednesday my first run felt fine but turned out to be quite slow. I had sort of been cruising around, not being aggressive. Maybe my brain just needed a recon run.



For our second runs we adjusted the rear anti-roll bar to nearly full stiff. I focused on being aggressive and my run was much better but still out of the trophies due to the mediocre Tuesday runs. I watched a replay of the second run courtesy of our video camera and it showed several places I could clean up and where it might be possible to push harder.

Ken took his third run also hoping to put together a better run but about 2/3 through the course the left spoke on the steering wheel pulled away from the hub and he was driving with just the right side of the wheel. Not surprisingly his 3<sup>rd</sup> run time was disappointing despite another adjustment of the rear anti-roll bar to full hard.



*Duct tape to the rescue again*

We bring a lot of stuff with us to the grid at a National event but my duct tape was at least a 10 minute round trip away at the mandated 12 mph paddock speed limit. This being CMod I knew somewhere on the grid there had to be duct tape. Sure enough, one of the drivers in the next grid spot, old friend Linda Smiley, had a roll. Ken held the wheel while I duct taped the heck out of it. Interestingly as I pulled to the start line I wasn't thinking about this at all. However while negotiating the course I could feel it was soft and a little wobbly. But it held up well enough.

Prior to the somewhat radical modification made to the car two weeks earlier, my final runs on courses in this car were always disappointing. Pushing a severely understeering car harder usually leads to slower times for me, or at best yield only a modest improvement. But on this run the car felt good, I felt good, and when I saw my time it was all good! Not great but solid. It pulled me up into the last trophy position. While I wasn't deliriously exhilarated with the position, I was pretty damned pleased. Maybe the main emotion I felt was satisfaction and extreme relief that the car now was capable of being driven quickly.

A week later I finally took a look at the video of that last run. While it showed a nice improvement to the line it was clear there was too much distance from many cones. The extra distance adds lots of time. I also was a little hesitant to charge into some corners because of its past characteristics. Still, that run time was pretty good and I take that as an indicator of the car's potential because it gave me a good time despite the run not being well polished. Once we get comfortable with the car there is more to come. The video is here:

<https://youtu.be/Oq6Af100HeM?si=5P5z4ZVmE9eCcstX> Please forgive the mistakes.

Time for the trophies. Prior to the pandemic the Nationals awards banquet was a grand affair where all the attendees gathered in a large indoor event center with air conditioning and reasonably OK food. There was a large dais and special awards were presented and then trophies were awarded to all the trophy winners in the classes for the two days (a second banquet was held after the next two day). Many people dressed up. You could also peruse the tables set up by photographers selling event photos. There was much mingling. And there was beer. Lots of beer.

But in 2021 with the health threat still a high concern (the 2020 event had been canceled) this very long tradition ended. Starting that year a portable podium is towed into each impound area and the trophy winners in each heat are presented trophies shortly after their runs. Only a couple dozen people wander over to watch and it just doesn't feel as special as in the past. And of course there's no beer. But it saves a ton of money which has gone into improving other parts of the event.

## HOME AND PLANS

The ride home is always easier after doing well. This year I didn't spend any time on the phone searching for answers and making drastic plans. Just a long, not unpleasant drive. Not including the brief hotel stays in both directions, travel time for us was 21 hours 10 minutes to Lincoln. The return trip required 22 hours 45 minutes home with lots of construction and traffic near Chicago which we hit at the beginning of rush hour.

Attending to the bell crank pin problem unlocked all the other improvements made over the winter and itemized in the second paragraph. These changes collectively couldn't improve the car without the elimination of the severe friction in the front end. Having accomplished that one task, all the other improvements were able to come into play. Had I continued to use the 2023 setup, the improvement Ken & I happily experienced would not have been as significant.

We're looking forward to having a lot more fun driving the car next year and learning it intimately. I can't emphasize enough what a relief and pleasure this is. As for the car, I've already got a long list of off-season tasks to perform but this time they are mostly maintenance jobs with some investigative things like mapping the pickup points in order to conduct some analysis and measuring the force of each anti roll bar.

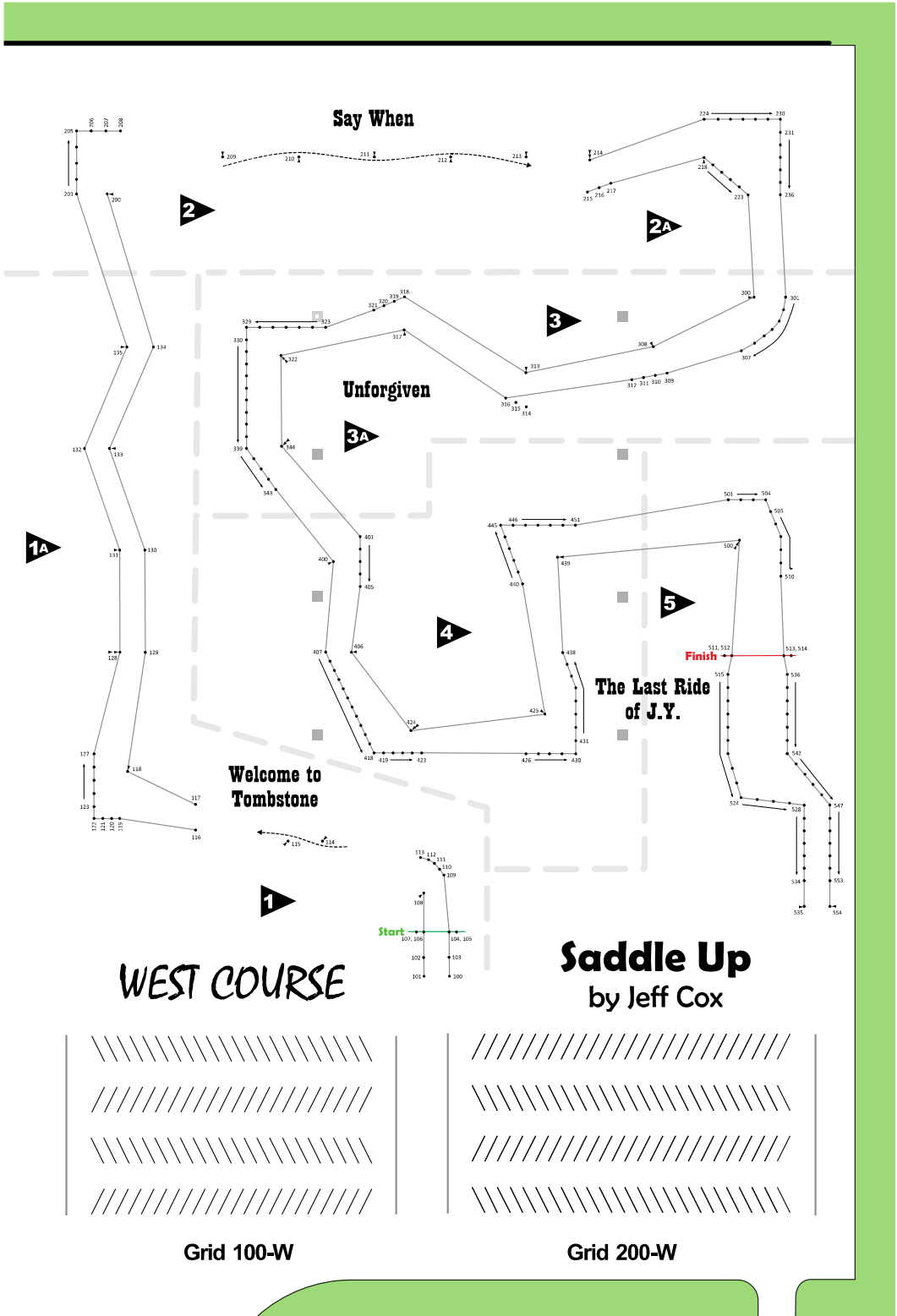
But one task has already been accomplished ... instead of buying a new steering wheel for \$250, a friend in Finger Lakes Region sent me one of his old ones from an open wheel car he no longer owns and has refused reimbursement for it or shipping costs! And a second friend from NER made the same offer. I drilled new holes in the hub and installed the quick release and that job is done! Only 83 more to go.

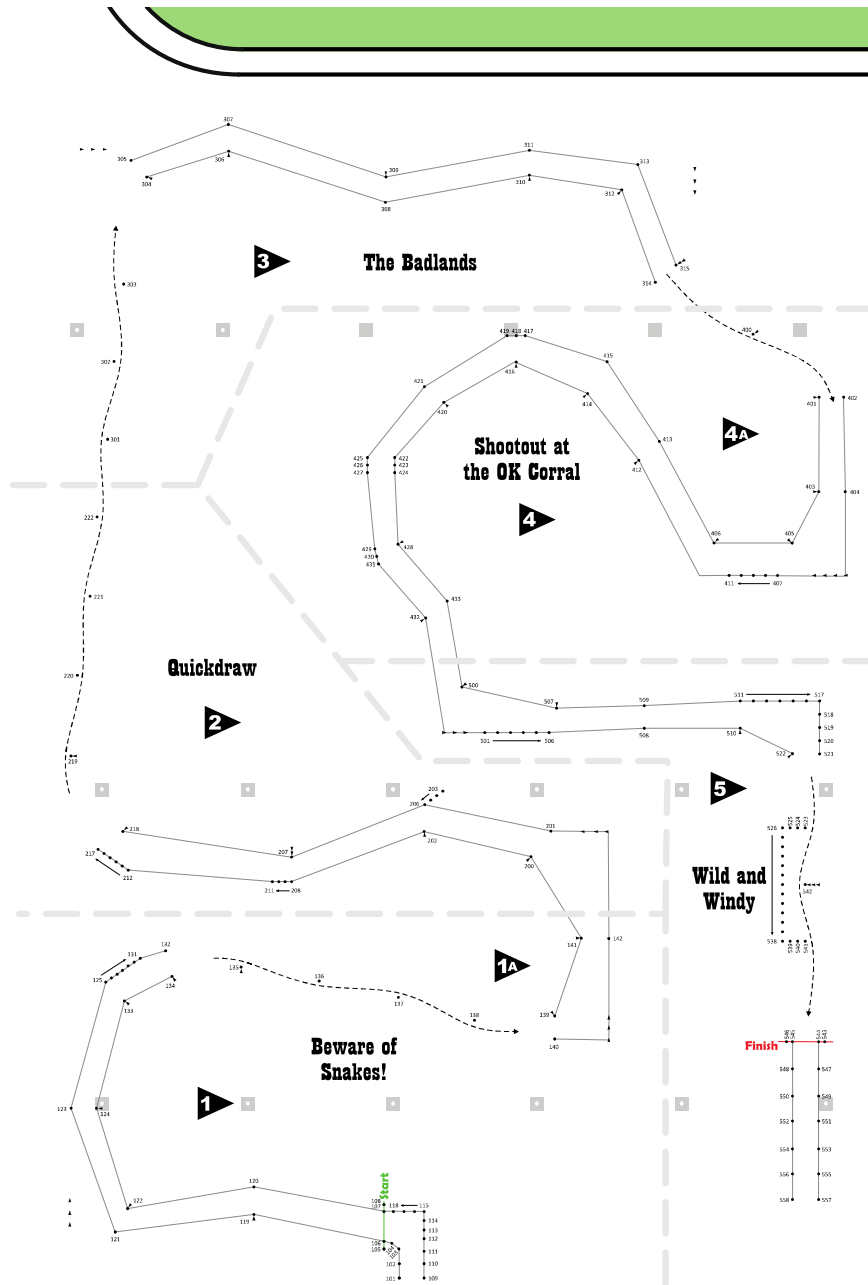


*Sunset coming in the garage windows earlier this year*



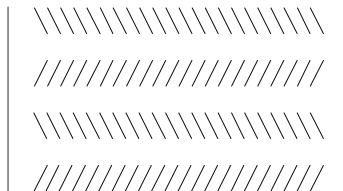
The courses are copied below. There's no scale but don't underestimate the size of these courses. Note the cowboy/western theme.



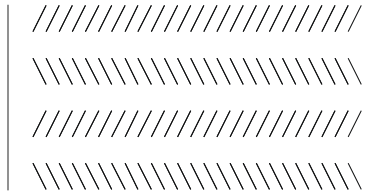


**EAST COURSE**

**HEADING OUT WEST**  
by Mike Faucett



Grid 200-E

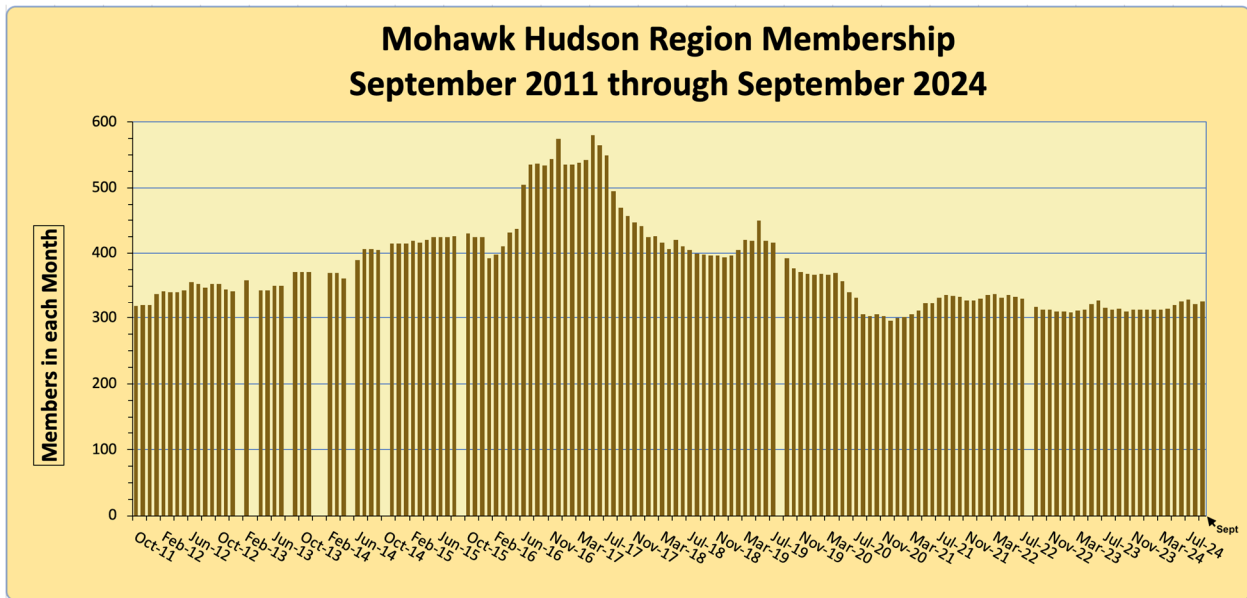


Grid 100-E

# Membership Report –

By Jim Garry

As of September 23rd, our membership count is at 327 which represents a maintenance of the slightly higher membership numbers seen this summer compared to the previous two years. We have yet to return to the membership numbers we had prior to the pandemic as most other SCCA regions have.



If you have a friend, relative, or colleague who seems interested in cars please talk to them about our club. Then ask them to check out [www.scca.com](http://www.scca.com). The dropdown menu shows “Programs” on the left side of the page and they can explore from there. The “Join SCCA Today” button is about 1/3 the way down on the left side of the page.

New Members in August and September:

- Inigo Betrian, New York
- Kyle Denny, Schenectady
- Emily Holder, Ballston Spa
- Dylan Larsen, Baldwinsville
- Dylan Larsen, Baldwinsville
- Brock Mendoza, Mechanicville
- Marc Salerno, Castleton
- David Sudlik, West Shokan
- Derek Werthmuller, Clifton Park
- Kimberly White, Troy

Welcome to everyone! If you have any questions please reach out to any officer listed at the end of this newsletter. Please consider coming to MoHud's monthly membership meetings. The next one is Wednesday, October 2nd at the Metro 7 Diner in Latham, NY. We gather in the back dining room for dinner (pay on your own) at 6pm, and then our formal meeting starts at 7pm. Just walk right in, say you're new, and you'll be warmly greeted. No requirement to come for the dinner portion if you can't make it.

Significant Anniversaries in September and October:

Ten Years

Grzegorz Biel

Twenty Years

Cassidy Karl

Colleen Karl

Evan Karl - Evan is the youngest of the Karl racing clan and holds a competition license.

Patrick Stringer - Patrick holds a competition license.

Twenty-Five Years

David Ferguson - David is another competition license racer and also has licenses for Flagging & Communication and Scrutineering.

Joan Ferguson

Thirty Years

Raymond Gilman - Raymond is a former competition license holder.

Forty Years

Dick Stewart - Dick is extremely well known for his many exploits in Formula Vee. He is also a past officer of MoHud.

**Regional Executive**

Sal Baisley

[MoHud.RE@gmail.com](mailto:MoHud.RE@gmail.com)

(518) 380-6675

**Secretary**

Shelby White

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**Director**

Russ Burkhard

[russtduck@gmail.com](mailto:russtduck@gmail.com)

**Assistant Regional Executive**

Eric Smith

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**Treasurer**

Paul Malecki

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

**Director**

Chip VanSlyke

[chipv87@gmail.com](mailto:chipv87@gmail.com)

**Autocross (Solo) Advisory Committee**

Russ Burckhard

**Tire Rack Street Survival Program**

Your Help Needed – contact Sal to volunteer!

**Track Events (Track Night and Time Trials)**

Sal Baisley

**Racing Program Committee**

Paul Malecki &

Rich Welty (Technical Scrutineer)

518-269-8232 (cell)

[rwelty@averillpark.net](mailto:rwelty@averillpark.net)

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**Membership**

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**Social Activities & Events**

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**Merchandise**

Chip VanSlyke