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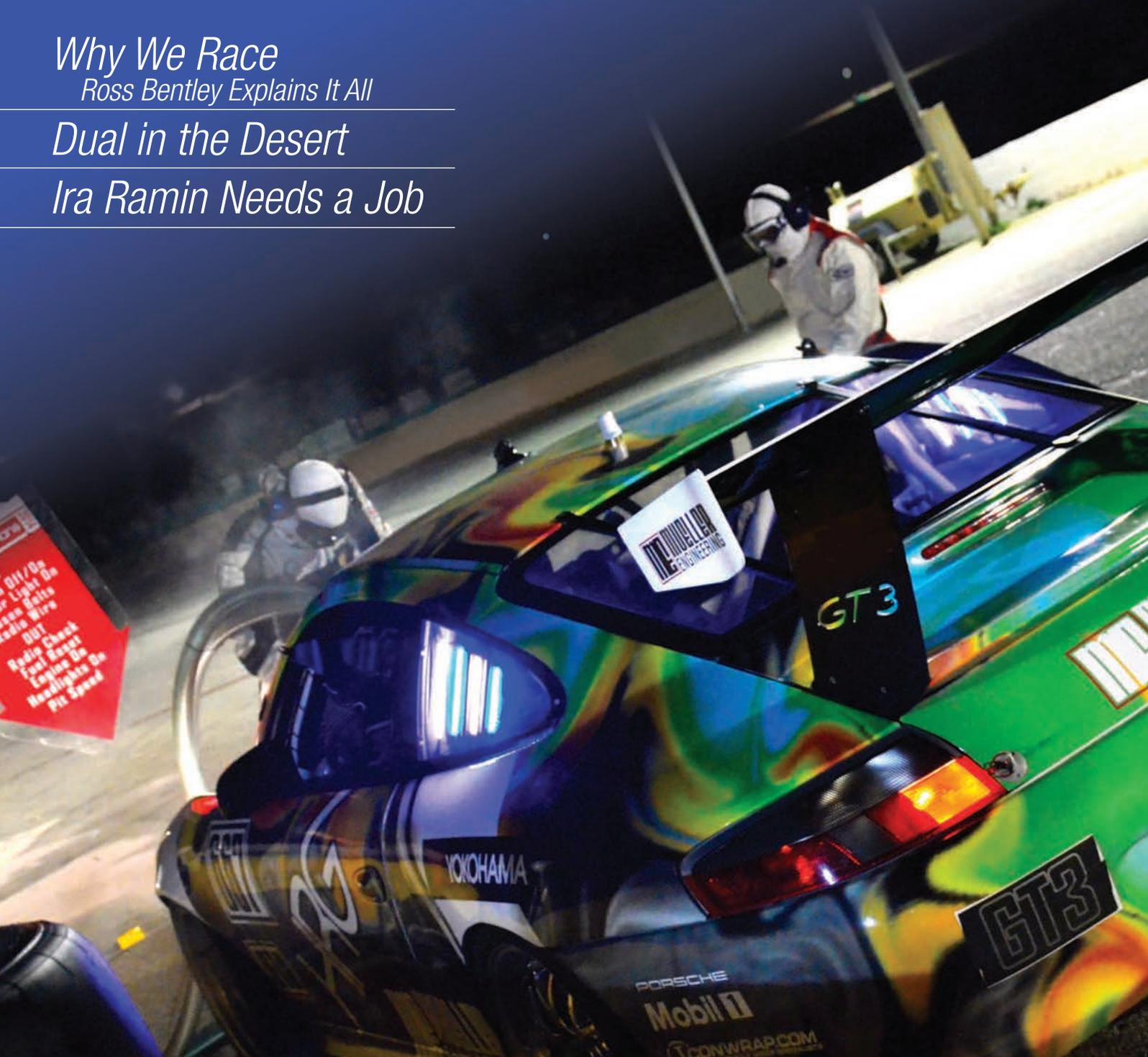
P O R S C H E O W N E R S C L U B

Why We Race

Ross Bentley Explains It All

Dual in the Desert

Ira Ramin Needs a Job



NIGHT RIDERS

Tribute to Le Mans under the lights

Volume 59-2 / June 2014



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EDITOR'S NOTE

ANDREW D. WEYMAN



This issue is a bit unusual. Okay, it's very unusual. When John Armstrong needed to step down as our Editor, I put out the word for a replacement and came up empty. John did such an amazing job, no one was willing to take on the work and appear less capable. The publication date for this issue was approaching quickly and I had no choice but to put on my Editor's helmet. I'm clearly less capable. I know John will disapprove of the following disclaimer but here goes. I'm to blame for errors, omissions, inaccuracies, etc. Playing a game of grammatical Where's Waldo was never my strength. So give me a brake. I mean, break. Thank you, John, for

looking over my shoulder on this issue.

Our cover story, written by Marco Gerace, is a terrific account of Tribute to Le Mans. With a minimum of arm-twisting, Marco stepped up and wrote a compelling article from a unique point-of-view. Thanks buddy!

Renowned author Ross Bentley takes a break from his Speed Secrets series and explores the reasons for our passion to race. Why We Do What We Do is a fun exploration into the mind of a racer.

Bill Vogel's journey through the Racers Clinic is entertainingly recounted in Clinically Insane. Randy Takaki enthusiastically volunteered (not really but that's how he would like it to appear) and delivered The Heart of The Matter in which he details the experiences of a newly licensed racer. Willy Leon tells the story of his sojourn into the desert (aka Chuckwalla Valley Raceway) and Max Sluiter delivers the details of his visit to the Long Beach Grand Prix. In RPM, we meet Akash Bajaj, a relatively new POC member who agreed to be the first interviewee for this new series.

Tarett Engineering has been a long-time supporter of the Porsche Owners Club. John Armstrong takes us inside the company best known for its suspension bits and excellent customer service.

Now, with mixed emotions, I announce that I am resigning from my temporary position as your Editor. Beginning with our next issue, Nancy and Alain Jamar will be assuming responsibility for the editorial content and art direction of VELOCITY. Nancy and Alain ran our magazine several years ago and did a brilliant job. Welcome back Nancy and Alain!

One of the greatest pleasures I have had over the past three months has been working with Don Matz. Don served as our Art Director/Designer for the last two issues and has delivered an outstanding magazine. Don will be stepping down as Nancy and Alain step up. I cannot thank Don enough for his talent, dedication and team spirit. Next time you see him at the track, please be sure to let him know what a great job he's done. He is truly a very special member of the POC. ✓

On the Cover

HRG fuel man Ted Siegel and fire monitor Kerry Dunn tend to Tom Mueller's car during a pit stop. Mueller and co-driver Tyler Palmer earned a third place trophy in the Unlimited group.

Photo by Stefanie Oviatt

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From the PRESIDENT

ANDREW D. WEYMAN



It's true. I can't wipe the smile off my face. And why should I?

As I write this, 1,159,160 seconds have passed since the checkered flag waved at our 2014 Tribute to Le Mans event. I drove it, in the dark, for the first time. I had driven in other Tribute events but never at night, under the lights. It was one of the best experiences of my life.

I teamed up with Will Marcy and Tom Stone two weeks before the event. We all planned to drive our Spec Boxsters - hence our team name, Mid-Engine Maniacs. Everything was moving forward in high gear. Heck, I even paid for expedited shipping on our team t-shirts

and they arrived a day early. Then, at the last minute, we learned that Tom was not going to be able to make it to the event. Downshift.

Will and I drove alternating one-hour stints. Alex Bermudez helped us out in the pits. I'd never been as happy to see Alex as I was when he greeted me with a bottle of water, a cold face cloth, and a bottle of Gatorade after my first run. At the end of four hours, the Mid-Engine Maniacs won third place in Relay and we went home with a trophy. That was pretty cool. But even cooler was the experience of endurance racing under the lights. It was spectacular. Let's do it again next year!

The weekend was very demanding. It was a three-day event and the days were long. Special thanks to Engine Builders Supply (EBS) for their sponsorship, Mark Hergesheimer, Dave Bouzaglou and Eric Oviatt for all their careful planning and precise execution. Thank you to Aaron Roth, Kati James, Dave Jansen, all our course workers, our fire and safety crew, Dave Elliott, Dwain Dement, Jeff Erickson, all the volunteers who helped set-up and breakdown, pit marshals, crew members, drivers, and of course, Laurie Taylor. If I omitted anyone, please forgive me. My excitement sometimes shifts into delirium.

We are just about halfway through our 2014 racing season and it's been a great adventure. The changes we made to our track event formats this year continue to evolve as we plan for the 2015 season. Membership surveys have helped us to gather valuable feedback. Constant monitoring and analysis have provided us with a clear direction for next year. We'll roll out details as soon as possible.

One of the most interesting aspects of serving as your President has been my communication with members. I've fielded questions, complaints, comments and suggestions. Each one has been important and your input is why we can say with confidence, we are "The Best in Club Racing." As always, please feel free to contact me at: president@porscheclubracing.org ✓

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NIGHT RIDERS

THE POC 2014 TRIBUTE TO LE MANS

by Marco Gerace

The 22nd Annual POC Tribute to Le Mans sponsored by Engine Builders Supply (EBS Racing) has come and gone, but the excitement still remains. For many people, this year's Tribute was their first time experiencing a sports car race at night; for others, this year's Tribute was a welcome return to the event's original configuration – a four-hour endurance race into the night.

photos by John Cary & Stefanie Oviatt



On the grid.

photo by Cathy Robson

As it turned out

the weekend of May 2nd through 4th was a busy one for club racing in Southern California - the POC was at Willow Springs, the PCA was holding an event at Chuckwalla, and VARA was running at Buttonwillow. Unfortunately, this resulted in thinner numbers of participants and spectators at ALL the events, but those who made the choice to join the POC at Willow were treated to a spectacular display of racing that is not often seen on a club level. From the moment the green flag dropped the drivers, the teams, and the cars were hammer-down, and they didn't let up until the last second ticked off the clock. And like all great races this year's Tribute to Le Mans came down to the wire. There was drama, there was excitement, and there was even some controversy, but it all added up to one fantastic event.

My infatuation with the POC's Tribute to Le Mans event started way back in 1998. I remember hopping into my '73 914/6 conversion and driving out to Willow Springs because I'd heard the Porsche Club was having a race that weekend. Nobody told me what to



expect, but if it was about Porsches going fast, I was in. That weekend happened to be the Tribute to Le Mans, and I was treated to all the sights, sounds, and smells of Porsche racing cars that I had grown up with albeit with one major difference - it was all happening IN THE DARK!

The familiarity of Turn One suddenly became a whole new experience - glowing brake rotors, flames coming out the exhaust, and the turbocharger snails glowing red hot under duress. These were the things I'd only heard of in stories and seen in pictures, but now they were happening right in front of me! Not to mention the fact that the cars just kept going - for hours and hours on end they just ... kept ... going. The normal sprint race format gave way to pit stops; and we all know that races are often won and lost in the pits. How could any racing fan not love this?! It was a professional event taking place on the club level and it was spectacular.

For many, many years this is how the event was run - at Willow Springs, starting in the late hours of the day and blazing into the night. For the last few years,



Top: The winner before nightfall.

photo by Cathy Robson

Middle: Oviatt and Wilson execute their driver change flawlessly.

photo by Stefanie Oviatt

Fill 'er up.

photo by Cathy Robson



Steve Alarcon.
photo by Cathy Robson

however, the script was altered and the event venue was moved from Willow Springs to Auto Club Speedway. The “night” portion of the event was also eliminated from the enduro. While I’m not sure exactly why the event was changed – I’m sure the Board of Directors had very good reasons – it’s my opinion that the changes took away some of the magic that had captivated me when I was an impressionable 18-year old kid with wide eyes, big dreams, and a 914/6. Frankly, I longed for the old days and the special kind of excitement that only comes with night racing, so I was thrilled to learn that this year’s return to Willow Springs would bring back the old format of racing into the night.



Evan Fullerton changes pressure washers.
photo by Stefanie Oviatt

The team of Kevin Roush, Robert Dalrymple, and Mike Monsalve qualified their #85 2010 GT3 Cup on the pole with a lightning fast lap of 1:21.7 logged by Roush. The HRG team of Eric Oviatt and Kevin Wilson put down a 1:23.0 in their #23 2009 GT3 Cup leaving them in P2 on the grid. Throughout the race it was these two cars – the Roush/Dalrymple/Monsalve car and the Oviatt/Wilson car – racing for the lead. However, despite the blisteringly quick 1:23s and 1:24s these two cars and their drivers were putting down – in the late hours of the day and into the darkness – it all came down to a single pit stop. Aided by a full-course yellow on lap 100, the Roush/Dalrymple/Monsalve car was able to grab the lead from the HRG team and hold on to P1 until the end. But Eric Oviatt, driving his second stint in the #23 HRG car, didn’t go down without a giving the #85 car a serious run for its money.

Opposite page:
Impound never felt so good.
photo by Stefanie Oviatt

With approximately 30 minutes to go, Oviatt came out of the pits with Kevin Roush nipping at his heels. After working hard to build a 2 second gap Oviatt radioed back to the pits to confirm he had the lead. The answer was not what he expected, nor what he wanted to hear. “Negative,” was the response. “P2. One lap down.” Oviatt radioed back and asked if he should just save the tires and bring the car home in second place, the response he got was clear, “Hell no! Go get him!”

Oviatt dropped the hammer, and everyone in attendance was treated to what will be remembered as one of the most spectacular drives in POC Tribute to Le Mans history. Oviatt’s lap times, which were hovering in the 1:23/1:24 range throughout most of the race, dropped by almost two seconds a lap as he made a balls-out run for

first place. Over the next 55 laps he was able to gain 84 seconds on Roush in the first place car; the last 15 of those laps had Oviatt chopping off nearly 3 seconds of Roush’s lead per lap. Oviatt was running low 22s on shagged tires, in traffic, on his second stint, after almost an hour in the car ... in the dark! It was truly a sight to behold; the 4.0L naturally aspirated Porsche Motorsports engine barking two-foot flames and going off like a shotgun blast with every up shift as the rear tires laid down patches of rubber over the rise of Turn Six. Unfortunately, the final push wasn’t quite enough to overcome the gap, and despite the heroic effort the HRG team wound up finishing in second place by a scant 2.176 seconds after 156 laps.



However dramatic the final moments of the race were, this year's Tribute to Le Mans event was equally as controversial. Somehow, during the course of the race, it appears that the HRG team went down a lap to the Roush/Dalrymple/Monsalve team. Nobody I've spoken to can pinpoint exactly what happened or where the lap was lost, but it appears to have gone missing during the pit stop/full course yellow. The only upswing to the "missing lap" is that it put Oviatt behind the 8 ball, and it led to him pulling out all the stops on his impressive final push to the front. Great for the spectators, not so good for the competitors.

It was the next bit of timing/scoring controversy that may have been even more critical regarding the outcome of the race. The race was slated to be a four-hour endurance event, but the Race Monitor timing of the race showed a total race time of 3:57:47... almost a full three minutes short of the slated four hours. In Race Control, the timer read 4:00:40. Again, nobody can account for the lost time according to Race Monitor, but at the rate Oviatt was gaining - 2-3 seconds per lap - one has to wonder if he may have been able to catch the first place car had he had another three minutes to work with. But it was not to be for Oviatt, Wilson, and the HRG team. The race ended and the official results were logged, and while no official protests were made these unanswered questions will linger.

First place winners Robert Dalrymple, Kevin Roush and Mike Monsalve.

photo by Cathy Robson



This year's Tribute to Le Mans first place trophy was presented to Robert Dalrymple, Kevin Roush, and Mike Monsalve (Car 85 Returns). Eric Oviatt and Kevin Wilson (Hergesheimer Racing Gruppe) celebrated a close second, and Tom Mueller and Tyler Palmer (Team Mueller) brought home third place. Dwain Dement, Duane Selby, and Rick Knoop (Team Vision) were this year's first runners up. Engine Builders Supply presented a \$1000 gift certificate for first place, a \$500 gift certificate for second place, and a \$250 gift certificate for third place. Thank you, Engine Builders Supply!

The Relay group results were as follows: First place went to Dead Pets Racing drivers Paul Young and Scott Craig. Second place went to team Shake and Bake!!! drivers Josh Matas, Gene Sigal and Drake Kemper. Third place went to Mid-Engine Maniacs Will Marcy and Andrew D. Weyman.

Everyone involved in the 2014 Tribute to Le Mans - from the organizers (Dave Bouzaglou, Mark Hergesheimer, Eric Oviatt, and Dave Elliott), to the course marshals (thanks to the J Squared Crew!!), to the volunteers who helped set up and tear down the lights and course markers - did a phenomenal job in bringing the event to fruition. It was great to have the Tribute back at Willow Springs and running into the night.

While the sights and sounds of glowing turbochargers have been replaced with the glowing headers and fire-spitting, sequential transmission up-shifts of naturally aspirated 3.8L and 4.0L Porsche Motorsport engines, the excitement of the event hasn't changed. In fact, I'm already looking forward to next year's Tribute; hopefully by then I'll be able to participate as a driver instead of a spectator. After all, that's what I remember most about my first Tribute back in 1998 - standing by the Turn One fence, watching the cars clamp down on the binders as they barreled 3 wide into the corner. I was overwhelmed with the desire to participate. I thought to myself, "I can do that." Hopefully this year's fantastic event gave that feeling to a new batch of POC members.

Congratulations to all of the participants who drove in the 2014 Tribute to Le Mans endurance race. Thanks for putting on a great show.

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CLINICALLY INSANE

by Bill Vogel

The sound of Screaming Porsche Engines

assaults me through the open windows of my wife's little BMW Coupe. There's a car seemingly inches from my right-side mirror, two more cars scant feet in front of me, another two are pressing me from behind, and a smurf-blue 911 with a huge wing is passing all of us on the right. My heart is pounding and my head is on a swivel. I've pinned the accelerator pedal to the floor and my Teutonic steed and I are closing in on the rear bumper of the Porsche in front. I've got to ESCAPE!! I sense an opening ahead and my brain says "move left now" but a quick glance in the mirror shows a white and blue missile (cleverly disguised as a 911 Cup car) going orbital between the edge of the pavement and our tight little pack, its closing speed at least 30 mph with a red and gray "FrankenBoxster" in hot pursuit! I instead slip into a narrow opening which appears between the two cars in front of me; but before I can congratulate myself on the move we are funneling three abreast into the very high speed Turn 1 at Big Willow, no one is lifting, and my car is squirming under me as I struggle to find the optimum slip angle for its cold tires.

If this were a Hollywood script I'd snap out of my reverie and inch another car length forward in stop and go traffic on the 405 freeway. But this isn't a daydream. Instead, I'm participating in my second

Porsche Owners Club Racers Clinic, held in late January, 2014, at Willow Springs International Raceway in Rosamond, California.

The fifteen other drivers on the track with me are my new best and closest friends. This must be similar to the friendship between soldiers in combat. Marty Mehterian, one of our classroom instructors, has been sternly warning us all weekend that off-track excursions or car-to-car contact are unacceptable, that all the current racers in the club are closely watching our conduct, and that we must depend on each other to keep cool and stay safe out there. The pressure is definitely on to perform well, and we must trust each other with our personal safety.

HOW DID I FIND MYSELF HERE, battling it out in a pack of snarling race cars?

I didn't set out to be a racer. I was just another middle-aged guy with a cool sports car, looking for a safe venue to stretch its legs. I discovered that most sports car clubs conduct non-competitive high performance driver education schools at local race tracks. Commonly known as HPDE, POC has its own version called Performance Driving School, or PDS. It's a great deal of fun!



Left to Right:
Jerry Hoffman
Bill Vogel
Ira Ramin.

photo by Cathy Robson

Oh, WOW!

After spending a number of years participating in driver education events at other clubs, I realized that despite making good progress I still had much to learn about performance driving. I began looking for a more rigorous forum in which to further develop my driving skills, and was very fortunate to have good friends steer me to the POC's Time Attack program. Time Attack, commonly known as TA or Time Trial, is a competitive event involving driving electronically-timed "hot laps" on a race track. The next step up from PDS, Time Attack is focused on learning to drive the most efficient, fastest lap around a race track in the safest manner possible. Competition with other cars is solely on the basis of lap times and in the interest of safety, car-to-car confrontations are studiously avoided. Passing among cars in a Time Attack session is cooperative, not confrontational.

Once a Time Attack driver has acquired sufficient experience they may decide to try Club Racing. This is wheel-to-wheel competition in a quest to be the first car across the finish line. POC requires the successful completion of two of their highly regarded Racers Clinics, along with intervening experience as a student driver in the club's race practice sessions, as a prerequisite for participation in the club's Cup Races. The Racers Clinics are typically held twice a year. While any sufficiently experienced TA driver may apply, admission is by invitation. Given the speeds and nature of competition, the risks in Cup Racing do become higher. The Cup Racing educational program is correspondingly much more intense and focused than the classes in an HPDE program.

The POC Racers Clinic follows a well-developed and

detailed syllabus. Classroom and on-track sessions feature a progressive series of lessons teaching the ethics of club racing, racing's procedural rules, skills for driving safely in close proximity to other racecars, and an introduction to race craft. Students are either on track or in the classroom all weekend long. Racers Clinic is a very intense experience!

POC promotes a strong ethic of good sportsmanship in the classic Olympian tradition. While professional racing as seen on TV often tolerates "rubbing doors" to provide paying spectators with thrills, we learned that POC club members are respectful friends first and competitors second. It was constantly emphasized throughout the weekend that POC takes good sportsmanship and clean competition very seriously. "Winning at all costs" has no place in POC club racing. Unsafe driving, contact between cars, violations of the rules of racing, and even aggressive off-track behavior towards race officials or fellow competitors, are all strictly forbidden. Transgressions quickly lead to suspension of racing privileges. While the subject matter was sobering, we all came away with a renewed appreciation for POC's safety culture and a firm commitment to be good citizens in our adopted community.

The procedural rules of racing are designed to allow for competition between drivers while providing for the safety of competitors and their cars. These rules are codified in the club's General Competition Rules, or GCRs. Our classroom sessions were a great opportunity to explore in detail what the rules mean and how they are applied in the heat of the racing environment. As we gained experience on the

track during the course of the weekend, some very interesting discussions ensued about the fine points of applying these rules in various racing situations that arise.

The driving skills needed for safety in traffic were introduced in the classroom and then put into practice through driving exercises on the track. This was one of the more intriguing parts of the program. Our small group was driving cars spanning the full gamut of Porsche performance, from spec 944 to Cup racers, and we were all on track in the same session. With guidance from Marty and his co-instructor Dwain Dement, the club's Chief Driving Instructor, our group quickly developed a great learning dynamic during these exercises. We all worked to maximize engagement with our fellow student racers, putting aside our natural competitive instincts and instead adjusting our individual speeds to stay within a pack of drivers, constantly engaging each other, passing and re-passing during the drills. I hope that most of the drivers had onboard video, because a spec 944 dicing with a Cup car in flat-out Turn 7 at WSIR is not something one sees very often!

The entire weekend was devoted to learning how not to drive that perfect Time Attack line we'd been honing for years, but instead to safely maximize performance while sharing not just the length of the track with other racers, but also its width. The emphasis was on strong car control skills accompanied by excellent situational awareness and mature judgment. We were expected to do this while maintaining maximum pace; in fact we were scolded if our lap times weren't competitive with those being posted by our soon-to-be-fellow racers, whose loud exhaust notes frequently punctuated our classroom discussions.

As soon as our group had adjusted to the idea of running off-line and side-by-side, and once our instructors and the club's safety stewards deemed the group to be driving safely and in control, race starts were added to the mix. In order to maximize learning opportunities the Racers Clinic relies heavily on Australian Pursuit, an interesting concept that involves placing the fastest cars at the back of the pack and the slowest cars in front. This upside-down

starting technique guarantees plenty of car-to-car engagement, with a great deal of passing both during the start and as the session progresses. Our half-hour sessions included up to six race starts, some with an early green flag, some with a late green flag, and some without any green flag, that is, "waved off" or aborted. Each race start was followed by a lap or two of various passing drills, with the last start of the session culminating in a several-lap mini-race. The intensity during these sessions was incredible, and as I've tried to describe in the opening paragraph, by far the most thrilling driving I'd ever experienced.

Race craft is the wily art of planning and executing a safe, clean, and legal pass on a fellow competitor. It is also the art of safely defending yourself against being passed by another car, while still exercising good sportsmanship. Our entire class considered ourselves extremely fortunate to have Marty and Dwain as our instructors. The stories they related of intriguing racing situations during famous races at world-renowned tracks were a wonderful introduction to the art and practice of race craft. I was going to include more detail in this article about some of the techniques we discussed, but have decided not to give up any competitive advantage!

By Sunday afternoon our class was working together like a well-oiled machine. Marty and Dwain congratulated us on our spirit of cooperation, and then drilled us on effective race qualifying. More than just driving a fast lap, this included the psychology of competition, mental preparation, and preserving the equipment for the coming race. I realized that our "qualifying" session after lunch was the first session of the weekend where our only assignment was to simply drive fast. It was tempting to drive the entire session, but mindful of our instructions I quickly laid down my fastest time of the weekend, bringing it in after only three laps.

Our last on-track session Sunday was a mock race and our graduation exercise. Given the wide range of equipment and the nature of the clinic, there were no trophies awarded. It would be a mistake, however, to believe there was no competition!

Like our qualifying session, the Clinic Race also

included some additional "firsts" for our weekend. Gone was the Australian Pursuit. We gridded and started in order of our qualifying times, just like we would in a club race. And unlike our earlier practice sessions, in which a lap or two of fast-paced action was followed by a regroup to do it all over again, in the Clinic's Blue Race session our start was followed by a full half hour of racing.

Marty had warned us that sometimes racing involves running around the track alone, with the cars in front and back slowly spreading out. We were fortunate that many of us found some close racing, with strategic decisions needed to defend position or evaluate a competitor's capabilities and plan a pass.

After the scramble at the start, the Omega sorted the group out and I found myself in hot pursuit of Ira Ramin in his GT4 white Boxster #340, with Dan Carusillo's GT4 red 911 and Tom Stone's BSR black Boxster #254 close behind. On lap four I was finally able to get alongside Ira in T2, and eventually completed the pass on the outside heading up the hill from T3. Ira and I were closely matched, and we might have enjoyed a mighty back-and-forth battle all race, but for the fact that on lap six Ira ran out of gas. Ira's situation taught all of us yet another object lesson about racing— not all races are lost on the track.

After Ira dropped back I thought that was likely my last challenge in the race. Wrong! I saw a car in the distance, slowly gaining on me every lap. Tom Stone had passed Dan Carusillo on his second attempt at the exit of Turn 9, and soon his black Boxster filled my mirrors. Tom's car is lighter than my BMW, and he was clearly faster in the corners. I had my work cut out trying to keep ahead. While I could gain a little in the straights, I realized that if I tried to match Tom's pace in the long sweepers at WSIR, the resulting understeer would quickly overheat my tires. They wouldn't hold up under the onslaught, and Tom would soon be able to pass me with ease. It was a good thing I'd saved my tires in the qualifying session. To add to my difficulty, it began to rain lightly about a third of the way through the race. Although it never rained hard, this added another variable to be factored into race strategy.



Top to Bottom:
Dan Carusillo
Tom Stone
Jerry Hoffman vs. Ira Ramin.
photos by Cathy Robson

I purposely made my car wide in the corners by driving a slightly looser than normal line while, remembering our classroom lessons, being careful to avoid illegal blocking. This allowed me to drive at less than 10/10ths in the sweepers while still holding Tom at bay. I also intentionally slowed early and late-apexed T9, knowing Tom would eventually decide this was a place where he could pass me by getting on the inside under braking. By these methods I was hoping to keep my tires from "going off" prematurely. I finally saw Tom hang back through the T7 kink, clearly planning to make a run on me at the entry to T9. I was ready for him, confident that I'd kept enough grip in reserve to drive T8 and T9 with tight lines and at full speed, and was able to successfully defend against the pass.

Ahead of the little pack I was running in, Brett Gaviglio's V3 black 911 #428 had passed Mike Brown's GT3 smurf-blue 911 #287, and Jerry Hoffman's GT5 tangerine 1970 911T #511 was

now in hot pursuit of his friend Mike. Jerry, while passing, misjudged his off-line braking into Turn 3. Fortunately Mike had good situational awareness and his alert reactions saved what could have turned into a bad situation.

Jerry reports, "I had a blast chasing Brett Gaviglio. Unfortunately I wasn't able to catch Brett, rolling across the finish line with my nose equal to Brett's rear bumper."

Up in front, Rob Phillips' V1 yellow 911 #160 chased Chris Thompson's GT2 white-and-blue GMG 997 Cup #485 around for 13.5 of 14 laps. "Every straight Chris would disappear like a rocket on the horizon, but I was able to reel a lot back in the corners. I was feeling rather pleased with myself, hanging close to the leader, until I crested Turn 6 on the final lap and promptly ran out of gas! I limped my choking car across the finish line with gas pedal floored, doing about 50 mph. Thankfully, I was able to coast the cool down lap in 6th gear and make it back to the paddock without a tow. Apparently a quarter tank of gas is not enough to run a full race... noted!"

What stood out the most about the weekend for Ira Ramin was "how everyone was really working together, not to be the fastest in the clinic, but to learn how to race against each other. Since Marty was training both [of my] classes, and he did a great job both times, I have to attribute it to the fact that we just had a really good group of participants. It made the class really fun and a great learning experience."

One of Rob Phillips' favorite moments was going three wide through Turn 2 in one of Sunday's practice session starts. Rob moved from 5th place to 1st in a single turn. "The marbles out there are surprisingly sticky!"

Jerry Hoffman said, "It was a great two days. Marty Mehterian is a great instructor and his attention to safety should ease any anxiety that prospective participants may have. Remember what Marty said: "Safety is non-negotiable."

Rob Phillips echoed the entire class's sentiments when he said, "Marty and Dwain were simply fantastic instructors. We are extremely fortunate to have guidance of that quality in the POC." 



CLINICALLY INSANE



Joel Silverstein.
photos by Cathy Robson



Matt Bernath.
photos by Cathy Robson



Top Right: David Nakamoto leads Igal Zagarov.

Top Left: Rob Phillips leads the pack.

Top row Left to Right:
Roland Weedon
Chris Cartwright
Brett Gaviglio
Ira Ramin
Donald Dickey
Chris Thompson
Justin Heil
Bill Vogel
Dan Carusillo.

Bottom row Left to Right:
Chet Kolley
Chick Richardson
Marty Mehterian
Mike Skinner
Tom Stone
Jerry Hoffman
Michael Brown
Rob Phillips.

photos by Cathy Robson

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO



WHAT WOULD FREUD THINK ABOUT RACERS?

By Ross Bentley

Why do we drive around race tracks?



I've talked to thousands of drivers over the past few decades, including some of you reading this when I did a talk for the POC at Willow Springs a few years ago. And I've heard some common answers to the question.

"I love the feeling of driving close to or at the limit, having the car on the knife edge of control."

"It's the ultimate challenge. It's thrilling, it's difficult, and the penalty for getting it wrong is extreme."

"I like the sense of satisfaction that comes from doing it well."

"Competition. I want to beat every other driver on the track, whether I'm faster or not. I just want to be in the lead at the end of the race."

"The constant and never-ending learning. You can never learn too much. There's always more."

"I enjoy the camaraderie at the track. When you're with like-minded people who are passionate about what we do, there's nothing more enjoyable."

"To be completely honest, it's the glory, the ego trip. I get off on being the best, on winning, on taking home the trophies."

"I race to test what I build. Building and tuning cars is what I do, and driving them is a way to demonstrate how good I am at that."

"I have too much money, and I can't think of an easier and quicker way to get rid of my money than to spend it on cars and driving!"

"It's for the chicks. Women love the fact that I race a Porsche."

But what happens when we dig a little deeper? What kind of answers can we come up with? What would Sigmund Freud think about us driving around and around racetracks?

Racing involves cars! And we love cars. Why? Freud would likely relate the shape of a Porsche 911 with certain parts of the body, or associate the muffled sound transmitted through our mother's womb with an accelerating Turbo. (I don't know. I don't remember.)

What I know, what I remember, is that as a little kid of around six I got a Dinky toy of a Jaguar D-type. The lines, the shape of that car, had an effect on me like no other. A couple of years later, a friend and I were walking alongside a rural road when something happened that is imprinted in my memory even more than my first girlfriend. A bright yellow Lotus Europa approached an intersection, and without slowing down one mph—it may have even sped up—zipped around a corner as if on a slot car track. I literally stopped in my tracks, my eyes got bigger, and a big grin spread across my face.

Later that year, another friend's older brother gave me a stack of Road & Track magazines, dating from about 1963 to 1968. I had recently become a teenager, but these were more attractive than a stack of Playboys. I read about Jimmy Clark and Grand Prix racing, and the Ford GT40s at Le Mans. Who needed centerfold models when I could gaze upon the gorgeous curves of a Lotus 49 and stare into the throttle trumpets of a Cosworth DFV? Then it was the Gulf Porsche 917s, in magazines and ultimately in the movie Le Mans, that fueled my day (and night) dreams.

There are moments like this for everyone who drives on a track—life changing moments that triggered the burning desire to go back again and again. Freudian moments, perhaps. It may have been a certain car, an image, a smell, an event . . .

I attended my first race at the age of five. My father took my older brother and me to the local oval track. I can still smell the burning gasoline, oil, and tires. I can still hear the thunder of two dozen flathead Ford-powered sprint cars scrambling their way into Turn One, slipping and sliding sideways as the drivers struggled for control. I can still see the yellow, black, white, red and blue of their minimalist bodies. Still.

"AUTO RACING, BULLFIGHTING, AND MOUNTAIN CLIMBING ARE THE ONLY REAL SPORTS... ALL OTHERS ARE GAMES."

Ernest Hemmingway

Yes, childhood experiences are partially responsible for what some people would think of as the irresponsible behavior of driving around racetracks at high speed. And perhaps that's part of it: the sense of being irresponsible, since we're expected to spend so much of our lives being responsible. It's a release, an escape. Those are the adult moments I'm talking about, and I'm sure Freud would have something to say about that, too.

While it can be an escape, there's also a sense of belonging, of being at home. There are times on the track when we can't help but think that it's just where we belong. I know it's where I'm most at home. It's what I do. It's what I'm good at (or is it that I'm not good at anything else?!).

As Steve McQueen famously said in the movie *Le Mans*, "Racing is life. Anything that happens before or after is just waiting." Racing is what some of us are meant to do.

For sure, racing is challenging. And that can be a trigger for a state of mind that we, as humans, naturally strive for.

In his groundbreaking book *Flow*, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi talks about what causes us to get into a state

of flow, or "the zone." Considered the grandfather of the topic, Csikszentmihalyi knows what he's talking about, as he's spent most of his adult life researching what causes a person to get into this state.

Being in the flow is something that most everyone has experienced at some point in their lives, whether it's in sport, playing music, driving, business, parenting, public speaking, or pursuing a hobby. For a few—

the superstars of an activity—it's almost a way of life. For others, it's a fleeting experience, there and gone in a flash. But experienced once, it's something we crave to experience again and

again. Track driving gives us an opportunity to flirt with being in the flow—it's accessible, unlike many other activities we spend time doing. Where else can we test ourselves to the extent that a racecar at speed on a track provides?

One factor that Csikszentmihalyi claims will often trigger a flow state is a balanced sense of challenge and belief. If you're faced with a task that is not challenging, and you don't believe you can handle it, you're likely to feel ambivalent towards engaging in it. You probably don't even want to do it, and it's unlikely that you'll get into the flow doing it. If you feel you're faced with a big challenge, and yet don't have the

belief in your ability to handle it, you're likely to feel anxious and not perform at your best. If you're facing a task that seems to offer no challenge to you, and you're super confident in your ability to handle it, it'll seem almost boring—that will not trigger a flow performance, either.

However, when you feel challenged and yet have a deep-down-inside sense of belief in your ability to handle it, that's when you're most likely to perform in the flow. A sense of challenge balanced with confidence leads to performing in the zone.

What do performance and race driving do? They challenge you. And most successful drivers have a pretty strong sense of belief in themselves (or they're working their way towards that feeling, especially when they've prepared well for the driving task). That triggers a flow state, often. And we're attracted to this state. In fact, we're more than just attracted to it. It's a basic human need. We want it, and we want more of it!

Performance and race driving do that. They provide an opportunity to experience a flow state, triggering all sorts of "reward chemicals" in our brains. Like dopamine. Flow triggers the release of dopamine in the brain, as do certain drugs. So, driving in the flow is more than like a drug, it is a drug! While it's questionable whether it's less expensive than a drug addiction, it's definitely healthier, and legal! For sure, Freud would have said something about this addiction (being addicted to cocaine himself, he could speak from experience).

The workout, mentally and physically, is an attraction. Like a runner's high, a racer's high is triggered by the release of chemicals in our brains.

Ernest Hemingway apparently claimed, "Auto racing, bullfighting, and mountain climbing are the only real sports—all others are games." While there is disagreement over whether Hemingway actually said that, scholars believe that he would have been referring to the fact that the result of failure in each of these sports is more "consequential" than in anything else. The average person who has never experienced performance driving or racing tends to think that it's this "cheating death" aspect that makes us do what we do. While there are some who do it for the thrill of being on that edge between life and death, most don't. Most would even prefer if the sport were safer. But still, it's a factor, one that Freud would likely relate to our desire to be cuddled by our mothers, or some even stranger conclusion.

Race driving is a technical challenge, both intellectually and physically. You know how difficult it is to put all the pieces together, to put a great lap together, let alone multiple laps over the course of a race.

My first time driving on a racetrack other than the local go-kart track was at Willow Springs, still one of my favorite tracks in the world. That first time was in a Formula Ford, but my most recent experience there was in a Porsche 993. And it was magic. The challenge of tying together the lines through the turns, the dance of the footwork on the pedals to adjust speed and weight transfer, the subtle but deliberate rotation



Coaching in Australia.
photo by Ross Bentley

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Working with Team16 at Daytona.
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of the steering wheel, and where my vision and attention were focused nearly caused my head to explode. Fortunately I was wearing a helmet, keeping my head in one piece. Oh, and that sound—the sound that can only come from a Porsche flat-six. And the g-loads building and fading; the visual picture in fast-forward.

Think about the thousands of movements, skills, and techniques you perform over the course of one single lap. Think of the variations in track conditions, and of your car and that of other drivers' cars. Then think how often, even with all those variables, you and another driver can be separated by fractions of a second, fractions of a percentage of lap time. It's mind-boggling and thrilling to think we control those minute differences.

That technical challenge, flooded with sensory input—is one more reason we do what we do.

Or maybe we race just because we're lazy. Or at least, want to feel lazy—relaxed for a while.

Most drivers will tell you that performance driving or racing is the most relaxing thing they do. The average person—the person who has never driven on a track—has a hard time understanding how driving a car at or near the limit, often wheel-to-wheel with another car, could be relaxing. But it requires such total focus, total commitment, that it is. It's that escape again. Nothing else matters. Business, family,

other commitments, all go out the window at speed. And that's an extremely attractive thing for so many people today. As our lives are inundated with technology and demands on our time, that escape is more and more important. Is that why our sport continues to grow?

The reasons we drive are varied, personal, and many. Perhaps that's it. Perhaps it's because we can't put our finger on it. We work to make money to do other things. We work out to keep our bodies fit. We have relationships because they make us feel better, more complete. We take vacations to relax and re-energize. We have sex because ... well, you know ... sex.

The thing is, we know why we do all of those things. We have reasons for doing them. But the fact that it's difficult to define the exact reason why we drive may be the reason we do it. Maybe not being able to define the reason is the reason. It's the journey. It's not the destination that matters. Well, except for the destination of the finish line at the end of the next lap, just that fraction of a second sooner than ever before ...

For more of Ross' writing, along with articles by other famous and not-so-famous contributors, go to <http://speedsecretsweekly.com>, or check out his website at <http://speedsecrets.com>. He can be reached at ross@speedsecrets.com. ✓

CHUCKWALLA



DUEL IN THE DESERT

by Willy Leon

Friday arrival allowed me to have some much needed track time. Chuckwalla is a 2.68-mile road course with 16 turns, including elevation changes, a bowl, and strategically placed apex berms. The track can be run in either direction—clockwise was the choice for our weekend. Friday morning greeted everyone with fierce winds, dust, and poor visibility. Great way to learn a new layout. The wind remained relentless, and the backside of the track looked like an exercise out of Desert Storm. Since Friday was an open test day there was a wide variety of cars, trucks, etc., on course. Thankfully, no tanks or IEDs to deal with. Despite the wind and traffic, I made good use of practice to figure things out. During the late afternoon and evening the troops started to file in. Pit space is at a premium, so there was quite a bit of jockeying for position among the trailers and RVs. This continued as more folks arrived early Saturday morning prior to the drivers meeting. Compared to last year's turnout of 60 or so, we managed a respectable 110 entrants—a testament to the wisdom of combining PDS, Time Attack, and Cup racers. My observation is that it helped everyone assimilate and make new friends.

We were all thrown under the same blanket in the tight confines of the pits, and I was able to meet many new faces as well as visit with fellow racers. The schedule included the PDS sessions, Time Attack sessions, one race each for Red and Orange Cup racers on Saturday and two races apiece on Sunday. Saturday's action was pretty intense in the Cup Races. For those of you unfamiliar with the track, it has a fairly short straight at the start with a slight left going into a right-hand sweeper—definitely an eye-opener under green starts. The top five Red Group qualifiers were Dan Aspesi, Loren Beggs, Tom Haacker, Kevin Wilson, and Blair Boyce, representing a cross section of four classes. High horsepower was not necessarily the rule. Great handling and car control skills made a big impact on position. Chuckwalla is not a particularly wide track, so passing was not easy, reminding me of Formula 1 racing. The finishing order was not much different than qualifying, with Dan, Loren, and Tom placing one, two and three.

Orange qualifying was made up mostly of the new Carrera Spec class (C32) and Boxster BSR racers. Kudos to Paul Young on placing highly with his

Since this was my first trek to Chuckwalla Valley Raceway I was not exactly sure what to expect. What I did know was it was somewhere in the middle of the desert between nowhere and BF Egypt. Although I was aware that accommodations might be an issue I was lucky enough to secure a bed in my buddy's motor home. Sleeping on a cot in my trailer thankfully did not come true. Staying at the track all weekend just necessitated my bringing lots of food, water, adult beverages, and cigars.



Willy Leon.
photo by Cathy Robson

CHUCKWALLA: DUEL IN THE DESERT



Blair Boyce leading John Gordon.
photo by Cathy Robson

GT5 entry. Carrera Spec guys (myself included) were learning the new track and figuring out the new Toyo spec tire and how it affected suspension setup. There were a heck of a lot more spins and "desert racing" than usual until we were dialed in.

The Orange Race was again pretty much top qualifiers becoming top finishers. I had Ed Muscat on my tail the whole race, which not only was a real blast but helped me push my car two seconds faster than my qualifying times. I guess I need a push to go fast. Ed and I had some good bench racing later in the pits. Orange Race top three were Steve Alarcon, Dave Elliott, and Brett Gaviglio. Time Attack had 56 entries during the weekend, with Michael Brown posting a 1:56:921 in GT3 for Fastest Time of the Day. Great job, Michael.

Saturday had been a clear and still weather day, warm and comfortable. It was interesting to see the mix of big RVs and cots in car trailers in the paddock. All of us who camped at the track saved a few bucks, and it seemed most people were comfortable. I know barbeque, cigars, and some pyrotechnics were part of our campsite.

Sunday sunrise and the time change slowly woke up the racers. Weather was again beautiful, and there was no wind to contend with. The top three Red Cup qualifiers were Tom Haacker, Dan Aspesi, and Kevin Wilson. The race was again exciting, with a notable performance by Blair Boyce in GT4. That guy has some great race craft as well as a beautiful car. Tom Haacker took the overall win. In the second Red Cup Race of the day, the finish order was Kevin Wilson in GT1, Blair Boyce in GT4, and Eric Olberz in GT3. It turns out you don't need a Cup car to place in the top three!

In both of the Orange Cup Races on Sunday, the C32 guys dominated. After spending all Saturday night repairing his broken upright/spindle, Mike Monsalve jumped in his car and qualified and finished on top. No pressure there. You have to give credit to the competitiveness of our members. Very impressive indeed.

Time Attack on Sunday was full of excitement. In GT6, David Tung did a 2:10:130 and in MI, Mike Holgate turned an impressive 2:06:866. There was also a very tight four-way battle in BSX between Barton Hale, Robert Lazar, Terry Davis and Justin Daily.

All in all, a great weekend. Clean racing, great camaraderie, and for many of us an excellent chance to get some seat time at a new track. The drive out to the track was easier than expected. October is our next event in Chuckwalla. We'll be driving counter-clockwise so it will be an entirely new experience. I'll see you there.



Top: Sunrise in the pits.
Bottom: Brad Keegan prepares for his foot massage.
photos by Don Matz



Don Matz chasing Keith Hulley.



Right: Peter Jungwirth.

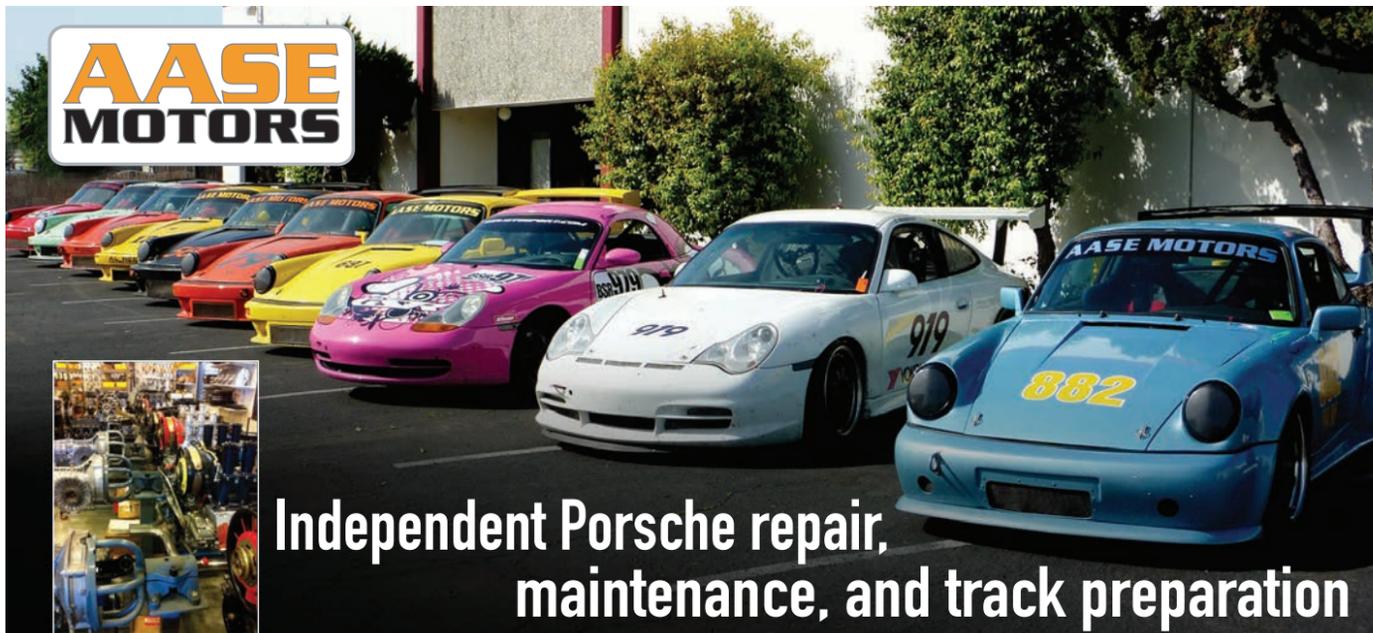
Bottom Left: Matt Bernath.

Bottom: Eric Olberz.

photos by Cathy Robson



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CHUCKWALLA: DUEL IN THE DESERT

Chris Thompson.
photo by Cathy Robson



John Momeyer, Kris and Don Kravig/Precision Motion.
photo by Don Matz



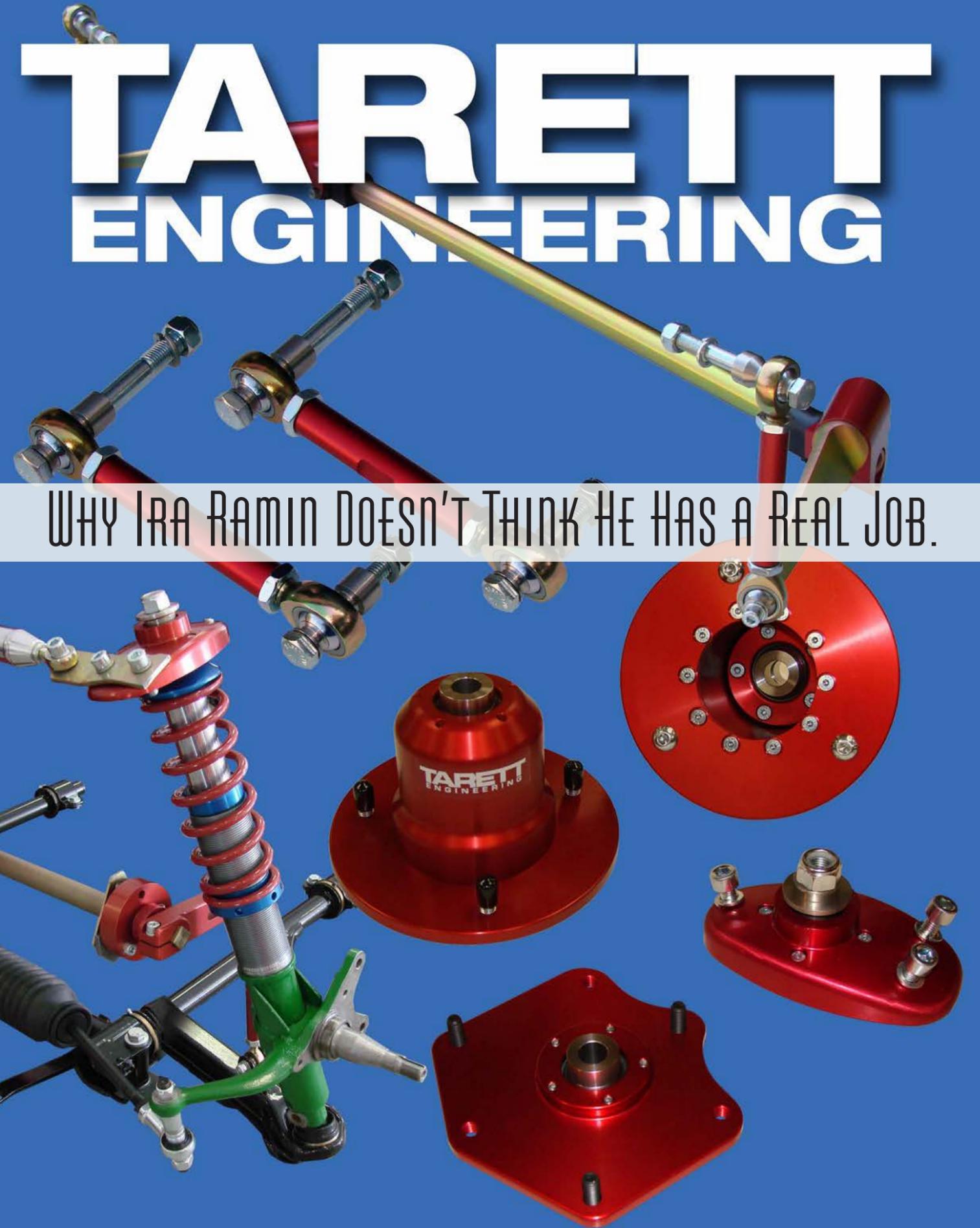
Mike Takaki, Brett Gaviglio, Steve Vandecar, Dave Elliott, Walter Airth, Steve Alarcon, Willy Leon.
photo by Cathy Robson



John Gordon practices his pit crew skills.
photo by Don Matz

TARETT ENGINEERING

WHY IRA RAMIN DOESN'T THINK HE HAS A REAL JOB.



by John Armstrong

Over thirty years ago—when the POC ran coned courses in parking lots at Pierce College and Lion Country Safari—a young mechanical engineer named Ira Ramin started driving with the POC, and became hooked. He had a 1966 912 which he restored while still in school. Naturally he took an interest in the car's suspension, and in one of his structural engineering classes he came up with a design idea for swaybars that he thought would work great.

He had to put that idea on the back burner, though, while he established a career working for Sym-Tek Systems as a designer of high speed, precision robotic equipment for the manufacture of semi-conductors. But 11 years later in 1995 when he acquired his next Porsche, a '70 911S, he finally decided he had to build those swaybars. They worked out so well on his own car that friends asked him to build sets for them, and eventually a few shops began carrying them. He named his little enterprise Tarett—after his kids Tara and Brett—because he thought the moniker would bring good luck. This was the genesis of one of the most respected names in Porsche suspension parts, Tarett Engineering.

Of those early years, Ira says, "I had a good product, but never expected it to be something that had the potential to someday support a full time business. I thought it would be fun to do, and would help support my racing habit. With a wife and two young kids and a full time job, I spent almost no time promoting my swaybars, but they practically sold themselves."

The new shop R&D car, parked out back. Recently upgraded every possible suspension modification. Soon to have a 986/996 prototype bladed front swaybar installed.



The original Tarett Engineering test car. After almost 20 years, it still has the first set of 911 swaybars built.

photos compliments of Ira Ramin

Buoyed by the initial success of his swaybars for early 911s (up to 1989), Ira began designing products for the emerging water-cooled Porsches. His timing was perfect, and his new swaybars, drop links, and toe links for the 996/986 were well-received. Ira also observed that nobody besides Porsche Motorsports was making rear toe control arms, so he developed those as well. The control arms were such a popular, cost-effective suspension improvement that they gave Tarett the biggest boost yet.

Meanwhile, Ira was so good at his job as a mechanical engineer that he was hired away from Sym-Tek by a fast-growing competitor named Delta Design, where he would work for 13 years. Between his real job and the fledgling Tarett, he began to spread himself thin. Eventually he was putting in 80-hour work weeks, and he had no time to go racing. He disappeared from the POC for ten years.

He was still running Tarett out of his home. Parts filled the garage, then the hall ... he stashed some under the bed.

Finally, "I decided to take a risk and quit my full-time job to give Tarett the attention it needed to make it successful," he recalls. "It was scary. I was nervous."

But when he presented his resignation to his employers, they didn't want to accept it. They persuaded him to continue working for them part-time, with full benefits.



Yet Tarett continued to grow exponentially. When the house was about to burst, Ira moved his company to an industrial building with 1200 square feet.

He went back to his employers and told them he was quitting for good. They thought he was angling for a raise and asked what they could do to make him happy, but he stuck to his guns. His wife Dee Dee was totally supportive. She even went back to school to get her teaching credential so the family could have medical insurance during those startup years.

The gamble paid off in every way. After only a few years, Tarett was doing so much business that Ira moved it into a 2,000 square-foot building, and now he's thinking about moving to another building with an additional thousand square feet. Ira says, "We have five employees, plus myself, and have more than 275 different products—not too bad for what seems like a small niche."

Ira's design goals of "performance, reliability, and cost effectiveness" have not changed since the beginning. When asked to describe a recent successful product, he talks about the bladed swaybars that he designs for Caymans. Last year, a Cayman won its class at the Daytona 24 using Tarett swaybars with in-car controllers. "There's nothing like a 24-hour endurance race to test a brand new product with highly stressed components," Ira declares. This year, "Every pro Cayman out there uses Tarett swaybars," he says.

Although Ira finds himself on the marketing end of his business a lot these days, he still gets very excited designing products using the latest technologies. "We use 3D modeling software for all our designs, and try to leverage off our current proven designs whenever possible. We have a 3D printer that we use to build a plastic prototype of our new designs. It's a great tool that allows us to quickly do preliminary testing before building a prototype. It also allows us to quickly test out different ideas. We also have finite element

analysis software—FEA—that we use to evaluate the stress in various components. This allows us to optimize the strength and weight of the parts as well as to maximize the adjustability range of our bladed swaybar designs."

Ira also has a mill and lathe in his shop, so he can create realistic aerospace-quality metal prototypes on the spot. He explains that, in addition to the plastic prototype and computerized data he analyzes, simply holding the metal product in his hands gives him important insights into its strength. Once he's satisfied with the metal prototype, the ultimate design is mass-produced by specialized manufacturers.

Ira has many reasons to be happy these days, but one of the most important is that he has somehow found the time to get back into racing with the POC. Five years ago he started time trialing (OK, Time Attacking) again in his '70 911S. Last year, he completed his first Racers Clinic in the car. This January he sold the 911 and bought a Boxster, which he drove in his second Racers Clinic. Now, 30 years after he began driving with the POC, he has his Cup Racing license. "That I can race my car with other like-minded enthusiasts is the coolest thing ever," he affirms.

Needless to say, Ira has been designing suspension parts for the Boxster. "I've found that no matter how many shops and teams I work with on new products, there's no substitute for installing, testing, and racing with products on my own car. I've only had the Boxster for a few months now, but I've already made several changes on several products based on my personal experience. Recently we ran the Boxster with a data acquisition system and strain gauges installed on the rear swaybar. We used them to record load data, which we then entered into the FEA software to determine the stress generated in the related swaybar blades and other components. From that I was able to determine how much softer I could safely make the blades to increase their range of adjustability."



When asked why he looks forward to going into the office on Monday morning, Ira gushes several reasons:

1) "The sense of accomplishment I get from the products I've designed and the new products that we're working on. Our bladed swaybar program is really taking off. We've been building them for the 997 for several years now, and we're putting the finishing touches on a 986/987 rear application with in-car controllers. We are leveraging our current designs and experience to design them for the early 911, 996, 993, and 991/981 platforms. We have a complete 981 suspension on the bench that we are using to design a full line of suspension products for. I think we have the whole Porsche field covered now."

2) "Working with customers to help come up with the best solution for their application. We have a bunch of race shops and club racers lined up to work with us on testing and development. They're always telling me about how much my parts improved their cars, and they're so appreciative."

3) "My amazing staff that works so hard to help make Tarett what it is today. It sometimes seems like they work even harder and get more excited than I do when we have a good day."

4) "The fact that the business can support itself and continues to grow."

Ira Ramin, the guy who took a risk and left the security of a well-paying career with a large corporation to live his passion, has this to say in summation: "People are always telling me that I'm living the dream. My wife jokingly tells people that I'm retired and get to play with race car stuff all day. I think they all might be kind of right."

Tarett Engineering is located at 10755-F Scripps-Poway Parkway, San Diego, CA 92131. You can reach Ira at 858 674-5573. For more info, check out tarett.com. 



Ira test fitting a bump steer tie rod on a 981 front suspension.



A prototype 986/987 bladed rear swaybar on one of the pro team cars that Tarett is sponsoring.



A shot of the 987 rear upper shock mount on the freshly powder coated tub of our 987 project car. POC will see plenty of this car in the near future.



987 project suspension.



THE HEART OF THE MATTER

By Randy Takaki

My dad arrived at my house on Saturday morning at 4:30 sharp. Together, it was a smooth drive out to Willow Springs. The weather was cooperative. There was no rain in the forecast. When we arrived the track, a cool 55° breeze that would soon warm up to a toastier 85° greeted us. Two months ago I completed the Drivers Clinic where we were doing side-by-side drills in the rain during the morning and finishing our afternoon race in a blinding T9 dust storm. This weekend's fair weather was welcomed.

Though I've been driving for a quite a few years, I only recently got my Cup license. I have been coming to the track with my dad and brothers for about eight years now. It has turned into a family hobby that started out with my dad's streetcar, a black '97 993. We have progressed through several Time Trial cars and now own dedicated racecars with accompanying trailers and trucks to haul them. This was my third official Cup race weekend and I could hardly wait to get on the track.

As a new racer, you transition from competing against the clock to "dancing with your partners," as one of my Clinic instructors, Rick Knoop, put it. This is the fun part about racing but one that comes with a new set of strategies and rules. Though we touched on this during the Racers Clinic, I got some real world knowledge about how to summon up the assertiveness needed to take a 100+MPH turn next to someone you're trying to pass. That'll get your heart started!

Robert Dalrymple chasing down Eric Oberz.

photos by Nathan Frederickson

I'd been a bit unclear on our passing rules. Does merely breaking the plane of the back bumper on the car you're overtaking entitle you to a side-by-side position in the turn? I asked Steve Vandecar, our Competition Director, who laid it out for me. If you are late braking to overtake someone going into a turn, you'd better have a position where that driver will actually see you next to him before the turn-in. After that point, he's looking toward the apex and might not expect you to be there. It is the overtaking driver's responsibility to make the pass safely. If you execute the pass correctly and it results in an incident, a camera pointed in the right direction would help prove you had position. Having at least one video camera in your car is an excellent idea.

Saturday's format for racers was two practices, qualifying and the race. The first race of the weekend was the Orange group, and Bob Mueller took first place in GT4 (out of seven competitors), Martin Schacht won in GT5, Nathan Johnson took first place in BSR (out of eleven competitors) and John Momeyer took first in GSR. My heart was pounding at the start. I finished in the middle of the BSR pack.

Saturday's Red group race was next with Chip Romer taking first in GT1 (out of five drivers), Gene Sigal taking first in GT3 (with a seven car field), Dan Aspesi was first in GT2, Roland Weedon won V3 and Mike Monsalve solidly placing first in C32 (out of eleven cars). The fastest time of the day, a 1:20.699 was set by Chip Romer in the first practice session. That is fast!

THE HEART OF THE MATTER



Left Top to Bottom:
Kevin Roush
Regan Steedman
Kevin Wilson.

Right Top to Bottom:
Dan Aspesi
Martin Schacht
Blair Boyce in the lead.

photos by Nathan Fredrickson

With the new three-race format, Sunday's schedule is one practice, qualifying, and two races. I like the new format and I know that it's been very well received by our membership.

Sunday's first Orange race, saw Bob Mueller took first in GT4 (a repeat of Saturday's performance), Regan Steedman won in GT5, Nathan Johnson, once again, led the BSR pack, former chief driving instructor Marty Mehterian won GT6 and Ted Frech took the win in GSR. Again, with my heart pounding at the start, I finished in the middle of the BSR pack.

The second Orange race saw some shakeups as Blair Boyce got to the front of GT4, Nathan Johnson still led the BSRs and John Momeyer took back control of the GSR class. With yet another heart-pounding start, do I have to mention that I finished in the middle of the BSR pack?

Sunday's first Red race ended with Chip Romer on top of GT1 (out of six cars). Chip also posted the fastest time of the day at an incredible 1:18.528 in qualifying. That is very fast! Dan Aspesi finished first in GT2, Kevin Roush led GT3 and Mike Monsalve was, once again, first in C32.

The first four finishers in the second Sunday Red race were also the first in each of their classes: Kevin Wilson in GT1, Dan Aspesi in GT2, Duane Selby in GT3, and Mike Monsalve in C32.

Time Attack is a very popular level of participation in our competitive racing program and this event was no exception. Time Attack drivers are having a blast. There are entries in every class and the battle for TA competition points is serious business. On

Saturday, some of the fastest laps were set by Geoff Steinbach in GT1, Duane Shelby in GT3, Dwain Dement in V3, Mike Monsalve in C32, Tom Stone in BSR, and Justin Daily in BSX. Sunday's lap time highlights include Josh Matas in BSR, Evan Clark in EX, Blair Boyce in GT4, Mike Skinner in GT5, and with fastest time of the day, Blair Boyce in GT4 with a 1:26.597.

In addition to Cup Races and Time Attack, our Performance Driving School (PDS) continues to build momentum and excitement on many levels. I remember when I started out in this group not too long ago. The weekends just flew by and I couldn't wait until the next event. Actually, not much has changed! It really amazes me how much great talent is being developed in PDS. Our certified instructors continue to educate and coach newer drivers about car control at high speed, etiquette on and off of the racetrack, and most importantly, safety, safety, safety. My take-away from the PDS drivers at this event was the big smiles on their faces after every session and the physical and emotional exhaustion they felt at the end of it all. So many talked enthusiastically about attending more events. I love the PDS program. It's where we all discovered what it takes to start a heart racing. ✓

Window net? Check.
photo by Nathan Fredrickson





R Randomly P profiled M member

First in a series of member profiles By Andrew D. Weyman

Member: Akash Bajaj MD, MPH

Age: 38 years young

Occupation:

Interventional Pain Management Physician
 Double Board Certified in Anesthesiology and
 Pain Management / Diplomate of the American Board
 of Anti-Aging Medicine
 Founder and Medical Director, Remedy Pain Solutions

Residence: Los Angeles, CA

Car: 2013 991 Porsche Carrera C2S - Agate Grey/ Black/ Black Rims

Length of membership: 1 year

Level of participation: Time Attack

Number of track events attended: 5

Tracks driven: The Streets of Willow, Auto Club Speedway (infield), WSI

What is your favorite track?

The Streets of Willow. The track has so many exciting elements. The chicanes, the hairpin, the camber and elevation changes as well as the bowl prove to be very challenging and are excellent for developing your driving skills. When you need an opportunity to pass another driver, you can take advantage of the front and back straights. Those straights are also good places to check your dashboard gauges, relax your death-grip on the steering wheel and take a few slow deep breaths. Since The Streets can be run clockwise one day and counterclockwise the next, you can experience two different tracks on the same weekend, each with a unique set of challenges.

What do you enjoy most about driving with the POC?

The POC is a very welcoming club. Members have the opportunity to meet drivers from all walks of life, with all levels of driving experience. Of course, drivers are focused on improving their individual lap times and skills. They'll also eagerly lend a helpful hand to another driver. Members share driving tips and feel comfortable about asking questions. The camaraderie in the pits is awesome. In addition, POC members have some pretty amazing vehicles to admire both on and off the track.

What's the greatest lesson you've learned while on the track?

I'm constantly reminded of how important a game plan, strategy, and proper execution work synergistically. Moreover, actions have consequences, and the ability to adapt, adjust, and persevere lead to success, both on and off the track.

What are your driving goals?

I'm a go-getter and have always been adrenaline junkie. When not on land, kite surfing is my passion. On land, it's motorsports. When I first joined the club, I wanted to get a better feel for my car. For better or worse (according to my bank account) I've been bit by the bug and have already visualized the paint job on my Cup car in the future. I want to learn as much as I can and develop my driving skills to be able to compete at a higher level. As a doctor, I fear this is an incurable ailment!

What tips would you give to new drivers?

Join the POC, attend track events, interact with other members, and explore your car's potential. That's actually just the beginning of active POC membership. Be careful. You may start visualizing your Cup car's paint job before too long. See you at the track!



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2014 LONG BEACH GRAND PRIX

by Max Sluiter

The End
of the World
As We Know It,
and I Feel Fine,
For Now.

I've been going to the Long Beach American Le Mans Series (ALMS) race with my dad since 2007. This year marked the "merger of equals" between Grand-Am and ALMS. That meant NASCAR was in charge. After NASCAR's race manipulation at Daytona and incompetence at Sebring, I was not sure what to expect at Long Beach. Sebring had about 5 hours of yellow in a 12-hour race. Because the stewards don't know one Porsche from another (shades of the cotton candy hawkler in *The Speed Merchants*), there was an 80 second penalty imposed on the innocent Alex Job Porsche. To make matters worse, there was no attempt to make it up to him. As Long Beach is a 100 minute sprint on a narrow track with unforgiving concrete barriers, I was prepared for everything from bad calls to needless cautions in the name of spicing up "The Show" but I got the only thing I was not expecting: a race free of full-course yellows.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. I came in with those negative expectations as well as knowing that getting good shots with my camera is difficult at best from behind the fences. Realizing that it wouldn't be worth hundreds of dollars more (considering my non-DSLR camera) for a better angle on the action, I focused on enjoying the festivities that took place around the actual race. I met many of my friends, including Magnus Walker. I seemed to be the only person wearing one of Magnus' Urban Outlaw shirts at the event. My dad shook hands with Bobby Rahal and Mario Andretti as he walked by while we were admiring the lineup of old F1 and F5000 cars on hand to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Long Beach Grand Prix.

The highlight of the event for me has always been talking to Patrick Long, as we share a hometown (Thousand Oaks). I asked him if he had a ride for Le Mans and it was clear he was not at liberty to say very much, but you can expect to see him there driving with "some old friends." I also asked Patrick how he liked Baja (he and Rafael Navarro III won the SCORE Lites class in the Baja 1000 last November). He said he really enjoyed it and wants to drive it more, working his way up to Class 1 and maybe going on from there. He said the VW-powered buggy handled like a 911, but one with absolutely no spring rate. Class 1 is an even more insane way to fly over the desert as there can only be a small block Chevy engine hanging out behind the rear wheels. Patrick has an incredible memory. He always recognizes me as well as dozens of other fans at events. This year he gave me one of his hats, partly because I have seen him every year since 2007 and partly because there was an inside joke between him and Magnus. No, I did not get a free bowl of soup with either the shirt or the hat, but both the shirt and the hat themselves were free. The hat actually came in very handy since the weather was beautiful and sunny for the race.

This year the green flag waved a little bit earlier in the afternoon than it has in the past. The earlier start allowed time for SCCA World Challenge qualifying after the race (for the series formerly known as ALMS). The World Challenge race was a rather straightforward event. Well, at least it was after a couple DP cars got into the tire wall early on. Neither that shunt, nor an errant cone, nor a wayward banner brought out the safety car. So, full points to NASCAR this time.

Bryan Sellers
driving the Falken
991 RSR in hot
pursuit of a
Ferrari 458 driven
by former F1 driver
Giancarlo Fisichella.
photo by Max Sluiter





Richard Lietz (#911) leading Michael Christensen (#912), both in 991 RSRs, followed by Giancarlo Fisichella in the Ferrari and Bryan Sellers in the Falken 991 RSR (#17).



991 RSRs in factory team pits after the race.



997 GT3-R driven by Tim Bergmeister during qualifying for the SCCA World Challenge.

Falken car before the race.

photos by Max Sluiter



There was plenty of close racing, including a late-race duel between Patrick Long and another local boy, defending class winner Bill Auberlen in the BMW Z4 V8 cheater-mobile. Unfortunately the race did not go very well for Porsche. While Patrick Long held off Bill Auberlen, Weissach simply did not seem to have the pace to match the best Corvettes and BMWs. Michael Christensen started sixth in the #912 Porsche 991 RSR and Pat Long moved up to finish fifth. Nick Tandy brought the #911 across the line fourth, one position ahead of where Richard Lietz started. Wolf Henzler finished eighth in the Falken car, which is where Bryan Sellers qualified it.

I must say that while the factory cars have had better results, I think the Falken car looks absolutely stunning. I am not impressed with the Porsche factory's choice of livery on the CORE Autosport cars, but at least it is better than the 919. Whatever happened to the Martini & Rossi, Rothmans/Racing and Gulf paint schemes? The Falken car reminds me a bit of the hippie colors on the 917LHs. Oh well. I am sure in a few years we will see some of those liveries recreated when the 991 RSR hits the POC Red Group Race at Big Willow.

I do wonder if those cars will have a derivative of the intermediate-shaft-free, direct-fuel-injection engine in the PDK-only GT3. It seems Porsche ultimately wants to strengthen it for racing and retire the Mezger Motor (which is currently still being used in the 991 RSR) for good. The first step in that process is to get some better rod bolts. That said, Porsche is currently leading the IMSA manufacturers' championship and their drivers are second (Lietz/Tandy) and third (Long/Christensen) in the driver championship.

One change I was happy to see this year was the SCCA World Challenge qualifying after the IMSA race. I was glad to finally see the World Challenge cars run. A couple of years ago when Pat Long was doing double-duty in ALMS and WC, I wasn't able to fit it into my schedule. At that time, I was busy concentrating on my engineering degree (I graduated last June). World Challenge provides a great diversity of cars with the inclusion of FIA GT3 cars this year. Some of

the highlights were a couple McLaren 12C's and a chrome-wrapped Mercedes SLS Gullwing, along with a squadron of Audi R8's from my neighbor's GMG Racing (who also ran the stunning, loud, blue 997 RSR that ran rings around the field at the Festival of Speed and was in action with the POC at WSIR during the GP weekend).

In the Tudor series race, my Italian friend Marco Galvagno said the Ferrari sounded the best and I had to agree. It was the sole flat-crank V8 in the field (the 991's were just too quiet). In World Challenge I enjoyed the bent-crank Caddy V8's for their ground-pounding bass notes that contrasted well with the amorous wail of the Ferraris, the hushed whistle of the McLaren twin turbos, and the smooth whir of the Mezger Motor in the 997 GT3R. The only other Porsches were a pair of Caymans running the non-GT3 MA1 engine. I love the symphonic diversity but if I could only listen to one engine for the rest of my life it would be an air-cooled flat 6. Well, that or a 917 engine.



Patrick Long sandwiched by Max Sluiter and Magnus Walker. photo courtesy of Max Sluiter

I came into the event prepared for the worst and half-expecting to defect like Turner BMW to World Challenge next year, but the day turned out much better than I expected, despite the less-than-stellar results from Porsche. I will be at the LBGP again next year, and hopefully I won't have to miss a POC weekend in order to do it. I'd love to be driving in the PDS group at that event. My car and bank account are down a bit for an MFI rebuild that will take up much of the first half of 2014, but I'm going to do whatever I can to remedy that!

At the time of writing, I am looking forward to the Tribute to Le Mans. That event will be epic now that it is back at a proper road course and running into the night (great for golden hour photography). A big thanks to Mark Hergesheimer, Dave Bouzagloul and the POC Board of Directors who made this happen! A special shout out to Eric Oviatt for his extra efforts. You can view and download my pictures and videos from this and other races here: https://www.flickr.com/photos/max_911_fahrer/sets/

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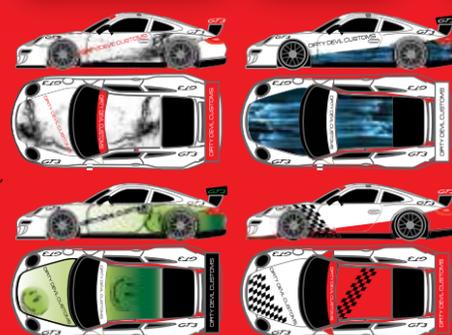
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2014 Schedule

Check porscheclubracing.org regularly for exciting news and updates

Date	Track	Description
January 18	OLD RANCH COUNTRY CLUB, SEAL BEACH, CA	58th Annual POC Banquet
January 25 / 26	WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY	Racers Clinic #1 PDS Clinic #1 Open Testing
February 8 / 9	WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY	Cup Race #1, #2, #3 Time Attack #1, #2 PDS #1, #2
March 8 / 9	CHUCKWALLA VALLEY RACEWAY	Cup Race #4, #5, #6 Time Attack #3, #4 PDS #3, #4
April 12 / 13	WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY	Cup Race #7, #8, #9 Time Attack #5, #6 PDS #5, #6
May 2 / 3 / 4	WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY	Saturday, May 3 Tribute to Le Mans four-hour Enduro Cup Race #10, #11 Time Attack #7, #8 PDS #7, #8
May 31 / June 1	AUTO CLUB SPEEDWAY	Cup Race #12, #13 Time Attack #9, #10 PDS #9, #10
June 28 / 29	MAZDA RACEWAY LAGUNA SECA	In association with Competent Motorsport– 105db sound limit Cup Race #14, #15 Time Attack #11, #12
September 6 / 7	WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY	Racers Clinic #2 Cup Race #16, #17, #18 Time Attack #13, #14 PDS #11, #12
October 4 / 5	CHUCKWALLA VALLEY RACEWAY	Cup Race #19, #20, #21 Time Attack #15, #16 PDS #13, #14
November 8 / 9	BUTTONWILLOW RACEWAY	Cup Race #22, #23, #24 Time Attack #17, #18 PDS #15, #16
December 6 / 7	WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY	Cup Race #25, #26, #27 Time Attack #19, #20 PDS #17, #18

