



VELOCITY

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NEWS

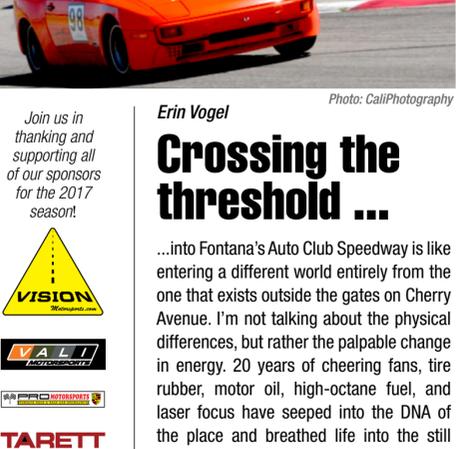
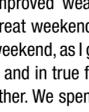
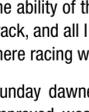
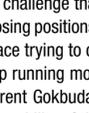
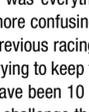
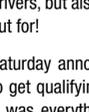
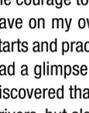
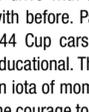
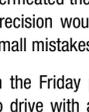


Photo: CaliPhotography

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Erin Vogel

Crossing the threshold ...

...into Fontana's Auto Club Speedway is like entering a different world entirely from the one that exists outside the gates on Cherry Avenue. I'm not talking about the physical differences, but rather the palpable change in energy. 20 years of cheering fans, tire rubber, motor oil, high-octane fuel, and laser focus have seeped into the DNA of the place and breathed life into the still surfaces of tarmac, cinder block, and steel. The stresses of work and traffic instantly dissipate as the atmosphere of quiet anticipation embraces me, the incredible feeling of this pervasive stillness creating a perfect foil for the fleeting moments of rage in store. Stepping out of my pickup truck, snatches of sound drift toward me on the breeze – the melodic hum of hydraulic lifts, the heart-palpitating rumble of Porsche motors, and the staccato snap of flags thrashing in the breeze – a perfect soundtrack to the start of this 2017 Festival of Speed.

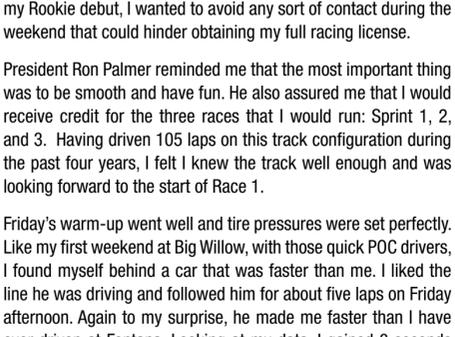
Friday bloomed bright and hot, and the consensus was that the track should be approached with a healthy sense of caution throughout the weekend. It was the first truly warm weather of the season and the sun was like a Glen Ivy aesthetician, bringing up all the oil and grease that had permeated the surface of the track over the course of the winter. Precision would be even more valued on a slick track, where small mistakes would be magnified by less-than-ideal grip.

In the Friday practice sessions, I had the valuable opportunity to drive with a number of racers I'd never driven or competed with before. Particularly, the chance to chase the drivers of the 944 Cup cars through the playground was extremely fun and educational. Those drivers know how to corner without giving up on iota of momentum, so for me to tuck in behind them gave me the courage to attack many areas of the track harder than I would have on my own. Of even more notable value were the practice starts and practice race in the final session on Friday, where we all had a glimpse of our competition for the weekend – and where I discovered that not only were the 944 pilots fantastic momentum drivers, but also wicked at the start and definitely worth watching out for!

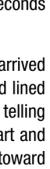
Saturday announced itself as another scorcher, and I was glad to get qualifying out of the way early in the day. Blue Cup Race 1 was everything I'd hoped it would be, and so much more – more confusing, more overwhelming, and still a lot more fun! My previous racing experience never provided such large fields, and trying to keep track of not just one or two or three, but what must have been 10 or 15 other cars, was thrilling. And honestly it was a challenge that was a little bit beyond me at that moment! After losing positions to a number of cars in my class I spent most of the race trying to catch the rest of the Spec Boxster pack, and ended up running most of the race near a couple of GT4 cars, including Brent Gokbudak. It was very interesting to see the difference in the ability of the Boxster versus the 911 in various places on the track, and all I just kept thinking what a pleasure it was to be out there racing with such talented drivers.

Sunday dawned cooler and with a touch of overcast, and the improved weather set the perfect tone for the final day of a great weekend. Sunday's races were perhaps my favorite of the weekend, and I got to spend a good part of both competing with Dad – and in true family spirit, we really do love to race against each other. We spend so much of our free time discussing driving and race craft, so racing together is comfortable on a level that is more difficult to achieve with drivers that don't share that kind of familiarity. Because we often know what the other is thinking and because of the level of innate respect and trust that we possess and have developed, we push each other to be better in the heat of the moment. No matter what order we finish in there is nothing to diminish the fun of that kind of competition, nor the excitement we have for each other's successes!

Perhaps my favorite part of the weekend, and what made it truly special as far as race weekends go, was the unusual atmosphere of vendor row. Throughout the weekend I ran into a number of people I've met in other areas of the auto world, drawn by the shared love of Porsches and driving. Many families wandered through the campground where we were parked, and my little orange car was like a California poppy attracting bees in springtime. The kids loved to look at and touch the car, asking all kinds of questions about the sponsor stickers, the bright yellow brake calipers, and why the steering wheel was on the roof?! Their enthusiasm was intoxicating, and by the end of Sunday I was on high from both the great competition and the exciting social aspects of the weekend. The organizers from PCA National and PCA Zone 8 Region receive my hearty congratulations for an extremely well-run and thoroughly enjoyable event. Many thanks to everyone who helped put on this truly first-class event – one which I look forward to repeating in years to come!

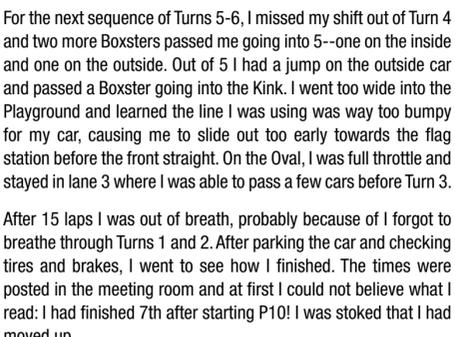


Photos: CaliPhotography



My First Club Race as a Rookie

Bruce Wing



Photos: CaliPhotography & Don Matz

There I was, Thursday, in the pits at AutoClub Speedway for the California Festival of Speed. Brian Henderson, the PCA National Stewart, led the Rookie Driver's meeting sharing words of encouragement and stressing the importance of safety. PCA's passing rules are a little different than what I was used to from the POC Racers Clinic, but other than that, everything else was about the same. I was reminded that when I am the overtaking car, it is my responsibility to execute a clean pass. Because this was my Rookie debut, I wanted to get a clean pass. Because this was my Rookie debut, I wanted to get a clean pass. Because this was my Rookie debut, I wanted to get a clean pass.

President Ron Palmer reminded me that the most important thing was to be smooth and have fun. He also assured me that I would receive credit for the three races that I would run: Sprint 1, 2, and 3. Having driven 105 laps on this track configuration during the past four years, I felt I knew the track well enough and was looking forward to the start of Race 1.

Friday's warm-up went well and tire pressures were set perfectly. Like my first weekend at Big Willow, with those quick POC drivers, I found myself behind a car that was faster than me. I liked the line he was driving and followed him for about five laps on Friday afternoon. Again to my surprise, he made me faster than I have ever driven at Fontana. Looking at my data, I gained 3 seconds from my fastest lap time ever.

I felt ready for Saturday's first race, was super excited, and arrived really early to the grid. I was P10 in the Orange Group and lined up on the high side for the start. I remember a fellow racer telling me that "all I had to do was watch the flagman at the start and make sure not to hit the car in front." As the pack moved toward the final stretch, all I could hear were the screaming Boxster Spec cars all around me. The grid was tight and I was tucked in behind another GT car.

The green flag dropped and before I could blink I was passed by 10 cars before Turn 1. I thought to myself, "OK, it's on!" I moved down to the inside when I could, and held my line around 2. As we approached Turn 3, there were 20+ cars packed into that single turn. It looked like a wall of cars stopped directly in front of me. I pounded on the brakes to keep from pushing the Boxsters off the track. I kept the inside line and made it through without problems. I thought to myself, "Great I made it through the worst part!"

For the next sequence of Turns 5-6, I missed my shift out of Turn 4 and two more Boxsters passed me going into 5--one on the inside and one on the outside. Out of 5 I had a jump on the outside car and passed a Boxster going into the Kink. I went too wide into the Playground and learned the line I was using was way too bumpy for my car, causing me to slide out too early towards the flag station before the front straight. On the Oval, I was full throttle and stayed in lane 3 where I was able to pass a few cars before Turn 3.

After 15 laps I was out of breath, probably because of I forgot to breathe through Turns 1 and 2. After parking the car and checking tires and brakes, I went to see how I finished. The times were posted in the meeting room and at first I could not believe what I read: I had finished 7th after starting P10! I was stoked that I had moved up.

During the race I had the opportunity to drive alongside a "rabbit" by the name of Garrett Guess in his J class 996. I had so much fun that I had to find him in the pits to thank him for driving so well and giving me some room to explore the track. Garrett's car was so fast on the straights that he would disappear until Turn 3, then we would trade places and stay close. In Sprint 1 I even passed Paul Young who's driving skills I admire and respect. I guess Paul just gave me the pass to make me feel good about the day.

Feeling good about my first race, I was really looking forward to Sprints 2 and 3 on Sunday. I was up early for the 8:30 practice. When doing my pre race check I discovered that I had a flat rear tire. Despite adding air, the sound from the back of the rim told me the tire was done. I then remembered that when coming out of Turn 4, I ran off the end of the gator and found that big hole. I had no idea that I finished Sprint 1 with a fast leaking LR tire. I removed the rear wheels and, sure enough, the inside LR rim was badly bent.

With only about 30 minutes to get the car ready for the first practice, I mounted the new rear rims and checked the air pressure. That same hissing sound was happening again. I had just bought two new rims and the vendor hadn't tightened the valve stems. Next, I was digging into my tool box looking for the correct tools, but unfortunately, I did not have what I needed. Heading across my pit, I asked Mo Smith if he could help. Mo was at Fontana from Memphis and had everything I needed to get the air back into the tire and slow, if not stop, the leak.

Arriving to grid little a late, I was still early compared to the rest of the field. Worried about the possibility of a slow leaking LR wheel, I asked Jae Lee from Mirage if he could be in the Hot Pits to check my tires after the first 4 laps. Jae had the tire pressure gauge and said he would be ready. OK here we go, my second big start at CFoS Sprint 2. I told myself that I would not get smoked at the start again. This time I was in P9 and had the inside line at the start. I gave myself more room in front and power braked the car to get the engine into the power band.

As the Green Flag dropped, I stepped out to the inside and stayed down. I was able to move quickly into P4 before we entered 3. I had a good start, then as I exited 4, and trying not to run off the end of the gator, I missed my shift again. In a blink of the eye, the pack was on me like glue. We were three wide going into 5-6 when a Boxster passing me on the outside hit another Boxster who passing me on the inside. The Boxster's passenger door fell off and was directly in front of my car. The door-less Boxster didn't skip a beat and I quickly jumped in behind to avoid running over his passenger door.

After a few more laps I thought it was about time to check the tires. I drove into the Hot Pits, trying to maintain the pit speed limit, looking for Jae Lee, and stopped at the end of pit lane. No Jae. Not wanting to miss out on some good track time I went back out. I thought that if the LR tire was going down I should feel something after the Kink. I drove the Discount Tire Car hard for the next 5 laps and did not feel any wiggle or slide going through the Kink. Then going through 11, something wasn't right. Into the Hot Pit again, looking for my tire pressure gauge and Jae Lee. I waited and, again, no Jae. Well, as I sat there watching the cars go by, I had to get back out on the track.

Off I went, staying down low and heading to the blend line at 3. Around the circuit again, I felt something was wrong in the rear of the car? Back again, I just freaked out or was there really something going on? Back again, into the Hot Pit I went. As I drove to the end of pit lane the Stewart was waving at me to drive down to meet her. She explained to me that as I entered the Hot Pit, the checker flag was dropped and the race was over.

As I exited the track was Jae Lee standing on the Grid. He felt so bad and was very apologetic stating that because he was wearing shorts and a short-sleeved shirt, he was not allowed to be in the Hot Pit. I went back and checked the tires and they were fine, all was good. I was over thinking everything, as it was my first race weekend. OK, now I knew I was ready for the fun race: Sprint 3. Since it was supposed to be a fun race with no points, most of the drivers from Sprint 2 had already packed up and were done for the weekend.

Again, I was early to the Grid, but this time something was really different. The super fast Cup Cars and Dwain Dement's Twin Turbo Beast were going to be out on the track with me. We were lined up on the straight for the green. I was ready and watching the starter. Boom! We were off! I could hardly hear myself think behind the screaming Cup Cars. Note to self: get some ear plugs! Around to 3 and again in front of me was a parking lot. I was able to sneak inside and gain a spot or two.

On the second lap we were still kind of bunched up. Well, some of us were bunched up while the Cup Cars and Dwain were gone; I didn't see them again until they lapped me. As we headed into 3, I saw a Boxster in my mirror on my inside, diving in deep to out-brake me into 3. I glanced over to see another 911 on my right out-braking me as well. Knowing that I was a Rookie, I did not want to challenge the turn, and gave it up. Thank goodness I did because the Boxster T-boned the 911 right in front of me between 3-4. I drove out wide to avoid being part of the carnage. Then, back on the gas and off I went.

For about 5 laps it felt as though I was the only one on the track, no cars in front and no cars in back. As I popped up on the front straight, the starter was holding up 1 finger indicating that this was the last lap. As I entered Turn 1, I could see two 944s ahead. I carefully thought out how I was going to pass and out-brake them into 3, just as I was passed earlier in the session. Sure enough, I made the pass, well I thought I did. Going into 3 too hot caused me to over-correct and I found myself on the outside of 3 going into 4. Well, because the 944s don't use their brakes, I caught Isabella Busalacchi coming around me on the outside. I then decided that I would stay inside of 4 and drive over the top of the gator to give her and the other 944 room to pass, if they could. I made the mistake of rolling over the top of the gator and hooked my RF wheel, inducing a quick 360 spin and I ended up pointing in the correct direction. Shifting into first gear, I proceeded towards the checkered flag. What a great event and fun weekend!

Back at the pits and was told the scrutineer was looking for me. I thought I'd hit the 944s and didn't realize it or was afraid I'd caused a problem with my spin. Instead, I found Brian, the head man. He wanted to congratulate me on being the most improved Rookie of the weekend and gave me a \$100 gift certificate. Phew, all is good and I even won something at CFoS.

Thanks to all the volunteers and staff who participated and helped make this one of the most memorable weekends at Fontana I have ever had. I am looking forward to our next track weekend at Big Willow. Thanks everyone for all the kind words and help at the track. This club is great at motivation!

More CFOS Sightings

New Members join at CFOS

Photo: Brett Caviglio

Last month The Porsche Owners Club was represented at the California Festival of Speed in Fontana not only on the track but also on Vendor Row. As an incentive for joining the club, a FREE TRACK DAY was offered at any one of our upcoming PDS events. As a result, 35 new members will be joining us in the near future. Be sure to welcome them!

Speed Secrets Podcast with Ross Bentley & Mike Roban

Our own Michael Roban was recently interviewed on Ross Bentley's weekly Podcast, Speed Secrets. Mike offers his opinion on **What it Takes to Succeed at Racing – or Anything.** As both Mike and Ross speak highly of the POC, the podcast is informative and entertaining to listen to. Check it out!

Coming Up!

If you haven't already registered, be sure to get onboard for our marquee 2017 event coming up soon, **Tribute to LeMans!** ...featuring all three of our racing series: Cup, Time Attack and PDS, as well as the famous 3-hour Enduro.

Born in Flacht. The new 911 GT3

Many have never heard of it. Some believe it's all a myth. But genuine Porsche Enthusiasts know that the oft fabled land lies beyond the idyllic green hills of the Swabian countryside: Flacht, the home of Porsche Motorsport. The place where the transfer from motorsport to series production is everyday practice. The birthplace of the new 911 GT3. Explore this very special location during a virtual tour.

Check Us Out!

Be sure to check out the new POC website for our 2017 schedule of events and to stay current on PDS, Time Attack and Cup Racing standings.

And, don't miss the Official POC Facebook Page with photos, videos and comments from our members.