

SSSCC September Club Meeting

September 14, 2009

Meeting called to order by Vickie at 6:30pm with 15 members present.

Old Business:

No local race events since last meeting.

New club timing and event management trailer was approved for purchase at the August club meeting. Payment was made to Tim Bush Motors to place the order. The trailer has gone into production at the factory in Idaho and is scheduled to be delivered sometime in late September.

All the tires have been removed from TCR by the Port.

Several SSSCC members made their first trip to SCCA Nationals competition this year. Victor and Vickie recap the experience. The lot is approximately 800 X 1000square feet. The courses were fast and flowing without excessive speeds. The concrete had super grip and was easy to under drive if you didn't realize you could trust the grip level. Everyone did well on the first day but the rain showed up and spoiled runs on the second day. Overall, everyone enjoyed the experience enormously.

Treasurer's report – Jodee Penner reports the checkbook balance is \$9800 after trailer purchase. The club is in good standings financially. Jodee closed the account at Bank of America finally.

New Business:

Upcoming Events

September 19th and 20th season events #9 and 10 at TCR. Course designers are Dan Best and Logr Mike. Current registration numbers are low, mid 30's. Spread the word and get the turnout up!!!

October 10th and 11th season events #11 and #12 at TCR. Course designers are Mike and Mitzi Vesecki.

Future use of TCR

Lynn opened a dialog concerning whether a full season schedule at TCR is the best choice for the club for next year. TCR has many benefits such as being a very inexpensive host site, security, on-site bathrooms/storage/camping, noise tolerable area. This has been the major factor making the trailer purchase affordable this year. Along with the positives the difficulties at TCR are the cost of maintaining the property without landscaping sponsorship, site maintenance is time consuming and difficult to coordinate, the course designs are limited and create numerous safety concerns. The location is far from amenities and does not attract new participants. The race surface is deteriorating and requiring attention.

There has been some grumbling from within the club about the quality of events we are able to put on at TCR among them complaints of the courses being too slow. The officers need to know the feeling of the members to decide if we are right in the site decisions we make. Part of that is deciding how much of a decrease in attendance is due to the sites difficulties and how much do we let that influence us into paying for other sites. Should we prioritize another event somewhere else or should we wait until trailer is up and optimized?

Lynn believes we need to stay at TCR for financial reasons while we outfit the trailer next year and not put out money elsewhere in site fees. Vickie suggested we hold most of our events at TCR but chose to go to Yakima or other site a couple times a year. Lynn concurs we have always had good weather and good turn out in Yakima but we would not make a lot of money, usually only \$1,000 for the weekend. Victor brought up the issue of whether we make an out of town event a season points event. Idea was raised to only give season points to SSSCC members at these events. Packwood is hard to get without SCCA backing and is hard to negotiate with them. To make that a possibility we could try to go together with Portland, although Yakima is closer and more accommodating. John Jobin supported Vickie's suggestion to plan one event mid-season in Yakima to break up the monotony of TCR.

These are the top two viable immediate alternatives to TCR. Yakima offers versatile course design and lots of room for pits and on-site camping. There are bathrooms on-site but they are a great distance from the track. The cost is \$3,000-\$4,000 per weekend and even with a history of good turnout it costs SSSCC members to be out of town. Packwood's site is large and has great accommodations with indoor pits and portable toilets near track but at our expense. Unknown cost for site rental but turnout expectations would be good. We would have to attempt to arrange food on site. Everyone incurs travel costs to attend. SCCA would probably have to co-host an event to gain site, which is a huge undertaking for the officers.

There are viable non-immediate alternatives. The EVOC training track has always been on the list of valuable sites. There are design constraints similar to TCR as it resembles a narrow road course. The cost is unknown as well as any other demands that could be made of the club. As of yet, there has been no known autocross friendly contacts. Mitch suggests we contact Hammer to come to one of our club meetings as a guest speaker and break the ice with them.

Another non-immediate alternative is the Walla Walla drag strip. It is a small facility which would limit course design. This site would be out town to most participants. Costs are projected to be high based on previous conversations Lynn has had with them. Rich Weaver is currently investigating options with the site.

The Moses Lake airport is another consideration. Autocross friendly contacts have been unsuccessful in assisting us to gain access. Dan Smith and Brian Edwards both currently are working angles to gain us access. This site would be out of town except for a few club members.

Dust Devils could be a possibility again. Lynn could approach the city again but we have had a lot of safety issues there in past. If we were to use that site again we would need to be a little more mindful of speeds we allow cars to go due to the things we can run into.

Upcoming TCR work needed:

The club has an obligation to the Port of Kennewick to perform site clean-up in return for low cost use of the site. Our minimum obligation is to perform tumbleweed removal and disposal within the fence and any piled up against the outside of the fences. Lynn has set October 24th as a work day to burn and clean up the tumbleweeds.

Suggested additional work includes disposing of a portion of the garbage debris on site, tack weed control measures and removal of portions of the track infrastructure that may improve club events. These improvements include removal of some of the pit poles from each end of pits, removal of the pit wall and concrete light poles, removal of the perimeter wall bordering Turn One. There is some asphalt patching required as well. This type of work would require some heavy equipment rental and purchase of asphalt patching compound. This should be discussed at the next club meeting to decide if we want to do that. Mitch suggested the course design committee make a map that would show what course design could be done if we made these additional improvements.

Another issue that will become relevant in the near future is the question of where the club stands on racing at TCR when it rains. If there is a solid rain do we shut down completely or do we leave it up to driver discretion? Vickie wants to open this discussion up to see what the vibe from the club is towards the issue. If we shut down an event it has ramifications for season points and if we continue to run it raises safety issues. Current safety people do not want that decision to be on their shoulders. The officers have problem of letting event go on if we feel it is unsafe because we open ourselves up to lawsuits if there is an incident. It is possible we could roll a car if one was to go into wet grass off camber. Is there a way we could eliminate part of a course or part of runs and continue to race in rain? If so, what bearing would that have on season points? Could we have a couple of courses adequate for rain? What are we going to do in October if it rains during our last points events? What would happen to the drops? More concerns arise about the possibility of mid-day rain. Mitch suggested if everyone has run three runs you call the event with those points but if not everyone has had three runs we should just close the event with no points counted. If we called the whole day off and didn't count points would we be obligated to refund money to people who didn't get to run and/or everyone? It was suggested the issue be put on the forum and see what people think before voting on it at the next meeting.

Miscellaneous:

Remember to register for the banquet on the ORM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40