

the ***Snarling Exhaust***

March 2009

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Monthly Membership Meeting:

Wednesday, March 11, 7:00 PM
American Legion Hall, Liverpool



A publication of the Central New York Region of the Sports Car Club of America



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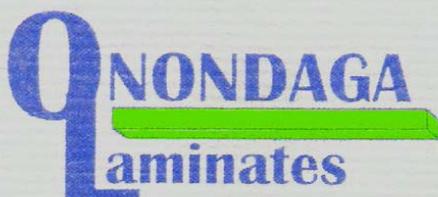
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Gary Sadlik/Focus Photography photo



the

Snarling Exhaust

March 2009

The Central New York Region of the Sports Car Club of America

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The Snarling Exhaust is published 11 or 12 times per year as a service to the membership of the Central New York Region of the Sports Car Club of America, Inc.

The deadline for submissions is the 25th of the month. This deadline still applies to everyone, honest.

All editorial opinions expressed in this publication are solely the opinions of the author, and are not necessarily representative of the policies of the Central New York Region or of SCCA.

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Graphics assistance courtesy of Alex Fairbank.

Cover photo: Ed Tucker leads Roy Hopkins and Carl VanKesteren on Oneida Lake (Andrew Beyer photo)

From the Editor:

It's entirely possible that spring is on the way. I'm never one to rush it, though, as a fan of racing cars on ice here in central NY. After all, if you're going to live around here, why not enjoy something you can only do where it's so cold for so much of the year?

This winter provided an ice racing season better than we've seen here in many years. Races were held by the Central NY Ice Racing Association on Honeoye, Oneida, and Otisco lakes, as well as at Black Rock Speedway in Dundee. AMEC, the Albany-area club, got in eight race weekends, including an "out-of-town" event at Tupper Lake, and races at the Lake George Winter Carnival.

Ice racing scheduling is problematic, because it's often not until the night before that you can know for sure if and where the racing will be. This requires a would-be ice racer to get ready well ahead of time, and then hurry up and wait.

The payback? The best possible experience in car control, and the least cost (in terms of dollars per seat minute) of any wheel-to-wheel racing series anywhere. You can maintain a dedicated ice racing car and run in the "prepared" classes on purpose-built ice tires. Or, you can "run what you brung" in the street tire classes. If you're a rallycross fan, chances are your rallycross car is ice-racing ready with a set of decent snow tires.

Either way it's a hoot, and when you drive in the rain on an autocross course or at the Glen, it'll never seem slippery again.

As you may have noticed, delivery of the Snarling to your mailbox has been spotty recently. Aside from the difficulties in getting material from contributors around the holidays, the expense of printing the newsletter is one of the largest an SCCA region has. Personally, I enjoy seeing the Snarling show up in my mailbox, even though I already know what's in it. Even so, it is getting increasingly difficult to justify the expense when so many people can easily download it from the club website within minutes of the latest issue being posted. Heck, we might even be doing something good for the environment.



Gary Sadlik/Focus Photography photo

So, it looks like that is the direction the region is headed. If you have an opinion on this, one way or the other, please let your opinion be heard. It would be nice to get some letters for this editor to post here!

Also in this issue is an article by Joe Kramer reviewing Lee Hidy's 45 years in the SCCA. Years ago I had the pleasure of driving Lee's Tobias sprint car at an autocross. Wow: Sturdy, simple and cheap in this case meant one heck of a ride! Here was a car that would bite you if you didn't treat it with respect.

On another note, CNYR has lost another long-time member, John Burgess. I remember John as always friendly and fun to chat with. He used to write a column for this newsletter, and I plan to go back through some old issues and re-run a few. The region made a donation in his memory to Camp Good Days, a charity organization John liked. His wife Marie writes: "Thank you so much for your donation to Camp Good Days in John's memory. He really enjoyed the years he was a member of the club. He did not do much the later years because of his health but it was thought of none the less."

There will be an article in the next issue of this newsletter with more on John's life and his involvement with the club. In the meantime, I'd like to suggest that we all make the time to sit down with another club member and have a "natter" about the sport we all enjoy, as a tip of the hat to John.

Lastly, you'll find an article in this issue extolling the virtues of vintage racing with NEDiv's own Historic Racing Group. It's intended as good fun, so please enjoy!

Be seeing you,
-Karl



RE Returns

From the R.E., Mike Donofrio

After what seems like a very long hiatus from writing this column, I'm back. With this return I will make the same announcement as I have said in the past few meetings. 2009 will be my last year serving as Regional Executive

With the next election only seven months away we need to start working now to find the next leader for this region. Anyone interested please contact me or attend a meeting and make your intentions known.

One big change for this year is The Snarling Exhaust is ending its run in paper format. Within this year it will be move to electronic version only. In the future you will be receiving it via email, and it can always be viewed at www.cny-scca.com.

The reasons are simple; we can save money, and broaden our distribution without spending a penny. Readers will still get the current content,



plus the bonus of receiving it in color too. Also, it will be in your email box before it would ever get to your mailbox. The savings; thousands of dollars; the downside; none worth preventing this necessary change.

The 2009 Solo schedule is official and can be found on the website. It is very similar to last years, including the double header in conjunction with the Glen Region at Seneca Army Depot.

Area 10 director John Sheridan will be attending the April membership meeting. Those with questions or would like to learn more about the future of the club, be at the Legion on the 8th.



Region Events Calendar



Mar 11	Membership meeting
April 8	Membership meeting with John Sheridan
April 26	Solo: NYS Fairgrounds
May 13	Membership meeting
May 17	Solo: Cherry Valley Kart Track
June 10	Membership meeting
June 21	Solo: NYS Fairgrounds
July 8	Membership meeting
August 1	Solo: Seneca Army Depot
August 2	Solo: Seneca Army Depot
August (TBD)	Annual picnic
August 23	ENDURO: Cherry Valley Kart Track
Sept. 9	Membership meeting
Sept. 12	NIGHT EVENT: Cherry Valley
Oct. 4	Solo: NYS Fairgrounds
Oct. 14	Membership meeting

Membership meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at the Liverpool American Legion Post 188 205 Cypress St. in the village of Liverpool



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Exhaust Pipe Dreams

From the Assistant R.E., Jon Coffin

With the weather we've had, sometimes it's hard to dream for shivering. For hardy racers however, the weather's been a dream turned to reality, ice racing. This activity's been missed the last year or two, but is back this year as I'm sure you'll read elsewhere.

When I can warm up, I'm dreaming of clear, dry, open parking lots, and racetracks old and new. I wrote of running the Rabbit up to Shannonville in Ontario last October, and I've already signed up for a return the first part of May. (The club running the school offered a 20% discount for paying up before the end of January, so I've rolled the dice.)

Mark Bizzozero has promised a SOLO April 26th that'll be my Rabbit warmup. I'm looking at running the Thunderbolt Circuit at the New Jersey Motorsports Park the end of May, and wishing for a rerun of the Lightning Circuit there the beginning of July. And, I want to rewrite my nightmare of last August by going back to Calabogie up in Ontario the middle part of July. Closer, I'll fit in a school or two at Watkins Glen, and many of us are already set to run this season at Cherry Valley Motorsports Park in Lafayette.

Go-kart tracks are fun, and good for both beginners and long-time autocrossers. Batavia International Motorsports Park is another go-kart track we'd enjoy if we'd get ourselves to go to an event there, up and down hills, and around a big Monza curve! I'm dreaming!

Let's see, can I make a Vermont hillclimb (or two) this year? How 'bout one of the SCCA Time Trial hillclimbs in Pennsylvania? (Sorry for Rex, Karl



Jane Quinn photo

and me and others, the Hershey Vintage Hillclimb has been put off this spring...)

Well, what else? There's already more than I have money or time for, but... There's also a time trial open to all on one of the circuits at the new Monticello Motor Club, in June. As a matter of fact, very recently, they ran time trials there, in the snow and ice. A friend sent some pictures, what a riot! Those folks didn't look cold. They were hot on driving!

-Jon Coffin



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Andrew Beyer photo

When you work the course at an ice race, the flag station may turn out to be your own car!

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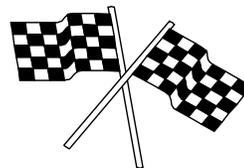
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Membership Meeting Minutes

Courtesy of Bob Holcomb

CNY General Membership Meeting Held on Feb. 11, 2009 at American Legion in Liverpool, NY

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by R.E. Mike Donofrio at 7:22 p.m.

R.E. REPORT:

Mike Donofrio reported that this would definitely be his last year as the R.E. for CNYR SCCA. Mike said he will attempt to get Area 10 governor John Sheridan for our March, 2009 meeting as it has been a while since his last visit and several in the region would like to meet with him.

Mike discussed the status of the Snarling Exhaust, our region newsletter, based on ideas brought forth at previous meetings.

Due to increased costs and with most members owning or having access to computers it was felt the region would benefit from going to an electronic version of Snarling vs. hard copies that are quite expensive (\$2,500+ per year) to produce and mail. Such a change would require an updated list of e-mail addresses of all current members and would be tentatively scheduled for implementation in 2010.

Mike Mollura asked about hard copies of Snarling for SOLO events. Ed Heffron proposed adding a line on all SOLO entry forms for an e-mail address which would help simplify the updates.

David Kicak proposed a motion to attempt the change between the dates of August, 2009 and December, 2009. The motion was seconded by Evan Haas and carried.

ASST.R.E. REPORT:

Jon Coffin commended Mark Bizzozero on a job well done in obtaining trophies for our annual awards banquet that included 1/43 scale models of cars for the SOLO awards.

SECRETARY REPORT:

Bob Holcomb asked for approval of minutes of previous meeting in December (January being the awards banquet and no meeting). Motion made by Rex Franklin, seconded by Chris Forte and carried.

TREASURER:

Jay Cartini reported we are current with all bills. CNYR will continue to have Bruce Fehlman as a SOLO sponsor. All Snarling advertisers will be sent bills for 2009.

ACTIVITIES:

Mike Mollura reported that we actually spent less for our annual awards banquet than expected. We will plan on using Nestico's in North Syracuse for next year as well. Mike asked for suggestions for our annual summer picnic in August. The question is whether to have it catered or have members help in cooking such menu items as hot dogs, hamburgers, etc. This will be discussed at future meeting. Again, unless something changes, we plan on using the Onondaga Yacht Club as our location.

Having a monthly meeting at the Cherry Valley Go-Kart track was also suggested.

SOLO:

Mark Bizzozero presented some SOLO trophies to members not present at the awards banquet, Ed Heffron and Dustin Erlich.

The proposed 2009 schedule was given as:

Sunday: April 26, NYS Fairgrounds

Sunday: May 17, Cherry Valley Kart Track

Sunday: June 21*, NYS Fairgrounds

Saturday: August 1, Seneca Army Depot

Sunday: August 2, Seneca Army Depot

Sunday: August 23, ENDURO: Cherry Valley Kart Track

Saturday: Sept. 12: NIGHT EVENT: Cherry Valley

Sunday: October 4, NYS Fairgrounds

* NOTE: The June 21 event may be moved to June 7th, updates when available.

F&C:

Bob Holcomb reported that F&C chief Mick Levy was currently enjoying the warm weather in San Diego. Chris Forte will be representing CNYR at the Sebring 12 HRS at station 10 and will give us a report upon his return. Jon Coffin strongly suggested that as many SCCA members as possible, whether racers, SOLO or Rally folks try flagging at least one SCCA event for a deeper appreciation of what actually goes on out on the track. Bob and Chris agreed and reminded the members that on track training is available.

COMPETITION:

Dave Kicak reported that members of CNYR should make more of an attempt to attend the national convention. He said that national is attempting to regulate which manufacturers of safety equipment will be deemed as "official", i.e. such as the Hans Device being the only approved head and neck safety restraint.

Also, the Trans Am Series is back after several years of inactivity and will possibly be running at Watkins Glen during the weekend of the FLR-GLEN Nationals, July 11 & 12.

Dave also reminded members that the SCCA Runoffs have now been moved from Topeka to a true road course with plenty of history to it, Road America.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None, other than the previously discussed proposed change to Snarling.

Rex Franklin mentioned that Lee Hidy was absent due to surgery and everyone wished him a speedy recovery.

The 50-50 "fix"...err...winner was Mike Mollura for a total of \$11.

Rex Franklin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chris Forte and carried at 8:19pm.

Submitted by Sec. Bob Holcomb



Sturdy, Simple, Cheap: 45 Years and Counting...

By Joe Kramer

Back in the early '60s the SCCA had a membership rule that dictated which geographic region you would belong to based on where you lived. For Lee Hidy, who was living in Ohio at the time, this would have meant joining the Cincinnati region instead of the much closer Dayton region. He had heard of SCCA from his brother and was interested in joining, but decided to wait. In 1962 he moved to the Syracuse area and found himself located in the epicenter of the Central New York Region. And, finding this geographic arrangement more to his liking, he joined the Sports Car Club of America in 1963 (in February, according to Lee; in July, according to national headquarters. We'll go with Lee on this one). And now, 45 years later, William Lee Hidy is the longest continuous active member in the Central New York Region of SCCA. Congratulations, Lee!

Lee has participated in road racing and solo

events over the years. He tried rally, too, but didn't take to it.

Lee's philosophy in competition machines is embodied in a quote he attributed to John Burgess: "Race cars should be sturdy, simple and cheap, and so should their drivers". The idea was always to get a "quart of performance from a pint pot". Lee found that smaller cars such as Formula Vees and B Sedans suited the purpose. Then, when his road racing career ended, it was time to get a Solo machine. He decided to get "the biggest hammer I could find for the sport", which turned out to be the Number 99 sprint car that he raced in A Modified until a few seasons ago. Built to take the terrible punishment that dirt track racing can dish out, the sprint car was bound to be sturdy and reliable, especially on the pavement of a solo course for runs of 30 to 140 seconds. Originally Lee was considering a Formula 5000

Continued on Page 12

Joe Kramer photo



Sturdy, Simple, Cheap: 45 Years and Counting...

or Formula Atlantic with a 350 engine in it until he found out what a Hewland gearbox costs. Which brings up one of the issues Lee finds with the sport.

He bought the Sprint car roller for about what a Hewland gear box would have cost. It's his understanding that folks that run in the front in A-Mod pay \$5000 for a 3-element ring for the gearbox. Others in stock classes talk of spending \$5000 or so for a set of wheels and tires and another few thousand for shocks – all in the cause of "being competitive" at the national level. Lee has always believed that there is no need to spend a ton of money to compete and enjoy the competition. He's attended the Solo National Championships a number of times, driving the A-Mod sprint car. He's never expected to win, the fellowship and the fun of competing in such an event have always been enough for him. He goes for the week, partly because there are many events peripheral to the actual competition. His best finish in the open A-Mod class was third from last, but he's always watching how close he can get his times in that old sprint car to the high-budget class winner. Lee recommends attending the Solo Nationals to everybody. He feels that there is too much of the sentiment of doing whatever it takes to win, a need to be "competitive" whatever the cost. He feels that the sport would benefit from more folks willing to compete for the sheer joy of the competition.

Lee is the founding father (and grandfather) of

Old Fart Racing. There are now three generations of Hidy's participating in SCCA Solo. Lee's wife isn't too fond of seeing her grandchildren sporting tee shirts that read "Old Fart Racing – Third Generation". But the parents don't seem to mind. Lee says the name came from an autocross event at the Cherry Valley kart track back when he was running a Formula Vee. Lee got fast time of day at the event and a former RE commented: "The old fart in the red rat strikes again".

Lee has been club parliamentarian for at least the six years I've been associated with the CNY region. He was assistant RE many years ago. Which primarily involved ordering movies from SCCA national, and showing them at the monthly meetings.

Lee has been event chairman a number of times (including the recent mini enduro events, which were his idea to revive an old and different event format). In recent years he has also used his position of influence with the Onondaga Yacht Club to secure a venue for the club's annual picnic. One recent year Lee was taken to the hospital emergency room with a heart problem the day before the picnic. But a phone call to his daughter Lynn insured that the picnic would proceed without a hitch.

Sturdy, simple, but in no way cheap. Lee Hidy, we celebrate your 45 years of membership.



NEDiv Historic Racing Group: John Discovers the Miata Antidote

By Paul Paparella



Author's note: The author of this story is not anti-Miata, enjoys watching Spec Miata races, and thought the Miata he owned for two years was a great car.

This is the story of John. Back in days when the local mechanic still knew what a carburetor looked like, John was an avid SCCA racer. After years away from the track to raise his family, John decided to get back into racing. If nothing else, it would take his mind off of his wife leaving him for that tennis pro in a red Miata. So off he went to the next SCCA regional to check out the current scene.

John struck up a conversation with some racers in the paddock. "What's the hot car if I want to race a production based sedan?" he asked. The response was "Spec Miata is about the most popular thing going." Well, of course, John wasn't too excited about that. "What else do you have?" he asked. "Well, you could try Showroom Stock Miata," they answered. Not happy with the way the conversation was going, John walked over to the fence to watch the first race.

As it happened, the first group out was GT. After seeing the lead cars go by, he thought this was kind of interesting. At least it was, until a couple of GT3 Miatas came by, followed closely by a GTL Miata. That just got him thinking about how much money he lost when his former business partner skimmed from the

top to buy a new Miata, then skipped town.

So back to the paddock he went to look around. John was never much of an open wheel kind of guy, but he looked at those too. Of course the first one he saw was a Formula Mazda. It had one of those annoying "zoom zoom" decals, just like the one on the Miata that the kid down the street drove, with the big boom box that wakes John up at 3 AM every Sunday morning.

Eventually he came upon some old timers standing around some cool old cars, like the ones John raced in the late '70's. Turns out they were Production racers. "Tell me more about Production," John asked, "I kind of like the older cars." "John, we've got to be honest with you," one guy said, "we love the old cars, too, but these days you need a Miata to win in E-Prod. "Or, if you don't want to spend so much on the engine, you could run a Miata in FP." "Those damn Miatas are everywhere," he thought, and then remembered that the IRS agent who audited him last year drove one.

By now it was afternoon, and there were just two races to go. Starting to feel discouraged, John wandered over to the false grid to see who was lining up for the next race. As he approached the grid, seeing an interesting mix of cars from the 1970's up through new models, John got his hopes up. Then as he walked down the line, he saw three Miatas in ITA, and five in ITS. One of them looked a lot like the car that ran a red light and wrecked John's classic Alfa last summer.

Continuing down the grid, he passed one SSB Miata, and a couple in T3. The last

Continued on Page 14



Photo courtesy of the HRG Gallery at www.historicracing.org

NEDiv Historic Racing Group

Continued from Page 13

one he saw was the same color as the one his daughter was in when she got pregnant. "I give up - I guess SCCA just doesn't have anything for me," he thought.

John went to the food stand for a late lunch, and then headed for his car, not wanting to stay for the last race. As he walked towards the parking lot, he noticed crowds of people gravitating to the fences. Then he heard the rumble of the pack as it approached the starting line. As the green flag flew, he heard a roar of V-8's like he hadn't experienced since the heyday of Trans-Am. He turned towards the track just in time to see the leaders approach Turn 1. "What the hell is that Mini doing in between that Stingray Vette and the Shelby Mustang?" he thought. Then he saw a couple of BMW 2002's, a beautiful Jaguar, three MG's and a Corvair. "Man, these are the kind of cars I remember racing with," he thought.

After watching several laps of close racing but no bumping and rubbing, he realized these guys knew what they were doing, and were having fun doing it. He pulled out his stop watch, and saw that some of these cars were pretty darned fast, too.

After the race was over, he went back to the

paddock and found a bunch of the guys from the race. They were all having a great time talking and laughing with each other, but were quick to answer his questions and offer him a beer. After hanging out with the guys for over an hour, John decided that SCCA did have a place for an old school guy like him, after all. The Northeast Division Historic Racing Group was just what he was looking for.

It wasn't until he was halfway home that it hit him. He realized that, besides being a great series, HRG was the only closed wheel race all day that didn't have single one of those damned Miatas!

This is a fictional story. Any similarity between the cars in this story and actual Miatas is purely coincidental. However, HRG is the real thing. For more information, look up HRG on www.nescca.com or www.historicracing.org.

NEDIV SCCA Historic Racing Group Schedule:

July 3-4 at Lime Rock (with VSCCA and Jaguar Club)
July 25-26 at Watkins Glen
August 22-23 at NJMP
Sept 19-20 at Watkins Glen
Oct 17-18 at NJMP



Photo courtesy of the HRG Gallery at www.historicracing.org



Membership Application

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To find your region dues, visit <http://www.scca.com/Join/Index.asp?reference=dues>

Annual National Dues		Annual Regional Dues		Total	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Spouse Member	\$ 20.00	+	Spouse Member	\$ _____	= \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Member	\$ 95.00	+	Family Member	\$ _____	= \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Gear	(you must be age 24 and under)				\$ 45.00

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Applicant's Signature _____ **Date** _____

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