

**February
2003**



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BMW CCA CLUB RACING

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We're ba-a-a-ck!

Welcome to the first online edition of the The Tire Rack BMW CCA Club Racing Series Newsletter! Through these pages you will get the latest on the 2003 Series, your competitors and the national program.

As you may have noticed the website has undergone a number of change and updates. For up-to-the-minute information and hot off the press news check the [News and Updates](#) pages regularly. Comments and questions? Simply contact the [Webmaster](#).

Have fun, be safe!

Next Edition: APRIL

No foolin', the next edition of the newsletter will be published the first week of April. Submission deadline is March 25th. Content can be short or long, opinion, thoughts, reports or comments. Simply Email text and pics to the [Webmaster](#) any time.

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BMW CCA CLUB RACING

From the Chair - Steve Olsen

On a Clear Day

Taking Stock ... 2002 and Beyond

With 2002 season behind us it seems appropriate to take stock of BMW CCA Club Racing's performance and to assess the future.

In 2002 we increased the number of active licensed racers by over 16%. We showed an increase in the participation level, measured by miles raced, by over 30%. There was a dramatic increase in the amount of interregional competition, with more racers venturing out of their local areas to compete. The number of incidents was up in raw numbers (but no more than in 1998), but actually down when measured against the consistent factor of miles raced. The points system, which some feared would lead to a higher incident level, has proved to be an incentive in increased participation. And the Club Racing organization has the best financial footing in its history.



Growing Pains

In short, there are many things of which to be rightfully proud. But it would be myopic to believe that all is roses. There are areas that have room for significant improvement. In particular, the Rules process has been both painful and divisive as we try to rationalize the rules with the realities of what is and, perhaps, what should have been. Our failure to develop a good administrative system for monitoring and following up on technical issues such as rules clarifications has created confusion and left the door open for a variety of rules interpretations. Consolidating those interpretations has not been a pleasant experience for anyone involved, but it is a necessary function to re-establish a consistent and predictable set of rules. I am confident that we are now on the right track to proper management of the technical rules and that you will find the rules to be quite stable. The goal I have set for the Rules Committee is to make it a priority to maintain three very distinct levels of preparation and to put a stop on "class creep". The Club Racing Advisory Committee has asked the Rules Committee to study the advisability and possibility of some "rollbacks" in the rules to help achieve that goal. The Rules Committee, in cooperation with CRAC, will evaluate areas of opportunity including the impact and cost associated with any such considered changes.

And Growing the Program

Another area that needed improvement is that of personnel. Our schedule has grown significantly but our steward group has not grown to meet the increased demands. All of our steward groups are now actively soliciting additional personnel and will be doing training throughout the season. That is an expensive, time-consuming but necessary process to keep from burning out our current, excellent steward cadre. We have a great Club Racing team from marketing to licensing to the stewards and we're working hard to make it even better.

On Track

I am personally working to get Club Racing into more exciting venues with the increased visibility that comes with spectator events across the country. In the past our sole spectator event of significance has been the Pittsburgh Grand Prix which wasn't available to all of our racers by the vintage nature of the event. In 2003 we are working on spectator events all across the country and have events currently on the schedule in Arizona and Florida and pending in Alabama, California and Wisconsin.

Coast to Coast

Many of you are concerned about the events in California. I want to assure you that BMW CCA Club Racing will continue to have a meaningful presence in the Pacific Region and California in particular. There will be an initial burden on the national staff, but we expect the chapters to pick up the ball and run with it once we show them how to do it. Club races can be both fun and profitable!

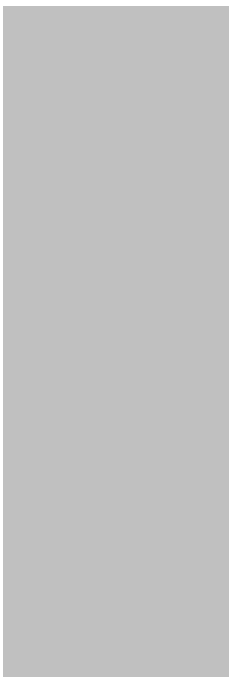
The Mini and Us

The Spec MINI rules and equipment specifications will be announced shortly and we are excited about the potential to be the lead organization nationally. We intend to set the national standard and see this as an exciting growth area over the next few years.

Communication

The website has become our primary means of communication with you, the racers. The costs and effort associated with a printed newsletter are significant. Often the "news" is stale by the time it actually reaches the racers, which is precisely why you now see this electronic newsletter. In the future the website will be more entertaining, more informative and easier to navigate. One item I would like to address is the Club Racing List. It offers an enormous benefit for instant communication on a wide variety of topics of interest to our racers. Its sole shortcoming is that it might be too instant ... a sharp reply in a heated exchange or a choice of words that may be interpreted in other than the intended fashion. They are irrecoverable after that "send" button is pushed. As a guilty party of that syndrome, I would ask that you read and re-read your responses when the topic is emotional for you and maybe consider a short break prior to sending that response. It sure can save a lot of apologies and mea culpas later.

If Not for Their Support



And, lastly, a tip of the hat and a round of applause for our sponsors who have generously supported BMW CCA Club Racing, especially Title Sponsor, The Tire Rack. Their sponsorship pays for the travel of the national stewards, the overhead of the national licensing staff, the purchase of necessary equipment such as timing and scoring gear and a host of other items that keep your entry and licensing fees as low as possible. Please honor our sponsors with your business whenever possible, proudly sport their decals and banners and be sure to personally thank them if you see them at the track. Without them there would be no Club Racing program.

Happy Trails and a clear track !!!

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From the Comp Steward - Jeff Lutes

Incidents: What to Do?

Last time I talked about the concept of “racing room” and the shared responsibility of making a safe pass. But, what happens if you are involved in an incident?

First, if you are by yourself and contact is made with a stationary object, you are subject to penalty just as if there were another car involved. However, the Competition Steward does have some leeway in how long your probation can last (3, 6 or 13 months). This will basically depend on a) how stupid your mistake was, b) how much damage was inflicted, and c) how much risk you became to other drivers nearby.



If you make contact with another car while racing, things are a little different. Bear in mind that, as stated in the rulebook, the driver(s) involved in any contact incident are required to report to the Competition Steward (with their car(s) within thirty minutes of the end of the session in which the incident occurred. Failing to do so will ensure a minimum of a three month probation. The Comp and Tech Stewards must then attempt to determine who is at fault in the incident. This is done by gathering whatever evidence can be found. This entails inspecting the damage to the vehicles, talking to corner workers who witnessed the incident, interviewing the drivers of the vehicles, viewing videotape of the incident whether taken from inside one or more of the cars involved or from another car or even from a spectator. After all the evidence is weighed the stewards will make a decision as to where the fault should lie. The offending driver(s) will be placed on 13 months probation and excluded from the remainder of the event in which the incident occurred. If it is a multi-day event the Comp Steward can make the exclusion effective for the rest of the day of the incident or the remainder of the event. (There is also a substantial penalty in points, but I'm not going to get into that here.)

The only way that this decision can be overturned is through the appeal process. A penalized driver has fourteen days from the day of the incident to file his appeal with the National Competition Steward. The NatCompStew then reviews the submission, copies everything submitted (including videotape) and distributes the materials to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee consists of the National Competition Steward, the National Technical Steward, one Regional Competition Steward, one Regional Tech Steward, and one CRAC representative. In the event that one or more of these individuals were involved in the original decision, they will be replaced by a suitable substitute. The committee will independently review the appeal filed and render a decision. This decision

is final.

What constitutes a good appeal, you ask? Well a good appeal is not based on the statement "It wasn't my fault". A well-founded appeal will contain *new evidence or some evidence not considered* by the stewards originally involved in the decision. This is a key point. Unless some evidence of this nature is submitted, there is no basis for the appeal. The appeal should be well organized and clearly and concisely stated. Any videotape submitted should be of good quality and be limited to the time frame of the incident in question, unless the appellate feels that some prior behavior or event has some bearing on the incident that took place. If this is the case it is very important that the appellate define what event or behavior is relevant to the incident under appeal.

Well, I hope that this little treatise on the appeals process has been enlightening for you and that since it is such a hassle to file a proper appeal, all of you will decide its just better not to risk contact than to have to go through the very time consuming process of filing a proper appeal. Remember that you'll still be on probation/suspension until a decision is rendered by the Appeals Committee.

Sue Rathbone - New Steward

We welcome Sue Rathbone to the fold as our newest Competition Steward. Sue will be working the New Hampshire races this year. Here is what she has to say:

"My first track day was at a COM weekend in 1991 at NHIS because someone offered me the use of their racecar. That winter I started ice racing in a road course, pack style series in New York and raced there for several years. When summer arrived, I got a SCCA license to go road racing. I raced Show Stock nationally and professionally along with regional IT racing for several years. A friend of mine from SCCA was registrar at the Boston Chapter BMW ice time trials and I went along one day to give him a hand with registration. He loaned me his '87 Audi Quattro to take out on the ice (way sweet!). Then he took me to the Chapter board meetings because he said they were a good group of folks and yakked nonstop about cars. He was right, so I joined and have been there since 1995 helping out with chapter driving events."

Anne + Bob Varey, Two for the Price of One!

We also are pleased to welcome Anne and Bob Varey of Pickering, Ontario!

"Anne has been the Canada G.T. Challenge Cup Series Chief Steward for the last four years and prior to that she was the Series Deputy Steward. This Series was a closed wheel professional race series of 9-12 events sanctioned by the national sanctioning body in Canada - ASN Canada FIA. She has been a Regional Race Steward for 9 years as well as a Scrutineer [*that's Canadian for Tech, eh. -ed.*] for Regional race events. Anne also competed as a Regional Race Driver for several years and has recently re-qualified for her race license (after taking a break as a competitor).

"Bob was volunteer Regional Chief Scrutineer for seven years before retiring to spend all his spare time looking after the Canada G.T. Challenge Cup Series as Series Director, Deputy Steward and Series Chief Timekeeper.

"As members of the local BMW club for several years we both have enjoyed assisting at the Club race events as well as participating in our own cars in the advanced drivers schools. Bob holds a current Ontario Regional Race License. In addition to assisting at the BMW CCA Club Racing events in Canada, we also have assisted at the Porsche Club race weekends.

"We look forward to our association with the great group of workers in the BMW CCA organization [*and we, yours! -ed.*]."

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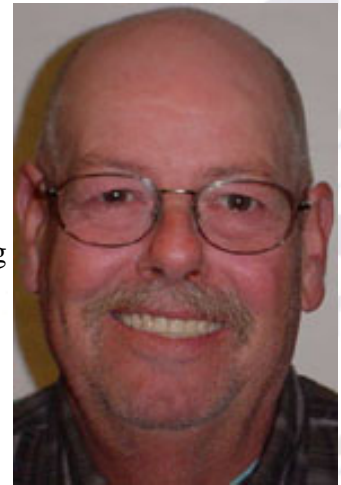
BMW CCA CLUB RACING

News from Tech - Jim Fluckey

Allow me to introduce myself ...

Most of you do not know me and I hope we all get a chance to meet at our races. This has been a transition year for Club Racing and I realize many issues are weighing on your collective minds. A little background on me maybe helps where we are coming from with the tech program.

I have been actively involved in amateur and professional racing for thirty odd years. I have done everything from Midwest bullring sprints to CART Indy cars. I found out early in my career I was a much better tech than a driver. I have several University Degrees in technology areas and cad-cam programming. I moved to Phoenix with the idea of retiring but that fell by the wayside. I was enlisted to take over the tech job late last year and have been at a dead run since. The advantage of me being a former outsider and having no previous agenda and completely outside any political loop will work to your benefit.



National staff and your CRAC team have given me the mandate to stop class creep and to hold the line on buying a win with dollars. I am fully aware that this mandate will help some but hurt others. The other main mandate is to stabilize the rules package for several years. I am fully aware this is going to be a tortuous process for us all in the beginning but here again it will work to everyone's benefit in the long run.

Rest assured I will not turn anyone away from the race track on a given weekend for a non-compliant car but we will re-classify as required. We will be spot checking different items or multiple items as the need arises. The only exception will be sponsor decals. You will not be allowed to participate or get thru tech until they are in place. Plan ahead please.

My onsite or regional inspectors do not have the authority to allow a variance in the rules or issue an "on the spot clarification", please don't ask them to.

Let's remember this Club Racing thing is supposed to be a fun thing for us. The SCCA GCR is thicker than some phone books and we should not need that for our amateur racing program.

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News from Timing & Scoring - Nanci Maloney

New Software

BMW CCA Club Racing Timing and Scoring will be using the newest AMB Orbitz software program this season. Orbitz has numerous improvements not only for T&S but, for the racers.

Race data can now be sent electronically to the AMB website, where it can be accessed by individual racers. Racers can now get individual lap times and race results in a pdf format from the web. BMW CCA Club Racing will continue to post the OFFICIAL results to the BMW CCA Club Racing website. We will post the AMB website to the All Racers List towards the end of February.



New Faces

We at BMW CCA Club Racing are pleased to announce that Roland Nieves will be the newest member of the BMW CCA CR T&S team. Roland is a member of the Omaha Chapter of BMW CCA. He has extensive experience with DEs as well as race management for PCA CR. He will be training with the T&S staff this season. Please welcome Roland to the BMW CCA T&S team.

Is this "Telemetry"?

BMW CCA Club Racing has also upgraded the T&S equipment to allow two way communication directly from the T&S computers. AMB is in the process of developing an in-car real time display of individual lap times, race position as well as class position. There is very little additional information at this time regarding any specifics. Check the BMW CCA Club Racing website for announcements and updates.

Racer Updates

We are in the process of updating the T&S database. The Orbitz software allows T&S to maintain a central database as well as race specific data. T&S strives to maintain an accurate database, but we need the racers help to do this. There will be a form on the website to notify T&S and the National Registrar, Fran Hughes of any changes to pertinent personal information. Please use this form to assist us in assuring the accuracy of results,

points and the database.

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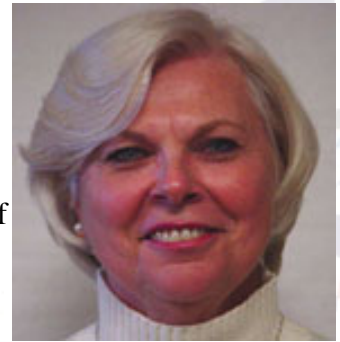
Licensing Information - Fran Hughes

Growing, Growing, Growing

BMW CCA Club Racing continued it's steady growth in the 2002 season with a 16% increase in racers licensed (117 new racers). The program also shows significant racer loyalty with over 79% renewal rate among 2002 licensees.

Race participation showed a 13.5% growth in average number of racers for 2002 with average race participation reaching 25 cars per race.

Event Entry Leaders included: Buttonwillow, VIR, Lime Rock, Watkins Glen, Summit Point, Mid-Ohio. Genessee Valley Chapter's Inaugural Watkins Glen Club Race set the 2002 record with 60 cars!



New Fees, Updates

We have revamped our fee structure for licensing, including renewals and "rush" renewals. See the [fees](#) page for further information. Additionally, there have been some changes in regard to ordering replacement SSF door panels. See the [Decals](#) page for more information.

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BMW CCA CLUB RACING

Sponsorship / Marketing Update - Scott Hughes

The Tire Rack Retains Series Title Sponsorship

We are very happy to report that The Tire Rack returns as Title Sponsor of The Tire Rack BMW CCA Club Racing Series for 2003! As you know, The Tire Rack has been a key supporter of the program since its beginnings. We greatly appreciate their loyalty and active support!

For 2003 The Tire Rack has broadened their support as an exclusive source for the new Spec MINI Series.



2003 Sponsorship update

- SSF Imported Auto Parts returns as an Official Supplier Sponsor for 2003.
- BMW of North America, Inc. continues their support as Manufacturer Sponsor
- BMP Design continues their support as Primary Sponsor
- MINI Mania joins as a Primary Sponsor and an exclusive source for the new Spec MINI Series
- VAC Motorsports continues their support as Primary Sponsor
- Northstar Motorsports continues their support as Associate Sponsor
- Bavarian Machine Specialties joins as an Associate Sponsor
- Grassroots Motorsports continues their support as Associate Sponsor
- Bimmers.com, HMS Motorsport and Redline BMW Performance are Rule Book Sponsors

Every one of these Sponsors is a key factor in making the BMW CCA Club Racing program available to our racers. We encourage your active support of these sponsors whenever you make a purchase of a product they provide.

Thank YOU for YOUR support of BMW CCA Club Racing Sponsors!

New Team Member

Rick Dirks Joins BMW CCA Club Racing Sponsorship/Marketing Team! We are very pleased to have Dallas, Texas Club Racer and past Club Racing Advisory Committee Representative Rick Dirks join the Club Racing Sponsorship/Marketing Team. Rick brings a strong professional sales and marketing background to the group as we continue to grow sponsorship, marketing and public relations roles within Club Racing. If YOU would like to help please contact Scott or Rick.

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BMW CCA CLUB RACING

Safety Steward's Report -- Ron Sullivan

2002 Safety Report

As the keeper of the safety-related information for Club Racing, I am pleased to report that the 2002 season was the safest yet. As our Chairman stated in his article, the number of incidents per miles raced improved again in 2002. Miles raced per incident is the key indicator we currently use to measure our progress from year to year, and with the exception of a slight dip in 2001, has improved every year since 1997. Another measurement we have tracked is the damage to cars involved in incidents -- from this year forward, we will be more consistent in our measurement and tracking of car damage -- Jim Fluckey, our National Tech Steward, is developing a set of standard definitions for the terms used in the Incident Reports by the Race Stewards.

Driver error continues to be the number one cause of incidents, averaging between 80 and 90 percent of all incidents each year. In 2002, 53% of driver error incidents resulted in a track object (tire barrier, wall, etc.) being struck, while 27% resulted in another car being hit. The 53% was an increase from previous years, and is a cause for concern, as car to car incidents usually result in relatively lower impact speeds, while hitting track objects often result in higher impact speeds with the resultant higher deceleration rates. I have asked Jeff Lutes, our National Competition Steward to ensure that the Event Competition Stewards cover this in Drivers Meetings -- more black flags will be used for what they believe to be unsafe driving; examples I have used at events are: spinning twice in one lap, excessive two wheels off course, causing other cars to take evasive action because of poor passing techniques, etc.

In 2002, we had two mechanical incidents- one where a power steering hose broke, causing a car to spin in the oil; the other where a throttle stuck wide open. The good news is we have moved on from the spate of brake and suspension failures we experienced in previous years, our cars are being better prepared each year.

Rookies and Provisionals were involved in 8% of the incidents in 2002, down from an average of 12% in previous years. We will continue our Racing School and Rookie Mentoring programs in 2003 to continue to drive this number down.

In conclusion, we had a better safety record in 2002 than in previous years, but we have a lot of room for improvement. I understand that a race season without an incident is not going to happen, but I expect all of us--competitors, crew, and Race Officials--to do our best to continue to make our Club Racing Series even safer.

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Races + Reports

Are you interested in reading about your local race? How about the one your buddies towed half-way across the US to kick some local butt? Maybe even that race you have been thinking of attending? On the other hand, do you want to promote your event? Do you have something special planned and simply need the place to tell the world?

Here is your chance! Take fingers to keyboard, digital camera to trackside and Email your notes, thoughts, comments and pics to the [webmaster](#) for inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter.

DEADLINE: March 25th for the April edition!

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BMW CCA CLUB RACING

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Barber Motorsports Event Announced

Thanks to the hard work of the Heart of Dixie chapter, we are pleased to announce that [Barber Motorsports Park](#) will be the host venue for the July 25-26-27 Club Race. Further information is available from [Scott Montana](#)

Grand Am Support Races

The Tire Rack BMW CCA Club Racing Series is pleased to announce that they will be providing a support race for the April 12-13, 2003 Grand Am race at Homestead Motor Speedway, Florida.

Additionally, negotiations are underway to provide a similar Grand Am support race at Barber Motorsports Park. Detail to follow -- watch this space!

CART Support Race

Although our hopes were high, there simply was insufficient track-time available to justify the August 1-3 CART support race. Nevertheless, we are looking towards another Road America date. Watch for announcements.

Speaking of Events

We have the opportunity to offer an "Event Organizers" mailing list. Here Club Racing organizers can chat, share problems, offer advice and otherwise provide support to each other and the program. The list would be private, only open to those organizing or working on hosting a BMW CCA Club Race. Interested? Just let the [webmaster](#) know!

Points Program Changes

After an extremely successful inaugural points series in 2002, the system has been "tweaked" to better serve the Club Racer. The emphasis will no longer be placed on a winner-take-all National Championship race, but rather on the accumulation of Regional points. For full details check out the link on the [2003 Series](#) page.

Calendar Updates

Our 2002 season saw three distinct calendars; those of Rules, of Sponsorship and of Points. The 2003 Season will see the last of the mixed-calendars as we phase into a January-1 to December 31 calendar for all Club Race activities. Points for 2003 began accruing at the third TWS race in November (after the National Championship race) and those points will stand. However, 2004 points will begin as of the first race held in 2004. The rules proposals and changes will likewise reflect a standard calendar year.

SCCA "Oops"

On Jan 4 we reported that SCCA had (finally) recognized a BMW CCA Club Racing license for Regional events. Well, seems that SCCA made a boo-boo when printing the GCR. What they meant to say is that a BMW CCA Club Racing license is recognized by SCCA for competition in *Vintage* events. See the next edition of SCCA *Fastrack* for the details.

Rules Clarifications

In hopes of formalizing as well as simplifying the process, a Rules Clarification Form will soon be posted on the website. With this form anyone with an interest in rules clarification can submit their formal request directly to the Rules Committee. Gone will be the "I was told last week that ..." as every request for clarification and the action taken by the Rules Committee will be posted and archived for all to see.

NASA West-Coast Updates

In a telephone interview with NASA president Jerry Kuzman, rumors were confirmed that NASA will not allow BMW CCA Club Racing to participate in any NASA Western Region sanctioned events in 2003. This marks the (hopefully temporary) end to a long-standing mutually beneficial relationship between BMW CCA Club Racing and NASA Western Region.

In related news, the Las Vegas Regional NASA head, Ray Hampton, resigned his position after the announcement, citing "conflicts of ethics."

Racer Updates

Along with the new Rules Clarification Form, an all-new Racer Update form will be posted. This will allow easy and accurate communication between you, Licensing, Timing & Scoring and Tech. There you will be able to update your address, change your Email, update car class, color, AMB-number -- literally everything and anything that changes will now go to *everyone* that needs it.

Next Edition

The first week of April (no foolin') is when the next edition of the newsletter will be published. If you have something, or want to see something, be sure to Email the [webmaster](#) with your contributions and/or ideas before March 25th.