

I was honored to represent the Glen Region at the 2013 SCCA National Convention and want to update and recap the activities during the Convention. I flew out Wednesday from Rochester to Charlotte then onto Las Vegas. The plane was very late leaving Rochester due to weather, so I was worried about making my connecting flight. There was only 18 minutes from the time when the tyres hit the tarmac to the departure of my connection flight. Running from one concourse to another on the opposite side of the airport I was thinking two things.....my bags are never going to make it, and man, am I out of shape! Much to my amazement my bags did make it! (And I am still out of shape). We landed in Las Vegas and headed to the Hotel Shuttle Bus.

Met some SCCA friend on the bus and made it to the South Pointe without incident. Checking went fine and once I got to my room I realized I was really hungry as since I missed the connection, I had not eaten. The food at South Pointe is good with a large variety. In the late afternoon I met up with more fellow SCCA friends from around the country and most of us realized that we were no longer used to all the cigarette smoke (as smoking is allowed in the casino/bars/restaurants/hallways/etc/etc/etc.).

In the early evening a meeting of the NeDiv National/Divisional Racing Committee (NRC/DRC) was held with the member who were at the Convention. The committee continued to iron out the plans for the NeDiv Divisional Championship Series that will start in 2014 (remember that in 2014 there will no longer be 'National' and 'Regional' Racing, only 'Majors' and 'Divisional' racing).

On Thursday morning I attended a meeting for all 'All Club Racing Specialties' which was a discussion/Town Hall with the National Staff to get feedback on what the Club Racing Specialties need in terms of training, communication, and support from the National Office. Since the elimination of the National Administrator positions in the Club Racing specialties, the National Office is interested in how the club can distribute information to the various specialties. Online Training and mass emails were two examples given by the members attending the meeting. Look for more information and changes in the future. Overall the meeting went very well with the National Staff and members.

The Annual Meeting and Town Hall with the SCCA Board of Directors went very smooth. Updates on the club, appreciation to outgoing Directors, and induction of new Directors went well. With no new business brought by the members in the audience, the meeting was adjourned.

The Chairman's Welcome Reception went well. The chance to see and talk to members from all over the country is always a great experience as you can discuss how the regions operate differently from each other. There is much to learn from these experiences.

Friday morning the first meeting I attended was the Time Trials Advisory Committee Town Hall. My voice and sinuses and lungs were showing the effects of the cigarette smoke by then (as many of us had the same symptoms). The TTAC Town Hall meeting was very productive as that committee was working hard to convert a 30+page rulebook down to 1-1/2 pages! Discussion on why regions do not hold Time Trials was discussed as well. I stood to speak first as Chief Advisor of Driver Schools for the club and then as representing the Glen Region. As Chief Advisor, I discussed the need for Time Trial Instructor Training. And as Glen Region Asst RE, I discussed how our region has the time to put on a Time Trial, but

does not have the personnel, knowledge or experience to host that type of event. Many other regions could not insert a Time Trial into their Club Races due to costs, track time, etc.

The next meeting was 'The Key to Drive Membership and Participation and the Future of SCCA'. The meeting was hosted by the Trozollo Communications Group, a media/public relations firm that SCCA has retained. They have been working with the National Staff for quite a while assisting in the long term plans and direction of the club. Their research presented showed how we need to continue to change and meet the new needs of member's interests and more importantly potential new member's interests. What does the new SCCA member want from the club? Changes to our club's website, PR materials, interaction with sponsors, were examples of concentrated areas of focus.

To finish the morning I attended the Club Racing Town Hall meeting. The presentation of statistics on the number of Club races (national and regional) and number of entrants was covered. There were more National Races with fewer entrants than in the past. Also there were more regional entrants last year than from years past. During this meeting the relationship between National Racing and SCCA sponsors was discussed. As the number of National Races has skyrocketed in the past few years, it has been harder and harder to market National Racing to potential sponsors. This is one of the reasons that the Majors Program was developed, by reducing and concentrating the exposure of bang for the buck for our sponsors.

Lunch was the 'Awards Luncheon' where Solo and Rally Awards were given out.

After Lunch was the Exec Stewards Town Hall meeting. There was much discussion regarding the Majors, and how decisions are made once the event registration has opened (IE: changing of the schedule, groups, etc). While such changes may seem small to some during the event, they can have great consequences to a variety of entrants depending on the circumstances. There were various lively discussions during the meeting with the audience members and the Exec Stewards.

The next couple of hours was spent with the RE's meeting with the Board of Directors and National Staff. This annual meeting is always productive. Many discussions on the status and direction of the club were discussed. One thing that was interesting was to see where we are in the NorthEast Division in terms of preparing for the 2014 Club Racing Season (Divisional Series) as compared to other divisions. We should be proud of the work completed by the NRC/DRC as we are well ahead of the curve in our preparations. Also, it was interesting to hear that in other divisions there is not the level of communication between the regions and their representing Directors that we have in NeDiv. Once again I think we should be proud of the level that NeDiv operates at.

The 'Happy Hour and Region Leadership Awards' was where the Glen Region and the Fingerlakes Region both won the Tom Burke Award!



This award is given to regions that increase and maintain members. I was honored to accept the award in the place of Larry Emery on behalf of the Glen Region.

Friday night a group of us including; Terri and Chuck Dobbs, John Walsh and Mike Toombs, me and few others headed out to the Hofbräuhaus for a 'real' German dinner. While the food was great, the German band was LOUD! (Only SCCA geeks like Mike Toombs and I would have dB meters on our mobile phones....we measured over 100dB!!!)

Saturday started with a meeting titled 'Marketing Your Region and Your Events'. Sydney Davis of the Houston Region presented ways to market our events to both those inside and more importantly outside the club. I brought back examples marketing for our region consider. Of course social media was a large topic as well as the basics like, Who, What, Where, When, How and WHY (the most important item).

Then it was off to 'High Finance and Low Budgets'. Rick Ehret (Vice President of Finance for SCCA) discussed the finance status of the club as well as the short and long term plans for the clubs finances. Region financial status and tax codes were also discussed. The Glen Region is in the correct status for both the IRS and NYS. The Club is in good financial status I am happy to report!

Next was the 'Driver Guide to the Protest Process' hosted by Mike Collins (of the WDCR and owner of Meathead Racing). Mike did a great job of walking through the protest process, even correcting a Steward or two. One of Mike's biggest items was not to be emotionally tied to the protest process. It is there of all of us to use and as Mike said, "we all sign on the line where we agree to participate to the

rules". If one of us feels that someone is not doing so, then it is up to us to use the processes that are given to us to use. It is not only our right, but our obligation to the club and the sport. The meeting was very lively and well attended.

Another 'Awards Luncheon' was held and all had a great time.

After lunch I attended a meeting on the Majors. Most of us from the NeDiv had a good handle on the Majors, once again thanks to our Directors (Walsh, Patullo, and Wanarka).

The next meeting was 'Racing Experience: Barriers to Entry Project'. The SCCA Racing Experience is a new pilot program that the Glen Region is considering for 2013. In this event, which is on track and wheel to wheel, no competition license or medical is required. The event is heavily controlled and only certain car classes being allowed to attend. Along with the Chief Steward, there is a Chief Driving Instructor. More information will be coming out on this topic and how/if our region will host this type of event.

After that I spent time interacting with members from around the country and also attending my duties as Chief Advisor of Driving Schools.

The Reception, Awards and Hall of Fame Induction Banquet was awesome. To listen to Lisa Noble and her daughter talk about Bill Noble, Carroll Shelby's grandsons speak about their grandfathers experiences, and to hear the stories of Skip Barber and Bobby Rahal in person was a great experience. Our club's history and future experiences are in great hands. We all need to keep up the great work and as Lisa Noble says, "We are the greatest Club in the country and it is time WE ACT LIKE IT!".

Once again I was honored to represent you at our National Convention. If you have any questions about anything covered at the convention please feel free to shoot me an email. There were many more meetings than just the ones I attend, so also feel free to seek out the other Glen Region members who were at the convention.

In The Spirit Of The Sport,

Ed...