

The Checker

Official Publication of the
Central Florida Region
Sports Car Club of America
Volume 51, Issue 7
July 2009

CFR Board of Governors at Work





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The Checker is published monthly by the Central Florida Region of the Sports Car Club of America, Inc.

Subscriptions are available to non-Central Florida Region members for \$25 per year to addresses in the United States only. A subscription is included in the Central Florida Region dues charged to its members.

Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Central Florida Region, its officers, its members, *The Checker*, or its advertisers.

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Half Page - \$115/month

Quarter Page - \$85/month

AVAILABLE TO CFR MEMBERS ONLY:

CFR Business Exchange - \$50/year

Classified Ads - Personal, non-commercial, classified ads are free to CFR/SCCA members for two (2) issues. ALL ADS MUST BE PREPAID.

We prefer to receive ads by e-mail at checker@clearlysaid.com, if you cannot send the ad by e-mail please type or print it clearly and mail it to *The Checker*.

Deadline and Other Information:

ADS AND ARTICLES MUST ARRIVE AT THE CHECKER ON OR BEFORE THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO THE DESIRED PUBLICATION DATE.

Send ads, articles and photographs to Checker@ClearlySaid.com. Articles may also be mailed to *The Checker* at 136 Dublin Drive, Lake Mary, Florida 32746.

Printed Photographs will not be returned unless specifically requested. Include a self-addressed return envelope with sufficient postage. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for return.

Address Changes:

Make your changes on line at www.scca.com. You will need your member number (and password if you have already created one) to log on. Be sure to add or update your email address so that you can get your meeting notices! Or, call the Topeka office 800-770-2055 to notify them of your change. Any call to Topeka with a request will require that you provide your membership number. DO NOT SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE CHECKER.



When & Where

2009 Event Schedule for CFR and Surrounding Regions (Updated)

For Registration and updates to the CFR schedule, go to www.cfrscca.org. For more complete SEDiv information, go to sediv racing.org.

July		5-6	Restricted Regional/ECR	CFR	31 - Nov 1	Regional	FL
2	Brumos 250 (This date may move to July 4, but this appears to have a scheduling conflict with NASCAR)DIS	12	CFR BOG Meeting			Palm Beach International	
3-5	Lou Ella Cook Dbl National SEDiv Roebling	19-20	Regional/SARRC Homestead	FL	November		
11-12	Drivers' School/Vintage Sebring - Short	21-27	Runoffs Road America www.scca.com	NAT	6-8	HSR	DIS
25	Mid-Year Meeting Atlanta	25	Daytona Test Day		14-15	Track Trials	BUC
August		26-27	Restricted Regional Daytona Int'l Speedway	CFR	14-15	Italian Cars at Daytona	DIS
7	Daytona Test Day	October			14-15	Palm Bch Classic/2010 SARRC	FL
8-9	SARRC/SARRC/Restr'd Reg'l Daytona Int'l Speedway	9-11	PCA	DIS	28-29	Restricted Regional Sebring - Long	CFR
		10-11	SARRC Invitational Challenge SEDIV Roebling Road		December		
September		17-18	2010 SARRC/Restricted Regional Sebring - Short	CFR	11-13	CFR Annual Meeting	
5-6	Restricted Regional Roebling Road				11-13	Audi Club	DIS
					19-20	2010 SARRC/SARRC	FL
						Palm Beach International	

District Meeting Times and Places:

(See inside front cover for contact information.)

District 1 — 2nd Tuesday 7:30 p.m., Joe's Crab Shack, 2730 Gulf to Bay Blvd, Clearwater (east of US 19).

NEW! District 2 — 4th Wednesday 7:00 P. MCDB's Italian Restaurant, 5104 East Fowler Ave, Tampa FL.

District 3 — 2nd Tuesday 8:00 PM Rossi's Pizza & Pasta 5919 South Orange Blossom Trail Orlando 321-228-0430.

District 4 — Contact Governor for details.

NEW! District 5 — 2nd Monday Dinner at 6:30 PM, Meeting at 7:30 Pizza Gallery and Grill 2250 Town Center Ave. Viera, FL 321-633-0397

District 6 — 3rd Thursday, Dinner at 7:00 PM, Meeting at 7:45 Quality Inn, 6525 US Hwy 27 N., Sebring.

District 7 — Meetings alternate between Edgewater and Debary locations on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Dinner at 6:00 PM, meeting at 7:00 PM. Contact the district Governor for directions

District 8 — 2nd Wednesday 6PM Uno's Chicago Grill Daniels Parkway, Fort Myers.

District 9 — Call Governor for details.

New to the club?

For general information on the membership or meetings please call your district governor. Or, if you want to know about a specific "specialty" call the "chief" listed on the inside cover. Use this list and map to find your District:

District 1: Pinellas and Pasco County to Port Richey.

District 2: Hillsborough and Pasco County except Port Richey.

District 3: Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties.

District 4: Alacuja, Bradford, Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Hernando, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Marion, Sumter, Suwanee, Taylor and Union Counties.

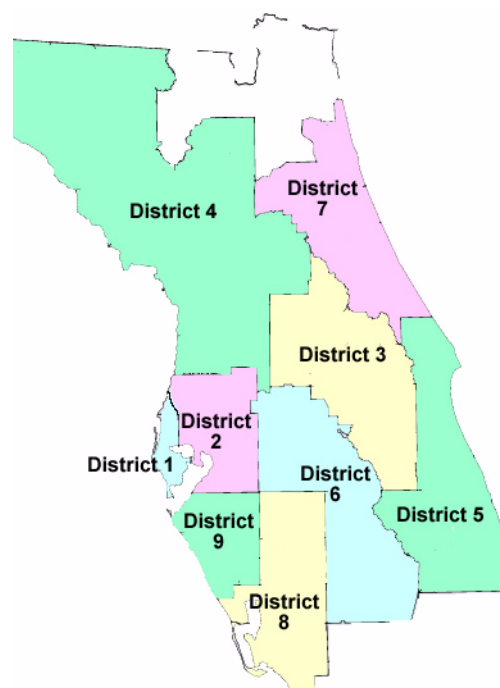
District 5: Brevard, Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, and St. Lucie counties.

District 6: Glades, Highlands, and Polk Counties.

District 7: Flagler, Putnam, St. Johns, and Volusia counties.

District 8: Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, and Lee Counties.

District 9: Manatee and Sarasota Counties.





Club News

Welcome New Members

District 1

Teresa Borden, Land O Lakes
Wayne Borden, Land O Lakes
Alexander Paul Downs, St. Pete
Chris Kraus, St. Pete
Richard Kraus, St. Pete
Evangela Naskale, Kenneth City
Steven Roberts, Largo

District 2

John Gallway Carter, Tampa
Hailee Cornett, Thonotasa
Chris Dinklage, Wesley Chapel
Codye Jumpingwolf, Tampa
Jeffrey Douglas Lail, Dade City
George Raymond Neill, III, Tampa
Stacy Sorton, Thonotasa

William Sorton III, Thonotasa
William L Sorton, Jr, Thonotasa
Mark Sultenfuss, Tampa

District 3

Joshua W Baldwin, Maitland
Rashaun Dell Bush, Orlando
Phillip White, Orlando
Robert White, Orlando

District 4

Bill Palmen, Summerfield
Didi Palmen, Summerfield
Gary Palmen, Summerfield

District 5

Alex Barberio, Rockledge
James Davis, Palm Bay

District 6

John Boltik, Lake Wales

District 7

John R DeBenedictis, Port Orange
Babak Gilbert, Ormond Beach
Scott T Minehart, Palm Coast
Bruce T Reichard, Deltona
Linda Reichard, Deltona
Cindy Shaffer, Lake Helen
Wray Shaffer, Lake Helen
Wryan Shaffer, Lake Helen

District 8

Michael Joseph Lawson, Lehigh Acres

District 9

Matthew Barnebey, Bradenton

Out Of Region

Steve Cusick, Chapel Hill, NC
Patrick J Dowling, Newtonville, Ont
Chris Whalen, Oshawa, Ont

R.E. Report

Rick Balderson

If you missed our June 6 & 7th regional / solo pool party, you really missed a great time. We had plenty of food, adult beverage, and door prizes. The chief chef was Jack Ragaglia our pace car driver, ably assisted by Robin Ragaglia and Charlene Gunn. Margaritas and door prized were by the RE.

Next up on the CFR's agenda was the BoG meeting in Indian Rocks Beach hosted by District 1. This meeting proved to be fairly long as we had many issues to discuss. Two of the highlights were: 1) More electric repairs in green

park 2) Further discussions about a CFR building on Daytona property at gate 40 and over night parking at Daytona for club and pro races. The board also took care of some day to day business and approved the operating budget, capital budget and reelected the RE, assistant RE and Treasurer. In the secretary position Carol Gavaletz has chosen to step down and we thank her for all her years of service. Stepping up to the plate will be Richard Bittmann. The CFR BoG meetings are the basis of how CFR is run, if you would like to be an active participant let this be your invitation to attend. The next BoG meeting

is on Saturday September 19th, 10 am at the Quality Inn (located at the intersection of I-4 and Hwy 27).

COMPETITORS, be sure to take advantage of the Test day scheduled for Friday, August 7th before the Daytona SARRC X2 event, entry to the track is on Thursday evening.

And now it's time for me to go back to work, this month finds me pinned down in beautiful Arcadia.

Membership Report

Joyce Hayward

Membership remains steady at 2600 to 2700 members every month. We continue to receive 40 to 50 new members every month through our racing events and our Solo events.

We have 22 Dual members, the majority are competition drivers wanting CFR points.

I have agreed to keep track of the Dual Memberships & make sure their dues are paid and report their names to our Points Keeper and the Checker publisher.

I have issued only 7 Novice Permits since the start of the year. By contrast, I issued 22 Novice

Permits during the first half of 2008, and 42 during the first half of 2007.

I continue to keep track of members who are ill. Sunshine baskets are still being sent out when needed in this regard. I need everyone to remember to notify me when this service is needed.

This week I had the pleasure of seeing Marcy Bennett. We were both having lunch at the same restaurant in Sanford. She was with her mother-in-law and daughter & grandchild. Marcy is on full time oxygen and in a wheel chair now and can't exert herself at all but she says she is

getting along okay and misses everyone. She had her usual sunny smile. Cards from her friends would be appreciated.

I was delighted to see the write up on Berta Sager in the Sports Car magazine - Volunteer of the Year Award from National as Chief of Sound, and also the write up on our young driver Mike McCaughey.

National is asking for nominations for Worker of the year for 2009 and I plan on sending in Lee Shaffer's name for Chief of T&S.

Bits and Pieces from the BOG

Harriet Watkins

Your club officials were hard at work at the mid-year Board of Governors meeting on June 14. The meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Harborside in Indian Rocks Beach (St. Pete), the location for the next Annual Meeting/Shindig to be held in December. It's a nice place, I particularly liked the steel drums out by the pool... The business of the club was well considered at the meeting, you should talk to your Governor if you want information about the details.

In addition to the usual reports and discussions, we had a good talk with Kevin Crain, the President of Osceola Press, the company that prints *The Checker* each month. Costs associated with the magazine and options for improvement were discussed, questions regarding mailing labels and costs were covered, and many questions and concerns were raised and answered during the discussion. Thank you Kevin for being there!

After Kevin left the Governors got really busy, and elected officials, approved budgets, planned improvements and generally took care of the behind the scenes business that keeps CFR going as well as it does.

Richard Bittman was elected to the post of Secretary, replacing Carol Gavaletz who has

provided years of service to the club (thank you Carol!), other positions up for reelection were unanimously filled by their former owners.

Elections for odd numbered Governors will be held in December, watch *The Checker* and the website for information.

Your next renewal for dues will include a \$5.00 increase, which is a per household charge for the increase in mailing costs.

For complete information go to your District Meeting!

Governors and Chairperson at work.



CFR Regional Executive, Rick Balderson



District News

District 3

We had one of our largest attendances at our June meeting at Rossi's so maybe the change to Tuesday is better. Discussions and bench racing centered on the Sebring June Regional/Solo/Pool Party held the previous weekend. Racing was on the short course with camping in Green Park while Solo held their event in the 12 Hour paddock. RBCs reported that our entry of 155 (10-20 fewer cars) is following the downward trend we've seen for previous events. Solo appeared to have a good turnout for their activities and there was definitely a good turnout for the annual Kenilworth social and dinner. RE Rick Balderson again proved he has a

bottomless closet and provided goodies for the raffle, Jack Ragaglia discarded his web hat for chef duties and persons unknown put together Ted's "Killer" Margaritas to ensure everyone had a great evening.

Governor Bill Martin reported on our next activity – the July 4th Grand Am event at Daytona. It will be a jam-packed day as the Grand AM cars are running the same day as NASCAR. We'll look for some interesting 'after the race' stories.

This year is an odd numbered year so elections are due for Governors from districts 1,3,5,7,9. Governor Bill agreed to continue to serve District

Fran Martin

3 if nominated and elected.

Our July Driver's School will be on the short course, camping in Green Park and will have a little something for everyone. The students will have their time on track; there will be Vintage racing and a battle of the "spexes" – a 1 hr. 5 min. enduro for SRF/SM.

Don't forget to check our web site for most current event schedules, the ProWorker and contact your chiefs to work.

See you at the Races!

Letters to the Editor

The June Bug Dash, or in other words - The June Lighting Bug Dash...

As a Corner worker I would like to thank all the Stewards and the decision makers and the workers who watched all day on Sunday for that terrible weather that came in on us after lunch. We had a wonderful weekend and a great bash at the Hotel Saturday night. Thank you very much

for all the fun.

But most of all I think I can speak for all the Workers and drivers who were out in the weather. When I say Thank You for protecting us and making sure we were all safe before the lightning and rain rolled in. I know it must be very frustrating to run a race and watch the weather and worry about all the people you guys are responsible for. I'm a new member of SCCA. But I have been around SCCA most of my life. (My

father being Bud Merrill and my Mother Pat Merrill (God rest her Soul). Many of you knew her and still miss her. It was at Sebring, my mother was working Registration and then finished the day in Timing when she had her heart Attack.)

Robin Took me under her wing at my very first race I worked at Sebring. And me not knowing which turn was which, Rich Kasson said on the radio, "Corner 8 I have a package for you." Well, He crossed the track pulling up next to Robin,



Who I knew I was working with her as I met her in the tower a month earlier and she suggested working sound with her. Well, I had never been called a Package before. And all day I was sound control's Package. That was my breaking into SCCA. I loved it. So, Mr. Kasson, at the Bash, when we were told to get to a safe place, we stuck our flags and equipment in the BLUE ROOM. Well I need to learn the radio. So I wanted so badly for my first time on Central Florida Radio to be able to have said "Control, Turn 6 has a new Communicator." Then say, "Turn 6 to Communication". Then when Mr Kasson answered me I wanted to tell him,

"Communication This is Turn 6, You know THE PACKAGE? well, You will find our equipment in the BLUE ROOM. GIGGLE!!!"

But, we love the job that our Rich Kasson does, we put our equipment by the road and left as instructed.

The wonderful people in the tower were looking out for us because in SCCA we are all one big family and we all look out for each other. That was what I learned the very first race I worked back in January.

So, I just want to give everyone a great big thank you for everything that everyone does. And for all

the Corner Chiefs and Corner workers I have worked with that have taught me so much. And every person that has crossed my path will tell you. "boy that girl is like, 50 questions...." And like my dad says, "They also say, 'Does she ever Hush up?' "

Hugs everyone, be safe, have fun.... That is what we are here for.... if your not having fun.. then why be here? God Bless..

Thanks again for another wonderful and safe weekend

LORI MERRILL

The Checker is YOUR Magazine

John Tremblay

The Checker is your magazine, pictures of your events and stories about last minute engine work and how well the duct tape held up. But things have gotten a little stale and I would like to see that change.

My name is John Tremblay, and I am the new business manager for the Checker. I invite you to write articles (try to keep them motorsport

related) and send them to us for publication. I invite you to send in your photos and give us the story behind them. Let's work together to make the Checker interesting to not only us race nuts, but also to the new generation of people that are just beginning to learn what CFR SCCA is.

Don't forget, the Checker is a great place to advertise your business. We will now offer full color spots as well as our regular ¼, ½, and full-

page black and white spots.

Please send your pictures, stories, to Checker@clearlysaid.com, and your questions about advertising to SCCACHECKER@gmail.com. I look forward to serving the Central Florida Region SCCA family.

Flag Ravings

Sally Larson

WOW: I never thought I might need to pack a life jacket with my worker gear, but looking at the pictures of Daytona International Speedway taken after the rains in May, we sure would have needed same. The new tunnel and the track itself truly underwater was almost unbelievable. And I thought riding in the back of Jim Hooker's pickup when the bed turned into a swimming pool was bad! Maybe we should consider bringing an Ark to the track.

I can recall, several years ago..... when we still had safety positions drivers' Drivers' right in the infield at Turns 3 and Turn 5... we had a similar monsoon, thankfully of shorter duration It was so bad, visibility and traction were nil. The Stewards stopped the race and we all tried to wait it out. The rain was accompanied by nasty thunder and lightning which sure didn't help. Of course, I was in the infield at Three with a rookie from Florida Region. I had two alternatives.... slog through calf high water dodging lightning or.... duck into the portalet in the infield. Since I really didn't like the looks of the lightning, I opted, rookie in tow, for the Blue Room. Fortunately it had had little use during the week end and there was ample seating room for two. At one point, a safety car was dispatched to check the track... we waved as they sloshed past - they forgot it was a no wake zone. Finally the race day was ended since the animals were beginning to line up two by two. I had visions of Florida Region losing a rookie because of the incident.... but he was a game guy

and took it in stride. We decided the company was fine, but the ambiance didn't pass muster. Two years ago at the 12-hour, I was vindicated. Gigi, who had laughed at me for my Potti escapade, ended up using the potti shelter at her Turn during practice. A similar downpour occurred and she crammed as many workers into their Blue Room as was possible. You do what you gotta' do!

A WEEKEND IN JUNE IN SEBRING: My sources tell me - "The weekend was pretty laid back. Small Groups (only 8 cars in the GT-1 GT-2-AS-SPO- group). Saturday was overcast, breezy and actually pleasant temperature wise. Sunday was actually hot in the morning with no breeze. After lunch things got ugly. Major Thunder Boomers, lightning, dueling lightning meters, and rain, shut us down for almost an hour, we ended up canceling the last two races because the weather was not going to improve." And words from The Chief, "This past Regional had to be one of the most fun and laid-back events I have seen for some time. Everything went smoothly until the lightening storm of Sunday afternoon. We received full cooperation from all of the Membership as we waited out the storm in our cars. We held the Annual Picnic at the Kennelworth with many SOLO folks in attendance. I had numerous conversations with many of our experienced Drivers who simply wanted to convey their support and praise for our CFR Professional

Workers of all Specialties. Every Driver I was in

contact with claims they brag about the CFR way of doing things at all of the other Tracks that they visit. It most certainly feels good to hear the kind words and praise for CFR."

For storms, Assistant Flag Chief, Gail suggested a storm protocol be adopted -that "as the leading edge of a storm approaches, workers should be allowed 5 minutes to 'batten down the hatches', move their stations out from under trees and generally set themselves up for a possible lightning delay and then, a quick restart. Once the leading edge has passed, the lightning, although still in the area, begins to abate. In the case of this past weekend, we had multiple cells in the area and we were not set up to stop and start with any efficiency.

She added, "we need to move our operating mind set from, 'wait until a storm has passed' to 'lets start and stop as needed' while still being mindful of lightning in the area. After the shut down, that cell passed and the weather again improved." For the stormy months, Matt and Gail discussed starting the race day at 7:30 instead of 8 and, shortening the lunch period by 5 minutes to accommodate the 5 minutes needed when a leading edge approaches. Give Chief Rich, and Assistants Gail, Matt and Jim your thoughts on this. On a very positive note,,,,, the race had 40 + F & C workers! My thanks to Rich, Jim and Gail for their input.

VOLUNTEER: Remember, if you've always wanted to know what goes on in the Steward's Tower but were afraid to ask... there's an

opportunity to serve as a logger or communicator. It's on the job training. It not only gives the officials some extra help, but it also gives us an opportunity to experience, first hand, what goes on to keep the cars safe and on track. If you're interested, let Rich, Gail, Jim, or Matt know - you'll be glad you did.

CONGRATULATIONS BERTA! Be sure to check out the July issue of SportsCar. It features a photo and article... Central Florida Region's Berta Sager, Sound Control SCCA Worker of the Year. It gives Berta's history with CFR and, of course, the 6 years she spent as our Flag Chief before she headed Sound Control where, for the past

two years, she has been the divisional administrator for the Southeast Division. Berta's a great worker and friend in whatever she does - and deserves every honor she receives.

Results of the Love Bug Dash

David Ellis-Brown

The turnout for the weekend was smaller than I have seen for a very long time. At the time registration closed there were less than 200 cars had entered. Actually only 176 cars entered and 45 were the IT cars. In my way of thinking there were at least 3 reasons for the low turn out. Primarily, and I am assuming, it must be the economy, and secondly I believe it was the threat of rain. Some folks just do not like to race in the rain, and may not have rain tires. We definitely have had our share of wet weather here in Central Florida over the last month. And third, as some drivers have told me, they do not like the club course. I believe most drivers prefer the 12hour course. But the short course does make you work, and for the "newbies" it is a better course to hone your skills.

Weather for the event was not what most of us, who attended, expected. It did rain hard early Friday evening, just about the time registration was closing, but Saturday was as usually dry, clear and hot. When we did get the thunderstorms that most were expecting, they did not come until about 3:00 on Sunday which resulted in the last two races being cancelled due to concerns for the safety for the corner workers.

Group 2 were entirely IT cars, made up of ITR, ITS, and ITA, a total of 25 cars went out for qualifying. In ITR, Mike Guenther, in his BMW, was fastest with a time of 1:18.994. Gerard Ruffino and Derek Catterfeld filled out the top 3 in ITR. In ITS, Marc Dana, in his Mazda RX7 won the pole for ITS and was second on the grid, with a time of 1:19.013. Mike Van Steenburg was right behind with a time of 1:19.518, and Rob Wansley was third, just a tick behind with a time of 1:20:251. The top three were all in Zoom Zoom cars. In ITA, John Barben set the standard with a qualifying time of 1:21.855 and in 2nd was

Douglas Davidson, with a time of 1:22.413. Third qualifier in ITA was Bob Sieck. Again all were in Mazda's.

Group 2, Race 2: The bigger bore IT cars got run their first 30-minute race on Saturday. All 25 entries started with Guenther and Dana running nose to tail for the first few laps. But in the end, Mike Guenther came home the overall winner and first in ITR, Gerald Ruffino came in 2nd in his Porsche 911 with Derek Catterfeld coming home third in his Toyota. Marc Dana won ITS in his Mazda with Menas Akarjalian was closing at the checker to take 2nd place, also in a Mazda, and Rob Wansley rounded out the top 3. In ITA, Douglas Davidson took the win over John Barben who came in 2nd. Bob Sieck rounded out the podium for ITA with a third place finish.

On Sunday, Group 2, Race 9: Was run, again on a dry track. But this time only 21 cars took the Green Flag. And again it was Mike Guenther taking the win in ITR and overall. Gerard Ruffino again took 2nd in his Porsche 911. There were no other finishers in ITR. In ITS, Marc Dana again took the top spot, but this time Rob Wansley bettered his Saturday's finishing position to take 2nd over third place finisher Menas Akarjalian. All were in Mazda RX-7's. In ITA, it was a total repeat of race 2 with Douglas Davidson taking the top podium spot again with John Barben and Bob Sieck filling out the podium. All were in Mazda Miata's. Mike Van Steenburg set a new track record for ITA with a time of 1:21.276. Congratulations to all of you.

Group 7, consisted of IT-7, ITB & ITC, plus a bunch of other stuff (no offense).

A total of 21 cars made up group 7, of which 14 were IT cars. In qualifying, Barry Burgoon was fastest in his IT-7 Mazda with a time of 1:24.037 but Ellis Blanton was just a tick behind with a

1:24.541. Nathan Schirmer qualified 3rd in IT-7 with a time of 1:26.828. In ITB, your humble correspondent, David Ellis-Brown was fastest with a time of 1:24.560 in his VW Jetta. Mike McCormick qualified 2nd in his VW Jetta with a time 1:26.805, and Paul McCormick (Mike's Father) qualified 3rd with a time of 1:27.178, in his VW Golf. In ITC, Earl Clemenson won the pole in his Honda CRX with a time of 1:27.569. Miki Moerwald qualified her VW Rabbit in 2nd with a time of 1:28.210, and Ernest Taylor was third with a time of 1:29.175 in his Honda Civic.

Group 7, Race 7: Was held on Sunday, again on a dry track. Some 25 cars took the green flag. And after 30 minutes of racing, and no incidents, Barry Burgoon took the win in IT7 with Ellis Blanton in 2nd. In third place was Nathan Schirmer. All three finished in the same order as they started. In ITB, David Ellis-Brown took the win, with Mark Kalfas taking 2nd in his Porsche 914. Mike McCormick took third in his VW after a spirited race with his Father, Paul McCormick. In ITC Earl Clemenson stood at the top of the podium with his first place finish, with Louis Hutto, in his Scirocco (who started at the back of the group) came in 2nd to beat Miki Moerwald's Rabbit in 3rd place.

Note: Your humble correspondent was credited with setting a new track record for ITB, with a time of 1:25.336. Thanks, but that is not accurate. I did a little research, and found that Andrew Carbonnell, holds the track record for ITB (on the club course) with a time of 1:23.843, set at the 2008's June Bug Dash. Bill Yates had set the record with a time of 1:24.414 earlier in the event in 2008. I cannot lay claim to the track record in ITB. Just to set the record straight.

Turning the Corner

David Ellis-Brown

Upgrading to a Programmable Engine Management Computer:

It is fairly common knowledge that the "Computer" in modern cars can be upgraded to make the car perform better. Today there is a huge after market business in "upgrading" the vehicle's engine control management systems to

improve performance and mileage. Many "tuning houses" offer replaceable "Chips" that plug in into the factory computer. Just look through publications like Sports Car or Grassroots Motorsports and you will see companies like APR, Motec, AEM, DIYAutoTune, etc. So what can we as IT races do to take advantage of this emerging technology?

What the rules allow:

Under the Improved Touring Specifications, Per 9.1.3, D.1.a.6 & 7 in the current GCR permits the "altering or replacing" of the "Engine Management Computer (EMC)" or (ECM, engine control module). Some sensors can be added per the rules. "A throttle position sensor and it wiring may be added. A MAP (manifold absolute



pressure) sensor and its wiring may be added". Other existing sensors, excluding the stock air-metering device (Mass air flow sensor), may be substituted for equivalent units. And "the wires and connectors in the engine wiring harness may be modified or replaced". So per the 2009 rules, we are permitted to change out the entire ECM and take advantage of the emerging technology.

Background:

When John Robinson and I initially built our Mk III Jetta in 2005, the ECM rules were more restrictive than they are today. We could modify the existing computer as long as all changes were made within the current system. The "after market" technology to upgrade the engine management systems was fairly extensive but very expensive. Motec is one of the world's premier engine management computer companies and their products have been used in F1, Sports Prototype cars, and in other forms of professional racing for years. But back in 2005, GCR rules for IT permitted us to modify the ECM by "re-chipping" the unit with a different program. I did my home work and found out that the "stock" ECM controlled features such as:

1. The Air and Fuel Ratio (A/FR) to limit emissions and met EPA standards
2. To limit the engine RPM to keep the customer from over revving the engine.
3. To limit the speed of the vehicle so not to exceed the tire specifications
4. To limit the engine ignition timing to facilitate the use 89 octane fuel
5. Plus many other engine/vehicle related functions

Since the Jetta was going to be a racecar and optimum power was its new goal, I searched the Internet to find a supplier that made after market chips for this car. I found GIAC in California and I contacted them. They had an "off the shelf" chip that made the "street" version more spirited. I asked them if they would be interested in "burning" a chip for "off road use". They offered to "burn a custom chip" for this model of Volkswagen. They asked me a series of questions as to ignition timing, Air / Fuel ratio, compression, fuel to be used, etc. We responded with the following data:

1. We wanted the rev. limiter increased to 7200
2. We needed the vehicle speed limiter to be disabled

3. We wanted the ignition timing advanced over the factory specs
4. We wanted the air to fuel ratio to operate at 12.5.
5. We would be using 100 Octane, Unleaded fuel
6. Plus

From this data, and a small check, GIAC developed 3 sets of "custom" chips for the racecar. (Note: For most after-market chip developers, they have to "reverse engineer" the software code of the ECM since the code is "proprietary" for each vehicle manufacturer. After they had created a copy of the code, they then can modify the software to provide a different sets of parameters). From the time I contacted them, to the time I received the new chips was about 2 months.

I installed the "new chip" on to an "encryption socket" and to my amazement the started up and we were ready to race. As we built the car, we had worked closely with David Boles who owns Atlantic Auto Works in Melbourne and contracted him to develop and assemble various components of the car. Due to his expertise I wanted his inputs to shorten the "teething time" that a new racecar normally went through. We wanted him to attend the first time we dyno'ed the car to get his inputs. We have learned to extensively use dyno testing to get the most out of our car. We also knew that dyno testing would also help identify potential problems that would normally only show up at the track. We made some 6 runs on the dyno and found that the 2-liter engine definitely made more power and torque than our old A2 GTI. We were pleased with the results. But we discovered that in the area of A/FR, that we were running richer than the 12.5 spec that we had requested, especially at Wide Open Throttle (WOT). But since we were going to Daytona, and would be at WOT for a long time, we were not too concerned with the rich condition. We also discovered that for some reason at high RPM in the top gears that the engine developed a "bobble" and then shut down. We later learned that this was due to a miss wired faulty vehicle speed sensor.

To make a very long story short, over the past three years, and some 4 more trips back to the Dyno to test various modifications plus trying other vendors chips, the overly rich A/FR condition not only persisted and actually

degraded to an even richer condition when at WOT. We began seeing an A/FR higher than 11.0. This overly rich condition also was verified when we started a cold engine we usually got some "black" smoke out of the exhaust. Also under race conditions we knew the car was a real "gas hog" and was only getting about 8 miles to a gallon.

Even though the car ran well and was fast, I had spoken to David Boles at AAW about the "rich" condition and David felt that there must be some embedded software code within the stock Motronic 2.9 ECM that took precedence over the modified code that both GIAC & Techtonics had produced and that stock program had some "fail safe" code that richened the A/FR at WOT. David and Jeff Linfert (who works with David at AAW) both felt that the only way to overcome this condition was to change out the ECM, and since the IT rules now permitted it, it was the only solution around the issue. They had recently installed a "MegaSquirt" aftermarket ECM unit in their GTL VW's and knew what they were talking about. They also felt that the Jetta would also make more HP & Torque if we could get the A/FR ratio leaner. So we decided to make the change and buy a MegaSquirt Programmable Engine Management System.

Since I was fairly mechanically competent, had a good understanding of vehicle electronics, and I had made my living in the information technology field at Lockheed Martin, and John was a master electrician, we felt with a high degree of competence, that we could tackle the MegaSquirt installation project ourselves.

Ordering the MegaSquirt ECM:

Again, using the Internet, I contacted DIYAutotune.com and after a few e-mails, they recommend various parts and pieces that we needed to install a "MegaSquirt" ECM in our MK III Jetta. I also verified what components that DIYAutoTune had recommended with Atlantic Auto Works. I ordered the MegaSquirt ECM, along with ECM wiring harness, air temp sensor and water temp sensor with wiring. I also ordered the necessary interface cable to connect my laptop computer to the MegaSquirt ECM. The DYIAutoTune.com website has a lot of information, and a very responsive help desk, plus links to other people who have experience with installing and debugging problems associated with it's installation.

Here are the components that we bought from DIYAutoTune



Again going back to David and Jeff, I presented our approach on how we were going to install the unit in our car. We had a spare engine harnesses for the injectors, sensors and the like, so the wiring should be fairly straight forward to integrate the new ECM wiring harness with the stock sub harness. David and Jeff confirmed that this should be OK, and made some additional recommendations on how to connect the new MegaSquirt wiring harness to the “stock” harness that had the injector and sensor connectors attached. This should not be too tricky.

As my training and education dictate, I do a lot of homework before I begin a project. I like to know the total scope of project, I develop a list of all of the material that I am going to need and even develop a “process plan” that I am going to use to get the project completed and on time. (As John would note, this is where the Engineer in me shows up) The “mechanical” end of the project seemed to be fairly straightforward in the development of the harness and installation of the hardware into the car. No problem. Since we built the Jetta, we had purchased diagnostic software for my laptop from Ross-Tech so we have been able to access and diagnose the stock OBD-1 system. So integrating a laptop computer into our racing program was nothing new.

One area that I found after developing the “installation” process that I knew was going to be tricky was the development and loading the MegaSquirt with the initial software map. Then manipulating the code to achieve the full potential of the upgraded ECM. Even though the DIYAutoTune.com website provides a ton of information, and basic software maps to get the unit working, you need to have a fairly extensive knowledge of the concepts of a rich and lean air to fuel ratio, basic EFI theory and ignition timing requirements before you can program the system properly. You need to be a combination of a

skilled automotive technician and an experienced computer Geek or Dweeb. If you don't possess these skills, you have two choices! Either you better be a fast learner or go to a qualified shop that has the technical skills to do the job.

Making a Smart Decision:

I pride myself in my knowledge and understanding of our racecar. We built of the car ourselves and have maintained since its inception. But I have also learned to “know what I do not know”. Even though I feel that we could ultimately figure everything out about the new ECM and the software, we made the decision to let the experts do the installation and that is what we did. We decided to let Atlantic Auto Works do the job (Jeff had just finished installing a MegaSquirt ECM in another Mk III VW, and that was for Paul McCormick). Jeff has developed a baseline software configuration from his experience with the units for their GTL cars and should be able to get my car running. I was anticipating several weeks of development time if I did the job myself. So deciding to let Atlantic Auto Works do the job was one of my better decisions.

The Installation:

We dropped the car off at Atlantic Auto Works in Melbourne along with all of the bits and pieces that we purchased from DYIAutoTune.com. Jeff began by moving the current harness out of the way, but did not remove it just in case we had to go back to the “re-chipped” ECM. Jeff then spliced in the MegaSquirt harness to a spare sub-harness that we had from a “scrapped” out car that we had cannibalized. Jeff installed the new air-temperature sensor by re-tapping into the stock location in the intake manifold. Using a modified fitting, he was able to insert the new water temperature sensor into the stock water outlet coming off the head. The ABA engine in the Mk III has a crankshaft position “wheel”

attached to the crankshaft so splicing the new wiring harness into the stock crankshaft sensor was a simple modification. The stock distributor already had a hall sensor, so again adapting the distributor was also straightforward. The only change to the ignition was to go to a different coil. The other connections were fairly straight forward since the fuel pump was activated with a switch, as was the source for the 12 volts that the MegaSquirt ECM needed to operate. The stock “throttle position sensor” was also easy just by splicing in the spare wiring harness. The MegaSquirt picks up its air flow information from a stock vacuum port installed in the intake manifold. It uses this data for its manifold absolute pressure (MAP) sensor. The completed job looked better than stock, plus we had the luxury to go back to the earlier “chipped” stock ECM if we did have a failure with the MegaSquirt. The actual MegaSquirt ECM was attached to a holding fixture that is mounted just below the “passenger” air bag compartment inside of the driver's compartment. The whole installation took a little over a day to complete. Jeff then powered up the system with his laptop and down loaded a “custom program” that AAW had already developed. This basic map contained some basic fuel and ignition curves for our engine using tables that specified spark timing and a base fuel delivery for the pulse width-modulated (PWM) electronic fuel injection. This Map was created as a function of engine speed and airflow. This part of the process is typically a “black art” for most people. I understand the process but do not possess the expertise to neither create the initial software program nor be able to manipulate it for to optimize the performance. After the installation was completed, Jeff then provided to us a copy of the data on a CD that we needed to download on to our laptop “system access data so we also could access the MegaSquirt system. The Jetta was now ready to take to the Dyno, and fine-tune



the system to obtain optimum power.

Here is the MegaSquirt ECM installed inside of passenger compartment of our Jetta. Jeff did a nice job.



The Dyno Test: After AAW finished the installation, John and I took the car to Dick Laslo who owns Laslo Racing and Fabrication, a few doors down from David's shop also on Washburn Road in Melbourne. We literally drive the car from David's shop down to the Dyno. Dick owns the DynoJet chassis dyno that we have been using for the past 3 years. We had been on the dyno in April, just before the Daytona race weekend, so we had some recent dyno runs to use as a baseline. Dick installed the car on the dyno and Jeff came down with his laptop and knowledge to "fine tune" the program on our new ECM. Jeff hooked up his laptop with all of the necessary software to see how the MegaSquirt unit was working. We made the initial run. Dick Laslo read out the Torque and HP numbers, and OH WOW! Right out of the box we were making more HP and more Torque. We made two more pulls to make sure we had a good base line to work from. The A/FR was in the 13.1 range. Right were Jeff and David felt it needed to be. Plus what I liked the mixture richened slightly just as we got past 6500 RPM. I had read from several sources that the ideal mixture was in the 12.5-13.4 ranges. There are terms like Rich Best Torque (RBT) and Lean Best Torque (LBT) to define this A/FR. As I previously said, I asked GIAC to program the chip to 12.5 A/FR. We had always made more torque than HP with fuel mixture that rich. At AAW, David and Jeff's experience had shown them that an A/FR of 13.1 was optimal, and that is what we settled at. During the test, Jeff had the laptop attached to the new ECM and verified what the

MegaSquirt system was doing. We made a few changes to the ignition timing to see what affect it would have on the numbers. We made a total of 6 pulls and the bottom line is that we were making approximately 6% more horsepower and 3% more torque. We were able to reduce the total timing advance some 5 degrees, and leaned down the mixture, and were making more power. I found it interesting that leaning down the mixture gave a higher percentage increase in HP than Torque. I am just wondering if we richened the mixture slightly, would we gain a little more torque at the sacrifice of some horsepower? Maybe later on we will make some changes and see how they affect the HP and Torque numbers. But for now, all I can say is "Oh Wow".

Atlantic Auto Works was able to install the MegaSquirt ECM system, load and manipulate the software. After seeing what they did, and can do, I am absolutely convinced that letting a professional tuner install the system is the only way to go. Now remember, we built the car, and "inserted" new chips into the factory ECM, and have been able to maintain the car ourselves. But we do not possess the technical programming skills to manipulate the software nor the time to develop those skills with the resources that we have. I am now sure that if you want to update your car with a "MegaSquirt Programmable ECM", you should go to an experienced MegaSquirt tuning shop like Atlantic Auto Works. It is the most cost effective way to go. I want to "Thank David and Jeff" for doing a great job. I

could not be happier. Some of the best money I have spent on the Jetta.

Results: Well, I have only two things to say. Look at our results from the Love Bug Dash, and I will just relate a comment that fellow ITB competitor and Jetta owner, Mike McCormick, said to me after the qualifying session, "That thing (your car) is a rocket ship". Mike is scheduled to have his Jetta updated by AAW with a MegaSquirt before the next race. As I said, Paul McCormick had AAW install his unit. The 2008 ITB ARRC Winner, Deuce Keane, delivered his Honda Accord to AAW to have his MegaSquirt installed also. David Boles / Atlantic Auto Works are now dealers for MegaSquirt, so it is a great place to do one stop shopping.

Footnote: If you would like to read more on installing the MegaSquirt, and DIYAutoTune, there is a good article in the latest "Grassroots Motorsports" issue.

Well it is time to send this edition off to the Checker. I'm not sure what to write about next month, but I will come up with something. We (the IT cars) in CFR, don't race again until August when we go to Daytona for the Double SARRC, event. I will be out of the country again, so I will miss this event as well as the September Enduro at Sebring. If you have any comments on this column, drop me a note at tonianddavid@b@aol.com, otherwise, "I will see you at the races"



Picture Pages

Sebring June Bug Dash

Bill Martin

The start of the Group 7 race saw Volvo on the pole



That is one very fast SPU car - Ron Stanley from Lake Helen



Bill Rose and his venerable Volvo 1800es



"Look Darrell, they're double wide", - Robin Hawley & Jim Rosa



005.jpg - Bill Cullen gets a little crossed up in Turn 2



The new Worker Shelters are making their appearance around the Track





"Pool Party" - The tables and chairs were ready



We have it on good authority that the Margaritas did "kill" some people



RE Rick set up the bar while John Woessner supervised



Jack stepped away from his Pace Car duties to become "Le Chef"



The goodie table was well stocked



Again, RE Rick handled the emcee duties



There seemed to be something for everybody



A good time was had by all without the benefit of a police visit





Tim Montpelier takes his Swift toward Turn 2



Two Group 4 cars contest Turn 2



Jon Swanson looking smooth and heading for Turn 3



Mike Campanelli (FA) passing Derek Lieb (F5000)



It was the last hurrah for the Sebring Gift Shop



Oops, Mike Ogren loses the pavement chasing Eric Rhoades



These two guys were at it every time - Al Thomas & Scott Kirouac



Fred Hoover and Pax Lemmon in Turn 10



Close racing in Turn 10 led by Jerry Neely



Pax Lemmon trying the "wide" line in Turn 10



Group 4 Pit Crews ponder the incoming bad weather that ended the day





Club Racing

CFR Regional Points Championship

Racing Year 2009

Current as of June 11, 2009

Class	Last name	First	Total	FE	SWAIN	JIM	30	GTL	BOLES	DAVID	21
AS	DAWSON	CHAS	24	FE	OSINGA	WALLY	18	GTL	MCDONALD	VAN	16
AS	WALTHER	MARK	9	FE	GREEN	THOMAS	17	GTL	BROWN	STEVEN	12
AS	REICHARD	BRUCE	7					GTL	HIGGS	G.M.	12
				FF	SHAVATT	LANCE	60	GTL	MCTUREOUS	JOHN	9
ASR	ARMELLINI	ARTHUR	24	FF	SWANSON	JON	27	GTL	BORELL	BRIAN	7
ASR	SEVERINO	FRANK	9	FF	WITHAM	ROBERT	23	GTL	BORELL	ALAN	6
				FF	SCHIMENTI	JOHN	19	GTL	ADLER	JAMES	5
CF	FUCINI	NORMAN	48	FF	POPE	DAVID	18	GTL	BRANNON	BARRY	3
								GTL	LARSON	JEROLD	2
CSR	FALATICK	WILLIAM	28	FM	WEEDER	MARK	66				
CSR	LAMBERT	LARRY	24	FM	EVANSON	RYAN	24	H1	HOLBROOK	SHEA	18
CSR	BAKER	MICHAEL	16								
				FP	HULSE II	ALAN	37	H4	GONZALES	RICHEL	48
DSR	BONANNO	ROBIN	38	FP	PIEHL	GREG	18				
DSR	DEMPSEY	CHARLES	36	FP	YOUNG	PERRY	14	HP	MILLER	LELAND	33
DSR	DOWLING	SHERRY	18	FP	BRILLINGER	BRIAN	13	HP	GRIFFIN	JAY	21
DSR	SCHMIDT	MIKE	16	FP	RAYMON	DAVE	12	HP	HESS	BOB	17
DSR	HADDOCK	RALPH	11	FP	RIVERA	PEDRO	12	HP	SLATER	TIM	16
DSR	BONSEY	JIM	6	FP	ALFORD	TUCKER	11	HP	CRIFE	JEFFREY	12
				FP	AHRENS	DON	9	HP	FOOTE	KERRY	7
EP	EELLS	PETER	42	FP	DESHONG	DANA	9	HP	HOLLIS SR	CHARLIE	6
EP	ROSE	BILL	21	FP	ROSE	BILL	9	HP	HOLLIS JR	CHUCK	5
EP	CARSON	WILLIAM	19	FP	ROSE	TRICIA	9				
EP	CLARK	JIM	18	FP	BUTLER	WAYNE	5	IT7	CAREY	LON	40
EP	PAULIN	WAYNE	12	FP	PEARCE	CRAIG	4	IT7	BURGOON	BARRY	33
EP	CORBITT	WELDON	7					IT7	SCHIRMER	NATHAN	20
EP	WATSON	TIM	6	FV	DASSINGER	CARL	36	IT7	WELZ	JAMES	20
EP	RIVARD	RICK	5	FV	SCHIFFER	MIKE	27	IT7	MCCAULEY	DAVID	19
EP	HOLLINGSON	RICARDO	4	FV	BURFORD	RAY	19	IT7	SANEY	STEVE	19
EP	SMITH	MARK	3	FV	SCHNEIDER	HARRY	12	IT7	BLANTON	ELLIS	15
				FV	MATTOX	SHAWN	10	IT7	SMITH	CHUCK	9
F5	MOODY	ROBIN	33	FV	WALDROP	DUKE	5	IT7	HURLEY	JACK	6
F5	LIEB	DEREK	18	FV	MATTOX	JOHN	4	IT7	WALTERS	KENNETH O	3
F5	MANALIO	THOMAS	7								
F5	THOMSON	CHARLES	7	GT1	MC ELHENY	ROBERT	28	ITA	SIECK	BOB	43
				GT1	BORDERS	ROBERT	24	ITA	MCNAMARA	PAUL	21
FA	NOGUEIRA	LUIZ	52	GT1	WICHT	CHARLES	12	ITA	BARBEN	JOHN	18
FA	BOUGHAN	DONALD	49					ITA	PIGMAN	ROBERT	17
FA	CAMPANELLI	MIKE	16	GT2	BURGESS	ALAN	30	ITA	HUFF	CLIFFORD	16
FA	OETTER	BOB	12	GT2	TAYLOR	TERRY	24	ITA	BURAS	TODD	12
FA	NISHIOKA	HIRO	9	GT2	DIEHL	ED	19	ITA	ATKINSON	CAREY	9
								ITA	HUNT	BRUCE	9
FB	WALD	BILL	46	GT3	MCGAVIC	BILL	24	ITA	BOWLING	TAD	5
FB	BEATTIE	TOM	38					ITA	BOYLAN	LARRY	5
				GTA	MARSHALL	JAY	24	ITA	KISH	JOHN	5
FC	MONTPELIER	TIM	40	GTA	TAPIA	FELIPE	12	ITA	STEELE JR	WILLIAM	5
FC	MCQUAIG	JAMES	19	GTA	LUTICH	SHERI	11	ITA	TUCKER	JAMIE	4
FC	JORDAN	BOB	15	GTA	AMICO	TONY	7	ITA	ISAACS	GREENE	3
FC	LANGLEY	DONALD	14	GTA	GRAHAM	TOM	2	ITA	REHKOPF	KEVIN	3
FC	HERSCHER	JOHN	12	GTA	LUTICH	GEORGE	1	ITA	TAYLOR	KENNETH	2
FC	POLLOCK	LYN	9					ITA	COYNE	JAMES	1
FC	JENSEN	BRUCE	7	GTL	LINFERT	JEFF	24	ITA	DYKES	RODNEY	1
				GTL	MEVOLI	PAUL	24				

ITB	ELLIS-BROWN	DAVID	32	ITS	COHEN	JIM	11	SPU	STANLEY	RON	18
ITB	KEANE	DEUCE	24	ITS	GALLUP	RICHARD	9	SPU	FULLER	JACK	12
ITB	MCCORMICK	GEORGE	15	ITS	GOLDIN	KEITH	8	SPU	FUTCH	GENEVIEVE	12
ITB	MCCORMICK	MIKE	14	ITS	GOLDIN	STEVE	7	SPU	SANDERS	BRAD	12
ITB	MCCORMICK	PAUL	11	ITS	ARMELLINI	AUSTIN	5	SPU	TROGLIA	DONNY	12
ITB	HAMPTON	HENRY	7	ITS	SAYLER	VAN	5	SPU	MARCHAND	CHRIS	9
ITB	BATSON	MATTHEW	5	ITS	LADNIER	KC	4	SPU	ROBERTS	ANDY	7
ITB	HORN	MICHAEL	4	ITS	LANGLEY	DONALD	4				
ITB	YATES	WILLIAM	4	ITS	SIMOE	MANNY	4	SRF	LADONICZKI	BILL	42
ITB	REICHARD	LINDA	2	ITS	CHERNEKOFF	RYAN	2	SRF	ATKINSON	BRIAN	21
				ITS	NUSSBAUM	CHRIS	2	SRF	PANAGGIO	TOM	19
ITC	CLEMENSON	EARL	48	ITS	PICARD	MICHAEL	2	SRF	CULLEN	BILL	18
ITC	HUTTO	LOUIS	25					SRF	LUND	NEIL	14
ITC	MOERWALD	MIKI	25	LEG	FUTCH	JAMES	24	SRF	GALLOWAY	CHAD	13
ITC	TAYLOR	ERNEST	18					SRF	MARINO	KEN	13
ITC	MARTIN	TIM	13	SM	CHARBONNEAU	ANDREW	31	SRF	CHARBONNEAU	ANDREW	12
ITC	BOUSTANI	LOUIS	9	SM	BLANCHARD	CLIFF	23	SRF	LADONICZKI	STEVE	8
ITC	KOSTEWICZ	STAN	7	SM	TUCKER	JAMIE	18	SRF	BREWER	STEVE	5
ITC	WILLIAMS	MARK	7	SM	KIROUAC	STEVE	11	SRF	MCKINNON	ABRAHAM	5
ITC	WAECHTER	JIM	5	SM	MAGERO	JAMES	11	SRF	HAYES	RICHARD	4
ITC	BATCHIN	B.H.	4	SM	SANTOS	ALEX	8	SRF	OLSEN	ERIC	4
				SM	BARBEN	JOHN	7	SRF	VORAS	STEVE	4
ITO	WICHT	AL	12	SM	LABOUNTY	JEFF	7	SRF	HAWLEY	ROBIN	3
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ITR	GUENTHER	MIKE	48	SM	CLEMENS	KARL	5	SRF	HAMEL	JERRY	2
ITR	FLYNN	MICHAEL	36	SM	LOWRANCE	CHARLIE	5	SRF	LADONICZKI	JOEL	2
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ITR	KARABLY	DAVE	12	SM	RHOADES	CLIFFORD	3				
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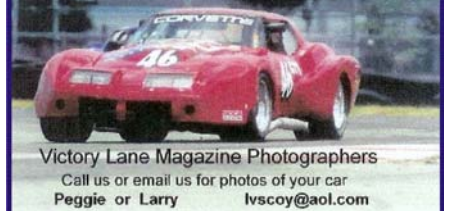
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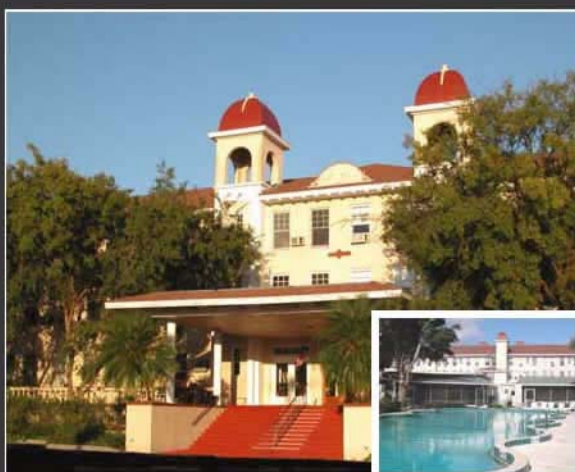
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