

TEAM CONTINENTAL

THE TELL TALE



JUNE 1983

Hi T.C.!

WELL, SORRY ABOUT THE TIMING & ALL THAT OTHER STUFF, BUT ROSE CUPS JUST GOT TOO MUCH IN THE WAY FOR TOO MANY OF US.

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING THIS WEDNESDAY - IF YOU CAN'T MAKE IT, BE SURE AND SHOW AT DRIVER'S TRAINING ON THE 18TH - WE NEED YOU!

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 15TH

HUNG FAR LOWS

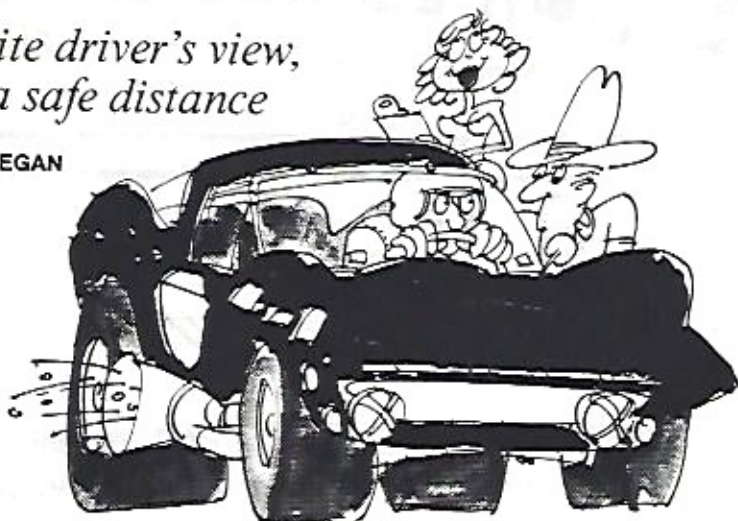
YOU SHOULD ALL KNOW WHERE IT IS
BY NOW --

7:00PM SOCIAL, 8:00PM MEETING

THE CORVETTE RACER

*A Sprite driver's view,
from a safe distance*

BY PETER EGAN



DRAWINGS BY LEO BESTGEN

TO THOSE OF US who raced our diminutive H Production Sprites and similarly high-pitched cars in Midwest Council and SCCA regionals, Corvette drivers were always a breed apart. We spent many weekends pitted next to Corvette teams, adjusting our pathetic tiny Austin valves or performing some other jeweler's chore on our Bug-eyes, watching these fiberglass behemoths and the crews who serviced them out of the corner of one collective eye (we didn't have the nerve to stare with both eyes). Corvette drivers and Sprite drivers didn't mix much, except to borrow the occasional strand of safety wire or half roll of duct tape from one another, but a shortage of information and personal contact didn't prevent us from forming some well developed stereotypes and generalizations.

We knew a few things about Corvette guys:

Corvettes always seemed to be raced by drivers who had crew cuts long after everyone else in the club looked like George Harrison. You got the feeling that if they weren't driving Corvettes, they'd be dropping you for 50 pushups at Camp Lejeune or chewing Copenhagen without taking it out of the can. Corvette guys drove in black Wellington boots while everyone else wore effete moccasins or Nomex booties. They wore open-face helmets with no visors so everyone could see them scowl. When they dressed up to go out at night they wore white nylon windbreakers, white pants, Goodyear caps with the visors pulled down over the eyes and at least one article of clothing with stars & stripes or

crossed checkered flags on it, and they always went out for pizza and beer in a place with bright neon lights.

Corvette drivers adjusted their points with air wrenches and their pit men were sometimes crushed to death by fallen lug nuts. Corvette guys had trailers with six wheels and towed them with brand-new extended cab white pickup trucks with more checkered flags and stars & stripes on them. The trailers had overhead tire racks with tires that were exactly four times as wide as they were tall. These tires cost \$600 a piece and lasted only one practice session before being torn to bits by raw torque.

Corvette drivers never asked any questions at drivers' meetings.

When a Corvette driver started his engine the smoke and noise came out of side pipes the size of storm sewers, and the exhaust pulses threw large chunks of gravel and blew your tent down. When these engines blew up on the track, the concussion and coolant spray left corner workers dripping and dazed for hours. If a Corvette threw a rod through its sump, the resulting oil spill made your Sprite go backwards through Turn 3 for the rest of the season.

Every Corvette driver had at least one gold tooth. Corvette drivers made their money in cattle or lumber, or else they owned more than one gas station and paid men named Frank to run it for them. Corvette drivers themselves had names like Bart or Chuck or Bob, and their last names were usually Johnson. They always had Texas jet pilot accents even if they were from Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

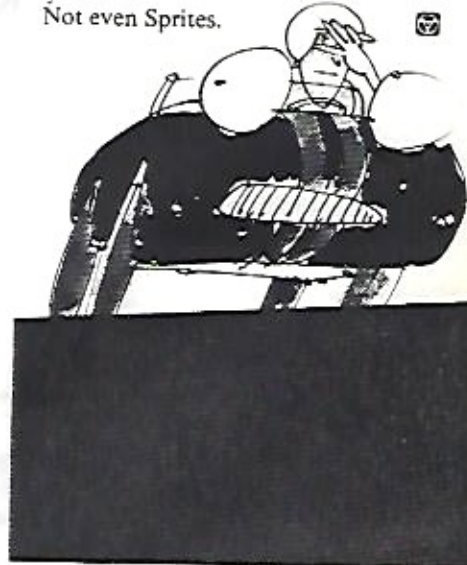
Corvette drivers used hacksaws to set their camber and had tool chests where each tool occupied a whole drawer. The sockets at the small end of their socket sets started at 1 1/4 in. and went upward to sizes that frightened Caterpillar mechanics. Between races, Corvette drivers arc-welded things to their chassis in a blinding shower of sparks. When a Corvette driver jacked up his car, he didn't so much lift the car, as push the earth away from it.

Male Corvette drivers had blonde wives who chain-smoked and had cattle ranch tans and pale blue eyes, while women Corvette drivers were always single because they couldn't find anyone who was man enough to marry them. Corvette drivers never lit their cigars. They just chewed them flat and walked around the pits until they saw the front suspension on a Lotus Seven or the engine in a Sprite. Then they threw the flat, wet cigars on the ground in disgust.

Corvette drivers used approximately 100 gallons of Union 76 racing gas on every lap and had government surplus fuel cells from armored vehicles. While those of us in Sprites, Midgets and Spitfires had to *drive* from one end of the main straight to another, Corvette drivers simply *launched* themselves in a great belch of power and landed at the other end on four smoking tires. Corvette drivers drove on a much shorter track than we did, and their pitboards flew by like fastballs and were impossible for the human eye to read, while we had time to examine the small print on the race marshal's badge-littered vest.

When Corvette drivers massed on the starting grid for the A and B Production races at Elkhart Lake, the announcer used to say, "Ladies and Gentlemen, it's time to shake the dew off the lilies." He didn't say that before the other races, because nothing else thundered, rumbled and shook the ground quite the same way.

Not even Sprites.



TC RACERS PAGE

MEMORIAL WEEKEND - From Seattle to Spokane - everywhere +100 degrees.

Your wandering reporter wandered into SIR on day two of the SCCA double national, so day one is all here-say. From the looks of the TC pits, the heat took it's toll on us and other folks, with several cars already retired before Monday's action.

It was hot everywhere that weekend. Some grown-ups were seen sitting in the Seattle Center fountain, with the rest of the kids - near the McLeod's Auto Auction. The auction brought out about 350 neat cars, but not many serious bidders. However, one '57 Chev sale put some green in the afore-mentioned race budget coffers - so, on to SIR with an empty trailer.

SIR - Monday's National:

Jerry Murch, sometime TC member, was already loaded for home Monday AM with something about pistons touching sparkplugs. Dan Hall, friend of TC, was also ready for the trip home with a fried motor. DuBois and team were trying to diagnose an overheating problem that started on Sunday - Jim was running 2nd in Sunday's race when he chose the pit lane rather than bury the temp gauge any further into the dashboard.

Dave Rue was the local hero with two victories in his Scirrocco, the first on Sunday with a last lap pass on Mike Rickman, the second on Monday with an easier victory over Jeff Scoville - Mike was further back with left-over clutch and engine problems.

The FF & FA race on Monday produced a great FF race, with TC'er Don Crawford running the whole race in the lead pack of three Fords. Don, who not only runs consistently near the front of FF, but also holds the prize for the largest non-race-looking tow vehicle, ran a great race of changing positions, and finished second in FF. The overall winner of the group was Blackwell, in his fast Argo FA.

The GT race brought Jim BuBois out to see if the cooling was improved, and Doug Taylor in his Vette, both in GT-1. The start of this race was beyond belief. As the cars came out onto the straight, supposedly watching for the green flag, the Hargrove Corvette hammered it and got about 10 cars ahead of the pack - you guessed it - green flag. Needless to say, the honest TC'ers DuBois & Taylor were caught with their pants down and tried playing catch-up. Jim ran well for a few laps, 3rd in GT-1, but slowed again with overheating and pitted for a while, then finished. Doug Taylor kept working on the lead Hargrove Vette, but was having braking problems - once we could see both sides of the car as Doug brought 'er into the 3A braking point. Patience began to pay off for Doug, as Hargrove started smoking, and Doug kept gaining. With a lap or two to go, Doug moved into 1st place GT-1 for the finish.

Overall turnout at SIR was surprizingly low for the double national, haven't heard how ICSCC at Spokane went - except for the temperature. ICSCC has joined IRDC in making the June 11/12 SIR race a memorial for Steve Phillips, and has issued a special appeal for attendance.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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