

# KRYDERACING NEWSLETTER

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“HELPING PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR RACING OBJECTIVES”

## TRANS AM

We are already three race weekends into the 2018 season. David Pintaric kicked things off with a Third Place in the TA class at Sebring. At Road Atlanta he was racing for the lead a dozen laps into the race. A spin dropped him to fifth. He charged back to third and should have finished on the podium. But an engine electrical problem left him without power for about a minute sitting at the edge of the track trying to restart the Caddy. After regaining power he was able to salvage a fifth place finish. Back at the shop it was discovered there was no fuel pressure at the time the engine stalled. Changes to the system were made. The team thought they had solved the problem only to have it return and worsen during the Homestead event. It was hard to find since it would come and go. And the frequency of it occurring was increasing. After checking and changing just about everything electrical on the car for three days the problem was found minutes before the start of the race. And this time the problem was truly found – a short frayed wire buried in the wiring harness. David raced from the back row of the grid to finish in fourth place – by .017 seconds. He currently sets third in the TA points standings.

Phil Di Pippo has run only a single 2018 TransAm2 class race, but his Road Atlanta experiences kept the Kryderacing crew busy. A broken shaft in the quick-change differential and damage following a spin into the third turn tirewall kept everyone working between sessions. Twice it looked as if Phil would miss a session due to the amount of work required to get the car back in shape. But the Kryderacing crew managed to finish repairs just as each of the sessions was starting. On race day Phil ran the entire event, but the lack of complete practice sessions limited his learning the track and refining the car set-up. His lap times dropped during the race and a quick pitstop to try a tire pressure adjustment also led to improvements. Phil is still learning these cars and we are looking forward to spending a full day at a race track to let him drive while the team tests suspension adjustments and a lot more.

We did have a discussion with a potential future TransAm client while at Homestead. He was interested in 2019. The TransAm series is healthy and continuing to grow. Several years ago the TA class struggled to have 6-8 cars at each race. Now a dozen seems like a small turnout and twenty has been seen at several events. TA2 saw a gigantic explosion in growth a couple of years ago and as a result has been getting its own races. It has seen fewer cars recently but the fields are still large and competitive. TA3 and TA4 continue to evolve. Neither has ever seen large fields of entrants but interest exists. First one class looks healthier than the other, then they switch roles.

The next TransAm race is for TA2 only and is scheduled for Detroit on the June 2-3 weekend. Phil is currently not planning on participating. Detroit is followed by Indy on June 15-17. TA2 races on Saturday, the 16<sup>th</sup> and TA is on Sunday, the 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **TODD KRYDER**

Todd was Reed's two year younger brother. Like many brothers Todd and Reed were alike in some ways and yet very different in others. One difference was cars. Reed fell in love with cars at an early age. He enjoyed getting his hands dirty while working on them. Todd felt the only thing you needed to get work done on your car was an AAA membership and a trusty mechanic at the local dealer. Reed's vehicle choices seemed to be sporty models. Todd tended towards luxury type vehicles, most of which were out of his (and Reed's) price range. When Reed graduated from college (Mechanical Engineering Degree) he moved to Ohio while Todd (Elementary Education Degree) remained in Illinois after graduation. We still loved him. Sandi and I frequently stopped to visit him when passing through Rockford, Illinois.

Todd passed away late February after suffering declining health for many years due to several serious illnesses. We were with Mom in Florida when we got the news. LuAnn, our sister, still lives in Illinois and handled arrangements.

RIP, brother.

## **TAKE A LOOK AT SCCA'S "SHOP MANUAL"**

There is a section featuring several short videos targeted towards different aspects of SCCA Club Racing. Rob Piekarczyk's talk was to potential racers. Kryderacing has been associated with Rob for a long time. Reed has co-driven with him in endurance races, and Kryderacing has been associated with his personal racing efforts. Rob's advice in the video is well presented. It is definitely worth directing a potential racer towards it for some good advice. And we really want to thank Rob for wearing a Kryderacing shirt during the taping of the video.

## **NELSON LEDGES HAPPENINGS**

We have been told the track's website should become more up-to-date in the near future. For right now the schedule area of the website is available with numerous 2018 listings. Included are two dates (May 23 and June 13) which are targeted for tuning and testing of race cars. You would need to contact the track for information on these two events. You won't find any SCCA dates since those plans have been put off until 2019 for reasons too extensive to go into. There is an incorrect rumor going around that the reason for the delay was due to track safety issues. Nothing could be further from the truth. There was some work which needed to be done, but it was scheduled to be completed before the 2018 season started. There are a lot of dates already reserved at the track for numerous types of events. In addition to what you will find on the official website calendar there are private test sessions by companies and individuals. Kryderacing has been struggling to find an open date which is compatible with our TA2 client's busy schedule. Contact the track for your own dates.

Reed is also accepting any submissions for the [www.nelsonledgeshistory.com](http://www.nelsonledgeshistory.com) website. It's time he started putting some new stuff on the website.

## **SAYINGS**

"Don't monkey with a buzz-saw."

"Moral courage is the result of respect from fellow men."

"You don't know what you don't know."

## MORE OF REED'S 'MUMBLING'S'

Winter allowed a lot of time to reflect on the past as well as plan for the future. Kryderacing has been very busy but there is still time to let the mind roam. This can be good or bad. Lately Reed has been wondering about the future of racing.

### Looking at where racing is going through the eyes of where I started?

First of all, this isn't intended to be a "remembering the good old days" type of article. I also don't want to sound as if I am bad mouthing the current directions some areas of our sport seem to be taking. While my comments are centered on racing, they very easily could be applied to other sports. If you read magazines targeting race spectators, engineers, or teams/shops you may have noticed articles concerning one type of subject over the past year or two. These articles and editorials are concerned about the future of the sport. Why have most types of professional racing been losing spectators and what can be changed with the sport to reverse the trend? Has the sport become so safe that it is no longer attractive to those wishing thrills? Is the attention span of younger generations too short for the longer races of the past? Has the increasing costs of car design, engineering, and event participation lead to smaller participation levels? Is electric car racing the future? There is no doubt a lot of people are concerned about the sport we all love. Change is occurring, and bigger changes are probably on the way.

But first, some personal background:

While a child I often went to the local stock car races with my parents. I built model cars based on what I was watching. I listened to every lap of the Indy 500 on the radio while my family and relatives celebrated Memorial Day at family picnics. I was first attracted to sports car racing while still in high school. I was on the school swimming team and golf squad, but away from school I watched Wide World of Sports for everything on racing, especially Formula 1. Back then you followed these types of racing through magazines, and often the coverage was a couple of months old. It didn't matter. The summer after graduating from high school I took a 300+ mile trip to Elkhart Lake to watch my first road race, the Road America 500. This trip got me grounded since it was against my dad's strict guidelines regarding where I could and could not go with the car. It was also the biggest breaking of his rules I had ever done, at least until the following year when I repeated it. My mom kept him from sending the police after me that year.

Throughout college I played many sports on the intermural level. And I continued my love of racing. Discovering "National Speed Sport News" and "Autoweek" reduced the time delay between a race and reading about it. By this time of my life I was totally hooked on automobiles and especially auto racing. Pursuing a Mechanical Engineering degree came about because of a letter from Ken Miles shortly before he was killed while testing the Ford J-Car. After graduation I landed at Goodyear. It took a few years, but eventually I found myself in Race Tire Development.

During those years I met and married Sandi. We became involved in autocrossing and were officers in the Akron Sports Car Club. Four years after taking our honeymoon in a new Datsun 240Z we turned it into a C-Production class race car for SCCA racing. Did I know I was going to go racing at any time up to this point? Not exactly. When Sandi and I were engaged, and before we bought the Datsun, we were watching a race and I made the following statement to her: "Someday I would like to do that. I won't if you tell me you don't want me to, but I will hate you for it the rest of my life." Now, is that anything to tell your fiancé? She felt it would never happen. We are currently working on our forty-seventh year of marriage.

I bring this background up to point out that my love of racing started at a very young age. And an important part of that love was to actually be a driver. I didn't have the money to pursue it while young, but everything I did was intended to move me closer to it becoming a reality. A year before I actually started racing I met a fellow Goodyear engineer who was pursuing the same goal. We spent most of that year planning and comparing notes. He helped with my decisions on a tow vehicle and a trailer as well as many other steps along the way. One important difference to our approaches was in the level of prep before actually going to a driver's school. He wanted a competitive car before setting foot on a race track while I wanted something which would allow me to get on the track as soon as possible. I didn't need the best race engine, latest transmission, and other highly recommended race parts. I had invested in some suspension modifications, a different rear end set of gears, and the best safety gear my budget allowed. I went to two driver's schools and raced six Regional weekends in 1975. As far as I know, to this day he has never raced.

That's my story of how I got started. I think every child has a similar story, be it racing or being active in other sports. Probably very few of us actually reach our sports related goals. I never made it to being a Formula 1 driver. But I bet the majority of us followed a path in life which somehow shadowed those childhood desires. And that includes those who became diehard fans of many sports. It also includes many people who took up professions combining their love of a sport and their specific labor skills. Most of my fellow Goodyear racing engineers had no desire to race, but they loved the environment and the engineering challenges. Kryderacing has had mechanics who love to work on racecars but no desire to drive. Matt Miller manages our shop and he has an Aeronautical Engineering degree. Matt likes driving his race car, but I think helping others successfully compete is a higher priority for him.

## Competition?

What is it? It is easy to define when you are looking at sports. It is also all around us in many other ways. We are graded in school and that involves competition, whether it is strictly personal or against others. Finding the right partner in life, how you fit in at your place of employment, circle of friends (do you have a 'best friend?'), and an endless list of everyday activities involve competition, whether you realize it or not. Even those who preach that competition is bad are competing against those who feel otherwise. (Competition can lead to bad behavior, but I am not going down that path with this story.)

One way that competition is good is that it pushes us to become better. In racing we want to become better drivers, mechanics, car constructors, organizers, track constructors, announcers, volunteers, emergency crews, flaggers, and on and on. Most of the people I know from racing want to excel at whatever they are doing. The best drivers are never satisfied with their lap times. The same is true for the people who design and build the cars. Teams are always looking for the 'unfair advantages', whether they are legal or not. Rules-makers are always writing thicker and thicker rule books to keep things fair, balance the competition, and improve safety. Everything keeps improving, but lately many of the improvements could better be defined as refinements. Not a bad idea, unless these changes fail to recognize things outside their focus.

Electric car racing is the big eye-opener, but it is not the only change happening. Racing on the local level seems to be thriving with lower budget teams. Meanwhile, NASCAR ovals have been reducing the number of seats in their facilities due to fewer tickets being sold. Traditional road courses are not immune to lower attendance levels. For several years SCCA club racers (and other club level organizations) have found it increasingly difficult to schedule events at traditional pro level tracks due to increasing rental fees. These increases have led to these club organizations looking elsewhere. Several years ago they didn't have many options, but new tracks are being built to meet the needs of these club level organizations and there is also increasing demand for 'country club' facilities. I know of at least one track with a long history of professional and amateur racing which is facing increasing financial problems because of these shifts.

If you look at this from a 'supply and demand' viewpoint there is no doubt the demand for race facilities has increased. But it is due to a wider diversification of usages, not because pro racing is experiencing significant growth. But the older, and historically more successful tracks have continued to focus on professional racing and its demands for making the show bigger, better, and safer. This continues to increase the operational cost to these tracks. Now look at where the new types of racing are operating. Formula E is on city streets. Global Rally Cross is not on traditional tracks. Club racers are moving to less expensive facilities. Unless pro-levels of racing find ways to turn things around it is questionable some traditional tracks will be able to continue operating with their current business plans.

## The Sport, The Show, and The Business

Kryderacing has been involved in all three of these aspects. Those people involved because of the love of the sport are usually the ones found driving, crewing, or working as volunteers. Some can be found in other areas such as writing, photographing, etc. Most of these people do not concern themselves with the money except as a means of staying involved with the sport they love. Then there is the large number of people who like to watch 'The Show'. Fans create an environment which attracts those wishing to make a profit, thus 'The Business' is created. None of these three can exist without the other two. Sure, 'Sport' might exist on its own, but without any facilities other than backroads there would be no 'Show' and those wishing to make a living through involvement would probably starve.

Historically the sport grew into a show which led to related businesses, including track facilities, organizers, and sponsors. What I see today in the uppermost levels of racing is the business portion has grown to the point they are trying to dictate what the sport should be. They are looking at ways to continue or increase the current revenue stream. When there is a downturn in business they look for ways to make changes to maintain previous profit levels. Some succeed and some don't. Lately the frequency of these changes being made leads many to believe the sport is in trouble.

Another way to look at this is the sport's pursuit of perfection. Perfection through safety improvements. Perfection in making sure everyone is legally compliant and as equal as possible in performance. Perfection in the quality of the "Show" for spectators. There is nothing wrong with these pursuits. However, the process of moving towards perfection usually means eliminating non-perfection. In almost every case (not just racing) of pursuing perfection the steps along the way end up redefining the endeavor. As teams, tracks, and racing organizations strive for perfection those who are only near-perfect increasingly fall by the wayside. For a variety of reasons they cannot keep up with what is transpiring. If pro-levels of our sport keeps going in its current direction we will eventually end up with one perfect race at the only perfect track featuring the lone perfect car and team. Who will be watching? I am not saying we should stop pursuing perfection. But maybe we need to examine the definition(s) of perfection for our sport. And the pathways to achieve them.

Summary:

From my viewpoint much of motorsports is healthy and growing. But its growth is in the variety of activities, no longer in the narrow fields of traditional types of competition. There was a time when the lower levels of motorsport tried to copy everything the top levels did. Now might be a good time for the top levels to take a look at what is succeeding in the lower levels.

Check [www.kryderacing.com](http://www.kryderacing.com) for weekly updates.