

KRYDERACING NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 2

February 10, 2009

“HELPING PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR RACING OBJECTIVES”

It's been awfully cold outside. And very white. We have experienced several days with temperatures below zero. And it seems like the ground has been covered with snow all winter. The shop heating bills have been high. The good news is we have been busier than previous winters.

DAYTONA GRAND AM

One member of the Kryderacing group has not been suffering quite as much as the rest of us. Shop Manager Matt Miller spent a few January days in Florida. As mentioned last issue, he has been helping some past friends get started with their Grand American Koni Challenge ST program. When Matt started racing there were a bunch of his hometown friends who also got the racing bug about the same time. The group raced mainly ITS style cars and there were enough of them to almost have their own race group. They established their own paddock area at Mid-Ohio. Seeing ten to twenty cars in the area was not uncommon. Last year two of them, Dan Harding and Alan Milarcik decided to try professional racing. For crew, the rest of the “New Philly Bunch” (as they were called), including Matt, joined to help build and campaign the car. Many of these individuals have crewing experience from participation in Kryderacing professional efforts with our own vehicles and those of clients, most recently in Grand Am Koni and Rolex.

Pirate Racing's (their name) first outing went better than the average rookie team. Their Mazda RX-8 debut was at the Daytona Test Days in early January. The first race was the 3-Hour Daytona event late in January. There were a few problems (inconsistent ABS brakes) and a spin or two, but the drivers and team got off to a good start with a finish and some prize money.

Matt Miller almost didn't make it back to Canal Fulton when he had a problem with the airline. At check-in he was upgraded to First Class. He questioned it but accepted the fact that this was his new assigned seat. He had never requested, and certainly didn't pay for, an upgrade. After becoming comfortable in his big seat, someone else boarded with the same seat assignment. Matt had always believed he was in the wrong seat and was ready to move. But there were two problems. His original seat had been reassigned, and the flight crew wanted to put the second Matt Miller (now you know the basis for the confusion), the one who had paid for the First Class treatment, back in Coach Class. It got to the point airport security was about to be called. You will have to ask Matt for the complete story.

Several Kryderacing clients were also in Daytona to watch both the Koni and Rolex races. Mike Olivier, Rob Piekarczyk, and Eddy Eckert probably opted for lifting cans of beer instead of tools. We have also heard a few tales regarding a trip to the local go-kart track. Most racers reading this will understand why when I say: “They were asked to leave”.

YOUTUBE

Anyone who knows Matt Miller, knows he can spend a lot of time on the internet. He always has a wealth of information about what is happening in the racing world, especially as it impacts Kryderacing client vehicles. The other day he said someone must have dumped their old IMSA videos onto YouTube. He found a large selection from the eighties and nineties. He also found footage of the Kryderacing GTU cars in many of the selections. He said it would be great if someone assembled collections of these old TV shows for sale. (Brock, are you reading this? You were the announcer in many of them.)

CLIENT PROJECTS IN THE SHOP

There is a Mustang in the shop being built for SCCA's T-2 class. This is a complete build-up for long-time client Brett Mars. It presents some challenges for several different reasons. First of all, there are few, if any, fully prepared Mustangs running in the class. Thus, there is virtually no knowledge to be learned from other competitors. And the SCCA rules are in a state of flux with respect to both the class and the vehicle. Currently the car appears to be slightly underpowered for the class but no one has built one to the maximum allowed by the rules to confirm this.

The Nissan NX2000 we sold last winter is being fitted with a new limited slip differential. This is occurring after lengthy research resulted in four options. The first was the viscous style already found in the car. These work reasonably well when new but are not durable when used for racing. The second was to weld the differential. This approach is sometimes called the "poor-man's limited slip". We have experience with these in rear-wheel drive cars, but are hesitant to attempt it with a front wheel drive. Of the remaining two LSD's we found, the better looking one would need to be imported and could not be returned. It also cost four times the amount of the one we found available in the U.S. Guess which one was selected?

Chris Dercole's ITR class Mustang has been in and out of the shop during the month of January. A variety of suspension updates were the focus of most of the work. Last year was Chris's first as a racer and he did very well. But his beautiful red Mustang, while capable of running up front, was never competitive with the top cars in his class. He will be closer in 2009.

David Pintaric's Viper is also being gone over in preparation for the 2009 season. No radical changes are planned for this 2008 NASA ST2 National Champion. We just want to make sure everything is as it should be. For example, the need for a new steering rack was discovered. David will probably concentrate on SCCA events in 2009 in the T-1 class. By the way, there is a second Viper setting in the shop which can be purchased from its owner. We don't know the asking price, but the car has no damage and it won races in both the SCCA and NASA in 2008.

Bill Pintaric's GTL class Nissan is also getting a complete physical in preparation for the new season. But we don't know which engine to run. Several years ago the SCCA combined the GT4 and GT5 classes to create GTL. They tried to equate the two classes. Bill's car was a GT4, but we installed the (smaller) GT5 engine when it appeared the rules would favor it at the SCCA National Run-Offs at Heartland Park. In 2009 the Run-Offs are moving to Road America's Elkhart Lake and the (larger) GT4 engine is looking like the better choice, at least on paper.

The Kryderacing Nissan 240SX which we ran in SCCA's ITS and EP classes last year will continue progressing towards total EP usage for the upcoming year. We plan on leaving it in the lower prep ITS class through the April Double Driver's School at Nelson Ledges Road Course before installing the EP prepared engine. By the way, it is available for rent at the Driver's School.

TECH TIP: TRACKSIDE TEAM MANAGER?

The following isn't your normal mechanical tech tip. It can apply to any style of racing, Small race teams may not recognize this issue because everyone on the team generally can do anything, and usually does. But the bigger the team, the more critical this becomes. It is especially valuable in endurance style racing where the team has larger quantities of personnel and duties to perform. The endurance environment is also more likely to produce unexpected problems requiring immediate attention and solutions.

If you have spent much time around Reed or Sandi during their professional endurance racing programs you have already heard the following story and its conclusions. When Reed worked as a Tire Development Engineer for Goodyear he observed the managers of the best teams rarely got their hands dirty. These leaders may have been extremely intelligent and well qualified for their positions, but it looked as if they were doing very little actual work. At first Reed assumed they were acting in an elite manner simply because of their personal status. But as time passed and Kryderacing entered the professional ranks it became apparent this conclusion was totally incorrect, especially with the best teams.

Any sizable team needs someone to watch the team as a whole. Sounds easy, but in fact very few teams actually do it. In most cases the person assigned to this job performs their duties well. And they continue to do so until a problem arises. With most teams this person then becomes involved in solving the crisis, frequently leading these efforts. Usually this person is the best choice for fixing the problem. But the Team Manager's job gets minimized or totally neglected when this happens.

We normally attacked this problem from two different angles. Every crew member had an assigned job(s). When problems arose in other areas, they were still expected to complete their assignments. For example, a crew member assigned responsibility for brakes might be required to help with an unexpected differential swap. But when the car was ready to go back on track no one needed to ask about brake condition. They brake responsibilities had been handled. The same was true for making sure there was fuel in the car, checking tires, and numerous other items. We strongly encouraged crew members to constantly check with their teammates to see if jobs were done or if help was needed. But personal responsibility was the priority.

The second thing we did was to assign someone to be the Team Manager. This was a different job from Chief Mechanic. Qualifications for Team Manager included a good overall understanding of everything. They had to have basic knowledge of the vehicle mechanical workings, understand race strategy, know the rule book, have had previous experience with these types of races, and be able to function as a team member. They usually spent their time observing the team actions as a whole. If there was an unexpected problem they made sure the right people were working on it. Then they concentrated on

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making sure the rest of the jobs were being completed. In over a quarter century of racing we have found most individuals assigned this job are not as good at it as we had hoped. Their main weakness is the one mentioned above. They are drawn into solving a problem and neglect the overall picture. Sandi started handling these duties during Reed's latter year's of professional driving. Reed has handled them when required for clients since then.

A perfect example of someone doing this job in the correct manner was observed year's ago at Lime Rock Park. Kryderacing was running our GTU Nissan and we were paddocked next to the Roush Mustang team for the upcoming IMSA GT weekend. For days we observed their Team Manager basically standing around doing nothing. But when we looked closer we noticed he never was too far from the action of the crew (paddock and pits), and was always watching their activities. Occasionally he would walk over and hold a short discussion with a mechanic, and sometimes (usually immediately before or after a session) hold a very brief meeting with the group. The Roush Team was extremely successful in those days. The Team Manager's name was Lee White. He currently heads up Toyota's racing efforts.

Hopefully the above Tip will be useful to you. If you need personnel, Kryderacing can help any program, whether they need the complete team or an individual. We still have the people and their expertise that contributed to our successes with both our own vehicles and those of our clients. Contact us if you need mechanics, catering, logistics, timing, race strategy, or managing assistance.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE ITEMS

February 19-21

The SCCA National Convention is scheduled for these dates. Reed and Sandi have their reservations. Reed is Regional Executive and Sandi is Treasurer for the Mahoning Valley Region. This convention is always a good place to learn details about the latest changes and future plans of the Sports Car Club of America. This year's convention is in Las Vegas. There will probably be a couple of news items in the next newsletter regarding things we have learned. Provided we didn't oversleep because of staying out too late.

February 28-March 8

The annual Cleveland Car Show should have one or two Kryderacing assisted vehicles on display. The Mazda display should include the Mazda MX5 Reed co-drove in last year's 24-Hour Longest Day of Nelson Ledges race. The car was built by the students attending the Ohio Technical Center. The full story of this car is included in previous newsletters found on our website.

The second car on display could be Chris Dercole's ITR class Mustang. It will be part of the Neohio Region's display, depending on the allotted space from the show organizers.

March 28

The Neohio Region of the SCCA will be holding a Competition Clinic at the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center in Brecksville, Ohio. These day-long clinics are part of an ongoing tradition and consist of a series of classroom sessions aimed at the racer and soon-to-be-racer. Traditional subjects include suspension, brakes, tires, data acquisition, car preparation, solo events, road racing, and more. Contact Bob Roberts for details. Call 330-607-2343 (cell) or email him at broberts@babcox.com.

April 17

The Mahoning Valley Region of the SCCA will be hosting a PDX at Nelson Ledges Road Course. These events are aimed at drivers who want to improve their high performance driving skills while minimizing risks involved in actual racing. The costs are minimal and most participants use their personal street vehicles. Reed will be the Chief Instructor for the day. For more information visit www.mvrscga.org.

April 18-19

For the more serious minded drivers, the MVR weekend at Nelson Ledges Road Course continues with a Double Drivers School. Drivers need to bring legal SCCA race prepared vehicles. The amount of time on track is large and everyone's goal is to receive good enough grades to move onto an actual Regional race weekend. While there is a written criteria for passing the program, most instructors have one main pass/fail question: Does this driver have the skills which would make me feel safe racing against them? Again it's www.mvrscga.org for more details.