

KRYDERACING NEWSLETTER

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“HELPING PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR RACING OBJECTIVES”

NELSON LEDGES ROAD COURSE – Part 1

For those of you who are not aware of what has been happening; sit down, buckle up, and hold on. It has been a wild ride. What follows is a very brief summary (strictly from our viewpoint) of a few developments we are knowledgeable in:

Prior to May 3-4 motorcycle event there had been a Safety Training Day, a Funday, and a car manufacturer test session. It was evident the winter had been very damaging to the track surface and the still soft, water soaked ground was not helping matters. The cars were creating pavement problems by opening up pot holes at a greater rate than any time in the past. The problems continued during an early May motorcycle weekend. Many riders started to say they could not continue to race at the track if these conditions were not dealt with.

Following the weekend the motorcycle organizer contacted the track owner and expressed his feelings. He was very unhappy with the current management (and there apparently had been tension for years) and basically said either they go and track repairs are made, or his group could no longer run at the track. In a very short period of time the old management was replaced by new management (motorcycle organizer). Those who showed up for the May 10 Funday (and had missed the cancellation notice on the website) found the old management team packing their belongings.

The new manager asked Reed if he could help with the car events. The old management was still handling the website and they removed many of the scheduled events they had been directly responsible for, such as Fundays. Reed asked them to put the May 24-25 Funday events back on the website calendar and they agreed. As Reed and Sandi traveled to Canada for the TransAm event (held a week before the rescheduled Funday events) they made a long list of items (from ambulance to toilet paper) needed to put on this minimal track event. While in Canada they also received numerous communications asking what was happening at the track. Everyone was told what little was known and someone would get back to them early the following week. There were attempts to contact Todd (the new manager) with a list of these people who needed questions answered.

While traveling home on Saturday evening it was discovered the May 24-25 Fundays had been cancelled - again. Follow-up calls to Kerrie revealed the decision had been made by Scott, part of the old management team. Todd still hadn't returned any calls and an assumption was made that the old management was back in place. That assumption turned out to be incorrect, as was discovered after posting that Todd may have been gone already. Apologies were posted and made personally to Todd.

Not knowing the status of many things, a decision was made to go to the track on May 24 to remove the Kryderacing pace car and racing gas. On Friday, May 23 we talked with Todd to check on ability to get in the track and found out there was a meeting being planned between him, Scott, and the track owner on the 24th. The time had not been finalized. We arrived early on the 24th and decided to simply wait to see what happened. Inspection of the track surface showed Scott's decision to cancel the Fundays was a wise one. Mid-afternoon saw the arrival of track owner Marv Drucker and his son, Rick. Scott was there, but we never saw Todd. Later on we found out he had another obligation. When the meeting was over we felt the Druckers had a good understanding of the track's surface problems. Rick also indicated to us it was okay to leave the pace car and race fuel at the track until some final decisions were made.

One week later we were at Mid-Ohio when we found out Todd had pavers making some major repairs to the track. This was fantastic news and we spread the word as much as we could amongst the racers at Mid-Ohio. The report we received at Mid-Ohio came from a racer who had just talked with Todd and been told there was more than a 1000 feet of track being paved. This led to another incorrect assumption.

Todd had a motorcycle event scheduled for June 7-8 and we traveled to the track on June 6. An inspection of the track revealed the repairs were not exactly as reported. Instead of shoulder-to-shoulder repaving in a couple of areas there were a large number of areas where the track had been dug up and quality patching (not hot patches) had been done. This actually repaired more of the problems than the "shoulder-to-shoulder" activity first envisioned.

We also finally met Todd. He seemed to have his act together and to be a nice person. His failures to return calls and reply to emails was also better understood when we heard the amount of activities other than the track he is involved with.

Meanwhile, disagreements were continuing between old and new management. Most of these concerned ownership of equipment such as emergency trucks, a tractor for mowing, scales, radios, and so on. Old management felt they owned the stuff and new management felt they belonged to the track. Who is correct is not a discussion for this newsletter. Old management removed everything they thought they owned. This left new management with little more than pavement, rapidly growing grass, and mostly empty buildings.

The next event at the track was the Finger Lakes Region SCCA Regional races. There was also a Tune & Test/Funday planned on the Friday of the race weekend. The event attracted 68 entrants, which was down slightly in comparison to recent years. Without the equipment mentioned above there were problems the event organizers, entrants, and track management had to deal with. The repairs made previously to the track were welcome, but new problem areas with the pavement opened up. Radios and emergency vehicles were sourced by the Region conducting the event. Even though mowing was progressing, the vast majority of the facility had uncut (and very tall) grass. This was a major criticism by both competitors who either could not paddock in areas they were used to or had to clear an area of the tall grass. To make matters worse, the water holding tank (important for the restrooms) started having problems and eventually failed on Sunday. Most of the competitors we talked with left the facility with a good understanding of what the challenges were facing the new management, but also feeling improvements were necessary before they would return.

This left the Mahoning Valley Region with a problem concerning their scheduled July 26-27 Regional race weekend. The word of the track's problems was spreading to other competitors and it looked like attracting enough entrants to pay the bills was going to be a major problem. Even if improvements were made during the last week in June and the first couple of weeks in July it was questionable the word would spread enough to make people change their minds and attend the event. Most racers make up their minds on schedules several weeks in advance. This subject was discussed at length during their July 1 membership meeting before it was decided to cancel the July event. The September races were left on the schedule with the belief improvements would be made to the track.

About a dozen participants attended Fundays on both July 5 and 6. The attendance was less than what was typical last year, but these were newly added days and there was still a lot of confusion regarding which website to go to for reliable information. The progress with the mowing was very evident. There had also been some work done with the pavement, but once again new holes opened up during the weekend. Most people felt the track was usable, but less than desirable.

During the July 5th Funday members of the SCCA met with Marv and Rick Drucker to discuss what was necessary for the September MVR Regional races to be held. There were about a dozen participants including officials, corner workers, and several drivers. While no decisions were made it was a productive meeting with a lot of information exchanged. Most of the issues were already being addressed by new management. Many had backup plans if they could not be solved in time for the race weekend. The pavement condition was the one big problem which everyone agreed needed improvements beyond those already planned and in progress. Several ideas were going to be investigated.

A week later two more Fundays were held. The old website still listed these events and the new site, www.nelsonledgesracecomplex.com, was up and running a couple of days before the event. Saturday had beautiful weather and around twenty drivers took advantage of it. Sunday featured all kinds of weather (someone even said they saw what looked like the remains of a tornado shortly after one extremely wet and windy few minutes), but a dozen participants still participated. Mowing (three farmers were cutting and bailing) was still progressing and the track facility was looking a lot better. Pavement continued to be a problem, but meetings with a race track pavement repair specialist were being scheduled.

End of Part 1: Upcoming – big improvements in several areas, including pavement repairs, noted during July 26-27 weekend. Things appear to be going in the right direction.

CLIENT RACING

May 2-4: Matt Carson traveled to the SCCA Blackhawk Farms Major with a new Kryderacing client. Bob MacDonald has raced numerous cars over the years and has spent the last few behind the wheel of a Spec Miata. Bob also runs a business which has been doing well enough to keep him away from the race tracks, and away from prepping the car. For 2014 we have worked out an arrangement where we supply assistance both at home and on the road. Blackhawk Farms was the first event in this new arrangement. It was also a new track for Bob. He steadily improved over the weekend and while his positions on the grids were not at the front, the time behind pole position shrunk with each session and never was large. Unfortunately a broken differential ended his Sunday race early.

May 8-10: It had to happen. After running near the top in all of his 2013 TransAm events and earning "Rookie of the Year" in recognition of it, David Pintaric finally achieved a podium finish. During the Road Atlanta event he qualified sixth fastest, quickly moved to fifth in the early laps of the race, and following misfortunes of others he found himself in third. When the last of several caution periods ended, and only a couple of laps left in the race, David engaged in a wheel-to-wheel battle with second-place qualifier Amy Ruman and 2012 Champion Simon Gregg for the final podium spot. David's rearview camera recording showed some wild passing attempts. It was a hard earned and well deserved third place finish. It also moved him into seventh place in the TA points after two disappointing races earlier in the season.

May 15-17: It was a short turnaround between Road Atlanta and Mosport. The car returned to the shop on Sunday, received a thorough inspection (which led to an engine swap), and was loaded Tuesday evening for its Wednesday trip to Canada. David once again qualified sixth. Early in the race he moved to fifth, only to drop back to sixth a few laps later. Partway through the race David pitted for a flat tire. The crew did a great job and got David back on track without losing a lap. A caution period allowed him to catch up, but there were still a lot of cars in front of him. As the race went on he fought his way to a fourth place finish, passing for that position on the last lap. David and the team had run two fantastic races and posted great finishes on back-to-back weekends. He now found himself in fourth place in the season points.

May 30-June 1: David qualified fourth at the New Jersey Motorsports Park. But when the race started he had already left the facility in order to attend to a family problem. While the team was disappointed about not racing, everyone has always admired David's priorities and understood his decision.

May 30-June 1: Bob MacDonald was racing his Spec Miata at the Mid-Ohio Majors event. Reed and Sandi were providing trackside support this weekend. Bob was still struggling with finding enough speed to get to the front end of the field. Recent changes made to the car had resulted in lap times a second faster than in the past, but it seemed as if everyone was going faster. It was frustrating and following the weekend Bob made the decision to test ideas during Regional racing events rather than concentrating on Majors.

June 14-15: Bob's first Regional weekend was at the Steel Cities event at Pittsburgh International Race Complex. Kryderacing was providing trackside support for Bob and two others during the weekend. Bob finished fourth in his two Spec Miata races and was always near the front. Progress was made but other areas still needed investigation. The Torsen part of the differential was becoming a prime suspect. Bill Pintaric was also at the track racing his GT-Lite Nissan. Bill won both days. Meanwhile, Kristofer Wright posted a win in our rental Spec Miata. He had qualified fifth for the Saturday race. At the start of the race he moved to third by turn one, had second by the end of the first lap, and took the lead several laps later. He never had much of a lead, but no one ever passed him. He didn't race on Sunday.

June 19-21: The Trans-Am Series was at Elkhart Lake's Road America with NASCAR's Nationwide Series. It was a wet weekend both on and off the track. NASCAR teams had the paved paddock area and this left the T/A teams dealing with transporters becoming stuck in the mud. This was a major problem during both arrival and departure. On-track sessions were both wet and dry. Fortunately both qualifying and race sessions were basically dry. David experienced a transmission problem on the way to the qualifying session. It was easily repaired, but the lack of a qualifying time relegated him to the back of the large grid for the race. He quickly moved past competitors until he came upon 2012 Champion Simon Gregg. After many laps he out-braked Simon going into Canada Corner. Unfortunately his entry speed also put him into the gravel trap. A broken axle was discovered after the race. Did it contribute to the mishap?

June 20-21: Doug Weaver came down from Canada to resume his 2013 racing exploits in the rental Spec Miata. He had a lot to live up to after the young renter had won with the car at PIRC. The qualifying session on Saturday was still damp from a recent shower. We and a few others opted for rain tires while many felt the track was dry enough for slicks. Doug 8930 Indian Hill Cir NW ~ Canal Fulton, OH 44614-8860 ~ 330-854-4889 ~330-854-4672 FAX~ KRYDERACING@aol.com ~www.kryderacing.com

looked good on the track during the session, but the surprise came when the grid was posted. He was on the pole by a full two seconds over the second place car. Everyone knew this wouldn't last when the races were run in the dry, but Doug did run competitively all weekend, posting top five finishes and setting a new fast time for both him and the car. What is surprising about all this is that the car is a rental and does not have the high dollar secret "tweaks" found on many front runners. It also has the 'presumably slower' 1.6 liter engine. All Kryderacing does is make sure everything is in good working order. Having a couple of talented drivers doesn't hurt appearances.

THE HAWK

Fifty years is a long time. But that is how many consecutive years Reed has been making at least one annual visit to Road America's Elkhart Lake. His first visit was as a spectator at the 1965 Road America 500 on Labor Day weekend. Since then he has raced many times as both an amateur and a professional. He has also served as an instructor for several types of events. And on years he couldn't participate as a driver, he found a weekend to be a spectator. By the way, Sandi also has a long streak going as she first attended the track in 1971 shortly after she and Reed married. Sandi also discovered she liked bratwurst on that weekend, but that's another story.

Anyway, The HAWK is Brian Redman's annual vintage racing affair. It is one of the biggest vintage events in the country. We had never been to an event of this scale and it was quite an experience. Several years ago we visited the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix and enjoyed that experience. But the two events are quite different from the standpoint of vehicles participating. While many were the same, the bulk of Pittsburgh's entry was older (think pre-1960) while most of the HAWK entry was newer. One HAWK race featured 60-some high horsepower modern racecars. Most of them were TransAm or IMSA GTO. Can-Am, F5000, F-1, and others were featured in different races. One amazing sight was when most of these cars were driven several miles from the track to the downtown streets of Elkhart Lake. They were parked there for a couple of hours so thousands of people in attendance could get close-up views and talk with the owners and drivers. When was the last time you had a Surtees F5000 car pull up to the curb in front of you to park? It probably was the same car David Hobbs drove at Mid-Ohio during Reed and Sandi's first date at a race track.

We saw a large number of vehicles we had raced against during our IMSA years. We saw fewer familiar faces than we expected, but did visit with Dorsey Schroeder, Bob Leitzinger, Frank Honsowetz, and a few others. We definitely want to return for a future event, but this time with our rebuilt IMSA GTU car.

QUOTES TO LIVE BY:

"The best is yet to come."

"One thing you can give and still keep is your word."

"There are times when you should raise yourself above the conflict."

"To spell out the obvious is often to call it into question."

CLOSING COMMENT (Reed)

Have any of you watched the "Cosmos" series on television? It wrapped up on June 9th. Like many programs there was a final section summarizing much of what had been presented. One comment which struck me was "The more science belongs to all of us, the less likely it is to be misused." Throughout the series there had been references to discoveries which had been made years before they became known to the general public. In some cases the knowledge was kept secret for hundreds of years. Rarely was it the scientists who withheld their discoveries. More frequently it was government or religious organizations. Usually the reason behind keeping the secret was selfishness with the power gained from the information.

"I know something you don't" was (maybe still is) a frequent taunt between kids. Saying it made one feel superior to whoever was listening. We all have reasons for keeping secrets. Some are probably very good reasons. But if your reason is to position yourself as more intelligent than someone else, perhaps you should reconsider. Knowledge is a form of power. Keeping it hidden and using it to try to manipulate others is a form of selfishness. Everyone, including you, will advance faster and further when it is shared.