

Race Director's Report

Cindy Armstrong

St. Lawrence Automobile Club

Based on an extensive analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of how we conduct business in the Race Division, conducted during my first year as Race Director in 2008, several initiatives were undertaken this year to lay a stronger foundation for the future.

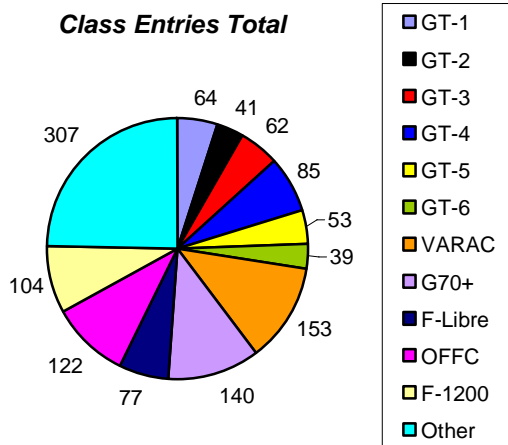
Spring Fling was reinstated. This event will be sustainable thanks to *Shannonville Motorsport Park* partnering with CASC-OR to reduce our joint financial exposure and to *St. Lawrence Automobile Club* for offering to organize the event. Traditionally solely a Race Division event, in 2009 Spring Fling was opened up to the SoloSprint and AutoSlalom competitors and will also be the primary pre-season test venue for Vintage racers in 2010. In conjunction with competitor testing, annual technical inspections are performed to reduce the workload and wait times at the first scheduled race event, as well as providing a venue for training for new scrutineers. Training for select groups of other official's was conducted (Clerk of the Course, Starter and Pit Lane officials), and this event provides two days for flag marshalls to gain experience and signatures toward their licence. Both SMP and St. LAC have already committed to reprising their roles in 2010 and have our deepest gratitude.

A second CASC-OR sanctioned race school was instituted to increase capacity for new racers in the region. This school attracted a cadre of talented and generous instructors from a variety of our member clubs as well as a phalanx of track workers supplied by both *St. Lawrence Automobile Club* and *Canadian Race Communications Association*. Students were provided with an outstanding experience thanks to the expertise and diligence of Bob Armstrong (Chief Instructor), Eric Brunner (St. LAC – team leader) and Marty Cooper (CRCA – team leader). This event is on the schedule again for 2010.

There were several capital purchases made to enhance pit lane safety. A new mobile, purpose-built radar display and bi-directional radar gun provide both competitors and pit lane officials with accurate, visible speed indicators. Helmets for pit lane officials provide additional personal protection. High-visibility, flame-retardant vests will be added for further protection of pit lane officials in 2010.

Mike Nilson and Mary McClure deserve special thanks for taking the initiative and spending the necessary hours to inventory, sort and organize the CASC-OR trailer.

Despite the downturn in the economy at the beginning of 2009, the fear that this would negatively impact participation in regional racing was mostly unrealized. In fact, total entries were up from 1140 last year to 1247 this year, in part due to the introduction of a CASC-OR class at the Honda Indy weekend.



While there was significant growth in the GT-1 and GT-2 classes, up 25% and 41% respectively, there was an overall decline of just over 6% in GT Sprints entries.

G70+ entries maintained the status quo, after a significant increase last year, and VARAC entries rose by an impressive 67%.

Despite a mid-season conflict within the OFFC resulting in lower entries during the second half of the season, there was an overall increase in open-wheel class participation of just over 8%, thanks to a surge in participation in the FV1200 series, up 35%, and a slight increase in Formula Libre participation, up 6%.

Two non-points endurance races were run again this year. Both races once again showed an increased entry; the spring Sundowner entry was 28 while the fall Warbonnet had 40 cars on the grid. A significant number of sedan racers have voiced a preference for more endurance style races on regional weekends to allow car/cost sharing and a reduced time commitment. A rule set has been developed and a new regional race series to respond to this demand will be introduced in 2010.

As in the past few years, complimentary crew and guest gate tickets continue to attract more people to regional racing. The complimentary weekend program that was added as an adjunct to this initiative reached an increased number of spectators again this year, thanks to the ingenuity of Paul Einarson who last year sourced and donated a 'distribution' box for Mosport and who, this year, donated additional boxes for Shannonville and Calabogie Motorsport Parks. The programs are zealously sought after and are a great method for distributing information about CASC-OR racing activities to the general public.

This year has seen an increase in the dialogue surrounding competitor behaviour on-track and the reaction thereto – penalties or lack thereof - by race officials. This is an area that warrants additional investigation and action.

The Race Committee and the Ontario Race Organizers (ORO) meet regularly throughout the year and I would like to thank each of the committee members for contributing their valuable time and expertise in support of racing activities in Ontario Region. 2009 also saw a number of other individuals in regular attendance at these meetings as interested parties. With our collective wisdom we continue to evolve to ensure that Ontario Region remains the "Place to Race". There are a number of initiatives already underway for next year.

<u>Race Committee</u>	<u>ORO</u>
Peter Carpenko*	Paul Anderson (CRDA)
Brian Graham*	Gianni Biral (DAC)
Walter Davies	Bill Bryan (CTA)
Dave King	Marty Cooper (CRCA)
Mary Lobban	Richard Dobbs (MMS)
Bob McCallum	Paul Einarson (BARC)
George McCullough	John Kinnear (St. LAC)
	Anne McCallum (Registrar)
	Mike Nilson (MCO)
	Grant Rutland (BEMC)
*Driver reps	Stefan Wiesen (VARAC)

On behalf of the region's competitors I would like to extend thanks to the countless unnamed volunteers, without whose tireless efforts and dedication we could not race! We recognize that it is only through your hard work that we are able to play equally hard. Hopefully the show matches the level of effort you expend!

The 2010 race season will start with Spring Fling on April 23/24, followed shortly thereafter by two racing schools, then eight regional race weekends as well as Sundowner on the Victoria Day weekend and the Vintage Festival. With all of this activity all of our participants can anticipate a bigger and better season in 2010!