



BY DEWITT BOYD

Below are names of what-I'll-call "Stopwatcher area people" who participated in the 1995 Solo II (autocross) National Championship runoffs held at Topeka, Kansas (after years at Salina) in September. Some moved away, others moved away and back again and some never lived in this area but whose names should be at least remotely familiar to Autocrossroads readers and/or those who read autocross and Solo II results elsewhere in the Stopwatcher.

Here they are by name, class and car (NC designates '95 National Champion): John Ames, Super Stock NC, '93 Mazda RX-7; G.H. Sharp, '93 Mazda RX-7; Patty Frye, SS Ladies, '93 RX-7; Terry Baker, A Stock, '95 Porsche 911; Jim Shebest BS, '88 Mazda RX-7; Alex Noordergraaf and Vince Bly, CS, Toyota MR2 (both); Neal Sapp, CS, oops, CSP (registered but didn't run, no car); Lisa Noordergraaf, CSL, Toyota MR2; Dean Sapp (NC last year, 2nd of 42 this year) and Jeff Fields, FS, both drove Dean's '92 Chevy Camaro; Andy Hollis NC, CSL, Mazda MX6 (yes, husband and wife both are national champs); Lane Sanders, C Street Prepared (national champ last year, 3rd of 27 this year), '85 Honda Civic; Chuck Sieber, E Modified, '66 Lotus Super-duper 7; Chuck Meyers, DM, '90 Caterham Seven; John F. Kelly, Jr. (North American Pylon head guru) and daughter Katie, DM (both), '94 Westfield Roadster (both); Dick Rasmussen, CM, Van Diemen RF85; David Frye, CM, Tiga S2000; and, George Bowland NC (3rd time), AM, BBR Special (BBR translation, Bowland Boys Racing).

The Solo II Championship scoring format consists of totalling each competitor's best of three run times on two different courses. George Bowland's time was the best of all (700 or more) entrants, as were his accomplishments in '88, '93 and '94. His son, Todd Bowland, an engineer who created the BBR Specials, also took the top honors in 1990. I'm sure the FTD hopefuls on the eastern seaboard are thankful that George moved from Fairfax County, VA, to Gahanna, Ohio, 2 or 3 years ago. Son Todd, last I heard, had joined one of the big-time Indy Car crews where he could ply his high performance engineering expertise.

Most of the information above was gleaned from a complete set of the '95 Solo II results which were passed on to me from Tom Martin who obtained them by Internet, or whatever, from, of all places, the University of Utah — I don't get the connection but there must be one. Next week my aim is to show the car-make population by Stock class. Stock class info is more representative of the hot/popular cars used/bought by extremely serious autocrossers. There have been interesting changes since my last such study.

Screech.

The 46th Press-on Regardless Rally

by Fred Cochran

"On State Street, That Great Street — They Do Things They Never Do On Broadway".

It (the Press-on-Regardless) began again; for the 46th time, on State Street at Max and Emily's Deli in beautiful down town Alma, Michigan. Thursday evening's festivities included closing off State Street to all but rally traffic.

The entries in this year's events were almost divided between the bizarre and the geriatric genre. While the POR is not a stage rally (for the past few years, anyway), it drew some of the best known "pro" rallyists from the 50 states. Probably fewer than one in 10 readers can say they're familiar with the name Scott Harvey, but Scott has hauled down more championships in the past 30 years than anyone I've heard of, and he did it when the "woods" were full of Indians, too (read: lots of heavy competition).

Walt Kammer rolled down from the Buffalo area of New York with understanding navigator Jackie Adams. He's driven more "pro-rally" miles than I've done route checks.

Satch Carlson managed to steer clear of the authorities long enough to get in and then out of Canada (penalty free) from Alaska and into the lower Peninsula of Michigan to continue the saga.

If you think some of the contestants were "interesting," a good look at some of the cars would prove more than just interesting. That takes us to the bizarre.

If you saw a white '72 VW Beetle with a big black # "53" on each door, what would you call it? Or, if you saw an '86 white Ford with big red and blue lights on the roof and "1 Adam 12" painted on each front door, what would you call it? How about a '65 Plymouth Valiant? Would you believe a '68 Jeep CJ5? And how's this — a '64 red MGB, a gray '66 MGB-GT and a red '75 MG Midget?

There were three rentals — they all finished. There was a Chevy Caprice (to prove the family boat could cruise this event), and a Dodge Intrepid (which showed an improved family cruiser wouldn't sink either). Heavens to Murgatroyd — there was an Olds Cutlass, a Chevy Blazer and a Dodge Ram W-250

pickup to muddy the rally waters.

Two BMWs ran — one piloted by Satch Carlson (license plate # WE BAD), and the other driven by Herb Spencer (it's his wife's car). Just one Saab, and three Eagle Talon AWD TSIs. Oh yes, and a Sube Legacy. There were a few other cars tossed into this sand-based salad, which was served without any dressing (it didn't rain over much of the 65 percent unpaved roads). Am I talking about food again?

Anyhow, Friday morning saw us taking off into the woods very early. It seemed that the Odo Leg was given out early; but officially there was no Odo Leg required to be run. If you wanted a paved and dirt factor, you'd best get out early and run it on your own — sort of a "pre-check," if I may coin a phrase. There was a DIY tech inspection in which every car passed with flying colors.

Official start time was not on the Routes (it was in the Generals) and that was 11:30 a.m. A 75-mile transit zone got you to the R/S at the Total station in Harrison, and then it was "off to see the lizard." Seeing there was no mention in the routes as to unpaved or paved, the main road rule prevailed, both driver and co-driver were a bit busy — with a beginning CAS of 50, which soon went down to 43, then up to 45, then to 48.

And so it went. I would hazard a guess that taking the number of miles at the different CASes would average out to an average speed of around 46 (give or take a lb. of sand). The roads themselves varied from firm sand/clay to loose yellow sand, to very loose yellow sand (VW swallowing variety). There were a few CAS upper 40s with a gain 20 over the next mile or so to keep drivers awake.

I can think of about five very loose dirt roads which made the going difficult. The rest of the roads were great. There were few rockadillos (very few), a few deep ruts, one waterbar and the most cooperative locals you would ever want to meet.

Now, I speak as the driver of car 15, running on an average 16.5 minute T/A. I saw more of cars 23, 24 and 25 than I

— continued on page 4

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Nicol & Pendarvis

— from page 1

could not tell ahead of time if the controls were manned, discovering this only until you were actually at the checkpoint.

Jeff Nicol and Jim Pendarvis won first overall and first in Class E with a total of 12 points, just six points ahead of Jack von Kaenel and Jim O'Connor who were second overall and second in Class E.

Steve Novatne and Gary Urhan came down from the north and won the Stock Class (a.k.a. AU) and third overall with an excellent run of only 31 points while Bob and Donna Gochenaur won Class B with 308 points.

The Novice Class was won by Jackie O'Keefe and Jeff Miller with 464 points and Chris Scamordella and Christa Johnson took the Rookie Class with 720 points.

One Rookie Class team did extremely well, actually finishing fifth overall, but unfortunately there were three people in their car so that they were ineligible for a trophy. The disappointed trio consisted of Robert and Samuel Sheinbein with (could it be?) Alan Onymous the distracting third member.

did 16 and 14. As I went hurtling down these roads, I kept seeing scenes from my past and it wasn't my life flashing before me — it was de'ja vu: I had been on roads like this before, doing what I was doing. Only it was 26 years ago and in an MGB.

I know, I know. Who's bizarre?

Mid-afternoon found us at the Ranch, home of the infamous closed section (on private property). Y/T did not avail himself as the Eagle does not wear a breastplate (no skidplate under the engine). But about two-thirds of the others did romp in the woods and (later) joined us chickens for sandwiches and soda — courtesy of the Club. The same guys who flew above the rest of us won that section, too.

Gene Henderson and Company (da Rallygators) had some interesting features on this year's POR, such as all even speed CASEs were Free Zones. If you think these were strictly on paved roads, you're not far from wrong — but not always. Also, there were Key Times (usually after an open checkpoint) spaced around 15 to 20 miles apart. And there were a number of mini-breaks (to give some of us an opportunity to get off T/As and back into our original time slots).

Mark Henderson ran three types of checkpoints: Open, with one type of identifying sign; Informational with another type of sign; and Closed with just about everything made hard to see until it was too late (with a third type of sign). There was also an observation control which just about everyone observed.

Friday's run gave my navigator, Steve Novatne, the mathematical buzz of his life. Calculating data in a low-flying car as CASEs in the upper 40s was more than he anticipated. By the time he settled down we had used up a good chunk of our 19.5 minutes T/A limit for the day. There was a nickel penalty for each T/A, but running in Stock class that was no killer. This was the third time in 25 years I drove in Stock (SOP) class (the last time was with Steve in the Sunsetter two years ago — a good experience for the POR).

By the time we got to instruction 135 it was getting dark. If you think it's a blast cranking up on these roads in broad daylight, try it at night with damp-to-wet roads (more de'ja vu). "Down 5. . . Down 6. . . Down 7. . . Up 10. . . Down 3. . . What was that CAS again?" Somewhere around 9:30 p.m., we found ourselves in Grayling, MI in the parking lot of the Holiday Inn, parked next to a large black pickup which looked for all the world like it was powered by a steam engine. There was steam, and it did come from the engine — but that wasn't supposed to be the source of power.

"Turn in Time Allowances at the Birch Room at Handicapped." More de'ja vu? For those who had queries about the event, there was a hand drawn sign exhorting those with protests to drop them off at the "Gypsum Room" (which did not exist, and I hope you catch the significance of the room's name). Again, a nice buffet for workers and contestants.

Saturday morning dawned on the '65 Valiant catching a ride to the shop to

have its front torsion bar reconnected. The checkpoint worker's pickup truck that had its hood tossed in favor of additional cooling to overcome a steaming radiator was back in the fray. A little tap here, a minor patch there, clean the glass, pull the grass out of the bumper(s) and we're off to find that "lizard" again.

The start was 21 miles up the road at a Total station. Gene promised us a real honker of a day — and he wasn't kidding. About 21 miles farther down the road I had a close encounter of the worst kind with a local. From there on, it was eat dust, drive the car, eat dust, drive the car. . . We missed a speed change sign about ten minutes later. We were running on a 16.5 minute T/A, but we weren't all by ourselves.

We caught up with #24 (the red Midget) on a loose dirt uphill and with some cooperation from Dan Kirby (driver), we got past the mired MG. They managed to extricate themselves shortly thereafter. We also caught up with #23 (the Jeep) and promptly went off course.

Ten minutes later I discovered by error — the turn was one mile farther down the road. We maxed the next four controls because we were out of T/A time.

Then things got really bad. Car 7 buried itself at a turn in loose sand and stopped the rest of the contestants. Everybody lent a hand to get the Saab out. We were still out of T/A time, so from here on it was just drive, drive, drive — just for the Hell of it.

We maxed seven controls before getting to a "lunch" break. At this time, we were able to get back into our slot, but Pete Schneider and Steve Mauger were cursed with a frozen alternator which precipitated the engine's digestion of the alternator belt. They left "town" to find help — which they did — and managed to finish the rally.

There are lots of stories, 27 of them, but time and space won't allow the telling. However, the final results are the last chapter in the 1995 POR. They read:

1st VINTAGE: Eric Jones & Bill Potvin, '64 MGB, 639 points. **2nd VINTAGE:** Scott Harvey Jr. & Brian Murphy, '75 Dodge Colt, 1011.

1st NOVICE: Dan Kirby & John DePentu, '75 MG Midget, 5519. **2nd NOVICE:** Terry Clements & Wayne Wiefelich, '68 Jeep CJ5, 7034.

1st STOCK: Kevin Wesley & Richard Ehrenberg, '96 Dodge Intrepid, 610. **2nd STOCK:** Fred Cochran & Steve Novatne, '90 Eagle Talon, 2731.

1st LIMITED: Jim Fekette & Jim Shaffer, '95 Chevy Blazer, 222. **2nd LIMITED:** Arthur Welch & Terry Palmer, '88 Toyota Celica, 775.

1st EQUIPPED: Bill Laitenberger & John McArthur, '93 Subaru Legacy, 92. **2nd EQUIPPED:** Scott Harvey & Greg Lester, '91 Eagle Talon, 98.

The POR is a tough event. It's a two-day event. It's for the adventuresome. It is most likely the last of its kind.

If you fancy yourself a good driver or navigator and want a real challenge, the POR is for you. See you there in '96. . .

THE TOTAL POR 1995

PRESS ON REGARDLESS MEETS ALMA

by Jim Mickle

The event started and finished in Alma, the home of Total Petroleum, the sponsor of the event. One block of the main street was closed off on Friday morning for registration and the ceremonial start at 11:00 a.m. From there the rally went north for a long transit and a chance to check your odometer factor. After a short gas stop, the event went into the woods where the real rallying started. Mid afternoon found the competitors at the Henry Joy ranch

just outside Lewiston. Here the competitors were offered a chance to see what they could do on a short, difficult, perfect time section. Since it did not count in the overall event scoring, some of the competitors with less prepared cars decided not to run, and just watched. Bill Laitenberger and John McArthur were first with 82 points. Bruce Fisher and Tom Bell were second with 92. Third were Walt Kammer and Jackie Adams with 100. Novices Thomas Camp and Tyler Haase were fourth in a VW Beetle with 232 points. Following a

U. S. ROAD RALLY CHALLENGE 1995

by Jim Mickle

The first annual United States Road Rally Championship was held in LaCrosse Wisconsin over Labor Day weekend. The event consisted of three National Rallies, two of them tours and one a course or trap rally.

The best in the country competed, with a total of 40 teams from 28 states. The only team from the Detroit Region was the son and father team of Brian and Jim Mickle, who ran in Jim's 1995 Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera company car. After an all day drive on Friday they arrived in time to register on Friday night.

The first event, the Northern Lights National Tour Rally started at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. After some 250 miles of beautiful twisty roads, Brian and Jim were tied for third with 18 points, only one point (about 1/2 second) out of first. They won the tie breaker at the second level by having the most legs with zeros. The day ended with an awards banquet aboard the Island Girl, cruising the Mississippi River.

Sunday started just a bit later with the first car picking up their route instructions for the Badger Trails National Tour Rally at 7:30 a.m.. The Mickle/Mickle team again finished with 18 points, only this time in a tie for second. They again won the tie breaker at the second level by having the most zeros. The day again ended with an awards banquet where all the teams enjoyed a delicious prime rib dinner.

Monday, Labor Day, again started at 7:00 a.m. This days event, the Oktoberally National Course Rally, would find the Mickle/Mickle team doing as bad as they

had good on the first two events. Well before lunch, they had been totally lost three times, and nearly totally confused almost all the time. After 8 legs of the 12 scheduled before lunch, they packed it in and went to the lunch break, turned in their score cards and volunteered to help work in the afternoon. They followed the course opening car around the route so that they could act as a control crew. Event follow-

ing the course opening car, many times they were unable to understand why they went the direction that they did at the various intersections. They finished 16th of 17 in Class E in this event. No worry about collecting a trophy for this event at the final awards banquet.

Even with the terrible finish on the Course Rally, Brian and Jim finished third in the extremely competitive Equipped Class for the USRRC.

Next year, more of the Detroit teams should give the challenge a try. The roads were great and the events very well done. It was great fun, and the most competitive event the writer has ever competed in. Don't forget to check out the November issue of Sports Car for a more complete article about the whole event.

picnic lunch of Subway sandwiches in the woods, the competition resumed, with the competitors arriving at the Holiday Inn in Grayling about 9:30. After a little bench rallying and a light supper, the competitors and organizers retired for the night.

Saturday morning dawned with another beautiful day in store. The rally resumed from the new Total station just south of town at 10:00. Another 250 miles of competition lay ahead. Not only were the roads a challenge, but the hidden controls also provided a challenge. You often did not see them until you were past. No chance to speed up or slow down if you were off a bit on time. Add to that the challenge of matching the rallymaster's mileage and some of the scores achieved were outstanding.

After totaling all the scores back in Alma, the home of event sponsor, Total Petroleum, the team of Bill Laitenberger and John McArthur pulled out a close victory over last years winner Scott Harvey and Greg Lester 92 to 98. The limited class was won by Jim Fekete and Jim Shaffer with 222 points. Kevin Wesley and Richard Ehrenberg in a new 1996 rental Dodge Intrepid won the Stock Class with 610 points. The Vintage Class, for cars at least 15 years old with mechanical counters and computing equipment, and analog watches, was won by Eric Jones and Bill Potvin in an MGB of all things.

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HOLIDAY

SHOPPING GUIDE

on pages 13 & 14

1995 TOTAL PRESS ON REGARDLESS

by Scott Harvey

The 1995 Press On Regardless (POR) rally was run the weekend of September 15th, out of Alma, Michigan. First put on by the Detroit Region in 1948, the POR has had a colorful and storied past. In the early 70s the POR developed into the original, and premier, performance rally in North America. (Performance rallies eventually developed into their own series, in 1973; the SCCA PRO Rally championship series).

Beginning in 1992, the POR has been run as a 25th anniversary celebration of the historic event. The spirit of the Silver Anniversary PORs has meant a return to many of the original roads, and the brisk TSD format (time, speed, distance), of twenty five years ago. Additionally, a new class for vintage rally cars has been created.

While this year's event did not draw world famous rallyists from Europe, as it did in the 70s and 80s, some of the great American rallyists made the trip to Michigan from all across the country. Satch Carlson (famous writer and automotive lunatic) came in from Alaska! Four time winner Scott Harvey came from California. Team members from Oregon, Maine, Wisconsin, Vermont, Illinois, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and of

course, Michigan, were all there to test their skills on some of the finest roads the lower peninsula has to offer.

Since 1992 the POR has been a two day affair covering over 500 grueling miles. This year's rally started in Alma (home of Total Petroleum, event sponsor for the umteenth time) and headed north and east through Gladwin, Ogemaw and Oscoda counties. The roads were very scenic and challenging. Over 90 percent of which were unpaved. These roads ranged from narrow dirt or sand trails to wide hard-packed gravel roads. The speeds which the teams were required to run were quite high, and very challenging to maintain.

Since the roads were open to the public, though lightly travelled, the rallyists had to always assume a vehicle could be coming the other direction. This is especially important when apexing for a left hand turn or drifting out after a right hand turn. Several "encounters" were reported, with only one incident. The team of Cochran/Novatne had an unfortunate meeting with a local. The Talon rally car and the F-150 (loaded with carrots) tried to occupy the same spot in the road at the same time. The whole left side of the Talon was dented and scraped. After the drivers traded insurance information, the crew pressed on, in the true spirit of the Press On Regardless. Other teams had their exhaust sys-

tems tested on the POR roads. Parps/Mickle and Conner/Conner had to perform some unplanned modifications at the brief fuel stop in Mio. From there the rally headed further north; to PRO rallyist Henry Joy's Lockwood Lake Ranch, near Lewiston (or Atlanta if you're Henry). Here the rallyists did not have to be concerned with oncoming traffic, as there would be none, on the private roads. As a consequence, the speeds were set quite high; close to PRO Rally speeds. The Lockwood Lake section was optional, and 8 of the 26 entries opted not to run it. This is also where two of the casualties of the rally were to occur. Chuck Fortino's '65 vintage Plymouth Valiant suffered a failure of a cross-member which held one of the torsion bars, and was unable to complete the Lockwood Lake section. (Fortino's Valiant is a nice replica of the car Scott Harvey and Gene Henderson used on the 1964 running of the Monte Carlo rally in Europe).

The other casualty of the Lockwood Lake section was a GMC Suburban crewed by McCallister/Long. The big Suburban had difficulty negotiating the narrow trails at the assigned speeds, and made contact with a tree. Damage was severe enough that they too, were unable to continue. From here the rallyists headed into the

See POR on page 8

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1995

7

POR from page 7

night; and finished the last few legs of the day with those big, bright, rally lights getting a little use.

The overnight stay was in Grayling. A banquet room was reserved to act as the rally's headquarters for the night. As the teams continued to straggle in, the mixture of friendly camaraderie, scoreboard watching and consumption (food and drink) made for a festive and jovial atmosphere. Once the stories started flying, the first liar never had a chance. There was even a story of a team running out of fuel twice on the last section of the first day! In their defence, they apparently had two jugs of fuel in the trunk. The stories and drinks continued to flow well into the night, but eventually the crews retired for the evening.

The following day was very similar to the first; good roads, high speeds, big grins. To some extent the roads may have been even more challenging. At least one car was sucked off the road by a giant sand trap and had to be yanked back on. The team of Harvey, Jr/Murphy came upon the MGB of Jones/Potvin stopped at the base of a long, deep and tall sand hill. This would prove to be an opportunity to make up some ground on the (vintage) class lead-

ing MG. The road was blocked by a youngster on a three wheel ATV, with a trailer full of sugar beets. Three teams of rallyists helped push the silly chap up the hill. After which, he was told in no uncertain terms, to stay the hell out of the way, as there was a rally coming through.

The roads continued to take their toll. The Harvey, Jr/Murphy team suffered two flats within a 30 mile stretch. The "rockadillos" did in the first tire, while the second one failed catastrophically at about 65 mph on an asphalt transit section. Fortunately, the team was carrying two spares. Those twenty year old Goodyear Rally Specials were due for replacement anyway.

The flats helped insure that Harvey, Jr would not "threepeat" as the vintage class winner. The team of Jones/Potvin would take the class win in their beautiful 1964 MGB. Both Eric Jones and, navigator, Bill Potvin are veteran rallyists, with many thousands of PRO Rally miles under their tires. Jones has always brought a sense of humor to rallies; along with his beautifully prepared cars. The names listed above the doors of the MGB were: "Driver - Rexx Karrs", "Navigator - Terry Fide". In the 70s, Jones' (Karrs) navigator was "Mogan David".

At the finish, 23 of the 26 starters rolled into Alma to share stories and compare scores. More food, drinks and lots of rally videos were on tap while the competitors waited for the scores to become official. Protests and "bought time" slips helped to slow the scoring process. After several hours of deliberation, the scoring committee emerged with the final results. The team of Laitenberger/McArthur had been declared the overall winners. Several strange rulings, by the chairman, had denied Scott Harvey, Sr the repeat victory he had coveted. The team of Harvey/Lester, thus had to settle for second. Third overall and third in the Equipped class was the team of Carlson/Kraushaar. First in the Limited class and sixth overall were Fekete/Shaffer. First in the Stock class, in a rental car, were Wesley/Ehrenberg. Jones/Potvin took the vintage class and tenth overall. The top placed Novice team was Kirby/DePentu in a 1975 MG Midget.

The 1995 edition of the POR had some of the finest roads and when combined with the high speeds, made this one of the most enjoyable rallies in many years. The tradition of Pressing On Regardless was displayed in fine fashion by the competitors and most can't wait for next years event