

1-15-00

## To the competitors and workers: observations and results from Son of Sno\*Drift II

Snow arrived just in time for this year's Son of Sno\*Drift road rally. Another mild winter has kept the Detroit area light on snow. 3 to 4 inches of the white stuff fell two days prior to the rally and made the roads just right. Enough snow, ice, slop and muck were present to make the going challenging as well as fun.

Though I wish I could take credit for the weather, I must take the blame for a few glitches. First off, the general instructions did not explain the work/run method for controls. That version did not reach the copier. Next, several of the critique slips contained incorrect leg calculations. Throw in a mileage instruction that was off by exactly one mile and you have the potential for some disgruntled rallyists.

After the shocking announcement that I had planned to use the work/run control method at some controls (but did not mention it in the generals) it got ugly. Then it got better. We had the option of throwing several controls or enlist some of the lead cars to work controls. Thankfully, the crews at the front of the pack agreed to work if needed.

What happened next provided the potential for disaster. The course opening/ control-positioning car (#0) was suffering from a dead alternator. This car is the same one that Bob Martin and I plan to use in two weeks at the real Sno\*Drift (ProRally). (According to Dan Coughnour, the power steering fluid that has been dripping onto the alternator has fouled the brushes. I have no reason to doubt this and have been working to cure this leak for several months.)

Most controls were properly located but as I approached checkpoint 8 the car was just about dead. I was able to place 8 with car #1 acting as the new control crew (Harkcom/ Harkcom). From there I just reached checkpoint 9 and pulled off. I had been holding-up car #3 (Coughnour/ Coughnour) and immediately scored them with a zero and handed them the control paperwork. We hooked a jumper cable to my battery and logged the remaining 21 cars. I still had the control package for checkpoint #10 in my car so it would not be scored. Checkpoint #11 could not be scored either. I could not subject the Coughnours to any penalty as they towed me across the timing line. From there it was a short, "snatch-em strap" ride into the mid rally break.

Luckily Bob Martin was there collecting the scorecards and I resolved to get a ride back home (about an hour away) and get the other Talon. My plan was to then backtrack the route to set up the later controls. Fortunately cooler heads prevailed, and Bob came up with the plan that saved the rally. We assumed car #0 duties and placed the first car (Harkcom/Harkcom again) at the control that Bob had been scheduled to work (#12). We placed most of the remaining controls and gladly accepted the help of the competitors for controls 17, 18 and 20. We did not have the control package for checkpoint 22. The Paddens, who were to work this control, were swamped with TAs (time allowance requests) due to the previously mentioned mileage error. Somehow Bob (who did the scoring too) was able to score all controls in the second section, except #16 - which had to be thrown because of the bad mileage in the RIs.

Special thanks need to go out to the Shiloffs for working registration and 2 controls. Pete Padden organized the control crews and, along with his daughter, worked 2 controls. Mark and Heather Shehan worked 3 controls. Terry/ Carolyn Palmer and Lu Henry worked two controls each. Mark Henderson helped initiate two newcomers - Klixi Schaer and her son Cameron. Then Mark helped Bob Martin sort out the scoring fiasco. Tom and Peg Woodside worked control #1, before leaving for another commitment. The competitors who worked controls did a great job and I must thank you all for accepting the task without complaint. Next time I promise to include the specifics (about work/run) in the generals.

For the competitors it was a chance to have some fun on some decent roads. The road conditions were just about right for the speeds that were selected. Only one TA request actually admits to being unable to maintain CAST. There was, however, an amusing repetition of "stuffed it" from car #19.

At the end, the Novice class was won by Jeff and Elea Feit (pronounced "fight"). Second in Novice was Waters and Paquette, who were visiting (the North American International Auto Show) from Virginia.

First in Stock were Worden and Robinette. Limited was won by Shaffer and Fekete.

First overall, and first in E would be taken in the oldest car in the rally - a '72 Datsun 510 wagon. Rob Moran must like this rally as he has won them both. This year he had Bruce Fisher driving (the vintage 510), last year it was Gene Henderson. Dave and Daniel Harkcom were second. Dan and Dan Coughnour made the trip from Ohio and took third place.

In general, I think the route and the conditions went a long way to keep the competitors happy. There were enough other things happening behind the scenes, that could have made the rally a disaster. Bob Martin deserves most of the credit for the happy ending.

Following are the scores from the Son of Sno\*Drift II road rally:  
 Detroit Region SCCA January 15, 2000 175.744 miles, 20 scored controls.

1/1E	27	Fisher/ Moran	#4	Datsun 510 wagon
2/2E	30	Harkcom/ Harkcom	#1	Audi Quattro
3/3E	31	Coughnour/ Coughnour (OH)	#3	Jeep Cherokee
4/4E	45	Kormendi/ Mickle	#2	Subaru Impreza
5/1L	70	Shaffer/ Fekete	#5	Jeep Grand Cherokee
6/5E	91	Foster/ Secrest (OH/KY)	#9	GMC Sonoma
7/1S	120	Worden/ Robinette	#20	Saab 900 SE
8/2L	186	Kleckner/ Gingrich	#8	Dodge Colt
9/6E	197	Boris/ Boris	#10	Mazda 323
10/2S	198	Kay/ Bennett	#12	Ford Contour
11/3S	215	Achterhof/ Essenburg	#19	Ford Ranger
12/3L	295	Phillips/ Gilbert (IN)	#7	Saab 900
13/1N	335	Feit/ Feit	#16	BMW 325is
14/4S	544	Young/ Butler (MI/ONT)	#11	Chevy Chevette
15/2N	630	Waters/ Paquette (VA)	#22	Ford Crown Vic (rental?)
16/3N	698	Kurth/ Symons	#18	Ford Explorer
17/4N	715	Spieszny/ Ugolnik	#14	Nissan 240SX
18/5N	885	Rief/ Haanskorf	#15	VW GTI
19/6N	1009	Lovett/ Gerber	#21	Chevy Impala (rental)
20/5S	1154	Argalas/ Abbott	#13	Mercury Mystique (rental?)
21/4L	1181	Kovach/ Benchina (OH)	#6	Ford Escort
22/7N	1405	Purzycki/ Purzycki	#17	Ford Fiesta

Respectfully submitted by:

Scott Harvey, Jr  
 Chief cook and bottle neck