

Press On

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The Official Semi-occasional Newsletter for, of,
and about the Press On Regardless Road Rally
Issue #3 Summer 2008

POR 2008

The 60th running of the Press On Regardless Rally is firmly scheduled for the weekend of September 5th. The POR planning committee, along with Chairman Bruce Fisher, has been working hard to make the 2008 running a more enjoyable event for both workers and competitors. The goal, of course, is to bring more entrants to the rally and to provide them with more of the “POR experience”. In addition to the improvements mentioned in the most recent issue of *Press On* – the idea of a **POR alumni reunion** has been tossed around.

While this “reunion” has not been fully formulated at the time of this document’s release – there is no reason it wouldn’t work. Even on an informal level, it is a great idea. Among the various ideas brought up were social gatherings for the alums, possible “spectator” spots along the rally route and of course time to honor the veterans of POR during the awards ceremony. Additionally, Bruce Fisher would like to tap as many of the veterans as possible to assist by working a few controls. It’s a great way to give back to the rally and to also relive the fun and camaraderie of this great event. Regardless, attendance is really the only prerequisite. The fun and festivities will spontaneously materialize.

One thing that can be done **now** – is to make your commitment. If you are competing, make hotel reservations and submit your entry. If you are planning to work – let Bruce know. All entries and confirmed commitments will make life much easier on the organizers and the folks at the hotel. **Committing to the event early allows the organizers to make plans for awards, social aspects and, of critical importance, how many control crews can be counted on.** Please do your part to make the event a success.

The schedule is pretty well defined: FPOR (Friday POR) will run from 6:00 PM until about 3:00 AM for about 240 miles. SPOR (Saturday POR) will run from 2:00 PM until about 2:00 AM for another 330 miles. The total distance for POR will be very close to 600 miles. The route has been condensed to make it a more efficient use of the time and mileage. With headquarters in Houghton Lake, a certain amount of efficiency is also achieved for those arriving from the Detroit area and points south.

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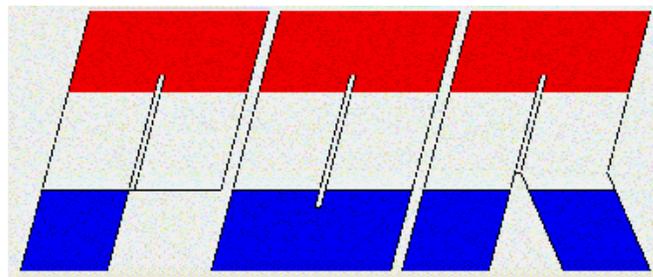
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Shameless Plugs

Nokian and Hankook tires. Winter tires from Nokian and Hakkapeliitta as well as rally and performance tires from Hankook available from Team Harco Motorsports. Contact: teamharco@juno.com Visit: www.nokiantires.com and www.hankooktireusa.com

Rally equipment and lights. Tom Bell's Competition Limited in Traverse City can help with Hella and IPF lights, rally clocks, rally odometers and other rally-related accessories. Contact: Tom Bell trbrally@charter.net website: www.compltd.com

Historic POR films on DVD. Films from 2004, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1973 and 1988. Well worth the paltry \$10 (\$12.50 if shipped within the United States). Contact: teamharco@juno.com



POR Needs You!

That's right. POR needs you. Here's what you can do:

- **Commit.** See above. Do your part to help make the event a success.
- **Compete.** Enter the rally as a competitor. Those who have run recently know how good this rally is. Those that have not run recently – or not at all – should definitely consider doing so.
- **Volunteer to work.** If you can't compete, the next best thing is to volunteer as a worker. You get a chance to see some of the action, drive a lot of the roads and be a big part of making it all happen. Contact Bruce Fisher and let him know you can help. BAFisher@aol.com
- **Be a sponsor.** POR can always use support. A simple way to get involved in this area might be to sponsor some of the awards. There are many trophies presented each year. Other than the usual class trophies, there are sometimes awards for exemplary sportsmanship, "Dead Last but Finished", the Press On Regardless award and others. If this sounds interesting to you – please contact Bruce Fisher to see what sort of sponsorship opportunities would be most helpful.
- **Contribute to this newsletter.** It won't bring anyone fortune or fame – but if you have a story or photographs you would like to submit – I will try to include them in a future issue of *Press On*.
- **Spread the word.** Let potential workers or competitors know about the POR. Send a copy of this newsletter to everyone you know (and even some you don't).
- **Get on the distribution list.** If you aren't on it already, drop a note to: pressonregardless@ameritech.net and ask to be included.

Submitted for your reading enjoyment by Harry Ward (POR winning navigator in 1968 and 1989)

The origin of the first Special Stage on public roads in the United States!

Scott:

You recently asked for some historical information on POR's for possible inclusion in your next Press On newsletter on this, its 60th anniversary. (*Ed: 2009 will be the 60th anniversary – this year will be the 60th running*)

How about some history from 40 years ago, POR 1968? There were several "first's" associated with the 1968 POR, although their importance were not necessarily recognized at the time. That year, the rally concept changed from 24 hour straight, to two 12 hour nights with a daytime layover in Grayling. The rally, at 829 miles, was slightly shorter than the 1000+/- of previous years. It was the first POR to use tulip instructions-for part of Section II. POR was the first performance rally allowed into the SCCA National Rally Series (1965), and in 1968 was the first performance rally to win SCCA National Rally of the Year honors. Your dad was event chairman that year.

But perhaps its most enduring legacy was the running of the first special stage in the US. (I know some Michiganders will say that the Moonlight Monte, run a month before, was the first with a stage, but I cannot find any written evidence.) There was no mention of such a stage in the POR General Instructions, the Addendum, or advertising. Perhaps there was concern about maintaining good relations with the SCCA National Office and/or the Michigan State Police. But there it was on pages 17 and 18 of the Route Book, near the end of the rally. I have attached a .pdf file where I have highlighted the stage itself. (*Ed: see copy of route instructions below*)

No name (stage names were to come in 1969), no special fanfare; just a brief paragraph explaining how it would be timed and the control procedure. This section was named in the 1969 POR as "Conner's Flats", a

twisty 6.33 mile section of gravel county road. It was actually run as what has become known as a "selective"; with an assigned average speed that was below the speed limit, but not makeable. The organizers did not want the special stage to play too large a part in the overall results, so you can see that although timed to the second, the scoring, at 1/10 point per 6 seconds, equaled the same 1 point per minute as used on the rest of the rally. Two teams tied for the fast time on this stage: Gene Henderson/Wayne Zitkus in a 1968 Barracuda, and Dave Kuehne/Dave Cady in a 1967 Saab. Both were 1.4 minutes late. So they averaged 45 MPH on the stage. 64 cars started the rally, and 31 finished. Karl Goering/Harry Ward won in a 1968 Barracuda. Henderson and Zitkus were 2nd, and Tom Jones/John Campbell were third in a 1968 BMW.

The success and subsequent recognition of the 1968 POR encouraged events to be more aggressive. The next year, 1969, special stages became much more prominent. There were six on POR, and for the first time, they were named, so folks could relate to them when the proverbial war stories were told. Listing POR as an FIA Championship Rally, and the PRO Series soon followed. The rest, as folks, say is history.

Harry Ward

Thank you Harry! That is a nice piece of history.

As mentioned above (contributing to this newsletter), this is the sort of thing that is interesting and entertaining. There must be thousands of stories worth telling by others who have been a part of the many previous running's of POR. Let's hear yours!

Also, on a bit of a historical note – the 1968 POR is one of the seven years that are captured on the Historical POR DVD. If you don't have a copy yet – you need one.

✓ 41.97 Right at STOP CAS 51(47) PAUSE 10 MIN.
BEFORE MILEAGE 47.00

✓ 45.10 Left

✓ 48.91 Right CAS 54(49)MPH

✓ 48.93 CONTROL

After checking in, pull ahead to the "OUT CONTROL" where the crew will issue you a time out sticker. You will not be allowed to leave this control until exactly the time noted on the sticker. Time between the "IN CONTROL" and the "OUT CONTROL" is "dead time" and is to be disregarded.

The next control (55.36) will be timed to the second. Competitors will be assessed 1/10 of a point for each 6 seconds early or late.

NOTE: THE PERFECT TIME TO THIS CONTROL WILL NOT FALL + or - 10 SEC. FROM THE HALF MINUTE

✓ 49.03 OUT CONTROL

✓ 50.50 Keep Right 1.63

✓ 50.65 Keep Right

✓ 54.03 Keep Right 5.55

✓ 55.36 CONTROL 7.03

✓ 55.39 Left at Tee and follow pavement

✓ 58.66 Left at STOP onto M-72 and follow

✓ 61.95 Right

✓ 63.02 Right CAS 45(41)MPH

✓ 66.11 Keep Right onto USFR 4169 CAS 54(51)MPH

✓ 68.96 Left at STOP

✓ 69.34 Right

✓ 71.56 Left

✓ 76.42 PAUSE 12 MINUTES BEFORE MILEAGE 78.91

✓ 76.84 Left at STOP

✓ 77.46 Right at STOP

✓ 77.52 Left at traffic signal onto M-76. Gas available at this intersection if needed. LEONARD station (Roscommon).



Follow-up stories from more POR Veterans...

That was some... great history from Harry Ward. John Smiskol and I were the official pre-checkers of the 68 POR and had an interesting time of things. We met the organizers in Alma, the starting point on Friday afternoon and while John and I headed further north, the organizers headed back to the Detroit area and left us on our own.

On the first night, we were in John's Saab 96 Monte Carlo and just north of M-131 nicknamed Nightmare Alley because of all the fog on previous "Michigan Miglia" causing several crashes, the paved state highway turned to sand on the way to Cross Village when the lights went off and the car just stopped. We looked for a flash light and we didn't have one so we lit one of our flares and went into the engine compartment looking for the problem. We found that the bracket on the starter that the positive battery cable connected to had broken off so we had absolutely no power. Somehow we fixed it by flare light and finished both Friday night and Saturday night; meeting the organizers again in Alma Sunday morning.

We were sworn to secrecy regarding the "M" Stage. That is how I remember them calling Connors Flat. At the Leonard station (Leonard was the name before Total and they gave us free gas as a sponsor) prior to Connors Flat, word got out about the "M" Stage. People including Jean Calvin came looking for me as did others because they knew I had pre-checked the rally and knew where the stage was. The problem was we had a very angry wife of a co-driver in the area who was threatening to block the road if she could. I had to sneak out of the gas station and shake several people who saw me to go spectate the stage.

Harry did mention that the speed was not attainable on Connors Flat. What he didn't state was that even though POR was a TSD (Touring by today's standards as no traps), ALL the penalties were for late because the speeds were such that no one could make the speeds into any of the controls. Interesting event and one thing Harry forgot to mention was that POR that year was the SCCA TSD Rally of the Year.

Submitted by Dave Weiman

My first POR was in 1969 co-driving for Walter Boyce in a Datsun 510. We had done a few rallies together and Walter had proven to be quite a quick driver. We had heard about the POR and decided to give it a try.

Our 510 was decidedly stock. Rally preparation consisted of snow tires, a skid plate, two driving lights, a map light and a Twin Master.

When we arrived at the start, we were somewhat in awe at the quality of the cars we were competing against, including John Buffum in his Porsche that he had used at the Monte Carlo Rally.

The rally took place entirely in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. Rallymaster Bob Hourihan had found just about every car breaking road in the state to use in the rally. Think of roads like the recent Waste Management Stage at STPR used continuously for two days. 🤖

Many of the roads had horrendous rough parts/holes/whatever hidden around corners or over the crest of hills with, of course, no warning of them in the route book. The worst of these would be followed by a "GOTCHA" sign that Hourihan had nailed to a tree beside the road.

The route was basically straightforward instructions/tulips with elapsed times between controls. Once on the real rally roads, the elapsed times were hopelessly unachievable. I remember one section with an 8 minute elapsed time on which we were 8 minutes late. That is more or less what the rally was like for two days in a row.

Walter and I managed to finish fourth overall, with Scott Harvey winning the event.

We liked it so much; we came back for another five years and managed to win the rally in 1973, the first year that it was in the WRC.

Submitted by Doug Woods

Looking Ahead

Detroit Region SCCA events* of possible interest to competitors (and workers) in the SE Michigan area:

Jul 12th – Detroit Region/ Great Lakes Divisional RallyCross. Event #5 of Detroit Region SCCA RallyCross Championship series. Location: Bob's Family Raceway, Clarksville, MI. Contact: Bob Martin robert.martin@aam.com also www.detroit-scca.com

Sep 5th-7th – Press On Regardless. Detroit Region and Great Lakes Division Championship Road Rally. Separate awards for each night (FPOR and SPOR). POR will count toward National Tour Rally points as well. Start and finish in Houghton Lake, MI. Contact: Bruce Fisher BAFisher@aol.com

Sep 27th – The GNU Rally. Jim Fekete and Jim Shaffer put together a fun and challenging rally out of the Pinckney area. Part of the Detroit Region and Great Lakes Division series. Contact: Jim Fekete racerjim@ameritech.net also www.detroit-scca.com

Oct 4th-5th – Detroit Region/ National Tour RallyCross. Detroit Region RallyCross #6 and National Tour. Two days of RallyCross action at the Detroit Region's premier site – the Fowlerville fairgrounds. Location: Fowlerville, MI. Contact: Bob Martin robert.martin@aam.com also www.detroit-scca.com

* All dates are tentative. Verify date and time by checking with the appropriate contact or website.



Above: Overall winners of POR 2007. (L to R) Daniel Harkcom, Dave Harkcom, Rally Chairman: Bruce Fisher
Photo by Adam Spieszny.



Where To Go For Info

Websites providing details on events past and future. Where to go – to stay in the know:

Detroit Region SCCA – Race, Rally and Solo. Amateur motorsports of all sorts. www.detroit-scca.org

Sports Car Club of America – The national website for SCCA. www.scca.com

Saginaw Valley Region SCCA – The region just to our north. Good ice runs in the winter. www.svr-scca.com

Northeast Ohio Region SCCA – Lots of good rallies. www.neohio-scca.org

Sno*Drift Rally – Performance rally headquartered in Atlanta, MI. The only winter rally on the Rally America schedule. www.sno-drift.org

Lake Superior Performance Rally – LSPR, the stage-rally in the UP (eh). www.lsprorally.com

CARS – The Canadian Association of Rallysport (eh). www.carsrally.ca/CARSRally

Team Harco Motorsports: It's all about the cars and what we do with them. www.teamharco.com

The Furrin Group – Group of enthusiasts located primarily in western Michigan. www.furrin.org

MyAutoEvents.com – Event information and online registration. www.myautoevents.com

Great Lakes Division SCCA – Competition within the GLDiv including Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and part of West Virginia. www.greatlakes-scca.org



photo-McMahon

Renaults (Gordinis and Alpines) and Lancias (Stratos and Beta): Exotic European rally machines at Parc Expose during the 1974 POR.



photo-McMahon

A slightly less exotic car – a Plymouth Barracuda at the Belle Isle stage during the 1972 POR