



REmarks

Chicago Region RE, Rick Bentson

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Because I have the somewhat unusual title of Regional Executive of the Chicago Region – SCCA

I am often asked just what that means. The answer, if the person asking has the patience to listen long enough, usually involves an explanation of the structure of the Chicago Region's organization and where the Regional Executive fits in. Most of the more senior members of the club are familiar with its structure, but many of our newer members, and some older members who have not gotten involved in organizing or operating events, are not.

For those of you who want the short version to the question "what is the Regional Executive", the Regional Executive is President of the Chicago Region board of Directors. Each year, usually in October, the 9 members of the board of Directors elects one of their own to be the Regional Executive.

The longer answer includes an explanation of the Region's organization.

The Chicago Region is governed by a board of Directors consisting of 9 region members. A Director's term is 3 years and each year 3 Directors' terms expire. A director is limited to serving 2 consecutive terms, or 6 years total. The board is responsible for overseeing the finances of the region by each year creating and approving an operating budget, planning for capital expenses and equipment purchases, approving event schedules and event site contracts, planning membership meetings and other social events, and overseeing the work of our event committees.

The work of planning, organizing, staffing and operating our various events is managed by committees, one for each type of our events. The Solo committee and its chairman **Greg Meier** schedule, plan and run our Solo events (this has been an especially challenging year for the Solo committee as we've lost our long-time Solo site). I can't say enough about time and effort Greg and his committee have put forth trying to salvage a season. The PDX committee and its chairman **Jack Novak** organize and run out PDX events. The Competition Committee and its chairman **George Laws** organize our Club Racing events.

Getting back to the Regional Executive, for a good part of the Region's history the Regional Executive was not allowed to serve as RE for consecutive years. 1-year terms were the norm. More recently the Region bylaws were changed to remove that restriction, recognizing that there is value in having some continuity of leadership. Since 1995 all but one RE has served at least 2 years. The RE is the "face" of the region, representing the region when dealing with other regions, the SCCA National office, event sites, and members.

Over the next few months this column will feature one or two of our board members each month to introduce you to the people governing your region and give you a little background on each. For this month we may as well start at the top, as it were.

I've been an SCCA and Chicago Region member since 2001. Since that time I've been a Solo competitor, running a Honda Civic in the Street Tire, now Street, category. Prior to that, much prior, I raced Enduro Karts for 10 years, from the mid-70's to mid-80's, running on tracks like Blackhawk Farms, Road America, Mid-Ohio, Watkins Glen and Daytona. About 5 years ago I responded to an email from Erik Vandermeij, who was recruiting instructors for our PDX program. That led to joining the PDX committee, then chair of the committee, then election to the region board. 4 years ago I started volunteering for Club Racing, working corners. Whether Solo, PDX or Club Racing I love it all.

Professionally I've been involved in the automotive aftermarket for most of my career, having worked at JC Whitney (Warschawsky & Company for you Chicagoans) for 19 years, first as a Merchandise Buyer and later in Call Center management. Currently I'm Director of Operations for an ecommerce company based in Frankfort, IL, Autoaccessoriesgarage.com. If you need accessories, brakes, or exhaust for your vehicle, look us up.

As I write this, next weekend is the TUDOR Sports Car Championship series at Road America, August 7-9. Chicago Region is staffing the event. The following weekend is the Chicago Region Dog Days Double Divisional race at Blackhawk Farms.

See you at the races!

Rick Bentson
Regional Executive