



REmarks

Chicago Region RE, Rick Bentson

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Are you kidding me?! It's September already? Labor Day is in just a few days. Where did the Summer of 2015 go to? Seems like the season was just getting started and now it's nearly over.

Not that there aren't still things to do after Labor Day. The **Solo Nationals** are Labor Day week and as usual Chicago Region has a hefty group of competitors heading for Lincoln, NE to do battle against, oh, about 1,200 of the best Soloists in the country. Final preparations are underway and our competitors will begin heading west in just a couple days. Good luck to all! Let's bring the bling back to Chicago.

Two weeks after the Solo Nationals get underway, the Club Racing folks get their shot at fame and fortune (well, fame anyway) at the **SCCA National Runoffs** in Daytona. From Sept. 21-28 the W2W will determine who's the best, at least this year. And how about Spec Miata running under the lights at Daytona. Those guys gotta be pumped.

All the action this fall isn't outside our area though. On Sunday, Sept. 13 the PDX crowd will have the last **Chicago Region PDX** event of the season at Autobahn Country Club. Grab your helmet and come on out for some non-competitive on-track fun.

October has a couple of events on the schedule. First up is the last Chicago Region Club Racing weekend of 2015, the **Kettle Moraine Double Divisional at Road America** on Oct. 10-11. It might be the last race of 2015, but it counts toward points and Runoffs qualifying for 2016. A great chance to get a head start on next season and begin qualifying for the 2016 Runoffs at Mid-Ohio. Then, on October 18 is the **Rocky Waters Tour**, a relaxing tour through the Illinois countryside to the Rocky Waters Vineyard, an award winning small family owned boutique winery located on a bluff overlooking the vineyard and the Mississippi River. We hope you will join us for an enjoyable drive, and relaxing afternoon on the deck or in front of the stone fireplace. The fall foliage should be at about its peak.

August is in the rear-view and there was some fun to be had. On August 7-9 Chicago Region provided staffing for the **IMSA TUDOR Sports Car race** at Road America, and our volunteers turned out in force! It's been quite a while since we've had 50+ corner workers come out, in addition to Paddock, Grid, Course Marshals, Registrars, and all the others needed to support this event. By all appearances everyone had a good time. I can say for certain that both Road America and IMSA were VERY pleased with the professionalism of our volunteers. I've heard enough pro series officials tell us that our workers are the best in the country by now that I've got to believe they aren't just blowing smoke up our skirts. They really mean it. Next year we'll get to show the **Indycar** folks what we're made of.

August 15-16 took us to Blackhawk Farms for the **Dog Days Double Divisional** race. Although the turnout was less than hoped the racing was intense. The off-again, on-again rain on Saturday kept the drivers on their toes and guessing about tire choices. I gotta say, I've never seen so much rain on a day the forecast called for 0% chance of precipitation. Sunday was better weatherwise, though a bit on the warm side. Speaking for all the F&C people as well as others whose specialty keeps them outdoors in the sun and heat, we greatly appreciated Chief Steward **Dorn Lynch's** call to cancel victory laps after each race so that the workers could get out of the sun for a few extra minutes and sit down and hydrate.

August 21 saw the **4th PDX** event of the season on the North Course at Autobahn CC. Once again the entries were very good – this program has really spread its wings.

Last month I mentioned that each month would feature one or two Chicago Region board members, to give you an idea of who is running the Region. This month's featured Director is **Claire Ball**.

Claire joined the Chicago Region in 1972, having moved to this area the previous year, and was among a small group who formed the Chicago Region Solo program, which didn't exist prior. Claire competed in Solo events for over 45 years, winning over 30 Regional championships, multiple CenDiv Solo championships, and the Solo Nationals in 1985. Along the way Claire won the Solo Driver of the Year award, as well as the prestigious SCCA Solo Driver of Eminence award. He has served on the SCCA National Solo Rules committee, chaired the Region's Solo committee for several years, and was chairman of 2 SCCA National Solo Championship events.

You might get the impression that Claire's SCCA world revolved around just Solo, but he's also been active in Club Racing, volunteering for over 35 years as Paddock volunteer, race chairman and pace car driver. Just this year Claire was an instrumental member of the June Sprints 60th celebration committee.

Claire has served on the Chicago Region board of directors for over 15 years, and was Regional Executive in 1985. Currently Claire serves as region Treasurer.

Professionally Claire is a retired structural engineer with over 40 years in management of research and testing of numerous products and materials.

Let's all enjoy the Labor Day weekend, then get back to racing. The season ain't over yet!

See you at the races.

Rick Bentson
Regional Executive