



REmarks

Chicago Region RE, Rick Bentson

March 1, 2016

If you missed - the annual Chicago Region Checkered Flag dinner and awards banquet at Lake Forest Motorcars on Feb. 6, you missed a fantastic evening. The wit and banter of the Master of Ceremonies notwithstanding, the highlight of the evening had to be the opportunity to take a ride-and-drive in either a Ferrari or McLaren! As if dining among the exotic inventory in the Lake Forest Sportscars wasn't enough. Many thanks to Rick Mancuso and his staff for opening the doors to us and for allowing our members to drive the cars of our dreams. It's always a good time when we can get together to enjoy the company of friends and fellow motorsports enthusiasts, eat a good meal, have a few drinks and do a little off-season bench racing, and this year did not disappoint. A jazz trio added to the ambience before dinner, while once again Goose Island Brewing provided the food and beverages.

Awards - The checkered Flag banquet is when we present the region's major awards for the previous season to salute our champions and recognize outstanding achievement, and this year was no exception. This year our award winners included:

Rookie of the Year – Marcel Berkout

Driver of the Year – Pat Womak

Soloist of the Year – John Azevedo

Dave Morell Worker of the Year – Greg Meier

In addition, the Founders Club selected Bob Stone to join their ranks. Bob was also recognized for his 6 years service on the region board of directors.

Member's Gathering – On Feb. 17 we held a member's gathering at K1 Speed indoor karting facility in Addison, where the Solo season champions were crowned. We also awarded anniversary pins to those Chicago Region members reaching 5-year increments in their membership. Special recognition was given to Chicago Region's most senior member, and the 4th oldest surviving member in all of SCCA, Burdie Martin. Burdie joined the SCCA in 1950 and has been a member for 65 years! Aside from his SCCA activities Burdie also served as Chief Steward for the original Trans-Am and Can-Am series and Chief Steward for Formula One. If you ever have the opportunity to talk with Burdie, pay attention. His stories are priceless.

The Fun Committee needs your input. The Fun committee's purpose is twofold: 1) make our race, Solo and PDX events more fun for the competitors and volunteers by adding elements not necessarily related to the on-track action, and 2) organize social happenings completely separate from our other events.

So what would you like to see? What activities would interest you? How about a weekend morning Cars & Coffee gathering? Touring events to area car museums? Organized outings to pro races? Send your thoughts and suggestions to me at regionalexec@scca-chicago.com and I'll forward them to the committee.

Upcoming events – March is arriving a day late this year. What's that got to do with upcoming events? Well, nothing really. But it did give me one extra day before the deadline to submit this article, so hooray for Leap Year. Anyway, there are a couple things on the March calendar worth mentioning.

First, on **Wednesday, March 16** we've got a Member's Gathering set at K1 Speed in Addison. What's on the program? To be honest, we're still working on it. Could be we'll have a guest speaker, or maybe it'll be a Movie Night, or could be some karting, bench racing and a few beverages. Show up at 7PM and find out for yourself.

Then, on **Saturday, March 19** is the annual CenDiv Spring Training event, once again held at the Best Western hotel across from the Milwaukee airport. There are sessions planned for everyone, whether you're into club racing, Solo or PDX. Register on MotorsportsReg.com. The region is picking up the tab and breakfast and lunch are included, so your only cost is the gas and tolls to get there.

Looking forward a bit to April, the first weekend has 2 events scheduled. On **Saturday, April 2** we are hosting a Tire Rack Street Survival school for young drivers at RT66 dragway in Joliet. This program teaches young drivers ages 16-21 the car control and accident avoidance skills they don't get in the typical Driver's Ed school or class. If you can, plan to attend and help out. We need instructors and volunteers to man the various exercise stations. For information and to sign up to help, contact myself at regionalexec@scca-chicago.com or Kevin Coulter at kcoulter@comcast.net.

The next day, **Sunday, April 3** is the second event in our GOATS (Get Out And Tour Series). This a casual, fun, non-competitive drive through some interesting backroad countryside with a stop at a very interesting model train museum, then continuing to the Minhas Brewery/distillery in Monroe, WI. You can register for the event at <http://scca-chicago.com/wp-content/RallyTour/2016/2016AprilFools.pdf>

So that's what's going on in your region. Don't forget to let me know what else you'd like to do with your club and what more you'd like to get out of it.

See you at the races

Rick Bentson
Regional Executive