



The Blower

Newsletter of Neohio Region, SCCA

Volume 64, Issue 4

April 2017

The Starting Line

REport by Kerry Klotzman

SCCA Annual Tech Day

- **Annual Tech is on a first come, first serve basis on May 6 from 9:30 to 12:30**
- **New Location-Track First-Ohio** - Thank you Tim!
- Track First - Ohio
2636 Brecksville Rd Suite A
Richfield, OH 44286
- If you have a new car that needs a logbook, please let us know in advance so we are prepared for you.

Competition Driver Physicals

- **Saturday, April 29 from 10:00 to 12:00**
- For physical appointments, contact Debbie LaFond at fastlady1026@yahoo.com or 440-946-2207.

Debbie LaFond

Spring is a busy time of year. For parents of teens, this the time of year when parents hold their breath praying that their child makes it through prom weekend safely. Parents hope that their children survive through graduation, so that they can go away to college or begin a new job in the summer or fall. I remember very well those feelings and discussions with my children. I also remember that because I put my kids through the (more expensive and over an hours drive away) teen driving school at Mid-Ohio, I wasn't as concerned as all of our peers were about their kids surviving these spring rituals. Not everyone can afford the school or is willing to make the effort to travel the distance.

SAFETY & RECALL NOTICE

SAFETY & RECALL NOTICE - 4/6/17
Simpson Performance Products has recently discovered a potential safety issue with its Snell SA 2015 Voyager 2 helmet. If the helmet's chin strap experiences large tensile forces during an accident, it could detach from one or both sides of the helmet. This presents an enhanced risk of injury to the head should the helmet not be retained in a crash. Simpson Performance Products is voluntarily recalling the Snell SA 2015 Voyager 2 helmet due to the chin strap's potential inability to withstand

For these reasons, we are considering a Tire Rack Street Survival Training Event on Saturday, May 20, 2017. How many lives saved makes it worth doing? I suggested that we run this event in May, if we can agree on a minimum threshold number of students. I plea for as many TRSS students as possible to enlist and enroll. If each person tries to find one new driver, we should be able to do a great benefit for our community.

After having back surgery three weeks ago, I am finally allowed out of the house. While my recovery will take time, I am putting in a couple of hours a day at work and should be able to resume participating in life again soon. Hopefully within the next week or two, I should actually begin feeling like doing things again as well.

Kerry

load forces on a consistent basis. This recall applies to the Snell SA 2015 Voyager 2 Model only, sizes Extra Small – Large with manufacturing dates in 2016 only (the only sizes sold and available to date). It does NOT apply to any other Simpson helmet models with Voyager in the name, i.e. NOT Snell SA 2010 Voyager or Snell SA 2010 Sidewinder Voyager, etc. It is only the Snell SA 2015 Voyager 2 helmet. Follow link: http://cdn.growassets.net/user_files/scca/downloads/000/021/054/MA_17-01.pdf?1492005244

Inside This Issue

BOT Minutes	3
Calendar of Events	4
The Man Who Lived to Race	5
Classifieds	12



R.E. & Club Office

Kerry Klotzman
(216) 469-0190
regexec@neohioscca.com

Assistant R.E.

Scott Lunder
slunfp12@gmail.com

Treasurer

Joe Blaha
334 Keyser Pkwy.
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223
ADdrummerdude@neo.rr.com

Recording Secretary

Jeff Blumenthal
(216) 469-0341
jblumenthal@sbcglobal.net

Membership Secretary

Tara Oram
216-272-2487
toe002@gmail.com

Trustees

Joe Blaha '17
ADdrummerdude@neo.rr.com

Kerry Klotzman '17
(216) 469-0190
kerry@alphapark.com

Jim Pracker '17
(440) 338-1222
1amps@windstream.net

Dave Lancaster, '18
(440) 796-8214
dave.lancaster@tenantco.com

Bob MacDonald '18
(216) 509-6671
bob@
impactcommunications.com

Jason Pokines '18
(330) 475-2559
jasonpokines@gmail.com

Gabriel Guterriez '19
gabe@el-pollo.net

Bill Moore '19
440-591-0989
williamjmoore33@gmail.com

Maddie Oswalt '19
mbk44@case.edu

Specialty Chiefs

Novice Licenses
Jim Pracker
(440) 338-1222
1amps@windstream.net

Registrar & Pointskeeper
Dorothy Harrington
216-390-2856
doubledlh@hotmail.com

Tech Inspection
Maurice LaFond
440-946-2207
mrl1070@yahoo.com

Timing & Scoring
Brenda Nick
brenda.j.nick@gmail.com

Sound Control
Gary Bargerstock
724-527-5686
phototaker69@comcast.com

Pits
Bill Stewart
814-882-7225
bstewart@sccaonline.net

Grid
OPEN

Flagging & Communications
OPEN

Emergency Services
OPEN

Rally Chair
Greg Lester
WGregoryLester@gmail.com

Solo Chair
Jason Pokines
(330) 475-2559
jasonpokines@gmail.com

Rally Cross Chair
OPEN

Street Survival
Bob MacDonald
(216) 509-6671
bob@
impactcommunications.com

Newsletter Editor
Laura O'Neill
330-467-4472
oneill397@windstream.net

Web Master
Duane Harrington
neohio.webmaster@gmail.com
http://neohioscca.com/

Track Contacts

Nelson Ledges Road Course
Fred Wolfe

Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course
419-884-2295

Monthly Meetings

Neohio Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. Any exceptions will be published in *The Blower*.

Meetings are held at 7:00 PM in the private room at Winking Lizard, 25200 Miles Road, Bedford Heights, OH 44146. Members and guests are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Membership meeting dates and times are published in *The Blower*.

The Blower

The Neohio *Blower* is the official publication of the Neohio Region, Inc., Sports Car Club of America. Material in this issue may be reproduced by other regions of the SCCA without specific permission, if proper acknowledgment of both source and author is given. All other reproduction requires specific permission of the Neohio Regional Executive. All photos are copyrighted to the owner and may not be reproduced without expressed written permission of the owner.

Articles for publication in The Blower may be submitted in most Windows based word processing formats. You may mail or e-mail material to the editor or Kerry Klotzman at regexec@neohioscca.com by the last day of each month.

Contributors:

Jeff Blumenthal, Carl Goodwin, Kerry Klotzman, Debbie LaFond, Greg Lester

RIDGE ROAD
Auto Parts
YOUR SOURCE for RECYCLED OEM PARTS
"Everyone Rides on Used Parts"
3741 Ridge Road • Cleveland, OH 44144
(216) 281-1400 • (800) 837-SAVE
(216) 281-7956 Fax
www.ridgerdauto.com
Maurice Leiser
ridgeparts@aol.com



Great Lakes Division Website
<http://www.greatlakes-scca.org/>
Neohio SCCA Website
www.neohioscca.com

Neohio Region, SCCA
Meeting Minutes APPROVED | March 7, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Green, Joe Blaha, Scott Lunder, Dave Lancaster, Bob MacDonald, Gabe Gutierrez, Madeline Oswald

EXCUSED MEMBERS: Jim Pracker, Jason Pokines, Tara Oram, Bill Moore, Jeff Blumenthal, Kerry Klotzman

GUESTS: Welcome to all.

Meeting called to order by Jim Green at 7:02 pm. (Thanks to Bob MacDonald for handling the minutes for this meeting.)

Minutes presented from past meetings for approval. Corrected to show Dave & Kerry were absent last meeting. Also corrected spelling error regarding treasurer's report. MOTION to accept the minutes with corrections. MacDonald/Moore Approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: MOTION – to accept report as presented. Lancaster/Oswalt – Approved.

REPORTS & COMMITTEE REVIEWS:

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE: Ed Hughes expressed appreciation for HOF recognition at the Banquet.

COMPETITION COMMITTEE: NO REPORT

MEMBERSHIP: 527 members

SOLO:

- Gabe reported for Jason: Gabe & Madeline visited West side potential site. Venue representative concerned about pavement damage from a Solo event many years ago. Our team brought up possibility of using site for TRSS and response was favorable for a Street Survival event. Asked for dates of both types of events and asked for references from previous event venues.
- Budget Request: Pronto Timing support \$250. FTD awards \$13 to \$120, Promotion \$75 + \$30, Safety Event Refreshments \$66.67, TOTAL request \$513 (Motion to approve \$600) MacDonald/Lunder (APPROVED)

RALLY: NO REPORT

STREET SURVIVAL:

- Still looking for venues: Bill Snow looking into Twinsburg. Gabe has interest from LCCC. Dave Lancaster will look into Mentor.
- Can we advertise at DMV? MVR event 4/23 has 5 students. Encouraged our members to support MVR event.

HALL OF FAME:

- Duane Harrington reported two current Nominations for the coming year. Looking for more! Contact Duane and Dorothy.
- Criteria for nominations is on the Neohio website.

OLD BUSINESS:

Banquet had 67 total guests. We went \$355.07 over budget. Need to be more careful about making sure all information gets to the Trophy Chair. Need to get information to printer sooner. Thanks to Debbie LaFond for managing this year's trophies. Consider letting Award winners know they are winning in advance so they will show up. Duane requesting a \$500 budget for deposit for the 2018 Banquet. MOTION by Lancaster/Gutierrez (APPROVED). Next year's Banquet date proposed for 2/17/18.

NEW BUSINESS:

- We need to fill two open Trustee positions, and also need to elect a Chairperson.
- Should Membership be sending letters to welcome new members and following up with expiring memberships?
- Did Kerry get the Charter update finished?
- Madeline suggested doing the May meeting as a Board Retreat at a different location with an objective of reviewing programs and brainstorming ways to build the strength of the Region
- Gabe met with the new owner of Nelson Ledges. There are plans to cut and repair about 12 sections of the track. The track intends to continue doing limited events this year. Is the region open to doing a track day? Concern was raised regarding SCCA Sanction not in place. Can't do an official event unless the track passes it's safety inspection.
- Madeline proposes more social events. Idea: Holiday party for members at Winking Lizard. She is exploring possibilities.

Next Meeting: April 4, 2017

MOTION to adjourn at 8:59 pm. MacDonald/Lancaster – Approved

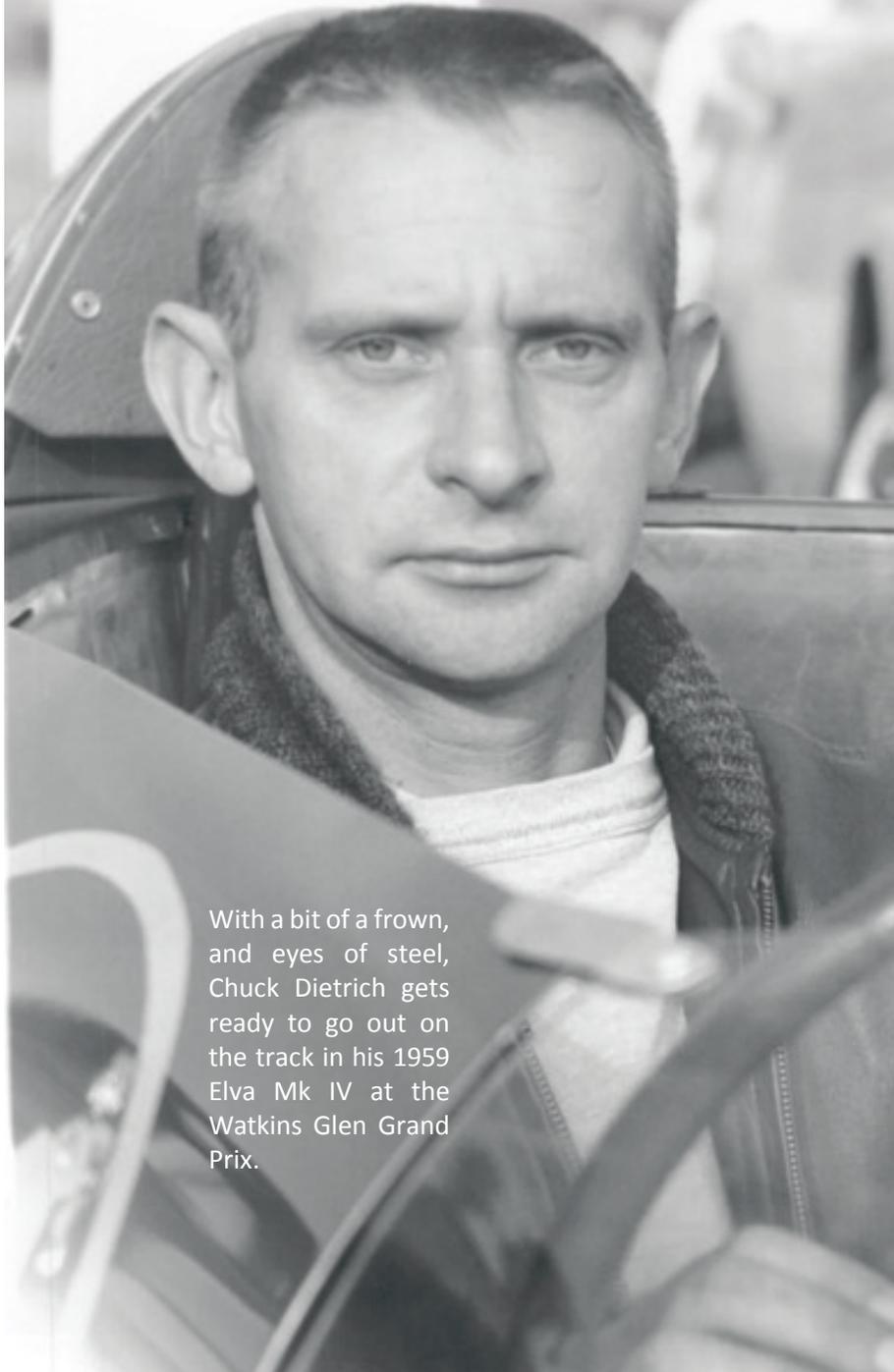
Submitted by Bob MacDonald

DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL / MAY 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
April 3	April 4 7 P Trustee Meeting @ Winking Lizard Bedford Hts.	April 5	April 6	April 7	April 8	April 9
April 10	April 11	April 12	April 13	April 14	April 15	April 16 Easter
April 17	April 18	April 19	April 20	April 21	April 22 Twilight Tour; Ann Arbor, MI; Detroit Region, SCCA	April 23
April 24	April 25	April 26	April 27	April 28	April 29 Physicals Steel Haul National Rally	April 30 Laurel Run Divisional Touring Rally
May 1	May 2 7 P Trustee Meeting @ Impact Communications in Cleveland	May 3	May 4	May 5	May 6 Annual Tech Day	May 7
May 8	May 9	May 10	May 11	May 12	May 13	May 14
May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19 Southern Ohio Forest Rally	May 20 Southern Ohio Forest Rally	May 21

THE MAN WHO LIVED TO RACE



With a bit of a frown, and eyes of steel, Chuck Dietrich gets ready to go out on the track in his 1959 Elva Mk IV at the Watkins Glen Grand Prix.

Chuck Dietrich held the no. 1 honorary competition license in the Sports Car Club of America.

By Carl Goodwin

Photography
Jane Dietrich Archive

Article appeared in
VINTAGEMOTORSPORT.COM Mar/
Apr 2017

Chuck Dietrich raced from May 1951 to August 2002. Yes, 51 years. That's more than Phil Hill (18 years), Dan Gurney, (15 years), Ken Miles (18 years), Briggs Cunningham (18 years), John Fitch (17 years), or Walt Hansgen (15 years).

Dietrich drove more than 400 races at 64 different racing venues, in 27 race cars, covering more than 20,000 racing miles. He won nine championships in the SCCA Central Division. He won two SCCA national championships: class GM in 1963 in a Bobsy Ford and Formula B in 1967 in a McLaren M4B.

He held the number one honorary competition license in the Sports Car Club of America. He was a member of the elite Road Racing Drivers Club beginning 1958. He was the man who lived to race.

Dietrich was a legend in the Midwest. This article was supposed to be titled "The King of Mid-Ohio." But before he won an unbeatable 37 races at the well-known Midwestern track, more than Bobby Rahal, he was the King of Put-in-Bay, the King of G-Modified, the King of Formula B, the King of SCCA's Central Division, the King of the Elva MkVII and the King of Formula Atlantic (no, wait a minute, that was Dan Carmichel). In the U.S., as writer and historian Jeff Allison notes, he put Elva cars on the map.

When you asked Chuck, he'd say, "I've always raced." In fact, as motorcyclist Bob Satava reminds us, "he raced Triumphs and an Indian

Continued on page 6.

Continued from page 5.

Chief motorcycle before and after World War II, on TT courses.”

During World War II he manned a machine-gun on a landing craft in battles with the Japanese throughout the Pacific islands. As soon as he got out of the Navy, Chuck Dietrich knew what he wanted to do: have a life involved with cars, a life that ended quietly on July 7, 2013 at age 88.

According to Dan Angelo, reporting in the Sandusky Register, Dietrich began working as the parts manager for Smith Motors. While he was racing his MG TC, he met Don Marsh, a Volkswagen distributor in Columbus, who offered him a VW dealership. Ralph Smith co-signed for the floor plan and Dietrich got a \$5,000 loan to start the business in a 30-by-30 foot building on Sycamore Line.

The Put-in-Bay Road Races

After a go at the old Detroit Fairgrounds in 1951, the Put-in-Bay race was organized on an island in Lake Erie by the Cleveland Sport Car Club and this was perfect for Chuck.

He started running his supercharged MG TC there in 1952. It was well-prepared, with a balanced engine, drilled out tappets, polished rocker arms, milled pistons and a considerably lightened chassis. Besides being mechanically adept, he was an outstanding driver. “Between the car and himself,” notes early racing official Bob Satava, “they became a giant killer.”

Dietrich raced the same car in '53 and '54, and then added a Lester MG—bought from his friend Don Marsh—to his entry for 1955, so he could run in two classes.

Put-in-Bay corner worker Bob Satava notes. “I remember standing on the corner at the Colonial Inn. He went through that corner faster than anyone else. I couldn't believe how fast he was.”

The Elva Arrives

“I read about a new car in an English magazine,” Chuck noted. “John Bolster wrote about the Elva MkI. I contacted Frank Nichols and he said he had one that had been made for a Canadian who was overcome by fumes in his garage. I bought it and it was the first one in the country. I became the exclusive importer for a couple of years until it became too much work.”

Elva very much needed a gifted driver like Dietrich racing its cars, someone who had the ability to make the car win over the engineering of Lotus and Cooper.

Commenting on the new wave of British cars, Dietrich noted: “Compared to the Lester MG and the Italian cars, they were much quicker. They cornered better, had better brakes and were totally different. They were superior cars.

“I had a new Elva every year,” Dietrich said, “and won G-Modified at the 'Bay every year (except for '59). One year I hit a tree and still won. In 1956 I had the MkI, in '57 a MkII, in '58 a MkIII and a MkIV in '59. I could sell the Elva and make money on it. An Elva cost about \$3,000 from Frank Nichols, cheaper than a Lotus or Lola, but just as fast.”

An early contest pitted the MkI Elva against the Mk 9 Lotus at the 1956 Brynfan Tyddyn event. “I got into the lead very soon,” Dietrich recalled. “The Elva was ideally suited to the course at Brynfan Tyddyn. I loved that course. The Lotus was a good fast car that had done well in England, and Duncan Black was a good driver, but they fell behind.”

The June 2, 1957 race at Dunkirk Airport was a showplace for Dietrich's driving abilities. According to Bernie Groh, whose Porsche Speedster finished 4th in Race 1, “Dietrich's performance in the feature was The Race of the Race. He followed the Tom Payne Porsche Spyder with his

little Elva MkI bumper to bumper. On the 36th and final lap, Chuck's Elva drove inside the Porsche to finish second to the D-Jaguar of Bill Klinck.”

In 1958, the 2nd Annual Lake Erie Invitational was held at Dunkirk. Repeating the Kenneth Ahr Memorial Race for sports racers under 1500cc, Dietrich put the 550 Spyder of Bill Lewis behind him, where it stayed, along with the Elvas of Millard Ripley and Charlie Kurtz, and the Lotus Mk 9 of Bob Davison.

Chuck Dietrich vs Jim Clark

“In 1960, I had a full season of racing for the Elva factory in Europe,” said Chuck. “Competition included many famous drivers such as Jim Clark, John Surtees, Denny Hulme and Allan Rees. Courses included Brands Hatch, Mallory Park, Goodwood and Snetterton. The season climaxed with a 3rd place in the British Empire Trophy Race at Silverstone after starting at the rear due to engine problems.”

According to *Sporting Motorist*: “At the start of the Silverstone Formula Junior race Surtees left the road at the very first bend. This let Jim Clark take the lead ahead of Dietrich's Elva. These two led no less than four more Lotuses.” This left Dietrich challenging Clark for the lead. He later spun and left 2nd to Peter Ashdown, with himself in 3rd.

In 1961, Chuck imported a 200 series Elva FJ, winning both 10 consecutive races and the CenDiv Championship. The “tail fin” car was replaced with a 300 series (“long nose”) and Dietrich continued his winning ways.

Starting the 1962 season, Chuck drove a SWB Ferrari, owned by Dr. Baxter of Fremont, Ohio, in several races. These included Mosport in Canada, the Road America June Sprints and the Grand Prix de Puerto Rico. Classed with the big-block Corvettes, he got two 2^{nds} and a 3rd.

Continued on page 7.

Racing at Mid-Ohio

Finally, at long last, a road course was built in Ohio. Starting 1960 Les Greibling was contacted about the construction of a track.

Six drivers were consulted: Dietrich, Porsche Spyder champion Don Sessler, Alfa champion Chuck Stoddard, Corvette champion Bob Johnson, Porsche driver T. King Hedding and Triumph driver Reed Andrews.

"I used to know Les Greibling pretty well," says Chuck Stoddard, who would become a three-time National Champion in Alfas. "He had a BMC franchise, just as I did. His land was not far from Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cincinnati, Dayton and, of course, Columbus."

"The exit from Turn 8 originally went much further left than it does now," said driver Don Sessler. Chuck Dietrich, Bob Johnson and I discussed it. I told them 'this is going to cause nothing but trouble. You're going to have the biggest pile-up you ever saw. You better have several wreckers on hand.' They ignored our advice. Before the track was formally opened, there was an impromptu race. Between Turns 8 and 9, they piled up six cars. After that they changed the design'."

Jon Clifton, a friend of Dietrich's, a driver and racing official from SCCA's Fort Wayne Region recalls, "prior to the opening of the new Mid-Ohio road course, Chuck was towing a double-decker trailer. On the top was an Elva 200 Formula Junior and on the bottom was the newer Elva 300 Junior. They were for Suzy (Dietrich's wife, also a racer) and Chuck. In 1962, the first race was held at Mid-Ohio. Chuck and I talked about driving the new course. When the overall track record was set, it belonged to him."

Dietrich was always a very popular driver everywhere he went, but

nowhere more so than at Mid-Ohio. Here Jake Perry from Port Clinton and his three kids would sit on the hill at Turn 7 and scream at the top of their lungs "COME ON CHUCK!"

A Car They Called the Bobsy

In 1962, race car fabricator Jerry Mong announced a small-displacement midengine sports-racing machine with a novel aluminum tube frame.

As the late Suzy Dietrich recalled, "Kaye Hier had his car at Cumberland, MD and Mong asked if Chuck could take the car out for a couple of laps. He quickly put down some very fast lap times. So Mong offered him a ride for the 1963 season, which resulted in a G-Modified National Championship for Bobsy."

A few remembrances by Jerry Mong: "First of all Chuck was an incredibly good driver. He made Bobsy, I cannot emphasize this enough.

"You must understand Chuck raced at a time when sports racing cars were the most ill-handling things to drive that ever existed. And this included the early Bobsy. It took a special talent by the driver to make up for this. You should also understand that Chuck was very, very frugal. This was both a blessing and a curse. He was so happy to have a ride in 1963 that he would never complain about the car and was always keen to tell everyone how wonderful the car was. This came back to haunt me later on.

"In the year's final event Chuck was 3rd on the grid lined up right behind a Ferrari which had about a thousand horsepower. There was a long straight after the first turn. Chuck got the nose of the Bobsy stuck up under the tail of the Ferrari and got a massive tow all the way down the long straight, resulting in a huge lead over Dr. M.R.J. Wyllie, whom we needed to beat. Dietrich won the race and the championship.

"Chuck was a truly a unique individual. A very dedicated sports car racer for

sure. Had it not been for Chuck the whole thing would have simply gone away.

"Thank you Chuck—wherever you are!"

The Elva-BMW

In 1964, Elva introduced the MkVII, a big brother to their first mid-engined car, the lightweight MkVI, powered by an 1100cc Coventry Climax engine. In contrast, MkVII was built to carry 2.0-liter engines such as the 4-cam 1700cc Porsche that won the 1963 Road America Enduro, and the BMW. It could touch 150mph. E-Modified was a very competitive class and it also included a Ferrari Dino, George Follmer's Lotus 23-Porsche and Joe Buzzetta's Porsche 906. Dietrich's first experience with the Elva MkVII was on Scuderia Tin Can, the team organized and financed by Ollie Schmidt of Chicago.

In a mid-summer race June 5th, 1966 at Mid-Ohio, Dietrich performed yet another you-can't-do-that feat by beating the Porsche 906 of Ralph Treischmann in the feature race with the Elva-BMW. In setting a record of 82.442mph, he also passed a C-Modified Cooper Ford, for the overall victory, his first at the track. Race worker Gail Murphy took some good movies of this contest.

Later that summer he took a vacation from Elva and drove Suzy's Lotus 20 to first in the July 17, '66 national race at Mid-Ohio, setting a new course record at 1:48.4 and 79.048 mph. Nobody, including Suzy, came close to this record.

In 1967, Chuck and Suzy got a divorce. And a year later, Chuck married Jane.

"We went to a lot of places," Jane said. "I liked Road America. It was a beautiful place, with a nice hotel. Laguna Seca—I loved that. I liked Donnybrook in Minnesota. We went to Lime Rock with Bob Amey. That was nice. We went to the East Coast

Continued on page 8.

Continued from page 7.

and to the Bahamas. Chuck drove a Chevron for Dick Leppla there. Charlie passed Augie Pabst and Augie wasn't happy about it. But when Charlie got passed he never got angry about it."

According to the newspaper report of Mickey Mishne, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Chuck Dietrich nearly won three races at the July 16 mid-summer Mid-Ohio National. In the Formula car race, Dietrich and his McLaren M4B took overall and Formula B honors, and with 2nd going to Tom Clark in a Cooper-Ford. Dietrich's M4B also set a record, beating all of the FB cars as well as FC, FF and FV. It also beat the Formula A record set by Jerry Hansen in a Lola-Chevy. The time was 1:38.6 versus 1:40.2. In the sedan race, Dietrich's Mini-Cooper broke a magnesium wheel while leading.

Clark's 2nd place was notable in that he was driving a Formula C car. "Dietrich was my mentor," Clark recalls. "He was so fast. I won a couple of races and he said to me 'I think you can win the CenDiv Championship,' which I did.

According to Dinah Chapman, writing for the *Sandusky Register* July 17, 1967, Dietrich lowered the sports racing track record at Mid-Ohio to 1:45.0 or 82.29 mph. "I was really pleased with the way it handled," said the smiling winner.

By 1967, the Elva was getting a bit long of tooth and after three Central Division wins and a seventh USRRC under-2.0-liter win, the car was called an antique by fellow race drivers. It kept racing and, on September 17th, won an important race against three of the new Porsche 906s up at St. Jovite, Quebec.

In a 1967 race at the fast 2-mile Nelson Ledges course, Dietrich's McLaren Formula B out-qualified George Wintersteen in a Repco Brabham 1:12.7 to 1:16.0.

Misfortune struck after he had qualified 4th fastest at the American

Road Race of Champions in Daytona Beach, with a 1:47.7. Fred Baker was leading in a 906 when he spun in the second to last turn and stalled. Dietrich avoided him and led for a brief few seconds before he was cut off and hit by another 906 driver, Peter Gregg. The collision broke the front hub carrier.

Formula B at the ARRC

Earlier in the same race weekend at Daytona, Dietrich was driving the beautiful McLaren M4B sponsored by Bob and Peggy Amey. Chuck trailed the 1966 champion, Gus Hutchinson, in a Lotus, for two laps and then took the lead on the third. His average speed was 105.474mph for the 26 laps and the national championship.

It's a cliché to say Dietrich was a fast driver. How fast? At the Mid-Ohio national race in 1967, Ed Lowther, well-known bigbore driver from Pittsburgh, drove his 427 Cobra to a first in A-Production with a lap time of 1:46.0. The famous Mark Donohue drove his A-Sedan Penske-prepared Camaro to a first in class at 1:41.0. Multi-time Formula 5000 champion Jerry Hansen won at 1:40.2 in a Chevy-powered Lola. And Chuck Dietrich took Formula B with a McLaren-Ford at 1:38.6 seconds.

Early in the 1968 season, Dietrich earned his second national win of the year at the June Sprints at Elkhart Lake driving the Bob Amey-Dietrich Racing McLaren Formula B. He set a new lap record for the class of 2:33.5 and was second overall in the FA/FB event.

The 1968 Nationals

Dietrich won the 1968 division crown with his McLaren M4B and just missed gaining the national crown as he finished runner-up in the American Road Race of Champions at Riverside, California. Oil on the track prevented Dietrich from capturing another Formula B title.

In 1969 Dietrich competed in a

Formula 5000 Lola owned by Carl Hogan of St. Louis. But he had a number of mechanical problems with the car and crashed at Elkhart Lake and St. Jovite in the professional SCCA Continental Series. He then returned to amateur racing for the rest of the season and he again won the divisional crown in FB.

In 1970, Chuck won his fifth divisional championship driving a Porsche 914-6 sponsored by the Audi distributorship in Columbus. He also drove a Camaro owned by Vince Gimando of Orlando, FL, for a class win at the Sebring 12 hour race.

More Formula B Racing

Multi-time Formula Ford and Formula B champion Mike Rand recalls some of the FB events that he and Dietrich drove.

"The first time we were on the track together," Rand recalls, "it was a 1971 Cen-Div championship event at Mid-Ohio on Memorial Day. I beat Dietrich and I also beat Northeast driver Fred Stevenson.

"The next race was at Nelson Ledges. Chuck in his BT29 and Dan Carmichael in his Chevron B18. Both loved the track. It was a fast track. But Fred Stevenson was 1st and I was 3rd. I forget who was 2nd.

"In 1972 we raced at Detroit and Chuck was on the pole, Dan was 2nd and I was 3rd in my Rondel FB from Opert."

In the middle of the 1973 season, Chuck again demonstrated his prowess racing in the rain by finishing 1st at the Nelson Ledges Nationals, June 9, with Mike Rand 2nd and Dan Carmichael 3rd. Times for the first three were 1:07.3, 1:07.4 and 1:09.7. They used to call Dietrich "the rain-meister."

In a 1976 interview for the Mid-Ohio race program, writer Dave Arnold noted his 25 years of racing

Continued on page 9.

Continued from page 8.

and Dietrich exclaimed “I wouldn’t know what to do if I retired. You can get killed on an airplane and drown in the water, so I’ll continue to race until I get to be the same age as Dan Carmichael (59).”

Dan had a nickname that was “Ace,” and he was a real Ace, with 13 air victories in a Grumman Hellcat flying off carriers Enterprise and Hornet during the Pacific Campaign in WWII. Chuck’s nickname was “Woof” but no one is certain of where that came from. “After the races,” Jane adds, “we sat in the paddock and had sardines and crackers, and a little Jack Daniels. It was fun.” Then they all went to Kentucky Fried Chicken for dinner.

“Charlie was a kind person,” says Jane. “There was a friend of mine who lived on Cleveland Road in Sandusky, near his Volkswagen shop. One time she brought it in for some work. She walked over later to pick it up. But she couldn’t pay for it just then. And the shop would not let her have it. She went back home and called Charlie. She explained that she really needed the car, to take her child to the baby sitter and go to her job. Shortly afterward, Charlie drove into her driveway. He apologized for his mechanic. Then he walked back to the dealership and had a discussion with the mechanic. He said that if a customer needed a car, they should get the car. He would take his chances with the payment.”

Jim Hollowell was a fellow racer. “I used to watch Dietrich race in ’71,” says Jim. “He had an ugly Chevron—I think it was a Chevron 18 with that big wide open nose. Later he got a Brabham with a slant-back nose and I got one too. That’s when we met. The engine in my car was no end of trouble. We tried to pull-start the car around the paddock. He loaned us a Lucas ignition box so we could make the race. He was always willing to



*In a Formula Atlantic race in 2002,
Dietrich at the age of 77 is at work in the No. 62 Martini Super Vee.*

help—just a fine person. My brother and I worshipped him.

“He and Dan Carmichael would sit in folding chairs and talk. They were always ready to go as soon as they pulled into the track at Nelsons. When I got my BDA engine I could stay close enough to Carmichael to read the words on the back of his wing. They said, ‘Who is John Galt?’”

Neohio SCCA Formula Atlantic driver Dennis Sideri shares some memories: “Chuck was racing his beautiful yellow Lola FA car in the Mahoning National against some of the best drivers of the time, guys like Jim Trueman, Tommy Outcault, Dan Fowler, Patrick Garmen and a whole bunch of other guys. They were brilliant to watch and of course, the King of Formula Atlantic, Dan Carmichael. Chuck and Dan were best buds off and on the track and being a young inexperienced driver, they both showed me respect and what true racing etiquette was on the race track.

“Years later, Chuck had sold his Lola and purchased a real race car. I told him that as a joke. It was a Martini FSV which was previously raced by a very famous French F1 driver, Didier Theys. We always kidded him that he was going to be leaving us in SCCA and going across the pond to compete in F1 and be the next big superstar.

“I remember the last event at Mid-Ohio. We were sharing a garage

together, like always, and he casually walked over and mentioned that this was his last race. At first I do not think it really registered with me. I think I was in the middle of fixing something on our car and trying to repair it before the next qualifying. But later he reconfirmed it was his last race.

“I honestly now cannot remember how we or he did that weekend only that I will never forget helping him load his car up on his little flatbed ramp and thinking to myself that this would be the last time I would have the opportunity to race with him. “Thanks and God bless, Charlie. I hope to see you some day up on the big race track in the sky.”

The author wishes to thank the following people for their help and memories in the preparation of this article: Jeff Allison, Bob and Peggy Amey, Dan Angelo, Dave Arnold, Barry Budlong, Dinah Chapman, Tom Clark, Jon Clifton, Jane Dietrich, Bernard Groh, Jim Groh, Jim Hollowell, Don Marsh, Berdie Martin, Mickey Mishne, Jerry Mong, Jake Perry, Mike Rand, Bob Satava, Don Sessler, Denny Sideri, Jim Sitz and Chuck Stoddard.

Carl Goodwin has written for many periodicals and has written a book titled "The Put-in-Bay Road Races, 1952-1963". The publisher is listed as "McFarland" and is available on all major ebook providers.

How Do I Road Rally?

Reprinted from www.scca.com.

Because SCCA RoadRally events are held on public roads and well within any laws, this form of motorsport has no more barriers to entry than the daily driving done by millions of people. The costs are as low as any form of motorsports in existence and the risks are no higher than you might encounter on your commute to work.

What you need

A street legal car, covered by an automobile insurance policy: Your car needs to be road legal and will have to pass a basic safety inspection which includes all working lights, windshield wipers, rear-view mirror, working brakes including a parking brake, seat belts for each occupant, a working horn and tires in road-worthy condition.

In addition, each entered vehicle must be covered by a valid auto insurance policy as required by the state in which it is registered, and that the policy must be up to date throughout the event.

Helpful tip - Chances are if your vehicle is legal to drive on the road in your home state, and you have the documentation you need to show during a traffic stop you're also going to be good to participate in a RoadRally, but we figured we would spell it out in case you were planning on driving your top fuel drag racing car in the event. (Please don't.)

Two people: Each RoadRally team is required to have two people - a driver and a navigator. Anyone on the team planning on driving during the event must also have a valid

drivers license. Teammates can be best friends, spouses, parent and son/daughter, co-workers or random people you met at other automobile events. (Like Track Night in America.. true story!)

Helpful tip - Team members do not have to be over 18, but if you are under 18 and planning on participating in an SCCA RoadRally - you will need your parents to sign a minor waiver for you.

Some small stuff: When we say, "Small stuff" we mean something to write with (in order to do some math or make notes on the route instructions) some paper (to do math on) and some type of device which keeps time down to the second - usually a watch or smart phone. If the RoadRally is at night (most are not), you might also need a flashlight or a working map light in your car.

Helpful tip - The truth is, you don't actually NEED those things to do a RoadRally. In some events there will even be "seat of the pants" class where only guesswork and your cars gauges are used to try to get to the checkpoints on time. But, if you do want to be more competitive; pens, paper and a second-hand on your watch are a minimum of what you will want.

How to Participate:

Find an event: Below this description of steps will be an application to help you find events. Put in your zip code, find the event pages and see details to determine which event is right for you.

Register: Some events may have online registration, some may have mail-in forms, some may have both and some may even allow you to show up and register

on site. When you find an event look for the details about how registration might be unique. Depending on the Region and the location, events usually cost less than \$40 to enter.

Helpful tip - If you still have questions about which RoadRally might be right for you or questions about a specific event, contact us or the event organizers and ask all of your questions. SCCA RoadRally organizers love to help out and chances are you will make a new friend!

Show Up: Once you know which event you're going to attend - get your team together and get to the event. Attend any drivers meetings, get your car double-checked by the organizers to make sure it's safe, go over the route instructions and try to shake off the nervous anticipation.

Helpful tip - As with asking questions when you're looking for an event, SCCA members are a helpful bunch once you get to the event as well. Tell someone this is your first time and chances are you're going to get walked through any processes necessary for the event. As before, you'll probably even make some new friends along the way.

Drive: This is the easy part - well, easy to do, tougher to be perfect at. Buckle up, wait for your team's assigned start time and have fun. After all, that's what this is all about.

Helpful tip - Since it's probably your first time, you're going to learn a lot about things you would do differently the next time so go into the event relaxed and with an open mind. Talk to your co-driver a lot, smile even more.

Do You Miss it?

Sebring. As the competitors fly by on the screen, mixed emotions fill my brain. The new IMSA DPI's are spectacular. In fact, at the Daytona 24, Jeff Gordon's kids thought their dad was finally a cool race driver because he was driving a mean black Cadillac DPI, the Batmobile. I even like the shark fin tails on the DPIs that are also sprouting on Formula 1 cars this season. Certainly, the battle in GTLM is fierce with Corvettes, Porsche 911s, a Ferrari 488 and BMW M6s chasing the Ford GTs trying for a triple of last year's 24 Hours of Le Mans and this year's Rolex 24 and Sebring. The new Ohio built Acura is looking good in GTD.

It really seems time to blow out of this miserable Ohio March and to get to a race track. Last year, I had already made a first weekend in March return to Sebring after 47 years for the Trans Am 50th Anniversary race. As that weekend came and went, I wished I had been able to return to watch Cliff Ebben's Mustang take this year's win. But his win only came about after problems for young Mr. Ernie Francis Jr's number 98 Mustang. It broke after claiming the pole, setting the fastest race lap and leading the first 16 laps or the race. He is certainly one to watch for now and the future. Sadly, this year my chaplaincy duties for Road Race Ministries will be limited. Due to sanctioning and personnel changes with the Pirelli World Challenge and Trans Am, I will only be at a couple of the more local Trans AMs.

Of course, all SCCA racers in the Northeast Ohio areas and around wait with baited breath for more news from Nelson Ledges. The rumors seem good and if they are true, it will be so good to be back at a "grown up" Nelson. For this now it seems to be as Joni Mitchell sang "You don't know what you've got til its gone." There is one great SCCA deal this month to get over the "I miss the race track blues."

Members can sign up for a Track Night in America for only \$50. Who knows, you might see a red 94 Mustang GT at Pitt Race in April.

Despite the joy we get from racing, the ultimate joy is having a relationship with God. You are always on His schedule. You just need to go to Him.

Chaplain Marvin Gray
chapnlrc@aol.com

Mark Your Calendars!

**2017 SCCA® Runoffs®
at Indianapolis Motor Speedway**

September 25-October 1, 2017



Auto Annex Toy Store LLC Fine Quality Motor Sales



Storage for Your Car or Boat!

216-575-7506

**12910 Taft Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44108**



The Blower

Newsletter of Neohio Region, SCCA

April 2017

Laura O'Neill
397 Apple Hill Drive
Sagamore Hills, OH 44067

I'VE GOT IT- YOU WANT IT Classified Ads For Members

Classified ads for Neohio members run for three issues. If your item sells before the third month, contact The Blower newsletter editor to remove the ad.

CARS

'99 Acura Integra ITS #13. Always a top finisher. Engine alone worth \$5000 plus you get a ready to go car for only \$7500/offer. Pat Kane, 440-785-3432.***

MISC

WANTED - Used enclosed trailer between 15 and 20 feet. Ramp or doors at rear and side door. Any condition undercarriage. Going to be used for storage. Must be delivered to my site. Contact doubledhtwo@yahoo.com.***

1993 Winnebago Warrior 25' Motorhome, 454 Chevy Engine, Trailer hitch & trailer brake system, Tires good—front tires new, Everything (a/c, refrigerator, furnace, generator, etc.) works! Awning - 42,300 miles. A great racer's tow vehicle/weekend residence. Needs nothing! \$11,000. Bob Piekarczyk, 330-225-8229, parkera1@aol.com.***

Triumph-TR-3 Engine; FIAT 600 Engine. Larry at 216-321-6045, 10 AM to 5 PM.***

Advertisement Rates

For ads, other than classified, the following rates apply:

- Full Page - \$90 / month (8" x 9.5") \$250 / 3 months
- 1/2 Page - \$45 / month (8" x 5.25") \$120 / 3 months
- 1/4 Page - \$25 / month (4" x 5") \$65 / 3 months
- 1/8 Page - \$15 / month (3.5" x 2") \$40 / 3 months

20% Discount to Neohio member

Payment must accompany ad.

To place a classified ad, contact Laura O'Neill:

Laura O'Neill | 397 Apple Hill Drive | Sagamore Hills, OH 44067
(330) 467-4472 | oneill397@windstream.net

Classified ads are free for members.