

CASC-OR Race Workshop Notes

by Candace Calder

Competition Director, 2007

The 2007 CASC-OR Race Workshop was held on November 11, 2007 at the Toronto Congress Centre, the site of the previous evening's superb Gala Awards Dinner and Dance. (If you didn't attend, you missed a helluva good party.)

In one of his last roles as CASC-OR's Race Director, **Gunter Schmidt** presented a review of the 2007 Regional Race year which consisted of an 8 race weekend schedule.

Participation was up by about 7% this year, with the number of entries over the 8 weekends being 1219 as opposed to last year's 1141. The OCC Sprints (aka GT Alphabet) grew modestly overall, as did Formula Libre and Formula 1200. Vintage, G70 and Club Sport declined as did the number of Formula Ford 1600 entries.

By far the greatest gain occurred in the Castrol Canadian Touring Car Championship, growing by 40% over 2006. CCTCC's overall entries were 362, averaging about 40 cars per race. It was suggested that the growth of CCTCC may have drawn on cars that would otherwise have run in the OCC Sprints series, hence the OCC's lack of growth.

The overall number of penalties issued declined a little in 2007 – blendline infractions were way down while the number of yellow flag infractions increased. Putting it in context, over an 8 weekend race season, 24 to 30 infractions could be expected. In Gunter's words, this suggests that one goal for 2008 will be to improve the education of drivers and officials in regards to some of our rules.

The 2008 tentative race schedule is as follows:

May 10 to May 11
May 31 to June 1
June 28 to June 29
July 26 to July 27
Aug 9 to Aug 10
Aug 30 to Aug 31
Sep 13 to Sep 14
Sep 27 to Sep 28

Organizing clubs to be finalized. A ninth event may be added after discussion. This leaves room for a DAC event if a satisfactory date can be determined.

Question: *Has there been any consideration given to realigning the GT Sprints classes to accommodate the huge speed differential among some GT-1 cars?*

Gunter said that the current class system works quite well resulting in an average of 9 to 10 cars per class. The uber-fast Vipers might not be around forever so building a separate class

around them may not be justified.

A suggestion from the floor was to consider restrictor plates to slow the front runners. A related suggestion was to prohibit the use of radios in Sprints, just as in-car timing devices are prohibited.

Question: *How about dealing with on track speed differentials between classes?*

In Gunter's opinion, there will always be speed differentials in racing – it's up to the drivers to be race-safe and not run over slower cars. Part of racing is learning to share the track using good judgment. He said the problem arises with new racers coming out once or twice a year - whose driving behaviour may be unpredictable. Whether to split the classes in 2008 is a decision for the 2008 Race Director and ORO and will depend on car counts and length of day issues.

Question: *Will we be running the full track at Calabogie in 2008?*

In 2007 only the East section of Calabogie could be used because of the shortage of race-qualified marshalls. The number of blind corners requires many trained corner workers and the Calabogie marshalls have not yet been able to meet the strict requirements of the sanctioning body. Until they do, it may not be possible to run the full track, especially if there is a conflict on the race schedule with other events. There was much discussion about what it takes to attract workers to an event. Scott Ellsworth (CASC-OR President) announced that the Board and Committees are looking at solutions – perhaps supporting some of the volunteers' expenses such as accommodation.

Question: *Future of Club Sport racing?*

Probably won't be continued in 2008. It was originally created to encourage marque clubs to participate but those that came out now run OCC Sprints. Those that didn't, have stuck with the marque clubs' own series. Also, running with the G70 group, some racers were not respecting the stricter '13/13' rules about clumsy driving.

Question: *Has the Appeals Process been overhauled given the problems experienced this year?*

Yes. A permanent Appeals Board with a Chairperson is being set up, and the 2008 General Competition Rules have been amended to reflect improved rules and standards for both competitors and officials. These rules regarding timelines of the steps involved as well as the requirements for presenting evidence will be similar to FIA and SCCA standards. Penalties will be published in keeping with their deterrent nature.

John Bondar (of the Castrol Canadian Touring Car Challenge) thanked the Ontario Race Organizers for their support and help in growing the series. He announced that the series will be expanding into the Quebec Region for 2008 and will likely move its affiliation to the ASN (national) sanctioning body, having moved beyond the Ontario Region.

With a couple of races to take place in Quebec, and perhaps another two joining Pro Race weekends, there will be fewer CCTCC events in the Regional schedule. Regional organizers will find great holes in their schedules and revenues. John said that the CCTCC will work with ORO so as to minimize the hurt.

The CCTCC has also adopted rule changes such that many cars will no longer be eligible to

run the series. John planted the seeds of an idea to create an Ontario Touring Car series with more relaxed eligibility rules as a place for these cars to race. It would also be a feeder series to the CCTCC. [Sounds like an opportunity for someone to step up to the plate and run with the idea.]

With Gunter Schmidt's retirement after 8 years as Race Director, Cindy Armstrong of MCO – Motorsport Club of Ottawa – has stepped up to take over. She brings not only 31 years of experience in almost every role in motorsport – from official to crew to racer to instructor/school organizer – but also a proactive stance and an openness to discussion. 2008 should be a good season.