

The Write Line

~ May 2023 ~

**SALINA
REGION**
SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA



Phelan Gagnon, AS Corvette

The official newsletter of the Salina Region SCCA

Regional Executive Views

Teamwork makes the dream work. I was not present at May's event and I would like to thank everyone who stepped up to make the event happen. I say it time and time again but it takes everyone's help to make a Solo Event function with minimal hiccups.

While everyone was working their tails off, I was on a family vacation in Florida for a week and a half. Took the family to Disney World as well as Clearwater beach. We all had a blast as well as my 4-year-old daughter seeing all the characters and princesses. Made amazing memories but one thing that impressed me was how clean and organized Disney is. Did you know that Disney gets over 7 million visitors and makes it look easy on how they are experts on moving people. If anyone is planning a Disney trip, get with me because I now know some ins and outs.

Back to business, did you hear about the amazing events coming up? I know you have read and heard about it time and time again. Salina is hosting a MiDiv Solo Championship event that is not far away on June 2-4. Sign up early because registration closes on the 31st of this month.

The Famous Salina Mirror Khana (on Father's Day!) is just two weeks after MiDiv on June 18th. I will be honest with you, this will be my first Mirror Khana but will surely not be my last. From looking at the course as well as how the event is run with the brackets instead of timing is fun and different from the usual Solo that we are all used to. Registration is open for Mirror Khana as well and just like MiDiv registration

will close the Wednesday before, so we can get the brackets all ready for the day of the event.

June is a full month for events in Salina, and then we do not have a local event in July because of the annual Lead Sled Spectacular. It is good that events other than our own make use of the Berkeley Family Recreation Area – it gives the city reason to maintain it – but the setup for that creates safety issues for us so we just wait until they're done.

Still, we do have two points events in July – the Topeka and Wichita rounds of the Sunflower Solo Showdown, an annual headknocker between three Sunflower State regions. Represent the Salina Region and travel to the neighboring regions Showdown events. Both events count in our regional championship.

They're back-to-back on the first two Sundays of July. Kansas Region was only given two weekends to use at the Stormont Vail Event Center (formerly the Kansas Expocentre) in downtown Topeka, so they had to make do with their limited resource – two weekends, four days, if you want to run both days you can but only Sunday is the Showdown. Registration is open on MSR.

Wichita Region's schedule this year is mostly Saturday-Sunday events at their Road Yoder Solo Site, but July 8-9 is special because that's their round of the MiDiv Solo Championship. And then Sunday is doubling as their round of the Sunflower Solo Showdown. So after running Salina's MiDiv Championship, you'll want to do both days at Yoder for max points in the Divisional Championship.

I hope everyone is having a great spring and that we'll see everyone out for this busy June in Salina. Have a great Father's Day.

—Andlee, RE, Salina Region

► Next Events ◀

MiDiv Championship Solo - June 3-4

Mirror Khana XLI - June 18

Berkley Family Recreation Area - 841 Markley Road, Salina

For Mirror Khana:

SCCA members \$30, non-members \$45

Check-in/Tech opens 8:00 am, closes 9:00 a.m. — Course open to walk by 8:30

Novice coursewalk 9:15 — Driver's Meeting 9:30 — Cars on course by 10:00

Pre-register on MotorsportsReg.com ~ link at salinascca.org

Next Business Meeting

Tuesday, June 20
7 p.m.

► On Zoom! ◀

*Business meetings are
open to all members.*

*Email Andlee (see Pg. 2)
to get the connection link.*



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Salina Region Schedule ~ 2023

All events at Berkley Family Recreational Area unless noted otherwise

Event

Jun 3-4 – Solo #5 & 6 – Divisional Championship
Jun 18 – Solo #7 – Mirror Khana XLI
Jul 2 – Solo #8 – Sunflower Showdown @ Topeka
Jul 9 – Solo #9 – Sunflower Showdown @ Yoder
Aug 13 – Solo #10 – Sunflower Showdown @ Salina
Sep 10 – Solo #11
Oct 15 – Solo #12 – Octoberfast 34
Nov 5 – Solo #13

Chair

Andlee Phengphachanh
Dennis Smith
Kansas Region
Wichita Region
Andlee Phengphachanh
Abner Perney
Salina Region Board
Kale Morris

A Salina Divisional (if held) and Solo Nationals (Sep. 4-8, 2023) also score in Salina Region's Championship, with bonus points. Lowest three scores are thrown out, four if we do a Divisional

MiDiv



SPS/R&S MiDiv Solo Series – 2023

~~Apr 29-30 – Kansas City @ Independence (Metro CC Driving Center)~~

~~May 13-14 – NeOkla @ Muskogee (Davis Field)~~

June 3-4 – Salina @ Salina (Berkley Family Rec Area)

July 8-9 – Wichita @ Yoder (Road Yoder Solo Site)

Aug 5-6 – Nebraska @ Lincoln (Lincoln Airpark)

SCCA Solo Nationals ~ Sep. 4-8, 2023 ~ Lincoln, NE

MEETING MINUTES

(Subject to correction and approval at the next Salina Region board meeting)

Regional Executive Andlee Phengphachanh called the board meeting of Salina Region SCCA to order at 07:15 p.m. on May 18 via Zoom. Attending were Sharon Brillhart, Chandler Brown, Rocky Entriken, Monte Rans, Jason Rash, Dennis and Nancy Smith, and late arrival Aaron Loggan.

Dennis moved to approve the minutes as written, Sharon seconded. Approved unanimously. Sharon presented the treasurer's report. Balance essentially unchanged since last month. The check from the Evolution Performance Driving School has been received; Andlee will deposit it tomorrow. Nancy moved to approve, Dennis seconded. Approved unanimously.

Old Business -- Fire Extinguishers: Abner has had them serviced.

Dog Park – The city has been contacted and are providing barriers. They are not locking the gates during our events, which we prefer.

Timing electronics -- Batteries for the finish line display are getting old. Finish line antenna isn't working reliably. Y cable may need to be replaced.

Trailer security – Discussion (GPS or wheel lock?) tabled.

Mirror Khana confirmed for June 18.

Sunflower showdown – Kansas Region and Wichita Region will be back to back (July 7 2, 9). Kansas Region will have the Showdown on Sunday, with regular event on Saturday. Wichita will have two-day event for divisional championship, with Showdown on Sunday. Salina event will be Sunday, Aug. 13.

New Business -- May event: fairly low turnout, but everyone stepped up to help out and everything went well. Course was a lot of fun. Some issues with late fee setup on MSR.

Painting party – Complete Mirror Khana course and east side of grid completed by Kale Morris, Chandler Brown and Abner Perney. West side of grid still needs to be completed.

MiDiv Championship Event, June 3-4 – Dennis can set up course (maybe Chandler) and Nancy will handle registration on Friday, June 2. Andlee as backup. An entry of more than 60 cars may require three heats. Cars are assigned grid slots and are grouped by class.

Evo school – 12 students on Friday, 10 on Saturday and six on Sunday; generally typical numbers.

Mirror Khana – Monte will email bracket spreadsheet to Andlee. Monte suggested smaller zoom meeting to discuss logistics. Event provides a minimum of four runs including two practice runs and double-elimination brackets.

Open Forum -- Dennis has 10 new cones. We may need to buy more in the near future. SCCA's previous vendor may not be selling them anymore.

Next meeting -- June 20, 7 p.m. on Zoom

Motion to adjourn 08:43 p.m.

Submitted, Chandler Brown, Secretary.

Divisional Championship!

Dave Whitworth – he's the Solo Performance Specialties guy who is a co-sponsor of the MiDiv Solo Series – wrote this about a National event in St. Louis earlier this month. It applies equally to our upcoming Divisional:

"There is nothing intimidating about a National Solo event. They are well and efficiently run and you get exposed to entrants you normally wouldn't get to, and let me tell you will not meet a better person than a fellow competitor in your class at a national event. In fact, it is just like a regular event, everyone is nice and helpful and the camaraderie is amazing. Do you think that 1200 people spend a week in Lincoln every September for 6 runs? That's part of it, but mostly it is the people!!!!

"These ... events are an AMAZING deal \$\$ wise.... For (\$85)..., you get a minimum of 8 runs over 2 days. And if you drive well, a National trophy!!

"Normal national event entry fees are \$125-\$200 and you only get 3 runs per day, plus they aren't here in your back yard so you have to travel to get to them. So, I can't help with the intimidation factor of a national event except to re-assure you there is nothing to worry about."

All that applies equally to our Divisional Championship event. Registration is open now at MotorsportsReg.com. Look for:

MiDiv Solo Salina June 2nd-4th

This will be the third round of the five-weekend 2023 Midwest Division Championship, or events #5 and #6. After our event comes Wichita's at Yoder July 8-9 (which is also their Sunflower Showdown on Sunday), and the finale at Lincoln, NE Aug. 5-6, usually rerunning last year's terrific Nationals courses.

Our weekend also counts in our Regional Championship series. Each day scores as a separate event in both the Regional and the Divisional Championships. Enter just one day or both days.

Qualifying for the Divisional this year is easy for us to do with events in Salina and Yoder. Minimum requirement is two events on two weekends – easy for us just by running Salina and Yoder, but you can count your best six events.

Get your entry in now for Salina's Divisional!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tracy Edwards, Benton, has a 1999 Mazda Miata (probably E Street) he drove in Novice class at Yoder in a recent Wichita Region event.

Mirror Khana XLI

Two weeks after our Divisional, We are going to have a Mirror Khana for the first time in five years.

This is a unique event with no clocks – just you and another driver racing heads-up like a drag race with corners. One of you starts going south, the other halfway around the course going north, first one back wins. Many drivers have said the course (originally designed in 1973) is among the most fun they have ever driven.

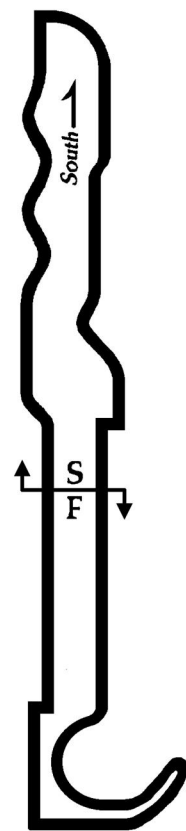
It's a double elimination tournament format so you have to lose twice to be put out. And there's practice! Everyone begins with two runs in the morning, one from each start line, and if you want to set up a grudge match, that's the time to do it.

Classes are grouped to make fun brackets, points are still scored like a regular event, so if you finish third in your bracket but you are still the highest-placed in your class, you get winner points in the Salina Region season championship. But a 3rd place trophy.

No clocks! Winners are determined by two judges standing on opposite sides of the course. If they disagree, no debate – we rerun the pairing from opposite start lines.

And a unique pylon rule: Three For Free. That's right, no penalty for the first three cones you hit, but #4 is a DNF. And the driver hitting 4 still beats one who hits 5. Key corners are double-coned, and a couple even triple-coned.

You won't want to miss this one. Registration is open on motorsportsreg.com. Complete rules are also posted on the MSR listing.



SUNFLOWER SOLO SHOWDOWN

It's the annual Kansas/Wichita/Salina Regions' battle. Topeka July 2, Yoder July 9, Salina Aug. 13. All three events count in each region's championship. Kansas and Wichita are doing two-day events, but only Sunday counts in the Showdown.

Registration is open on MSR for the Topeka round. Wichita and Salina will be posted soon.

Swingtime

We rarely see a course like Kale Morris gave us on the eve of Mother's Day, what has become our annual Saturday-in-May event. The 150-foot width of our site seldom suggests courses with giant sweepers, so Kale gave us eight of them – four fast swings uphill and four downhill – to test our skills on the edge of adhesion.

The course ran longer than might have been expected after a coursewalk. An opening slalom, swing right, swing left, right again, left to the top-end slalom, turn around and back down. But most drivers were over a minute and only five of 20 broke below 60 sec.

It was Kale himself displaying the greatest skill in his XB Miata, one of only two drivers under 58 seconds – he did it twice with a best of 57.052. Tim Nicholson's DS WRX came in at 57.7 to take Top PAX. Next-quick was Dennis Smith's Mystic Cobra (Mystic is the color-changing paint job), and Mason Libby's AS Saturn Sky in the 58s, and finally Sharon Brillhart's ESL Mister Two at 59.0 for Fast Lady. Those were also the Top Five in PAX.

There was only one close fight for a class win, in E Street, but not exactly a display of skill. Rocky Entriiken won it with a 63.5 on his first run, which he was never able to replicate. Henry Brillhart's attempts to catch him resulted in a DNF, three cones and a spinout before a 63.8 on his final try – 0.305 sec not enough.

~~ Swingtime • PAX Rankings ~~

Driver	Class	Time	Index	PAX
Tim Nicholson	DS	57.731	*0.807	46.588
Sharon Brillhart	ESL	59.062	*0.792	46.777
Dennis Smith	CAMT	58.056	*0.816	47.373
Mason Libby	AS	58.432	*0.821	47.972
Kale Morris	XB	57.052	*0.851	48.551
Chandler Brown	CS	61.779	*0.810	50.041
Rocky Entriiken	ES	63.521	*0.792	50.308
Phelan Gagnon	AS	61.393	*0.821	50.403
Henry Brillhart	ES	63.826	*0.792	50.550
Tracy Presnell	STS	62.422	*0.813	50.749
Douglas Jones	GS	64.399	*0.794	51.132
Nancy Smith	CAMTL	63.358	*0.816	51.700
R. Abner Perney	FS	63.925	*0.814	52.035
Rick Nicholson	STR	62.893	*0.828	52.075
Addison Bell	STX	64.099	*0.817	52.368
Tyler Lamia	CAMC	64.135	*0.819	52.526
Jonathan Hale	ES	67.643	*0.792	53.573
Mitchell Bell	CAMT	68.337	*0.816	55.763
Roger Hill	AS	68.251	*0.821	56.034
David Thorne	DS	70.459	*0.807	56.860

MAKE PLANS NOW FOR THE 2023 SOLO NATIONALS!

It is not too early to begin planning to attend the 50th running of the SCCA Solo Nationals, September 4-8. When Tier 3 registration opens June 27, expect the cap of 1300 entries to fill quickly.

It happened once before, pre-COVID, when the entry filled in less than 24 hours, and a waitlist crowd agonized for two months to see if they'd get in.

So there's the preliminary Run Days sched. Everybody but the X classes, CAM, Heritage Classic, SST and FSAE – and those will be announced soon after Memorial Day. So now's the time to figure out your travel plan, make hotel reservations, decide what car you'll take and who will be your tire-warmer.

God news on hotels: University of Nebraska football is playing away games on both weekends before and after Nationals, so lodging should be available at reasonable prices (I've already got mine at \$71/night).

The Solo Nationals has been called the autocrossers' family reunion and the theme of "Homecoming" certainly reflects that. Preliminary planning has parties both scheduled and impromptu throughout the week, a special museum display, friends old and new from coast to coast, and there's an autocross too! Two of them, in fact.

When you live in or near Salina, it seems a shame not to take in this iconic event so near to us. It's barely a three-hour drive to the Lincoln Airpark. From here, the frugal autocrosser could drive up Tuesday or Thursday morning, do one overnight, leave the next day and be home before sundown while still running both courses. But why

2023 Run Days

T-W	T-F
SS	SSR
BS	AS
CS	ES
DS	FS
GS	HS
SSC	
	STU
STS	STR
STH	STX
SSP	CSP
FSP	DSP
	ESP
SMF	
	SSM
XP	SM
EP	
	CP
AM	DP
DM	FP
EM	
FM	BM
	CM
	KM

TBD after SpringNats

XS	CAMS
XA	CAMC
XB	CAMT
EVX	
	SST
HCS	
HCR	FSAE



would you want to? This is a vacay event, worth booking four days (Monday is a holiday) to enjoy an ambience like no other.

Okay, yes, I've been to all of them, from 1973 when 224 people (more than twice what was expected) found their way to Mid-America Raceway in Wentzville, Mo., to 2018 when 1375 drivers filled the Lincoln Airpark paddock. And all the others between and beyond. It's always been worth it. Even when it was a 16-hour drive away, or those years when my trip was all of 5 minutes!

Actually, seven of us have done that, and I expect we'll all be on hand to celebrate running the event for a 50th time. Show me any other sports event in the world that can celebrate seven individuals competing for a 50th time – not just attending but *competing*!

They range from Susan Anderson, an 11-time champion, to Dick Berger, who's never even so much as scored a trophy finish; Rick Ruth, who

produces the PAX numbers every year, to Charlie Clark, a four-time winner and two-time event chair, and the Schweikles, Dee and George, who were the first his-and-hers pair to win the same year. And, uh, me.

The only requirement is having fun. —Rocky Entriiken

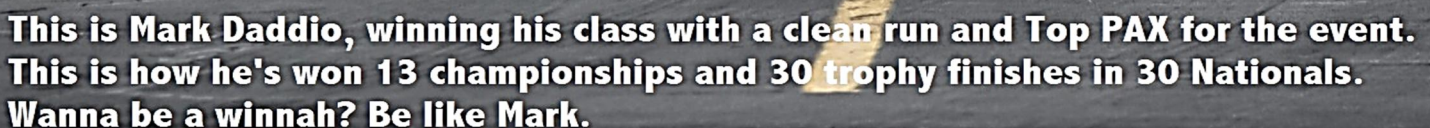
Salina Region SCCA ~ May 13, 2023 ~ Berkley Family Recreation Area, Salina, KS

• Trophy FTD - Fast Time Of Day FL - Fast Lady PAX – Top PAX

• SALINA REGION MEMBER **Points after Swingtime** * QUALIFIED FOR AWARDS (MIN. 4 LOCAL EVENTS)

◆ PAX – Top 10 ◆

Dennis Smith • 1



Events

.... Elsewhere - 2023

A calendar of AutoX and RallyX events by the Wichita, Kansas, Kansas City, Nebraska, NeOkla and Oklahoma Regions of SCCA. Go see how others do it!

‡ = Test & Tune / § = Street Survival School / ♯ Starting Line School

ALWAYS CONFIRM THE EVENT BEFORE MAKING A LONG TRIP!

(* = Salina Region autocross on this date)

AUTOCROSS

May 25-29 ...ProSolo/Nat'l Tour @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln, NE
Jun 3.....*Oklahoma @ Frederick Airport, Frederick, OK (MirrorCross)
Jun 4.....*Oklahoma @ Frederick Airport, Frederick, OK
Jun 17.....♯. Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Jun 18.....*Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
*NeOkla @ Fair Meadows, Tulsa OK
Jun 24-25 ...ProSolo @ Frederick Airport, Frederick, OK
Jun 24.....‡. Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Kansas @ Stormont Vail Events Center, Topeka KS
Jun 25.....Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Kansas @ Stormont Vail Events Center, Topeka KS
Jul 1.....♯. Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Kansas @ Stormont Vail Events Center, Topeka KS
Jul 2.....Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Kansas @ Stormont Vail Events Center, Topeka KS
Jul 8.....NeOkla @ Davis Field, Muskogee OK
‡. Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Jul 9.....*NeOkla @ Davis Field, Muskogee OK
*Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Jul 30.....Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Aug 6.....Oklahoma @ Remington Park, Oklahoma City OK
Aug 19.....NeOkla @ Davis Field, Muskogee OK
‡. Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Aug 20.....NeOkla @ Davis Field, Muskogee OK
Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Aug 26.....§. Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Wichita @ Road Yoder, Yoder KS
Aug 27.....Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Wichita @ Road Yoder, Yoder KS
Sep 17.....Oklahoma @ Remington Park, Oklahoma City OK
Sep 24.....Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
NeOkla @ Davis Field, Muskogee OK
Sep 30.....§. Wichita @ Road Yoder, Yoder KS
‡. Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Oct 1.....Wichita @ Road Yoder, Yoder KS
Nebraska @ Nebraska Rally Bowl, Nebraska City NE
Oct 8.....Kansas City @ MetroCC Driving Center, Independence MO
Oklahoma @ Remington Park, Oklahoma City OK
Oct 15.....*NeOkla @ Davis Field, Muskogee OK
Oct. 21-22 ...National Tour @ Frederick Airport, Frederick, OK
Oct 28.....Wichita @ Road Yoder, Yoder KS
‡. Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Oct 29.....Wichita @ Road Yoder, Yoder KS
Nebraska @ Lincoln Airpark, Lincoln NE
Nov 4.....NeOkla @ Fair Meadows, Tulsa OK



RALLYCROSS

May 28.....Wichita @ Sandy Bottoms, Mulvane KS
Jun 4.....*Nebraska @ Nebraska Rally Bowl, Nebraska City NE
Jun 11.....Kansas City @ Valley Speedway, Grain Valley MO
NeOkla @ Billy Bob's Farm, Billings, OK
Jun 24.....Kansas @ McCain's Offroad Park, Carbondale, KS (Tent.)
Jun 25.....Wichita @ Sandy Bottoms, Mulvane KS
Jul 16.....Kansas City @ I-35 Speedway, Weston MO
Jul 23.....NeOkla @ Billy Bob's Farm, Billings, OK
Nebraska @ Nebraska Rally Bowl, Nebraska City NE
Aug 6.....Kansas City @ Valley Speedway, Grain Valley MO
Aug 13.....*Kansas @ McCain's Offroad Park, Carbondale, KS
Aug 27.....NeOkla @ Billy Bob's Farm, Billings, OK
Nebraska @ Nebraska Rally Bowl, Nebraska City NE
Sep 3.....Wichita @ Sandy Bottoms, Mulvane KS
Sep 17.....Kansas City @ I-35 Speedway, Weston MO
Sep 24.....Kansas @ McCain's Offroad Park, Carbondale, KS
Oct 6-8.....**SCCA RX Nationals, Heartland Mspts Pk, Topeka KS**
Oct 8.....Nebraska @ Nebraska Rally Bowl, Nebraska City NE
NeOkla @ Billy Bob's Farm, Billings, OK
Wichita @ Sandy Bottoms, Mulvane KS

Go

Racing!



Five MiDiv road course tracks are within a 5-hour drive of Salina. Be part of the action as a race worker -- flagging on corners, timing, grid, tech, etc. Or be a driver?

• Hallett Motor Racing Circuit, Hallett OK • Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
 • Motorsports Park Hastings, Hastings NE • Ozarks International Raceway, Gravois Mills MO
 • Raceway Park of the Midlands, Pacific Junction, IA

ROAD RACING

Apr 22-23 ...AVRG @ Hallett Motor Racing Circuit, Hallett, OK
May 20-21...KVRG @ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
May 27-28...Cont. Divide @ Pueblo Motorsports Park, Pueblo, CO
Jul 1-2.....Colorado @ High Plains Raceway, Deer Trail CO
Jul 15-16....KVRG @ Ozarks int'l Raceway, Gravois Mills, MO
Aug 19-20...Colorado @ High Plains Raceway, Deer Trail CO
Sep 23-Oct 1 . **The Runoffs @ VIRginia International Raceway**

MIDIV TIME TRIALS SERIES

May 20-21...KVRG @ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
Jul 1-2.....MiDiv @ Brainerd Int'l Raceway, Brainerd, MN
Jul 15-16....KVRG @ Ozarks int'l Raceway, Gravois Mills, MO (Nat'l Tour)
Aug 12-13...Nebraska/DMV @ Motorsports Park Hastings, Hastings, NE
Sep 16-17...Nebraska/DMV @ Raceway Park o/t Midlands, Pacific Jct. IA
Oct 12-15....Time Trials Nationals @ NCM Mspts Park, Bowling Green, KY

TRACK NIGHT IN AMERICA

May 18.....@ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
May 25.....@ Pikes Peak Int'l Raceway, Fountain CO
Jun 15.....@ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
Jun 22.....@ High Plains Raceway, Deer Trail CO
Jul 6.....@ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
Jul 17.....@ Pikes Peak Int'l Raceway, Fountain CO
Aug 17.....@ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
Aug 24.....@ High Plains Raceway, Deer Trail CO
Sep 19.....@ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS
Oct 19.....@ Heartland Motorsports Park, Topeka KS

60 years ago, Jim Clark's views on motoring

In October 1964, Formula One champion Jim Clark spoke to Small Car magazine – which soon became CAR – about his road driving technique, his opinions on the average motorist, and his Radford Lotus Elan.

Jim Clark: “My Kind Of Driving – Your Kind, Too”

Cars in every shape and form are an inextricable part of Jim Clark's life. He's never tried to work out how many miles he covers each year on the circuits themselves, but he does know that in 1963 he drove at least 40,000 miles as an ordinary road user. That included some 20,000 in his own Lotus Elan. His first Elan has given place to a £2000 luxury hardtop version specially built at the Lotus factory and converted by Harold Radford, a Rolls-Royce and Bentley coachbuilder.

“My latest road car is basically a standard Lotus Elan hardtop model prepared for me at the Cheshunt factory,” says Clark. “But after Lotus had finished with it, it went to Radford for some interior modifications. I drove my original Elan for thousands of miles and I was pleased with its performance and comfort. I learned a lot from that first car and I decided to incorporate some of my own ideas to make the replacement even quieter and more comfortable. I had all the interior trim stripped out and replaced with Cirrus elasticised PVC.

“Then I ordered deep pile carpets, special seats and electric windows. Spending most of your life in the cockpit of a racing car makes you extremely careful about instrumentation. I had a new dash panel made up with the gauges and dials countersunk for easier reading and an extra console centrally mounted behind the gear lever for the electric window switches. Then finally the car got a £150 paint finish. I'm the owner now of a remarkably attractive and extremely practical road vehicle. I've already done 4000 miles in it.

“At the moment the engine is standard but as soon as I get a moment I'm going to have it brought up to Special Equipment specification, which includes modifications like high-lift cams. Then it'll be a personalised version of what is a very good car, particularly useful to my requirements for high-speed touring.

“Every racing driver is constantly anticipating and thinking ahead far further than he can see. On any one lap he's already attuning his mind for the next one. He's always on the lookout for a warning slick of oil, or a shower of rain. He's observing the actions of his rivals and adapting his driving to match the situation. I think anticipation is the key to better driving on the road, too. I'm certain many of today's tragic road accidents could be avoided if road users trained themselves to spot danger signals in time. A child wobbling down the road ahead on an oversize bicycle. Somebody suddenly opening a car door onto the off-side. Traffic lights two blocks away changing from green to red. An old person crossing the road. They're all indications that traffic will either stop abruptly or take avoiding action. A good driver is alert to any of these hazards.

“Gearchanging and braking become second nature to a racing driver, but again it's anticipation that matters most. Gearchanges should always be smooth. Made in plenty of time so the car is in the right gear for any corner in advance. I think many drivers are inclined to overbrake, so that the wheels lock and upset the efficiency of the brakes. The whole essence of good road driving should be to move and stop without conspicuous effort.

“There's nothing worse than being passenger in a car that's being driven like a runaway rollercoaster. It probably means the driver isn't concentrating.



“As a racing driver, I'm used to scanning the vital instruments without taking my eyes off the road. Ordinary drivers could practice that too. And it's still possible to carry on conversation on the road without frantic arm gestures or turning your head.”

Clark's Radford-converted Lotus Elan hardtop is used mostly for night-time dashes between his London office and his farm near Duns in Berwickshire. Non-standard features include a special off-white paint finish. Steering wheel rim and boss are all black leather and the rest of the car is retrimmed in top quality red and black vinyl fabric. A padded boot floor keeps noise down, and there's a thick wad of reflective sound deadening material under the bonnet.

“There's even more need for care than normally when driving in bad weather and at night. For example, you should clean your windscreen first, as well as the rear window and the glasses of the lamps. I should like to see a law passed for all manufacturers to fit windscreen washers and headlamp flashers as standard equipment. They're extras on many cars. I think they're essential.

“From long-distance driving in the Elan, I've learned that your car must be fit for the trip. Oil and water must be up to the mark, petrol tank and a reserve can filled, and tyre pressures right for your load and speeds. I always like to plot my route in advance to avoid major towns and bottlenecks. I make sure I have the right maps with me. I think clothing is important, too, so you feel comfortable and relaxed all the time. That cuts down fatigue.

“Drink and driving obviously don't mix and I always avoid a heavy meal before a long drive. Far better to have a light snack and then stop later for refreshment. It helps to break the journey anyway. I find chewing a boiled sweet helps keep me alert.”

Clark's Elan is equipped with seatbelts. “I think they're essential equipment in passenger cars. I would never fit them in an open sports-racer, but I do recommend them for the road.

“Compared to some I've seen in other countries, British drivers are quite good. But there's quite a lot of room for improvement. I think our road users lack confidence in themselves. That leaves them hesitant and floundering. Once they've passed the test, few of them make any serious attempt at learning the finer points. With the roads as crowded as they are today and the number of new vehicles increasing every year it's vital that drivers should be efficient operators in any situation.

“I want to suggest that the three words to remember for everyday driving should be anticipation, smoothness and tolerance. That should help anyone drive better and live longer.”

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••• Associate memberships •••

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- Annual dues are \$15.00 both for single memberships and for family memberships (which includes spouse and children age 20 and younger).
- To become an Associate Member of Salina Region, contact SCCA Membership (call 1-800-770-2055) and ask to be included as a member in Salina Region. The Region's dues will be paid at that time and added to your renewal fees.
- Or, at renewal time, renew online and you will find an option to "Add Region." Scroll down to find Salina Region in the drop-down menu.
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