



a publication from
National Headquarters of
the Four Cylinder Club
of America

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editorial

A QUESTION OF NOMENCLATURE

As Bob Fink pointed out in his column in the "Sports Car Journal," our local "rallies" are only "regularity runs," a fact which many of the clan have privately realized for sometime. Naturally, there are logical reasons for this peculiar development. The standard systemized regularity run was a very important step in the evolution of the true rally in the U. S. However, now that the evolution of the sport has apparently stopped at this point and threatens to petrify in a strange over-refined form, it is high time to prod the sacred cattle and remind all concerned that the genuine, big league, ichi ban rally is primarily a test of car and driver and not a battle of mathematicians. As an avowed rally club, we are in the exact position of a racing club that for various reasons never got beyond the point of holding slaloms. There is nothing at all wrong with either a regularity run or a slalom as such. Both are entertaining low budget sports, but a regularity run is no more a rally than a slalom is a road race.

When this touchy subject has been broached in the past, the plaintiff cry has been, "But our laws won't let us barrel down the highway like those Europeans." This is true as far as it goes, but if memory serves, there are a couple of large organizations in the immediate vicinity who spend their time going flat out at such places at Riverside, Pomona, Paramount, etc. Consequently, a real honest old-country rally could be staged incorporating one of the many road race courses in the area. All it takes is money. And this, brethren, is the real rub.

A big time event takes big organization and big money, none of which are in evidence among the hundreds of little clubs cluttering the California scene. However, in the FCCA, we have eleven of these little clubs banded together in a relatively large organization. To date, there has been no readily apparent reason for this union except we got badges cheaper by quantity buying. Now the usual reason for organization of any type is to accomplish something as a group that you cannot do individually. As long as FCCA's activities are principally at the chapter level, there is really no reason for the association. However, if we adopted a policy of staging a series of national events which would be completely beyond the capability of any individual chapter, then our association would become meaningful and intelligible.

If the U. S. is to achieve parity in international motor sports, it is evident that some organization must lead the way, and the FCCA acting as a group is one of the few organizations in the entire country capable of this. It is quite properly the function of the individual chapter to entertain the average member, but the organization as a whole should assume the function

of developing contestants of international status. The only way to do this is to stage a continuing series of events of international caliber and break the pattern of small-time clubs staging small-time events.

Discriminatory? Certainly. These events would positively not be for the average enthusiast any more than the major leagues are designed for the average ball player, but they would present an opportunity for the above average enthusiast to attain a high level of achievement. Cheap? No. Easy? No. Worthwhile? Definitely yes.



1st national mexican rally —part II

DICK KERMODE

The second stopping place was Mazatlan which is famous for its superb marlin fishing. Here our routine of the first night was repeated.

The route from Mazatlan to Guadalajara was a steady climb through volcanic formations and tropical jungles. Guadalajara is the second largest city in Mexico, and we entered its arched gates at sundown of the fourth day. This ended the vacation part of the trip because the rest of the time was spent in preparation for the rally.

The Guadalajara sports car club was our host. Their hospitality was terrific. George Garabay, local Buick Dealer in Guadalajara loaned us his service department to ready the cars. We installed dual odometers reading to hundredths, reading lights, spot lights, Marchal head lamps and other rally equipment. The numbers were painted on the car doors—numbers 283, 284, and 285. The cars were then lubed and washed and stored for the rally the next day.

That night George Garabay hosted the team members and their wives at a party. It was here that we met another hot entry from Los Angeles—Ignacio Lozano, well known Lotus driver, driving John Porter's Porsche Carrera, and his navigator, Howard Frank, who is one of the best navigators in the business. Everybody enjoyed the party. The mariachis played between sounds of tequila glasses being offered by the Guadalajara club with "saludos amigos". The next day several people who had too much saludos were wearing ice bags beneath their crash helmets.

The starting line looked like the beginning of the Mexican Road Race. There were the three Simcas, several Porsches, a Studebaker, Buick, Mercury, and several other American types. Other entries from the U. S. included road race driver Paul O'Shea in his

continued on last page



president's cornering

As I reflected on the big doings of 1957, I wondered, probably as you have done, on just what we will come up with this year? Can we top the events of last year? Can we uphold our reputation for the number, quality and size of our events? Each year I have had the same apprehension, and yet for the past eight years we have never regressed. We have progressed tremendously in the ability to provide opportunities to entertain ourselves and our friends. We have helped to set, and to maintain standards which are the Hallmark of our sport and have matured into an organization recognized and respected in our communities. That 1958 will be equally as successful, I have no doubts, and like you, I am eagerly awaiting the challenges that this year has in store for us.

The old year had not passed when rumblings were heard, tentative inquiries made, discreet suggestions whispered around, about a couple of events that should be just what you ordered. If all goes well we will be making history again and having a ball to boot.

During a brief chat with Bruce Pollack of Rally D'Oro fame, I learned that this most enjoyable and record shattering rally is planned again for this year. The imported car dealers cannot complain now that they haven't been warned! They all want to close up shop and head for Mexico that week, because when Santa Monica Chapter go out on the prowl for trophies for THAT one, it makes the Olympics look like a Cub Scout picnic!

I just can't help getting a big kick out of seeing all the domestic car dealers opening up with "Imported Car Departments," and seeing sports cars on just about every lot in town. You know, I can remember when at Dealer meetings and car shows, they simply derided our enthusiasm and talked of the imported and sports cars as passing fancy. My old boss argued that the MG would never sell in this country . . . and anyone trying to turn in an imported car on a domestic one was either offered some ridiculous figure out of a blue book written by the Kelly Ford family, or simply told to scram. My guess is the next people to wake up will be Detroit, especially if this "slight repression" we are in continues.

Heard the other day that the Stude/Packard people are going to

assemble the German Goggomobile in this country. Last year this little Bavarian "krautenwerks" sold 33,000 of these tiny (under 10 feet long) two cylinder mites. I honestly thought that we had gone as small as we dare with the Morris Minor and Renault, but jeepsers, these days I find myself looking down from my MG onto such midgets as the Fiat 600 and the Berkley! The race is on in Europe too, but in the exact opposite direction to Detroit and I can only foresee in the future tremendous juggernauts cruising down the highway with "broods" of little piranhas in their wake, or parked like suckling piglets beneath them! I had thought that we would see lots of Vauxhaul Victors on the road, as it is a neat little car, but I priced one recently, and shuddered. At \$2195 basic I cannot see them even so much as rocking the VW boat. Due for major changes this year are the Morris Minor (hope they keep its handling and quality); the Volvo (I saw a preview of the new body . . . Wow! looks like a Ghia Fiat!) and believe it or not, the VW.

With all the cunning names being adopted by the "scudera" set, I am quite amazed that no-one has used my old "nom de plume," "Ventre á terre" which, freely translated, and to save you looking it up, means "Belly to the ground at very great speed."

Language classes at school were always a bore until one bright character suggested that we each adopt an Heraldic emblem with appropriate motto for our cars. The teacher was amazed at the sudden interest we showed in Latin and indeed, the only foreign tongue I remember are some of our old mottos and sayings. There was Spunky Halford with his chopped Austin seven with "Multim in parvo" emblazoned on his door (Much in little); Ken Walsh had a huge Invicta, about three blocks long that would carry the whole form (class) but was tempermental as hell and we always seemed to be pushing it. I think it had "Remis Velisque" (With oars and sails, with all might) beneath a somnulent lion, on its side. Weary Willie who always thought he got a raw deal from life and drove a ramshackle Clyno, dreadful thing, adopted "EX Nihilo Nihil Fit" (From nothing, nothing comes); while Sammy Kemp who had a Morris "Bull Nose" Cowley that poured dreadful smoke, bore the proud insignia "Cetra Desunt" (The remaining parts are lacking). Tubby Tangey who had money and

1958 Championship SCHEDULE

JANUARY 25, 1958—	4th Great Western	Long Beach MG Club
FEBRUARY 16, 1958—	Don Diego	San Diego SCC
MARCH 8 & 9, 1958—	Rallye de Wheel Bounce V	Pacific SCC
APRIL 20, 1958—	3rd Anniversary Rally	AHOc
MAY 23, 24, 25, 1958—	24-hr. Rally VI	Lockheed SCC
JUNE 15, 1958—	Over the Hill	Compton FCCA
JULY 13, 1958—	Sierra V Rally	Northrop SCC
AUGUST 10, 1958—	Ken Farrar IV	Douglas Long Beach SCC
SEPTEMBER 7, 1958—	Big Bear	San Fernando Valley FCCA
OCTOBER 4 & 5, 1958—	Desert Rally IV	Douglas SCC
NOVEMBER 9, 1958—	Rallye of the Stars III	Palomar SCC
DECEMBER 9, 1958—	Nutz and Boltz	Convair SCC

book review

THE GREEN HELMET
by Jon Cleary

A fast moving story of an English Sportscar driver, covering LeMans, Sebring and the Mille Miglia.

Excellent description of the "you are there" type with no soft pedal on the danger involved.

Family, friends and an American girl-friend give an insight to the philosophy of people who love someone in the business.

This story keeps you mentally in the navigators seat and has many vivid experiences. Anyone interested in racing or Sportscars will find it difficult to stop reading this outstanding novel.

—YVONNE MAGARIS

the pride of the school, owned an SS1 Swallow which we all cherished and which he kept under wraps with "Esto Perpetua" (May she endure forever) while the motto of our motoring club, as near as I can recall was "Vogue La Galère" (keep to the oars men, let us keep on, whatever may happen); which could just as easily do for our jolly old club.

DASH PLAQUE

Published on the 10th of each month for the Four Cylinder Club of America.

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Deadline for copy will be the 25th of the month preceding date of publication.

san fernando stages time trials

REPORTED BY FRANK PIERCE

Time Trials??? Yes, that was the Club's January event. When Dick Henderson was unanimously selected to put on this month's event, he must have felt pretty uneasy with only a few weeks to prepare it. That was probably one of the main reasons he selected this type of event. There just wasn't enough time to lay out and prepare a rally. Well, Columbus took a chance and so did Dick. Dick made arrangements with the management of El Mirage Airport for the use of some of the runways. This is an airport used mainly for gliders and has some excellent macadam surfaces. The Airport allowed us use of the runways as long as they were not needed by the gliders. This meant an early start for the Trials so we could finish before the wind changed.

All cars met at Tip's Drive-In (Hwy. 6) at seven a.m. After a bite to eat, a gaggle was led by Bob Greenland to the Airport. Dick Henderson had left early to set up the pylons marking the course. Two groups got separated, but found the way. Pat Patrick's Healey (El Chermoot) lost water through a loose radiator hose and required a roadside repair. Ron Stange stopped at a filling station for something. I didn't find out what, but it wasn't gas.

When all the cars arrived, a short practice session was declared, which gave most drivers a chance at a lap or two around the course. Right about here everybody's misgivings disappeared. This was a darned interesting course, a good surface, a beautiful sunshiny day and a lot of fun. After the practice session, all cars were called in for a drivers' meeting. It was explained that the object would be to drive one lap warm-up and then two laps timed. All awards were to be for consistency or for the smallest time difference between the two timed laps. This was in all fairness to the cars with less urge. With these explanations over, the timing was started, one car at a time. The most excitement of the day was by a Karman-Ghia that came unhinged in the rear end and started to pass itself. After a few anxious moments, the driver regained control and kept going. I saw a Triumph lose it partially on the 180° turn and I understand another spun completely. Bruce Landers lost his fan belt, but made it home with an MG-TD belt.

annual meeting date set for april 15th

The annual meeting of the Four Cylinder Club of America will be held in conjunction with the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors on April 15th, 1958, 8:00 p.m., at Blarney Castle, 623 South Western Avenue, Los Angeles, for the purpose of considering the revisions in the By-Laws as accepted by the Board of Directors. All active members are urged to attend.

board votes to continue dash plaque

Based on the auditors recommendation that the club could afford the \$85.00 per issue for the printing of Dash Plaque and after due discussion, a motion was made and passed to continue the Dash Plaque as a bi-monthly publication making six issues a year.

committee picked for clubs annual holiday party

Paul Magaris will act as chairman of the committee, to be composed of Roy Brimhall, Gene Ross, Ed Warren, Howard Kunow, Ralph Taylor and Dennis Davis. The name of the 1958 party will be "Barbary Coast Holiday." The tentative date has been set for late September.

announcements

Ralph Taylor announced Whittier chapter's first annual slalom to be held April 20th at the Long Beach Memorial Stadium Parking lot at Carson and Lakewood. This will be an open event.

Dennis Davis gave details of the forthcoming Glendale chapter "Sixth Annual Las Vegas Economy Run" to be held the week-end of May 24-25, with a deadline for entries of May 14th. Further information can be obtained from Chuck Dieffenbach at CItrus 1-5392, after 4:00 p.m.

attention all club events chairmen:

Another outlet for Sports Car activities. The Daily News-Post-San Gabriel Valley paper.

Send information regarding meetings, rallies, etc. to:

Yvonne Magaris, 1219 So. Alta Vista, Monrovia, California, ELliott 9-1722.

rambling around

Dutch Grand Prix, a World Championship event, was not included in the 1958 Calendar originally supplied by the RAC. It will, in fact, take place at Zandvoort on 26 May.

* * *

Sebring circuit is being resurfaced in time for the Sports Car Championship event on 22 March. Other improvements include widening the approach to the "S" bends and removing the hump in the "S" bend itself. Spectator facilities will also be improved, and the number of seats is to be trebled. Run concurrently with the Championship race will be a 12-hour GT event.

* * *

Finding ourselves near Biggleswade last month we paid a visit to Berkeley Cars Ltd., makers of Britain's smallest sports car.

Their sales manager told us that since production of this front-drive, two-stroke plastics miniature sports car commenced in 1956, over 800 Berkeleys have been made.

After the initial 150 cars Excelsior engines were adopted. Export orders have been received from the U.S.A., Peru, Southern Rhodesia, South Africa, Malaya, New Zealand, Australia, Greece, etc. So great has been the interest that from seven agents at the time of last year's Motor Show Berkeley now have agents throughout the country and in Ireland. Complete cars are shipped for export, only those for Eire going C.K.D.

For the American market sealed-beam headlamps were faired into the nose but recently American users seem to be convincing the authorities that the normal recessed headlamps are legal in the U. S.

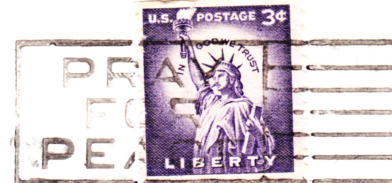
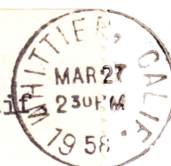
Production of the three-cylinder Berkeley 500 is due to commence in the New Year. The present output of approximately 40 cars a week is composed of 328 cc two-cylinder models. By January next output is scheduled at 70 cars a week, and by March 1958 the Biggleswade plant should be producing 100 cars a week.

There is no intention of entering a works team in competition events but help can be extended to private owners who wish to enter them for races and rallies after purchasing their cars. Goddard Watts intends to race a Berkeley 500 next season, after his good showing this year with one of the smaller models.

DASH PLAQUE

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FIRST CLASS

mexican rally

from page 1

300SL and a three-car team from Texas sponsored by Carrol Shelby. All cars caravanned to the starting line where they were flagged out at one-minute intervals.

Off we raced for the first Meta (finish) in the town of Jalostotitlan. This control was the first in the ideal run portion of the rally. There were six controls in the 650 mile run to Mexico City. Each car had an ideal time in which he must arrive at each point. You could be 59 seconds early or late without penalty. Any fraction of a minute above this amount was one hundred points penalty. The location of each control was known. It was permissible to go like gangbusters and then wait to cross the white line which was located 50 yards before the meta sign. The control officer recorded your arrival time in the route book and then you drove like blazes to the next control.

You slowed down only for small towns and cows. The road stopped abruptly at each town. From one side of town to the other there were only cobblestones, axle-busting ruts, and route signs that were pointing either up or down. If they pointed left, you went right. In the town of San Luis Potosi just before the second control, the only way we got through was to follow a Mexican bus which we later learned was actually in the rally.

Crowds were yelling "ole!" all along the route, and in some towns the police directed you through. The people would crowd as close as possible to the speeding one of the more daring young bullfighters the road just as your car approached them.

The control points were expertly manned by Mexicans with Mickey Mouse wrist watches which were either stopped or unreliable. One checker at the 3rd was actually reading the watch upside down. The control officer at the 5th control was a young Mexican girl who had a ladies wrist watch which has no second hand and was five minutes off. However, by the time we arrived at that control, we were seasoned veterans, so we crossed the line on foot, synchronized our watches, returned to the car and then drove in on time.

At the 4th control we mingled by the bonfire with the checkers while waiting for our time to cross the line. It was at this point that Ken Miles was attempting to heat water for his teabag in a Simca hub cap.

The final leg from Morelia to Mexico City was the most scenic. It wound through the forests at elevations exceeding 10,000 feet. It was necessary to keep the engine rpm high in order to negotiate the many hills and switchbacks at this altitude. On the downhill section to Mexico City we encountered various weather conditions such as fog and ice. Trucks and peasant farmers were creeping along the road leading to the hub of Mexico. These were hazardous conditions in the fog. The Meta at Mexico City welcomed us for a short breather before starting the final portion of the rally—the regularity run.

The regularity run from Mexico City to Acapulco was the big test. There were 15 secret control points in this 250 mile run. The passage hour was noted by the checkers at each control. One penalty point was assessed for each second early or late. The location of these controls was not known in advance.

The measured distance was the kilometer post. These posts were not always equally spaced. Southern California average speed navigation techniques were useless in this event. The method that we used was to compute the arrival time for each kilometer post and try to pass each kilometer post at the exact computed time. This was difficult because it required speeding up for long kilometers and braking for short kilometers. The Mexicans had every advantage here because they had been over the route many times.

The route went via the old winding road through Taxco at strict average speeds. Many times we learned the meaning of "Despacion, Puente Angosta" which means "Danger, narrow bridge" and also "el granado" meaning "cows".

Our minds and bodies were tired from 900 torturous miles without rest. The final meta was a welcome sight. Yet it was not over. There was still the mechanical test. We raced from the final meta to the finish in Acapulco. The three Simcas crossed the line as a unit to the acclaim of the crowd gathered at the finish. At this point the cars were inspected for body damage and equipment. None of the three cars was penalized for damages or missing equipment. And then we were finished.

Among the party that greeted us were John Malone, the team manager, and Gus Vignole from Motoracing. Acapulco was the highlight of the trip as we recuperated by the pool and talked about the rally. The next day there was swimming, water skiing and shopping.

The ill-fated victory banquet was held on the final evening. The awarding of the first three prizes was interrupted by a riot. Threats were shouted at the organizing committee which was headed by Martin Moreno, who was an official for the Mexican Road Race. The Americans were completely overlooked in the final results with the exception of the Royers who started from Torreon. They took 38th place with 64 penalty points. Mexico City entries captured all the other prizes. The other Americans, the Glassetts, Lozano and Frank, as well as Miles and Marchal, Patchen and Kermode, Flude and Johnson were left unplaced.

The final results which were received by mail after all scores had been rechecked showed what had happened to the American entries. Four of the clocks at secret controls were not synchronized. The Mexico City entries had early entry numbers and so passed the controls shortly after the clocks had been synchronized. It was four hours before the later numbered cars passed by and in this time the clocks had slowed down. This is regrettable, and at the time of the rally it was not known.

The winner was Fernandel Murphy from Mexico City with 8 penalty points for the 900 mile run with 21 control points.