

RALLYIST NEWSLETTER (A now and then communique)

With the running of the final event of the year on December 28th last, the 1968 SCCA Rally Championship closed out what has to be the strongest rally competition we've had. While Jack Chidester and Bruce Gezon had wrapped up the Class B Championship in early November with a perfect 50 out of 50 possible points, the Class A Championship went into December with 3 teams fighting for 1st and into the final event of the year's 57 with the Championship still undecided.

When the dust settled, the following members emerged as award winners. Whether 1st or 10th, all merit our congratulations for their success:

<u>Class A</u>		<u>Class B</u>	
1 Russell Brown	SWDiv. 43.0	1 Jack Chidester	NEDiv. 50.0
Nathan Jones	SWDiv. 43.0	R. Bruce Gezon	NEDiv. 50.0
3 Kathy Bohl	NEDiv. 42.0	3 John Leyerle	CEDiv. 44.0
Roger Bohl	NEDiv. 42.0	4 Paul Novak	SEDiv. 43.5
5 Lynn Smith	SWDiv. 40.0	5 Earl Gruer	MWDiv. 41.0
Sammie Smith	SWDiv. 40.0	6 Bernd Albers	NEDiv. 40.5
7 Pete Schmieler	CEDiv. 37.9	Unsel Albers	NEDiv. 40.5
8 John Smiskol	CEDiv. 32.9	8 Philip Class	MWDiv. 40.0
9 Ed Crockett	NEDiv. 31.9	9 Ronald Ewing	MWDiv. 38.0
10 Mac Cornforth	NEDiv. 31.25	Jerry Noe	SPDiv. 38.0

Let's take a quick look at the 1968 statistics: there were 57 events in the series (16 Nationals, 41 Divisionals), compared with 48 in 1967; 542 members qualified (vs 390 in 1967); entries per event averaged 45 (vs 42 in 1967); a new record entry of 157 starters on the South Jersey Region's March Lion Divisional broke the previous high of 146 set on the 1958 Kansas City Region's Flaming Fall National; almost 2500 individuals competed; Class B provided 39% of the entries (vs 35% in 1967; and so on.

1969 at this point seems to be headed in the direction of the continued growth so necessary in developing the strong base for the sport. The calendar as of January 15th already lists as many events (57) as we had in 1968 and in all probability additional rallies will be added. The success of the series will depend on the participation of the membership - not only as competitors but as organizers and workers on the events.

Though the membership participation in the national rally championship reached a new record, it is obvious that there is a long way to go before we can say the series is an unqualified success. We had a very sizable participation by new members ("rookies") and a renewal rate by

old members (91%+ of 1967 member-rallyists renewed membership in 1968) that was far better than the Club as a whole, but a large number of non-members took part and many of them ran in several events. If the Club's program is to continue growing, not only must each rallyist continue their membership, but they must act as missionaries by enlisting the active non-members who are running in the series.

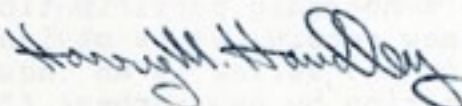
A large vote of appreciation goes to the event organizers and workers. Nothing points up the nature of our sport more than the contribution made by the huge number of people who voluntarily contribute untold hours and dollars to the organization of events so that others may compete. Of interest is the fact that 3 of the 4 Champions also served as Chairmen of National Rallies (Russ Brown on the Coastal Masters, Jack Chidester on the Tri-River, and Bruce Gezon on the Appalachian). If nothing else, this should show that the SCCA Rally Championship is a program by and for the membership, and therefore is dependent on what you and your fellow member-rallyists do now and in the future.

We are pleased to be able to send a copy of the 1969 SCCA Rally Regulations to all members who qualified for the 1968 Championship. Additional copies are available from the Club office for 50¢ each pre-paid. You will notice that the regs contain a growing amount of advertising. This avenue of income, while still small, is rapidly becoming the most significant single source of direct income for the rally program. Mention the Rally Regulations when you patronize our advertisers. We also welcome inquiries regarding advertising for the next edition.

You may notice that Datsun's ad details their new Rally support program; Volvo's points fund led to a win in the Manufacturer's Rally Championship and the success of the program is beginning to attract competitors. SCCA does not participate in financial arrangements its members make, but the support offered by such manufacturers is there because they believe success in the program to be of benefit to them. If we continue to come up with a strong series, members will benefit not only in the competition and the prestige success brings but may also reap more real rewards.

We continue to stress that the SCCA Rally Championship is your program. Last year we enjoyed far greater communications from the members who had something they wanted to comment on, and we hope that you will continue letting us know your likes and dislikes. While there is no guarantee that any one letter will change something, a steady stream of ideas will provide a source of guidance for the Rally Board. The organization of the SCCA program is, again, dependent on the members. Participate on all levels of the Club, Regional, Divisional and National. Our growth hinges on you!

Sincerely,



Harry M. Handley
Rally Director