

Editorial: The Death of Wheel-To-Wheel Racing In Hawaii?

By: Scott J. Schulte

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To: Racers and workers of SCCA Wheel to Wheel Races

From: Lindsey Akamu
Regional Executive

SUBJECT: March 23 Race

I have decided to cancel the March 23rd race at Hawaii Raceway Park. This was a hard decision to make, because I do not want to send the wrong signals to all our loyal racers and workers. The reason for cancelling the race is because the competition Board of SCCA recommended against the continued use of the spec Racers without the Ford motors. It was only a recommendation, so the SCCA Board of Directors had a conference call to decide on the fate of the Renault Spec Racers. It seems as if there are a couple of other regions in the US that want exemptions as well as Hawaii Region. Because of our isolation, we have a very strong case to continue using the cars in their present state, though most of the regions on the mainland have complied. SCCA feels they need more time to word the changes to allow us to race the Spec Racers and prevent the mainland regions from doing so.

We need the Spec Racers to race in order to cover all our expenses. Without the Spec Racers we would be forced to raise the entry fees by a hefty amount. Rather than compound the issue by having a higher price for this race, then maybe lowering the prices if the Spec Racers return, I have decided to cancel the event. Also, by cancelling the race I hope to send a positive note to SCCA that we need the Spec Racers to race in order to keep the program alive in Hawaii.

I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. I fully expect to be back to racing in June. If you have any comments regarding my decision, please give me a call.

The above letter was recently sent out announcing the cancellation of the March 23, 1997 wheel-to-wheel race event. This is very alarming. This is the first event ever canceled since we re-started our program in 1991. Why was the race canceled? Simply, lack of support. This sets a very poor precedence. If we are forced to cancel other events, this will snow-ball into the death of our Club Racing program. The doubters out there will get their way. There was way too much effort put into building this program, and way too much money spent on cars and equipment to let this happen. For our Club racing program to survive we need two things, event participation, and club support.

First, our club racers must make a firmer commitment to SCCA racing. You must participate in every event. As you know, the entry fees from these races barely cover operating expenses even when we have a good field of cars. Lately, because of low turn-out the club has been losing money. This month we simply couldn't get a commitment from enough racers to hold the event.

Lindsey sights the unresponsiveness of SCCA National to allow the Hawaii Region an exemption to run the Spec Racer Renaults, as one of the major factors in the club being unable to hold a profitable event. I agree that although the participation of these drivers is beneficial to raising the moneys needed, I don't feel that we can count on it. Personally, I think