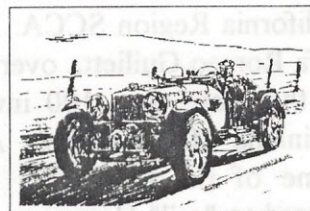


A BREIF HISTORY OF SPORTS CAR RACING IN HAWAII

By: Ed Hollmann, Hawaii Region SCCA Historian



We have had two races in a row canceled, there are still worries about the long term status of the spec racers, there are questions about the future of HRP and there have been low turnouts of both drivers and workers for the last few events. Before we despair about the future however we should first understand the past. Hawaii Region SCCA has been around for 45 years during both good times and bad times. There were some big events with famous mainland drivers and there were 25 years with no wheel to

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wheel racing at all. For some historical perspective, the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) was started on the East Coast in 1944 while World War II was still raging. They held their first road race at Watkins Glen on Oct. 2, 1948. By 1949 4.8 million American made cars were sold in the U.S. but only 3,593 foreign cars were registered, mostly British. It wasn't until 1958 that Road & Track magazine did its first test of a Japanese car. I can not swear to the accuracy of everything written below as this is still a work in progress and only my present understanding. I welcome input from anyone who has anything to add and especially any old newsletters, news clippings, or documents of any kind.

1952 seems to be the green flag year for the organization of sports car activity in the Territory of Hawaii. The Hawaiian (later changed to Hawaii) Region was granted a charter by SCCA; the MG Club was formed and the two organizations joined together to form the Associated Sports Car Clubs of Hawaii, Ltd. (ASCCH). The first recorded event I could find was a MG Club gymkhana held at Kahuku air field in Feb. or Mar, 1952. The first recorded SCCA regional event was a hill climb on Mar 27, 1954, held on the old Pali Road in Maunawili. Fastest time went to a visitor, Jerry Unser, driving a TR2 with the skill learned from driving the Pikes Peak Hill Climb. Second fastest went to Pete Wimberly in an Austin Healy 100. The first road race was held Mar 13, 1955 on the inactive runway at Bellows Air Force Base. Pete remembers 43 cars running. There were two more races held at Bellows during 1955. About seven races were held all together over two years before the Air Force decided to convert the abandoned runways to a radio transmitter site and a new area had to be found.

In 1956 the ASCCH had enough money so that they could spend \$1400 to construct a two mile race course on the Cambell Estate owned Kahuku runway where some gymkhanas had been previously run. On sep.2, 1956 the first open to the public sports car race was held there with a reported 8000 spectators present. Less than three months later, on Nov. 25, a second race was held. At

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