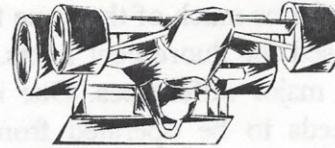


## The Death of Club Racing In Hawaii, Part II

An Editorial By: Scott J. Schulte



I am well into my second year as the editor of *Huila*. In the very first issue I produced, I wrote an editorial about the future of our local club chapter, and expressed specific concerns about our Club Racing program. I spoke of the overall lack of member's enthusiasm, poor event participation, and lack of support between people in the various 'factions' of the club. I suggested trying new events, expanding the club through different markets. I cautioned against the threat of competing sanctioning bodies, and I asked for additional administrative support in the absence of our out-going RE M.G. Lewis. In those past sixteen months I don't feel that any of these concerns have even been seriously discussed, let alone solutions attempted. I am not writing to belittle the efforts of many of our dedicated 'core' and board members. They work hard and commit a great deal of time to the club. But, I do mean to scold and criticize the other 150 active club members who use the club, but have done nothing to support or further it's existence.

We are in serious trouble. Recently, we have had exceptionally low participation in both our Solo II and Club Racing events. In fact, at the Club Race in December we had only five cars finish the only race! As you know, the SCCA is a non-profit club. The only revenue we receive is from our kick-back of the national dues. This small sum doesn't even cover the costs of producing this newsletter! So all of our events have to support themselves through entry fees. At the December Club Race Lindsey Akamu had to raise the

entry fee at the last minute to \$400.00 in attempt to cover costs. This is an outrageous amount of money. You could practically race in three events anywhere else for \$400.00. Obviously, our problem is participation. (My familiarity is only with Club Racing, so I will address it exclusively.)

What are we doing wrong? I personally feel that there are five main issues: First, we live in what some call paradise, the sun shines year-round, and people are apathetic to all forms of motorsport, especially road racing— So you have an exceptionally small population to appeal to. Second, we started our road racing program in the middle of an on-going recession—Not a good time to ask people to make a huge investment in a discretionary, recreational activity. Third (and related) we have failed to stimulate people to build private cars. We have relied on the use of HIRS's rental cars. And those people who rent the school's cars have moved over to compete in the school's racing series (see point five). I remember back in 1991, at a preliminary meeting at the Nimitz Business Center, M.G. Lewis asking how many of the people in attendance would be willing to build a race car if he proceeded to develop a wheel-to-wheel program in Hawaii. He asked only those who were absolutely certain, "if you have any doubts, don't raise your hand", he said. I looked around the room, there were more than fifteen hands in the air, mine was not one of them. Later that year at the races, I believe it was just Art Sonen and myself with

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