
A Day at the Grand Prix

by Gary Whitaker

Diana and I volunteered by email from a link from the NCRS web to the 1st annual grand prix race that was at the Frazee area last Saturday, 27 May. I do not know if it can be considered that we were there in behalf of our club but we did show off the NCRS chapter tee shirts in the morning until we changed to their yellow volunteer shirt. However, we still got to wear the Corvette hats during the day.

Diana was chosen as corner #3 flagger and she is a mean one with flags. She black flagged 2 cars into the pits for unauthorized equipment on the car or driver and raised the red flag during one race stopping the race entirely because of an accident in turn #4. This without the say so of the control tower. Good thing there was an safety official close by that saw what was going on and backed her up on the radio.

I was a person carrying around a radio relating information from the control tower to the flaggers of #3 and #4 of

potential problems from the lookouts to look for from info related from the other corners and turns. I have never been involved in anything of this nature, but just from standing back and observing, I felt the event was well planned, executed and there were enough people there with past experience of this type of event to answer questions if some question arise.

I did feel there was no welcoming group to any extent. No one introduced themselves unless I initiated it first and the core group running the show did not introduce themselves at any point during the event so people would just look for titles on backs of different colored shirts if they were looking for a judge, steward, official etc. and I would introduce myself as radio on corner 3. I am going to think positive that the event was new and everyone at the top was just attempting to get everything on time, with as little risk of injury to people, drivers and cars. Therefore they did not worry about names or introductions. Also we did not know we

were actually needed until Thursday night by e mail and on Friday night set up of the track. The head of the volunteer committee did not show up so I just jumped in and started moving tires.

On Saturday, we had a list of places and names at the registration table so we just picked up our shirt, meal ticket, looked on a map of the track and took our spot and someone from the control tower came around just before the first race to make sure there was enough people on the spots. I guess most of the 100 or so volunteers had done this before and Diana and I were the only novices. It did look like a lot of people did know each other especially ones with the red officials shirts on.

There was as always the thrill of an accident just like the Indy 500 or nascar race with one of the White Allen dealer sponsored cars flipping over at turn 5 (which we could not see) and there was one sponsored

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car called euro classics that was painted orange and baby blue where the guy was very aggressive pushing other cars onto the tires. There was enough small accidents where at least 12 of the 30 cars had lost a part or all of the front end fins and or body by the end of the racing day around 3:00.

There was a grudge match between White Allen Porsche dealership and Wag-
oner Suburu of which the Suburu won by 2 car lengths. All cars were outfitted with Suburu engines as a requirement. Suburu was not a sponsor of the race. Only owned and sponsored

one car. I would like to think next year, there may be a requirement of Porsche engines in all cars with as much at White Allen and Porsche spent on advertising, sponsorship, cars (2), Indy style uniforms for all pit people, tents, tools, parts, back up carts, trailers and display of many cars from the Centerville dealership.

Also what seemed interesting was cars taken care of by the pit crews that seemed to be mechanics like the White Allen crew, Carl's body shop crew, and Ernest Concrete did not place high in any race. The sponsors like dentists (2) and an all girl group with no uniforms that just

pooled money (that had cheap tee shirts, wore personal wind breakers, shared a helmet and had no tent, tools, parts, or trailer and golf cart) and where the pit crew seemed to be employees of the businesses did very well.

I do not know if I want to go to those dentists and meet one of the pit crew as the person to clean my teeth unless they did the cleaning in record time with no accidents.

The overall the majority of winners were the cars that had 98 lb. females in the driver seat. They were also aggressive but also had the weight advantage just like any other race car.