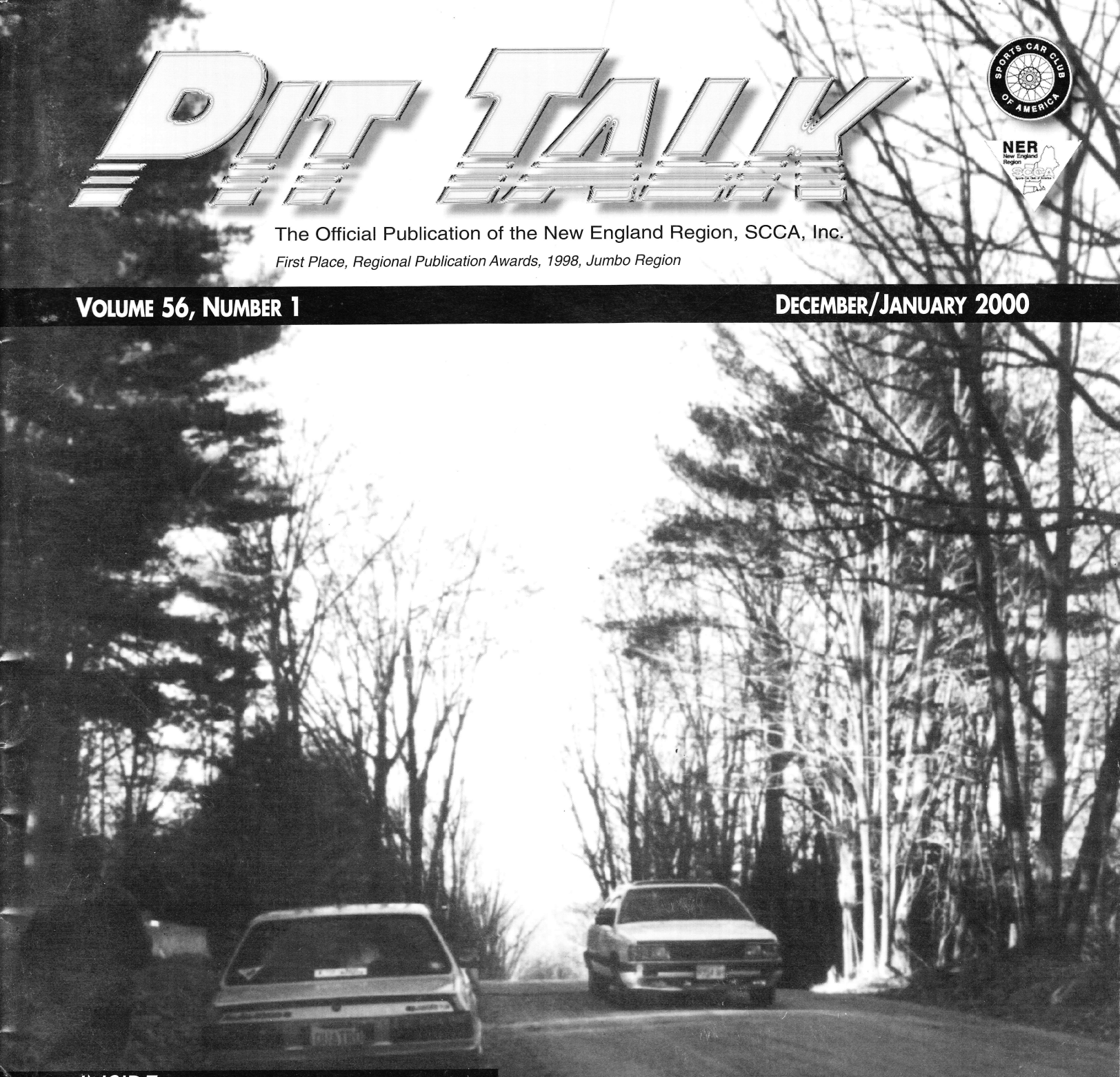
Pit Talk

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Volume 56, Number 1 **December/January 2000**



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Covered Bridge Rally/RallyCross,

NARRC Runoff Results &

2000 Road Racing Schedule

Transponders Are In!

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NER's First RallyCross... A Resounding Success!

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Cover Photo:
A checkpoint during the running of the Covered Bridge Rally.
Photo: R. Beaulieu

(Inset) A Subaru kicks some dirt in NER's first RallyCross
Photo: Jon Lamkins

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PIT TALK

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PAYMENT
Make checks payable to NER/SCCA, Inc. Send all ad copy and payment to the editors.

All ads must be pre-paid

DEADLINE
Please observe the closing dates below:

Issue Month	Closing Date	Mailing Date (±)
May	April 25	May 17
June	May 25	June 14
July	June 25	July 19
August	July 25	Aug 16
September	Aug 25	Sept 18
October	Sep 25	Oct 18
November	Oct 25	Nov 16
December/Jan*	Dec 5	Jan 6
Feb/Mar*	Feb 5	Feb 20
April	Mar 25	Apr 15

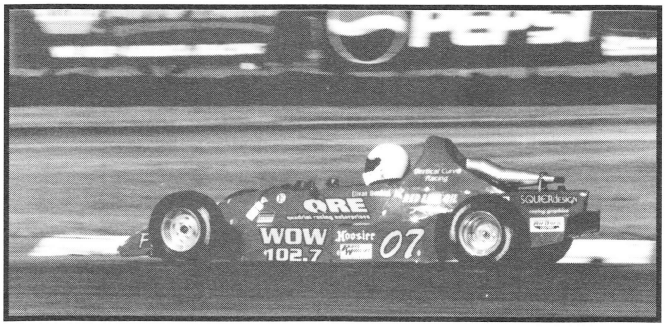
If deadlines prove too close for your event, please notify us and we will try to reserve area. Thank you.

NER Web Site:
www.ner.org
Web Master: Mark Wentworth

From the RE

The competition season is at a close or maybe for you glass half full people it is about to start. 1999 was a very good year for NER. Most problems, and they were few, dealt with growth and keeping event quality as high as possible. In the Solo program, this has been felt the hardest. With many events approaching 200 cars, organizers have to work hard to give the competitors the "track time" to make the solo's fun. How can we make this easier? One component is simple. Larger lots. Most of the traditional solo lots are a tight fit. It is very hard to find a parking lot of substantial size that is not broken up with traffic islands and landscaping. Devins, the old air base, and our new course from last year, the Smith and Wesson plant, are the only really large lots we have. There are limits on how often we can use them. What can you do? Well if you are at work, look out the window. Is there a sea of asphalt? If you see a lot that has parking for 2000 cars call me, or call the Solo chair. A great lot would be 500' by 1000'. NER's Solo 2 is a wonderful way to get new people involved in SCCA. After all $20, your car, your helmet and you're racing. (and we will even loan you a helmet). But when the program is running at capacity, there is not much incentive to recruit. The other problem keeping solo from growing is core workers. Now, at a solo, all competitors put in a work shift such as shagging pylons or some other task when they are not running. But there is a group that works beyond that, getting to a event early and working registration, working key jobs like timing, being a safety steward for the event and even the crew that cleans up the site at the end. These task right now are being done by just a few. If you really love the program and want to make it better, step forward and ask to do a little more. This is the only way we can improve and grow in the future.





Elivan Goulart took a fine fourth place finish at this year's Valvoline Runoffs in his F500. Photo: Roz Rosintoski

Mark Wentworth has been doing a great job with our website, NER.ORG. Mark took over the site a few years ago and it has been improving all the time. Mark, however, would like to move on to other challenges so we have an opportunity for one or more of you cybertypes. Being Webmaster is a great way to be in on everything that is happening before it happens. If you are interested e mail or call Mark.

I missed the NARRC banquet in early

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NEW TRACK COMMITTEE UPDATE

By Doug Holmes, NER New Track Committee Chairperson

This is the time of year that we frequently reflect on the past and ponder the future. We think about where we have been and where we are going. We question whether we are we better off today than we were a year ago.

It's also a time of year to say thank you for those that volunteer their time, energy, and expertise to further the goals of the club. I want to thank the members of the New Track Committee for all their efforts. One of the reasons we have had as much progress as we have is that everyone is an active participant of e-mail. Hardly a day goes by without electronic exchange.

We now have a number of real possibilities and a plan of how to accomplish our goal. Undoubtedly there are many unanticipated problems that lie ahead but we also have a committed group to overcome those problems.

As the plan continues to be outlined, we ask for your support and suggestions. New tracks require a lot of work and quite a bit of money. We will be asking for volunteers with specific areas of expertise to minimize costs. We will also be asking for investors to step forward to help ensure New England club racing will exist for decades to come.

Disagreements:

One thing I can assure you is that not everyone will like our plan. I know, because it is unusual when the committee is in 100% agreement. Fortunately, the disagreements are open, honest, and professionally discussed. Your disagreement is welcome if it is open, honest, and professionally discussed.

What sort of disagreements? Here are just a few questions that can easily generate hours of debate due to different opinions held by well-intentioned, intelligent members:

- What would you think about having th track located in inexpensive real estate in southern Maine?
- Who should own and control the track?
- Should we try to buy 150 acres or 1,000 acres?
- How big should the solo pad be?
- What financial burden can we expect the club and racers to accept?
- Could we live with stricter sound controls?
- Should we try to bring in a professional race or two per year to help revenues?
- Suppose the Ferrari Club wanted to invest heavily?
- How should the race dates get assigned?

Easy questions to as—impossible to get a unanimous answer.

Comments, questions, opinions - please call Doug Holmes at (508) 785-1904 (e-mail: Doug_Holmes@ssga.com) or talk with any committee member.

LETTERS

Dear Editor:

The column by Dick Patullo and Harold Flescher's letter in the October ***PIT TALK*** were quite striking in their contrast: After running my first "season" after 15 years of being away from road racing competition, I just had to respond. Dick hit the nail right on the head: This is the most fun you can have. The competition is great, the people are super, there is good comaraderie amongst the competitors and each track is challenging. Thanks to everyone who made it possible—both the new members who are taking up the challenges and the ... um ... "experienced" members who have kept things going—and going well.

During my "off" years, I came back once in a while, trying my hand at various specialties. The challenge each and every specialty and even the competitors face is making the time the members spend with the club the most value they can get for the money, time and effort spent with SCCA. After all, we compete with other hobbies and activities for everyone's time and resources. We're here not because we have to, but because we want to. From making it a safe place to play to getting results out quickly to bringing watermelon to share with your competitors, it all adds up to individuals doing the best they can to maximize the fun—the value—of each and every event.

Thanks again everyone! Keep up the great work
—Phil Gott

—continued on page 21

1999 Competition Board Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held Friday at 7:30 PM at the Ramada Inn in Auburn, MA.

Meetings are open to the general membership, however due to time constraints, only items on the agenda will be discussed. If there is an item you would like placed on the agenda, please contact the Comp Board Chairman, or one of the assistants. Call 207.36.5534 to confirm dates.

January 15 (at Annual meeting) February 11, March 10, April 7, May 12, June 16, July 7, August 18, September 15, October 20, November 10

Next Editorial Deadline is February 5th for the February/March Issue

Please submit your contributions on or before this deadline.

Mailing will be approximately the 25th of February