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Willow Springs begins with an alarm blasting at 4:30 AM and a dash to make coffee while dressing for the cold and windy in expectation of greeting a normal November day. Bob Singer is the designated driver and passes on the offered coffee. Meanwhile, both Bill Wright and Bob Culpepper join me in the ritual known to wake us all. The ride itself is uneventful as the driver selected the most efficient route for the early morning jaunt. The conversation extends well beyond the automotive topics into areas both personal and public. The exit from the freeway is troublesome to those who have not ventured heretofore since there are no signs to mark the proper route.

Arrival at the entry gate gives us an opportunity to sign our lives away on the waiver form for the track as well as recognition of our real role as volunteers. We register the gang of both drivers and passengers for the event insuring full tech inspections of their cars and that they also sign a second set of waivers for Jim Saxton's West Coast Racing. With dreams of possible rides we too sign in as passengers.

A stroll through the open pits finds the variety of cars astounding. The range is wide with some cars weighing in at a 1,100 featherweight pounds to the porky Pontiac SJ at close to 5,000 pounds. The big Ponpon chases the group with great aplomb and to my surprise manages a number of clean passes down the straights. The driver has just begun the sorting process and expects a better showing in the coming track days. This is a reminder of 1965 Monte Carlo rallies and Brit Sedan races where the lowly heavy weight Falcon Sprints showed that cubes and torque outperform many of the light sport cars. Among the usual crowd here were the normal Cobras, Shelys, Corvettes, Camaros, Porsches, and the odd Mazda RX8 even a Lexus was there. Perhaps I should have brought Phyllis' MBZ E320.

A yellow copy of the same era '65 CAV GT40 replica graced the track on its second outing. The interior looked just like the original GT40 and I found it to be much tighter than the Pantera. Headroom was fine for me but may present a more difficult ride for taller drivers. The seats are sparse yet comfortable. Pedals were set at an angle similar to my L. Power is generated by a built 302 through what looked like an Audi transaxle (maybe VW?). It attracted more attention than the Ferrari located right next to it. Many consider CAV copy as a low quality unit but it seemed very good to me.

The race itself was a 1,2,3 sweep of the Radicals (remember the sweep at Le Mans for GT40 40 years ago?) but most of the race had the Ferrari holding off the 3rd Radical until the last two laps. Panteras made a good showing along with Paige Adler.

Bob Singer and I conned a ride with the Radical boys. Mine was a red SR3 weighing 1,100 pounds with a Powertec Suzuki 1500cc pumping 252hp through the 6 speed sequential gearbox to a posi rear. The electronic dash recorded 2gs turns and a casual 140 mph down the straights with 100 mph turn 9. My driver lapped all of the other cars in our session while chasing down Bob's ride. Note that his ride was a fully licensed car for Nevada and will also be street legal in California by the time you read this. Consider driving a 1,100 pound spec racer on the streets that has a power to weight ratio that rival hot motorcycles as you gather looks from rocket racers with their showy high wings. Standing start to double nickels is so quick. Be sure to wear a full faced helmet cause no windshield is provided and I was pelted by 3 marbles during our run. Launch from a stop light with or without slicks is essentially the same. Willow track times, I'm told, varied by less than .1 of a second using slicks over street tires. Muscle or rockets

regardless of extra motivation can not touch these near F1 launches. The SR8 2.6L V8 powered car is rated at 360hp for those of you who always want more or better yet select the turbo version yielding a faster car with a mere 330hp. It ran the 14 mile Nurburgring in 7 minutes 19 seconds. A used SR3 costs about \$49,000 but there is no room for those big boom boom thingamagigs that entertain the neighborhood.

What's it like? The steward signals a clear track and off we go. The clutch shudders under the force used to send the car forward yet there is no tire squeal just go. We take a far left swing into turn one leaving the normal line far to the right as we rocket into the left hander up shifting through the sequential gears without the clutch as we accelerate. The car is centered for the second turn's right hander but this time it is steady on the throttle through the long turn then add power progressively as we exit with full throttle as we head for turn three lefty. Just as we're about to enter, hard on the brakes then a snap of the wheel, climb, straighten, set for turn four right as steady power is applied to settle the car through it down to five. Squirt out to five then full throttle for six, seven and the downhill back straight. Pass two cars here as we chase the street version SR3. My arm is bruised by the side bar but I am grinning with delight. But wait we're not slowing for the end of the straight until at the last moment where four-pot calipers all around reduce the speed and we enter turn nine then steady throttle and squeeze it to full throttle for the front straight passing another car. From far to the right we enter turn one for the hard left. No need for trail braking because the slicks hold while I feel the driver making small corrections with the wheel. There is no squealing from the tires...just grip. My 6 point seat belts are strained as I am pushed side to side as well as forward and back throughout the lap. This time we are blocked from the racing line but it doesn't matter. We use the outside line and still keep up with the street SR3. Our car runs anywhere we want on the track and it still holds.

Radical West plans to bring these cars to the next Willow Springs in March and Las Vegas POCA rally in May for you to try. It's worth much more than the zero dollars and cents I spent on this E ticket ride (for those who know what an "E ticket" really means). Of course, they want to sell their cars, but I think both of our drivers just love to put their cars through the paces.

I wonder what a ride in an old CanAm car would be like. Do any of you have a Formula One I can borrow?

Reminders: from rkunishige@hotmail.com

Dec 18 *El Cajon Show* Grossmont College \$5.

Dec 20 *Pomona Show & Swap* Fairplex \$8 admin \$7 parking.

Jan 11 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your stories.

Jan *Peterson Museum* Steve McQueen cars. Judy McCartney & Bill Harris.

Feb 5 *3rd Annual Super Bowl Party* at Dave Rudderow's home.

Feb 8 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your associate.

Feb 11-12 *Palm Springs Run* Judy McCartney is checking a ride on the Tram or the Follies as possible events.

Feb 25-26 *San Diego Big 3 Show* Qualcomm Stadium.

Mar 4-5 *Willow Springs open Track* featuring Panteras and Ferraris---Jim Saxton 626 285-2024. This TPOC event is on the fastest track in the West. It is often seen on Speed TV for car testing. Why not test your ride where the pros test? This event is for pro and novice alike classed in 4 groups.

Mar 8 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your pics.

Apr 12 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your suggestions.

May 3-7 *POCA Las Vegas Fun Rally* & Car Display at Orleans Hotel. Kent & Sandi Snyder 626 966-0890.

May 10 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your car.

Jun 14 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your stories.

Jul 12 *TPOC Mtg* 7PM Mimi's 18461 Brookhurst & Ellis FV. Bring your stories.

Write an article of your own and submit it to Mike Drew, Jack Deryke, or Dave Adler.

Rod, that's me, lost the TPOC badges at the swap meet. So, if you or your associate would like one call me at 714 374-8177 or email me at rkunishige@hotmail.com. The badges are free in order to encourage prospective and old members to bypass that very awkward memory moment. This is a common affliction of this writer.

Please send any changes to Judy McCartney at jpoca2@hotmail.com 'cause we're considering sending a TPOC roster to you. Check your phone numbers, email address and most importantly your associate's name. Oops, it's not listed but we do want it for our database anyway. Then tell us what info you'd like to include or exclude in the roster.