

RACING ROOM

CLUB RACING BY JOHN NESBIT

THE CLUB RACING RULES PROCESS

This month we look at the Club Racing rules process and hopefully demystify issues like requesting a rule change and how the proposed change gets approved?

So how *do* you request a rule change? Go to the request form page at www.crbsscca.com. This replaces the old e-mail system. Enter your request or member comment. Select the category, class and car, if applicable. State your request as briefly as possible. You can attach a file with supporting evidence. If you have more than one request, submit separate forms for each one.

You will receive an e-mail acknowledgment, with a tracking number to follow your request through the system. You can also sign up for automated status updates. At that point, your request goes on the agenda for the appropriate Advisory Committee (AC).

The AC will research and discuss your request, then send its recommendation to the Club Racing Board (CRB), which, in turn, may recommend it to the Board of Directors (BoD) for approval. Some changes do not require BoD approval and are complete at the CRB approval stage.

Most rule requests come from members, but the CRB and BoD can also initiate rule changes. In addition, the BoD may request the CRB to research a particular issue and make a rules recommendation.

You can find the members of the boards and committees on the SCCA Web site (www.scca.com). Click "Log In," mouse over the "Resources" tab, click "Directory" and then click "Boards and Committees."

TYPES OF RULES

We speak of "rule changes" in a generic sense but, in fact, there are several types of rule changes. Some require BoD approval; others are approved by the CRB.

The following are approved by the BoD: Changes to the Sporting Regulations. These affect the way events are conducted; changes to the rules for an entire class or category or to methods of construction; in general, specification changes with broad effect; and car reclassifications.

These items are approved by the CRB: Rule clarifications (these add or change language to make clear the original intent of a rule); errors and omissions (corrections to typos or information that was omitted when originally adopted); new car

classifications and changes to vehicle specification lines, including competition adjustments (these are typically such items as weight, intake restrictor size, wheel and tire sizes, but can include other items).

Let's look at each step of the rules process in detail.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Each committee meets monthly to review rule change requests from members and the BoD or CRB. The committees are composed of Club members selected for their expertise in the particular category. Their opinions carry great weight in the rules process. Two CRB members act as liaison to each AC.

A request may be carried forward to a subsequent meeting if more research is required, especially if there are conflicting requests on an issue. The AC will report the request back to the CRB, with a recommendation on action. The AC may recommend that the change not be adopted.

The request then goes on the CRB agenda.

CLUB RACING BOARD

The CRB meets at least monthly, usually by conference call, but with several face-to-face meetings during the year.

Requests may require more discussion and research, and be carried forward to a subsequent meeting.

If the CRB approves a rule change that does not require BoD approval, the change will be published in a technical bulletin in *Fastrack* and will typically become effective at the beginning of the issue month. For rule changes requiring BoD approval, there may be a period of at least 30 days opened for member comment following publication in *Fastrack*. Comments from the membership should be submitted via the crbsscca.com Web site.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The BoD considers proposed rule changes (except safety-related items which are considered at the next monthly meeting) at its quarterly face-to-face meetings. In general, if a proposed rule has significant impact on racers, it will go out for member comment before the BoD considers it.

It is important to remember that the member comment process is not a vote. While the number of comments, pro and con, on a proposed rule is important, it is not necessarily decisive. A single member may offer a comment about the technical or economic feasibility of the proposed rule that exposes a critical weakness in the rule. Based on that, the BoD may send the rule back to the CRB for a re-work or the proposed rule may be scrapped in its entirety.

WHEN DO RULES GO INTO EFFECT?

Each year's GCR becomes effective on Jan. 1. Starting in 2010, the electronic version posted on the SCCA Web site is the official version. There is still a paper GCR. For 2010, it is available free by order; in subsequent years, there may be a charge.

In order to provide a stable rule set, the Club has adopted a "rules year." Rule changes approved by the BoD (except safety

items) and car reclassifications are accumulated through the year and normally become effective only with the next year's GCR on Jan. 1.

Items approved by the CRB (clarifications, errors and omissions, new car classifications, changes to spec lines) normally become effective on the first day of the *Fastrack* issue month. The CRB tries to make its last competition adjustments after the June Sprints (with publication in the August *Fastrack*).

It's important to recognize that there will be some lapse of time between the submission of a request on the crbsscca.com and the final action on the submission. Each board or committee meets monthly, and may have to revisit your request in more than one meeting before making a decision. In addition, a member comment period may be required.

WHERE CAN I FIND THINGS?

Everything is available online. The critical documents (like the GCR and *Fastrack*) are also available on paper by order.

On the SCCA Web site, click the "Club Racing" tab, and then click "Cars and Rules." There, you will find the original 2010 GCR, as well as the current revision. Each section of the GCR is available separately; however, these individual sections are not updated through the year.

Farther down the page, you will find the current Master Technical Bulletin (a compendium of the monthly Technical Bulletins, organized by category and class), Racing Memos (notices of important technical issues, usually safety-related), and Recommended Rule Changes (a summary of rule changes proposed by the CRB to the BoD).

Fastrack is available by clicking on the "Club Racing" tab and then clicking "Fastrack." *Fastrack* is normally posted around the 20th of each month. You can sign up for e-mail notification when it's posted.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

The rules process provides several levels of review. Member input is critical. Remember that member comment is not a vote. The process is focused on the interests of all members.

While the CRB and its committees are appointed, they are responsible to the elected BoD, and through it, to the membership. You can nominate someone for the CRB or an AC or submit your résumé via the crbsscca.com page.

The CRB tries to make the rules process as transparent as possible. The new electronic request submission and tracking system improves the membership's ability to follow the process.

Next month, we look at how Club Racing events are organized.



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