

Pat Richard Interview Continues...

**You and your sister Nathalie seem to be working well together. What's it like working so closely with your sister. Is it easier to deal with problems in the car when you know each other so well?**

Well, it's good and it's bad. I mean, you know, it's your sister...sibling rivalry. You always fight and stuff, but in the car it's good because we can get mad at each other and not all freak out about it. It works well, like she knows when I'm about to crash or when I'm just givin'er, and we had a really good season together. She's done a good job.

**Do you see a good business model for rallying in north America?**

Yeah. I think between myself and a few other folks we've all shared a vision of a business model for rallying that works. The problem is there a lot of people involved in the sport who don't share that vision. So, even if we can see that, there may be a lot of other people who are either new to the sport or have been in the sport a long time that don't want it to change or whatever. It's almost impossible to get everybody on side to go to a common goal, and that's really what's hindered the evolution of the sport, at least in the United States anyway. I definitely believe there is a viable business model, not only for drivers but for teams, sponsors, event organizers. I've seen it work in other countries and there's no reason it shouldn't work here.

**So you think there's hope that teams can pay for rallying with sponsorship money?**

It's not that I think there's hope, I know it's possible. I've been surviving as a rally driver for three years now so I know it's possible. It's just that people need to do all the things that need to be done, not just two or three things they think should be done and then be all stoked and not follow through with the fifteen other things that need to be done. And that goes for the whole gamut, from event organizers, to promoters, to TV producers, to the competitors, and to the hospitality people hosting the sponsors. Everybody's got to put on

a good experience, not only for the spectators but for the companies involved in the sport so they can ultimately sell their products and so it looks exciting and not just like a bunch of guys going slow. You know, all that kind of stuff needs to happen.

**The SCCA just dropped rallying for whatever reason. Do you see this as this a good thing?**

I'm actually quite happy that SCCA has pulled out of rallying and I think they've done the sport a disservice by saying that it's exclusively due to insurance concerns. I know that's not the case because we can rally in Canada and we have insurance. One suggestion I gave to the organizers in the States was why don't you just adopt the Canadian rulebook and use our insurance provider and you'll have insurance in two days. It really goes to the point that it's not the issue. It's unfortunate because there are a lot of people who are SCCA members who have put a lot into rallying. It sucks for them to not be directly involved in the sport anymore, but at the same time we had a bunch of people involved in the sport who didn't know much about the sport and didn't care about the sport, and in some respects were mismanaging it. So, I think it's good - and that might be controversial - but I was one of the first people to congratulate Rally America for taking a step forward and taking over. To be honest, I think if the SCCA hadn't

dropped it they were going to be forced to drop it anyway. There were meetings already being held about starting a new series.


**What's one of the most important lessons you've learned as a driver? Did someone ever give you a piece of advice that made something 'click' and improve your driving?**

Never give up, and the tires will grip. The tires always grip way more than you think they will so just go.

**What's after rallying for you? Or is there any "after" rallying?**

Well, I don't know. My wife just had a baby and I've got to settle down. I think that's why I opened up the shop, because already I'm traveling too much. I need to hang out and build some cars for other people. So, I don't know if there's an "after" rally. We'll see. I have talked to a couple of people about organizing an International Rally, but I'm not going to get into that until after I'm done driving.

Interview by Warwick Patterson  
All photos by Warwick Patterson



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