

South of the Border

SCCA Closed Course Rally Program.

In Oct of 2004, the SCCA's Board of Directors chose to no longer sanction stage rally events in the United States thereby terminating the ProRally Championship and ClubRally programs. Stage rallying will continue in the US but it will be organized and governed by Rally America who has previously provided timing systems to the sport. The SCCA has devised a new program that promises to bring many of the excitement aspects of stage rallying together with some elements found in other forms of motorsport. The aim being to resolve the insurance and liability concerns that led to the Board's decision.

The purpose of the move to closed course format is to develop a venue where a more controlled environment may be established, both for competitors and spectators. The SCCA feels that this will appeal not only to current rallyists but also to the youth

market who may find "an accessible, real world version of video game rallying."

The new program will come about over the next three years and will feature RallyCross, RallySprint, and the new concept CircuitRally. Events will provide for competition at various levels including recreational street cars, hobby level rally cars, and fully professional entries.

There are definite advantages to the new format. I picture this as being similar to the existing "Superspecial" or Race of Champions where two cars compete head to

head around a "rally stage" in a stadium setting. Spectator comfort and safety is high everyone has a good seat and a hotdog and they can watch the shiny sponsorship decals on the cars as they go round and round in front of them. No longer will TV crews have

to trek into the wilds or try to find the elusive best shot for the camera. One location will view the whole thing. The improved visibility should make it easier to lure commercial backing and therefore cheaper for competitors to run a series. Also it is likely that running costs would be lower with events held closer to home and a reduction in seriously big offs. Organizers will not have to secure closure on public roads and workers will be in one location rather than

spread across the countryside. Post event costs to perform rally related repairs to roads and scenery (perhaps fewer damaged fences) will be reduced.

In fact the only disadvantage I can foresee is that they are finally removing the "rally" from rally racing. Traditionalists are proud to tackle a thousand corners once rather than one corner a thousand times. What will become of the co-driver? Relegated to navigating through the pit-lane line-ups? How about tire selection and fuel calculations? No, I think we just need round tires for the stadium.

Proof will be in the pudding, as they say. Rules are planned to be finalized by Feb 1 2005 with the first Rallycross phase underway in March. For more information contact Sue Robinson, Manager of SCCA Rally at srobinson@scca.com.

By MAX ETAK

Stadium Stage: Michelin Race of Champions 2004



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RALLY X

Rallycross on ice is back! A closed course is ploughed across the frozen surface of Barnes Lake and competitors race the clock, one at a time, to record the fastest laps. Come push yourself to the limit of your skills at a friendly event that caters to all levels. From novice to expert and two or four wheel drive. Cars must be road legal and pass a technical inspection, occupants require suitable helmets and competition licence (available on the day), passengers are permitted. See www.rallybc.com for full regulations and registration information.

Not sure? Come out and work the event as a volunteer! We need lots of help growing this sport and you get close to the action without the pucker.

For volunteer info: shawn@rallybc.com

Feb 26th 2005

Barnes Lake, BC

(near Cache Creek)

Hosted by the West Coast Rally Association

