

H.O. RACERS of OREGON

NEWSLETTER NO.4

APRIL 1984

1ST ANNUAL APRIL FOOLS RACING & TRADING DAY in Lebanon on April 1, 1984.

This was a lap counter blues day as it turned out. We had lap counter problems that just wouldn't stop, all the way through. But the lap counter did finally half way work. That and paper and pencil we got the job done. Also in the orange slot we had a low power handicap for everybody, but it worked out okay. Al Blanchard - Thanks anyway for the use of your lap counter, it did save some paper work. Okay, to get started with the races-

In the Modified T-Jet class- Glen started out in front and stayed that way with his white Ford J. Close behind was Bart, with his red 2plus2 Ford Mustang of course.-(Down on the ground was Thumper, waiting for Bart's car). Third place- Paul Fromm with his orange Cheetah- Fast it was, but it had fishtailing problems. One lap behind Paul was Rowan in fourth place with a black Ford Torino that he had borrowed from Steve Robinson. He beat Steve with his own car again! "Thanks Rowan" Steve said! Lee Freitag took fifth with his 1960 Corvette. He had pickup shoe problems - he said. And Kerrie, he finally took sixth place with a T-Jet car, - we can't remember what kind. And Steve Robinson took seventh place with his vintage Lola GT.

Ok now, Unlimited T-Jet class- Glen took first with his Ford J again - (the same car). Talk about fast! Bart again followed up with his Ferrari 512. Talk about a race! Paul Fromm got third with a Porsche. Kerrie got fourth with his lowered ZX Datsun, he finally got in the top five. And Lee took fifth with his 1960 Corvette. Russ, from Springfield, got sixth place- Good job there!

And to get into the 440 Stock class- Bart was the hot-dog this time with his Mercury Cyclone. Second place was Kerrie with his Mustang. Bart was two laps ahead of Kerrie. Lee took third with the Pit Stop Trans Am Turbo Firebird (whew!, that's a mouth-full!.ed.). Fourth place was Paul Fromm with his green Camaro. Glen came in a tight fifth place with his blue stocker. And Russ got sixth place in that race. Rowan got seventh position. Mark took eighth(the other Springfield racer). Steve Robinson came in ninth. And Jason, the Kid, took tenth place - A brand new driver to join the HO ranks!

by Lee Freitag
Rowan Nicklous
Steve Robinson

Sounds like it was a great time ! I'm sorry I had to miss it !
Lee - Thanks for the extra effort on your race coverage!-Sorry about the rush!
- Bill

-ISSUES-

- Date of the final POINTS RACE for 1984 season was changed to May 6:
Race is still to be held at Lee Freitag's track in Lebanon.
- Need those surveys returned! (Preferably completed!) If you haven't had a chance to return your survey, please do so at the Points Race at Lee's. We need as much info as possible for the meeting to be held to organize for the 1985 season.
- Date to be set for the Awards Day. A day will be decided upon and date set at the Points Race on May 6.
- The perpetual trophy for the H.O.R.O. Point Series will be on display at the race on May 6.
- Dick Beardsley's track in North Plains has been undergoing some changes. Dick is adding a section of esses and another straight. These changes will add about 20 feet to the length of his present layout. Dick has also been sheet-rocking and painting his garage where the track is located. Dick hopes to have his track completed for some races this summer. When completed this will be one nice racing facility !!! - well worth the wait !!!
- Check Sears outlet stores for HO cars. I've seen Aurora Magna-Traction, G-Plus, and Tyco HP7's. The prices I've seen range from \$4.99 to \$5.99. It's worth the time to check them out - you just may run across something! (Like maybe a red Porsche 510K).
- The word is Aurora has finally been purchased. I don't know the details yet, but I'll update you when I find out for sure, and have all the information.

-UP COMING-

May 6 - H.O.R.O. POINT SERIES RACE NO.6 To be held on Lee Freitag's track in Lebanon. This is the last point race of the 1984 point series. For car pooling info contact: Bill at 255-6761.

AWARDS DAY - date as yet undetermined.

-LAST NOTES-

I was informed Mr. Lee Dundus Sr. has recently undergone surgery. I would like to wish him a complete and speedy recovery!!

There is a possibility of another Swap Meet being organized for this fall. I have been in contact with the president of a large model car club in the Portland area. This club is very hot on the Swap Meet idea, and would like to join with us on another one. Are we interested? Let me know

-Bill

- The H.O.R.O. patches have arrived! They will be available at the points race on May 6. The cost is \$2.75 each. If you can't make the race you can call me to hold your patch or patches. I have 30 patches in stock from the first order. If necessary we can order more. Call Bill, 255-6761 for the patches.

93

INTRODUCTION

In this article I shall talk of constructing one's own track for H.O. racing. Although the type of track construction I shall describe is tedious and involved to build, the advantages are many, and they represent a potential for the next advancement in H.O. racing: nil pickup shoe wear, improved cornering and handling, full smooth power down, perfectly true and dead level straights, and most importantly, free form track design. In other words, any track design you can conceive, with smooth flowing driving lines and any radius or style corner, may be built.

Two important considerations need to be stated here. First, since the plastic track has served our hobby well for the last 27 years, the sentimental value attached to your plastic track is important. Second, there does exist an alternative to both plastic tracks and what I offer, a commercial track made in Japan, the Puma.

The Puma track costs \$3000 to \$5000. The track comes in one completely assembled unit, fiberglass resin poured with braided steel and copper pick up strips. It has about 1/3 the magnatraction pull of stock AFX track and thus requires rare earth magnets to be effectively driven on. Also, although I am not certain about this because the sales brochure is written in Japanese, I believe the lane spacing is based on stock 1 3/8 dimensions.

One needs only to compare their t-jet car body width to their X2 can am body to see that a scoosh more room in the lanes is needed. One should remember that true H.O. scale (Half of O scale) was 1/87, yet today's cars are much closer to 1/50 scale.

We need to adopt standards to fit our cars; I propose either a 1 1/2" or a 1 5/8" lane distance as the standard. The only variation from this might be a reduction back to 1 3/8 anywhere on the track or 1 3/4 or 2 inch spacing in front of the driver station. This would help achieve safe car placement and could accommodate a functional solenoid switch pit lane.

Mandatory pit stops every 25 laps....A few 1/24 commercial tracks in the golden years had this feature but I think most were abandoned as too complicated: they malfunctioned frequently and generally fouled up the racing process.

My goal is to provide an economical improved alternative to the present dated track with a building technique within the grasp of most hobbyists.

Please let me know what your views and thoughts are. I've handbuilt two H.O. tracks of my own: one in 1974; and two years ago, one which required over a year to complete. I've learned from both; a multitude of things I would do differently. Prior to this I've never had anyone to turn to for advise or help in this matter, I truly feel I was a pioneer in this effort.

Puma

84

TRACK DESIGN

All too often the idea of track design is left to the notion of the longest straight the area will accommodate with a bunch of curves in between. Often this is based on how many curve sections a person can finance or finagle out of a friend's scrap box. Realize that by building your own and using the technique I shall describe, any free form design may be used. Long sweepers at the end of straights can change radius and become fishhooks which quickly de-slot the unwary, dog legs can be employed, and sections can become progressively tighter, constant, or progressively wider. Of course true radius corners of any radius can be used.

As with a successful real road course, consideration should be given to the pace your design will result in. Tight multi-corner designs may emphasize skill and make for interesting driving but leaves the chance of recovery from a mistake hard to impossible, and racing action becomes too spread apart. Contrast this with a more open design which keeps cars more clustered together, making an interesting race but resulting in monotonous driving. Strike a balance and pick a pace which emphasizes the type of cars you plan to race the most, and have your pace have its quickest point occur closest to the driver station. This will reduce the need for corner marshalls, make a cleaner race and help the old eyestrain. And lastly plan a back straight area in front of the driver stations to aid track placement of cars. As mentioned earlier, this area can be widened in front of the driver station to 1 3/4" or 2" as opposed to the 1 1/2" distance used elsewhere. Thus rear enders will be kept to a minimum and a possible pit lane incorporated.

I might mention here the effectiveness of a flat pickup strip used in conjunction with a steel underlay. The original intention of the raised rail was to give the non-magnatraction cars such as t-jets enough electrical pick-up shoe pressure to operate properly. This feature, which with the advent of magna-traction could have been eliminated, was retained because it guaranteed pick-up shoe sales and wear and tear on the cars. Copper tape with steel underlay provides a superior electrical contact. Realize also the effect that the steel has on your car's handling, as the present X-2 cars will almost self-steer without a guide pin.

From experience, properly applied copper tape has proven quite durable. Silicon tires perform quite nicely on it and the anticipated oxidation problem proved no more than that experienced with the stock plastic track.

Future installments will cover:

Track surface--

Material selection, laminating procedure, banked curves, construction technique

Routing--

Router bit types, size, router guides, routing procedure, type of tool

Steel placement--

Type and amounts of steel, different amounts before and in corners, staggering steel position in corners, sub surface steel placement, steel slot fillers

Copper tape--

Type and width, application procedure.

I'd like to extend a personal invitation to any of you in the Club visiting Eugene or in the area, come by and race.

Russell Bessonette

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