



Newsletter of the Performance Corvair Group (PCG)

CORVAIR RACER **UPDATE**

AUGUST 8, 2016 **[HTTP://WWW.CORVAIR.ORG/CHAPTERS/PCG](http://www.corvair.org/chapters/pcg)** **ESTABLISHED 2007**

FROM: Rick Norris: I've been working in the shop getting my 3:89 differential rebuilt and ready to go in the car as soon as I get the racing clutch back from the manufacturer. The next race for me will be the HSR Savannah Speed Classic at the Grand Prize of America track on Hutchinson Island across the river in Savannah GA. So far we have five racers going in 27-30 October. It will be my third time there and I've learned to love the quirky little street circuit track. This time I will have a proven engine from the great Road America event so I hope to set a new personal fast lap. The whole affair is smaller and more laid back plus you can always go over to River Street for some fine grub and libations.

The Road America event gave me the opportunity to dispense a few more of the highly coveted Corvair Pit Monkey T shirts to some deserving folks who are Living the Grease Life! It's my way of saying thank you to the folks who come to the races ready to help in any way they can. More to come I'm sure.

This issue has two very good race reports From Ken Hand and Eric Schakel. Thanks guys for the reports as I always need content for the Racer Update and I hate to have to beat it out of you! GG!



Eric Schakel sez:

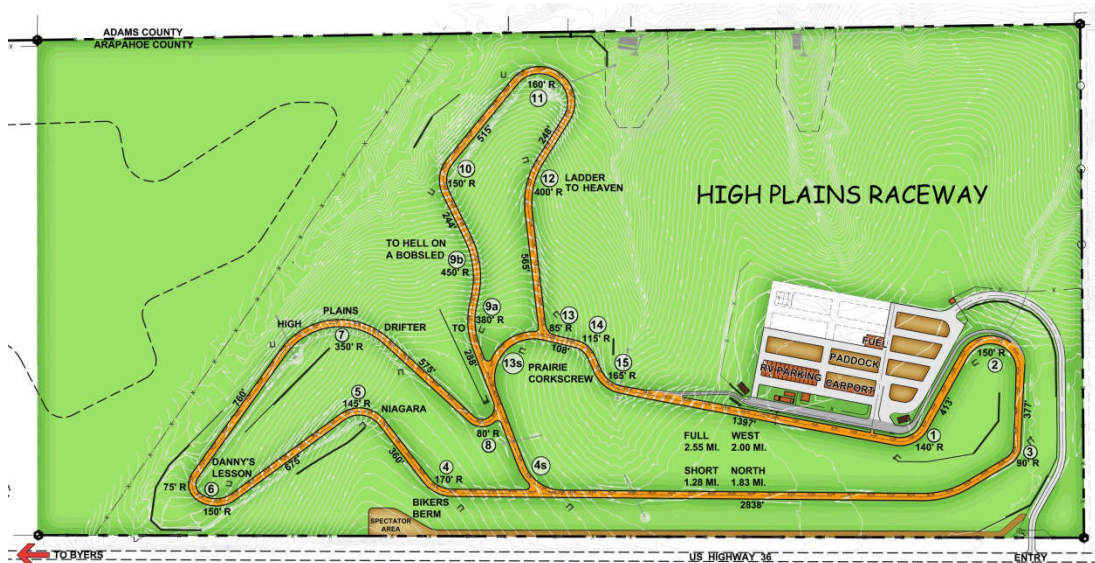
YS-066 At Race Against Kid's Cancer - High Plains Raceway

After a long hiatus from racing, I decided to haul YS-066 to the Rocky Mountain Vintage Racing event at High Plains Raceway the weekend of July 30-31.

This race is RMVR's most highly promoted annual event, raising money for children's cancer research sponsored by the Morgan Adams Foundation. The fundraising goal this year was \$140,000, and I'm pleased to report they were on the positive side of that goal when we left High Plains Sunday afternoon.

The High Plains track looked unusually barren in comparison with Road America, where I had been a spectator two weeks earlier. Mid-summer in Colorado's eastern plains is hot, dry, and dusty, without so much as a single tree on the 270-odd acres. But the track itself is 2.55 miles of glorious elevation changes with plenty of 3-wide passing and ample runoff. It's a fantastic club track, and I've spent many hours there racing the Stinger, as well as providing competition instruction in my other Chevy.

The Stinger is currently motivated by an engine dubbed "The Junkyard Dog". Built on a 1965 Monza 110 PG case that is GM-original, and a set of old vintage-prepped 140 cylinder heads, the JYD was thrown together to get us back on the track before my upcoming clutch knee swap. YS-066 was down almost 50% from my previous best engine's power, so it was a shock to the old "competitive spirit".



Tech was a challenge. RMVR, like most other race organizers, is now balking at vintage entrants without fuel cells. YS-066 is still street registered and driven (just the previous weekend, in fact, we had attended a Corvair event, slogging 100-plus miles through dense traffic), so the new Chief of Tech reluctantly granted a tech stamp based on the D-Production Historic classification YS-066 has held for almost two decades. Time marches on...

We were in Run Group 2, populated with 30 other entrants: AH Sprites and MG Midgets, several Triumph TR-4s, a Spitfire GT-6, multiple MG-Bs, 3 rocket sled Lotus 7s, and a smattering of Porsches (914 and 912 variations). There were also a

couple of Datsun 510s, a blatty RX-7, and one nasty-sounding Volvo. The most notable car of the group was a glorious red Allard K-2, with the driver bolt upright and exposed like Fangio in a Stig costume.

My first practice session was conducted at speeds that took me back to early days of racing with a stock 140. The Stinger was down 10 seconds from lap times a decent "race motor" would have allowed, but it pulled well from low revs, and the prepped carbs and distributor kept drivability issues at bay. The engine was all done by 4500 RPM – pushing the tach to 4800 resulted in cylinders dropping randomly, just like a modern rev limiter but based on cam pattern and ancient OE valve lifters!

Still, racing is racing. I had a new set of Goodrich Rival S tires, brakes were awesome, and the engine steady. I quickly fell back into rhythm during the session, and was surprised to finish with times that were mid-pack.



The second session was the first qualifying race, and the Stinger survived the rolling start nicely. As traffic began to spread a bit, I was able to pick off three of the other cars and maintain position, while also gaining confidence in the durability of the Dog.

The Stinger really likes the two long uphill sweepers at High Plains, both taken at full throttle in third gear for a sustained period. They are my favorite spots for catching cars that walk away on the long straight. On the last lap, I noticed oil

temp creeping past 270 degrees, and eased off a bit without giving up position to keep the gauge from pegging.

High oil temps have never been a problem with YS-066 thanks to a big front cooler, oil stat, and high-flow filter fed by -12 AN lines. The variable was, in order to preserve the Dog's old GM lifters with the stronger valve springs (and with only 30 psi of oil pressure from the pump), I was running Castrol GTX dino oil with extra ZDDP instead of my normal Mobil 1.

Of course, you notice these things and mentally dial up Mr. Scott in your head, "I'm giving her all she's got, Keptin..." and then the checkered flag comes out and the sigh of relief is vivid.

Back in the paddock, I inspected the hot Dog. Oil was pushing out the dipstick, not excessively, and the catch can released a Gerber jar of condensation goo. I noticed the side ducting missing (previous engine ran cool without it) from the big Serck cooler. Would that difference in airflow, combined with dino oil have that big an impact on the oil temperature of the poor weak Dog?



By the first afternoon race session the Dog had cooled, side shrouds were re-installed, and the air temperature had reached a pleasant 98 degrees. The session was a repeat of the previous: Car & Driver came out reasonably fast

and competitive, oil heated up dramatically in 3-4 laps, Car & Driver backed off to keep temps from spiking into the 300-plus range. Next session, ditto. I vowed to show up Sunday morning with IR temp gun and to recharge the oil system with Mobil 1.

Predictably, Sunday dawned warmer than Saturday, and my plans were blown by a late arrival at High Plains. I suited up for a 10 minute warm-up session with no time for changing oil. That session was great fun, as the entire closed wheel cars could go out, and I had my eardrums blown out by the V8 cars! Oil temp was a cool 240 when the checker flew.

Friends had arrived while I was out, so no further diagnostics were conducted in the next 20 minutes, which is when the first Sunday qualifier was called to grid. As expected, our fast laps were mid-pack, but the oil temp gauge pegged at the halfway point, and I backed off to keep the Dog from going into total thermal shock.

Afterwards, I logged system temps and discovered that the front cooler wasn't even warm. Could the inline oilstat have failed? No, it was barely 110 degrees. The oil filter was only 115 degrees. The oil pan was 309 degrees.

The technically astute Corvair racer reading this has probably already diagnosed the issue: The oil cooler bypass valve in the stock rear housing had opened up, and very little oil was going through the plumbing to the front of the car. I had completely forgotten about the miserable little bypass valve.

Since my wife had taken the truck to the Denver airport to pick up our daughter, I decided to cruise the Stinger through the early afternoon race. The result was the same, but I went out fully prepared to simply motor about. I focused on the line, rather than speed, and had a pretty good run. The Allard K-2 was my drop-dead target: When he began to close on me, I would elevate the revs and watch the oil temp peg as I pulled away. The Dog propelled YS-066 to the checker with the Allard a respectable distance behind.

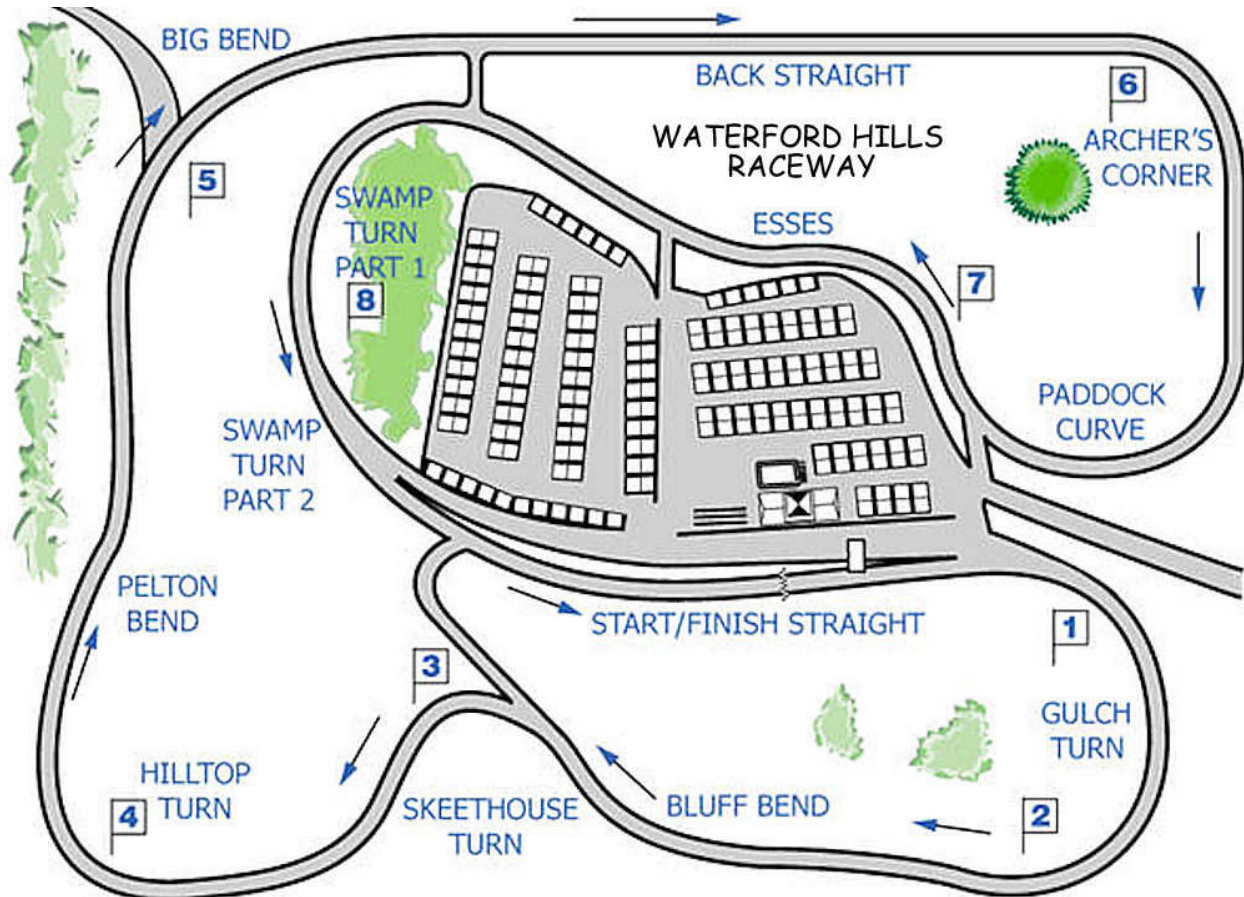
I recently watched some of the fastest Corvairs in the USA going through engines at Road America like popcorn at a B movie, so it was gratifying to drive YS-066 back into the trailer with a still-healthy Junkyard Dog providing the thrust Sunday afternoon.

In retrospect, I think it was significant that I had bolted roller rockers onto the engine when the heads were swapped. The difference in friction and heat

tolerance may have been the key to the car's survival over the weekend. Regardless, the Dog truly deserves an honorable retirement.

Ken Hand sez:

Waterford Hills Vintage Races 07-27/28-2016: As many of you know I didn't have the race car done in time to go to the Convention this year and I also missed a race the prior weekend to this so I could work on the car. There were an older set of Toyo R888's at the convention that I purchased on Camaro rims. After getting home I finally got everything around and finished the race car on the Thursday before the race weekend. That afternoon I took the car and trailer over to Waterford Hills, the place was packed! It was an MG showcase weekend and there were no shortage of MG's of all kinds. There were a few others like an Elva and a couple of Ginetta's. If you are on Facebook I have posted in car videos of the weekend on my Handy Car Care page.



There was a Friday practice and I went out just to make sure the car was going to run OK, I don't need to learn the track just make sure the car works. So I only did one session and packed up. Keep in mind that the Toyo tires are 6 years old and sticky street tires that only have about 6" of tread width as opposed to my 9.5" wide slicks that I am used to. Also keep in mind that in the middle of all this we purchased a new to us Ultravan! When Beth got out of work on Fri., after I had already been to the track and back we loaded up the Ultra and headed to the campgrounds at the track. When we got there we cannot even get in the campground because of all the people that gathered around it. Everyone was very nice and even made a spot for us to park for the weekend. Go anywhere else and have that happen!

Saturday morning was rainy so I did all of my service prep items in the trailer. There is just barely enough room to do that and the last thing I did was silicone the belt, with the door closed and sort of dark. I have a spring loaded pulley and can do it blindfolded, can't you? I wait for the morning practice qualifying and it was sort of cool so I fire up the engine a little early to get some heat into the oil. I smell a little something like rubber burning but didn't give it any thought, Beth came up to the car and said she smelled something and I dismissed it because of the silicone. I go line up wanting to go near the end because I have no idea how the tires are going to work. While I am waiting the engine is running, probably 10-15 minutes wanting some oil temp before going on the track. We do a medium speed lap and then get the green flag. I do a lap and I see the dreaded fan belt light! This happened coming around to the front straight and I thought about going around a full lap to the pits but decided to pull off and wait it out at turn 2 station. I drove the car back to the pits and found out what happened. In the dark the belt had gone OVER the idler belt guard NOT under it, so much for working in the dark.

Here's Kens race video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZdBHGv4X3E&feature=youtu.be>

The Saturday afternoon race rolls around and I am ready with a new belt installed properly in the daylight. Although later in the race I found out the throttle was hanging up just a little but always released. I was having a good race with a couple of cars and then going into Swamp turn the throttle hung up in between the 2-3 shift and the belt came off because of the sudden change in RPM going into 3rd. I saw the light come on and thought about going into the pit lane but I was too fast and too wide to make it so I ended up at turn 1 station

for the last two laps of the race. I again fired up the engine and drove it back the short way to my pit. I was talking with one of the drivers after the race and mentioned that my belt came off and he said that it was over on the track! I retrieved the belt just for nostalgia reasons and to get the debris off the track. Sunday comes and I start getting things prepped on the car. I changed tire pressures some, torqued the wheels and siliconed the new belt and made sure it was UNDER the guard.

I have to let the video tell the story of this race. It was very interesting to say the least. The one thing that is not in the video but you see later is an Alfa that is in front of me for part of the race. I really do think he was faster than me but I know the track way better than he does. I do get around him and he is on my tail for a couple of laps but what you don't see happen is him spinning behind me. I see this happen in my mirror at turn 6, one of the fastest and hardest braking zones on the track. As we are braking I see this motion in my mirror and I see both sides of this Alfa coming up behind me and I'm thinking, please don't hit me, please don't hit me all the while I am braking and making a 90 degree turn! You see the Alfa sitting at turn 6 in my next lap around. I actually get to finish this race!

I think I started 12th and finished 7th. During lunch time I had made arrangements to do a parade lap around the track with the Ultravan. This was the Vintage races and this was a 1968 vintage motorhome! It always gathers a crowd wherever you go! This was a true parade lap as the Ultra is not a handling race car!

The second Sunday race is at hand and I have done all my checks again leaving the tire pressures alone as the car was doing OK for handling. It was a bit loose but loose is fast! I did silicone the belt again and everything was back together where it should be. I go out with the group and I get a good run going battling with a couple of cars but I only get three laps in and the belt goes AGAIN! I pull off at station 4 and sit the race out. This time a chunk came out of the belt, I think I know what happened. As I was putting on the new belt I noticed that it wanted to twist going over the alternator pulley. I think this is what happened the last time that made the chunk come out of the belt.

What's in your shop?

Corvair Racer Update is published by the Performance Corvair Group (PCG). We accept articles of interest to Corvair owners who are interested in extracting high performance from their classic Corvair cars and trucks. Classified advertising is available free of charge to all persons. Commercial advertising is also available on a fee basis. For details, email our club President. Email address shown in the Officers section on the back page of this newsletter.

PCG is one of the many regional chapters of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA), a non-profit organization that was incorporated to satisfy the common needs of individuals interested in the preservation, restoration, and operation of the Chevrolet Corvair. Membership is free of charge. To join, please use the handy form on our website: www.corvair.org/chapters/pcg.

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