



The Observers Stand

June 2026
Issue #21

The Newsletter of the Ohio Valley Region chapter of the Sports Car Club of America

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Photo Credit: Mike Berchack

The Latest News

Alan Stamper

Welcome to Edition #21 of the Ohio Valley Regions Observers Stand.

Time Flies! Spring is here and summer is at the door. Our Autocross and Road Racing programs are active and events are happening. We also have a Time Trial coming up in August and have some exciting news about a Time Trial Scholarship program. You can read the details of the new program on page 13.

We will also review the Banquet and the second SIM event that took place in April.

As of his release of the newsletter, the OVR Hoosier Super Tour has taken place at Mid-Ohio while solo has had their yearly tech at Rabid Customs and completed a Test and Tune at Fortress Obetz.

The next autocross is scheduled for June 14th (Points event #2) at Fortress Obetz:

<https://www.motorsportreg.com/events/ovr-scca-solo-2026-pe2-fortress-obetz-ohio-valley-015877>

The next OVR road race at Mid-Ohio will be the OVR Sprints on August 8th and 9th:

<https://www.motorsportreg.com/events/ohio-valley-2026-sprints-mid-sports-car-course-scca-club-racing-970882>

The OVR Banquet

An evening of Fun, Good Food and Awards at Villa Milano

Our annual Awards Banquet took place on January 31st at the Villa Milano in Westerville. While it was a cold and snowy evening, inside the facility was warm with camaraderie, stories of race cars, good food and year end awards.

The ladies at registration did a great job as they do every year (Thank You!). The Villa Milano was set up for us with a podium in front of the stage and round table throughout the dining area for the members. The banquet line was set up on the far end of the facility.

Everyone found seats and there was time for introductions and conversation while the Hors d'oeuvres were made available for consumption. Dinner was a spread of Italian Roast Chicken, Lasagna and Carved Prime Rib. A dedicated dessert table was set up at the end of the line with multiple types of sweets.

There were many special awards handed out during the evening. I've done my best to capture them below.

<i>Road Racings Awards</i>	<i>Winners</i>
Regional Executive Award	Jude Summer and Dan Hodge
Board of Directors Award	Chris Yeager
New Race Worker of the Year	Langston Macklin
The Barry Baker Race Worker of the Year	Duane Ward
The Dave Stewart Award	Tari Hodge
The Phil Alspach Service to Racing Award	Dan Hodge
Specialty Stars Award	Dorothy Harrington
Specialty Stars Award	Theo Hardesty
Specialty Stars Award	Brian Hammand
The Fergus Award	Karie Beal Garber
The Champions Award	Brandon Lavender
Ted Vedrinski Memorial Most Improved Driver Award	Madin Workman
Regional Road Racing Driver of the Year	Kevin Bus
National Road Racing Driver of the Year	Matt Brannon
Road Racing Novice Driver of the Year	Parker Willis
Road Race Pro Driver of the Year	Patrick Gallagher
Road Race Driver of the Year	Ray Mason
Road Race Turtle Tophi	Mason Workman



<i>Autocross Awards</i>	<i>Winners</i>
Autocross Worker of the Year	Dale & Todd Kunze
Autocross Driver of the Year	Nick Ulliman
Autocross - Stanberry Cup	Alex Tackett
Amy Pickerington Autocross Novice Driver of the Year	Derek Karcher



Spring Training in Fort Wayne

OVR had several member travel to Fort Wayne, Indiana on the weekend of February 27th and 28th to attend the annual Great Lakes Division Spring Training event. The annual event covers topics ranging across all spectrums of SCCA motorsport with Friday being a social and introductory event and Saturday being a day full of classes.

Several of our members have written recaps of their experiences from the weekend, as shown below. Personally, I gained the most knowledge from the class focusing on Time Trials, as I am sharing the Chiefs responsibility for this year's OVR event with Doug Houdeshell. There will be more about that later in newsletter!

Thank You, OVR members, for helping me to attend the Great Lakes Division Spring Training event in Ft Wayne on Feb 28. As your RE, I helped iron out some details for our May Hoosier SuperTour at Mid-Ohio, had some great discussions about Experiential programs like Time Trial, Track Experience, and Track Night in America, and gave input with other Divisional REs on the Spring Training meeting for 2026 and 2027. As the Division Administrator for Road Racing Scrutineers, I held a training for any interested party on what to look for on road race cars for the 2026 season. And, as OVR's Chief of Tech, I recruited volunteers for the upcoming SuperTour, and researched additional tech inspection tools. Most importantly, I enjoyed networking and kibitzing with other members of the Great Lakes Division.

Thank you.

Z Hardesty
Regional Executive
Ohio Valley Region SCCA

Great Lakes Division 2026 Winter Training Report From The OVR Competition Committee Norm Murdock

The event opened with a general session featuring Heyward Wagner, SCCA VP for Rally & Solo, and Experiential Programs. He underscored the 2026 national theme of "Accessibility", meaning how to accommodate as many interested people as possible into SCCA activities with as few roadblocks to their involvement.

I then attended a Road Racing Town Hall session moderated by Sydney Davis Yagel (SCCA Senior Manager of Road Racing) and Jon Krolewicz (Senior Manager Regional Track Program Development). Lots of questions, concerns, ideas were shared, and continued to happen in the halls and during breaks. In the afternoon, CRB Chairman Dayle Frame conducted another open session on Road Racing.

Next, we went to the Great Lakes Champ Series meeting with Paul McBride, Chairman, and OVR's own Richard Jones, GLD Committee Member. They outlined the 2025 season, lessons learned, things that went well, some things to try for 2026. How to build awareness of the Series went around the room as well.

Afterwards, although not a Steward, I attended the Road Racing Stewards training moderated by Lauri Burkons, and featuring Q&A by Debbie and Maurice LaFond. Chief Stewards want to be involved in drafting the event supps for races, as well as encouraging regions to shorten the supps by using references to the GCR rather than reprinting whole paragraphs. Noted to review Appendix B in preparing supps, as there have been some major changes in it over the last year.

Great Lakes Spring Training

Doug Houdeshell

Setting the Tone for a Fast and Fun Season

If you ever want to get a group of autocrossers energized before the season starts, put them in a room together, talk about cars, and remind them why we all love dodging cones in the first place. That's exactly what the Great Lakes Division SCCA Spring Training delivered – a mix of big-picture updates, thoughtful discussion, and practical advice to carry into the upcoming season.

From the National Office: Progress Without the Rush

The National Office kicked things off with updates that should have members cautiously optimistic. A new SCCA website is nearing completion, with a clear focus on stability and functionality over speed of release. The message was simple: don't rush it – get it right.

Along with the website came news of a new SCCA registration platform currently in development. Designed to integrate with MotorsportReg and built in collaboration with Alpha Timing, the goal is a smoother, more seamless experience from joining the club to registering for events. There's no official launch date yet, but the takeaway was memorable: it'll be ready when the cake is done baking.

Autocross General Session: Culture Is the Key

The autocross general session opened as an open forum, giving attendees a chance to share questions and concerns. Common themes quickly emerged – membership retention, attracting new drivers, leadership development, site acquisition, and overall operational excellence.

At the heart of all of it was one word: *culture*.

A welcoming, inclusive environment doesn't come from a rule book. It comes from people. Growth happens when current members invite others in, coach them along the way, and remember that having fun with cars is why we're here. Competition will always be part of autocross, but it doesn't have to be the sharp end of the sword for everyone. For many, it's simply about stretching the legs of the cars they've built and enjoying the community that comes with it.

One simple challenge was offered for the season ahead: talk to two or three new people at every event. Share a tip, walk a course together, or help them make sense of the sea of cones. Those small interactions are often what turn a first-time driver into a long-term member.

Driver Improvement: Speed Follows Skill

The driver improvement sessions brought things back to the basics – and reminded everyone that fast times are a result, not the primary goal. Speed comes from four key elements working together: physics, knowledge, driver skill, and car preparation.

Drivers were encouraged to review each run and ask simple questions: What went well? Where can things be cleaned up? Focusing on improving specific skills and sections of the course is far more productive than chasing raw time alone.

Course walks were emphasized as a critical tool. Walk enough times to drive the course in your head. Visualize the run, identify key reference points, and build a mental map that allows you to look ahead while driving. When your eyes stay up and scanning, the course slows down and becomes manageable.

Physics always gets the final say. Momentum matters, smooth inputs matter, and coasting is the enemy. Feed the throttle early, brake with purpose, and make the most of techniques like trail braking and managing slip angle. One advanced concept that sparked discussion was left-foot braking – eliminating that brief pause between throttle and brake can add up to meaningful gains over a run.

Rolling Into the Season

The biggest takeaway from the Great Lakes Division Spring Training was simple: our future depends just as much on people as it does on performance. Build a welcoming culture, keep learning behind the wheel, and the speed – and the smiles – will follow. With that mindset, the upcoming autocross season is shaping up to be a good one.

Summary of the 2026 Great Lakes Spring Training Conference

Chris Yeager

Attending the Great Lakes Spring Training Conference is something I look forward to each year. It is a great opportunity to meet SCCA leadership from both the National and Regional levels and to exchange ideas with fellow members who are passionate about the future of the club.

During the conference, I had the opportunity to listen to Heyward Wagner, SCCA's Vice President of Rally/Solo and Experiential Programs, deliver a "State of the Solo Program" presentation. One key takeaway from his talk was that across SCCA, attracting novice drivers to Solo events is relatively easy. The real challenge is retaining those novices and encouraging them to return for additional events.

This is a very real scenario for OVR's Solo program. Our autocross events are well attended and frequently include many novice drivers. However, we do face a challenge: some of these newcomers are "one and done." They attend a single event but do not return.

In 2025, OVR hosted eight regular-season points events. Across those events, we had 275 unique drivers participate. On average, drivers attended three events during the season. Of those 275 drivers, 93 fell into the "one and done" category. That statistic was surprising and highlights the importance of focusing on retention.

Heyward's presentation confirmed that this is a challenge faced by Solo programs across the country. Of course, some participants may attend an event and decide that autocross simply isn't for them. But the question remains: are there things regions can do to encourage more of these newcomers to return?

OVR already offers a dedicated novice course walk to help new drivers become familiar with the course and learn how to navigate the cones. However, the conversation at the conference focused on whether regions can do more to engage novices throughout the day, not just before the first run. Ideas included greater interaction with novice drivers during the event and following up with them afterward. The concept is simple: more engagement leads to better retention.

I encourage OVR members to consider attending the 2027 Great Lakes Spring Training Conference next year. It is an excellent experience, particularly for those interested in helping grow and strengthen our club.

Sim Event #2

On April 12th OVR had its second Sim event at Racing Line Columbus.

For 3 and half hours the attending members ran Sim races at Laguna Seca in GT3 911's. It was a lot of fun and the competition was fierce! We had 21 members signed up and a total of 28 entries with guests. 24 people checked in, which fit well with the total number of sim units being 12.

When not driving, the members were scarfing down OVR supplied Jet's pizza and brownies. I've been told that the next time we do this, that we should purchase more of those brownies!

After the last race was completed and the trophies were handed out, there was still time for the remaining members to run a lap on the Nürburgring in the same 911's. After that, we ran a few laps at I think Monza in f1 cars. Surprisingly, the F1 car steers, handles and brakes much like a 1985 EP prepared Honda civic. Almost...

The reviews for this event were good with lots of positive comments, however we need to get more members to attend if we are going to continue to have these. Look for a survey from OVR about future SIM events with questions about how to best get more members to attend.

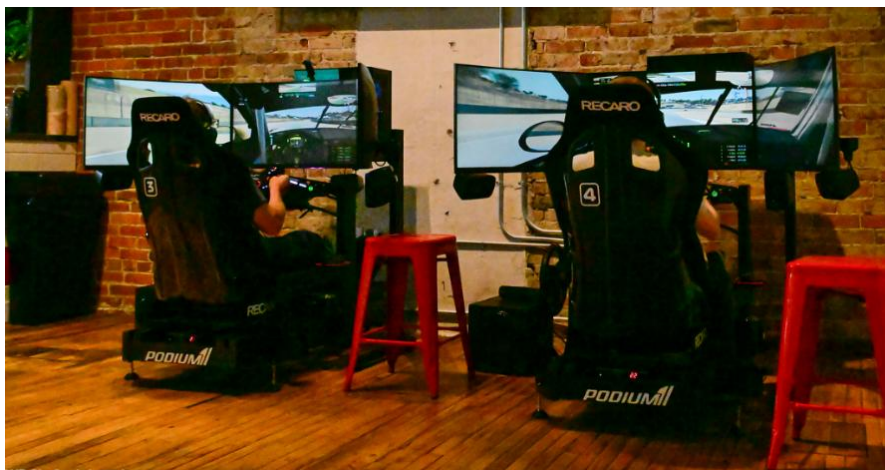
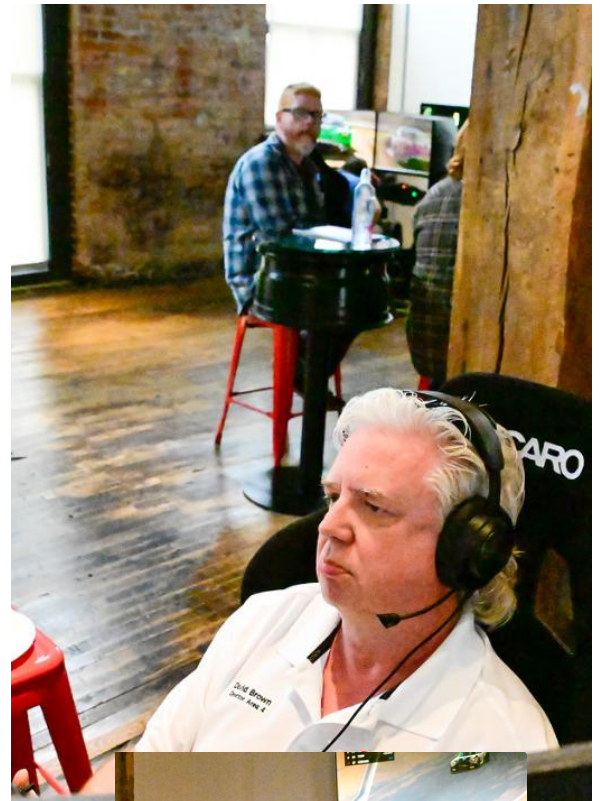


Photo Credit: Mike Berchack

Autocross

The Solo season is underway! At this point, an annual tech event has been held at Rabid Customs and a Test and Tue event was held at Fortress Obetz. Point event #1 is coming up this weekend and will also be held at Fortress Obetz.

Solo's annual tech was held at Rabid Customs. This is the second year we have been there and from all reports everything went great. We very much appreciate them letting us use their site for this event! The turn out was great and a over 50 cars were teched by the end of the day.



Our distinguished and refined Solo Chair, showing off his exemplary fashion sense!

The Test and Tune was held on May 3rd at Fortress with many of our members out having fun with cars!

There were 70 different entries that day and a staggering 10 runs per entry were recorded. The fastest raw time of the day was recorded by Jeremy Rodgers in his 2003 Audi TT Quattro. The top 10 fastest raw times are shown below:

Raw Pos.	Pos.	Class	#	Driver	Car	Raw Time	Diff.
1		P	224	Jeremy Rodgers	2003 Audi TT Quattro	24.453	0.000
2		ST	88	Dan Howard	2013 Subaru BRZ	25.297	0.844
3		X	125	Matthew Schnelle	1997 BMW M3	25.778	0.481
4		X	8	Connor Ryan	2013 Subaru BRZ	26.453	0.675
5		CAM	87	Ryan Staup	1998 Chevrolet Corvette	26.575	0.122
6		ST	22	Matt Haskins	2017 Volkswagen Gti SE	26.590	0.015
7		ST	19	Christopher Anderson	2019 Subaru WRX STI	26.726	0.136
8		X	27	Chris Fetty	2019 Honda Civic Si	26.732	0.006
9		M	77	Henry Kurek	2017 Ford Focus ST	27.019	0.287
10		X	4	Kameron Feola	1989 Honda Prelude	27.157	0.138

When pax is factored in, Matt Haskins had the quickest corrected time for the day, with a 26.950. Matt was driving a 2017 Volkswagen GTI. It seems that German cars were at the top of their game on this day. Again, the top 10 pax times are shown below:

Index Pos.	Pos.	Class	#	Driver	Car	Time	Index	Index Time
1	3	ST / GST	22	Matt Haskins	2017 Volkswagen Gti SE	26.590	0.812	21.591
2	4	ST / XB	88	Dan Howard	2013 Subaru BRZ	25.297	0.859	21.730
3	1	P / XP	224	Jeremy Rodgers	2003 Audi TT Quattro	24.453	0.892	21.812
4	1	SR / DS	35	John Souder	2022 Subaru BRZ	27.228	0.811	22.082
5	1	X / XA	125	Matthew Schnelle	1997 BMW M3	25.778	0.861	22.195
6	5	ST / BST	19	Christopher Anderson	2019 Subaru WRX STI	26.726	0.835	22.316
7	2	SR / DS	12	Jeff Clark	2023 Toyota GR86	27.610	0.811	22.392
8	2	CAM / CAMT	86	Nick Ulliman	1986 Ford Mustang	27.400	0.819	22.441
9	3	CAM / CAMS	87	Ryan Staup	1998 Chevrolet Corvette	26.575	0.847	22.509
10	1	SF / HS	612	Hunter Stavenger	2018 Volkswagen GTI	29.002	0.780	22.622

The 2025 OVR Solo
Driver of the Year:

Nick Ulliman



Road Racing Tech Day



OVR's annual Road Race Tech was held on April 11th at Alliance Autosport . Even though it was in April, there was no rain to keep the racers away! Members brought their cars, log books, gear and camera/flagtronics mounts for inspection. Food was supplied by the region and much bench racing was had before the official start of the season



Photo Credit: Mike Berchack

Hoosier Super Tour

By Jude Summers

The OVR Season for 2026 has begun, with the OVR SCCA Hoosier Super Tour

Time flies and OVR's Season has begun at Mid-Ohio! I had planned to report last week, about OVR's SCCA Hoosier Super Tour held May 15-17th but by now all of you know that the event was held and it was a great success! To recap 246 entrants participated and over 124 volunteers throughout the weekend supported this event. A very special thank you to everyone and especially our volunteers who gave their time and talents. We had volunteers from as far away as California, and entrants as far away as Utah attended. The SCCA's Super Tour Series drew the competition and those that participated or spectated saw some great racing!



OVR provided a welcome to Mid-Ohio get together on Friday at the now called Turn One Pavilion, that coincided with the Friday evening track walk after the track was cold, which consisted of hors d'oeuvres, beverages, bench racing, and big welcome to Ohio. Honestly, the welcome was a bit under subscribed early on- due to all the folks walking the track, but who can blame them? It was a beautiful evening for a walk especially around Mid-Ohio (with no rain). They showed up later after their walk.

Throughout the weekend, our volunteers worked endlessly to ensure a hospitable environment for all, some even assisting other race teams, so that they would be able to complete the event. (It was wonderful to see people working together; The SCCA is a family like no other, that has never changed in my many years with the SCCA.) *I will add here that the bench racing stories at Saturday evening's dinner were quite entertaining.*

One of my highlights of the weekend.

On Saturday, for the evening dinner, **Dave Brown**, Area 4 Director, and Past RE of OVR presented **Kevin Frazer** with the signed Checkered Flag by all the winners of the HST on Saturday for his contributions to our event. Kevin, who turns 15 on May 30th, is an avid motorsports follower. He is grandson of **Lori Clark** (Driver Information) and has been active since he was a toddler with OVR's racing adventures. Throughout the years he has been assisting at Driver Information, now he also helps with lunches and other tasks/errands. He knows his way around Mid-Ohio and through his activities has made a lot of friends with many drivers. He also is now crewing for Lori's significant other **Daune Ward** with his race car; plus, in the past couple of years has been learning "the trade" with **Alliance Autosport**- (something we now must pull him away from when we need him- thanks **Suren!**) I have never heard this young man complain. Kevin's eyes lit up when David presented the flag to him, so **"thank you to the SCCA HST Series for allowing us to present this very special flag to Kevin". CONGRATULATIONS Kevin**, you deserve this recognition!! One never knows, Kevin may replace **Dave Brown** as Area 4 Director some day or perhaps **become a SCCA National Champion?** But as I quickly recap this, he probably would rather be **Felix Rosenqvist**.

There were many other stories from the HST weekend, but I chose this one because I am looking forward to our region's and SCCA's future. We can't expect it to just grow; we need to fertilize it. If each of us could take some time to mentor, establishing a relationship by showcasing our love of our sport to even just one person- it would make a difference. By the way those differences? It is not just a difference to them, but you will find that is to you as well. Thank you to everyone, for your part, big or small with the OVR – SCCA Hoosier Super Tour it was very much appreciated!



Pictured Jude Summers (L) Kevin Frazer (R) Lunch at the HST



Photo Credit: Jude Summers



Photo Credit: Mike Berchack

Time Trial

OVR's 2026 Time Trial is live on MSReg and open for registration! This years' Time Trial is being held on Friday August 7th and Mid-Ohio!

<https://www.motorsportreg.com/events/ohio-valley-scca-time-trials-2026-mid-sports-car-course-club-racing-656399>

On **August 7th, 2026, OVR SCCA** is giving you the chance to get on track in a fun and safe environment at the **Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course** in Lexington, Ohio. **Time Trials** will be open to **ALL**, it is the same as an open track day, but with the added element of receiving timed laps during your sessions on track, which means better traffic control for more clean laps, and we have awards at the end of the day! We have included the all the needed timing equipment in the cost of the event.

Time Trials/Track Events are open to street licensed and "closed wheel" cars. We will not be running a race car class this year.

Entry Fee: \$405/day - SCCA Members receive a \$30 discount!

This is the most Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course track time for the money! Run Groups are based on track experience: Novice - Intermediate - Advanced. Novice group drivers will receive included professional driving instruction in the classroom, and all drivers will receive off-track instruction.

Who: The Ohio Valey Region of the Sports Car Club of America

What: Ohio Valley Region SCCA Time Trials

Where: Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course - Lexington, Ohio

When: August 7th, 2026

Time Trial event is the same as a Track Event, except sessions have a timing element. Bring your machine, put it (and you) to the test, and go for trophies and prizes.

FOR MORE INFO OR QUESTIONS, CONTACT:

Alan Stamper & Doug Houdeshell
Time Trials Co Chairs - Ohio Valley Region SCCA
timetrials@ovr-scca.org

or Alan - (614) 572-7699 (text preferred, voice by appointment)

or Doug - (614) 806-2796 (text preferred, voice by appointment)

Time Trial Scholarship

2026 Ohio Valley Region SCCA Scholarship

First-Time Track Driving Experience

Program Description:

OVR is providing up to twenty \$100 scholarships for our 2026 Time Trial on August 7th. These scholarships are for OVR SCCA members who are true Track Time Novices.

To qualify the entrant must be a 2026 OVR SCCA member who has never driven in any SCCA or other organization's track event on a road racing track.

The \$100 scholarship will be refunded after the event to the same credit card used to pay for the full registration fee on MSR upon satisfactory check of qualifications of the applicant and successful completion of the Time Trial. The first twenty applications received by the Competition Committee will be considered in order of receipt.

To Apply Click Here:


<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=DQSIkWdsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAAANAAaJj3NhUNUc1WUhtNEdCVDEyNUFBSIIUTURBUzU1Ti4u&route=shorturl>



Photo Credit: Mike Berchack

Volunteer Incentive Program

Did you know that the SCCA had a volunteer incentive program? It does! The information is below!



2026 Volunteer Incentive Program Road Racing Department

The Road Racing Volunteer Incentive Program was launched in 2008 to reward SCCA volunteers for days worked at SCCA Road Racing events. Since then, the program has evolved to include other events.

VIP ELIGIBLE SCCA-SANCTIONED EVENTS:

- Road Racing (Driver Schools, Enduros, Regionals, Conference Majors, Hoosier Super Tour)
- Hill Climbs
- Pro Racing events
- Road Racing Worker Training events
- SCCA Support Sanction for Non-SCCA Road Race & Pro events

NOTE: Time Trials/Track Events are not eligible for volunteer credit.

HOW DO I EARN DISCOUNTS?

Workers are required to self-report days worked at eligible SCCA-sanctioned events to earn discounts. Earned discounts will be applied automatically to a membership renewal.

4-5 days worked	\$15 Membership Discount
6-7 days worked	\$22 Membership Discount
8-11 days worked	\$30 Membership Discount
12+ days worked	\$45 Membership Discount

HOW IS THE PROGRAM FUNDED?

Each eligible event pays a VIP fee of \$4.00 per entry. For the SCCA Support Sanction events, regions remit payment for each worker that volunteered at the event.

HOW DO I REPORT DAYS WORKED?

- Log-in to your my.SCCA.com profile account.
- From your profile page, scroll down to My VIP Days.
- Click "Add VIP", complete the required fields, and click save.

Rev. 012126

If you're interested in volunteering to be a race worker, please contact OVR Club Racing Volunteers for more information on how to get started.

Schedules

OVR SCCA Solo 2026 Schedule

Location: Rabid Customs

~~Saturday, April 25th- Annual Tech Day~~

Location: Fortress Obetz

~~Sunday, May 3rd - TrT~~

~~Saturday, May 30th - PE1~~

Sunday, June 14th - PE2

Sunday, June 28th - PE3

Saturday, July 11th - PE4 (GLDD Day 1)

Sunday, July 12th - PE5 (GLDD Day 2)

Sunday, July 26th - PE6

Sunday, August 2nd - PE7

Sunday, August 9th - PE8

Saturday, September 12th - Fun Run

Wednesday, September 23rd - PAX 1

Wednesday, September 30th - PAX 2

Wednesday, October 7th - PAX 3

Location: Darana Raceway

Saturday, September 19th - TBD

Sunday, September 20th - TBD



Club Racing Schedule

Type	Date	Event	Location
Club Racing	Friday, May 15, 2026	Ohio Valley Region SCCA Hoosier Super Tour 2026	Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course Lexington OH
Club Racing	Saturday, August 08, 2026	Ohio Valley Region 2026 Sprints	Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course Lexington OH
Club Racing	Saturday, October 10, 2026	Ohio Valley Region 2026 Autumn Classic XLV	Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course Lexington OH

To register for any of our events, please log into MotorsportReg!

<https://www.motorsportreg.com/calendar?q=OVR&lat=40.0097&lng=-82.6718&loc=Pataskala®ion=OH&country=US&radius=300>

Closing

Thank you for reading!

If you have questions or comments or would like to submit to future issues then please e-mail us at observerstand@ovr-scca.org.



SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA