



VEE LINE

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Oboy! Where to begin! The past month has been so big in relation to Formula Vee that it's going to be hard to decide, not what to include, but what to leave out.

As this is being written, the '67 rules are still not available in final form, though SCCA has provided a copy of the Car Classification Committee's minutes, which is no doubt a close indication of what we can expect.

Riverside and Nassau, though very recent, are history, and the customary race reports will no doubt have appeared elsewhere before you read this, so no attempt will be made to give lap-by-lap descriptions. However, as usual, there are many sidelights not considered important to the general public but of special interest to Vee owners, which you'll find only in this super-scoop.

As was mentioned last month, "Red" Crise, the "Czar of the Speed Weeks", invited my wife and me to attend this year. This being a Formula Vee publication rather than a travel folder, the non-race aspects of the trip will have to be treated lightly; but if your list of things you hope to do someday doesn't include taking in the the "Speed Weeks," I'd urge you to add it—at the top. As a result of this visit, for some of you the opportunity may come sooner than you think. (How's that for a teaser?)

As with Nassau, the American Road Race of Champions (Riverside), as reported by Gary Simmons, will have to be restricted to items you won't find elsewhere. It's a shame, too, as his whole report is certainly worthy of repetition.

NASSAU "SPEED WEEKS"

There were other cars besides Vees at Nassau, of course—there was an Islander's Race, which included local Porsches, Mustangs, Healeys, etc., and a couple of other more or less conventional races, and a big race on the final Sunday with a Chapparral, three Carreras, Lolas, Genies, and that type of iron; but Formula Vee was the most conspicuous class present, from the standpoint of both number of cars and number of races.

On Thursday there were two qualifying heats for the "big" race on Friday; on Saturday there were two five-lappers for men, and two for ladies. These were fun-type dashes, with registration possible right up to grid time, and evidently no requirements other than the statement that someone would trust you with his car.

Chuck Dietrich had the first ladies race sewed up for the first three laps, but was black-flagged when someone discovered that he was no lady. This resulted in a points tie between the winners of the two heats, which was to have been settled by a one-lap run-off. The run-off was decided at the first corner, however, in favor of Patsy Kennedy (a Nassau girl) when the other girl (from England) wrapped Crocky Peterson's car around a tree. She was taken to the hospital, after being sawed out of the car, but was not believed to be seriously hurt.

The course is barricaded at a couple of spots until practice is officially announced, to prevent early arrivals from benefitting by previous familiarity with the track. The first practice session is started by an innovation peculiar to Nassau—the cars are lined up on the grid (first come, first served) led around the course for one lap by "Red" Crise—in an official "Pace Car"—and the race is on! Practice, I mean—I guess. However, it is an accepted fact that when two Vees, at least, are on any track, that comprises a race; and when twenty or so, unfamiliar with the track, are turned loose with a flying start, all in a bunch, it makes for very interesting spectating! Those who have gone through it before ignore the repeated calls to the grid and wait till the field is somewhat sorted out before venturing into the fray, or lag behind on the first parade lap in order to obtain some elbow room—and some of those in the main pack wish they had done so, too.

The big news, of course, was the taking of the first three places by a team of Austrians (which deserves—and gets—a special section elsewhere) but nearly as big was the fact that the next three were private entries—John Magee, Crocky Peterson, and Whit Tharin. (Whit's was technically half of the two-car Zink "team," but was set up, tuned, and partially financed by him.)

"Big" names were notably absent, especially in the front ranks (with one exception). Mario Andretti (who refused to continue in a Vee after a couple of practice laps) Pedro Rodriguez, and Peter Revson appeared on the race program, but didn't make much of an appearance in the race. However, many of the better known Vee drivers were there—Lew Kerr, Ray Caldwell, Sam Posey, Tony Belcher, Mike Rothschild, Lee Cutler, to name a few. Bill Campbell, who had just won the Vee championship at Riverside, didn't do so well at Nassau—his car sucked a large leaf into the carburetor. He

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RIVERSIDE—THE ARRC

GARY SIMMONS

Into the first turn the order was Campbell, Templeton, Simmons, Biren, Zacharie, and Noah. At the end of the first lap both Biren and Zacharie had gotten by me, and Steve Burtis and I were going at it. This order continued for 4 or 5 laps. Then Templeton got wide in turn 7, and he and Biren dropped back of Burtis and myself. By this time Bill Denison had caught Noah, so a four-car pack of Templeton, Biren, Denison, and Noah proceeded to catch Burtis and me. This ended up in a six-car battle for about ten laps. What a race! Three, four or five cars either nose to tail or going through a corner all abreast! My bent exhaust pipes and axle cost me 300 to 400 revs, so only by diving through corners and drafting was I able to keep up with them. I'd pass all of them going into turn 9, one or two would pass me coming out, another one or two would get by in the esses or on the back straight, and then I'd have to start all over again going into 9. On lap 19 or 20 I got wide in turn 7 and lost the group, the finishing order is listed below—

Car No.	Sec. Behind	Driver	Div.	Car	Fastest Lap
22	-	Campbell	SE	Zink	154.4
62	23	Zacharie	NP	AD	155.3
61	34	Biren	NP	B-K Spl.	155.5
24	36	Templeton	SE	Zink	155.0
42	37	Noah	MW	Gladiator	155.4
41	38	Denison	MW	AD	155.3
16	39	Burtis	NE	AD	155.2
73	60	Simmons	SP	G-D Spl.	156.0
51	79	Samm	SW	AD	157.3
46	80	Staab	MW	Bobsy	157.4
35	81	Bentley	Cen	Bobsy	155.5
72	82	Chamberlain	SP	AD	157.4
13	83	Cook	NE	Bobsy	157.4
52	84	Stewart	SW	AD	157.4
54	89	Gross	SW	AD	157.7
63	90	Demele	NP	Crusader	157.3
34	1L27	Abney	Cen	Bobsy	157.9

DNF

71	7L	Hough	SP	Formcar	2:01.3
33	2L	Fowler	Cen	Gladiator	2:16.7

24 laps, 62.4 mi.; time: 46:15.3; average speed: 80.942mph.

Gary Simmons, who wrote the above report, said he was very happy to make eighth place. In practice, at about 9:30, he lost it in a turn, breaking a hub, bending an axle, and bending the exhausts. A little more damage was done by the wrecker in getting the car back to the pits. With the help of some of the other drivers and some parts from David Noah's car (which had also been clobbered) he made it to the grid at 11:00! The pipes were still crimped and the

(continued on Page 2)

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wheel wobbled, and a bent trailing arm had the geometry somewhat less than optimum, but he started—and finished—and in that kind of company 8th place is nothing to apologize for.

According to another report, Harvey Templeton was the star of the show, even though he came in fourth (check the times on the 3rd through 7th places!) The announcer made quite a fuss about Harvey being 56 years old, a grandfather, a rookie driver making the ARRC in his first year of driving, and the fact that he had had the fastest qualifying time. His drop back to 8th place in the 6th lap was attributed to a slight brush with Glen Biren on turn 7, which put him into a 360 turn, and his fight back up to 4th place had the crowd going wild. This report had Biren holding a solid 3rd place for the rest of the race. Take your choice.

Gary had a lot of other interesting points in his letter, including a detailed description of what he had done to his engine, but it will have to wait till another time. Incidentally, his car, which has been entirely rebuilt since Riverside, is for sale.

ANOTHER CANDIDATE!

“Dear Don —

George Eickhoff just called me and told me that he had nominated me for Executive Secretary, and that you could use a brief history —

I was born and raised near Monterey, California. I graduated from San Jose State College and Stanford University and went to work for the U.S. Food & Drug Administration as an analytical chemist. I am married, and the proud father of one son. I am 27 years old. I first became interested in sports cars and racing while at Stanford. I purchased an old '56 Porsche coupe, which I drove for two years in rallies and slaloms. Then I bought a new 1964 Porsche SC Coupe, which was stolen last April. Now I'm driving a Pontiac, which suits an enlarged family and makes a better tow car. When I decided to quit being a spectator at the races, I bought an Autodynamics kit; and in the last year and a half have worked at getting it—and me—up to competitive speed. I'm getting close.

I have held various offices in fraternities and other clubs, so I am familiar with the work involved and the time required to do a good job as Executive Secretary for FVI, and I am willing to do this. The most recent office I have held was Activities Chairman for the Los Angeles Region of the Porsche Club of America. I am also an active member of the Formula Racing Association, Los Angeles Chapter.”

Terry Farrell,
Lynwood, Cal.

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Formula Vee International**

Don Cheesman, Director

Box 291

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NASSAU “SPEED WEEKS”

pushed it half a mile to the pits and found the source of the trouble, but finished the race just for the ride. Tony Belcher had a flat tire which put him in the also-ran division too. Otherwise, as far as could be learned, the race was fairly uneventful.

There were enough spinouts, especially in the first laps, to keep the spectators happy, but on the corner I was watching, at least, all the cars pulled back on the track and continued the race with no damage. There were no reports of the shunting and nerfing which was somewhat prevalent at last year's race.

There were fast cars and slow cars; good drivers and some obvious amateurs. In short, it was a race comparable to most any Regional—so if you ever get a chance to enter it, don't let the “pro” aspect of it scare you out. There was one girl driver—Diana Carter, from Toronto—who, I believe, finished in around tenth place (I never did get a complete final tabulation). She earned it honestly, too, doing a fine job of driving, especially considering that she customarily drives a Volvo and had previously raced the Kelly Vee only once.

As usual, wheels and exhaust systems were “free” at Nassau. I saw only one set of “mag” wheels and a set of pressed aluminum ones, but many of the cars had remodeled VW wheels—widened by splitting the rim and welding in a spacer. One or two had substituted smaller diameter rims on the VW centers for use on the front of the car. Probably half the cars were on the standard wheels, and not all, by any means, even had the wide tires.

About half the cars also had fancy exhaust systems involving coils of pipe and one to four megaphones, but, surprisingly, the noisiest cars were those with the customary four equal-length pipes. In the hangar, which was provided for storage and mechanical work, the megaphones gave a really impressive sound, but on the track a few of them almost sounded muffled. Questions as to their effect on performance got the usual answers (naturally) ranging from (mostly) no effect to one driver who claimed more than a 5hp gain! If there *was* any benefit, it wasn't apparent in the outcome of the race, and if you've been advocating megaphones to impress the spectators, forget it! They weren't impressed. In fact, in one informal test, it was found impossible to distinguish the megaphones from the standard pipes going past on the finish straight when the “testee” had his back turned to the track!

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Autodynamics, Beach, and Bobsy had new models, being shown for the first time. There were two Zinks, a Lynx and the Kelly, and a team of five beautiful cars entered by American Racing Motors. These were based on modified Beach frames, but had special bodies. Surprisingly, this outfit isn't interested in selling Vees—they want to concentrate on engine preparation, with perhaps some experimenting in the other Formulas.

A couple of cars were observed with tiny 12-volt motorcycle batteries. It was explained that a resistor was used to adapt them to the 6-volt systems, but the consensus among the observers was that they wouldn't accept a charge from the 6-volt generator. Due to their finishing positions the point never assumed any great importance, however. (Incidentally, the '67 rules will specify “any 6-volt battery”.)

Those who feel that the manufacturers have some mysterious advantage can take heart—they fared neither better nor worse than anyone else. And if the Autodynamics Camber Compensator gives a car any advantage, it wasn't noticeable, especially on the team cars.

Despite the unfamiliar exhaust stacks and wheels, the overall impression was very reassuring. Formula Vee, even in Nassau, is still a class in *which anyone* could win—if the Austrians would just stay home!

THOSE AUSTRIANS!

They came, they saw, they conquered! Jochen Rindt, Gunther Huber, and Michael Walleczek—all from Austria—took the Nassau Vee Race, 1-2-3! And from the time they first fired up their cars they were NEWS. They shook up everyone—not just the other Vee drivers, but the officials, the spectators, the VW people, a couple of Vee engine “specialists”—no one was immune.

They came as a team, sent by the Austrian VW importer, complete with three Austrian Vees (“Austro-Vaus”), spares galore, a couple of mechanics and their regular team manager. I never did learn whether the European newsreel group was part of their outfit or a separate organization, but they naturally gravitated to each other, presenting the appearance of quite a formidable invasion. They had a sizeable space in the converted hangar, separated from their neighbors, not by the usual knee-high ropes, but with high plywood panels; and while they certainly couldn't be considered hostile, they didn't encourage the visiting and friendly snooping taking place in the other Vee enclosures.

Right out of their crates, the Austro-Vaus were impressive. While obviously Vees, they have somehow been given that Teutonic appearance of solid, no-nonsense invincibility. The design and workmanship are faultless, and they *look* fast, even when standing still. They *sound* fast, too—their megaphones did *not* sound like mufflers. And they *are* fast! Those who were able to compare cars with them on the practice sections knew it was no illusion that those Austrians were going like scat!

As at any other race, the obvious explanation was that they had to be cheating, and it didn't help matters any that they left one of their extra engines close enough to a gap in their plywood wall so that a corner of the tarp thrown over it could be reached and raised. The flywheel thus revealed probably weighed 5 lb., and the cylinders were of an unfamiliar design.

In the interests of forestalling an international incident a couple of "neutrals" interviewed the Austrians to question them, and make sure they knew the rules and were conforming to them. They were assured that the cars were legal. They said they had built up the engines with the *oversize* 1200 cylinders before coming (due to not having heard of the correction in the SCCA rules from 3,080" to 3,040") but had found out after arriving that they were illegal, so had installed new legal jugs obtained from the Nassau VW dealer.

After seeing them take both the qualifying heats, the officials had another session with them, getting the same assurance—that they knew and understood the rules and were legal. However, the concensus was still that if they won (which seemed almost certain) the post-race teardown could precipitate World War III.

As expected, the race belonged to the invaders. Jochen Rindt, of course, has an international reputation as a Formula 1 driver, and he had obviously put in a few laps in that Vee before, too. The other two drivers—Gunther Huber and Michael Walleczek—certainly weren't brought along because of their social connections, either. All three of those boys are *drivers!* Those back in the pack who still think they were beat merely by faster cars should sit out next year's race and see how it's done—assuming that a repeat performance will be attempted.

The first six cars were duly impounded at the finish line and taken to the nearby VW dealer for teardown. I was privileged to "assist" Joe Hoppen, the VW expert who has presided over the three Nassau inspections, and Ray Caldwell and Gene Beach were appointed as observers.

That teardown was a real shaker! Those VW engines were the *stockest* engines ever seen in a Vee! Outside of lightening the flywheel and polishing the ports, the rest of the parts were right off the shelf. They had been selectively chosen from a large assortment, we were told, but each piece was in factory condition. The rods had been picked for balance—not one had a grinding mark on it. Pistons, ditto. Cranks, the same. Clearances were strictly to factory specs—the pistons were snug in the cylinders, wrist pins had to be driven out, rods and mains had no play at all. The cams were still so new they could have been returned to the box in place of the one provided by the dealer for comparison.

The cylinders raised some eyebrows, at first. They were *different*, with larger fins and more of them, and they had holes through the fins (for the headbolts) rather than the customary notches. They also had a groove cut into the neck which spigots into the head. However, this is merely the latest version of VW cylinders, and is identical to the older ones in all essential dimensions. (Our engine has had one of these cylinders since way last summer.) They were honed lightly, we were told—not for clearance (it wasn't detectable with micrometer calipers), but to hasten break-in and improve lubrication. They were of the "blue" (smallest) grade, as were the pistons. The cams were the familiar "C" ("D"?) type.

There were two items noticeably different on their engines, but as neither had any performance effect no objections were raised. To drive the mechanical tachs they used, the covers on the 1500 oil pumps were from the VW industrial engine, which has magneto ignition and therefore uses a mechanical tach with the takeoff incorporated in the oil pump cover. Their interpretation of "baffles" in the crankcase was somewhat broad, but not considered a rule violation. Their "baffles" were actually a pair of sliding valves, actuated by a swinging weight so that the valve on the outside of a turn was always open to the pump while the inside one was closed. I'll draw you a picture of it sometime. I didn't find out what weight of oil they were using, but an hour or so after the race it was still only slightly thicker than water.

They used transporter 3rd gear in the transmission—and transporter ring and pinion, which is certainly indicated on a course with straights as long as Nassau's. They credited their suspension for a great deal of their cornering ability, but it appeared quite conventional, except that Armstrong adjustable shocks aren't seen on very many Vees.

Along with the teardown we got a bit of a "lecture" from their head mechanic, translated by Jochen Rindt and Gunther Huber, along these lines (and don't stop me if you've heard this before)—

1. VW has had lots of experience building engines, and knows what the clearances should be.
2. VWs can be driven full-bore indefinitely, right off the show-room floor.
3. Loose pistons rock in the cylinders, which rounds the corners of the rings, which spoils their effectiveness.

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FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS ONLY!

If the meeting will please come to order, we'll get away from racing for a couple of minutes and take up politics. In FVI? You betcha! By the time you read this you will even have received campaign literature from both the candidates for President!

It's very gratifying to have so many members willing to take an active part in FVI, but this is going to be a little sticky, possibly. According to the Constitution, we can have only one officer from any one State, and we now have three candidates from California—Harriet Gittings and Terry Farrell for the office of Executive Secretary, and Lee Wachs for President. I'm glad it's up to the present President to certify the election!

The postcard ballot enclosed (to Active Members only) is for *voting*. So PLEASE VOTE! With only six names on the ballot this shouldn't take over one minute. Is there any good reason why you can't have it in the mail tomorrow? Okay! If you simply *can't* get your ballot to Whit Tharin by January 15, don't bother—it will be too late. That's when the counting will terminate so the results can be included in the January issue.

Get ready! Get set! VOTE!

FOR WANT OF A NAIL...

From Harriet Gittings' "Vee Mail" —

"...During the latter portion of the race the coil on my car came completely off the fan housing, pulling the bolts clear off, leaving two holes, and of course stranding the car. I had it re-wired in time to catch the checkered flag 11th instead of 6th. Turns out others have had the same problem. (Now you tell me!) Check your mounting screws. If you want to be safe and sure, replace them with long ones clear through the housing, with nuts and washers on the other side."

Coils also just slip out of the clamp and drop down onto the engine. Before tightening the screws mounting the coil to the fan housing, tighten the screw that clamps the coil into the mounting bracket. Don't try to do it with both mounting screws tight. don

UNCLASSIFIED ADS

(1) FORMCAR, complete with trailer, six tires, helmet, suit, ready to run, \$1,000. (2) Bobsy, concours *and* race winning, BRG and Lotus Yellow, chromed suspension parts, snap-in upholstery, etc. Completely rebuilt, two new tires, brand new engine. Custom trailer. Car and trailer, \$2,200; car only, \$1,700; car and trailer, less VW parts, \$1,300. Folis Jones, 20 Ophir Drive, Charleston, S. C. (805) 556-3638.

G-D SPECIAL (Formcar Based) 4th, SP Div., 8th at ARRC under adverse conditions. Completely rebuilt since then. \$1,500. Gary Simmons, 1500 Dana Place, Fullerton, Cal.

RIVERSIDE — THE ARRC

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4. Loose bearings hammer themselves out in a short time at high speeds.
5. Heavier oil will help prevent this, but causes high friction losses.

The advocates of "loose" engines who were present may not have been convinced, but they were visibly impressed—and under the circumstances, argument didn't seem to be indicated.

It was announced that the cars would be sold if possible, rather than freighted back to Europe. One spare engine was reported to have been bought and installed by one of the participants in Saturday's races—who did *not* run off and hide from everyone else, indicating further that the drivers may have had some small part in winning the big one.

There were still a few people, when we left, who were certain something had been overlooked in the teardown. I'll admit I, too, expected to find something wrong, but I'm satisfied now that they did nothing the rest of us can't do—and a lot less than many do—and that they proved again, "It's what's up front that counts."

THE VEE AND ME

WHIT THARIN

Where do we go from here? We who dote on Formula Vee must soon face squarely the disadvantages of the colossal success of the Class. Less than two years ago we were delighted to have a ten-car field. Lately, entrants have been turned down at some races in the Northeast. Here we are, getting too big for our race courses, while for other classes, SCCA had to reduce the number of entries required to make a "class" from three to two!

Although there are several possible solutions, mine would be to open another class of Vees, obviously faster and perhaps capable of competing safely with the other formula cars (but not *against* them). Let's examine the idea.

VW is now putting 1500cc, 53hp engines in all their cars sold in the U.S. These engines have been going into the Volkswagen buses for several years and are now becoming readily available. They can be bought at junk yards for \$150 to \$300 and are just as simple and easy to maintain as the 1200 engines.

Suppose the 1500 engines were given a guarantee of recognition for a Championship category in 1968. Then a worn out or blown engine might be replaced anytime in 1967 with a 1500. The car

could then be run in Formula B for the rest of the season while the owner gained experience with the larger mill. The new class would not *force* anyone to make a change, because the original 1200cc class would still be maintained. But it would allow many cars now overcrowding the Vee fields to move up on the same low cost, minimum upkeep, everybody-equal philosophy that brought them into Vees in the first place. Further, it should satisfy many who now cry for more speed and power, but still not give them a competitive edge over their peers.

The details could be worked out, but I would hope to see such a class start out with an unmistakable set of rules that tighten further the present restrictions on engine preparation. I would advocate *no* area of freedom, even to prohibition of the minor items now permitted, such as balancing and port polishing. A guy should be able to select an engine from a wrecked VW, tune it to the nth degree, and then go fast enough to win, if he can drive. That would be Utopia for amateur race drivers.

(Kind of startling, isn't it? Especially coming from Whit. There isn't room for any discussion on the subject in this issue, but there should be some next time. By the way, there will be a class of 1500cc Vees at Nassau next year, but no 1300's. That engine is no longer available in the U.S. don)

HARVEY'S PLATFORM

"Dear Don—

Whit Tharin has told me that he is resigning, and that he has nominated me for the presidency of Formula Vee International. The nomination is an honor, and if elected I will be glad to serve.

Formula Vee has done a lot for me. In no other class could I have gone from Driver's School to Riverside in 10 months—partly because I might not have had the nerve to drive any more powerful machinery, partly because I would not have been able to afford it, and partly because I would not have been able to maintain any fancy cars with the limited resources of the rural area in which I live. So Formula Vee was just what the doctor ordered.

Since I have got so much out of Vees, I would like to do something in return. If elected, this is what I would try to do—keep the rules such that every Vee is just as much like every other Vee as possible. Not in appearance or structural details, certainly, but in its ability to go fast, and to win races if properly driven. To me, that is the fun—the wild, joyous excitement of getting in a pack of Vees, all about equally matched, and seeing who can out-think, out-bluff, and out-drive the others. For me, a few really fast Vees would spoil the fun, even if I had one of them.

So, if elected, I am going to be for stock parts that can be bought cheaply by anyone, anywhere—even in the hills of Tennessee. And I'm going to be for a free exchange of information within the association, so that every member can make his Vee just as fast as any other. Then I want to go out on the course and try to beat him!"

Harvey Templeton,
Winchester, Tenn.



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