



BULLETIN

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

I said last month that I was on the fence on this all-out-modification kick, but I've been taking a bit of my own advice, and have been giving it a lot of thought, and I've decided to climb back off the fence, on the same side. I was challenged by the "Big 3" to give the idea a fair shake in the *Bulletin*, which I believe I have done, but from here on out I'm agin' it.

Make no mistake, this proposal isn't just a small step to make things easier for over-worked race officials--it's an attempt to open Pandora's box and scrap the entire concept of Formula Vee as an economical Class for fun racing, and, in all fairness, it must be admitted that no attempt was made to disguise the fact. It was admitted that many who had adopted FV under that premise were due for a shock, but that they would just have to face the facts of racing life--"if they can't afford it, they shouldn't be racing."

Of course there are cheaters! But I can not understand anyone trying his darndest to beat one on the track but not even attempting to beat him in the impound area!

The first step in combatting cheating is to recognize it as such. The original rules encouraged it, actually. Their originators assumed that everyone would recognize that they were "permissive" (if they don't say you can't, you can't) but many--including myself--interpreted them "if they don't say you can't, you can," leading to hassles and arguments, right off the bat.

We got that one spelled out--"No components may be changed, etc., unless specifically authorized."

That's the key to the whole situation, really, and if we allow it to drop, FV is dead! IF we decide to allow cam modification, for instance, let's spell it out and add it to the "alloweds" in Sec. 4. But to just drop it and allow "ANY" modification? The more I think about it, the more it shudders me!

Perhaps my impression of the "big picture" is distorted, as I admit I only see one side of it. My only contacts are with you people who read this junk (and presumably agree with most of it, or you wouldn't be reading it) and who, no doubt, represent the first group George refers to--"those who lack funds and/or time to pamper the car." It may be, as he says, that the other group--those "who will spend time and/or money in any amount to gain a mechanical edge" are in the majority.

If they are, they lack one advantage that we have--an organization through which their views can be presented. Their "group" does include some "names" with access to the inner councils, but on the other hand, so does this Association, and I hope that they will exert their influence as individuals, as well as through this organization.

Believe me I'm not overstating the situation a bit in saying that Formula Vee is at a fork in the road, and whether it stays on the straight-and-narrow or takes the exit to the freeway depends on whether we--YOU--do the driving, or leave it up to someone else. So even if you are one of those who usually "don't care, just so I get a chance to race" this time make an exception and plan to vote. Get out your present copy of the rules and compare them. Talk it over with other owners, and if they aren't members give them the application in the last *Bulletin* and see that they use it, if you have to mail it for them yourself. Otherwise you'd better reserve space in the Unclassified Section for your obsolete Vee, and they'll be selling for less than Juniors.

SCCA is going to be under pressure on this issue from both sides, so let's press!

There have been several suggestions for an emblem, but also several requests for more time. Not only that, this thing is going into extra innings already, so this will be postponed for the time being. Get your ideas in. Two names for the *Bulletin* so far--"Vee-press" and "Veepoint." Can you do any better?

Without the heat-riser to brace it, the manifold is a bit springy, and moves when the throttle is depressed. Make a little brace of sheet metal to the fan housing, held by one of the carburetor screws.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Have been hoping for some news of that Enduro at Aspen, Colorado for this issue, but so far have heard nothing about it. The latest was just a couple of days before the race, to the effect that the entry list at that time was a bit disappointing. However, if it's like most of the races we go to, Vee drivers no doubt showed up at the last minute. We've been to several where there were five or six Vees, but no trophies, due to insufficient entries by closing time.

A mailing list of about two hundred names of drivers within a thousand-mile radius of Aspen was provided by this Association, but a thousand miles is quite a jaunt for a weekend, even for a Vee race.

Anyone interested in plans for a trailer? If I get 25 requests I'll draw up plans for one like ours, which we think is OK. Uses VW wheels (no spare problem) and weighs 265#.

THIS IS FORMULA VEE

(From Colin Cameron, co-manufacturer of "Der Elf" Vees in California)

"Friend Don:

Well, we finally got to the races with Der Elf. We ran at Santa Barbara ninth in a field of ten. The race engine broke and it just didn't get back in time to go racing so we snatched the engine out of Al Belavance's office girl's sedan. This would have been neat except she caught us and didn't approve. Persistence prevailed, however. In the back of the shop sat a pretty well used 1955 Sedan, our last alternative, so that's what we used. Al gave it the plug-point-and-tune bit and Saturday morning at 3:45 we took off for Santa Barbara. The car is a real gentleman on the track, in fact second to none, but boy did we lose it down the straights.

We met a lot of very nice people among the Vee drivers, and if I never make a dime at it the effort will be worthwhile.

As ever,
Colin"

DO YOU HAVE CROSSFIRE ITIS?

You've no doubt heard of "induction" but in case you don't know what it is, it's the transfer of electrical current from one wire to another close by, even though no actual electrical connection exists between them. It is present whenever the electrical field surrounding a wire extends far enough to include another, but is especially noticeable in parallel wires that are close together, and that are carrying high voltages.

In automobiles it is possible for it to cause ignition troubles that are hard to pin point, by inducing a current from one spark plug lead to another which isn't ready for it. If the second one happens to belong to the cylinder next in the firing order, where the piston is at the bottom of the intake stroke and a degree of vacuum exists, a relatively small current is required to jump the spark-plug gap and start a bon-fire in that cylinder also. This is hard to detect as the explosion is not apparent until the exhaust valve opens at the usual time, but it doesn't do the engine--or its performance--any good.

Does this ring any bells? Right! Cylinders 1 and 2 meet all the requirements, especially with the standard parallel routing of the high tension leads. It doesn't cost anything to re-route them, crossing at right angles where necessary, and if it doesn't do any good at least it won't hurt anything.

The result of the balloting on the change of name and dues was far from spectacular, which wasn't surprising, as neither was much of an issue. I hope you who didn't vote are saving your strength for the one that counts. Only one vote against the reduction in dues. I hope all you members of Formula Vee International are happy with the name change. The vote--FVA-2; IFVA-4; FVI-7; FVAI-2. It will still be referred to as "the Association" though, occasionally.

A big magazine can, without appearing to brag, print like "I think your magazine is wonderful--keep it up, etc." However this one is a bit too personal for me to print such comments, though I will admit there have been a few. This one from Peter Reidy I can't pass up though--it's too sincere. He's the only one, so far, to vote against the reduction in dues, with the comment--"Would \$10 dues enable the FVA to do something to promote FV? Advertising? Movies? A pretty secretary for Ye Olde Editor? I don't think \$10 is too much, and my car is not yet complete." You've been overruled, Pete, but thanks for the compliment, anyhow. Pete wrote the article on engine balancing--remember?--and corrects me on saying he was the owner of the company. He's an employee.

Some of his other comments--"As you said (cam) regrinds are cheap--anyone can afford one--and very hard to check. I say OK to any cam mod, but NOT complete cam kit-\$\$\$\$. Many hot cams aren't worth the money without multiple carbs. Any other engine mod I do not think would be wise." Regarding the oil suggestion last month--"Friend who races an Alpha says thanks." As to suggestions to improve the *Bulletin*--"Yes--BIGGER." Well, don't hold your breath while your waiting, Pete, but I'm working on it. I don't know about the bigger, for a while yet--I've got a living to make, too, in my spare time. But better, anyhow. How do you like this one?

ABILITY COUNTS

"Dear Don:

...I believe the best thing to do is maintain the original rulings, with only added options as specified in the rules.

While I'm writing I might as well comment on the section on "Driver Ability". When I was in Savannah there was a certain Formcar that seemed to surpass any other. Of course the opinion of many of the drivers was that "he might be using a Porsche cam". To my good fortune I saw the Pensacola USRRC and the same driver happened to be running in the Vee race. In this race he ran third, and not even close. I think it just points out what you were talking about--"Driver Ability".

James H. Snyder
McKees Rock, Pa."

Harriet Gittings' "Vee Mail reprints an article from the San Diego Region's 'Grid Line' favorable to Formula Vee! How about that? In California, yet!

UNCLASSIFIED ADS

FORMCAR, '64 Central Div. Champion, Fast and forgiving. Legal. R-6's and trailer, \$1650;

BOBSY VANGUARD. Fast, legal fantastic handling. R-6's, trailer. \$1995. Gene Greb, 1018 Walnut, Iowa City, Ia.

TWO VEES, kits or complete. Prices on request. M. A. Lewis, Jr., 2709 Kellner Drive, Landover, Md.

EX-LOU FLORENCE FORMCAR. Immaculate, prepared, \$1800. Wm. Gregg, 4307 SE 50th, Portland, Ore.

CANADIANS NOTE: Formcar, consistent winner at Westwood. \$2200. Pemberton Motors, 167 Pemberton Ave., North Vancouver, B. C.

EMPI REPLIES

"Dear Don:

We have received your May *Bulletin*. We are pleased that you are in agreement with us on use of rear suspension stabilizers on Formula Vee race cars; we regret that on page two the EMPI name was associated with devious devices for raising the compression ratio to an illegal level in some manner which defies detection.

Your page three reference to the mechanics of our flycutting operation appears to be accurate inasmuch as it does permit the cylinder to seat deeper in the head and thereby bring compression ratio up to the maximum allowed.

Regarding your implication that flycutting is illegal, as it has "altered, modified or changed" a stock VW engine part, we disagree, if only on a point of semantics. Our flycutting does not alter, modify, or change the head inasmuch as the fly-cut product is still of legal dimension. Let me emphasize! A part that is of legal dimension is not altered, modified, or changed.

Perhaps you wonder how we fly-cut without changing the legal dimension? Check your official factory specifications, please. Note the official measurement for "cylinder depth into cylinder head." It's 13.90-14.00mm. Note, too, that an official factory wear limit of 15.50mm is specified for this fitting. Flycutting that does not go beyond the 15.50mm limit does not modify the component; it should be as legal as hymn-singing in Sunday School.

Just for the record, flycutting is a rather simple job, performed with an inexpensive hand-driven tool called the Hunger Fly-Cutter. Every Volkswagen service shop has one. The VW factory advises flycutting for truing warped heads. The head must be true where it meets the top of the cylinder to avoid compression leaks.

We consider flycutting a routine tuning and conditioning operation of a nature comparable with adjusting spark-plugs gaps, fitting of rings, fitting of pistons, and grinding valves.

Sincerely,
EMPI
Bruce Deutsch."

There! Are you satisfied? Neither am I. Technically, some of those statements are correct, but they don't go far enough. It's like taking one verse from the Bible to prove something, without considering the rest of the chapter. For instance--

(continued on page 4)

TO MODIFY OR NOT TO MODIFY

This issue includes two diametrically opposite opinions on the question "To modify, or not to modify?" One is by George Smith, (Formcar) who, as mentioned last month, was one of those present when the switch to modification was proposed. His letter included his recommendations for changes, most of which were presented last month and all of which will be included on the ballot in August.

"Dear Don:

During the short time of its existence FV has grown out of all proportion to the anticipation of the founders of the class. The governing rules have changed little, and everything considered, have served well.

There are in the vicinity of 600 Vees in the US. There will be something over 100 in Europe before this year draws to a close. Prototypes have been shipped to Australia, and will soon be going to South Africa, Great Britain and South America. It is not too wild to speculate that there may be in excess of 1000 before 1966 draws to a close.

When as many as 600 people play at anything in competition with their fellow men, the whole will divide into groups, each motivated by a common philosophy of attaining an end result. I believe we have two such groups now in Formula Vee racing. One group is not really serious about winning for a number of reasons--a lack of funds and/or time to pamper and tune the car, the realization that the degree of skill to drive at the top end of the car's capability is unattainable, etc. The other group, which seems to be much in the majority, has an important number of people who will spend time and/or money in any amount to gain a mechanical edge, and have adequate driving skill to take full advantage of mechanical achievement. It is, alas, not true that the proper and intelligent use of funds and time on a Formula Vee is for naught. And this is all well and good. I know of no way or reason to legislate against it. It is only when a chap runs out of legal ideas that things get a bit dicey.

But what is "legal" and what is not? What booby traps lie in wait in the vast parts complex of a giant such as Volkswagen, upon which the motive power and running gear of a FV is based? What can be done to lighten the burden of Stewards Committees and competitors alike to clarify and define the right from the wrong side of the legal tracks?

To this end a group of people knowledgeable in the mores of FV sat around a table in the New York area recently. Represented were the three leading manufacturers, the Director of the Formula Vee Assn., and a thoroughly versed member of Volkswagen of America, Inc. A "trial balloon" rules adjustment was given birth in the belief that FV owners would, in large majority, welcome the adjustment to the rules that reduced the "Mickey Mouse" conditions of interpre-

tation and yet retained the essence of their original intent. Taking the bull by the horns, I will suggest the rule changes which the membership might consider as a starter.

(There follows much the same as was presented last month, except that (1) no metal may be added, and (2) parts must retain their VW identity. Don)

My kindest personal regards,
George"

The other is by Jerry Mong (Bobsy) who appears to be a definite contender for one of the "Top Three" positions in the list of manufacturers. He got his start building the Bobsy specials which made the name famous before he started building Vees, and as he says, he has probably had as much experience as anyone in the Class with modification. His opinions, therefore, should receive some careful consideration.

"Don:

While I may not be one of the "Big Three" of Formula Vee, our sales are fast approaching the 100 mark, so I do feel I have some small interest in this thing, and therefore I will go on record as being irrevocably opposed to the idea of 1200cc and VW parts being the only rule governing engines.

Formula Vee was predicated on the idea of being a one-class design to make racing available to one of modest means. It goes without saying that the idea has been phenomenally successful. There is no justification for changing it.

I suspect many of the persons advocating the change have never raced and maintained a modified car. If they had, I believe their outlook might be different. I have, and it does cost MONEY, lots and lots. Don't kid yourself. I could have a ball inside a VW, even with VW parts, but of course the man without a dyno and MONEY would be lost.

I do appreciate there is an enforcement problem, and am enough of a realist to know people will cheat. There have been several good suggestions to correct this problem. Whit's idea of a claiming price is good, but not without problems. I believe the answer may be in education. Publish a pamphlet which sets forth a uniform inspection procedure. In it make known all of the things to look for--cam profiles, flycutting, etc. Making all the tricks known will be a deterrent in itself. People generally will only make changes which they feel are "secret," or unknown to others--changes they feel will not be detected in the event of an inspection.

The only changes to the rules I would advocate would be the tail pipe rule (to improve the sound of the machine), an "all-up" weight, and the camber controlling devices. Aside from these, nothing. Expand the rules making them more precise, and put in a list of *cannots*.

Keep up the good work.

Regards,
Jerry Mong"

Regarding Jerry Mong's letter, I like his suggestion for providing an inspection guide and if virtue prevails and the rules are kept restrictive, I'll make a stab at compiling one. VW has agreed to furnish the general specs, but exposing the secret weapons is a bit out of their line, SO--you people who are familiar with this sort of thing--let's start exposing. They'll be printed in the *Bulletin* in the meantime.

SEEN IN PASSING

John and I made two races on two consecutive weekends this month, each nearly 350 miles from home. (Why is the home stretch so much longer?)

At the Portland, Oregon, Rose Cup Race it didn't just rain--someone pulled the ripcord and dumped it all at once during the Vee-Jr. race. Vees didn't beat the Jrs. which were given a head start, but in the rain Dennis Mangun, in the first Vee, was gaining on a couple of them.

Something I never saw before was the loss of a wheel such as happened to Darrell Franklin's Viper. All five bolts came unscrewed at exactly the same time, apparently, as only one of the bolt holes in the hub showed any sign of a bolt being torn out, and that was so slight as to be nearly unnoticeable. The holes in the wheel were well worn, indicating that the wheel had been running loose for some time. The bolts had been checked just before the race, which leads to the conclusion that the holes in the wheel must have been slightly worn to start with, so that the taper on the bolts was tightening against the hub, rather than the wheel, leaving the wheel just loose enough to start working and unscrewing the bolts. It happened on a straight, and no damage was done, even to the hub, though the wheel nearly ran over the car before leaving the track.

So how are your wheels?

At the Westwood race (near Vancouver, in British Columbia) Vees ran, as they did a couple of times last year, with H-Modified. It makes a much better race than the usual Vee-Jr. lashup, which satisfies neither of the classes. The H-Mods are in favor of it, too, as they usually run with the bigger modified classes, where they are in the same position as Vees are with Jrs. They may, in the future, have some second thoughts about it though--the finish was VVVHHHVHVVHH. We were the 3rd Vee. Garth Hopkins of Portland was 2nd.

In spite of a dyno tuning job the day before, our car was sick by the time we got on the track for practice Saturday PM. A Canadian VW shop owner--John Caflisch--stayed late to help us retune it, and got it running as well as it ever has. It wasn't quite good enough, though--it was his Vee in first place Sunday--but if that wasn't the height of sportsmanship, let's hear your story.

(EMPI REPLIES)

1. This argument is based on the 1958 VW manual. The operation is not described in the later ones, and the depth specified in the last one is 13.7-13.8 with NO wear limit.
2. Wear limit is just that--the maximum depth to which the head can be damaged and still be restored.
3. As specified by VW, this operation is for the purpose of *restoring* the head to its *original* dimensions. Shims of four different thicknesses are furnished for the purpose of *replacing* the metal removed by the fly-cutting operation. The wear limit has nothing to do with the depth of the cylinder in the head. Even using the obsolete figures, the *depth of the cylinder* in the head is specified as 13.9-14.0mm--NOT 15.5. The difference is to be made up by the shims.
4. The "maximum allowed" compression ratio as specified by VW is 7:1, and this operation is *not* designed to alter it. To quote from the same section in which it is described--"These heads *are to be* fitted with shims compensating the amount of remachining to *maintain* the compression ratio." Not "may" be -- "are to be." (My underlining.)
5. From their original letter I assumed that they had discovered that the actual VW compression ratio was less than 7:1, and were bringing it up to that point as the "maximum allowed." However according to the way I figure it, they are getting 8:1 as described in the letter above.
6. VW goes to great lengths to *avoid* changing the compression ratio--"To maintain the proper compression ratio of reground cylinders the corresponding oversize pistons are lower than the standard pistons (distance from piston top to piston pin hole)."

To summarize--nowhere in the VW manuals can I find any authorization for

WHIT DIDN'T QUIT

I just had a long-distance call from Whit Tharin that must have cost as much as a weekend of racing (a Vee, at least). About half an hour, and you can't get much farther from Ephrata than South Carolina.

If you've read his previous letters you know what he had in mind--keeping Formula Vee Formula Vee, of course. He's one of the original members of the original Association and one of the most ardent Vee enthusiasts we have. You may know, too, that he quit racing Vees last fall--for most of the winter--but in the Spring----Welcome back, Whit!

Anyhow, his point of view is still the same as the one that got you--and me--into this thing in the first place, and when you stop to think of it, has anything really changed since then? We've found out that there are cheaters in the crowd, which really shouldn't shock anyone old enough to race--there's some larceny in any gathering of two or more people. We've found out that the VW engines aren't all alike, but that doesn't change much except that there will evidently have to be some part substitutions now and then, which we didn't anticipate.

As to the cheating, as Whit says, the "let's modify" proposal is based on the idea that "it's impossible to prevent cheating, so let's all do it and make it legal." Carried to it's logical conclusion we could abolish police forces on the same premise.

Whit is still pushing his proposal for a "claiming price" on Vee engines, and darned if I'm not coming around to it, little by little, myself. If we can iron out the details so that it can be operable without too much red tape, we'll give it a fling, after we get these rules proposals settled. In case you came in late, it is a proposal to require anyone entering a Vee race to agree to sell his engine for some pre-determined price to anyone who wants it. This would discourage extensive and expensive preparation, especially of the cheating variety.

A few of his other observations (wish he had sent a letter, as I know I'll miss a lot of them)---

Last year he ran a standard vacuum advance distributor and late model carb with 130Y air correction and 122.5 main jets, for most of the season. Changed to old style distributor and carb, with adjustable main and 185 air correction jets, in the Fall and got an extra 1/2HP on a dyno. Uses sedan gears, but says transporter third gives some advantage on a short crooked track. By skillful drafting on straights you can keep up with cars turning 200-300 more RPM. Dunlop R6's are greater rain tires than Pirellis. Ignition timing is more important than carb settings. Does his tuning on a dyno. Now running a '65 engine which has never even had heads removed but with old carb and distributor. Gets 4800 on straights, but makes up in the corners. Suspension and tires make more difference than raw power. 4800 is the top shifting-point--you can get more R's per M, but you are just wasting time while waiting for them to come in.

I didn't have nerve enough to start him on suspension--after all, it was his nickle.

inserting the cylinder into the head more than 14.0mm (no matter how deep it is machined) or for increasing the compression ratio to more than 7:1. Mind you, I'm not saying that an engine so

altered (and it is altered) is illegal--that's not up to me to rule on. It is up to the race officials, but maybe this will give them something to think about, if it is brought to their attention.

WASH.
EPHRATA,
BOX 291

