

# MTM Newsletter for May/June 2005

## A Time of Happiness and Sorrow

Here we are in the last week of May, ALREADY! Racing season has kicked up into 5<sup>th</sup> gear, and we are planning some fun events in the coming months. I promise, the weather will get warmer, so don't be afraid to join us on our first annual MTM Invasion Weekend at Mid-Ohio July 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> (See details below.)

Unfortunately, the excitement of racing season was quickly hushed for all of us last week on the news of the passing of **Glenn Miller** from Lake Erie Communications. While working turn 11 during a drivers' school at Nelson Ledges, Glenn was struck and killed by a racing vehicle.

Ever the racing enthusiast, Glenn was back to working in the race control tower while recovering from a stroke a couple years ago. His passion for racing hardly dimmed, and it was a pleasure to see him at the morning meetings last year.

Lake Erie Communications has a tradition that ensures that our dear departed fellow turn marshals are never forgotten. Every year at the end of the Great Pumpkin at Nelson Ledges the box of whistles is brought out. The whistles belonging to departed friends are distributed and everyone shares a memory of their whistle's former carrier. Once all the memories are shared, the whistles are tooted in unison, creating such a noise that you can be sure, wherever they are, the whistles' owners can hear it.

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## Corner Station Safety

Recently there was an accident that brings to the forefront the importance of corner station safety. **Glen Miller**, a member of Lake Erie Communications lost his life while working a corner station at the Nelson Ledges race course.

We need to remember that corner stations safety is the responsibility of all members of the corner station team. The corner captain does carry the overall responsibility for safety, but each of us, as workers, needs to look out for our selves. Also, we need to look out for each other. We always emphasize the concept of working behind positive protection. Just like everything else in life positive protection isn't 100%, 100% of the time. That's why it's important that when cars are on course that everyone's attention is on the job at hand. The blue flagger's first and most important job is to watch the upstream traffic and alert the corner team of any incoming issues that may create a safety issue for the corner team.

I have fallen into the trap while working safety, communicating or even as captain that the racing is more interesting than the job at hand. We must and I repeat must keep our focus on the job of safety. We all enjoy working the track, having fun with other workers and if we work with safety in mind, we can continue our passion for the sport for a long time.

*Ken Lawfield*

Detroit Region Chief of Flagging and Communications

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## MTM Needs YOU!

We still need someone to take over the President, Vice President, and Treasurer/Secretary positions! Now is the time to speak up as the bulk of the work for these positions is over and we have plenty of time to train you to do the very few things you have to do.

**John Lisiecki** has stepped forward to handle our website. We will let you know when the changeover has been completed.

**Tara Troxel** has volunteered to help with the newsletter, that's great!

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## THE FIRST ANNUAL MTM ROAD TRIP

Sometimes things don't turn out like we planned them. Here is one that has just barely gotten started and I'm already changing direction. I had planned to present this idea to you in a series of humorous offerings with our friends from Lake Erie Communications as my comic foils. Now, after the tragedy we have all shared involving one of their members, I think I'll just tell you what I have in mind and go on from there.

After the last race at Waterford Hills this past October, the conversation at Mr. B's turned briefly to how it would really be great if we all went and worked an out of town race as a group. All of the logical reasons were touched on. How much fun working a good race at different track can be. How we all enjoy working together. That gas money and rooms near the track could be shared. We even went so far as to name a few of you who we haven't seen beyond Waterford or Grattan. Then another round arrived and the conversation shifted to a myriad of other things and I went home with this idea stuck in my head.

Time went by and before I knew it, there I was, sitting at Gingerman, freezing my butt off and telling the guy who was destined to become my accomplice about this great concept. That guy is Dennis Hand, our newsletter editor. How Convenient! He has taken the idea to heart and together we set some parameters for picking the ideal race, not the least of which is that it doesn't conflict with any other races here at home. It must also be run during a warm weather month, but this might just be a side effect of the snow and wind gusts occurring as we talked.

At any rate and without any further ado, we present to you.....

**THE FIRST ANNUAL MTM ROAD TRIP  
To  
THE BRAT BASH – aka. The FTW Double Regional  
To Be Held At THE MID OHIO SPORTS CAR COURSE  
JULY 30 & 31, 2005**

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Beer, brats, an excellent race featuring a lot of our Michigan drivers, good friends, old acquaintances, and a really good time working fully staffed corners because we all came to play. YEAH !!

Clear your calendars. Start planning those rides and rooms. Use the MTM Newsletter to communicate and we'll help you any way we can. It's going to be the event to take away all of those memories of our cold start to a season. You can look for me in the campground as usual, sleepin' cheep in the Jeep.

--Lynn Bertin

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### We Have New Members!!!!

Our flag school at Waterford this year landed us 11 students. New members of MTM so far are **Carl Kipp**, **Tom Yurkunas**, and **Mike Yurkunas**. **Melissa "Bullseye" Kimura** has also joined our ranks after spending a year in the trenches...I mean...turn stations.

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### How Did YOU Get Involved?

I always loved to watch racing, attended lots of F1 and CART races in the 80's, but never thought about working at them. In 1993, the Formula SAE competition was held at the Chrysler Technology Center in Auburn Hills where I work, and they were looking for volunteers. On the endurance event I was partnered with Nancy Schilke who "taught me the ropes" (and flags, and signals, and ...) and I was hooked! I have worked this exciting event pretty much every year since then. Now I try to use the FSAE as an opportunity to recruit new corner workers (and it seems to work as long as the rain doesn't chase them away!)

-**John Lisiecki**

Send your stories of how you got involved to the newsletter editor at > [hand1dj@cmich.edu](mailto:hand1dj@cmich.edu)

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### Forwarded from Doug Mitchell

In the Cal Club portion of the SoPac news is a funny story about an incident in the S2 race back in February at **Willow Springs**.

"...Actually, the whole race was pretty clean and drama free, with the exception of **John Page's** Swift driving straight off at turn 4 in the opening laps. He went off so fast and so straight that his car was up on top of a hill alongside the fence where many competitors never even noticed it. It was safely out of harm's way so it had no effect on the race (other than for Page). In fact, it was in such an unusual spot that the tow workers couldn't figure out how to get it down and it was left there for the next race too!"

Here is the "transcription" of the radio call on this as reported in the paper

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CORNER: "Car 7 off turn 4...drivers left"

CONTROL: "Is tow needed"

CORNER: "No he's clear"

CONTROL: ...silence (as there is no NORMAL clear/safe spot there) "The car is safe?"

CORNER: "The car is in the parking lot"

CONTROL: ...longer silence... (note here that the car must leave the track... cross desert... climb a 5 - 6 FOOT dirt and rock berm... and go through the track boundary fence to reach the parking area!) "Where?"

CORNER: "The parking area"

CONTROL" ...silence... "Does he have 4-wheel drive!?"

The story included a picture of the car stuck dead in the middle of the fence! Left side in the parking lot and right side on the edge of the hill slopping down to the track.

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That's all for this period. Have a SAFE and FUN time wherever your travels take you!

*-Michigan Turn Marshals*

