



American

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CAMARO-MUSTANG CHALLENGE™

racing series



NASA NorCal Region, 2012 Season Opener, ROUND 2
Sears Point International Raceway, Sonoma CA

Weekend Racing Recap
10/11 March 2012

American Iron V8 racing roars back to life in California with a VENGEANCE!

SEARS POINT WEEKEND RACE SUMMARY:

- + 3 CMC2 races toward championship points
- + 2 AIX races towards the championship
- + 6 total race group sessions with over 2 hours of track time!
- + **10 AIX entries raced for championship points!**
- + **Chris Terra**, in his Fox body hatchback, successfully completed the requirements for his competition license!
- + **Troy Dewell** returns for AI action after a one year hiatus!
- + **Tim Pinelli** receives his engine at 6:30pm Friday, gets it installed, and podiums over the weekend!
- + **Jim Black** brings out his 4th Gen Firebird for fast-paced AIX racing!

FRIDAY – V8 racing roars to life, as 10 AIX cars entered this event. A mix of rookies, veterans, and previous season champions made for a close laptimes and great racing action.

With the potential for weather this weekend, many kept a close on the radar to see if rain tires would be needed. Many thrashed to get their cars ready – Tim Pinelli installed his fresh engine late Friday night, and arrived Saturday afternoon just prior to the qualifying session.

The biggest news was one of the largest AIX fields seen in California for a few years – **10 AIX entries**.



A gaggle of American Iron racers, on grid and ready for action! Image by Kyle Plum.

SATURDAY MORNING PRACTICE – Due to the scheduled Sunday morning 4 hour Enduro, NASA ran a condensed schedule, putting a few groups together on track, making for a busy warm up session. All the AIX and CMC drivers suited up, and headed out on track to put down some laps, and make sure their racing steeds were in good working order. Situational awareness was key to obtaining clean track time. This wasn't always a successful endeavor, as some would find out later that day.....

SATURDAY MORNING QUALIFYING – The AI/CMC drivers gridded for qualifying, amongst GTS, ThunderRoadster, and Legends cars. Clean laps proved to be a challenge with so many cars on track – Ginsberg's #5 Mustang was hit by a Legends car, breaking 2 rims, destroying 3 tires, and bending the passenger inner tie rod.....ending his bid to try and take pole. Mike Plum nabbed the P1 spot with a 1:54.036, deftly managing to work around the busy track. Ginsberg, prior to the incident, put down a 1:5.390, good for P2, followed by Ron Klamecki in P3 with a 1:57.734.

The AIX group was running hard, with very close lap times. Ross Murray grabbed P1 with a 1:49.115, followed closely in P2 by the 2011 Season Champ Ryan Walton (1:49.553), Corey Weber (1:49.758), Robin Riner (1:49.939), Bryan MacMillan (1:50.794), returning AI racer Troy Dewell (1:53.126), Jim Black (1:54.755), Asif Chaudhri (1:58.864), and Rob Capetz (2:00.939). Tim Pinelli was having some teething pains....a broken clutch cable prevented him from getting out in qualifying. However, four AIX drivers within the same second would make for a close battle!

In between the qual and race sessions, Mike Plum went out with **AI newcomer Chris Terra** for his license evaluation. Chris successfully passed his on-track, and written exam to earn his rookie license, and will be racing with us at the April Buttonwillow event!

SATURDAY RACE #1 – A call to grid brought the group of American Iron and Camaro-Mustang Challenge racers into "race mode" in preparation for Race 1. A few cars weren't in perfect form for this race, so it was a best guess if they'd be able to finish the entire race.

The V8's made their way to the start/finish line, waiting patiently for the green to drop.....when it did, the group charged hard up the hill to T2!

Murray and Walton were door to door at the front of the pack, with everyone else close behind. Rob "The Magnet" Capetz got a little bump from Troy Dewell, turning Capetz's Shelby Mustang around with great fervor. The rest of the group made it through cleanly, as Capetz made it back on track. Unfortunately, his "magnetism" took hold again, this time getting tapped by a ThunderRoaster, bending a tie rod, and ending his race. In short order, Tim Pinelli's "MacGyver'd" clutch cable gave up, and Ginsberg couldn't drive around his bent tie rod, forcing both into the pits.

That left the rest of the AIX group to race hard, and indeed they did!!! Walton put some distance between him and the rest of the group, but MacMillan, Riner, and Black were battling it out for position! On the last lap, Murray got tied up in slower lap traffic, allowing Weber to take the spot away!

At the checker, Walton grabbed P1, Weber in P2, Murray in P3, followed by Riner, Black, MacMillan, Dewell, Chaudhri, Pinelli and Capetz for AIX. In CMC, Plum drove away with P1, followed by Klamecki in P2 and Ginsberg in P3.



The AIX podium. (L-R) Ross Murray (P3), Ryan Walton (P1), and Corey Weber (P2). Image by Adam Ginsberg.



A motley crew of American V8 racers (L-R) – Corey Weber, Troy Dewell, Robin Riner, Jim Black, Bryan MacMillan, Asif Chaudhri, Mike Plum, Ron Klamecki, Ryan Walton, Rob Capetz, and Ross Murray. Image by Adam Ginsberg.

SATURDAY EVENING – Once the Saturday race was complete, the AI/CMC group got together to make sure all the cars would be ready to go for the following day. Soon-to-be AI racer Rob Zieger helped Ginsberg make a parts run to pick up replacement tie rod ends. While they were at the parts store, they also picked up the shopping list of items for Asif's Javelin. The rest of the group enjoyed Mike "Try This" Winston's gin cocktails while watching Rob Capetz's smoking spins from his camera.

SUNDAY MORNING – Driver's finished wrenching on their cars as they enjoyed an Agent 47 supplied breakfast of bagels, donuts and fresh coffee brought in by Susie Plum.



Garage yacking. Image by Susie Plum.

Pinelli swapped distributors to fix a miss, replaced his clutch cable, and made some suspension adjustments. Ginsberg replaced his bent tie rod, put a fresh alignment and a new set of rims and tires on the car. Chaudhri fixed his power steering leak with the parts delivered the night before. Everyone's eyes were on the grey skies, as it rained lightly on and off the entire morning, making all wonder about their choice of tires.....

SUNDAY QUAL/QUAL RACE – With a NASA 4 hour enduro in the morning, AIX and CMC didn't hit the track until 2pm. This proved to be beneficial for the drivers, as they were able to finish working on their cars, and the weather improved!



Sunday morning's inverted CMC qualifying grid. Image by Susie Plum.

CMC's qualifying race was fierce at the drop of the green, with Klamecki edging out Ginsberg going into T2, and Plum hot on their tail! Klamecki lead the entire first lap, but got caught in traffic at T11. This allowed Ginsberg and Plum to get by, and they had an epic battle for the entire race....Plum doing his best to get past Ginsberg, and the #5 doing all that was possible to keep the #77 at bay!



Ginsberg eeking out the qual race win at the line. Image by Susie Plum.

At the checker, Ginsberg took P1 followed by Plum in P2 and Klamecki in P3.

AIX elected to run a normal qualifying session. Ryan Walton was hauling the mail, with the clocks showing a 1:46.884 to take the AIX pole over Murray (1:48.410), Pinelli (1:50.243), Weber (1:50.663), MacMillan (1:48.410), Black (1:48.410), Riner (1:48.410) and Chaudhri (1:48.410). Capetz was forced to sit out due to a penalty from the previous day, and Dewell was performing some repairs.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON RACE – With many driver's nursing various mechanical issues, and a few driver's starting from the back due to missing the mandatory driver's meeting, the Sunday race would prove to be interesting.

The group assembled on grid, fell in behind the pace car, and approached the flag stand to take a flying green flag start for the final race of the weekend.

Pole-position sitter Walton, P2 driver Ross Murray and the rest of the AIX drivers took the green! Murray got a slight jump on Walton, grabbing the lead. Walton wasn't about to give up, and stayed close.....Murray went wide in the carousel, allowing Walton by.

Murray and Pinelli battled for 2nd place until Pinelli's new temporary shift cable gave way on the last lap. Meanwhile, farther back Weber, Black, Macmillan and Riner had it out for fourth place. Weber had a front row seat as both Black and Riner took turns spinning dramatically in turn 7. Black's machine was stuck in the middle of T7, unable to move, but the entire AIX/CMC group deftly maneuvered around. This brought out a full-course caution, allowing the group to bunch up again.

Once back underway, Weber hunted down Macmillan until Mac encountered some "Mac-canical" difficulties with his harmonic balancer giving Weber 4th place, followed by Troy Dewell, Bryan MacMillan, Robin Riner, Asif Chaudhri and Jim Black.

In CMC, a closely fought battle ended with Plum taking P1, Ginsberg in P2, and Klamecki in P3.



The Sunday AIX podium (L-R) – Tim Pinelli (P3), Ryan Walton (P1) and Ross Murray (P2). Don't let the lack of smiling faces scare you....they really did have a good time. Image by Susie Plum.

CONCLUSION – In summary, we had some of the best AI racing we have ever seen with 6 of the racers within a one second spread on their fast laps. West coast AI racing has returned with a vengeance and the 2012 season is looking to be epic. All you drivers with AI cars in the garage or in mind for purchase should get moving so you can be a part of this Pony car racing revival! You will be glad you did!!

Our next AI/CMC event is 21/22 April 2012 at Buttonwillow Raceway just outside of Bakersfield CA, and we're looking forward to a big group of racers, a big Saturday BBQ, and lots of good racing stories! Be there!

2012 CMC Points:

596	Michael Plum	340	Robin Riner
584	Adam Ginsberg	326	Asif Chaudhri
574	Klamecki Brothers Racing	201	Ryan Walton
281	Derek Tisinger	176	Ross Murray
184	Karl Chicca	170	Corey Weber
0	Don Lariviere	152	Tim Pinelli
0	Nick Steel	144	Troy Dewell
0	Aaron Schroeder	142	Jim Black
0	Carson Scheller	140	Bryan MacMillan
0	David Brown (Mustang)	66	Rob Capetz
0	Jeremy Bua	0	Steve Butscher
0	Ken Pearson		
0	Matt Renna		
0	Robert Walters		
0	Mike Donahoe		
0	Charles Weeks		
0	Sam Stowell (BAF Racing)		
0	Dennis "Smitty" Smith		
0	David Brown (Camaro)		
0	Randy Wright		

2012 AIX Points:

For more information, the following websites should be able to answer any of your licensing/rules/racing questions:

www.nasaproracing.com
www.camaromustangchallenge.com
www.nasaponycars.com
www.agentfortyseven.com/outlaw/index.html

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