

Rules change process

Posted by rd7839 - 18 Nov 2013 03:21

Hey guys,

It seems like every year that I've been racing spec 944 there has been some sort of rules change, small or large. Taken individually most are not revolutionary or very costly but added up collectively they are a big step away from where we were when I started a few years ago. I look at my car now and compare it to the one I started with and I barely recognize it as the same one. I hadn't really noticed the difference because the changes have taken place over time and seem evolutionary and just the price of racing. My skill level has changed as well and some improvements are in keeping with the increased speeds, but not all.

Here in Nor Cal when I started the fastest guy was Rick L. I would even argue he was the fastest in the country although some could make their case for that honor. I remember meeting him before I bought my car and he gave me a tour of his. The thing I remember most was the license plates with current tags. He sometimes would drive to the track, change tires, pull out the door glass, go out and win with a new track record. The car was not the prettiest, with the faded silver paint, mismatched wheel colors and cracked dash but it passed smog, had working turn signals and was California legal. It was also fast! My goal was to not be lapped by him and I was proud when I wasn't! That car is pretty much the same but mine isn't. The last time we raced, I stayed just a couple car lengths behind him for the entire race, running very equal lap times. Now I can say emphatically that my skills are nowhere near his nor will they likely ever be. He is still head and shoulders above me and everybody else but his car is the same and mine has evolved with the class but is nowhere near the top cars in our class! How did that happen?

I think having a rule change suggestion period every year has led to unnecessary changes and rules creep that we are supposedly trying to avoid. I think we should have a system that makes it very hard to make changes. Maybe something like; Any change can be posited at any time but has to be in writing with supporting documentation pertaining to the rule change, reason this is necessary for reliability or safety, possible costs, and reason it is not performance oriented. Proposals should be supported by an outside "expert", in writing, and also be seconded by another 944 driver from a different region. It should be submitted to the regional directors who will pass it along to their drivers who have competed in T least two events a year for the last two years who will then vote on a written ballot. A majority is say 75 percent then would be needed to pass the change.

These are just suggestions but the idea is to make it hard to change or add rules. If we just open the forum to suggestions and take an informal vote of the 1 dozen respondents, we get more rules wanted by the minority. It's easy to suggest a rule that singularly is minor but inches along the wrong path.

Is my car faster than Ricks? Yes. Is it more fun? No! How about more expensive? Absolutely!

Any thoughts?

Thanks

Ron Dale

=====
Re: Rules change process

Posted by RacerX - 18 Nov 2013 20:41

Every class evolves over time. I believe that the leadership has done a very good job to keep costs down with an eye on reliability and will continue to do so. Just look at spec pinyataa. What did they cost at the beginning, now look what they cost.

=====
Re: Rules change process

Posted by Sterling Doc - 18 Nov 2013 21:55

Ron,

Good post, and something we need to think about.

I'd posit that rules creep hasn't been so much the issue as not reigning in development and loopholes. Going back to 2011, we've allowed Turbo valve springs, a larger jack pad, and that's about it, up until this year.

We even denied non-OEM headlight covers last year. We did allow a few more things this year, but still denied most, and have made an effort to carefully limit what we allowed (like the single option for the offset cam key).

As classes mature, people have more time time explore the limits of the rules, and develop the cars. This is where the "creep" comes in the that you have noticed, and I agree, it's an issue.

Ram air was legal from day one, but it wasn't exploited until a few years ago. In retrospect, I think we probably left this one pretty wide open. It's harder to fix later, but we are working on this on the other thread.

When headers were outlawed several years ago, it was assumed by most that the collector was part of that, but the rules left the collector an open loophole that was has only recently exploited. We made a conscious decision not to outlaw this, as the dyno cap was coming into place, and it was thought to be useful to allow the lower performing motors to come up to the dyno cap.

Of course the new tire(s) have affected this, as well. The area I have seen the most effort at the national level is chassis development. The bright spot is the fast guys in our class share what they learned - You see this more in our class than anywhere else. What other class has the guy who led much of the National Championship race using his data to coach his competitors?

So, moving forward, lets continue to help each other get faster, and we'll try an be vigilant about reigning things in. as they come up.

=====