

Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association

Minutes of the November 09, 2024, Annual Critique Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Rich Rock at 1:00 PM, after which it was determined that a quorum of Regional Representatives was in attendance.

Officers: Rich Rock, President; Trevor Filipowicz, Vice President; Eli Sharp, Secretary; and Grace Huntzinger, Treasurer.

Regional Representatives: Rich Rock, Trevor Filipowicz, Eli Sharp, Grace Huntzinger, Dale Gogel, Glenn Hoffman*, Don McLaughlin, Joe Whiteley*.

Alternative Representatives: Mike Daley, Don DeHart.

PHA members: Bill Ascheman*, Dillon Axarlis, Dustin Axarlis, Melinda Axarlis, Mike Axarlis, Gibby Bozicevich*, Bonnie Calhoon, Frank Calhoon, James Crocker, Trent Dagget*, Kathy Fisher, Jason Fraley, Mike Frohman*, Keith Gerhard*, Matt Green, Clair Harris, Kenneth High, Crystal Hoegg, Matt Hoegg, Jeff Israel*, Kristen Israel*, Patty Johnson*, Rick Johnson*, Richard Kase, Don Kennedy*, Ted Klaus*, Tony Lepera, Nancy Lewis, Tim Lewis*, Cory Michael, Ron Moreck*, Bill Norton, Charlene Norton, Bob Oswald Jr, John Pitman, Adrienne Reed*, Kris Reid*, Donna Robinson, Mike Robinson, Brian Serfass, Donna Sumner, Jim Swift, Mike Thomas*, Adam Weaver*, Vince Wieczorek, George Witman.

[* participated on Zoom]

1. Meeting Rules Recap Eli S recapped the meeting rules and process and added an extra rule to help the people on Zoom; “ask for clarification on who is speaking or a recap of what was said, if required”.

2. PHA Meeting Survey Results: Eli S stated we had 26 people who responded to the survey. The region that we had the most responses from was BMR, then Philadelphia, Susquehanna and NEPA. The majority of people said they preferred in-person meetings. However, it's still good that we do the hybrid option so people who can't travel and be here can still participate.

Q1. “Do you feel PHA meetings are well structured and run efficiently?” We received answers all over the board. The message we are taking from this is we're probably doing a slightly better job than we did before, but there's still room for improvement. We're going to be looking to make things run more efficiently and be more structured as we continue.

Q2. "Do you ever leave a PHA feeling that you've wasted your time?" There were a few people indicating that maybe sometimes it's not as efficient of a use of their time as possible. So again, we'll look to try and make things run more smoothly.

Q3. "How useful is the new audio and video feed during virtual meetings?" We had a couple of people that say it's sometimes difficult to keep track. We had the majority of people saying it's mostly clear, a couple said it was completely clear. So, we're going to try and do a better job of making sure that it is clear. As per our new rule, if it's not clear, send Grace a message in the chat.

Eli S put further improvements in two buckets: Rules and Process. For Rules; let's follow the rule of having no sidebar conversations, and be clear about who is speaking. For process; there's a few comments around it's not always clear what we're supposed to accomplish or whether we have accomplished it. Sometimes we kick the can down the road, particularly when things get difficult, sometimes we repeat what needs to be said, rather than moving on and making the meeting continue. We'll try and do a better job of those things. People said a paper copy of the agenda would be nice, so we have committed to providing that at each meeting going forward.

3. Treasurer's Report: Grace H reviewed the financials for 2024. She does not yet have all the banquet expenses in, has not yet paid for the hotel, and may not have a completely accurate number of reservations. Between the banquet income and the hill climb assessment fees and the miscellaneous income, which is all merchandise, we brought in \$11,733 this year. Our expenses so far; the banquet, Rich bought a used easy up for timing, we got SCCA GCRs and Solo rule books, \$3500 on new PHA promotional merchandise, printing tech stickers, Zoom subscription and Website. We are going to have a net loss this year, once all the banquet costs are in, and that loss is basically what was spent on the merchandise. In any case, our bank account is very healthy, and we still have over \$8000 in the insurance reserve fund. Last year, we increased the assessment fee from \$7 to \$10 last year because there was the possibility that PHA would have to pay BMR up to \$2000 for each of the Summit Point events in the event of a loss. But we never ended up having to do that, so Grace is leaning towards recommending we reduce the assessment fee back down to \$7. We will see how things end up after this weekend and will announce any changes at the January meeting.

4. Season Review and Event Updates:

Rich R stated; This year we had 592 total entries across all events, with 202 individual drivers from 26 different regions or organizations. By event; Jefferson had 66, Pagoda had 74, Giant's had 104, Duryea had 83 and Shenandoah 70. Spring Weatherly was 85 and Fall Weatherly was 108.

Bill Norton is now coordinating the Carlisle Import Performance National Show. He said it was very well attended. You get in for free, and we're allowed up to 25 or 26 cars. we can show up on Thursday. The show is actually Friday and Saturday only. They do have an auto cross track which you can participate in, if you wanted to try your car out two weeks before we start our PHA events. See Bill Norton for next year attendance.

Jefferson: Rich R said there was nothing remarkable. 66 timed entries or drivers crossed the start line. It was a money losing event for BMR, although it wasn't horrible, it was just under \$1,000 loss this year. As you know, there was some uncertainty about the Summit Point events because of the large track rental fees increase and PHA was committed to covering if there was a loss in excess of \$2,000. BMR was going to take the first \$2,000 hit and beyond that, PHA was going to cover the loss should it be necessary.

Shenandoah: Rich R said Shenandoah ended up really good, better than expected. We had about 74 entrants, about 10 of which signed up in the last week. The attendance made a difference. But the thing that made the biggest difference was the number of people who stepped up and contributed sponsor money. That was because when we were looking at it compared to 2023, we were looking at a \$7,000 loss if we didn't get more entries. But we got more entries, and we got sponsor money. Financially, Shenandoah made money. It covered all expenses if we put the two Summit Point events together. I think that BMR will be willing to have a go at it again next year. We should know the track fees for next year late November, hopefully before the January PHA meeting.

Pagoda and Duryea: Rich R stated, we made a little bit of money at Pagoda. Duryea, we had some people come up from down south. We had the guys from New England. Some of the rally guys came down. We had a bunch of cross kart guys show up. A lot of people left Saturday night because of predicted rain, and Sunday was beautiful. Because of the entries there was limited space at the fire tower. We may have to limit entries more. To avoid having to do this, we do have available space for trailers inside turn two and outside turn four. Reading is talking about installing a gate at the exit of turn nine, and another gate down where our turnaround is for Duryea. The plan is to close off Skyline Drive between turn nine and turnaround overnights. That may create additional trailer parking.

Weatherly: Matt Hoegg thanked everybody that did show up to give us good numbers, nothing really is going to change about the event.

Giant's Despair: The Israel's/Johnson's on Zoom relayed that the road paving is 100% done right now. They also thanked all the drivers and workers for making Giants a great event again this year.

Proposed new event: Rich R said there is a possibility of a new track event at Pocono Raceway. Mike Frohman has a family member connected with Pocono. There

are available dates for track and infield sections with overnight camping available. One April event conflicts with Pine Mountain Hillclimb down south, one May event is Mother's Day weekend. July fourth weekend may be available, and there are available weekends in October. An October weekend would make it difficult to include the points in with the season. Questions about shower availability and RV parking still need to be clarified. There were questions about who would manage the event, and the final thought that it would be run by the Giants Despair Hillclimb Association. Matt Green discussed the importance of including safety stewards in the planning process. Grace H suggested conducting a poll to gauge interest and availability for potential dates and feedback on the proposed event. Grace H said that people need to be on the PHA mailing list: On the website there is a link called mailing list sign up. You enter your email address, your first name and last name, and hit subscribe. You will get an email asking you to confirm that you really signed up. If you respond and click on the link, then you are signed up.

As far as shows go; There is the Motorsports Racecar & Trade Show down at Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, PA. That's going to be the 24th and 25th of January. Another is the Harrisburg Motorama. That is a young crowd, mostly cars that are prepped for drift or Time Trial. The show is February, 15 and 16th.

5. Changes to Supps for 2025:

Mike R shared information on changes to the PHA Supplemental Rules for 2025. The information was mostly about the road racing classes. Changes for 2025 were mostly about the SCCA National proposal on how they are going to operate the runoffs in the coming years in terms of how many classes are going to be accommodated. It will involve us, because these are GCR classes.

One of the changes for 2025: Prototype One and Prototype Two cars will be adjusted to a single prototype class for all races in 2025 so changes will be required of P1 cars, and modifications will be allowed to P2 cars to theoretically achieve a balance of performance. Instead of P1 and P2 it's just going to be Prototype (P). Jason Fraley then mentioned with respect to P1 and P2 a Fasttrack newsletter was just put out. P1 and P2 are staying separate for this year. They're going to run as P just in the runoffs. P1 and P2 are not changing for this year. That change is now going to take effect in 2026.

Mike Robinson continued; Next is GT Light eligibility. GT Light is going to become a regional only class in January 2025. GT Light cars will be allowed to compete in F Production nationally. So as a regional class for us, GTL cars can continue to run in their GT Light trim.

Super Touring (STU) class consolidation with GT3. For 2025 STU and GT3 will continue to run as two separate classes. STU will absorb GT3 in 2026 so nothing for this coming year. GT3 cars can continue to run based on the 2024 GT3 rules at our events.

Then there's a T2 and American Sedan combination. That is a similar thing to the STU/GT3 consolidation in the way it's laid out, with basically, no changes at all for us in GCR classes.

Now let's talk about the street prepared class proposal. A lot of progress has been made since we had our last meeting on this back in March. Mike R, Matt Hoegg and Adam Weaver have been working on this for quite a while.

Back in late-22 / early-23, SCCA decided they were going to eliminate A and B Street prepared, and redistribute other cars throughout the remaining classes. DSP, seemed to get affected the most. They broke it up. They took a known bunch of competitive cars in Hillclimb and separated them throughout different classes. FSP gained a few. SSP gained a bunch. The BSP cars got moved all over as well. And what we found because of that was that the solo classes don't transfer over well into a Hillclimb format. Classes were meant for cars going 60 miles an hour maximum in a parking lot in second or third gear. It's always been kind of questionable how good the competitiveness of the car classing was already, but then the recent moves really kind of blew it out of the water. That puts us in a spot where we kind of had a choice. We can either accept what they did or try to find something new. So, we decided to freeze the classes for a year and explore new options, which pretty much gets us to where we are today.

Matt, myself and Adam, we've talked to several people at Hills personally, on the phone, through social media channels, etc. We took a whole lot of suggestions. We looked into a whole bunch of different matrix matrices and formats, trying to do like horsepower to weight ratio stuff. We really tried to find something custom tailored for Hillclimb. Specifically, the more we dug into it, the more complicated it got, and the more rabbit holes we went down. You start working in things like modifiers for this modification or that modification, or, you know, this special option, or that option. And it just, it really started getting weird and complicated, which kind of led us to looking at the Appalachian Hillclimb series and the classing that they were doing. They're relatively new. They've only been around since 2021. They had the luxury of putting something together from scratch on a clean sheet of paper. As you know, all you guys have been in your classes for years, some of you for decades so it is a really hard transition to go to the Appalachian Hillclimb Series class structure, although it seems to be probably the most comprehensive for hills. Is it the best system out there? No. There probably isn't a perfect one. No matter what, somebody loses something, somewhere. But AHS seem to have the least amount of issues and be fairly easy to transfer to. It uses the existing Street prepared classing that's out there, currently up to date. It also throws in some time trial classes, which really is a good thing. We're getting a lot of people from time trials now trying to come into hills, so it kind of gives them an easier way in it seems to

be generally pretty good. So, I really haven't seen too many glaring disparities in it. The couple we saw, we tried to address.

For instance, we added Sport Light for those not too competitive in the Sport class. A lot of smaller, more compact cars with a lot of smaller displacements can't keep up with the more modern technology that's available in CSP, DSP and smaller displacement ESP cars. That's why we decided to break Sport Light off and give it its own subcategory, away from Sport.

We did also lower the displacement for Super Sport from 4.9 liters down to 4.5 liters. Mainly for early 2000s production cars that were under five liters.

Sport Max, the way they had it down south, they've got a displacement limit of six liters, but they were allowing ESP cars. There's multiple ESP cars that are over six liters, so we increased the displacement of that for ESP only cars to keep all those cars together the way they should be. ESP cars are allowed in multiple classes, but you have to check your displacement to make sure that you're not over. One of the things to remember with all these things is, not only do you have to be eligible in displacement, but you have to be eligible for class as well. So, if you're primarily an auto crosser and that's your thing, cars have got to be eligible for that class plus the displacement. If you're a time trial guy. It's got to fit your time trial class and the displacement. So, it's got to fit both.

Moving up the Sport Unlimited, it kind of gets a little touchy. Sport Unlimited is basically their version of Street Mod, and some of the much higher-class solo classes like Super Street Prepared. There is another class from down south that covers more GCR classing stuff, but we're not messing with our GCR classes.

After this recap of the proposed classing structure from Mike, there was a lot of discussion on whether SMR should remain a unique class in PHA due to its popularity and support. Mike R acknowledged the need for further data and input to refine and finalize the classing structure.

6. Website and Social Media:

Grace H said there were no changes to the website. We have two domains: pahillclimb.org and pahillclimb.net. Right now, .net goes nowhere, but she kept it so that nobody else grabs it. Generally, when there are announcements, she puts it out in four places. There's a news feed on the front page of the website, and she does still update the forum, if anyone is still using that. She sends out an email to everybody on the mailing list. We now have a Facebook page, and she posts all the announcements there. People are not allowed to comment on the page, but she shares it to the group where people can chat and comment all they like. If people are not on Facebook, they need to use one of the other methods: go to the website, or get on the mailing list so

Grace can send you email. We're now thinking about opening an Instagram account, and Grace plans on working on that with Jason F.

7. Timing:

Nancy L gave a review of timing: This year timing went fairly well. She would love any input or feedback anybody has on what they would like to see done differently as far as timing is concerned. Towards the beginning of 2025, Nancy will be reaching out to the software company Pronto. They are in the midst of talking about hosting their own live timing on their own server, so that if something should go wrong during the event, they don't have to try to contact Grace to help with our PHA website, where live timing currently is displayed for all of us. Darren from Pronto has already said he would waive any fee for our group for hosting it on their own server.

Nancy is still looking for people to help set up the equipment. That doesn't have to be at every event, but if they want to set up the equipment at, let's say Giant's or Weatherly, they want to take over that responsibility of setting up the equipment. She is looking for people to do that so that we have more and more people that are familiar with how to set the stuff up in case something should happen. We got very, very lucky at Fall Weatherly that a woman that has moved back into the area that has extensive timing and autocross experience, has said she'd be very interested in doing the timing for Weatherly and maybe also Giant's.

Nancy also talked about one thing that's really not timing related, but you are talking about how many runs you all get, and for the person that's releasing the cars from the start line (she is not always the one at the start line - she sits up at the jump at Weatherly, and at turn two for the Reading events). Nancy doesn't get to see the cars on the start line, so she relies on somebody, Patty Johnson or Ursula Whistler to start the cars. We have noticed over this past year that drivers are coming up to the start line not ready, and we've hit the green light and then have to back it off to red for the person to get ready. There have been times where we have had up to a minute of wait time for that driver to get ready. You might not think that that's a lot, but when you average it across all of the number of competitors, even a 15 second delay, because we're trying to release every 30 seconds, a 15 second delay really does add up over the course of the day, over the weekend. Just another reminder, please, please be fully ready. Have all your equipment on before you pull up to the start line or let the driver behind you go in front of you, whatever the case might be. We want to maximize the number of runs. We're trying to eliminate any reruns, which we were 99% successful this year

Nancy is always looking for help, so if anybody's interested, let her know. Help her with either the software or the hardware. Setting the equipment up takes 15 minutes at the start line, 15 minutes max at the finish line, and that's it. And then you're ready for your day, you can go ahead and race. So, if anybody has any questions or comments, she is open for any suggestions.

8. Tentative Schedule for 2025:

The tentative schedule is now online. Potential Pocono days TBD.

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| May 24-25, 2025 | Jefferson Circuit Time Attack TT - Summit Point Motorsports Park Summit Point, WV |
| Jun 7-8, 2025 | Spring Weatherly Hillclimb Weatherly, PA |
| Jun 21-22, 2025 | Pagoda Hillclimb Reading, PA |
| Jul 12-13, 2025 | Giants Despair Hillclimb Laurel Run, PA |
| Aug 16-17, 2025 | Duryea Hillclimb Reading, PA |
| Aug 31-31, 2025 | Shenandoah Circuit Track Sprint - Summit Point Motorsports Park Summit Point, WV |
| Sep 13-14, 2024 | Fall Weatherly Hillclimb Weatherly, PA |

9. New date for the PHA Banquet in 2025:

The banquet is likely to be the Veterans Day weekend again in 2025.

10. New Business / non-agenda Items:

New PHA merchandise can be purchased directly from Grace H, she is not putting credit card processing online.

11. Request nominations for PHA Officer positions:

Nominations for PHA Officer Positions

Richard Kase opened the floor for nominations for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Grace H nominates Rich Rock for President, Nancy Lewis seconds. There are no other nominations for President. Matt Hoegg nominates Trevor Filipowicz for Vice President, Mike Axarlis seconds. There are no other nominations for Vice President. Rich Rock nominates Eli Sharp for Secretary, Mike Robinson seconds. There are no other nominations for Secretary. George Whitman nominates Grace Huntzinger for Treasurer, seconded by Tony Lepera. There are no other nominations for Treasurer. All four positions will be reopened at our next meeting with a final decision to be made then.

12. Meeting wrap-up, next meeting date and venue:

Rich R then wrapped up the meeting. The next meeting date will be 1.00pm Saturday, January 18, 2025. It will be at Giannotti's Country Manor, 3118 Pricetown Road, Fleetwood, PA. Rich asked for a motion to adjourn. It was raised by Matt Hoegg and seconded by literally everyone.

The Annual Critique Meeting was adjourned at around 4:00 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Eli Sharp
PHA Secretary