

**T**his may be a little difficult to believe after years of ever-escalating racing costs, but we'll give it a try anyway: The cost of fielding a competitive sports racing car has just taken a huge leap downward.

How can that be, you ask? A misprint? Nope. The car you see here on these pages can be had, complete, for \$10,000. Well, almost complete. You'll have to add a battery and your own paint scheme. But the rest of the car? It'll all be there when you open its shipping crate—bodywork, wheels, tires, transmission, engine, instruments and all the rest.

Sound like a pretty good deal? That's the general idea, an idea that spread like wildfire at The Runoffs this year where 111 people made deposits on their own copies of the car, which will run in a national SCCA class next season.

The formula is called Sports Renault and its concept is so compelling that it became a million-dollar idea the very weekend it was sprung on the people it was intended for. Hard to beat that kind of a vote of confidence.

It's certainly a simple enough notion: A

## SPORTS RENAULT ARRIVES

sports racing car built by one manufacturer, using street radials and a stock production engine from the European Renault R9. The only variable will be driver skill.

Perhaps the best part of the whole idea, aside from the concept itself, is that the price of the new cars will be fixed for three years, as will be the cost of replacement parts. According to SCCA officials, "We expect the price of used Sports Renault cars to be very stable and to maintain a level very close to that of a new car."

SCCA brass say that the idea of a spec sports racing car has been under consideration for a couple of years. The whole concept jelled, however, at this year's

Detroit Grand Prix, according to Roy Lunn, president of Renault/Jeep Sport and the designer of the car.

"We announced the new corporation (Renault/Jeep Sport) at the grand prix, and as I came off the platform I was met by some of the high-level people at the SCCA who said they'd like to talk to me about this vehicle. I agreed to come in with a proposal and we brought it to a resolution.

"We just set to work and completed the design and the prototype, and showed it at Atlanta and it was an instant success. The SCCA sold 111 of the cars in three days and this is indicative that the segment the club is aiming for is really there—there's a need to have affordable racing again."

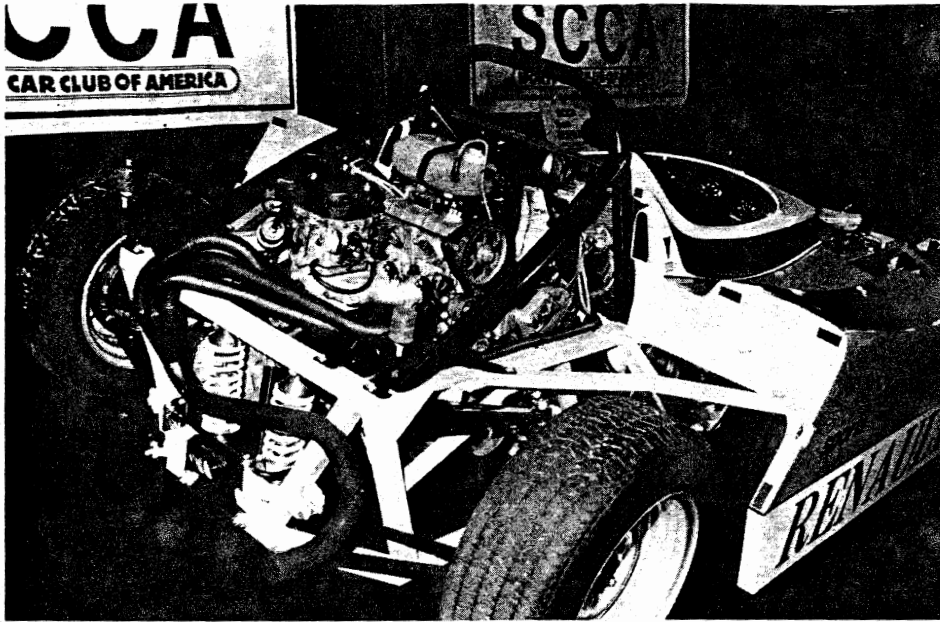
Sure, the need is there, but why Renault? According to SCCA President Nick Crow, "Renault has a tremendous combination of international and domestic experience in racing, and our objectives came together very well in the creation of this class." The objectives? Says Crow, "Trying to create a unique racing class that has a high level of participation and a minimal cost."

So much for the SCCA's reasoning. Why is Renault involved? Lunn says, "We kind

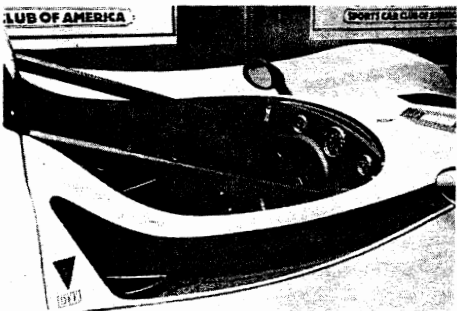
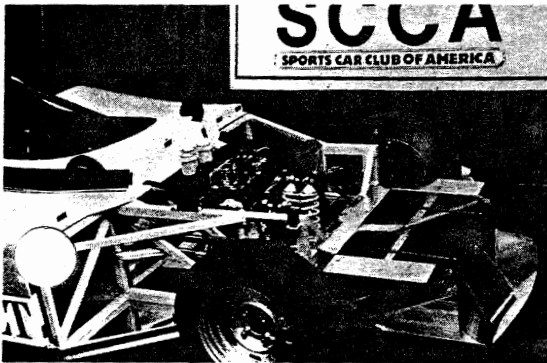
**CAN RACING BE AFFORDABLE?  
MAYBE, JUST MAYBE...**

(1984)

**SCCA**  
CAR CLUB OF AMERICA



**SCCA**  
SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA



The Sports Renault's sturdy space frame is visible in the top and center photos. The car's cockpit (bottom) is roomy and uncomplicated.

Photos by Jim Alvis

### Sports Renault

Wheelbase ..... 92 in.  
Length ..... 144 in.  
Height ..... 39 in.  
Width ..... 67 in.  
Track, f/r ..... 56.5/57.5 in.  
Weight (with driver and fuel) ... 1300 lbs.

#### ENGINE

Position ..... Transverse, amidships  
Type ..... In-line 4, ohc  
Displacement ..... 1700cc  
Compression ratio ..... 10:1  
Bore ..... 81mm/3.18 in.  
Stroke ..... 83.5mm/3.28 in.  
Horsepower ..... 85SAE @ 5000 rpm  
Torque ..... 108 lbs/ft. @ 3000 rpm

of cover a broad spectrum of racing activities, Formula 1 and a whole set of things in between, to things like the Renault Cup where we run Alliances on the West Coast and, on the East Coast, Encores. This is a pure race car, up a level from the current production cars."

Lunn says the biggest challenge he faced in the design of the car was keeping it simple. "It's a real racing car," he says, "but in order to meet our objectives we had to use a high percentage of standard production pieces—engine, transmission, brake parts—doing this and still maintaining the concept of a real racing car was a real challenge."

Lunn continues, "This car was drawn to a set of objectives, and that's the real difference between this class and other one-design classes. Formula Fords, for

instance, are drawn to a written specification, to a set of rules, but one guy will design and build better than the next guy, and thus you get the constant outmoding of the cars and the escalation of the costs. This car will have one builder and all the cars will be built alike. The only difference between them will be the skill of the driver.

"The initial cost of the vehicle, and the costs of maintaining it, will be kept low by things like running on street radials and by making it so you can use only the supplied pieces to stop this constant spending to tweak the car still further into better performance."

Lunn says a weight limit for the car has not yet been set, but that he expects it to be in the neighborhood of 1300 pounds, including driver. The idea is built around a 180-pound driver. Lunn says a 120-pound driver will have to add 60 pounds to the car, and the 200-pound driver will be in trouble. "He'll have to take a slimming course."

The car will be packaged and shipped from Livonia, Mich., by Renault/Jeep Sport. The parts themselves, those that are not pulled from various of the company's parts bins, will be constructed by various suppliers, not all of whom had been designated by press time.

The car itself, in fact, has not been completely finalized, though one working prototype, the one shown at The Runoffs, does exist. Says Lunn, "We see things we want to change, but fundamentally the cars will be like the prototype."

Those changes will be made after a series of test sessions that will be conducted this winter by several different drivers, according to Craw, who says, "We want to get different perspectives from a couple of different angles. As happy as we are with the prototype, it's only a first step and we see these test sessions as opportunities to make refinements. We'll do whatever it takes to make sure the car is as close to perfection as we can make it before it goes into production."

The club is now soliciting bids from qualified racing car distributors around the country. Those accepted will be awarded exclusive market territories. They'll be able to assemble cars at their locations and supply replacement parts for the owners.

Also for the owners will be what Craw calls a very healthy contingency program for a national class next season, and an even more healthy pro series in 1985.

All in all, this could be the beginning of just the kind of racing series a large number of people have been waiting for. -JFT

(January 1984)

# MATTERS OF THE MOMENT

## RETURN OF THE CHAMP

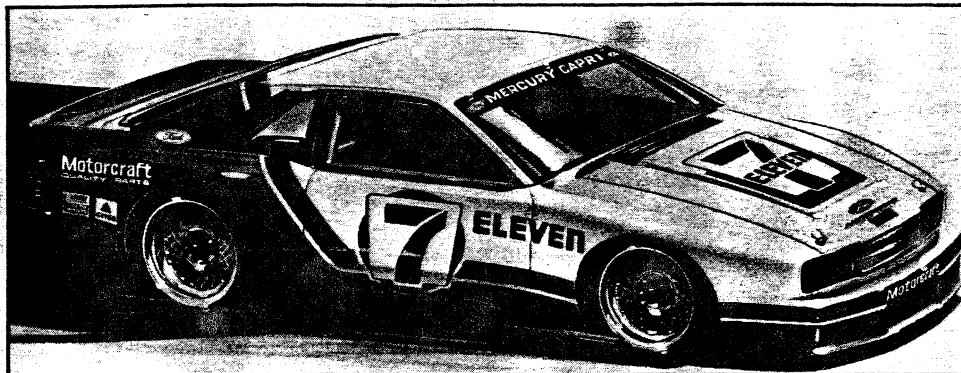
□ It would appear that 1983 Trans-Am champ David Hobbs will be back in the series for 1984 with the Neil DeAtley team, along with '83 teammate Willy T. Ribbs. Though Ribbs' participation in the '84 series has been the subject of some speculation, he has confirmed he'll return and he plans to fill out his racing program with selected rides in the CART Indy Car program, including the Indianapolis 500, making him the first black ever to run that event. Apparently the team with which Ribbs will run has not been finalized—it looks to be either the Shierson or Gilmore equipes, with betting in these offices leaning toward the Doug Shierson team.

## SPORTS RENAULT PROGRESSES

□ There is progress in two different areas in the Sports Renault program, introduced to members during The Runoffs. First of all, by press time the SCCA has received deposits for 172 cars. An SCCA spokesman said orders have been averaging approximately five per week, with inquiries running at approximately a dozen per day.

The other area of progress is in testing of the race cars. Two chassis exist at present. The first is undergoing durability tests at an AMC test track near Dearborn, Mich. Reports indicate this has gone smoothly, with the exception of a clutch problem that has been worked out and a fuel feed problem. The car was cutting out in left-hand turns and this eventually was traced to the use of an electric fuel pump, which apparently was overloading the fuel system and flooding it during left-handers. The pump was changed back to the stock mechanical unit and the problem was solved.

Chassis number two is



## SOUTHLAND CORP. BETS BIG WITH FORD

□ Tom Gloy will be driving a Mercury Capri in the '84 Trans-Am with 7-Eleven/Chief Autoparts sponsorship, thanks to an estimated \$30 million investment by Southland Corporation to back Ford and Mercury products in five major pro race series over the next three years.

Ford and 7-Eleven are also expected to get behind Formula Ford with more torque, pro-

bably in the form of contingency money at SCCA nationals and the CSPRRC. There are also rumors the Road Atlanta winner might be given a ride in the British Formula Ford Festival a week later at Brands Hatch, all part of increased support by Ford for U.S., British and European Formula Ford competition.

Gloy's Trans-Am wins at Sears Point in 1981 and again in 1982 are Ford's only Trans-Am victories over the past ten years, and Tom figures to improve that record dramatically in 1984 based on his consistent finishes this year. Gloy Sports (formerly Lane Sports) will prep the car.

undergoing torsional rigidity testing. Some areas of flexibility have been identified and the chassis is undergoing a triangulation redesign. An SCCA source, who says the car has been "way overdesigned," says that weight is being taken out of the car by the following methods: use of thinner fiberglass body panels; use of thinner-walled tubing in the car's space frame; and replacement of the prototype's steel floor pan with a bonded aluminum pan riveted onto the car's bottom.

## SSGT LATEST

□ If you're a runner in SSGT you'll be interested in the latest news from the Competition Board and Board of Directors. The board voted not to allow current-year cars in any SS class except SSGT.

The cars, all of them 1984 models, are as follows: Camaro Z28 HO 5-l

Corvette; Datsun 300 ZX Turbo; Dodge Daytona Turbo Z; Mustang GT 5-liter; Mustang SVO Turbo; Mazda RX-7 GSL, SE and GS, with the 13B engine; Capri RS; Plymouth Lazer Turbo Z; Pontiac Trans Am HO 5-liter with the WS6 handling package; Porsche 944; Pontiac Fiero 2.5 with the WS6 handling package.

The Corvette's approval, it should be noted, is tentative, made so by the board because of what it calls its lack of performance record. The thinking in Denver apparently is that if the car is too fast for the class it will be withdrawn.

## WORKERS UNITE!

□ That may sound a bit . . . er, Marxian, but that isn't what we mean. We're talking about corner workers, who may wish to unite behind the excellent new National

Kathy Maleck. We're in receipt of the first issue here at the sumptuous SportsCar® offices in the penthouse suite high atop the towering PCB Publications building in industrial-international Santa Ana, and we're impressed with this first effort and wish Kathy and her publishing cohorts lots of luck.

Those of you who would like to contribute to the letter, receive it or know more about it may write Kathy at 7620 Second Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55423.

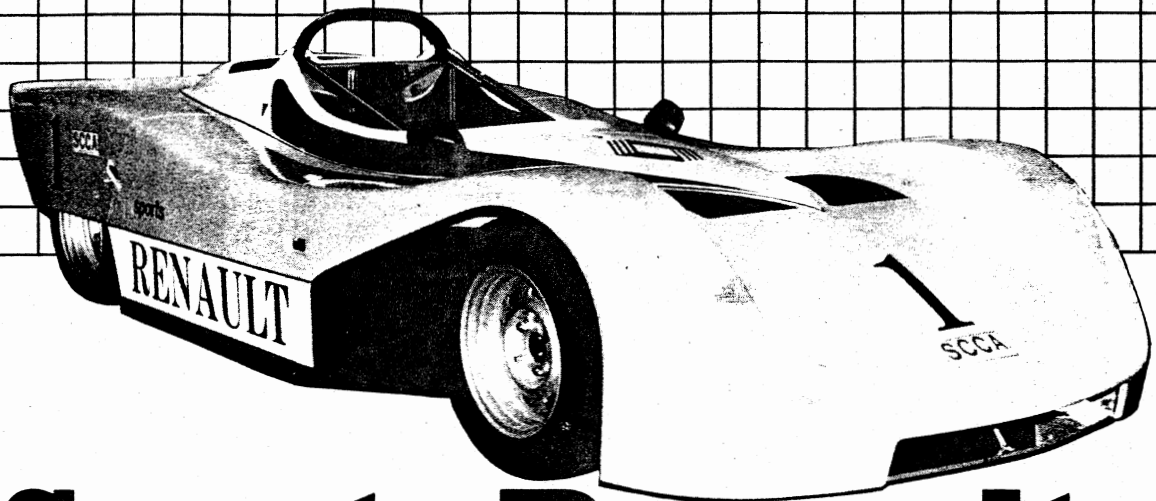
## CLUB AFFILIATES WITH POWERCARD

□ The Sports Car Club of America is offering another money-saving benefit to its membership. Powercard USA is a group-discount business card that will allow SCCA members who purchase the card to buy various business

and next page

(February 1984)

# THE SPORTS CAR CLUB OF AMERICA INTRODUCES



## Sports Renault

**T**hink for a minute what most racing should be. Simple. Straightforward. A true test of driving skill rather than a seemingly never-ending, never-won, costly process of upgrading equipment. Great fun. Close. Competitive. And most of all, affordable.

For over a year SCCA has been developing and refining just such a concept. Now it's proudly being introduced as Sports Renault, a technically advanced, exciting, affordable, one-design class of single-seat sports racing machine for Regional and National competition beginning in 1984. And

best of all, SCCA is aiming to deliver a Sports Renault in semi-kit form for under \$10,000 excluding the cost of shipping and a battery.

The concept of Sports Renault is a no-nonsense, long overdue one aimed at producing a high quality racing machine. The SCCA will be the sole source of supply for all Sports Renault vehicles and will strictly control build quality and compatibility of replacement parts. Rules will concentrate on providing equal performance while minimizing expenses and will be strictly enforced by the SCCA. Sports Renault will run on high quality street radial tires to help control costs and to further make sports Renault a comfortable, easy-to-adapt-to racing experience. Special programs will also be developed to keep replacement costs to a minimum. This innovative concept is even being applied to the method of shipping and building the semi-finished racers. The chassis will be bolted to a large crate; the engine will be placed in its bay; bodywork in primer will be attached to the chassis; and all necessary componentry, wheels, tires, and instructions will be included.

### Like to Know More?

Fill out this coupon and send it to:

The Sports Car Club of America

Attn: Bill King

6750 S. Emporia

P.O. Box 3278

Englewood, CO 80155

YES! Please send me more information on the new SCCA Sports Renault.

Please send me an order form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



(February 1984)

# MATTERS OF THE MOMENT

## Separate Class For Formula 2000s? GT1 Turbos Outlawed?

The Competition Board has recommended that Formula Continental become a Formula 2000-only class. Under the Comp Board proposal, all current FC cars—with the exception of F2000 cars—will be moved into Formula Atlantic. F2000 is called Super Ford and Formula Ford 2000 in other countries.

The Board of Directors will act on this and other Comp Board suggestions at its Nov. 21-23 meeting in Denver. If the BoD approves the Comp Board recommendations, they will become effective for the 1987 season.

The full Comp Board minutes appear in *FasTrack* on page 91, but here are some other highlights:

- The Comp Board recommended turbochargers, fuel management systems and fuel-injection systems be outlawed in GT1;
- It recommended Formula Fords be required to race on the same tires on which they qualify;
- It recommended a spec induction system for Formula 440. The required system would be two 38 mm Mikuni carburetors with no modifications permitted;
- It recommended front-wheel-drive GT2 cars be allowed to convert to rear-wheel drive, as is now legal in the Trans-Am;
- It recommended that all GT2 cars, including the former C Production cars, be prepared to GT specs;
- It recommended flat-bottom FA cars be allowed to compete in C Sports Racing with the addition of the required bodywork and a 36 mm intake venturi.

## Sports Renault Bidding Process Re-Opened

Sports Renault prices may hold the line in 1987. Making a move intended to promote the lowest possible costs by sharpening competition among firms competing for the Sports Renault construction contract, the

SCCA Board of Directors decided at the Runoffs to re-open and expand the bidding process to determine a replacement for Renault Jeep Sport. The RJS three-year contract to construct the SCCA's spec car expired Oct. 31.

The announcement came as a surprise. As noted here last month, it was anticipated that a new Sports Renault constructor would be introduced with some fanfare at the Runoffs. However, re-opening the bidding process and providing a comprehensive bid package to all comers was only part of the BoD's surprise.

To guarantee parts availability during the three-to-four months this selection process will take, the BoD directed that a new corporation be formed expressly for that purpose. Accordingly, SCCA Enterprises Inc. has been established to acquire the \$400,000 Sports Renault parts inventory from RJS and supply the needs of the Sports Renault Customer Service Representatives (CSRs). Zan Smith was appointed President of SCCA Enterprises Inc.

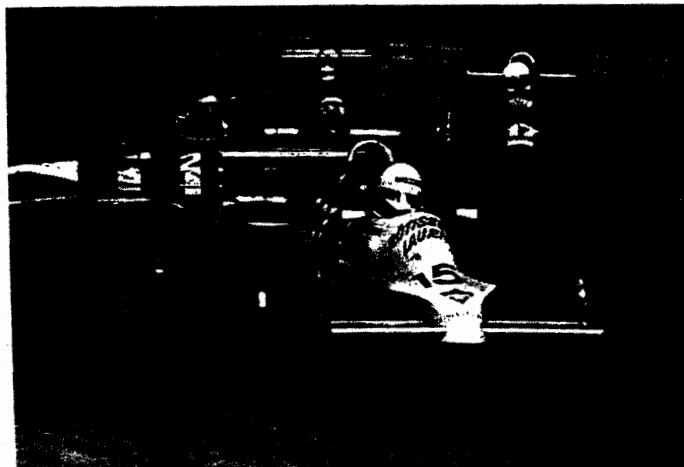
Commenting on the BoD's actions, SCCA President Nicholas W. Craw stated, "The Board wants to be absolutely assured that Sports Renault owners, potential buyers and the CSRs are protected with the lowest possible prices. SCCA prom-

ised to hold the kit price to \$10,000 for three years and kept that promise. Right now we have 10 cars in stock which can be purchased for the same price as three years ago. Who knows, by expanding the population of potential bidders maybe we can hold to \$10,000 for another three years. That's a goal worth some extra effort."

An on-going, low-cost supply of engines, transmissions and other Renault production car parts used in the Sports Renault is already assured, SCCA having contracted with RJS for the next three years at prices guaranteed to be the best possible. To bring costs still further under SCCA control, however, the BoD also decided at the Runoffs to purchase for \$60,000 all RJS custom tools, dies, jigs and molds used in Sports Renault construction. These will be made available to the new constructor, although on exactly what basis remains to be worked out.

In a letter to CSRs, the newly appointed SCCA Enterprises Inc. President Smith indicated Sports Renault parts will be warehoused in Denver, and that the company would be ready to begin filling orders by Jan. 1. No parts shortages are anticipated.

There has already been some speculation that SCCA Enterprises



The Comp Board has recommended FC become a Formula 2000-only class in 1987.

Inc. could wind up sourcing parts directly and in fact manufacturing the Sports Renault kit if a satisfactory vendor cannot be found.

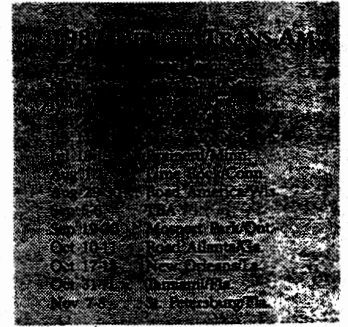
## Trans-Am To New Orleans

The recently announced 1987 SCCA Bendix Trans-Am schedule features 14 dates, including new venues at New Orleans and Long Beach and one "TBA".

The "Nahlns" event, called the New Orleans International Racefest, will be an Oct. 18 street race on a 2.1-mile, nine-turn circuit laid out on the concrete roads around the Superdome, just two blocks from the city's famed French Quarter. "It'll be a fast one," says organizer Bill McVey, who also was a founder of the St. Petersburg event. The New Orleans event will conflict with the Runoffs, which will be Oct. 16-18.

Possible sites for the Sept. 6 "TBA" include another southern city.

Gone from the Trans-Am schedule is the fall Sears Point date and the Riverside race.



## Sports Renault Bid Procedure

SCCA will soon be accepting bids from those interested in replacing Renault Jeep Sport as the constructor of the Sports Renault race car. The selected company will not only build new Sports Renaults, it will also distribute service and replacement parts.

Bid packages, which will include a complete set of engineering drawings and all other information necessary for developing a bid, will be available before Jan. 1. To receive a bid package, send \$500 to R. David Jones, Chairman of the Board, Sports Car Club of America, 910 Houston St., Suite 700, Ft. Worth, TX 76102.

Bids must be returned to SCCA by Feb. 1.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12