



Those of you who compete in or work pro rallies have undoubtedly received your latest issue of Pace Notes. For you compulsive filers, it is Issue 2, Volume 2 dated March 17 and has a banner headline "TULIP 200 CANCELLED." Dick Paddock, Chairman of the Ohio Forest Rallies calls it "Famous Last Words." I call it a sign of the times.

Rallies, pro or otherwise, are in the minds of more and more public officials, an insupportable intrusion. Snazzy colored cars with complicated equipment and all forms of decals plastered on them are driven by ladies and gentlemen who wear space suits and helmets. The route used by these aliens are those forest roads that the local gentry use for family picnics or bird watching or camping or just for getting away from it all. The two activities don't mix. Local taxpayers complain when their forests are closed for these events and rightly so. They could care less about watching a bunch of maniacs ding up their trees or tear up their well maintained dirt roads leading to that quiet fishing hole. They care very much, however, that their tax dollars are being used to restore those very same roads after an event has been run and all the funny cars and funny people in funny costumes are long gone. They give no thought to the substantial bond that is paid by the alien organizers for the privilege.

No, I haven't lost my love of the sport nor is this an invitation for all of us to go home and take up something a bit more sedentary, but I do sympathize with local governments. Our sport IS an intrusion because we haven't taken the time to mobilize the facts and figures that amply demonstrate how much of OUR hard earned cash gets left behind after we are long gone. Until groups like the Ohio Forest Rallies and sanctioning bodies like the SCCA quit bellyaching and start providing some hard economic evidence to local and state governments and their agencies the loss of events like the Tulip 200 will merely be a footnote to the cancellations we can expect in the future. Mr. Paddock knows that; somewhere in the caverns of SCCA somebody must know that. Hell, we all know it. The question is when are we going to do something with all that knowledge?

Consider if you will the economics of an event like the Tulip 200 for your basic four person rally team. You've got the rally car and the service vehicle, enough spare parts and tires to open a business of your own and let's not forget the trailer that hauls the rally car. Once the team and the vehicles have successfully arrived at the event headquarters, a few basic needs have to be

met. A minimum of two hotel rooms need to be secured for at least two nights at say, \$75 a night. That's a cool \$300 donation into the local pot. Service and rally vehicles need to be gassed up several times during the event so we'll conservatively estimate another hundred bucks for local service. (sub total \$400) Food for four people three times a day for two days is twenty four meals. While the appetite of team members vary greatly (consider the size of my TH and what it takes for him to announce he is full), let's say each meal plus tip averages about \$7. That gives us a team food contribution of \$168. (sub total \$568) The bar tab is a whole other ball of wax. Let's just assume that these four are average social drinkers (but we do know better) and assign a cost of \$20 per person for the whole stay. Add \$80 and we are up to \$648. Irritating miscellaneous expenditures to replace those items you forgot to pack include chewing gum, extra batteries, a roll of duct tape, ice and soda for the Playmate, band aids, a frisbee for the service crew and a tube of chapstick. Don't forget the extra rolls of 400 film, a spare battery for the camera and a copy of USA-TODAY for a conservative total of \$50. The calculator now says \$698.

Now let's imagine that things are humming along nicely until the service vehicle's battery dies and there is no reviving it. Hand over about \$75 to the local auto parts store after shelling out \$35 for the tow to a gas station. (sub total \$808 worth of local economic support so far) The death of your battery has caused a whole new set of problems for your team since you are not at the next scheduled service point and they NEED service bad. Not only have you incurred their wrath but you now have to bear the cost of replacing a tire they had to borrow from the team parked next to where you were supposed to be. The local Goodyear store is now \$125 richer and your team tally sheet now reads \$933. Believe me when I tell you that these figures are real. This is not small change folks.

I think I've made my point. At about \$235 per person, a 200 person event deposits \$47,000 in local merchants' bank accounts and this total does not even begin to factor in what organizers, event workers and sanctioning officials spend in pre, during and post event activities. I can't even begin to speculate on a bottom line figure but it's got to be impressive enough to make local

authorities stop and consider what they give up when they deny permits or approvals. The bottom line is that they can't be impressed unless we, who are doing all the donating, educate them with just this kind of tally sheet.

A paraphrase of a statement attributed to one of the more outlandish of the Watergate felons seems apropos to the moment. When you've got them by the cash registers, their hearts and minds will follow!