

Bob



## OUR RACING FRIENDS IN EUROPE A NOTE FROM NICO REMINDS US OF GLOBAL CIRCLE TRACK RACING

Stock car racing is popular all over the globe and takes place in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and even in Chile. It's very interesting to look at the class structures and how these other countries conduct their racing. Much of it mirrors the racing here in America, but some is unique to each country or region.

I recently received an email from a friend in the Netherlands, Nico Groot, who builds and races what are called F1 cars around Europe. As you'll read, these are cars with very high horsepower, small tires, and very stiff chassis. There is a Youtube video of the World Final BriSCA (British Stock Car Association) Formula One Stock Car event that was contested in the UK this year that you can find on our website, [www.circletrack.com](http://www.circletrack.com).

Groot writes, "I found a video from the last World Final at Coventry Stadium in the UK. It was a good one. Look at the 3,200-pound heavy cars and the crash at the beginning. Number 1, Andy Smith with a big-block 560 with 800 hp, and No. 217 Ron Kroonder with a small-block 410, 700 hp. Kroonder burned his too-soft LR tire at the end of the race.

"Look at the New Zealand guy, red/silver car with your balanced setup. He's a young guy named Joblin from New Zealand. The car is built with torsion bars, like a Sprint Car, by Clive Lintern of New Zealand.

"Bob, you have changed a lot of things with the balanced setup concept you present in CIRCLE TRACK! Most winning teams over here in Europe are working on your way. More and more frontrunners understand the advantage of it.

"I sell the parts of HCD race fabrications in Holland and have given Colin Alyward, the owner of HCD, tips and helped change his front suspension. He has won the World

Final with it in the Spedeworth, Superstox class. The fastest man over here in Holland in the F1 on tarmac is Gary Castell. He's a UK driver for a Dutch team, also using your concept."

I met Nico Groot two years ago when he and his family came to Florida on vacation and stopped by to chat at Marty Zehr's shop. We discussed their type of racing, how the cars were built, and some of the problems they encounter. And he was an avid reader of our magazine.

What I learned was that racing is taken very seriously in Europe and racers have a fair amount of freedom in the construction of their cars. The one thing that stood out was how the cars were built so rigid. There is no crush in those cars and all of the energy from hitting each other and the walls is taken by the driver.

I was very happy to learn how they are following our suggestions about chassis setup and I hope that they will pay attention to how we in this country have made our racing safer with the construction of the cars, the use of head-and-neck restraints, and other innovations.

It would be interesting if at some point in time there could be a true world championship for some class of stock car racing. Imagine teams from all over the globe coming together to race and exchange ideas.

We like to think of stock car racing as being an American invention, but although it began here early in the 20th century, its growth around the world is a sign that there is something inherently good about the entertainment factor as well as the competition level of auto racing.

More and more, our stock cars are being shipped overseas to be used in circle track racing. The event run in South Africa we attended is one such

indication of the global interest in this sport. We will be keeping an eye on the developments in other countries and note the progression of the class structures, the engine rule side of it, as well as the safety developments that are either copied from our racing here, or that might be above and beyond what we do here.

I want to thank Nico for writing and we encourage all racers around the world who are readers of CIRCLE TRACK to send us emails and keep us informed about how your racing is progressing. We look forward to any and all suggestions you might have as to advancements in chassis technology, engine tech, and safety. As we have learned, racing is truly a universal brotherhood.

If you have comments or questions about this or anything racing related, send them to my email address: [Bob.Bolles@socr.com](mailto:Bob.Bolles@socr.com), or mail can be sent to CIRCLE TRACK, Senior Tech Editor, 9036 Brittany Way, Tampa, FL 33619.

## RACING IS A LIFESTYLE

I just wanted to let you know that you were right on with the article in the Feb. '11 issue. At any racetrack we race or watch in Oklahoma, all over the pits and stands are families, enjoying themselves, kids racing each other, much like their dads or moms on the track.

My wife and I have both been raised around racing, I race Modifieds and she has raced Factory Stocks and our son is being raised around racing also. For me, racing has gotten so much more fun with the involvement of our 3-year-old.

A racetrack is about one of the few places left where perfect strangers sit down next to each other, watch their kids play together, and may never learn each other's names,