

# The Preservationist

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**Editorial Comment** - Following WWII as America's romance with sports cars spread across the nation, SCCA affiliated clubs and regions sprang up filled with sports car owners who exercised their cars in time trials, hill climbs, races and rallies. The TSD Rallies of the era were true auto sport events that often included speed hill climbs and trials. They were not the gimmick puzzle games that evolved in later decades. In the early fifties race drivers rallied and ralliists raced. Racers like Ernie Ericson, Ted

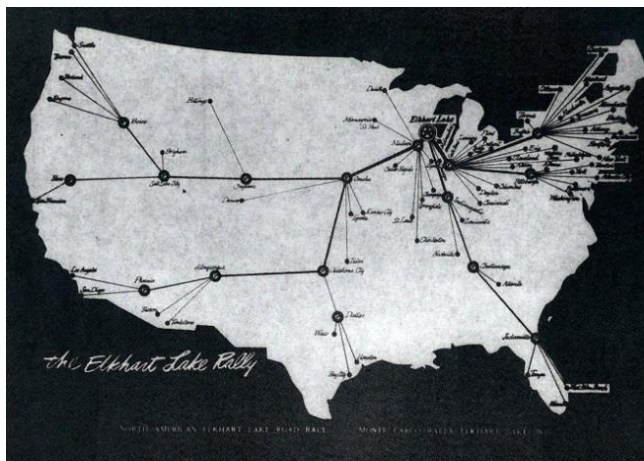
Boynton, Carl Haas, Andy Rosenberg, Hal Ullrich, Bud Seaverns, the Kramers, Hamills and Dickens all were ralliers as well. They often ran their race cars, Jaguar C types, Ferraris and Allards, etc., in TSD rallies. Linked by SCCA sponsorship races and rallies were frequently combined in a single weekend event with National Point's Races accompanied by National Point's Rallies. The 1951 and 52 races and the rallies that finished in Elkhart Lake were prime examples.

## RALLYE ELKHART LAKE The Chicago Region Monte Carlo Rallies By Fred Egloff

Perhaps the most overlooked events from the early 1950s Elkhart Lake Races are the Monte Carlo Rallies which provided some of the events most interesting sidelights.

During the early 50s it was popular to try and replicate famous European traditions. When the 1951 races received a "National" sanction it was decided that it would be great if a Monte Carlo type rally could be held prior to the road race. It would arguably be the first National SCCA Rally.

Drivers and navigators started from towns and cities all over the country. They converged enroute, stopping each night for meals and relaxation, conversations and more conversations (always about cars of course) and then started again the next day. At the beginning, each entry



*The Elkhart Lake Rally promotional rally map designed by Sid Dickens.*

was assigned a number of points – cars coming from a greater distance given more starting points than those traveling only a short distance. As the cars progressed, points were taken away for errors in early and late arrival. Early arrivals received twice as many deductions as late arrivals.

It was originally thought the event would be called "The American Monte Carlo" with the first place award named "The Prince Ranier Trophy". When it was eventually decided to call the event "Rally Elkhart Lake", someone on the committee brought up the question... with such a name change could they still name the winner's trophy after Prince Ranier? Following a lengthy discussion it was



*The Prince Ranier Trophy*

finally decided they should probably ask the Prince if his name could be used on the events major trophy.

Then the question arose as to how a letter to Prince Ranier should be addressed. "Your Royal Highness" seemed to be to obsequies coming from the Republic of the USA and "Dear Sir" didn't seem quite appropriate. It was finally decided to start with "Dear Friend". The letter was sent off



Prince Ranier III

and a week or so later an envelope arrived from the Principality of Monaco. Upon opening it the first line read "Nobody has ever called me friend before". "Thank you very much, you may not only use my name but I will supply the trophy engraved with the Royal Coat of Arms."

George Lamberson was the Chairman of the 1951 Rallye Elkhart Lake. He was the President of Lockformer Corporation, became the 4th Regional Executive of Chicago Region, drove an SJ Duesenberg that Monogram designed their model from and knew Enzo Ferrari personally. Sid Dickens designed a United States map for promotion showing the routes across the country to Elkhart. The map was included in the invitation sent to all SCCA Members (see map on page 1).

Participants in the 1951 Monte Carlo Rally were scheduled to arrive Saturday August 25<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 9am and 2pm the day prior to the races. The rally would conclude with performance tests and scrutiny for condition immediately following arrival. Thirty-five cars came from both coasts arriving at the finish line in front of the bank on Lake Street where the mobile Schlitz Theater Chalet was parked providing refreshment for the weary participants.



The Schlitz Mobile Theatre

Morgan Sinclair took first place overall traveling 2,241 miles at an average speed of 41 mph driving an Allard tourer from Santa Monica, California with his wife and two children. As Lamberson said, he was easily the most deserving.



Morgan Sinclair accepts the Prince Ranier Trophy from Fred Wacker. Rally Chairman, George Lamberson, is at the far right in front of the microphone.

1952 was the pinnacle year for the Elkhart Lake Monte Carlo Rallies. Chuck West was Rally Chairman and Bill Behanna was Chief Steward. The rally committee added a number of innovations including additional class trophies. The Allard Trophy, donated by Sidney Allard, would go to the best performance in a car over 1500cc and the Nuffield Trophy, donated by William



Sydney Allard.

Morris (Viscount Nuffield) of Morris Garage (MG) fame, to the best performance in a car under 1500cc. A ladies trophy would be awarded for the best performance by a lady driving the final 120 miles from Highland Park, Illinois to Elkhart Lake.



William Morris

One of the innovations that year was the issuance of a rally plate similar to the one used on the European Monte Carlo Rally. One of the competitors had overheating problems with his car. None of the mechanics could figure it out. A passerby advised him to move the rally plate from on front of the grill. Problem solved!



"Wacky" Arnolt's original rally plate from his Land-Cruiser bus.

At the request of the race officials, S. H. "Wacky" Arnolt, cancelled a fishing trip to Canada and entered the rally in his Land-Cruiser bus to be used as the communications center at the finish.





*The 1952 finish line with "Wacky" Arnolt's "communication center" parked on the far right.*

between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. where the mobile Schlitz Theatre Stage was again on hand to quench the thirst of the weary rally finishers.

Mr. & Mrs. D. S. Dickenson from Long Beach, CA driving an MG-TC were the winners of the Prince Ranier Trophy. They travelled approximately 2,700 miles and averaged 41.2 mph. In addition to receiving the Trophy, they received a personal letter of congratulations directly from Prince Ranier himself.

With the abrupt ending of the Elkhart Lake Road Races, the 1953 Monte Carlo rally finish was moved to Janesville, Wisconsin to coincide with the August 25<sup>th</sup> Janesville SCCA races. John Amber, owner and editor of GUN

There were a hundred and nine rally entries but only eighty-two made it to the finish line. They came from twenty-two states and Canada. The participants were scheduled to arrive Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>



*Harry Becker congratulated by John Amber (back to camera).*

DIGEST was chairman of the rally. The eighty-five car field was topped by Harry A. Becker from Cleveland, Ohio driving an MG TD.

After missing one year, Elkhart Lake Rally was revived to coincide with the opening of Road America in June of 1955. Al Russell was the Chicago Region's Rally Chairmen that year. The Rally plate's shape and size was revised to the shape and size of a standard license plate per the new SCCA



*The 1955 rally plate.*

National Rally regulations. There were seventy entries and George Tipsword from the Central Illinois Region driving a Jaguar XK120 was the winner of the Prince Ranier Trophy.

1955 was the last running of Elkhart Lake Monte Carlo Rally. Beginning in 1956 the "Lake Michigan Miglia", a one and a half day, 1300 mile rally around Lake Michigan replaced the Elkhart Lake Monte Carlo Rally as the Chicago Region's National Rally. The Elkhart Lake Monte Carlo Rallies were a major undertaking for the fledgling Region and their success added immensely to the saga of the Elkhart Lake open road race period and left an indelible impression on the Region's early 1950's history.

## About The Author

*Fred got his start in rallying when he and his brother Ralph purchased a Hillman Minx in 1951 and began TSD Rallying it in late 1952 with the MG Car Club. Fred soon became a serious rally contender in the Chicagoland area. In 1955, Fred placed third in the final Elkhart Lake Rally with George Cooks in an MG-TC. The following year Fred and George won the MSCC's "El Diablos Delight II" rally (run from midnight until dawn) an event which eventually became an SCCA Pro Rally.*

*For Fred it was just the beginning. The win in the El Diablos was followed in 1956 by four more SCCA rally wins including his first win in the one and one half day "Lake Michigan Miglia" in his MGA with Dick Tait. At the end of the season he was named "Master of the Rally" and the Chicago Region's Member of the Month for November.*

*1957 saw Fred's legendary run in his second Miglia in a BMW Isetta<sup>(1)</sup>. The clutch blew 175 miles from the finish and the car was towed to the finish at over 100 mph on the end of a 5 ft. tow cable. (Look for the definitive story in a future issue) Back on track, Fred won the "Lake Michigan Miglia" in 1959 and 1960 with Bob Liess (Chicago RE) in a twin cam MGA to become the only three time winner of the event.*

*Fred organized the Just-For-Fun Team which won the Regional Team Championship in 1961 with members Dick Tait, Dic Van der Feen, Ken Steffey, and Ken Recu, Fred with his wife Sherry won the Chicago Regions 1963 Individual Championship in a variety of cars. Fred served on the Chicago Regions Rally Board and went on to serve as chairman and worker on both National and local events. He and Sherry still run and win rallies with VSC and the Texas BMW clubs.*

Note<sup>(1)</sup> The Isetta was originally designed and produced by Iso Autoveicoli in Italy. It was introduced at the Turin Auto Show in 1953 and was later built under license in a number of different countries including BMW in Germany. BMW replaced the Iso 236 cc 9.5 hp one cylinder, two stroke motorcycle engine with a BMW 250 cc one-cylinder, four-stroke, motorcycle engine that generated 12 hp. In 1956 this was upgraded to 298 cc with an output of 13 hp giving the car a top speed of 53 mph. The BMW Isetta became the top-selling single-cylinder car in the world, with over 160,000 units sold.

## Help Solve the Pennant Mystery



Fred Egloff found this pennant tucked away in a dusty corner of his collection of memorabilia from the Elkhart Lake Rallies. The pennant measures 16 ½ inches in length and 8 ½ inches in width. He can't remember who gave it to him or how it was used. He would like to know in what year it was used and if it was given to entrants, used by the officials

or sold to spectators. If you recognize the pennant and have any information about its origin and use, email us at:

[historicracecircuits@gmail.com](mailto:historicracecircuits@gmail.com)

Your help will be greatly appreciated.