

Reducing Car to Car Contact in Az Races

Posted by joepaluch - 11 Feb 2010 01:54

This is a continuation of the Email discussions.

We have been experience a level of car to car contact that is just not good for class in the least few months. The intent of this thread is to discuss ways to reduce that.

So lets familairize ourself with the CCR's and Incident Review board policies and proceedurs.

CCR's

2010 Club Codes & Regulations (CCR's.)

<http://www.nasaproracing.com/rules/index.html>

A good place to start is

Section 25.0 On course conduct â Page 122 in the .pdf document.

Section 26.0 Appendix A - Details on specific incident types with car placement figures.

Section 27.0 Appendix B â Incident Review Board

If we can have good discussion on what is acceptable driving both based on the published rules and what is good for a club level series I believe we can reduce the contact. My goal is to have no more than 1 or 2 car to car contact incidents per SEASON. We used to race like that and believe we can get there again. If we can't get there through discussions and education sessions we may be forced to increase the punitative nature of any contact. (le restrictive contact rules)

We have already had a number of good discussion on this over email. I do not want to reproduce all those here, but I do want to share some guidelines that think make for good racing.

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Re:Reducing Car to Car Contact in Az Races

Posted by joepaluch - 11 Feb 2010 01:57

Based on the wording the CCR's there was some discussion on "incidental contact". One could interpret the rules as condoning that sort of contact. I interpret this as a way of dealing with incidents we fault is not really fair to assign. I do not interpret incidental contact as ok. (below is a copy of an e-mail you got)

Incidental contact = contact that occurs where neither driver was considered "at fault". Just because you are not "at fault" does not mean it was ok. It also does not mean you will get off jail free. Let's not get hung up on that. When it comes to the rules remember every body contact form adds to your driving history. Incidental contact may not mean an instant penalty, but it still gets recorded and the IRB has access to these when considering each incident.

The real issue is that we as drivers are not doing all we can to avoid contact. For some reason the mindset has changed that some contact is somehow ok rather than any contact being a driver failure. Instead of looking at contact and trying to understand how to prevent it we are in general just saying.. "Not my fault and I'm moving on like nothing happened". Rather than realizing you still could have done something better to avoid contact.

If I go into a corner with the idea that the guy next to me is "behind" per the rules I am free to turn in, the risk for contact has gone up. Now if the guy trying to pass says "if I can get to his door the corner is mine" the risk of contact went up. Put both these guys into a corner and the chance of contact has just gone up since the heat of battle judging the exact time the corner "is yours" is hard. Sure you can go in after the fact to judge who owned what, but the damage has been done.

That is why the rules even state just because you believe the corner is yours it is not always smart to insist on that. If we were pro racers looking to win big for sponsors and have guys to fix the cars then you have the luxury of rubbing a bit and letting the officials decide if you were right or wrong. We are not big time. We are just a bunch of guys using or spare cash to have some fun. Doing body work (or paying for body work) is just not fun. So is 3rd place worth 30hrs of hammering or a \$2000 check to your body guy? I say no. I think we all need to consider that on the track more than we have been.

One thing I used to do a lot when racing was to always leave myself an out. Some place to go if the other guy was an idiot and screwed-up. If I am passing the other guy turns do I have place to go to bail out? Can I back out to preserve my car. Do I really want to try a pass knowing that he may not see me and if he doesn't and turns I am toast. I know for me I have been thinking this less lately. After my incident in January (which was my fault for allowing myself to be so committed that I had no way out) I have worked on trying to get back to that. Trying to leave room for the other drivers to be idiots around me rather than relying on them to be 100% perfect.

Well I will say that can work to your advantage. On Saturday I had Darren come from behind make pass attempt on the inside of turn 1. I chose not to defend the inside of one really hard realizing that Darren had good car placement and race was long. Better to make him hold on and then set-up for a repass than press low percentage situation. Well he did get by, but in turn 3 he overcooked it a bit allowing me to drive right back by as I was in a perfect spot to respond to any error. Darren to his credit knew he was off line at turn 3 a bit and rather than fight it risking contact chose to tuck back behind me. By backing off at critical times we both allowed each other room to maneuver and avoid risking contact. Now a lap later he tried to pass again and this time made it stick. I tried to keep on his rear, but he was faster and slowly pulled away. Darren earned that spot.

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Re:Reducing Car to Car Contact in Az Races

Posted by joepaluch - 11 Feb 2010 04:39

Kent is working on forum access.

The CCRs are pretty clear in some areas. The NASA AZ IRB will be giving points accordingly. The 'incidental' grey area is the problem.

Here's an idea: If there is 'incidental' contact, both drivers get 2 points awarded by the IRB. If one feels that another driver is driving too aggressively and backs off to avoid 'incidental' contact, provide evidence i.e. video to the IRB and address the situation as aggressive driver.

Also, we as 944 drivers have to re-prove ourselves as good clean drivers before we can even consider complaining to a driver in another class that they should give us extra room to have our 944 race. Even then it is questionable that any of us have the right to tell someone who pays the same entry fees they should 'stay out of the way'.

Kent Buckley

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Re:Reducing Car to Car Contact in Az Races

Posted by joepaluch - 11 Feb 2010 04:42

Kent,

It is in the IRB's discretion to give points for 'incidental contact'. As it stands per the CCRs.

Recommended driver points.

- At fault contact - 3pts
- Partial fault (ie the not so innocent victim) - 1pt

10 pts over 13 races(note there is a Az supplemental on this on NASA-Az forums) you are suspended.

So the IRB has the ability to give points to the driver not at fault should they decied they were pressing thier situation. The idea of 2pts for both in incidental contact has some merit. Not sure if 2pts is the right value. Still 2pt can allow 5 contacts before suspension. I do think that if you have two incidents and 3rd one happens you will be handled a little different. Remember by design IRB is given lattitude to increase the penalties as they see fit given the situation and driving history.

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