

Nationals Sonoma Wreck

Posted by 944Racer72 - 11 Nov 2014 20:07

I'm editing this post in the hopes of making this thread constructive. My competitor, Javier, did contact me today and we discussed the incident. From my point of view, I was cleanly alongside and he came over and forced us off track.

I won't speak for Javier's position on what/why it happened.

If this had happened somewhere else, we might have had words but it probably wouldn't have been a big deal. Due to the location, both cars are destroyed and we're lucky we essentially walked away.

Here's the video from my car:

Full speed

Slo mo

Re: Nationals Sonoma Wreck

Posted by cbuzzetti - 19 Nov 2014 08:18

I see two close calls that in my opinion were a 50/50 fault.

The first is at T2 with Javier and Hicks. Hicks did not have good overlap and did not present his car well enough to be sure to be seen. Javier did not know Hicks was there partly due to awareness and lack of presentation. Javier did not leave the required 3/4 car width for Hicks.

The same situation at T 4 but between Javier and Alberto. There was a failure of Alberto to get fully along side in the attempted pass to be easily seen. And Javier did not have the awareness to know Alberto moved into his blind spot. The result was the same, Javier took the apex and did not leave the 3/4 car width.

I cant tell if contact occurred between any of the cars.

Again this is just my opinion/observation.

I am of the opinion that everyone has a portion of responsibility in every incident. Sometimes it's 50/50 sometimes it's 90/10.

Re: Nationals Sonoma Wreck

Posted by GregF - 19 Nov 2014 11:34

After watching Alberto's video I fail to see why Mr. Hicks said it was clearly his corner. Overlapping front to rear bumpers isn't even close. T2 at Sonoma is a notorious car crusher....anyone looking to go three wide through there is not showing very good judgement in my opinion. I will be coaching Javier next year to improve his race craft for the future so I have watched the available videos at his behest. He clearly needs to stop making go kart type moves and leave his competitors more room, but I have to say that the driving standards shown in the various videos leave a lot of room for improvement for a lot of the competitors. No comment about the re-entry of the silver car on the left after T5? Did that look like a safe or proper re-entry to the track after driving off in the dirt?

Re: Nationals Sonoma Wreck

Posted by cbuzzetti - 19 Nov 2014 13:03

Keeping in mind that we are all amateurs and we are going to have a wide variation of driving skill sets.

It is everyone's responsibility to control their car and have as much awareness about our surroundings as possible.

In high profile races the tension gets ratcheted up, everyone drives more aggressively and low percentage passes get attempted more frequently. We have to remember to keep calm and make good decisions, something that is very difficult to do in this situation.

The silver car appears to have a braking problem or misjudges the entry. I suspect a braking problem because at the next corner T6 his car has a big wiggle at the braking zone. The re-entry to the racing surface should have been done with less throttle. Fortunately there was no contact.

Re: Nationals Sonoma Wreck

Posted by rd7839 - 19 Nov 2014 13:11

The perspective is all wrong with those videos. What I saw starting next to Javier and right behind Jim was that first I thought Javier jumped the start. I don't know this to be fact but I remember him going before anybody else. I saw him go around Ken and then make a few feints towards the apex of two and then a dramatic turn down. My video shows them almost completely side by side with Jim slightly ahead at first but Javier getting about a 2 foot lead. I know a lot has been said about inadequate mirrors and not knowing someone is alongside you but if you can no longer see a car you are passing or are in close proximity to one of two things are happening. A;the car is being pulled back to the mothership by a tractorbeam from space or B;he's still there and you drive accordingly. The question is what you think "accordingly" means. I know I leave a car width or more but it is very apparent others don't.

Greg is both right and wrong about turn 2 eating cars. It is a tough place to pass 2 wide, let alone 3 but it can be done safely if people drive correctly and courteously. Corners don't kill cars drivers do!

What I took away from this race was that when the stakes are higher people lose perspective. The aggressive driving was startling. I too was forced into the dirt at 2 on saturday because drivers thought it ok to go three wide and not leaving any room for others. What I see when I watch Alberto's video is that while there is at least a car width or more to his outside I am going 4 off on the inside because we are three wide. I was the faster car with the better starting position but was shown zero respect and had to take to the dirt to avoid a big pileup because of poor decisions of others. My car was never right after finding that big hole in the dirt and it ruined my weekend. Fridays race I got chopped so many times by a certain car that I took to bump drafting to get my point across. I was so angry that I considered pushing all the way into 2 which would have been trouble but thought better of it and backed off.

I'm not sure what can be done to curb this but it definitely will weigh in my decision to run national events going forward.

Re: Nationals Sonoma Wreck

Posted by Sterling Doc - 19 Nov 2014 18:22

Maybe next year any contact sits you out of the next race, fault or no (short of being collected in a melee?).

The Championships should be an exhibition of sportsmanship and drivers at the top of their game.
