

Competition Corner

By: Tom Konicke; Referee, Competition Coordinator

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the "Competition Corner". The 2006 season is over with, the last Cross-Country Series (XC) and the Grand-Prix (GP) series are coming to an end. The Dualsport (DS) Series has been decided and all of the Poker Runs (PR) are behind us. A special "thank you" goes out to all promoters and their volunteers who made 2006 a great season. Additionally, we can all be proud of our sport and the conduct of all the competitors during the year. With little exception, the positive attitude, camaraderie, and "fun factor" were excellent in 2006!

This is also the time of year when we start to think about gearing up for the next season. On Saturday, November 4th, the OMRA had the Annual Calendar Meeting to discuss the upcoming events for 2007. Once again, there are some exciting events that are being planned for next season. Expect a few new venues, a couple new promoters, and even a few of the standby favorites experiencing some changes in 2007. It is sure to be another great season. Keep your eye on the new OMRA website (www.omraoffroad.com) for the 'official' 2007 OMRA Calendar posting.

In an effort to continue to keep competition equal across the board, OMRA has adopted a few changes to the Rider's Classification System for the 2007 season. We have created a new Beginner's class. This new class will be a true "beginner's class" and it was conceptualized and debated for several months this past year before receiving full, voted support at the annual Calendar Meeting. With this addition, there will be four major rider classifications focusing on rider ability. We start with the Beginner Class designated as the "C" class, the Intermediate Class, designated as the "B" class, the Expert Class, designated as the "A" class and the "Best of the Best" class (Pro), designated as the "AA" class. The hope is that this new classification structure will help to bring new people into competition and will level out the field so new folks have a better chance at running up front. In order for this to work, we will need our member's full support and cooperation in classifying yourselves for next year. The hope is this will be policed on a 'voluntary' basis, so please remember to sign-up in the right classification at the beginning of the year if you are planning on chasing points for year end. The OMRA will be tracking lap times and overall placing for everyone and will use this information as appropriate to help eliminate 'sand baggers' and 'trophy hunters'. We will provide more specifics in the near future, so please stay tuned.

Also discussed at the annual calendar meeting was a new Sanctioning Agreement that OMRA is requiring all promoters to adhere to for 2007. If you weren't able to attend this meeting, drop me a quick note and I will get you a copy. The OMRA is requesting that all necessary paperwork related to 2007 OMRA Sanctioning be completed as described in this agreement by the end of the year (December 2006).

One final note, I would like to introduce myself as the new Competition Coordinator for 2007. This is a position that will continue to evolve. However, you all can think of me as a single point of contact for chairing a competition-specific committee that has an overall objective to address both short-range and long-range goals related to competition. Remember that this is your club, so please feel free to email me your questions, comments, or suggestions on how OMRA can better serve your competitions needs. My email address is: tomko@omraoffroad.com. I plan to keep our members updated on the Competition Committee activities on an on-going basis.

