



BUGGYALUMNI

ASSOCIATION

2009 Members Only Raceday Wrapup and Recap

Dear Members,

Carnival 2009 was epic. It was full of drama, action, controversy, and clutch performances in the heat of some of the tightest battles we've ever seen. A week after the hay dust finally settled, it's a little hard to believe it all happened. Unbelievably, Pittsburgh gave us exactly 2.5 days of warm sunshine when we needed it most, bookended by wintry cold and rain. What made it extra outstanding, though, was the wealth of information provided to everyone at the races as well as those watching from home, and we're proud to say the Buggy Alumni Association was there to bring the huge crowds a steady stream of updates and pre-race buildup.

On board once again this year was cmuTV, who gave us excellent coverage for those at home and for the Jumbotron at the finish line. Their top notch coverage keeps getting better year after year: Gone are the days when the only video we had of races came from the shaky lead and follow truck cameras. Members Andy Bordick (PiKA '94) and Mark Estes (Sigma Nu '87) joined up with cmuTV and WRCT to call the races. Their combined buggy knowledge and friendly rivalry gave a lot of credibility and edge to what could have been another lackluster broadcast. Buggy addicts watching the webcast at home were also treated to an up-to-the-minute leader board, constant twitters from the BAA and Compu-bookie, and a chat room to stay connected with other alumni.



A treat for all in attendance was the Jumbotron on Hill 1. Broadcasting the cmuTV footage of all the races, the giant screen gave spectators at the top of the hill the chance to finally see the whole race. The chute was noticeably less crowded, while a massive crowd gathered near the finish line during the final heats. The screen was brought to us by Get in Line Games, a research group within Carnegie Mellon's Entertainment Technology Center, who conducted polls and quizzes between heats. We hope they'll be back next year - The people have spoken out and requested a big screen in the chute for next year, and we will put a lot of effort into making it happen.

Another new view of the races this year was available from the lead truck. Until now, this spot was reserved for officials and a broadcaster, but thanks to the Sweepstakes committee and cmuTV, a spot was made available to the Buggy Alumni Association to auction off. This was an excellent fundraiser for us, and we want to thank everyone who participated in the auction to support programming for the coming year. We hope you enjoyed the ride!

Of course, none of this would mean a thing without the spectacular races we saw this year, and here we'll try to recap the highlights. This is intended for members only, but if you want to share it with friends who aren't members yet, please encourage them to join today. Thanks again for your membership and support!

TOP TEN	
1 SDC A.	2:03.26
2 FRINGEA	2:07.23
3 TKA-A	2:07.58
4 SDC-B	2:08.28
5 ΣΦF-A	2:08.61
6 SPIRIT-A	2:10.41
7 KΔP-A	2:12.83
8 FRINGEB	2:13.68
9 SDC-C	2:15.34
10 ΣN-A	2:16.90

They certainly didn't come out of nowhere. Before 2009, SDC picked up five straight men's trophies and three women's, including two dominant wins and a course record. But this year they took their game to the highest level and sealed their place in history with double course records and incredible depth. This powerhouse put three men's teams and two women's teams into the finals, a feat accomplished only by PiKA in recent years (2006). Despite their trouble staying out of the bales leading into Carnival, every driver stuck her line when it mattered most. And to avoid the heartache of last year's DQs, the mechanics kept all the hatches and wheel covers on to make it all count.

The competition wasn't even close this year: SDC's record time of 2:03.3 was four seconds faster than second place Fringe, and the women's record time of 2:25.6 trumped PiKA by over five seconds. The men's B team beat Fringe A in their Finals heat (before rerolls) and set a new overall B team record of 2:08.2. In fact, they set team records for every one of their seven entries. It truly was SDC's year, and they deserve a lot of credit for doing it all professionally and with class.



Other Top Gainers

SigEp has made progress in leaps and bounds in the past two years, dropping 11 seconds and finally getting serious about their technology. The Men's A team time of 2:08.55 would have won four of the last ten sweepstakes, but this year with SDC A's domination it put them in a four way race for 2nd place. With such a strong push team, a couple more seconds off the freeroll of Barracuda would have easily landed them in 2nd. No less impressive is their Women's A team, who dropped a whopping 37 seconds from their 2008 time and got a solid third place trophy.



Fringe went faster on Day 2, without a DQ, for the first time since 1993. Initially losing to SDC B in the Finals, the team took advantage of a reroll granted because of two false starts caused by a faulty starting gun. They pulled out a clutch performance that edged out PiKA for 2nd place in back to back rerolls at the end of day 2, and set a new team record of 2:07.25. This time would have won in all but five years in the whole history of Sweepstakes, but the game has changed.

One of the biggest celebrations at the finish line this year wasn't about a trophy or beating a rival. It was AEPI, celebrating their new house record that smashed their old one by over 10 seconds and put them just outside the top ten. Their pushers really came together this year, and they finally have a buggy that can roll out (Kamikaze). Even two DQs couldn't dampen their spirits. One of the brothers pushed their women's Hill 1, and the B team was called out for pacing when someone with a video camera ran alongside Camo, cheering it on the whole time. If you're going to get a pacing DQ, you might as well make it a good one and get it on film.

Most Improved - Women

SigEp A	37 sec
Fringe B	21.15 sec
SDC B	19.19 sec
Spirit B	16.04 sec
PiKA B	11.5 sec

Most Improved - Men

SDC B	45.64 sec
AEPI A	18.2 sec
SigEp B	8.89 sec
Pioneers A	7.45 sec
SDC C	7.04 sec

Underperformers

This was definitely not PiKA's year. Their A team gained over three seconds from last year's record, and even though their time of 2:07.7 was decent by most years' standards, they missed the top of the scoreboard for the first since 2001. An injury during prelims forced a reshuffling in the ranks for Finals, but even though the time improved, it wasn't enough to overcome Fringe's reroll for 2nd. They hadn't placed lower than 2nd since 1997, when they came in behind Spirit and Beta.



Also missing from the trophy list is PiKA B due to a collision with the outer hay-bales. Luckily the driver walked away with only minor injuries, but the B team pushers were not to have a second chance because the C team buggy was disqualified. This was a surprising loss of mass DQ, where the mass lost was tire rubber. The rules state: "Weight loss during a race shall be permitted only if the Head Judge rules that the weight loss was unintentional, the weight loss was not caused by a design failure of the buggy, and the weight loss did not interfere with any of the other entries in that heat." Not in recent memory, maybe ever, has a team been excluded for chunking their tires. This precedent may single out PiKA since no other teams' tires are chunking these days, with the exception of Sigma Nu's spectacular spin this year in which the tire split into two flying semicircles.



Beta not only put up their worst time in many decades (2:40.4), they found the quickest way to be excluded from buggy for a year: Fire safety violation. An inspection of their truck revealed some quantity of flammable liquid, and although the quantity and type are not public knowledge, the rules are clear on this one: "Any organization found to have ANY combustibile liquids and/or ANY source of open flame in or near their buggy preparation area before or during the Sweepstakes races shall not be permitted to participate in ANY activity related to the Sweepstakes Competition for a period of 15 months from the date on which the violation is discovered."

It's notable that, except for DNFs and DQs, every 2009 women's team went faster than last year with the lone exception of Fringe A. The women of Fringe, pushing their new buggy (Bedlam), gained over 9 seconds from last year and placed out of the top six on Day 2.



The timing system again got a lot of criticism this year, thanks to inconsistencies and starting gun failures. The Fringe A / SDC B Finals heat was plagued by two false starts caused by the gun; at least one heat was not recorded by the timing chip. There's a lot of room for improvement here, and the Buggy Alumni Association wants to make this a priority.



No one had an answer to SDC's 2:03.3, but the race for 2nd place was incredibly close and made for some of the best heats in the modern era. After finals, it was evident that every team in the top 6 was capable of putting up a 2:08.x time, but unfortunately for Spirit that performance didn't come when it mattered most. Spirit A had a 2:08.95 during prelims for third place, but in the finals they dropped to 6th with a 2:10.45, leaving third place to PiKA, who improved nearly three seconds from prelims. SDC B and SigEp A also dropped time to put them in the hunt, but in the end, Fringe had the edge.



SAE returned to buggy after a long hiatus. Their A team placed in the top half of the standings with Rubicon, but the return of Limo to Design Comp really turned heads and showed everybody how serious the team is this year. If they can get it qualified next year, maybe the red plaid lumberjack push team can take their act to the hills.

PhiKap's buggy program has survived a decade long roller coaster, and even though their times are down on the bottom half, they managed to have one more team than last year and did it all with a positive attitude. Maybe it's a sign of progress for next year.

Sigma Nu's huge crowd of alums in the chute witnessed their buggies putting down some of the fastest freeroll times ever seen, but while the buggies have gotten faster, the pushers have gotten slower, and no hardware was taken home from awards this year. They would have needed to drop nine seconds to get in the game for 2nd place. On a brighter note, the Zoo women set a house record with a 2:40.55 for 6th place.



This was by far the fastest year ever for the women. Five teams came in under 2:35, and to put it in perspective, in every year of women's races, no team except the winner has gotten under a 2:35. Any one of the top 5 times this year would have won 24 of the 31 years. SDC's record setting A team was faster than half of the men's push teams, including three A teams (Pioneers, PhiKap, and Beta.) The recruitment restrictions for men's push teams don't apply to women's teams, and it will be interesting next year to see if more teams make a serious effort to give SDC a run for their money.

King of the Hill was awarded an official trophy by Sweepstakes this year. Until this year it had been an unofficial title given by the announcers of WRCT. However, the time is taken when the pusher's foot crosses the first transition line, so a pusher who plants his feet and shoves before the line is at a clear disadvantage. Some die hard observers are questioning the validity of the award.

On the night after prelims, an email went out to the chairmen telling of a fire in the chute in which about two dozen haybales were destroyed. The committee sized up the situation to determine if finals could happen safely, and of course they gave it a green light. The only downside to the incident was the awful smell surrounding the burnt bales. No official word about the culprits was announced.



Rerolls

Rerolls affected two of the top three men's final times. Both PiKA A and Fringe A improved their times, but Fringe made a big jump and went from 4th to 2nd, while PiKA slipped from 2nd to 3rd. Finals seeding was manually adjusted by Sweepstakes during the chairmen's meeting on Friday. As things stood after prelims, SDC A and PiKA A would have gone head to head. Instead, knowing the front hill times would be extremely close, the teams agreed to separate themselves, with PiKA electing to take an early heat to avoid a collision. The last two heats were also adjusted to allow SDC and Fringe to run against each other instead of themselves. This was a questionable move because Fringe A and SDC B were the two closest teams after prelims and ended up finishing less than a second apart in that heat.

Pioneers

Things looked grim for Pioneers at the beginning of the year - with fewer than five people and only one driver, it was unclear how they would make it to race-day. Vincent Zeng, former CIA driver and chairman, continued the proud CIA tradition of resurrecting dead organizations and took over as chairman. She worked during the fall recruiting people, and by spring she had her driver rolling



in their buggy Chaos and a push team from KapSig. On raceday, with only a skeleton crew, they posted a time of 2:28:90 - faster than eight other teams and 12 seconds faster than Beta A. The highlight of their weekend had to be the exhibition race against CIA as they secured the Spirit of Buggy award with their wheel change on Hill 3.

Now the question is: What happens to Pioneers? Will KapSig inherit Chaos and the other Pioneers buggies, and restart their own buggy program? Will Vincent (who graduates in August) find someone to keep Pioneers going? Will she enter grad school to do it herself? There are a lot of alums who will be interested to see how it turns out.



Exhibitions

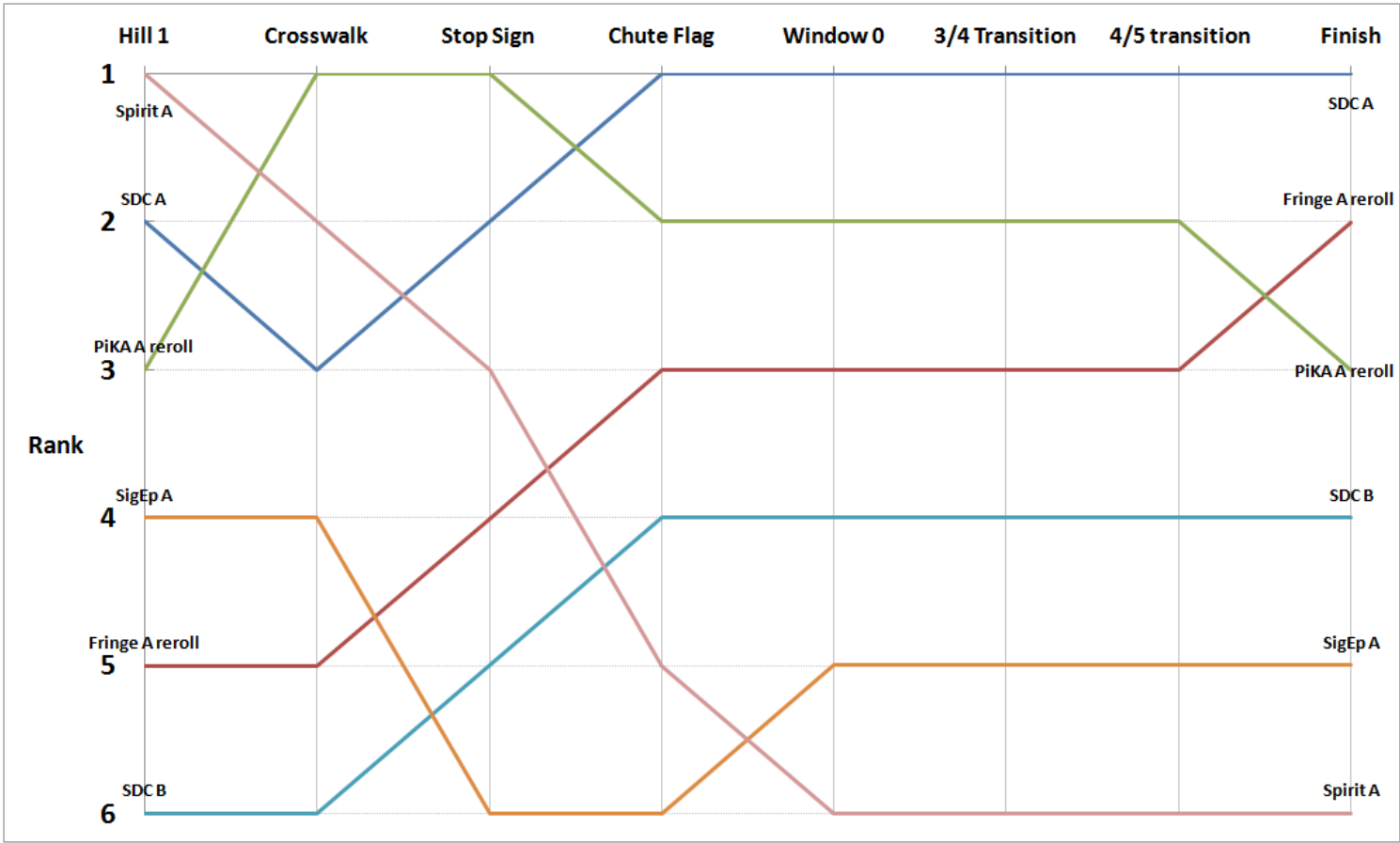
To spice up exhibitions and give us all a reason to wake up early, the Sweepstakes committee announced that anyone who changed a wheel during the race (1920s style) would be given extra consideration for the Spirit of Buggy Award. Pioneers, KDR, AEPi, and CIA all made the switch after the chute. AEPi had an entire F1-style pit crew working on the buggy, complete with a gas can, a foot massage, and a lollipop-sign guy. Pioneers won the award on their driver's performance - she actually got out of the buggy, pulled the replacement wheel out of the buggy, replaced it herself, and then got back in to drive the rest of the race.



Fringe's 1970 Hill 5, Henry Finch, reprised his role to mark the organization's 40th year. It was an impressive time, and he would likely have a place on the team if he considered grad school. AEPi supplied the Sweepstakes committee with Camo as their exhibition buggy. In another heat, Andy Bordick announced in the broadcast that CIA was having "a pushing orgy" when nearly a dozen pushers took on the backhills.

What a difference a hill makes.

The graphic below comes to us from our resident statistician in Miami. He took the times from cmuTV footage of day 2 and found some interesting results. It's evident that SDC had the race wrapped up by the time they got to the chute flag, but a couple of twists at the end meant 2nd place for Fringe and 5th place for SigEp. Have a look:



Buggy Alumni Association - Year in Review

The Buggy Alumni Association went from a good idea to a full blown Alumni Interest Group in a matter of months. Since our formation last Fall, we've gained over 90 dues paying members like you, as well as more than 250 registered users on at cmubuggy.org. A lot of individual talents within the group have contributed in a huge way to everything we've done so far. We of course could not have done this without the support of CMU Alumni Relations, who have helped us track down buggy alums and gave us a home base at the University. With this huge pool of support, we'll no doubt continue to work towards accomplishing our missions:

Preserve and make accessible the history of the sport. Our website has opened the floodgates to your pictures, data and stories. If you can help us correct or add to our history section, send email to data@cmubuggy.org.

Provide a channel by which alumni can remain connected to and support the sport. The forum at cmubuggy.org has been buzzing for months, and our freeroll reports helped build up the suspense leading into raceday. For raceday we had a members-only preview guide, and by the time raceday came, a twitter channel and live updates of our online scoreboard were there to keep you in the loop. This is a group by us, for us, and ideas, help, and suggestions are always welcome.

Support and improve undergraduate participation. An invitation went out to accepted freshmen to watch the webcast of the races. With some luck, many of them will find their calling either during Fall Rush or activities fair. Maybe some will go so far as to keep Pioneers afloat. Coming this fall we hope to have a proper Buggy 101 guide available to undergrads, and the talks by Tom Wood and Matt Wagner can help put it all in perspective.

Improve relations and raise interest in the greater Pittsburgh community. This is one area that could use more work. With a little more homework, we can have more effective press releases to advertise the races and show Pittsburghers what we already know: That buggy is extremely valuable to Carnegie Mellon. Any suggestions on how to make this happen, and how to help get the roads paved, are welcome.

Unite alumni across organizations. This one has pretty much taken care of itself. As years go on, it becomes harder to keep track of everybody from our former teams. Our founding members came from several different teams, and they saw a need to keep the buggy love alive among alumni from all backgrounds. The committee that planned our Carnival events and broadcast consists of members from seven different organizations, and every day on the forum at cmubuggy.org there is lively back-and-forth between alumni from an even greater number of teams. Mission accomplished! Keep spreading the word!



cmubuggy.org

Women’s Day 1

1	SDC A	2:26.00	New Course Record
2	PiKA A	2:33.80	
3	Spirit A	2:37.90	
4	SDC B	2:39.55	
5	SigEp A	2:40.25	
6	Fringe A	2:43.40	
7	SN A	2:45.20	
8	Spirit B	2:49.15	
9	KDR A	2:49.75	
10	Fringe B	2:52.10	
11	PiKA B	2:54.40	
12	SDC C	2:59.00	
13	CIA A	3:07.30	
14	Fringe C	3:52.70	
	SN B		spin
	Beta A	3:40.35	DQ - Safety Violation
	AEPi A	3:40.40	roster violation

Women’s Day 2

1	SDC A	2:25.60	New Course Record
2	PiKA A	2:31.15	
3	SigEp A	2:33.95	
4	SDC B	2:34.45	
5	Spirit A	2:34.65	
6	SN A	2:40.55	
7	Fringe A	2:46.45	

Men’s Day 1

1	SDC A	2:05.30	
2	Fringe A	2:08.00	
3	Spirit A	2:08.95	
4	SigEp A	2:10.15	
5	SDC B	2:10.35	
6	PiKA A	2:10.50	
7	Fringe B	2:14.82	
8	SDC C	2:17.65	
9	KDR A	2:18.45	
10	SN A	2:19.05	
11	AEPi A	2:21.49	
12	SigEp B	2:22.90	
13	Spirit B	2:23.05	
14	SAE A	2:24.94	
15	Fringe C	2:25.40	
16	CIA A	2:25.60	
17	SDC D	2:25.81	
18	PhiKap A	2:26.15	
19	KDR B	2:28.60	
20	SN B	2:28.75	
21	Pioneers A	2:28.90	
22	PhiKap B	2:29.25	
23	SN C	2:35.10	
24	CIA B	2:43.95	
25	CIA C	2:53.20	
	PiKA B		crash
	Spirit C		spin
	Fringe D	2:25.50	5-second rule
	PiKA C	2:30.20	Loss of Mass
	Beta A	2:40.40	DQ - Safety Violation
	KDR C	2:40.80	Roster No hill 4 pusher
	AEPi B	2:56.25	Pacer

Men’s Day 2

1	SDC A	2:03.30	New Course Record
2	Fringe A	2:07.25	(reroll)
3	PiKA A	2:07.70	(reroll)
4	SDC B	2:08.20	
5	SigEp A	2:08.55	
6	Spirit A	2:10.45	
7	KDR A	2:12.80	
8	Fringe B	2:13.75	
9	SDC C	2:15.35	
10	SN A	2:17.10	
	PiKA A	2:08.20	granted reroll
	Fringe A	2:09.14	granted reroll