



BUGGY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

2011 Members Only Raceday Preview

Hello BAA Members!

We want to thank you for your continued support this year. As a members-only perk, you're receiving this Raceday Preview - our chance to give you some extra news and predictions so you'll have the best inside information going into raceday.

It's hard to believe it, but Truck Weekend is behind us and Raceday is practically here. This is BAA's 3rd carnival, which in undergrad terms is practically forever. Our new site recently rolled out, with a great response, and we're so happy you love it and continue to come back for buggy news and conversation. Our 3rd Annual Lead Truck Auction is also about to begin (a little later than last year since heat selection happened after Truck Weekend this year), and we hope you'll take a shot at bidding for your chance to see your favorite organizations race from the best seat on the course, and help us raise money for continuing our Buggy Alumni efforts. Plus, BAA will be out again running the timing system on raceday. This was a huge success last year and we're always happy to help make raceday run a little smoother.

We've (hopefully temporarily) lost two familiar teams since last year: Beta Theta Pi and Phi Kappa Theta. Beta never rolls in the fall, but we'd hoped we'd see them back out for rolls this spring. It was not meant to be but here's hoping they'll be back next year. PhiKap is no longer on campus, following in the footsteps of many Greek organizations in past years, but we here at BAA HQ are rooting for their return to buggy in the future. Joining the ranks this year is Kappa Sigma, back racing on their own for the first time since 1998. They have a new buggy this year, Apache, and we can't wait to see how it rolls on Friday.



This is going to be an exciting year for sure. Fringe is coming back from a sweep, and the last time that happened, PiKA fought back with a 7-year winning streak. However, this year, it looks like SDC is the team to beat. They had an unfortunate team-wide DQ last year that kept them out of finals, but they're back this year itching for a win.

How things will turn out this year is anybody's guess, and if you're not able to come to Pittsburgh this year, we have your back and you won't miss a thing. cmuTV will be streaming the races live, and on cmubuggy.org you'll be able to chat with fellow buggy addicts and see up to the minute results.

See you on the hills!

cmubuggy.org

Thursday, April 14

Design Competition:

10am - 2pm, Wiegand Gymnasium in the University Center

Bar Hangout:

8pm Hough's Bar, 563 Greenfield Ave (houghspgh.com)

Friday, April 15

Prelim Races

8am - 12pm

Buggy Alumni Association Reception (Food!)

12:30pm Baker Hall coffee lounge just off Hill 4

History of Buggy by Tom Wood

1:30pm Baker Hall, Giant Eagle Auditorium

Saturday, April 16

Alumni & Exhibition Heats

8am - 9am

Final Races

9am - 12pm

Sunday, April 17

Morning after breakfast

10am Smallman Street Deli, 1912 Murray Avenue

See you on the hills...

and in the halls, at the bar, in the gym, at the deli, and of course at cmubuggy.org

Alpha Epsilon Pi

Best result out of last 5: Men 11th (2009), Women 12th (2010)

Team records: Men 2:21.49 (2009), Women 3:26.25 (2010)

Although the brothers of AEPi have a nice sized organization, their technology isn't quite leaping forward. Their sleek new buggy from last year isn't out, leaving Kamikaze to take the lead again. Zephyrus took a break from action in the fall and came back with a 2x4 pushbar. Sources say an attempt to fix the original with a composite bar didn't quite pan out. They've been trying out new tire compounds, including something that could be described as fire emergency red. The big news from this house, though, is the addition of Robobuggy to the lineup. It's not quite ready to roll with humans, but it should be primed for a decent exhibition of its own. Some more details of the project can be seen at robobuggy.blogspot.com.

Kamikaze '09



Zephyrus '07



Robobuggy '00

Forecast:

Robobuggy will be a success and that will be enough for AEPi this year.

Carnegie Involvement Association

Best result out of last 5: Men 13th (2008), Women 8th (2008)

Team records: Men 2:10.42 (1986), Women 2:41.48 (1986)

The CIA enters raceday with their third new buggy in three years, and seem to have finally worked through the composite learning curve with this one. At the same time, they seem to have jumped in to the tire development fray, rolling a powder blue compound seemingly color-matched to the buggy. The technological progress, however, is not enough to overcome the traditional weakness of their push teams, but hopefully the ever-present enthusiasm around this team leads to an improvement there.

Ascension '11



Freyja '10



Renaissance '09



Firebird '04



Quasar '02



Forecast:

They'll be right on the cusp of making second day, a goal they've held since their last appearance in 2005.

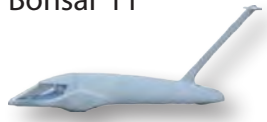
Fringe

Best result out of last 5: Men 1st (2010), Women 1st (2010)

Team records: Men 2:06.65 (2010), Women 2:34.70 (2001)

Fringe has pushed hard this year to defend their dual titles knowing the competition will be at full strength. Their new buggy, Bonsai, was quick out of the gate and impressed spectators in the chute as well as folks looking at their time sheets. Fringe is only rolling three buggies this year which will be the fewest in over 10 years. They attempted to qualify a new driver late in the spring but opted not to have her out on truck weekend. Fringe has set org records for the last 4 years in a row, so the expectations are high for the push team to live up to the hype surrounding their new buggy.

Bonsai '11



Borealis '10



Blizzard '05



Forecast:

Bonsai will give them a good shot at the title, but they might not have quite enough pull on campus to recruit the muscle they need.

Kappa Sigma

Best result out of last 5: Men 17th (1997), Women 20th (1992)

Team records: Men 2:21.00 (1981), Women 3:13.31 (1992)

Kappa Sigma is racing for the first time since 1998. Their last foray ended sadly when their buggy, Trojan (formerly Fringe's Genuine Risk), was taken in a heist and floated in Westinghouse Pond. Well, they made a splash of their own and returned with a new buggy just in time for the last rolls of the fall semester. Apache came out already painted and made it around the course on its first roll. (Never mind the pit stop at the transition flag.) Things progressed somewhat slowly in the Spring, but their driver, Amy, drove for PhiKap last year so qualification came quickly. Enthusiasm and a proper paint job on Apache have this team looking like they're in it to win it. The speed will come with experience.

Apache '11



Forecast:

If they can get through their first raceday without any big mistakes, they won't be at the very bottom of the standings.

Pi Kappa Alpha

Best result out of last 5: Men 1st ('06-'09), Women 1st (2006)

Team records: Men 2:04.35 (2008), Women 2:29.83 (2004)

PiKA's 2010 was a low point after a decade of dominance, and this year's race will measure their ability to bounce back and reassert themselves on the sport. Indeed, you have to look back to 1985 to find a worse year. Their previous A-team buggy, Nemesis, was lost to a mechanical failure a few weeks ago so it's good that their brand new standard trike is representing. In the short frame of reference common to undergrads, PiKA has already lost much of their intimidation factor, but their winning history testifies that you'd be foolish to take your eye off them.

Raceday '11

Chimera '08

Knightfall '07

Zeus '00



Forecast:

SDC and Fringe will have a lead downhill, and SDC won't be caught from behind on the back hills. PiKA is gunning for Fringe.

Pioneers

Best result out of last 5: Men 12th (2007), Women 7th (2003)

Team records: Men 2:15.55 (2002), Women 2:49.51 (2002)

The Pioneers are back again and looking like they're here to stay. It's been a pretty quiet year for them, but in these days of wheels going off and haybale homicide, it's best not to be making the headlines. Sweepstakes recorded one incident as "Pioneers lost driver," but she apparently made it back well enough to qualify. Two drivers are qualified in the same buggy, so men's and women's race duties will be split between the two. Chaos is again the buggy of choice, but there's not much of a choice in their garage. They likely won't win the race, but look for Pioneers to mix it up in the enthusiasm category.

Chaos '03



Forecast:

It's time to reverse their own recent trend and take a step back in the right direction by beating their 2010 time and passing the drop test.

Sigma Alpha Epsilon

Best result out of last 5: Men 9th (2000), Women 7th (2010)

Team records: Men 2:14.74 (1991), Women 2:54.50 (2010)

The men of SAE got off to a very slow start, taking most of the fall semester off and hibernating for much of the early rolls of the spring. When they did roll, they did so safely and quietly thanks to moderate speeds, big cushy wheels and plenty of visibility (Takoochi-style portholes would improve that.) They did manage more than enough rolls to qualify one driver, and they chose truck weekend to finally do their pass test. SAE hasn't been a buggy powerhouse since the '60s, but winning isn't everything in this sport.

Rubicon '99



Forecast:

SAE finished ahead of CIA last year. If they can pull that off again, they'll be doing well. This is only their 3rd year back in the race, they're still refining.

Sigma Nu

Best result out of last 5: Men 5th (2006), Women 5th ('06-'07)

Team records: Men 2:09.05 (1985), Women 2:40.55 (2009)

The Zoo flirted with the idea of leaving buggy, but made a good decision and got back on the course after spring break. They had the look of a completely new team for a while, but got back on track quickly with the help of wise local alumni. They got their speed back and were even comparing different wheels on truck weekend. The perennial weakness uphill will still be a factor, but they'll do just fine for a 4 week effort.

Bungarus Krait '09



Forecast:

Expectations are lower for the Zoo this year, and the fresh start will be healthy. The middle of the pack is now a step forward from quitting.

Sigma Phi Epsilon

Best result out of last 5: Men 2nd (2010), Women 3rd (2009)

Team records: Men 2:08.55 (2009), Women 2:33.95 (2009)

With four drivers qualified in four different buggies, make no mistake that Sigma Phi Epsilon is a major player in this race. They've been consistent and reliable, and as of truck weekend, also fast. SigEp wallowed in the middle of the pack of freeroll times all year, and then put down nearly top-tier times consistently this weekend. Their new buggy Mamba likely won't be making A team, but Barracuda (2009) will do the job for the 3rd year. Their men are looking to beat last year's house record and prove that 2nd place was no fluke. Their women should be place well if their tires hold together.

Mamba '11



Peregrine '10



Barracuda '09



Pandora '06



Forecast:

They won't be able to catch the top 3, but they are doing better than any one else at bridging the gap.

Spirit

Best result out of last 5: Men 4th (2008), Women 3rd (2006)

Team records: Men 2:06.2 (1988), Women 2:33.03 (1995)

Arguably no one has had a more exciting year than Spirit, for better and for worse. Every buggy got in its share of spins, thankfully nothing serious. Their rigorous wheel and tire program is producing some good speed downhill, but the buggies can't handle the chute turn, especially when their custom machined rims tear away from the hubs. The Big News, though, is that Spirit has built a new buggy. It's called Mapambazuko (Zuke for short), and you can tell it's a Spirit buggy by its sleek molded windshield fitted to a Quantum Leap style body. It's been a long time coming, but the new buggy, a lot of new wheel technology, and four buggies rolling suggests that Spirit is driving for a resurgence.

Mapambazuko '11



Seraph '04



Zulu Machafuko '96



Kufa Haraka '95



Spirit's paint jobs are subject to last minute change.



Forecast:

The back hills pushers will get to participate this year thanks to the new orange compound, and they'll make easy work of SN and CIA, but SigEp has their number this year.

SDC continues to be a major buggy force. They will have five drivers in five buggies with massive amounts of experience and a thirst for anything served out of a first place trophy. Last year the course record holders showed no signs of slowing down and were strong favorites for the big cup. An unfortunate and controversial organization-wide DQ in 2010 completely changed the game for Finals, leaving them a year to plot their revenge. The faces have changed but the speed remains the same as their top times this year have been neck and neck with Fringe. After a string of spins and wheel detachments, the organization settled in and got to work. Their new buggy, Bane, is just a hair off the pace of Malice, the course record holder. Expect Malice to repeat as the A team buggy - there's no doubt that SDC is out to win, and every fraction of a second counts.



Forecast:
They don't enjoy as much of an advantage downhill as they have in recent years, so the race will be tighter, but they had enough pushers out on truck weekend with CMU athletics t-shirts on to pull it out. No propane, more Champagne.



1. SDC
2. Fringe
3. PiKA
4. SDC B
5. SigEp
6. Fringe B
7. PiKA B
8. Spirit
9. SigNu
10. CIA

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other B and C teams

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SAE
KapSig
Pioneers
AEPi



The return of the standard trike?

A few years ago in 2007, Spirit hadn't built in years and SDC had just finished their second reverse trike. By last year, even CIA had switched to the reverse format for its new buggy. Chatter on the course commonly assumed that standard trikes were the "old" design and reverse was happening as fast as orgs could get it together to switch. Here we are in 2011 and odds are that two of the top 3 finishers will cross the line with one wheel first. SDC's success with the standard design was evidently sufficient to tempt PiKA into experimenting, and it seems to have paid off. RD2011 has been consistently faster than their twin standard bearers Nemesis and Chimera. Is there a new trend towards the simpler-steering and power-slide dynamics of the standard trike, or are we seeing another instance of a long tradition of copying whoever is winning?



PiKA's new entry for 2011, their first standard trike in nearly 20 years



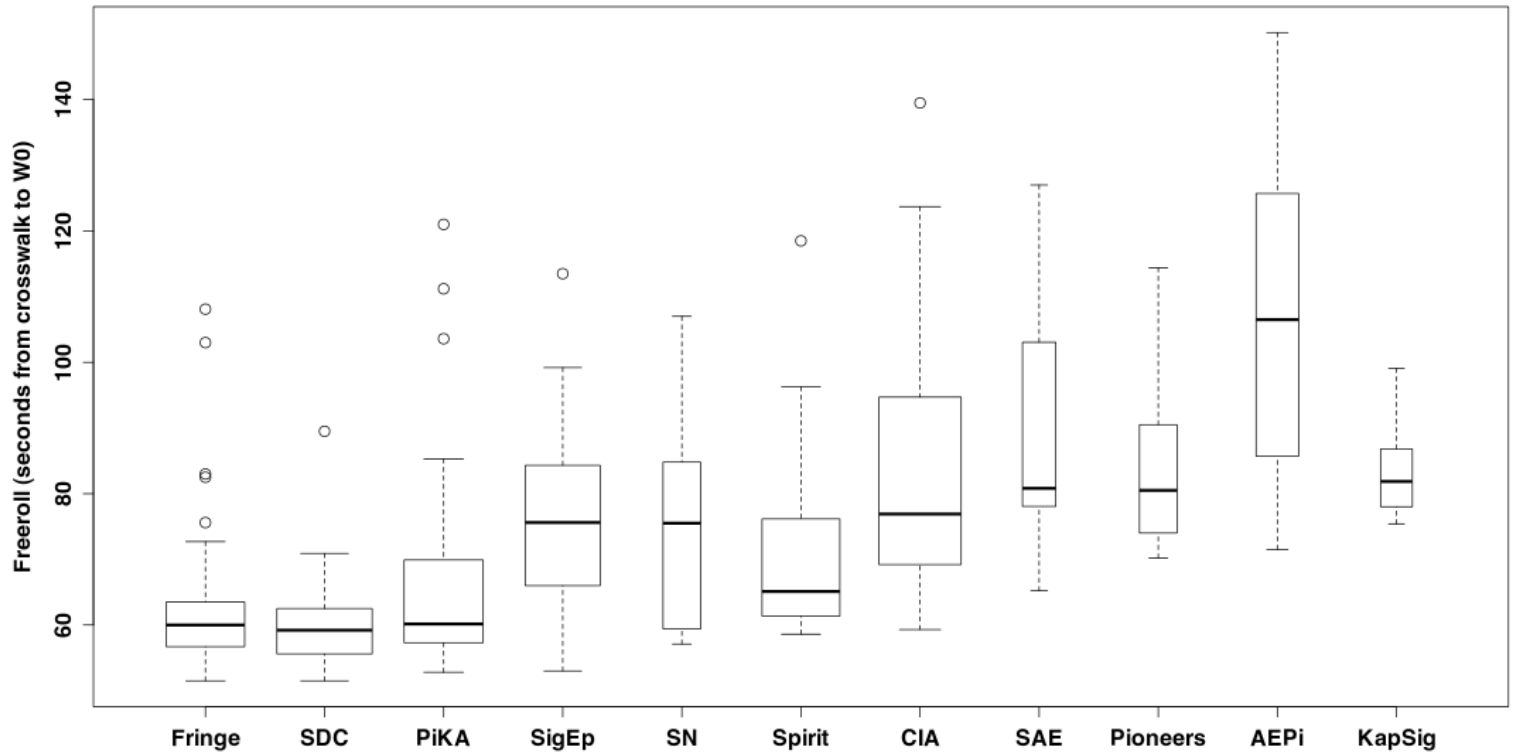
Spirit's Mapambazuko, a modern take on their design paradigm



SDC's perennially fast standard trikes: Bane (front), Avarice (rear)

Freerolls, Statistically Speaking

Spring 2011 Freeroll times (orgs sorted by single best time)



Buggies made it successfully around the course 634 times this semester, some quicker than others. Lucky for you, the BAA is here to sort through all that noise and tell you who you can bet on for the fastest downhill times this raceday. The chart above shows the range of freeroll times for each org this semester (being lower on the chart is faster). They are sorted from left to right by their single fastest time (shown by the lowest extremity of their box and whiskers). What do we make of it?

The race between SDC and Fringe is so tight, it's all about the pushers. PiKA is just a hair behind with their new standard trike. SigEp was much slower for the entire semester, but pulled out some serious speed on truck weekend. All of their fastest times come from Barracuda on consecutive rolls this weekend. SN, Spirit, and CIA form the next tier with Spirit being the most consistent and having the best pushers to back it up. SAE, Pioneers, AEPi, and KapSig form the third tier and could give each other some healthy competition this raceday. AEPi is the stand-out in this group, having built multiple buggies and been a stable org for a number of years. Unfortunately we don't have any times on robobuggy, but it doesn't look like it will set any speed records.

Wheels: The Rainbow Connection

There was a time when buggy experts could argue at length on the virtues or flaws of PiKA's wheels or the Zoo's wheels, or any other team. While there was a lot of variety across teams, most had their type and experimented within their mold (so to speak). These days, almost every team on the course has at least a couple of types of wheels or compounds. Pneumatic die-hards like Spirit have made the full transition to small hard rubber. Renowned chemists SigNu and PiKA have been seen trading in their house formula for the more colorful competition. Even fledgling programs like AEPi are checking into different compounds. The stock Xootr tire must be terrible if everybody thinks they know better. Would you bet on black?



The Course, or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Potholes

Drivers can count on smooth sailing from the start to the transition flag, but it's teeth-chattering from there on out. Hill 1-2 and the beginning of the freeroll have both been paved by the city in the last couple of years, but the chute and the back hills have been beaten to pieces by our freeze-thaw winters. Spirit, SAE, and CIA have all had dramatic wheel / attachment failures after hitting cracks and holes early in the chute. "Must have hit a pothole in the chute" is an explanation for pretty much everything else that happens. The switch away from pneumatic tires means the sweepers can get away with leaving the chute strewn with pebbles that would have caused blowouts in years past. The back hills are full of their own challenges. Drivers have carefully picked their lines during rolls, but anyone going two-wide on raceday is likely to regret it. Get your passing done early girls!

