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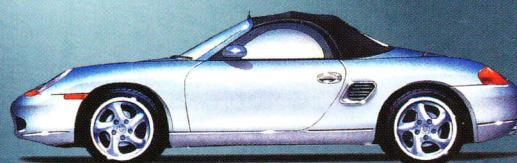
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FIRST LOOK!
**The New
911**



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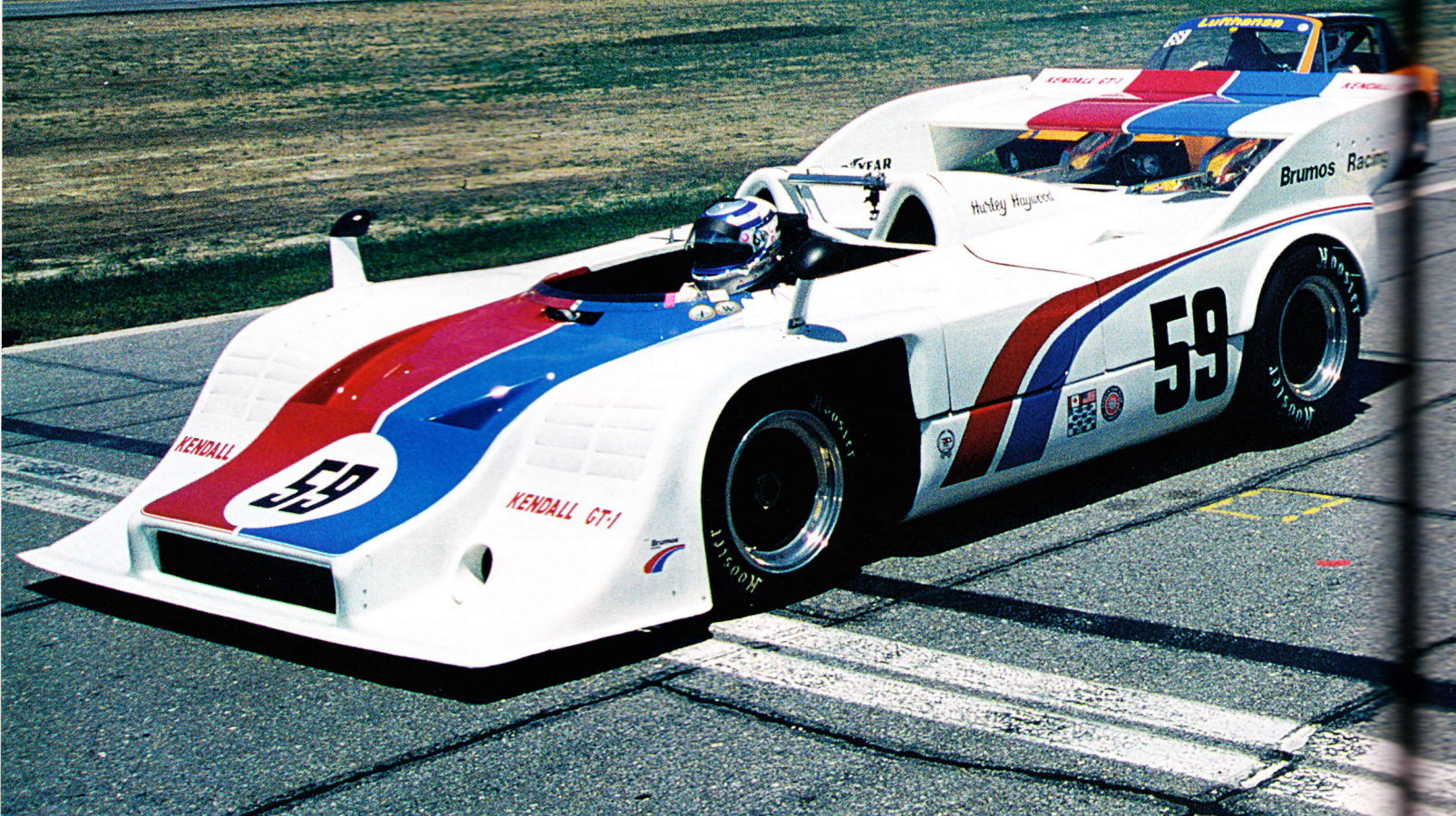
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Temple of Zoom

DAYTONA'S FAST AND FAMOUS BANKINGS HOST RENNSPORT REUNION II,
AN EVENT BILLED AS THE LARGEST GATHERING OF RACING PORSCHES IN HISTORY
STORY BY PETER LINSKY PHOTOS BY HAL THOMS AND PETE STOUT



So just what does a first-time visitor to Daytona International Speedway come away with after what was likely the largest gathering of Porsche race cars in history? The lasting memory of Porsche Cars North America and Brian Redman's second Rennsport Reunion is that of wall-to-wall Porsches. Everything from everyday street drivers to club racers and the most exotic plastic, titanium, and carbon-fiber monsters produced by Weissach. Emotions run the gamut. It's easy to be overawed by both this most intimidating

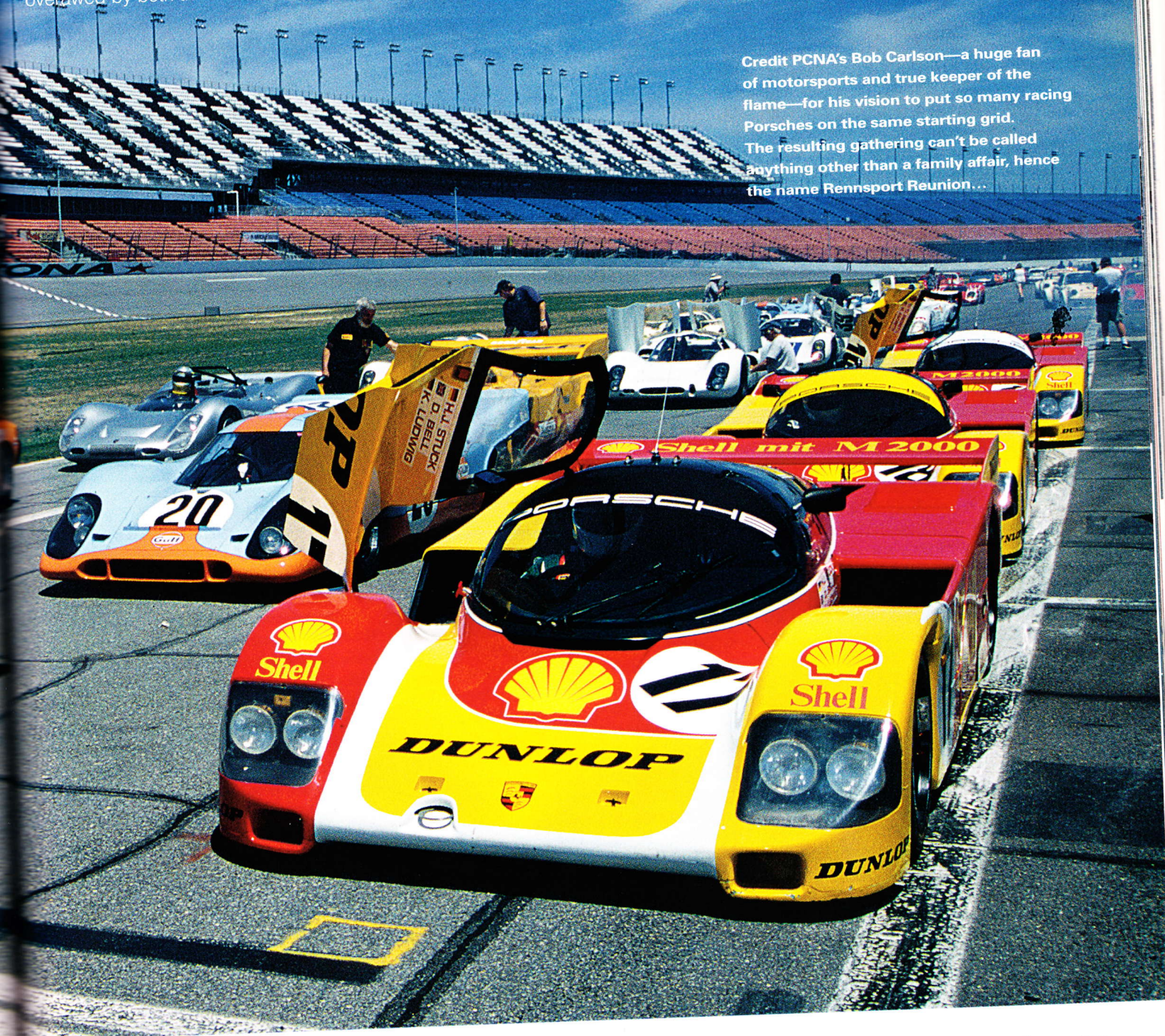
NASCAR circuit and the ability to actually touch, hear, and smell so many magnificent race and rally machines.

I'm among those who missed the first edition of the Rennsport Reunion at Lime Rock in the late summer of 2001, so I was bound and determined to make it to this one, come hell or high water. And early on Friday morning, it's clear the effort to get here was worth it. From every direction comes the crisp bark of racing engines, while race cars painted every color in the rainbow assault the eye. Over in the

PCNA tent, a metallic black Carrera GT rests tautly behind a low guardrail. Later in the weekend, it will make several demonstration laps in company with the prototype race group — the first time most of us will have ever seen or heard this 200-mph beast in action. It looks better in the flesh than in pictures, but that doesn't seem to discourage a lot of fans from posing alongside for photos.

Across an access road lies a shocking display of racing Porsches. Among the most interesting cars are a Penske-

Credit PCNA's Bob Carlson—a huge fan of motorsports and true keeper of the flame—for his vision to put so many racing Porsches on the same starting grid. The resulting gathering can't be called anything other than a family affair, hence the name Rennsport Reunion...





Sunoco-liveried Can-Am 917/30 and a 1974 Turbo Carrera RSR in Martini livery — one of several on hand this weekend. These ferocious racers are almost a caricature, with outlandish fender flares, scoops, and huge wings. There's also a red 908/2 Spyder rescued from a restaurant in Japan, where it had been on display for over 25 years after ending its competitive career in Asia.

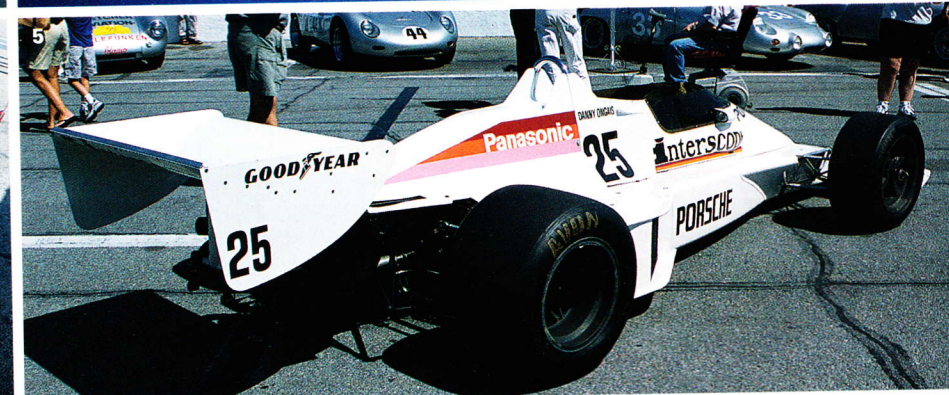
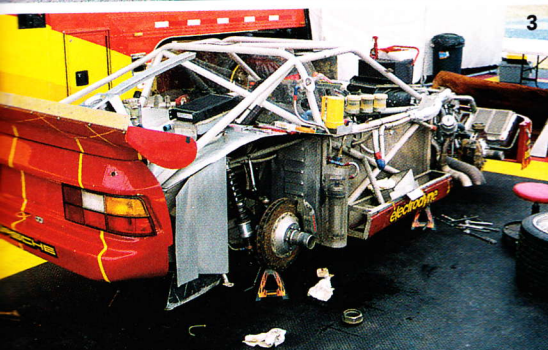
At every turn, both inside the spacious garages and scattered around the paddock, there are more aluminum and plastic and steel wonders to see: A 356 SL, 550 Spyders (including Hans Herrmann's Mexican road-race winner), RSKs, RS-60/61s, 356 Carreras, 904s, 906s, 907s, 908s, 910s, and 917s of all descriptions — highlighted by Dr. Julio Palmaz's 1970 Le Mans-winning 917K and the Gulf-sponsored Number 2 that won the 24 Hours on this very track in 1970. Then there are the cars of the late seventies and eighties: aborted Indy car projects, 934s, 935s, 956s, and 962s. Get into the 911

and 914 derivatives — such as famous 914-6 GTs and rare 911 SC/RS and 964 Carrera 4 Lightweights — and you're already heading for overload. And you've seen all this before lunch. On Friday.

But it just doesn't stop. 924 Carreras and 968 Turbo RSs lurk here and there while Porsche No. 1 putters by. Three of the Shell-sponsored 962s in perfect prep shunter by on their slick black Speedline six spokes, and then Joest himself motors by in his stunning Newman 962. Three or four 911 GT1s are littered about, and you still haven't gotten over to see that "Forty Years of the 911" display PCA set up to show one model from each year of the 911's history. That's mostly because there are winners and almost-winners to delight and amaze you all over the place.

Everywhere around you are the cars that we've all read about, the cars whose images were pinned to our bedroom and garage walls and remain indelibly printed in our minds. All told, track announcers say the race-car census approaches (or

If you're into 911-based race cars, a huge selection of 911 RSRs, 934s, and 935s was on hand to satisfy any hunger (1). From Coca-Cola and Martini-sponsored cars to Swap Shop and Interscope racers, it was all here. Porsche No. 1 made its first public U.S. appearance in a long time; it's seen here parked in front of a Panamericana 550 and a gaggle of plastic Porsches (2). After plastic came prototypes, as the old 917s and 936s of the seventies gave way to the 956/962 and TWR-based LMPs of the eighties and nineties (3). This was almost certainly the largest gathering of 956/962s in history. Peek in the garages to find a 356 SL coupe, two Spyders, and an Abarth Carrera hiding from the sun (4) while Klaus Bischof, Herbert Linge, Eckhard Schneider, and other factory legends wait by the Telefunken 550 for the next tasty dish to be rolled onto the grid for a few parade laps (5). The outer paddock wasn't short of Porsche treasures, with this group of early open-top 550s, RSKs, and 356s hailing all the way from the West Coast (6).



Carrera GT (1) knocked 'em dead before putting on a small drift show in the infield, courtesy of factory racer Sascha Maassen. The throng seemed to agree: black is particularly flattering on the C-GT. Gulf 917K and a highly original Gmünd coupe (2) make for an interesting juxtaposition, while the Electromotive Porsche woulda been hard to recognize if it weren't for the familiar 924/944 taillights (3). Rear end of this 968 Turbo RS (4) is a study in motorsport details with factory carbon-fiber trusses aimed at preventing the Plexiglas hatch from caving in at speed. Yellow composite "tubs" allowed far wider rear wheels within the narrow bodywork of this 968, the only one that raced at Le Mans (DNF). Of four 968 Turbo RSs built, two were at Rennsport. Even more rare (and very rarely seen) is Porsche's first attempt at building a car for Indy racing, the aborted turbocharged, six-cylinder Interscope car (6). Sadly, we never saw this woulda-been/coulda-been run, but it was great to see it in Sunday's concours.

exceeds) 600 by the time the flock of 356, 911, 914, 924, 944, 964, 968, 993, and 996 racing models are included.

That figure doesn't even include the substantial number of street Porsches parked in their own corrals. Out there, the Floridian contingent displays some seriously nice machinery in the form of a trick 914-6 GT replica and a perfect 356 GT-look coupe, though a black 928 sitting on 15x7-inch Fuch alloys and a very 1980s pearl white Gemballa Avalanche Cabriolet threaten to throw the mix off. A lime-green 356 also leaves a vivid impression. Still, just about everyone with a set of Porsche keys, except the Porsche Junior Diesel tractor guy, gets an opportunity to drive his or her vehicle on the famous track for at least a few minutes.

Get back into the racing garages and there's an interesting juxtaposition in the form of a 1949 Gmünd coupe, one of the earliest of Porsche's creations, sitting next to a 21-year newer 917K. The very original aluminum 356 — first owned by Otto

Mathé — is a jewel. Every welded seam, every bump from the panel-beater's hammer, is evident today. That's because the owner has decided to restore the mechanicals but not the exterior or interior. The car is fully documented, including the original bill of sale that mentions the rain-gutter cargo rack, now dull and corroded. The only catch for me is the sensibly restored wheels, which look a little too shiny for the rest of the car's outer appearance and detract from its otherwise wonderful patina.

Among several cars sent over from the Porsche Museum is 356-001, parked almost out of sight. It's the first time many of us have seen Number 1 since 1982 at Monterey — you might recall the car missed Porsche's 1998 50th Anniversary celebration at Monterey after it was damaged in transit. This benchmark automobile leads the parade laps when all the historic racing cars take an exhibition lap. The factory's America Roadster wasn't far behind, along with its Panamericana 550 and the 1973 Targa Florio-winning Carrera



RSR. Seeing all these cars circulate with Gulf 917s, a Jules 936, Interscope 935s, Rothmans 956s, a Löwenbräu 962, a Mobil 911 GT1, and hordes of other significant Porsche race cars from years past is a sight to be seen only at Rennsport. And you'll certainly need a track as big as Daytona to cram them on a single circuit at the same time.

Walking around the infield, I'm especially impressed by the willingness of owners and mechanics to talk about their cars, answer any questions, open doors and engine covers, and even push cars into the sunshine so fans can get a better shot. In the paddock, Alois Ruf is on hand to point out the features of his new RGT-RS, shown in stunning Mexico Blue. Nearby, a handsome silver 904/6 clone from England and a semi-convincing copy of a Gulf 917K (also with 911 power) draw admiring glances. There are stunning early 911 Turbos and soft-bumper 911s parked here and there for inspection, while a dark gray, road-registered 962 sits in front of a transporter. Look at it and you know it's got a story, but even the owner admits he's not sure what that story is — and he's consulted several street 962 experts. Walk around Rennsport and there are cars, stories, and mysteries everywhere.

It's all a bit overwhelming and, so far, we're only talking rolling stock. Wander

Something For Everyone: Mid-engined, front-engined, and rear-engined with four, six, and 10 cylinders—plus a turbo thrown in for good measure (1). Club racers were a major part of the show, giving PCA its first chance to run on the high banks of Daytona. The variety was fabulous, with 914s, 944s, a 996 Tip, 964s, 993s, 356s, 911s, and more all seen here (2-3).

through the paddock for a few minutes and you're likely to see familiar faces and famous names associated with Porsche success: Herbert Linge, Dan Gurney, Vic Elford, Denise McCluggage, Milt Minter, Brian Redman, Joe Buzzetta, Derek Bell, Jacky Ickx, Willi Kauhsen, Reinhold Joest, Hurley Haywood, Elliot Forbes-Robinson, Phil Busby, Vern Schuppan, Bobby Rahal, Dick Barbour, Bob Garretson, Price Cobb, Bruce Leven, Doc Bundy, Rick Bye, David Donohue, Dennis Aase, Danny Ongais, and the list of drivers goes on. Then there are the people *behind* the cars — like Norbert Singer, Valentine Schafer, Peter Falk, Hans Mezger, Alwin Springer, Klaus Bischof, Eckhard Schneider, and more. All are friendly and accessible, busily signing autographs and chatting with fans.

You'll need huge discipline to not get caught up in the vendors' midway. Need an original 550 Spyder owner's manual? You coulda had one. A set of rare, factory-issued place settings or Porsche

glassware from the 1950s? Right here! Paintings, toys, slot cars, sculptures, rare publications, and photographs are all on sale, too. How about several unique desk sets created by longtime East Coast Porsche distributor Max Hoffman as gifts for his top dealers? And this is only scratching the surface.

The infield straightaway stands are a good place to relax with a barbecue lunch during Saturday practice — and again to watch some racing on Sunday. I notice a gentleman sitting in front of me wearing a brand-new T-shirt from the 50th Anniversary celebration at Laguna Seca and we strike up a conversation. We agree that this is the best thing for Porsche people since that marvelous weekend. But is it *better*? If more race cars equates to "better," this certainly is. However, Monterey was the more selective event, bringing us the absolute crème de la crème. Rennsport's gaggle of club racing cars — while great to see — clogged the track up and relegated a lot of historic race cars to the garages for a fair amount of the weekend.

Call it a tossup — and start thinking about Rennsport Reunion III. If it holds true to the current logic, that should happen sometime in 2007. We hear rumors of making Daytona this event's permanent home, but we're kinda hoping the circus comes west next time! ♣