

## HOTMOD FAQ “It’s Grass Roots Racing, With A Modern Twist”

### I. Q: “What is a ‘HotMod’?”

A: The ‘HotMod’ is a hybrid race car. It combines the economical pure stock division suspension rules with the basic & standard construction rules of the modified division.

### Q: “What is the idea behind this class?”

A: The ‘HotMod’ is designed to encourage economical participation in racing for both the entry level competitor, as well as those unable or unwilling to devote the necessary time and funds to compete in the current pure stock, modified or late model style cars. Rules stability will allow prospective competitors the assurance that the car they prepare this year won't become technologically obsolete the next season. The ‘HotMod’ division rule book severely limits the amount of suspension fabrication work that can be done. While this somewhat levels the playing field, it serves a more important purpose: cost control. Properly maintained, a car can last several seasons. Additionally, building a ‘HotMod’ won’t require the purchase of a ‘racing chassis’ to be competitive. The required o.e.m. “stock” suspension mounting points eliminate that need. Also, this class will better ensure participant safety than the current support class divisions. Car construction specs mandate driver safety above all else.

### Q: “Why sanction this class?”

A: The purpose of sanctioning is primarily to protect every Hot Mod racer’s investment. By providing a standardized set of rules, it will benefit both the racers and the promoters. Getting everyone on a set of rules that all will adhere to avoids potential problems such as many of today’s Pure Stock racers encounter when attempting to race outside of their “home track”. Promoters will benefit from being relieved of the burden of rule research and interpretation, rule book distribution, and realize larger fields of cars and a healthier financial bottom line. Racers will benefit from a standardized set of rules which will allow them additional track options to compete at, knowing in advance that the rules are the same at tracks X, Y and Z. Racers will also have opportunities to run for year ending contingency awards and be able to see where they stack up against other competitors through a combined point structure identical to the TSMA “open” modifieds. Everyone benefits from a structured rule set that increases growth and insures fair competition through rule enforcement. After a single year of competition, the Hot Mod class interest shown by competitors and tracks alike has been beyond anything expected when the class was introduced. Because of this, it became obvious that there was a definite need to provide a common set of rules to maximize the class benefit for racers and track operators, alike. Sanctioning the Hot Mod division through TSMA eliminates the possibility of class rules being splintered by individuals choosing to interpret the rule book for their specific purposes, and by doing so harming everyone else, racers and promoters alike, in the process.

### Q: “How will the ‘HotMod’ be more economical?”

A: ‘HotMod’ engine rules are simple and easy to enforce fairly. Ignition and fuel delivery are designed to limit compression and rpm’s. Engine c.i.d. is limited by manufacturer, and rules to limit bore, stroke and compression will be enforced. The limiting of tire and suspension options should not only eliminate the need for monster engines, but encourage the use of less powerful, but more reliable smaller power plants. These lower compression engines will perform just as well on 92 octane pump gas as they will on racing fuel. The cost savings on fuel alone should encourage participation. Body rules allow for everything from o.e.m. to home-made bodies. This eliminates the expensive and fragile nose and tail pieces needed to make a ‘stock car’ look presentable. The use of the unaltered gm o.e.m. 4-link rear suspension minimizes chassis fabrication costs to the absolute minimum. By restricting the usage of purpose built racing parts, the class is designed to encourage and reward the resourcefulness of the ‘shade tree mechanic’, while keeping costs in check.

While no one can legislate irresponsible spending out of any class, these rules are designed to minimize the impact. It should be noted that there are currently variations of this class flourishing in most other parts of the country. Whether campaigning under the IMCA (Sportsmod), UMP (B-Mod) or SIMS modified banner, all have found a strong niche as a class for the economy minded racer and promoter.

The construction rules for the above mentioned groups are quite stringent in regards to the engines. Some require certain casting numbers cylinder heads for the visible external engine inspection. This is an easily enforceable rules concept. Others state that no internal engine modifications (porting & polishing, etc.) are allowed. These rules would require a much more thorough inspection process than what many track operators would find acceptable. The ‘Hot Mod’ rules are based on these same concepts, taking into

account what is currently workable for track operators and racers alike. The inspection is 90% visual, aided by a magnet, a tape measure (for the initial inspection) and a compression gauge. Removing valve covers is included and likewise would require little more than a visual inspection. Carburetors are also visual inspected, with possibly a bore gauge used as needed. Writing a set of rules which are unenforceable is a waste of time and effort.

Q: “Why an open wheel modified?”

A: The ‘HotMod’ car construction rules are based on the most popular class currently racing in the U.S. : the open wheel modified. Body construction rules allow for the most creativity with the least materials used of any current class in short track racing. Eliminating the need for nose pieces, tail pieces, and front fenders also eliminates the body parts most easily damaged and requiring replacement/repair. No class allows for a body to be built with less materials (all of which can be ‘home made’) than a modified. Detroit production bodies can be difficult to find, require a great deal of work to make ‘race ready’, and can be expensive. Some racers are already going to the expense of purchasing aftermarket bodies for these cars. Many other potential competitors are turned off from the pure stock division because of the requirements to work around rusty stock floor pans, trunk floors, inner fenders, etc. Modified bumper rules eliminate dangerous stock bumpers, and are much cheaper & easier to build than the ones currently used to back up the rubber nosepieces. Eliminating the rules requiring inner fenders, trunk floors, etc., as well as eliminating the front fenders make the car much easier to maintenance. In addition to being able to more easily maintain a good looking car of your own design, it will cut bodywork and car maintenance time (due to improved accessibility) drastically.

Q: “Will the current modifieds be able to run as ‘HotMods?’”

A: Not in their current design. None of the current competitive (TSMA, AMRA, UMP, IMCA, etc.) modified’s run the ‘HotMod’ rule mandated o.e.m. 4-link suspension. While a current modified could be used to construct a ‘HotMod’, it would require the installation or grafting of the required o.e.m. GM metric midsize passenger car rear frame and suspension to be legal. Many of the roll cage & body rules are similar (or in some cases identical) to the TSMA Modified sanctioning rules. This is simply to aid in the growth of the class, as the TSMA rules are the most widely used and accepted in the area for the current open wheel modified division. Nearly all of the current HotMods in competition originally began their lives as Late Model or Modifieds. A used and still safe “professionally built” chassis makes a great start on building a ‘HotMod’.

Q: “Can I convert my current pure stock?”

A: As long as the car meets the ‘HotMod’ construction requirements, it would be legal. For some, it may entail no more than changing their bumpers and removing the front fenders and nose piece. Please note, these rules were written with the economy racer in mind. It was intended to allow a transition period of a season or more to allow the ‘HotMod’ class to grow. Unfortunately, pure stock car counts have been on a slow but steady decline in the last 3 years. This is not unique to any area track, but instead seems to be a by-product of motor sports cycle. The evolution of the pure stock class is about to place it at a crossroads yet again. The current modifieds and late models have become so expensive to build and operate that only the most serious racers compete in these divisions. Rather than drastically change any class, this is an opportunity to get a class under control in regards to rules and cost, and still allow for current racers to compete with the equipment they presently have. No one wants to see the current racers have their equipment instantly obsoleted by the stroke of a pen. This eases the transition period for the racer. The ‘HotMod’ closely resembles a pure stock in many ways. Suspension rules are slightly more liberal, allowing for the use of stock located spring adjusters which require no fabrication. Transmission, rear end, wheel and tire rules for the ‘HotMod’ are the same as current pure stock rules. Body, safety and engine set back rules are the biggest difference.

Q: “I don’t want to have to build a body. What are my options?”

A: The rules don’t require that you fabricate or buy an aluminum racing body. Good looking cars can be created using light gauge sheet metal, as well. A Detroit o.e.m. body is just as acceptable, provided the ‘HotMod’ body rule dimensions are followed. The flexibility of ‘HotMod’ body rules encourage creativity for the racers, and provide variety for the fans.

In many ways, the ‘HotMod’ takes racing “back to the future”, where the car’s looks and performance were limited less by the size of the competitor’s wallet, but only by the creativity of the builder and crew.

***IT’S GRASS ROOTS RACING, WITH A MODERN TWIST!***

Q: “I want to race, but I can’t afford to buy a chassis to be competitive.”

A: The ‘HotMod’ rules were written so that the prospective racer who wants to build his own car can do so, and be just as competitive as the next guy. By requiring the rear suspension to be the unaltered o.e.m. 4 link design, and limiting the amount of suspension fabrication to an optional relocation of the o.e.m. front upper control arm mounts, just about anyone with access to a caster/ camber gauge, torches, a welder and other basic automotive tools can build a competitive car. There are chassis manufacturers who build this type of race car, but it is not a ‘high tech’ item, therefore the demand isn’t great. The reason being is that nearly any seasoned racer can order a cage kit and build one from scratch on their own just as well. Most pure stock racers currently do this already, and do it working around more difficult rules than required to construct a ‘HotMod’. Old late model and modified chassis’s are always available for sale, or can be found very reasonably priced at auctions. These frames and cages can be mated into an o.e.m. frame, or converted to make an excellent start for any ‘HotMod’ chassis. Again, this class is targeted at those who want to race competitively, and do so without breaking the family budget. The rules allow for some chassis adjustment, but more importantly place a premium on mechanical ingenuity and driver skill for success.

Q: “What are the benefits of sanctioning to the racer?”

A: Primarily, as stated previously, it is a protection for your investment. Of all the area support classes, only the current open wheel modifieds provide class stability and the opportunity to race at multiple tracks without unrealistic equipment changes. Providing the TSMA sanctioning banner for ALL ‘HotMod’ competitors will allow the racers opportunities they would never have otherwise. The ability to run at multiple tracks can’t be understated. TSMA has graciously agreed to sanction the class, and do this under the existing rules as provided. Conversations with TSMA founder Tye Twarog have shown that he understands the class rules and concepts of economical participation that the ‘HotMod’ division was initialized and intended to forward. It is a mutual agreement that there is a need for an economy rear wheel drive style of race car to encourage growth and participation on the local level. *This class will continue to run a D.O.T. mandated tire for competition!* That said, any contingencies awarded will likely come in the form of parts or services, not cash. The street tire rule is part of the concept of affordable competition, and is an integral part (along with engine, carburetion, ignition and suspension limitations) of keeping the cost of the class under control. All ‘HotMod’ division licensed drivers in good standing will be eligible for the year end point championship and contingency awards. Point structure will be the same as the TSMA ‘open’ modifieds, and will consist of the same amount of weeks of competition.

Please note: *TSMA Hot Mod sanctioned tracks will provide their own purse structures, rules for competition, etc.* TSMA is simply a sanctioning body, providing a common set class construction rules designed to insure fair competition, stability for the racers and class growth for the tracks. TSMA Hot Mod driver’s licenses will be \$25.00, and must be paid in advance of competition. This money will be used to administrate all things involving the Hot Mod division, including (but not limited to) points recording, website, clerical, administrative, etc., costs. *There is no cost involved to any Hot Mod sanctioned track!* In summary, this class may not be for everyone. It is designed in every way to promote a class of race car that is safe, good looking, easy to inspect, fun to race and most importantly, economical to build, maintain and compete in. When racing becomes a burden on time and finances, the “fun factor” quickly pegs on EMPTY. Those with unlimited resources may be better suited to another class.

***The sole intention for the TSMA Hot Mod division is to provide a benefit to racers and track promoters alike.***

Q: “I’m interested, but don’t understand all the rules. Who can I contact for answers to any questions I may have?”

A: Steve Davis is the contact for the HotMod division.

The Hot Mod division has a dedicated e-mail address to direct correspondence in regards to Hot Mod questions @

[hotmod09@hotmail.com](mailto:hotmod09@hotmail.com).

The Hot Mod mailbox is checked on a daily basis. I will gladly research and provide the answers to your questions in a timely manner.

On a side note: The ‘HotMod’ rules are not intended for redistribution unless for TSMA approved purposes and consent, and are not open for individual revision, interpretation or use.

Please do not plagiarize (to steal or pass off the words or ideas of another as one’s own) these rules, they

are in the process of being copyrighted.

The 'HotMod' rules are in no way a guarantee of safety. Racing is a dangerous sport, and any competitor or others involved assume all risk for their own personal safety.