

Fatal 944 incident at Daytona

Posted by GaryM05 - 29 Aug 2009 01:29

A recent racing accident at Daytona resulted in the very unfortunate loss of a 944 racer. Fire played a significant role in this accident. There's been a lot of discussion about this elsewhere, but I haven't seen anything on our various 944-spec sites yet so thought I'd post this here to make sure that none of us missed this.

Lots of detail on what can be learned from the accident here:

<http://forum.specmiata.com/cgi-bin/ultim...i?/topic/31/192.html>

A few pics showing the extent of the fire:

<http://s573.photobucket.com/albums/ss175...tty/Daytona%20Fire/?>

RIP Alan Burgess

Re:Fatal 944 incident at Daytona

Posted by Weston - 29 Aug 2009 01:56

Yeah, I've seen this on all the other forums too. It was said that he attempted to drive the car to the next corner worker station, rather than just stopping when he saw the flames and getting out...

As we saw in Chris' fire, a worker station isn't going to be able to put out a gasoline fire. They are only meant to get the driver out of the car. So, if you want to save your car from burning, it doesn't matter where you stop because you're going to be waiting for the fire crew to show up anyway. And if you want to save yourself from burning, stop and get out as soon as you can. If you leave a fire burning under the hood, it's only a matter of time until you lose the brakes and can't stop.

Obviously, hindsight is 20/20 and this is a mistake that a lot of us could have made. Like many things in racing, it really helps to have decisions for certain scenarios made ahead of time, rather than having to figure it out while under pressure and short on time.

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Re:Fatal 944 incident at Daytona

Posted by Big Dog - 29 Aug 2009 02:41

This is VERY important and it was NOT posted on our forum. This is the first I have heard about it. Shame on me (and us).

I have been known as a bit of a nag about safety issues to those in the regions I race in. I must say, however, that I am remiss in a number of areas that this brings up. Here are the issues that I need to fix prior to Miller.

Seal up holes in fire wall and floor.

Fire resistant boot for shifter. (Simpson piece)

Battery shut off more accessible to both driver and safety crew.

Better identification of shut off.

Fire system pull more accessible to safety crew.

Better identification of fire system pull handle.

Better system for fire bottle pin identification to ensure that it is pulled.

Practice in exiting the car.

Thanks for posting this on our forum.

Jim

Re:Fatal 944 incident at Daytona

Posted by Gary_44 - 30 Aug 2009 09:37

Tragic. Hard pics to look at, especially heartbreaking to see the pin still in the bottle.

Re:Fatal 944 incident at Daytona

Posted by fishguy - 30 Aug 2009 13:43

Jim,

your NOT, and nobody ever is a nag when it comes to safety issues. please be vocal!

I saw the thread in the SM forum(i just bought an SM).

I should have thought to post it here, but didnt.

off topic;

Can you believe i got a lot of crap from people in another club when i said something about not having any corner workers in turn one at firebird.

i was persistant, and they placed a worker there(that made 3!!! workers for the entire track crew), but it left me with very little confidence in the clubs safety resources.

it wasnt NASA, SCCA or HSR West(lets leave it at that)

I now dont run with them any longer.

be safe, and for those of use who use a fire suppression system, make sure you remove the safety pin(s) before going out on track.

I found mine left in once when i ran my formula ford, and it wont EVER happen again.

my pit crew handed it to me after i got out of the car.

we didnt need to talk about it, i knew i screwed up, but got away easy that time.

Another thing to think about is if you dont use a fire suppression system think about investing in one.

have at least one nozzle to spray you down in the event of it being employed

It can buy you the precious time needed to get out of the car. the hand held bottle IMO is just a placebo,

and does nothing to protect YOU, its really just for the car, and to pass the rules at a minumum.

if my car is ever burning and i am outside of the car, i will NOT make any attempt to save it. i am out of the car.....period.

let the fire crew deal with it.....its just a car, and me being out of the car and harms way is what is important.

my car is the easiest thing to replace in this situation.

tragic to have heard about Mr. Burgess

Josh

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Re:Fatal 944 incident at Daytona

Posted by Doc c - 30 Aug 2009 20:50

Sealing the Firewall is a valuable step that can and will by you time in the event of a fire. I know first hand from a fire that broke out in a 78 trans am I used to drag race that ran on alcohol. I had a massive fire under the hood and at 175mph you just cant stop right away. And once you do, you still need to unharness and get out.

A fire suppression system, can be had or made up rather easily. Everyone *should have one. I mean, we spend how much for parts and other goodies? The cost of an older fire

extinguisher is less than some stickers or a nice dinner. Forget saving the car, have nozzle pointed at you or the cockpit area to by some critical time to unharness and get the heck out.

there is no shame in doing practice runs of getting out of the care. When I did the Barber racing school, the instuctor had us practice several times, unharnessing, pulling the wheel, pulling the window pin and getting out.
