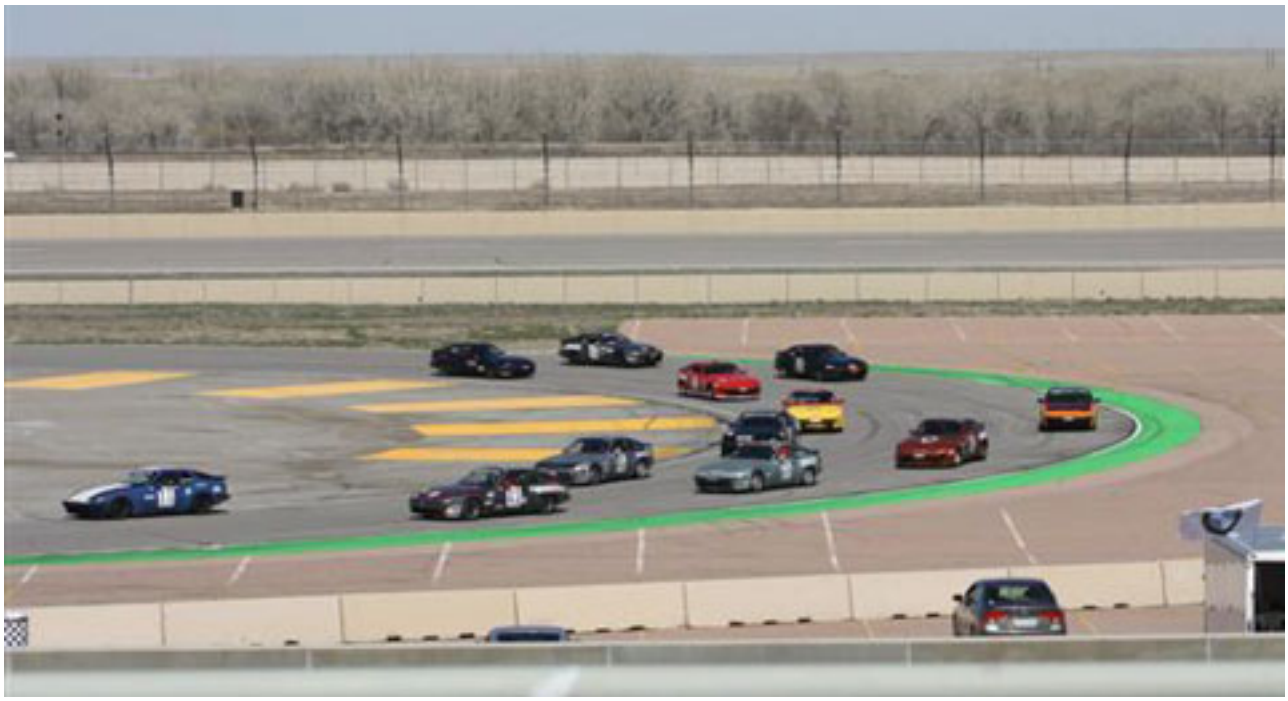
The *"Tornado"* season has started early this year in Colorado. Shane *"The Tornado"*
Ballard opened the 2010 season swinging for the fence and he was rewarded with not one but TWO 944-spec wins in the season opener at Pikes Peak International raceway.



The 2010 season seemed to be starting out a little odd for the Rocky Mountain Region of NASA with no event in March and a few cars changing hands in the off season. Throughout this unrest *"The Tornado"* stayed focused using this extra time off to do a valve job on his LOW COMPRESSION ENGINE and change tires on his 944-spec racer. He would not be distracted.

Ashley Burt assumed the role of *"Chuck Taylor"* bringing home two second place finishes. His off season had him extra busy fixing a small oil leak. His brand of overkill was to complete an entire engine swap to ensure years of reliable service.

Sunday Race

Sunday had last year's champions making big changes to reclaim the top spots destined to prove Saturdays fluke of a victory. Qualifying would be the first chance to prove this . TEN cars qualified just about ONE second apart but leading this horde was again the Tornado #11. By how much ... nearly a full second ! The big surprise outside of Shane was the number 67 of Tim Yungeberg who was just learning the day before now qualified center pack in the 6th position.

Sunday's qual race gave some poor qualifiers a chance to move up. The 96 and 913 had a photo finish for 4th place. The Main for Sunday previously thought of as a chance to reclaim dominance was now in doubt. Could the 11 of Tornado Ballard hold on to sweep the weekend ... yep.

Dirks made a huge jump to the inside on the start of Sunday's race. Ashley *"the dude"* held a gear for a few strokes too long and was getting passed like a wounded AI car. At the front the 11 assumed his place at the front while the 96 started chasing. Ashley feeling the pressure from Dirks tried to cover the inside too late, his moved forced Dirks to tap his brakes and that was enough for the 913 to skip on by coming out of 2. When asked later Chuck only said *"Hell no I was not gonna lift, Hold it to the wood and let the rough side drag BABY"*

Venturini starting from the back made numerous sly moves rushing through 5 cars on his way to 5th. In only his second race Tim broke into the top 10 fighting for numerous laps with Big Mike, Dale and Oliver.

In the end the 11 and 43 were too much for Dave *"not so"* Wright and with a sweep of 1st and 2nd places those drivers seem in firm control of the season points . With great racing and no damaged cars 944-spec racing in the Rocky Mountain region of NASA will continue to be the largest single class. Pueblo just 3 weeks away will bring the big dogs out of retirement and the Tornado is sure to be tamed ... or will it storm ...

Stay tuned Storm chasers this season is going to be AWESOME!

Picture credits go to Mitchell Taylor and www.ironhorseracing.com .