

Crystal Bay Club owner buys auto racing's SCORE International

By Autoweek

Culminating a deal that has been in the works for the last year, Sal Fish, longtime president of desert racing sanctioning body SCORE International, has sold the organization to racer and businessman Roger Norman. The sale marks the culmination of a lifetime of work for the seller.

Fish got his start in desert racing when he was still in the publishing business. After a disastrous though entertaining attempt at the Baja 1000 as a driver in the early 1970s, he was hooked. He learned the race sanctioning trade under SCORE founder Mickey Thompson and took over the organization shortly afterward. Fish, who is 73, has run it for most of SCORE's 39 years.

"Next to my wife Barbara, SCORE has been the love of my life, my passion and I have left my blood, sweat and tears in the desert of Baja California, Mexico, and in the USA in Arizona, California and Nevada," said Fish in a SCORE release. "I believe fervently that this is the time to pass the torch to the next generation and Roger Norman is a great racer with a big vision, superb business acumen and I know I leave my 'baby' in good hands. I know I'll wake up tomorrow wondering what did I do, but I have had a phenomenal run and I wouldn't change a thing. I have been able to grow this sport to the level it has reached and now Roger and his team will take it to the next level. I have no regrets and I leave knowing I have left a good legacy for the sport to continue to move forward in for the next 40 years."

New owner Norman comes from a racing family. His father Don

entered cars in IMSA races, according to Norman's website. His stepfather is the late Unlimited hydroplane racer Bill Muncey. Roger Norman's first race was in a Class 1 buggy in the 1996 Best in the Desert Vegas-to-Reno. Within two years he was part of the legendary Rod Hall's off-road team. From there he ran in the Baja Challenge class before forming Norman Motorsports in 2008 to race in the showcase Trophy Truck class. As an organizer and sanctioning body head he resurrected the old High Desert Racing Association (HDRA) last year.

Norman owns, among other properties, the Crystal Bay Club Casino at Lake Tahoe.

"For me it's a dream come true," said Norman regarding his acquisition of SCORE. "Sal Fish is the godfather of this sport and it is an honor to move forward with the incredible legacy he has left our sport with SCORE International. We have been talking about this for over a year, but I knew I had to learn all sides of the sport before I could be in a position to make a solid offer to Sal.

"I have tremendous respect for the future of the sport and the leadership role of SCORE International," Norman said.

Norman has big plans for the sport, announcing three separate championships for 2013: HDRA, SCORE, and a new world championship. The world championship will be comprised of three HDRA races in America and three SCORE races in Baja. The World Championship is the culmination of six of the seven races of the HDRA and SCORE race series with the Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 (Nov. 14-17, 2013) in Ensenada, Mexico as the deciding factor with double points. The first race is the HDRA South Point Vegas 250, Jan. 12 in Jean, Nev.

Norman also has big plans for televising the sport.

"Races will be nationally televised in the U.S. and we will provide greater details of our plans over the next two weeks," Norman said. "The vision of a world championship will be

monumental for our sport. We will look forward to honoring the legacy of SCORE and the colossal contribution to our sport by Sal Fish at the SCORE Awards Night on Jan. 12.”

The awards night will be Jan. 12 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Spa in Newport Beach honoring the Champions of 2012 and ushering in a new and exciting era for SCORE International.