

by Meagan

I would like to give a special thank you to all of the great Corvette folks who helped us out over our horrible weekend. The show and the autocross were great, it was just our horrible break-



down extravaganza that put a damper on the weekend for us. Several of you know the story but here it is:

We left Olympia for Portland at about 10pm on Friday night (late start due to my husband having to do some last minute fixes to the Yellow car: water pump gasket and overflow canister needed replaced suddenly). I should have taken that as a sign, but being the NWACC points chaser that I am (and the Prez), I wanted to take both cars (the yellow one to show and the red one to race). It is usually about a 2 hour drive. My husband hit the road headed south with the truck and enclosed car trailer pulling the race car. I told him I would catch up with him, because I needed to stop at the bank. I hit the freeway shortly thereafter. We live at exit 114 off of I-5.

At milemarker 35 (near Kelso) I noticed that the yellow car was running hot. About a minute later I saw sparks shooting out the wheel wells, and noticed what appeared to be a lot of smoke. I looked at the temperature gauge and it was pegged in the red at 280 degrees. I immediately called my husband (Mike) on my cell phone and told him I thought that my car was on fire, and swirled from the inside lane to the outside shoulder. In one fell swoop, I unclicked my 3 year old daughter's seat-belt, grabbed her by the arm and drug her out of the car while unhooking the fire extinguisher with the other hand. She was asleep up until that moment, so I scared the sh\*\* out of her, and she was screaming as I dropped her on the side of I-5 and told her to stay back. I reached in the car which still appeared to be 'smoking' really bad from the hood area, and popped the hood. I had pulled the pin on the extinguisher and was ready for the worst. Only to find that it was not smoke, but steam from my radiator overflow which had blown all over the engine compartment because the belt came off of the water pump. Whew! No fire!

My husband was 5 miles south of me at that time, so he had to turn around, head back north, then head south again to get to me. He arrived, and we used a screwdriver to pry the belt back on the water pump. We had two one gallon containers of water in the back of the truck, and put that in the car. Then, back on the road...

For about one mile, then the car overheated again, and I pulled to the side of I-5. Popped the hood, and... the belt is off again? Remember when I told you there were sparks shooting out of the wheel wells? That was because the bearing in the water pump went out, and the pulley and fan were chopping away at the water pump! It didn't just slip the belt, it was screwed! Now what do we do? By this time it was about midnight. No one is up, no one is open, and we are over 75 miles from home! But still had a good 45 miles from the hotel!

A WSP officer stopped about 20 minutes later to see what we were doing, oh and to tell us that the train that was running on the tracks right beside where we were broke down, derails in that exact location at least once every 5-10 years (so watch out)! Thanks for that tidbit.

I ended up calling Hagerty (our insurance co.) to see about our roadside assistance. They told me that they would send a flatbed to pick me up, but that they could only take us less than 10 miles to a gas station or whatever. Well at that point in time Kalama at exit 30 was the closest location, but there is nothing open in that town after about 6pm! So we waited an hour for a tow truck, and then got towed to Kalama and dumped off under a street light in a parking lot. It was about 2am. Mike then used our lack of tools (a crescent wrench, screwdriver, and a couple other odds and ends) to remove the water pump from the race car (in the trailer) to put it on the street car. The cop asked us why we wouldn't just pull the one car out and the other in, but the problem is that the race car has absolutely NO LIGHTS! And we were broke down on a stretch of I-5 that also has not lights. So after draining all of the anti-freeze onto the floor of our trailer and half of our stuff being soaked, Mike was able to get the pump and fan off of the race car. Then he proceeded to the yellow car. Then he had to struggle to get the plugs out of one pump and put in the other, because the race car doesn't have a heater core or any of those frills. After taking about 3 hours to change to water pumps, fans, pulleys, etc. the yellow car was ready to roll again. It was now 5am Saturday. We had a hotel that we paid for in Portland for Friday night too, and the show starts at 7am!

By this time, the gas station is now open, so we can put water in the yellow car. Oh, but wait; the water doesn't work! We had to walk with one gallon jugs in and out of the store to fill from the sink. We get back on the freeway, and one mile later: the yellow car is overheating, again! I pull off to the side and pop the hood. The belt is gone! It broke. So we pull the belt from the race car, but it is too small. So Mike has to pull the valve covers, to move the alternator, to get the belt on. Use the breaker bar to pry the alternator back so that he can put the valve cover back on the car. Add some more water: and walah! We are back in business!?

For one mile. I hear a weird noise and something shoots out from under the car! Then the car is again over heating again. I pull off to the side of I-5 AGAIN! I pop the hood, and the belt is off? That belt was tight! Apparently so tight that it was able to shear the pulley on the alternator in half!? Unbelievable? Well I saw the shiny object in the middle of the freeway, so I looked for coming cars, and ran out to get it! It was the sheered pulley. I figured I had to keep it or no one would believe me! Luckily we had a brand new alternator in the trailer. We had bought it for the race car, but it was the wrong one. But, it was the right one for the



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