

So, You Need Race Numbers

By Doug McMahan

The 2006 NCCC Competition Season is approaching fast and some of us are scrambling to round things up. If one of those items includes competition numbers for your Vette. There are a couple of options, keeping in mind that most of us do not want permanent numbers stuck to our Vette's paint. Here is a 10-step method to create your own low-cost numbers.

If you are going to compete most of the season, you can obtain a permanent (SW Region) competition number from Walt Zschirnt. However, if you are only going to compete in a few events, it is not recommended to request one but to utilize the number that they issue you at each event.

If you do not pre-register for an event with a number, the Host Club will assign you one by the time you check-in at the event. Obtaining an assigned number at the event does make things a little more difficult to have good looking, 6" number (NCCC rule) on your Vette. This means you need a template for every number (0-9) along with your number material and scissors with you, in order to cut out competition numbers at the event.

As for permanent numbers, the Top 10 Men & Women for the previous competition year have the option to run their finishing position (for numbers) in the subsequent year. For all other permanent numbers, the number must be higher than 200 but that does allow you to request numbers utilizing dates, like Birthdays or Anniversaries, which Walt confirms the availability. If you can't come up with a permanent number you'd like to utilize, you can usually bank that your 3-digit NCCC number is usually available.

For simplicity, we utilized a 4-digit number 2752, which provides a permanent number for Glenda and myself. I run 275, crossing out the last #2 and Glenda runs 752, crossing out the first #2 – both of our permanent numbers represent February of 1975, which is our wedding anniversary ☺



For the rest of this article, we will focus on how to create an inexpensive, paint-safe, good-looking set of competition numbers for your Vette.

Step 1: visit your favorite discount store and buy a roll of "Contact" shelf paper in the color you would like your competition numbers – it usually runs between four and eight dollars a roll, depending on the color and/or pattern chosen.

Step 2: use 80# heavy printer paper to print your numbers on, creating your number and alignment stencils.

Step 3: utilize your favorite computer program (i.e. MS Word, Photoshop, Paintbrush, etc.) to create your 6" tall numbers. If you do not have a large format printer, you may need to print one, maybe two numbers per sheet of paper.



Step 4: once you have your numbers printed on the 80# paper, take a pair of scissors and carefully cut them out. Remember, you will be tracing around these over and over – any rough cuts on the stencil will result in it being transferred to the actual numbers for your Vette. You now have cut-out stencils ☺



Step 5: if you destroyed the paper around the numbers accomplishing step three, print a second set of numbers on the 80# paper. Cut out the numbers again but try to keep the area around the numbers in tack this time. This will become your alignment template to help position the numbers on your Vette.

Step 6: now that you have your templates made, take your roll of Contact paper and turn it face down on a hard surface. Take one of the number stencils, turn it face down (reversed), on the back of the Contact paper. Hold it in securely in place with one hand while you trace around the number stencil with a pen; transferring the number outline to the back of the Contact paper. Repeat this step for each of the numbers that you need; one set of numbers for both sides of your Vette.



Step 7: Carefully cut out each of the numbers following the traced lines on the back of the Contact paper. For numbers like 6, 9, 0, etc., it is recommended to utilize an Xacto knife, on a piece of glass or mirror, since scissors can't cut inside, easily.

Step 8: Now that you have your numbers cut out for both sides of your Vette, take the alignment stencil and position it where you want to place your numbers (i.e. door, front fenders, side of your rear window [coupe]) – use painter's tape at each corner to hold it in place for step 8.

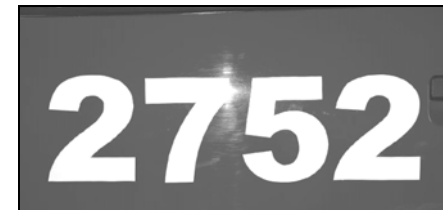


Step 9: Take one number at a time, peel about half of the backing off the Contact paper for that number. Carefully align the number (non sticky part) in the appropriate position in the alignment template – then lightly press the sticky part of the number to the surface. Once you have that half of the number positioned, remove the remaining backing paper, pressing the rest of the number down. Continue this process for each number

on that side of the car. Move your alignment stencil to the other side of your Vette and repeat the process.



Step 10: with the alignment stencil out of the way, take a soft cotton rag and gently smooth out the numbers, removing wrinkles and bubbles. Note: Since Contact paper is low-tack, you may carefully lift it to remove any wrinkles and bubbles, before you continue with smoothing it down, using the rag.



Time to have fun – the numbers are visible on the track



Note: If all of this is too much trouble, go out to a local vinyl graphics shop, or you can search eBay for one or Google the Internet for an on-line graphics store. They typically charge between one and two dollars for a six inch tall number. These typically aren't real low-tack, so you don't want to leave them on your paint more than a couple of days. That is where this option starts getting very expensive.

If you have any questions, give me a buzz and look for #2_L6 on the track this year, Glenda being #2 and myself being #6 in 05 ☺

Regards,

Douglas McMahan – Cowtown Racing