

# The *SESUG* Informant



## SESUG Proudly Welcomes All Our Attendees (Back) to ATLANTA, GA!

We are pleased to welcome you to Atlanta and the 14<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the SouthEast SAS Users Group, SESUG 2006. It's been a decade since we visited Atlanta for SESUG 1996—and we are glad to be back!



We would like to acknowledge and thank the section chairs, speakers, registration and session coordinators who all contributed to the success of the conference. SESUG is an all-volunteer organization and the annual conference would not be possible without the efforts of our dedicated volunteers.

We hope you enjoy the presentations and activities you attend here as much as we enjoyed planning them. If this is your first SESUG, then you are in for an exciting and informative conference. If you have attended SESUG before, you know that SESUG offers top-notch papers and a collegial atmosphere.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to the conference sponsors who help make the conference possible. Please stop by the Demo Room and say hello at the sponsor booths. You can also get more information about our 2006 Conference sponsors at the SESUG website, [www.sesug.org](http://www.sesug.org).

Several of you arrived at the conference early – or are staying later – in order to take advantage of the additional learning opportunities being provided in conjunction with the conference. SESUG is pleased to offer 6 Sunday workshops by nationally recognized instructors for a modest additional fee. The Atlanta SAS Training Center also is offering a discount on selected SAS Training classes offered immediately before and after the SESUG conference.

And finally, we thank SAS for their generous support. This year, 14 students will be attending SESUG, using scholarships provided by SAS. In early spring, SESUG solicited applications from university students who use SAS in their studies and we were overwhelmed by the response. It was a difficult decision to select the 14 winners. You can recognize the scholarship winners by the pink ribbons on their badges. In addition, many of the winners are presenting papers at the conference – those are marked by a mortar board icon in your program.

The SESUG 2006 conference includes a comprehensive lineup of over 120 presentations. These presentations cover a wide range of topics and skill levels. They were carefully selected with an emphasis on practical application and real-world solutions. We are confident you will find some very useful tips and techniques here and that you will go home with an expanded practical knowledge of SAS.

Besides the annual conference, SESUG conducts a number of year-round activities including a semi-annual newsletter and a speaker sharing program to provide SAS presentations to

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|  |    |
|--|----|
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Special points of interest:

- Celebrating Our Second Atlanta Conference!
- SESUG heads for Hilton Head in 2007
- Hints, tips, tricks, techniques, and more!



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local users groups in the southeastern United States. You can find out what SESUG is all about by visiting [www.sesug.org](http://www.sesug.org).

The conference kicks off Sunday evening with the Opening Session. We are honored this year to have Kathy Council, SAS Vice President for Publications, as our Keynote Speaker for our Opening Session. It's



been several years since we have seen her at SESUG – we hope she comes back much sooner the next time. We hope you will help make Kathy feel welcome as she tells us about the SAS philosophy of putting customers first – and how that has made SAS a leading software company and SAS users some of the most loyal in the software industry.

Monday kicks off the presentations with 7 concurrent sessions running all day Monday. Be sure to stop by the Poster Café in the Georgia Prefunction area between noon and 1:30 to meet the poster authors.

Also make sure you stop by the Demo Room and sign up for one of the SAS e-learning modules. These self-directed e-learning modules give you an opportunity to learn by doing at your own pace. This is a first for SESUG and we are pleased to provide this educational opportunity. Please take one for a spin and let us know what you think about this new feature!!!

Monday afternoon winds down with the SAS Customer Appreciation Mixer in the SAS Demo Room. Take advantage of the hospitality and mingle with other SESUG attendees and SAS staff while enjoying some delicious food and drinks. This reception is provided by SAS as a way to say thank you to their valuable SAS users.

Tuesday morning is another presentation-filled morning with 6 concurrent sessions. The conference closes at noon on Tuesday with a light lunch and Keynote speaker. David Baggett, SAS Director of Executive and User Events, will talk with us about the relationship between SAS and its users.

The Closing Session will follow immediately, with the SESUG 2007 co-chairs, Joy Smith and Ed Heaton, introducing you to the 2007 conference and what they have in store for next year. There will be prizes and it promises to be a fun and entertaining way to wrap up this year's conference.

And while we are all at the conference to learn and network, there is still time to get out and see some of the sights around our host city of Atlanta. If you can only get out for one outing, we personally recommend the Georgia Aquarium – opened in November of 2005 as the World's Largest Aquarium and located just a short taxi ride away from the conference hotel. Visit the Sheraton Hotel concierge or the aquarium's website at [www.georgiaaquarium.org](http://www.georgiaaquarium.org) for information about tickets and hours.

Have fun at SESUG 2006! We are very proud of the lineup of presentations and activities offered and the educational opportunity this conference represents for the SAS User Community. Thanks for attending and we hope you will consider making SESUG an annual tradition!



Marje Fecht  
Academic Chair  
Prowerk Consulting Ltd.



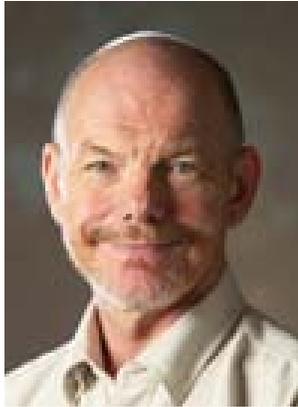
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*Peter is a long time SAS consultant, a certified SAS professional, and a SAS Alliance Partner. Although he enjoys working with SAS and teaching his EG classes, he does take time to speak and generally hob-nob with friends and strangers alike at SESUG, NESUG, SUGI and soon SGF. He is the co-chair of the upcoming SESUG 2008. And when he is not working, Peter partakes in the great outdoors, either paddling his home-made cedar canoe, or snowshoeing and camping with his home-made ash snowshoes.*



## Inaugural Column:

# *The Enterprise Guide Guy!*

Welcome to the newest addition to the SESUG newsletter ... The **Enterprise Guide Guy**. This regular column will cover one or two aspects of SAS Enterprise Guide 4.1 (EG) in each issue. If you have any questions about EG, have any suggestions for topics you would like to see covered, or have any tips and tricks of your own you would like to share feel free to contact me at [egg@fernwood.ca](mailto:egg@fernwood.ca).

In this issue we are going to look at some of the features that were added in EG 4.1, in particular:

- o Exporting results to Excel as a Process Step
- o Emailing results as a Process Step

We will also look at a simple to use documenting feature of EG – Notes.

### Exporting results to Excel as a Process Step

“Can I have that in Excel?” This is a refrain we have all heard at some point. In PC/SAS you could use a PROC EXPORT to create an Excel file on a local drive for your use, or on a shared network drive for others to use. If you are using a local server for EG 4 you can also use PROC EXPORT. However, once you start to use a SAS Workspace Server on another computer, PROC EXPORT may not work as expected. All of the drive references in your program refer to the drives as seen by the server computer. So, if you export to C:\TEMP\mytable.xls, EG will try to write the workbook to the C: drive **on the server**; this is probably not what you want. First, there is a good chance the export will fail since you probably do not have write privileges to the C: drive of server; it is unusual for most users to have write access to the server's local drive. And if you try to write to a shared network drive you can run into problems if the drive is not mapped to the same drive letter as you use. Moreover, that shared

drive may not even be mapped or accessible by the server machine your EG Workspace Server is running on. In EG 3 you could manually export the results, and now in EG 4 you can have the export as a step in your process flow.

To add an export step in your process flow:

- o Right click on the table you want to export
  - o Select Export.... Export as a step in project
- o Select the table you want to export
  - o By default the table you selected in the project is highlighted
- o Follow the steps in the export wizard (Note, the steps the wizard takes you through will vary depending upon the export destination. The following assumes the destination will be an Excel file)
  - o Select the type of export (e.g. Microsoft Excel File)
  - o Check the 'Use labels for column names' if you want to use your SAS labels as column names
  - o Specify the output location on your local computer
  - o Verify the options on the summary screen and press Finish

The following figures show the steps required.

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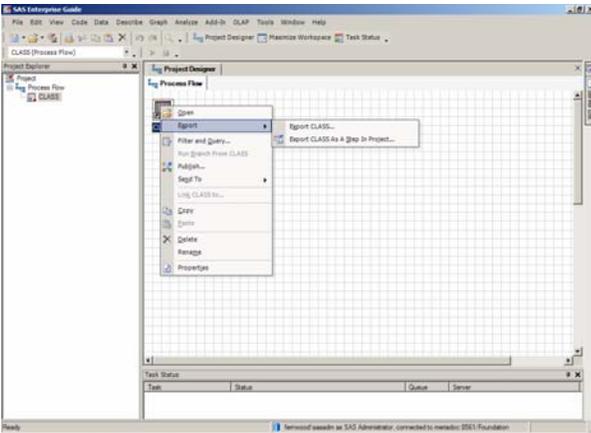


Figure 1 – Exporting as a Step in a Project



Figure 2 – Selecting the results to export

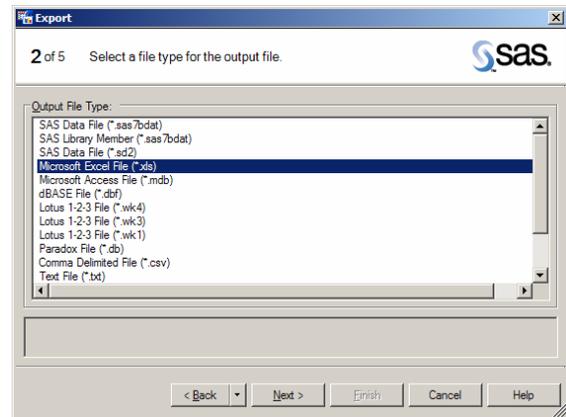


Figure 3 – Selecting the type of export

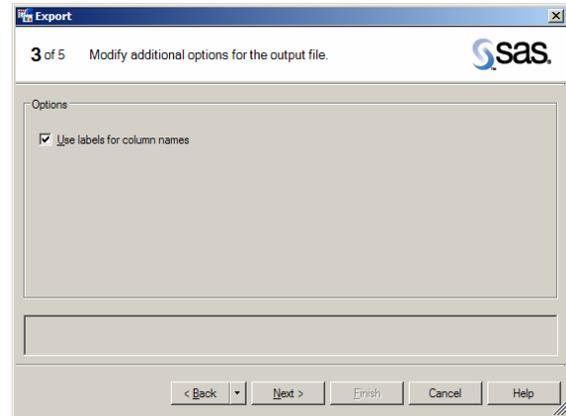


Figure 4 – Using labels as column headers

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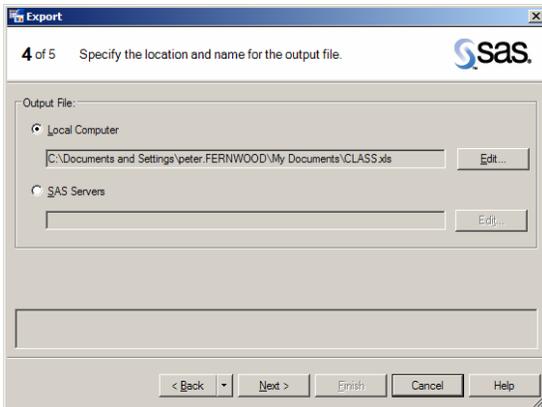


Figure 5 – Selecting the output destination

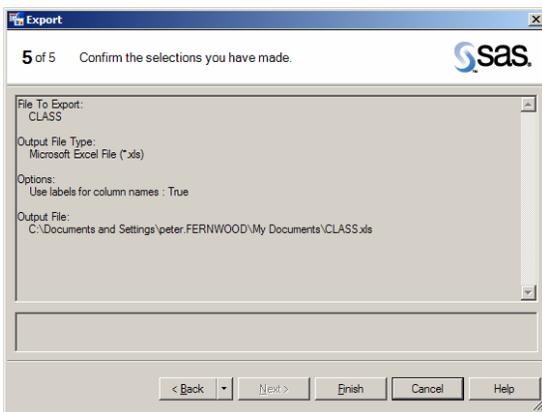


Figure 6 – Confirming the export selections

**E-mailing results as a Process Step**

Now that you have seen how to add an “export results” as a step in a project you will see that adding an “email results” is very similar. However, before you can email the results there are two things you have to do. First, you have to verify that your company allows the automatic sending of results by email. Because of the possibility of a program running amuck and sending out untold copies of the results, and because of the possibility of security breaches many companies do not allow the use of automatic emailing. Once you have verified your company policy allows automatic emailing you have to give EG the information it needs to email; this is done in the options screen. You may need to go to your email administrator to get the appropriate settings.

As with exporting a file, you start by right clicking on the result you want to email. From the pop-up menu select *Sent To .... Email Recipient as a Step in Project*. From there, follow the steps in the wizard. The screen shots below show the steps; as you can see the steps are very similar to exporting a file.

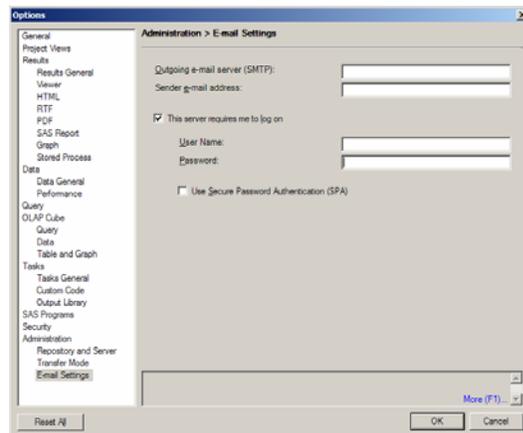


Figure 7 – The email settings

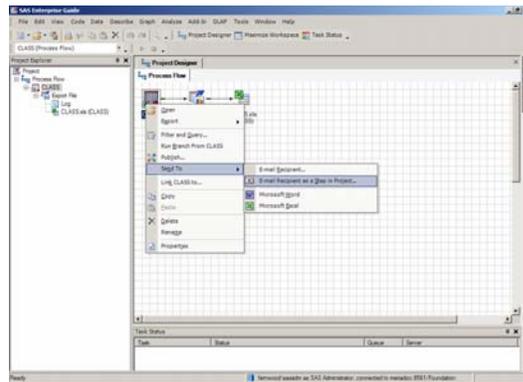


Figure 8 – Selecting the email as

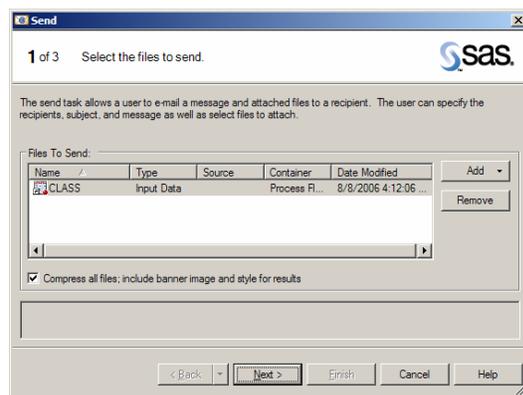


Figure 9 – Selecting the results

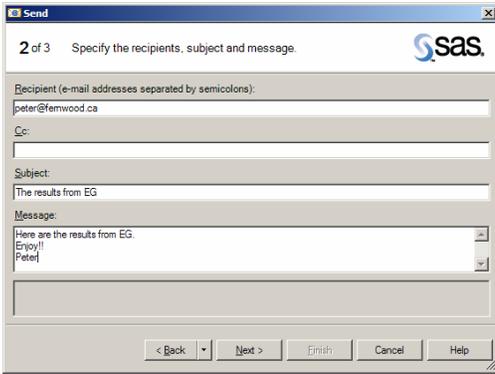


Figure 10 – Selecting the recipient

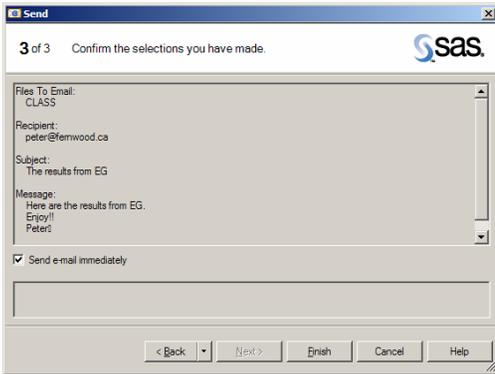


Figure 11 – Confirming selections

### Linking Notes to a Project or Task

The final feature we will look at is adding notes to the project. You can add notes as 'free standing' parts of your project, or link them to specific steps in the project. A 'free standing' note can be useful to provide an overall level of documentation to your project. A note attached to a task can be used to give more detail as to what you are intending your task to do; for some of us what we want to happen and what does happen do not always coincide.

To add a note to the overall project, simply right click anywhere on the project palette and select *New...Note*. Doing so will put you into an editor pad where you enter the text of your note.

To add a note to a step in a project is slightly different. First select the step to which you want to link the note, then, from the *File* menu select *New .... Note*, Again you are put into an editor pad.

With either type of note, free standing or linked to a step, you can rename it from the generic Note, Note1 etc. by right clicking on the note and selecting *Rename*. I like to create a note called *Instructions* which I place in the upper left hand corner of the designer palette. This note contains any information needed to use the project.

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Andrew T. Kuligowski has been a SAS user for over 20 years, with experience in the petrochemical and media research industries as well as in the public and non-profit sectors. He's chaired two SAS conferences in the past 10 years, and estimates that he has been an Invited speaker at over 40 SAS user group conferences and meetings. Despite being an Emeritus (semi-retired) member of the SESUG EC, his tireless efforts aiding Site Selection, the annual conferences, and the work of the EC continues to be a vital part of the organization.

### Andy's Book Reviews:

## **Web Development with SAS® by Example, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition and Sharpening Your SAS Skills**

"Technology changes occur so quickly that no human being could hope to keep up." These words, or thoughts of a similar vein, can be attributed to many individuals. It is doubtful that Frederick Pratter shares that sentiment. Dr. Pratter wrote Web Development with SAS® by Example in 2003. Faced with the inevitable rapid changes to Web technology, Fred chose to challenge them head-on. As a result, SAS Press is about to publish Web Development with SAS® by Example, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, only 3 years after the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition became available.

Frederick Pratter understands his material. Equally important, Frederick Pratter understands his audience. Towards the end of the book, Dr. Pratter casually quotes from a work by Alan Cooper, "Programmers by nature are inherently willing to trade simplicity for control: the price of control is always more effort and increased complexity." Dr. Pratter realizes that a programmer cannot make such a trade unless he or she first possesses a command of the basic concepts. As a result, he has taken it on himself to provide both sides of the equation – simple *and* controlling – throughout the pages of his text, and to do so with clarity.

The first few chapters are written for the novice audience, starting with 3 chapters of "Getting Started with Web Programming". The author progresses through sections on "Access to SAS with SAS/Intrnet Software" and "Server-Side Java Programming", and concludes with "SAS Integration Technologies". External references with additional information are liberally provided; the reader will be treated to significantly more than the 300+ pages of the book itself if these other sources are also investigated!

The first part of the book deals with simple – a relative term – interactions between SAS and web interfaces such as

HTML. This reviewer was sufficiently impressed with the text to highlight selected passages and send along to a member of his user community for possible application in her current job assignment.

A good percentage of this book is devoted to SAS AppDev Studio, a technology with which this reviewer has not yet had the opportunity to work. However, it is anticipated that Dr. Pratter, by way of his book, will be a constant companion as I explore the nuances of SAS AppDev Studio over the coming months!

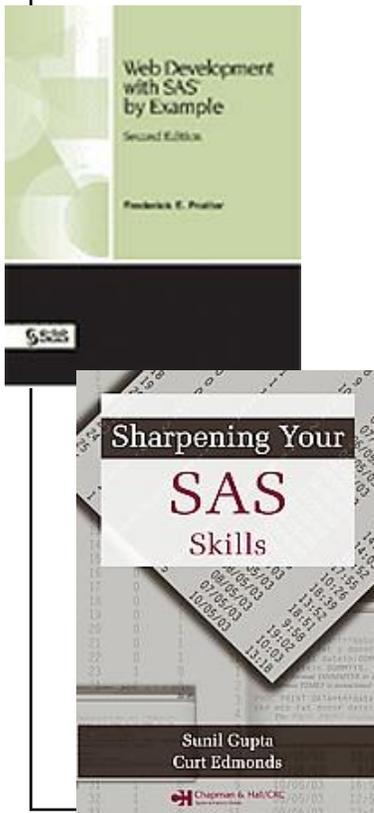
Web Development with SAS by Example, Second Edition by Frederick E. Pratter (ISBN: 1-59047-501-1), is scheduled to be published in late summer 2006. It will retail for \$51.95. It will be available through SAS Press, <http://support.sas.com/publishing/bbu/index.html>

NOTE: *The Alan Cooper quote is from "The Inmates are Running the Asylum: Why High-Tech Products Drive us Crazy and How to Restore the Sanity, 1st ed.", published in 1999 by Sams Publishing of Indianapolis, IN.*

\*\*\*

The New York Yankees have their Spring Training here in Tampa. You can easily distinguish a Yankees fan from someone supporting the other teams that train in the area just by listening to them. The Yankees fans fully expect that their team will be contenders each and every year, the season isn't considered successful unless the boys in pinstripes play in the World Series. Sometimes, it seems that their supporters even expect the team to win every one of the 162 regular season games, despite the fact with so many games, occasional losses have to be expected.

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This leads into my thoughts on Sharpening Your SAS Skills by Sunil Gupta and Curt Edmonds. I eagerly accepted the opportunity to read and review this book, actually leap-frogging it ahead of a couple of other books I had planned to read and review. One of the authors has a proven track record; his first book was very successful and he prepares and presents excellent presentations at SAS conferences.

Unfortunately, my lofty expectations proved not to be fulfilled. I found the book to be good – just not great.

There is a lot of excellent technical content in this work. It is well structured, leading from simple topics at the front to more advanced issues as the work progresses. The book even has quizzes at the end of each chapter to help the reader verify that they've understood and retained the concepts that were covered. (Yes, I took the quizzes, and checked my answers upon completion – and was occasionally humbled as a result. For those instances of weakness, most of the answers – not all, unfortunately – refer back to the section of the text that explained the concept in question.)

The book has many code examples designed to demonstrate coding points in the corresponding text. I found the formatting of these examples to be one of

the weaker points. The authors used a footnote system, in which various points of the code were identified with a number, and each of those points elaborated elsewhere. However, that elaboration consisted of a prose paragraph with the explanations of those bullet-points interspersed. I would have found it much clearer if those bullet points were instead identified line by line as one might do with footnotes – or better yet, interspersed alongside the code snippet being explained using text boxes or similar concept.

Each subsection of the text began with an example, then an intro paragraph, then the details – except in a few instances where the intro paragraph came before the example. Further, there were too many occurrences of a statement such as "... this is outside the scope of this book ..." I would think it better to either make it within the scope of the book and explain it – or skip past the offending concept without additional thought. The statement itself only calls attention to the missing information.

In general, after reviewing my notes tracking both good and bad points of the work, I drew the conclusion that most of the problems I had with this book seem to stem not from the work of the authors, but that of the editors. They do not involve technical content, but

*(Continued on page 14)*



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*Kirk Paul Lafler is with Software Intelligence Corporation. He is a published author on SAS, a frequent contributor to the SESUG Informant, and has presented and taught workshops at local, regional, and SUGI conferences.*

Kirk's Korner: Quick and Simple Tips

## Using the PROC SQL **\_METHOD** Option

Under Version 8.2 or later, PROC SQL supports a powerful “undocumented” option called **\_METHOD**. Although undocumented features like the **\_METHOD** option are often used with caution by SAS users, this option may provide far greater value than risk. Consequently, it is worth exploring the benefits associated with using the **\_METHOD** option especially in terms of understanding what happens during specific PROC SQL processes.

The **\_METHOD** option provides valuable information about the execution methods triggered by a PROC SQL query using a sequence of codes. With the results automatically displayed on the SAS Log, the information can be used to better understand a query's execution as well as during performance tuning and debugging operations by SAS users in the know. The various codes and their corresponding descriptions are displayed in the following table. A simple code example is then illustrated using the **\_METHOD** option, along with its corresponding SAS Log, below.

### **\_METHOD** Option Codes and Descriptions

| Code           | Description                                      |
|----------------|--|
| <b>SQXCRTA</b> | Create table as Select.                          |
| <b>SQXSLCT</b> | Select statement or clause.                      |
| <b>SQXJSL</b>  | Step loop join (Cartesian).                      |
| <b>SQXJM</b>   | Merge join operation.                            |
| <b>SQXJNDX</b> | Index join operation.                            |
| <b>SQXJHSH</b> | Hash join operation.                             |
| <b>SQXSORT</b> | Sort operation.                                  |
| <b>SQXSRC</b>  | Source rows from table.                          |
| <b>SQXFIL</b>  | Rows filtration.                                 |
| <b>SQXSUMG</b> | Summary stats (aggregates) with GROUP BY clause. |
| <b>SQXSUMN</b> | Summary stats with no GROUP BY clause.           |

The following PROC SQL code example, and corresponding SAS Log, illustrates the **\_METHOD** option and the execution methods involved in a simple two-way equi-join. The SAS Log shows that the two-table join references the MOVIES and ACTORS tables where the rows are joined using a hash join operation. Because a hash join utilizes available real memory to conduct the join, it is often faster than a merge or index-join operation.

### **PROC SQL Code**

```
PROC SQL _METHOD;
  SELECT MOVIES.TITLE, RATING, ACTOR_LEADING
  FROM MOVIES,
  ACTORS
  WHERE MOVIES.TITLE = ACTORS.TITLE;
QUIT;
```



*(Continued on page 14)*

(Continued from page 12)

rather flow, formatting and consistency. These are precisely the type of things that a good editor is supposed to catch and flag for correction before publication. Unfortunately, editors work in anonymity; leaving Gupta and Edmonds to deal with both praise and criticism alone.

As of this writing, the Yankees are at 68 wins and 46 losses, for a .596 winning percentage. In other words, they've lost at a rate of almost 4 out of 10 games. If we tally up previous SUGI papers and SAS Press works, the authors certainly have a better track record than that! Sadly, neither the Yankees, nor these two most worthy authors, can claim absolute perfection – despite what their fans may have come to expect.

Sharpening Your SAS Skills by Sunil Gupta and Curt Edmonds (ISBN: 1-58488-501-7), is 296 pages long and retails for \$59.95. It is published by Chapman & Hall/CRC and is also available through SAS Press, <http://support.sas.com/publishing/bbu/index.html>

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#### SIDEBAR:

*The review above was not easy to write. I've worked with Sunil Gupta, and read several of the presentations that he's done for SUGI (now SAS Global Forum) and WUSS – the Western Users of SAS Software. Sunil is a relatively rare individual, in that he has both a wealth of knowledge and the ability to effectively impart that information in a teaching forum. Heck, I've invited him to speak in a section I was chairing, and even had lunch with him at a SUGI or two in the recent past!*

*Based on previous experience, I expected to just dive into the book, love it, and make note of a couple of specific things to praise when I finished reading. Unfortunately, life doesn't work out according to plan.*

*Early into the book, I realized I couldn't write a glowing article – not if I wanted to be honest with my readers and myself. On the other hand, I certainly didn't want to condemn a quality individual like Sunil in print! I thought about just taking my notes and filing them away without writing a review. After all, I can't be expected to read and review every book about SAS programming that comes out – who'd miss the fact I didn't have anything to say about this one?*

*Finally, after consulting with a couple of colleagues, I decided that it would not be fair to the books I've read, liked, and praised over the years – and their authors – to do anything other than express my opinions on this work in a professional manner, just as I've done with other reviews.*

- Andy Kuligowski



(Continued from page 13)

#### SAS Log Results

NOTE: SQL execution methods chosen are:

```
sqxslct
  sqxjhsh
    sqxsrc( MOVIES )
    sqxsrc( ACTORS )
```

#### Contact Information

If you would like more information or have any questions about this tip, please contact: Kirk Paul Lafler, Software Intelligence Corporation at KirkLafler@cs.com. Kirk has been working with the SAS System since 1979 and is a SAS Certified Professional® and SAS Alliance Partner® (1996 - 2002). His company provides custom SAS programming, application design and development, specialized consulting services, and hands-on SAS training to clients around the world. Kirk is the author of four books including PROC SQL: Beyond the Basics Using SAS by SAS Institute, Power SAS and Power AOL by Apress, and more than one hundred peer-reviewed articles and papers for professional journals and SAS User Group proceedings. His popular SAS Tips column, Kirk's Korner, appears regularly in the BASAS, HASUG, SANDS, SAS, SESUG, and WUSS Newsletters and websites. Kirk can be reached at:

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## Editor's Afterwords

I hope everyone had a lovely summer!

Fall is a grand time of year. Colors changing, the summer heat giving way to temperate days and cool nights—and of course, another conference to present and attend!

Putting the show is a lot of work—special kudos should go to Marje Fecht and Deborah Skinner. They have put a LOT of thought into this year's conference—and I can suggest the best way to thank them for it.

Oh, it would be easy to send flowers, give them a smile, and so forth—but do you want to really warm their hearts?

Tell them you **learned** something at this year's show.

Really, that is what these conferences are all about, why the EC works so hard, why we go through all this time and effort (and remember, we're all *volunteers*, folks!) to put the show together. We can receive no higher compliment than just hearing that your time—and ours—was all worthwhile, because you learned lots of new things. I know as a presenter, my biggest thrill was when someone came up all excited, because they picked up something in my talk that they could go home and use to solve a problem they were having.

So, have a wonderful conference, pick up tips, tricks and techniques, relax, exchange questions, sneak yourself a latte once in a while—and share some ideas, and maybe a smile or two. After all—we're supposed to be having **fun** too, right?



- ges

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