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FORMULA

AMERICA'S INTERNATIONAL AUTORACING MAGAZINE

Vol. 3 No. 4 May 1976

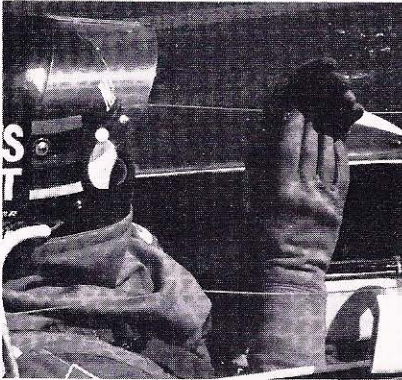
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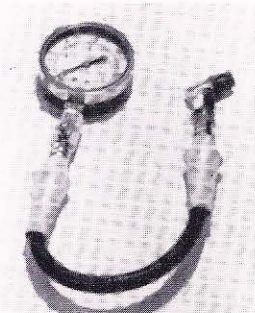
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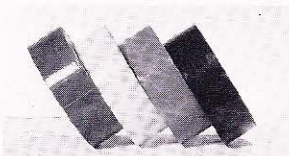
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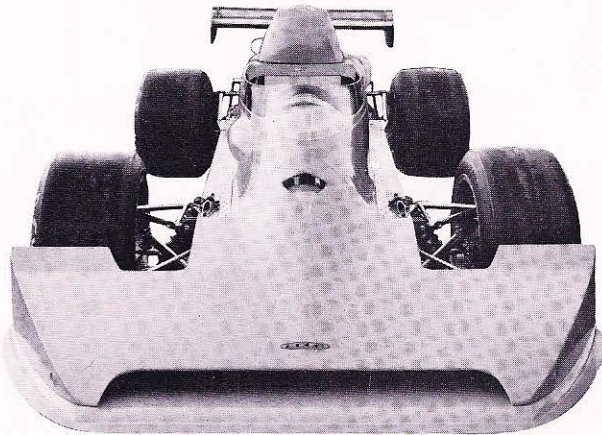
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Vol. 3 No. 4

May 1976

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FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT BY Hugh Mooney

American Road Racing Will We Ever Get With It?

For years other countries have been actively involved in helping develop young racing drivers while America just stands aside. And then we wonder why so few American drivers are making it in international racing.

Take France for an example. That country has been helping drivers move up the ladder for years, and on a big scale too. They pick drivers early in their careers through an annual competition. Now to expect our government to get involved in promoting young drivers would be little more than a pipe dream. But there are other ways.

The U.S. Formula Ford Champion gets nothing except a trophy for his efforts, and the same holds true for other classes

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May 31Watkins Glen
Jul 10-11Bridgehampton
Jul 24-25Summit Point (tent)
Sep 4Lime Rock
Sep 10-11Watkins Glen
Sep 12Trenton
Sep 18Dover, Del.
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like Formula Vee, Super Vee and Atlantic. There is no reason these champions should not be helped; some of our best young drivers will never get the chance to show their true ability because they lack the necessary financing to compete in America or Europe, or any other country for that matter.

Colleges have scholarships they give to outstanding or needy students — why can't the racing fraternity do something similar? Helping these new stars should be one of the most important activities in racing. We desperately need a ladder system in the U.S. that really works — one that young drivers can count on, one that will give them the direction necessary to accomplish their goals.

The way I see it most people in racing, the ones in a position to do anything about the problem, don't seem to care about the up-and-comers, the future champions. Our own American teams seem to have no concern for our young drivers. Many of them field cars for foreigners, casting likely American drivers aside. Now what kind of deal is that? It's shameful. Gurney, Penske, Haas, Nichols, the list of so-called American teams using foreign drivers goes on and on and on. I see it as a disgrace. How can these teams really call themselves Americans? I'm sick of seeing these "American" teams with their foreign drivers claiming they represent America. They do it right under our noses, right in our own country, and they do it abroad as well.

It is about time that these teams came to their senses and realized the consequences of what they're doing. To my knowledge there hasn't been one established team which has even offered any of our amateur champions a test session, much less a ride. Did Eddie Miller, Bob Earl, Dave Witzenhof or any other champions ever receive anything from the big teams? A try-out, a test, anything? Take a guess; the American team managers don't even look at the new talent coming up in FF, FV or SV. Most likely they couldn't even mention more than one or two promising drivers competing in the smaller formula car classes by name. If they had big gobs of money they might listen, that is, if it was more than the foreigners were offering. When was the last time you heard of an American driver getting anywhere just because he was damn good?

We need a good training ground, a ladder system for young drivers. Then we need a fund to be created to assist the most promising of these drivers, to train them to represent America on the race track.

This training ground should give the young driver the opportunity to develop and improve his talents with the full knowledge that if he does exceptionally well he will be rewarded for his efforts. I see this training ground in two stages. The first stage would be Formula Ford. Races could be run in conjunction with the premier formula which is F5000 here in the U.S. and would give the teams the opportunity to see who is coming up through the ranks. The second stage would be a more powerful formula such as Atlantic. This series could also run in conjunction with F5000 races.

A Formula Ford Champion could be determined in a number of different ways. Drivers could qualify for a runoff at year's end by doing well in local events. FF drivers would not be required to travel with the series as costs would more than likely prohibit this. At the end of the season, all qualified drivers would compete in a two or three race champion-

ship meeting, the overall winner being crowned the champion.

The Atlantic champion would most likely be determined by points at season's end. These drivers could travel with the entire series and possibly other selected events.

Taking a closer look, I see it like this. Every F5000 event could host FF and F/Atlantic races as the series moves across the country. Ford competitions could be held on Saturday — there is plenty of time available on most schedules. If the English can run three or four supporting races with their major events, so can the Americans. The drivers only need one 15 or 20 minute qualifying session, two ten minute heat races and a 25 minute main event. Surely time can be found to develop America's future champions. Purses would be mandatory with certain minimums set for each race. You can't seriously race if you can't make any money or at least have the opportunity to do so.

At the last race of the season the championship races could be held bringing all the qualifiers together, with the winner getting financial assistance to compete the following year in the second training class: Formula Atlantic. The other top finishers would receive cash awards. We would then have a Pro FF Championship, and it would mean something. It could be for real.

Formula Atlantic could stand on its own. This series would also follow the premier series and competitors would run the entire circuit of races as the purses could be large enough to warrant the costs. These competitors would have gained a vast amount of experience racing at the same tracks as the big boys. They would be ready for the next season to move up and challenge some of the established drivers. They would be well trained. The Atlantic Champion should also receive financial support to further his career, and hopefully an American team will see fit to assist him.

The newly formed North American Grand Prix Association (NAGPA) is in a prime position to implement such a program. This one group, more than any other, should be the most interested in developing our young talent. There is such a gap in America between amateur and professional racing that we need a system to bring the young driver back in the spotlight. He needs and deserves a lot more than he presently is getting under the current system, which is next to nothing.

Where would all the money come from? A portion could come from the F5000 entry fees, a small amount being added to the fund from each event. All the entry fees from the Formula Fords and, of course, Champion, Goodyear, Valvoline and the rest would be expected to chip in. After all, these young drivers have been supporting them by using their products. It's only natural for them to assist in the program; in fact, it should be mandatory. Other funds could come from the sanctioning bodies themselves as a kind of investment in the future, or maybe each F5000 team should be required to support this program also. The money can be had; it's just a matter of the American racing world wanting to do it and caring enough and believing in our young drivers.

Is this just another racing editor's pipe dream? Could this really happen in America? Sure it can, but only if the big guys, the ones that control everything, want it to. We must find a way to make them want to.

matters of the moment

BRIEFLY:

Bill Cruse, who won the Thompson Pro Formula Vee event November 9, 1975 but was disqualified, has won his appeal with the SCCA. He has been reinstated as the winner and will receive all appropriate trophies and awards.

Tom Wiechmann, 1975 FF Champion, has sold his ADF and will run a new Lola Formula Ford in a combined effort with Pierre's Motors Racing and Carl Haas. Ted Slatten will provide motors.

C&S Racing of Closter, New Jersey, has been appointed exclusive distributor of new Durasurf Formula Ford rings and valves. Durasurf is a patented process which, according to the manufacturer, significantly reduces friction and operating temperatures of engine components. For more information, contact C&S Racing, 120 Railroad Ave., Closter, NJ. (201) 768-9211.

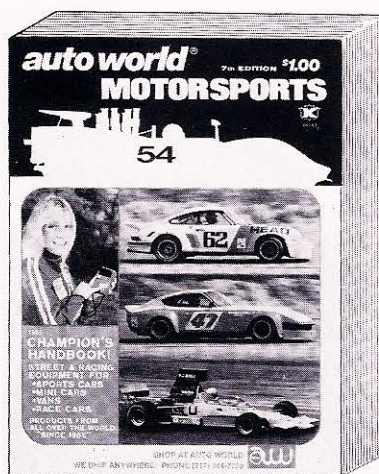
Fred Opert Racing has gear ratio charts for FT200 and FG400 gearboxes computed for the latest American Good-year 1179 tires which are 23.7" in diameter. The charts come in a pad of 40 and are free with every Hewland order, or send \$7.95 plus \$.55 postage to Fred Opert Racing, 17 Industrial Road, Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458.

Sweden's Bertil Roos, winner of 50 races and five major championships in formula cars, is opening a school at Pocono's International Raceway. A top contender in Formula Atlantic and Super Vees, he has instructed drivers at Fred Opert's school and considers Pocono one of the best training courses in the country. New Lola Super Fords have been chosen as the school's cars and three day schools are being scheduled. For more information contact Bertil Roos, c/o Pocono International Raceway, Long Pond, PA 18344.

Automotive Development has announced that Richard Shirey, 1975 SoPac Division FF Champion, will be the driver for their new Lola T332C F5000 car. Motors handled by Louie Unser.

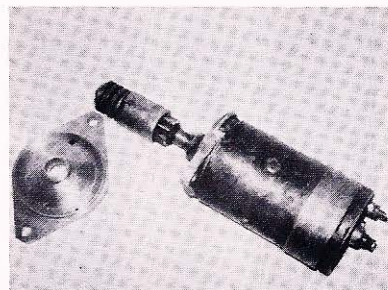
Rockin Road Productions will promote the IMSA event at Pocono August 15 complete with rock band and all their usual added attractions. Given the proper opportunity Rockin Road could do road racing alot of good, they have a neat program.

Two of FORMULA's staffers will be making their professional racing debut at the west coast Formula Atlantic races at Laguna Seca and Ontario in May. Hugh Mooney, editor, will be entered in his RPM Racing March 712 with backing from E-A-R Plugs, a new hearing protection device, and Baker Precision Bearings. Laguna will be Hugh's first race in his March and his first race at Laguna Seca. Pete Halsmer, technical editor, will be driving his much modified Brabham BT38 with backing from Chuck Willis Racing, Troika Racing and Al Thomas.



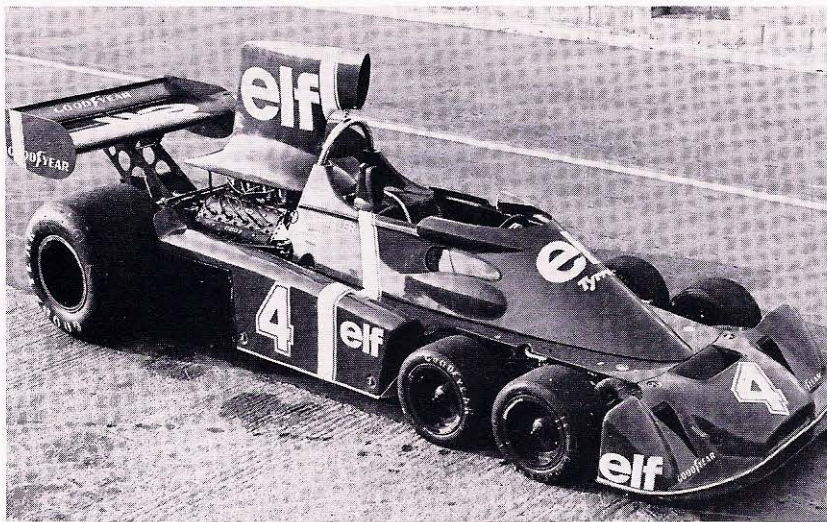
1976 Auto World Motorsports Catalog is now ready. Race, street and rally parts for American and foreign cars are textually illustrated in Auto World's new 1976 Motorsports Catalog. This ninth edition includes "How to do it stories" like: Getting Started In Racing, Rallying, and How To Set Your Car Up To Handle. For your copy, send \$1.00 to Auto World, 701 N. Keyser, Ave., Scranton, PA 18508.

END STARTER PROBLEMS



The Book Motor Racing is marketing a new product designed to end starter problems for Formula Ford drivers and others using the Lucas starter. The Book offers a steel starter end plate to replace the aluminum one, and it uses stock Lucas bushings should you need to replace them. According to the manufacturer, the additional support offered by the steel plate should add many hours of use from the starter and starter drive gear. The cost of the plate is \$48.00. For complete information contact The Book, 801 - 13th Avenue S., Mpls, MN 55404.

PROJECT 34 CONTINUES

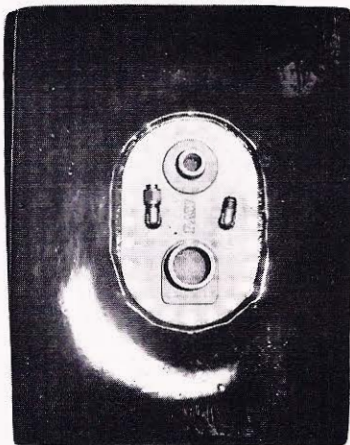


After extensive testing of the prototype six-wheeler, Ken Tyrrell has announced a new six-wheel Elf-Tyrrell conforming to 1976 regulations (except airbox). The new car features revised bodywork and is ten inches shorter in overall length. The front track is slightly wider and the oil radiator is now front mounted. Testing of the new car began March 9, at Silverstone with Depailler.

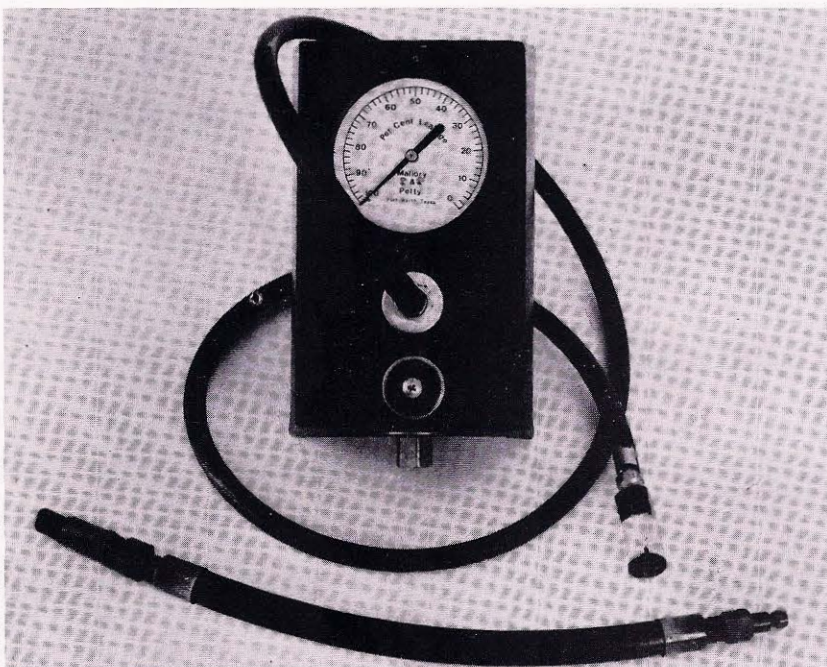
IMSA GOES ATLANTIC

IMSA, the International Motor Sports Association, has announced a five-race, professional Formula Atlantic racing series to run in conjunction with the Camel GT series this year. The new venture by IMSA introduces American fans to the single-seater, open-wheeled Atlantic cars that have swept to international prominence in just a few years. The race dates are: Road Atlanta, May 11; Laguna Seca, May 2; Ontario, May 9; Pocono, Aug. 15; Mid-Ohio, Aug. 29.

NEW FUEL CELL

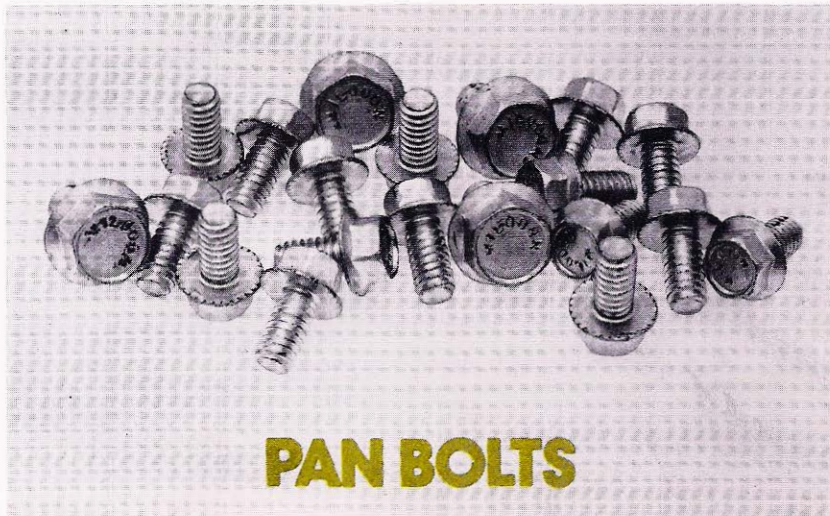


Paw Safety Systems, Inc. has a new concept in fuel cells for race and rally cars. Paw offers custom-sized and shaped cells, from small to extra large in gallonage, at no extra charge. Also available from Paw are 20 gauge steel or aluminum containers and a fast fill upside down valve that fits a standard size plate. All Paw equipment meets FIA and all major U.S. racing organizations' specifications. For complete details contact Paw Safety Systems, Inc., 616 E. Franklin Ave., El Segundo, CA 90245.



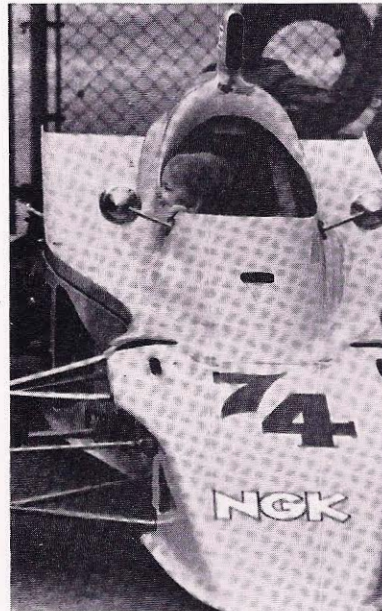
LEAKDOWN TESTER

Childs & Albert, Sun Valley, California now offers a new leak-down test meter for the performance industry. The new meter comes with all necessary hardware to check engine condition. Contact Childs & Albert, 11030 Sherman Way, Sun Valley, CA 91352. (213) 765-0988.



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Milodon Engineering has developed a totally new pan bolt designed to eliminate pesky oil pan leaks forever. The most important characteristic of Milodon's new pan bolt is a built-in washer face which features special serrations. Milodon pan bolts are designed and built to be re-used time and time again according to the manufacturer. Contact Milodon Engineering, 7711 Ventura Canyon Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91402. (213) 782-4373.



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Richard Shirey's son, Ricky, uses his dad's ADF as a playpen between practice sessions.

BOSCH UPS SUPER VEE ANTE

The Robert Bosch Corp. and VW of America have announced the remaining dates in the ten-race Gold Cup series. In addition Bosch has established a \$20,000 contingency points fund payable to the ten top drivers at the end of the season. The series winner will take home \$7,000. The remaining race dates are: Pocono, May 9; Nelson Ledges, May 30; Mosport, June 20; Watkins Glen, July 11; Mid-Ohio, Aug. 8; Brainerd, Aug. 15; Road America, Aug. 29; Road Atlanta, Sept. 12; Watkins Glen, Oct. 10.



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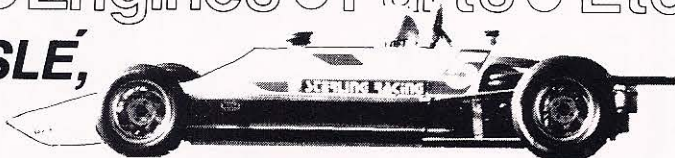
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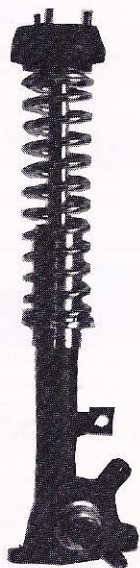
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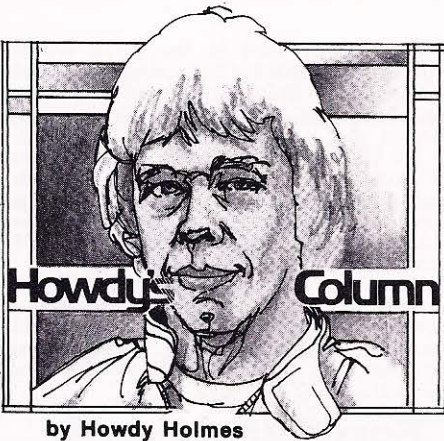
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FORMULA

AMERICA'S INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOBILING MAGAZINE

Drawing by Ed Remick / Terry Spitzerbaum



by Howdy Holmes

"ART THOU NOT A BIRD?"

While some of you are reading this in the middle of May in Indianapolis, the heartland city of America, your intrepid E-Z Wider is slaloming the slopes in Aspen, Colorado in the middle of winter. Now before you ask why I'm not testing tires in Phoenix, let me just say the skiing's great.

The similarities between skiing and racing are actually quite numerous. The rhythm involved in skiing and the balance required to keep yourself on those little boards is not unlike cornering in a formula car. The concentration demanded to keep yourself upright is both extremely relaxing and exhilarating, the same thrills derived from race driving.

Skiing has some very enjoyable attributes besides the satisfying physical aspects. My skiing is meant for relaxation, and for once I get to play the role of the spectator and not the participant. The spectator has so many more advantages in situations like these, what with all the young ladies — all wholesome, tanned, scrumptious. At the races you never have the time to engage in the nighttime follies. Out here in Aspen, I sometimes wish the sun never rose!

Also found in Aspen are a variety of extremely good restaurants, along with a multitude of tourists cum skiers. Most tourists are from Chicago and Detroit, never having skied before, looking for the Beautiful People. The Beautiful People are more than willing to please, strutting around like Rhinestone Cowboys. As a matter of fact, Glen Campbell and Paul McCartney may have just walked by, but I'm not really sure since Suzy Chaffee and Farah Fawcett are occupying my view.

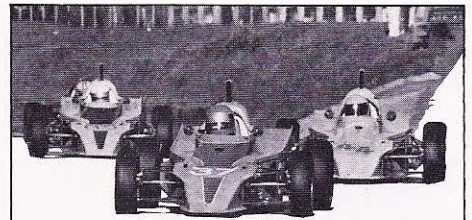
Speaking of Beautiful People, as I was skiing down underneath the lift, I

heard a call from above, "Howdy, is that you?" "Yes it is," I replied, screeching to a halt and turning around in one movement, throwing up more powder than a Jiffy Mix. And who else was riding the chair but Fred Phillips and friend Suzybelle. Only in Colorado could you find a swamp seller like Fred here instead of on a track at Daytona or Road Atlanta. I skied the rest of the afternoon with this verbose veteran of the Super Vee wars.

Surprisingly, quite a few drivers were in evidence in Aspen, including Jerry Jolly, Mike Hall and Peter Dodge. Every time they would ask, "Howdy, what's a professional driver like you doing here when you should be testing tires in Phoenix or Holtville?" all I could do was look at the scenery and smile.

Today was the best day of all, 30 degrees, not a cloud in the sky and 14 inches of new powder. On my last run of the afternoon, I spied a little jump and thought I would cop some air, as they say here in Aspen. Much to my surprise after take-off, I discovered the mild drop of 8 or 10 feet was actually 18 or 20 feet. Naturally, I didn't realize that until I was in the air attempting a spread-eagle. As I came crashing down to earth I remembered that immortal question, "Art thou not a bird?". Then I recalled the famous answer, "Help! Help! Helpppppp . . .!" cartwheeling down the slope in front of all those Beautiful People on the sundeck at Tyack Mountain. A hell of an entrance. With my luck Parnelli was probably watching along with Vel, J.C., Dan, Roger, et al.

If I met them there, they too would probably ask why I wasn't testing tires. And I wonder why the E-Z Wider doesn't drive at Indy yet. . .



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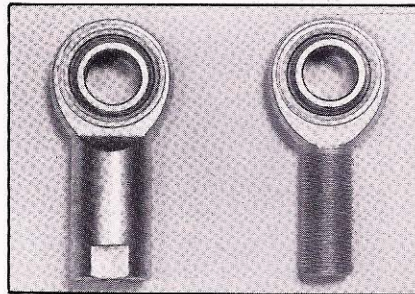
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Fred Opert Racing

By Randy Unsbee

The Beginning

Ask anyone in Britain, Europe, South Africa, Canada, South America, New Zealand or the Far East to name an American racing team, and almost certainly Fred Opert's name will pop up.

After eleven years in the motor racing business, Opert has achieved the distinction of having entered cars in all of the above countries. Today from his Upper Saddle River (New Jersey) shop he controls a racing organization that in 1976 will enter cars in Formula Two in Europe, Formula Atlantic in Canada, the United States, Britain and South Africa, and Super Vee in the United States. The team has already completed a four-race New Zealand excursion in a Chevron B29-BMW driven by F5000 champion Brian Redman.

Employing only five people over the winter, the shop expands at the start of the season in North America to a dozen workers, plus the two in Europe who are based at the Chevron headquarters in Bolton, England. But things weren't always this busy.



Fred started racing Sprites in the early 1960s when he was just coming out of law school in New York. At the time he found few jobs available and so decided to try selling cars, moving into the position of sales manager for Lotus Midwest in 1963. After a year of that he returned east and in 1965 began Fred Opert Racing, with an eye to exploiting the growing market for single-seat racing cars in the United States.

"In those days there were very few used single seaters in the country," Opert explained, "so we decided that the best way to sell cars would be to bring cars from England." That turned out to be a wise business decision and put Opert in the vanguard of small formula car importers, a position he maintains today.

In 1966 he obtained the Brabham distributorship and three years later added Chevron to his line. Opert was committed to Formula B, but was also taking advantage of the great growth in demand for Formula Ford cars, and began bringing Titans into North America in 1970.

A firm believer in the theory that the best way to sell cars is to race them and win, Opert supported Mike Eyerley who won the American FB title in 1969 in a Brabham BT18, and the following year in a Chevron B17. Alan Lader, in a Brabham BT29 entered by Opert, was runner-up in 1970 and then took the FB crown in 1971. That year the Opert-entered Tui driven by the late Bert Hawthorne was runner-up to Lader.

The bright spot in the 1972 season was the Canadian Championship which was taken by Brian Robertson in a Chevron B20. He had begun Fred Opert Canada that year, catering to the Canadian FB championship circuit as well as the FF market. But 1972 also marked the beginning of the Opert overseas expansion, as his cars won two races in Columbia and finished in the top half-dozen in the Japanese Grand Prix.

With no FB series in 1973, Opert turned to Super Vee and brought a Swedish discovery, Bertil Roos, to North America to win the series. Opert racing also went to Singapore, Venezuela and Japan that year.

Formula Atlantic

Opert was one of the first to get involved in Canadian Formula Atlantic in 1974, running a very successful two car team for Bertil Roos and Wink Bancroft. That was expanded to three cars in '75 and will likely be four Chevron B34s for 1976. If there was one race that Opert rated above all else in importance, it was the final round of the Player's series in 1974.

"In that race Bill Brack drove one of our Chevrons and won the championship. Getting him into the Chevron camp was a key move, which paid off when he won the title again last year."

In 1974 the Formula Two program began with four races for Bertil Roos, followed last year by several events in a Chevron B29 driven by Hector Rebaque. For the coming year, the Opert F2 schedule will probably include a two car team for the whole European season. Then of course there will be Super Vee again, another two car effort.

It's all coordinated from New Jersey where Opert sells Chevron Atlantic cars, Supernova Tui FSVs and Titan FFs, as well as assorted used machinery. They also import Hart engines for Atlantic, Varley batteries and Ampep rod ends. BDA engine rebuilds are also done by the team. Opert ran a three car Formula Ford team in 1973 but that was just a one year venture.

"The average Ford driver can't afford to pay to have us prepare his car the way we would an Atlantic car, and we wouldn't consider doing it any other way."

Now entering their most ambitious year to date, Fred Opert Racing has become an institution among North America formula racers, but there is no sign that they are content to rest on their considerable laurels. The competition is too tough to let them get away with that.



The girls in charge: Left, Linda Fedellin and right, Pat Davis.

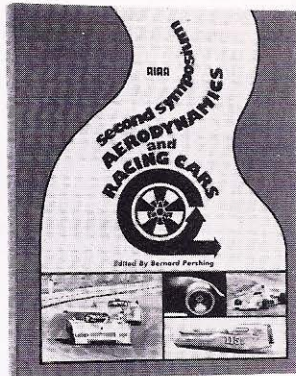


book review

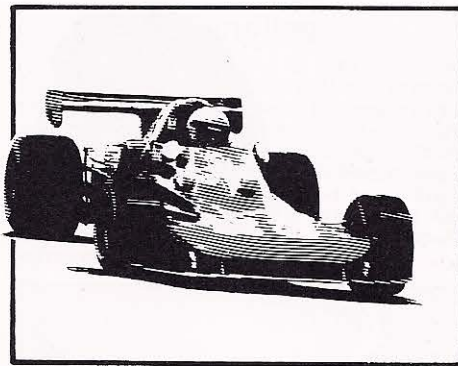
AIAA SECOND SYMPOSIUM AERODYNAMICS AND RACING CARS

Edited by Bernard Pershing
\$27.50, 266 pages
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Wow! After years of being kept in a state of starvation regarding technical information published to benefit the "do it yourself racer" and non-graduate engineer, we are finally being treated to several publications such as Carroll Smith's *Prepare To Win* (reviewed by *Formula Magazine*, August, 1975) and now an extremely comprehensive treatise on vehicle aerodynamics titled *AIAA Second Symposium/Aerodynamics and Racing Cars*. The very thought of this subject had my mouth watering even while reading the Table of Contents. What I discovered was that the book deals not only with race cars but also with land speed vehicles, typical road vehicles, the effects of aerodynamics on high speed motorcycles, many of Evel Knievel's secrets (laid bare in the chapter on The Dynamics and Aerodynamics of Jump Motorcycles), and the no doubt not-to-be-overlooked problems of determining the aerodynamic drag reduction of trucks. Pushing further on I began to realize that this book was indeed a symposium of eighteen technical papers written by twenty-two different authors and, needless to say, the manner of presentation varied greatly from author to author and not always in a style that enhanced the book. Not being an engineer myself, I was somewhat put off by the inconsistent format of formulas and vector diagrams. I quickly enlisted the assistance of J. Peter Halsmer, *Formula Magazine's* technical editor, to translate many passages into terms that a layman like myself can understand.



Although *Aerodynamics and Racing Cars* will not vie with your copy of *Vroom* for a position on the coffee table, it should be a part of the serious racer's technical library because of its tremendous wealth of information. If you are more than a little mathematically inclined and handy with a slide rule, you will love the many opportunities to use one; if not (and you want to go FAST FAST FAST) you may one day grow into the mental state of mind required to comprehend much of this technically-oriented book.



Rahal's Column

By Bobby Rahal

My new March 76B Atlantic car had been in the shop in Michigan a month, and I was getting itchy to try it. So in mid-February I packed my driver's suit and Bell Star, left my Red Roof Inn and skidded through the Chicago ice of the frozen North, headed for the sunshine in Savannah, Georgia.

Our test was in conjunction with Ecurie Canada and, in addition to our spanky new March, Ray Wardell brought Gilles Villeneuve's modified 75B to use as a baseline. Wardell, of course, ran the March F1 and F2 teams before leaving England. Also present at the session were Wiley McCoy (my mechanic), Gilles, Andy Row (Gilles' mechanic) and the irreplaceable Joe Grimaldi (representing Doug Shierson Racing/The Race Shop).

The city of Savannah was the objective of General Sherman's "march to the sea" in the Civil War, and after the first day I would have sworn he had been to the track the day before. The track was so abrasive that the tires would go off in 20 laps and be worn through after 30 or 40 circuits. We had intended to stay a week and had brought three or four sets of tires per car, but after that first day we had only two sets left.

Our main purpose in running was to see if this new racer was much improved over the '75 version. We knew it was going to be good, but little did we know that it would be two seconds a lap quicker! Both Gilles and I were able to achieve similar times in both cars, and our 1:08 was three seconds better than the best time by a top Atlantic car and competitor last year. For the most part we concentrated on springs and sway bar adjustments. Gilles missed the first day because he was competing in a snowmobile race for his sponsor, Skiroule, so most of the second day was devoted to Gilles. On the third day an engine with 600 miles on it began losing revs, and since we had gone through \$2500 in tires, we packed it up and went home.

As the March sits right out of the box, I think we have a race winner. Nevertheless our aim is to improve it. The testing wasn't very conclusive, but when you consider where everyone else is, we're ahead of the game; most people won't even have their cars until early or mid-March, especially those who count.

FLEXIBLE FLYER

In comparing this car to a March 75B or a Lola T360, some very different

characteristics appear. The Lola uses chassis flex as a big part of the suspension system, while the March is much stiffer. The Lola is much easier to drive fast, as well as being much easier to set up, because it's almost like a Flexible Flyer. But to go very fast in a Lola is much harder, I believe, than in a March or Chevron. The March is very twitchy when not going fast. The faster you go, however, the better it gets. Also, tires going off (the most prominent problem last year) is less of a handicap in a March than on a Lola. The chassis on the 76B is very stiff and the car is not softly sprung, the flex being in the suspension and sway bars.

Understandably, we're very optimistic. I think we've just touched the tip of the iceberg in terms of the development potential of the car. I haven't even told you about engine development, or our computer-analyzed suspension, or some of the tricks we have up our sleeves. Well, I guess you'll just have to wait until Atlanta, when after even more testing at Mid-Ohio and Road Atlanta we'll provide the stickler to Brack, Walker, Villeneuve, Holmes and all the rest.

Maybe this time we'll even beat General Sherman!

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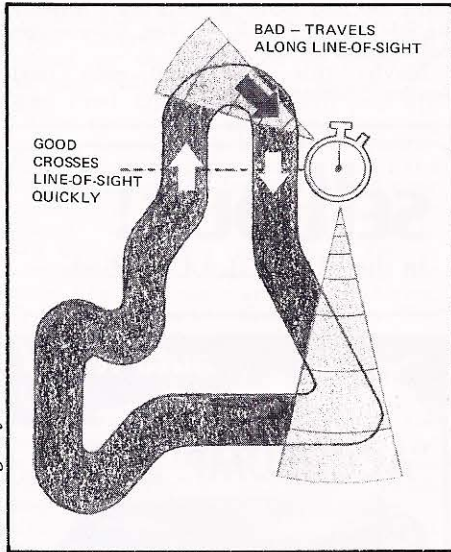
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The time has finally come for a few words on actual testing (I was starting to wonder if I'd ever get to this!)

In approaching both skid pad and track testing, there are a few general rules you should keep in mind:

1. Use criteria with the least inherent variance.
2. Identify affecting elements and eliminate as many variables as possible.
3. Establish normal variations.

Using criteria with the least inherent variance simply means to pick the timing points, tach-reading points, etc. so they will be as consistent and free of human error as possible. Timing points should be picked so the car passes by them fairly quickly, making for more consistent and accurate times. The illustration shows a couple of examples of good and not-so-good timing points. Tach reading should be taken at points on the track where you have time to accurately see the reading as well as making sure you are consistently at the same spot on the track.



Drawings by Ed Randell

Identifying affecting elements and reducing their effect is important. Think for a moment about all the things that can affect your performance at a track or pad: fuel load, weather, track conditions, tires, chassis set-up, and *you*, these are just a few of the significant items. If any of these elements vary, so will your times. Test back-to-back whenever possible (i.e. make several runs, change wings, and run again as soon as possible) and you can eliminate or reduce a number of variables. Weather will hopefully remain the same if you don't take too long to make the changes, although track conditions *can* change. Beware of people unloading oil or putting down more rubber; either of these will change your times. On a day when the temperature is below 65-70 degrees and the sun goes behind a cloud for more than a few minutes, track temperatures can drop sharply. When that happens the tires may not get hot enough to stick. Also more than a few gallons of fuel variation will affect things. As you can see, one simple test would probably eliminate most of the variables since they wouldn't have time to change, while a full day of testing could make some of the variables a problem. One way to evaluate effects of changing conditions during a test session is to later re-run an initial test to see how closely it coincides with the initial test results.

Establish normal variations with at



Technically Speaking

with J. Peter Halsmer

TRACK & SKID PAD TESTING

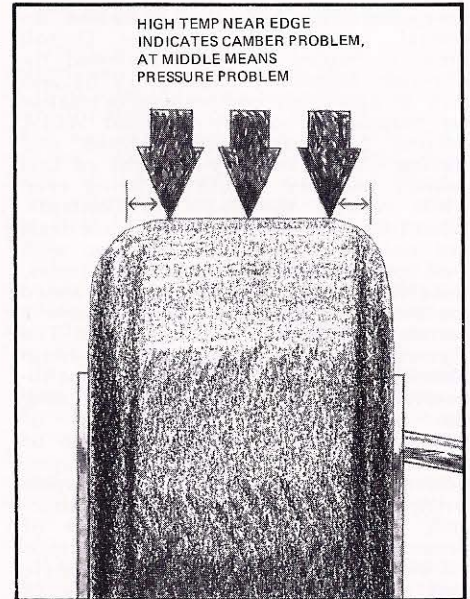
least three runs. Take the average of the three runs and note the amount of variation. This will give you a pretty good idea of what you can expect as normal variation and what is really a significant change due to the test changes. For example, if you do three runs before the first change and record 1:30.3, 1:30.5 and 1:30.4, your average is 1:30.4 with only .1 variation. If you change something and show 1:30.7, 1:30.6 and 1:30.6, you have a barely significant increase in time. More consistency allows you to give meaning to smaller variations.

Skid Pads

Skid pads are good for testing some things, but not for others. Tire pressures, camber settings, and general low speed cornering ability are the main things a skid pad can be helpful with. By using a tire pyrometer (temperature gauge) and timing each circle, you'll soon get a feel for what is good and bad in these areas. If you know times that other people have turned in similar cars, it can be a helpful comparison (depending on conditions). Skid pad times will give you some basis for evaluating speed steady state cornering ability, but nothing about transitional handling (braking and turning into a turn or accelerating out of a turn). Cambers and tire pressures that give equal temperature across the tire are what you're looking for, but some changes may be needed at the track to retain this due to high speed aerodynamics. Remember, the skid pad is no place to fine tune the car's overall handling. Bar settings will be quite different than what you'll want at the track — if you adjust the bar for neutral handling at the skid pad, you'll

almost certainly have to change these settings when you get to the track. Remember that wings will have little effect if it's a typical small-radius pad.

You'll probably have to put in a very low first gear, depending on the circle radius and expected average speed, since you will want the engine running near normal revs for best control as you're driving it. Be as consistent as possible when driving on a skid pad. Wandering away from the circle line itself will show up in significant time changes. So be consistent, but keep the car right on the edge of adhesion. A spin or good tail wagger now and then even helps you be sure you're near the limit!



Track Testing

At the track you have a better approximation of racing conditions than on a skid pad. It's here you'll want to fine tune the handling under all conditions, making the car easy and comfortable to drive as well as maximizing braking, cornering, acceleration and top speed.

First of all you must be comfortable in the car. Pedal positions, seat, steering wheel position, etc. must suit you.

For results to be meaningful at the track in terms of handling, you'll find the only answer is to go fast and go consistently. This means doing the turns the same way every time and using the same braking points every lap. It's amazing how comfortable a car can feel at 1:20, while lapping at 1:19 it can develop some really nasty habits.

Be careful of evaluating on the basis of what "feels" fast. The clock usually tells the truth. What *feels* the fastest and most comfortable in handling won't always *be* the fastest. Remember that you are after the lowest lap time, along with some semblance of control!

Planning Your Testing

Have your test day planned out before leaving the home port. Be sure you have all the necessary equipment (Gatorade, alignment equipment, tools, you, and of course a foxy timing assistant doesn't hurt!). The track is no place to find out you wanted to test something but you left it at home. In general, take everything you take to a race.

The following is an idea of some of

the basic things you should test when starting out with a car you've just bought:

- Evaluation of shocks
- Low and high speed handling
- Brakes

Testing Procedure

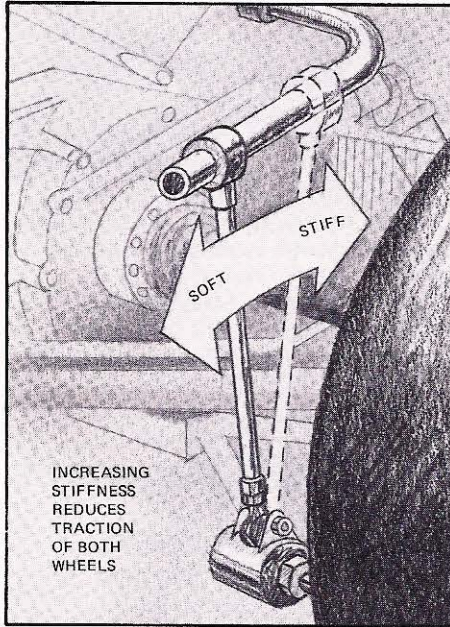
1. General check — car ready for running with initial set-up. Check normal pre-running list (fluid levels, wheel lugs, tire pressures, gas, oil, etc.).
2. Warm up engine — run a couple slow laps and check:
 - a. brakes — good pedal, no pulling
 - b. engine operation — oil pressure in turns, response in corners
 - c. general handling — high and low speed
 - d. look for leaks or any apparent problems (a missing wheel, etc.)
3. Run several quick laps to get consistent times.
 - a. note high and low speed handling
 - b. engine operation
 - c. brakes — proper bias?

Brake Bias

The brake bias should be set so that with the tires warm, the fronts barely lock up before the rears — or at worst, at the same time. Do some straight line braking in front of the pits with your pit people watching which wheels are locking up first if you need to.

Handling

Low speed handling is more affected by sway bar changes than wings. *Increasing* the stiffness of a sway bar makes that end of the car stick *less*, relative to the other end. High speed handling is more affected by aerodynamic device changes than bar positions. Increased wing angle or lowering the nose will make *that end* of the car stick better in high speed corners. *continued* ➤





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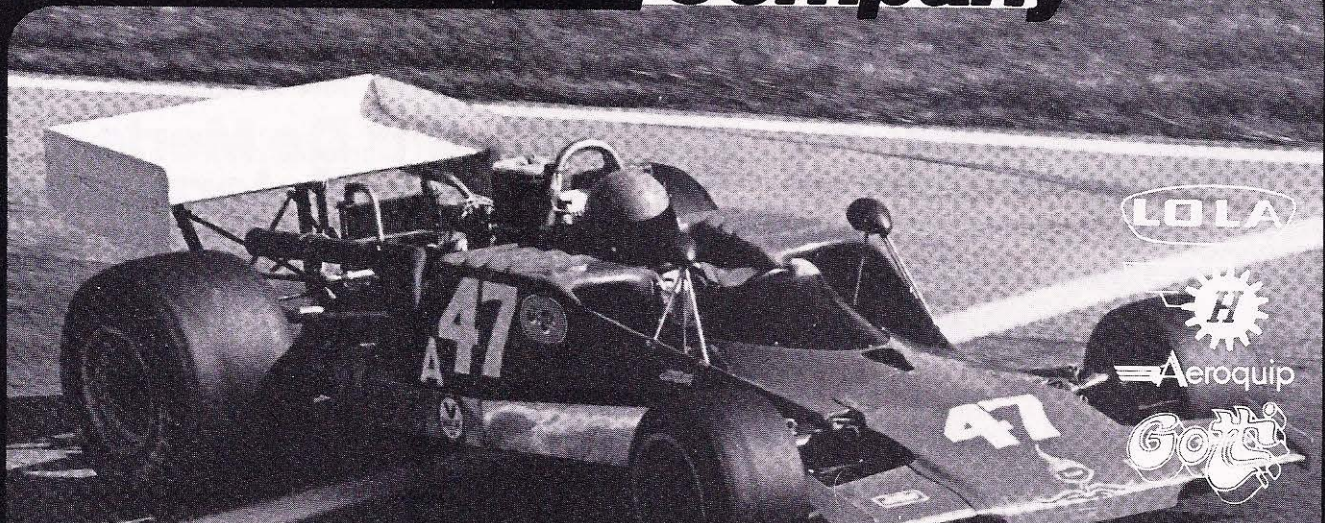
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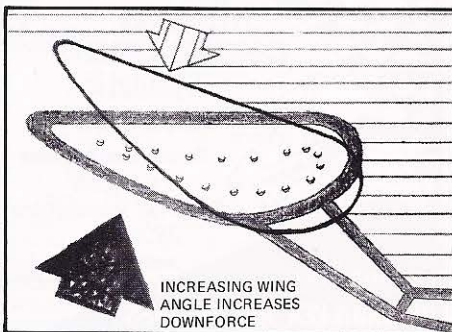
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Technically Speaking

continued

Drawing by Ed Randell



Shocks

Adjustable shocks should be set to what produces the quickest times. I'll give you some basic rules to use, but ultimately you will have to evaluate the changes you make in terms of feel and lap times. Too stiff on bump adjustment and you'll skip over small undulations in the track, while if you go too soft you may bottom the car. Too stiff on rebound and you'll jack the car down when going over rough areas. If you set the shocks too soft on rebound, you'll reach full droop of the suspension too soon on quick rises and drop-offs or have problems in quick ess-bends.

Send in your questions and subjects you would like to see in future articles. Next month we'll be looking at general troubleshooting and check lists, so good luck till then.

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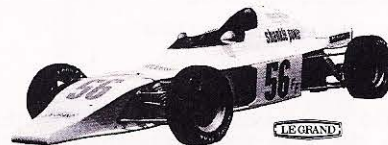
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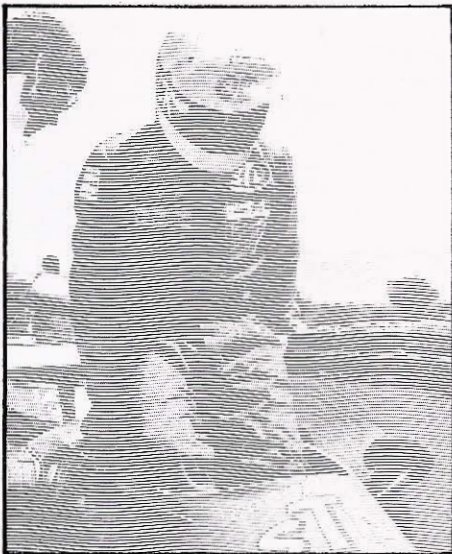
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Brack's Column

by Bill Brack

My trip to South Africa combined business and pleasure, for as well as running the opening Philips Formula Atlantic race, there was enough time to travel around the country a bit and get to know some of the racing people there.

From Toronto I flew to London and then on to Johannesburg, meeting John Nicholson who was also on his way to keep a close watch on his engines. He had taken his driving gear and gotten a ride in a local Chevron B25. Nicholson will be in Canada again this summer to assist competitors who have bought his engines, and might also run some of the races himself.

Arriving at Johannesburg I went out to the Kyalami circuit, which is quite close to the city. Its layout is very impressive and the track is very big, something like Watkins Glen, but it's a better spectator track than the Glen.

Traveling around to the various shops to see the Gunston, Lexington and Lucky Strike teams, it was really amazing to see McLaren M23s and Lotus 72s just sitting

in corners of shops, with piles of Cosworth engines beside them. All those Formula One cars are useless now that South Africa has switched to Formula Atlantic for their national championship. The Gunston team could start a museum for they have three Lotus 72s, nine Cosworth engines, and more spares than I have seen at Lotus works.

I took some T-shirts along and made a deal with the concessionaire at the Killarney track to sell them, but the biggest success story of the trip was the film I took with me. Called "The Challengers", it is the wrap-up television show that will be shown in Canada in May as a preview for the 1976 Player's series. It contains the highlights of the 1975 shows, plus some footage that was shot at each event but not used in the 30-minute telecasts.

I first showed the movie at Eddie Keizan's place. He is a South African driver who lives only about five minutes away from the Kyalami circuit. Everyone who saw it was very impressed with the number and quality of Atlantic cars competing in Canada. But even better things were said when I showed it at a combined STP/Bic press conference in a Johannesburg hotel the week before the series opener.

This time both members of the press and representatives of the Philips Car Radio Company, who sponsor the South African series and sponsors STP, were in attendance. They were ecstatic about it and the Philips people proceeded to confiscate the film from me for use on national television, which had just started in South Africa in January. This should give the Player's series a tremendous boost.

I returned to Toronto after the first race; on my way back to Johannesburg I stopped in London to receive the Chris Williams' Award which is given every year to the driver who achieves the greatest success in a Chevron. It's quite an honor to win this, for it's the first time that it has been awarded to a North American.

After South Africa, we've scheduled California testing and I've also been invited to drive a Formula Two car in Japan in early May, so I'll be all ready for the Player's opener and am looking for a fourth championship.

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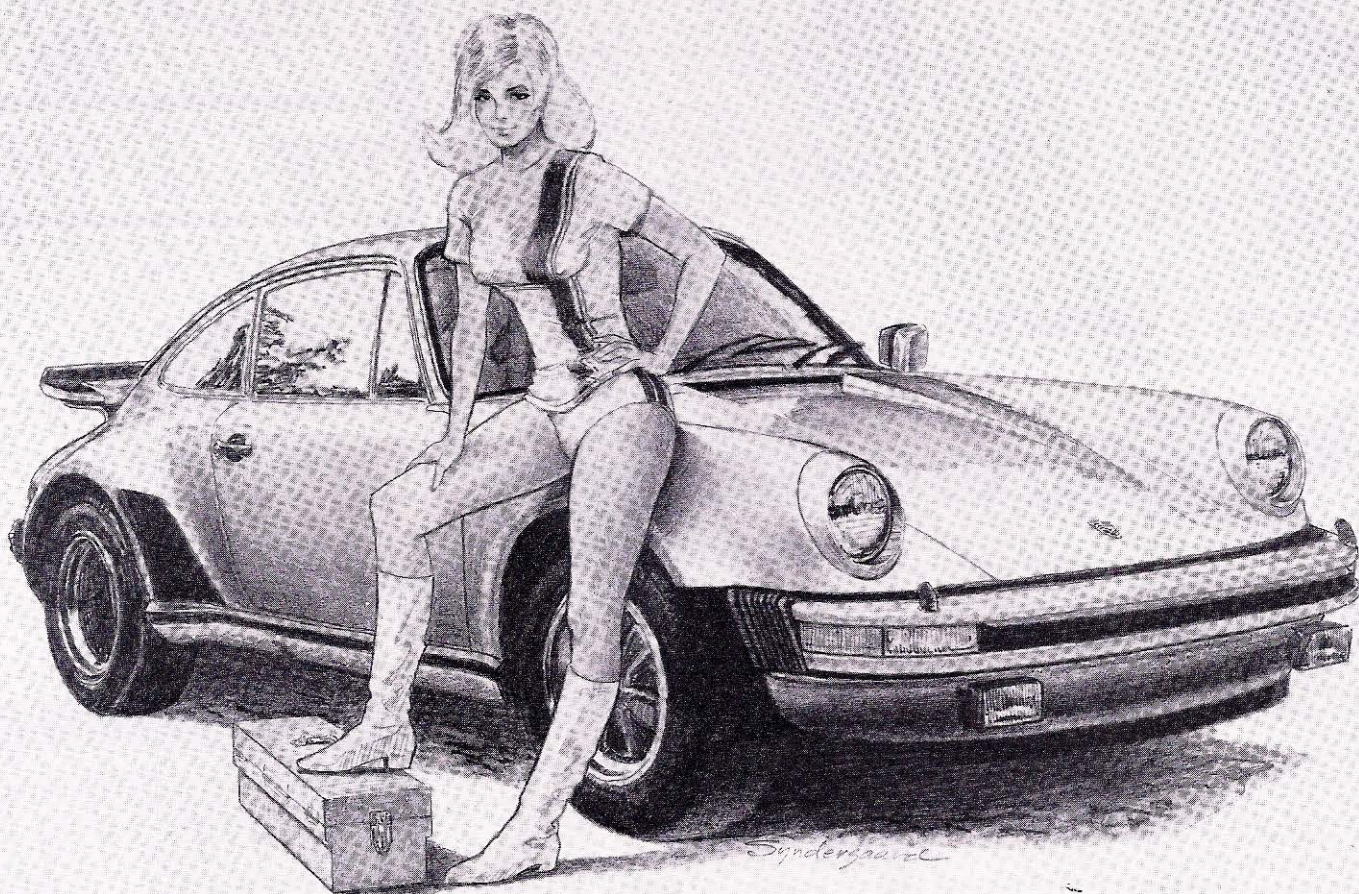


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Fiction by
Vennette Bailey

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how i led a race driver to victory circle

It was a beautiful Southern California day, that first afternoon I saw him. His reflection in the rear view mirror of my nondescript, economy model American car tugged at my heart. By the time I had engineered the recapped tires into my allotted space, slammed the automatic transmission into park, and shut off the forty-horsepower engine, I knew I was in love. Who could help it? I mean, there he was, hunched over a screaming piece of machinery; an Adonis cloaked in grease-smeared T-shirt, foul-looking levis and condemned tennis shoes. He looked so vulnerable, so *neglected* — this man needed me!

I walked across the alley to his garage, sidled up next to him and, dripping Chanel No. 5, purred, "Hi there, we must be neighbors."

He stuck his head closer to the machine. WABBA! WABBA! WABBA!

The blast sent me reeling halfway into the alley.

Undaunted, I retrieved my position, abandoned the purr and shouted, "Hi there! We must be neighbors."

Cold, grease-ringed blue eyes stared at me in disbelief. A shock of fine, golden brown hair fell to his forehead and was held fast by a glop of crankcase oil.

"There is only one thing in this world that 'must be'," he sneered menacingly. "This car must be ready for the track tomorrow, or I'll . . ."

Fortunately, the rest of his sentence was obscured by another series of WABBA's.

"Is this a race car?" I asked stupidly.

"What the hell does it look like, a submarine?" he barked.

"Gee, I've never met a race driver before," I crooned, engaging my most dazzling feminine smile.

He shut off the engine, slowly straightened up and gave me an exasperated but indulgent smile. "There's

probably a good reason for that," he said gently. "You see, we connoisseurs of finely-tuned precision racing equipment don't have time for broads."

"Well, I hope you and your precision equipment will be very happy together," I yelled to the stain on his chest, and stormed across the alley towards my apartment.

Leave it to me to fall for a ding-a-ling race driver. My terrific clothes, great figure and bubbling personality couldn't stand up to a finely-tuned engine, and my expertly decorated apartment was no love nest to a guy who digs concrete and oil slicks. This one was going to take planning, research, ingenuity and money. A lot of money. But it was worth it, I was certain of that. I mean, once you fall for a guy with grease rings around his eyes, how can you just forget it?

In the weeks that followed, he worked diligently in his garage, unaware and unprepared for the guerrilla warfare I was about to launch on his naive, blueprinted mind. My apartment bulged with magazines, catalogs, boxes. I read, I studied, I planned, I shopped.

I pressed the accelerator to a final throbbing crescendo

D-Day. I pulled into the alley, banged second gear, laid rubber for twenty feet and came to an impressive stop just outside his garage. His jaw fell at the sight of the gleaming silver Porsche Turbo Carrera. I nodded towards him, gave the victory sign with my right hand, exhibiting the custom leather driving gloves, and pressed the accelerator to a final, throbbing crescendo. He was suspended in ecstasy. I opened the door and unfolded one long, tanned leg to the ground. Slowly, I emerged from my precision machine, increasing his agitation with my flameproof Nomex hot pants. By the time his eyes hit the custom fitted, spun silver T-shirt with racing stripes, he was helpless. I leaned against the fender, swaying deliciously across the twenty-two coats of hand rubbed lacquer, lit a cigarette with my black and white checkered flag lighter, and observed his deterioration.

He wandered dazedly around the car, mumbling incoherently.

"How do you like it?" I asked.

"What are you doing with a car like this?" he croaked, contempt edging every word. "This is a man's car!"

"I can handle it," I gloated. "I went through Bondurant's driving school."

He glared at me, visibly torn between awe and hatred. I decided he'd had enough for the moment; Phase I was an unqualified success. I slithered back into the car, spun it around and whipped flawlessly into the carport, leaving my unsuspecting prey hyperventilating in his greasy garage.

"Hey you!" he shouted as I crossed towards my apartment. "What's your name?"

"My friends call me A.J.," I yelled over my shoulder, and went upstairs to plan Phase II.

Early the next day, just moments after the sound of his engine shattered the morning stillness, I glided into his garage with two cups of steaming coffee. He took one look at my flesh-pink one-piece driving suit, masterfully designed by Fredericks of Hollywood, and downed half the cup in one gulp.

"Good morning," I smiled cheerfully.

"Morning," he glowered. "If you cared about that car of yours, you'd put a cover on it at night. It was filthy this morning."

"That's funny," I said. "I just passed it, and it appeared to be freshly washed."

Crimson-faced, he grabbed a handful of tools and tore into the gearbox. I watched for awhile, delighting in his torment.

"Listen," he muttered, "if you're just gonna stand around, do something useful and hand me that socket wrench. If you can figure out what a socket wrench is." He eyed me distastefully.

I rummaged through the pile of tools, selected the smallest one and tossed it to him, shaking my head. "It's too big," I said.

He grabbed the wrench and labored furiously. "Damn!" he shouted, throwing it on the floor. "Too big."



"I have a few things in my car that might work," I offered innocently. "You're welcome to borrow them."

Glaring suspiciously, he headed for my car. I ran ahead, key in hand, and had it open by the time he caught up.

"My God!" he wheezed, gaping at the complete assortment of factory fresh metric tools. Clearly, he was impressed.

"Well," I shrugged, "you never now when you may need something like that. I always plan ahead."

"Can I really use them?" he asked.

I nodded. He gleefully transported every last one to his garage. I chuckled silently. Another outrageous victory. Now on to Phase III and the grand finale.

Leaning over his shoulder, I purred, "How about having dinner with me tonight?"

He kept working. "Sorry, I can't afford it. Big race this weekend."

"Oh, it won't cost you a cent," I said. "We'll eat at my place."

"No, I can't spare the time," he said stiffly. "Too much work to be done."

"We'll see," I smiled, and left him alone to contemplate his socket wrenches. Back in my apartment, I began preparations for the evening, laughing fiendishly as I worked.

You have a dynamometer in your kitchen? he croaked

"Hello," I said cheerfully, placing a sandwich in his free hand. "Change your mind about dinner?"

"No," he snorted, shoving the entire sandwich into his mouth. "Hand me that dial indicator, will you?" He gestured towards the workbench. "I'm never gonna make it with this engine." He grabbed the tool from my hand and swore

hostilely over the valves.

"I don't suppose you have a dynamometer in this mess, do you?" I asked casually.

He stared incredulously. "Sure, of course I do. I also have several spare engines, a Ferrari for running parts, a Pantera to dash out to my country home..."

"A simple yes or no would suffice," I interrupted.

"No."

"Oh," I said. "I have one in my kitchen; you're welcome to use it if you want."

"You have a dynamometer in your kitchen?" he croaked.

"Yeah," I said. "Come on up for dinner around 7:30. Apartment 112. I'll be waiting."

The doorbell rang at precisely 7:30. I was ready.

"Hello," I said huskily, as his eyes riveted to my scarlet negligee with "Bell Helmets" emblazoned across the bosom. I took his hand with my sequined driving glove and pulled him gently inside. The romantic strains of "Sounds of Sebring" filled the room with stereophonic rpms. Subtle candlelight danced across his nostrils as he inhaled the erotic incense of Castrol motor oil.

I led him towards a plush bucket seat and watched with sheer delight as he sank back, defeated, propping his feet on a stack of Goodyear Blue Streak racing tires. He looked around the room in bewilderment, taking in the McLaren Indy car tapestry on the far wall, the 'Dan Gurney for President' solid sterling plaque, the huge, wall-mounted stopwatch.

I handed him a scotch and water. "Sorry I don't have a cocktail table," I apologized. "You can just set your glass on this arc welder."

His shoulders began to tremble. Complete victory was only moments away. "Why don't you go wash up," I suggested. "The bathroom's down the hall to the left."

I shimmered with anticipation. This was it. In one minute, he was going to be so crazy in love with me, there'd be no turning back. "Oh, excuse my laundry," I hollered after him. "That's the only place I have to dry my unmentionables."

He emerged from the bathroom, shoulders slumped in submission, and weakly took my hand. It worked! I knew it. The flame-proof Nomex bikini panties and black net stockings with racing stripes, draped suggestively over the towel bar, had destroyed him. I had won, and he knew it.

"Where did you say you're racing this weekend?" I asked, patting his feverish hand.

"Las Vegas," he said.

"Fantastic," I squealed. "I've always wanted to go to Vegas."

He looked at me blankly.

"Well, the reason I brought it up," I explained, "I've had a lot of extra expenses lately, and the truth is, I'm being evicted from my apartment. I thought I might be able to store some of my things at your place, and go with you to the race, and..."

Silence.

"We can take my car," I added. "I had a trailer hitch installed."

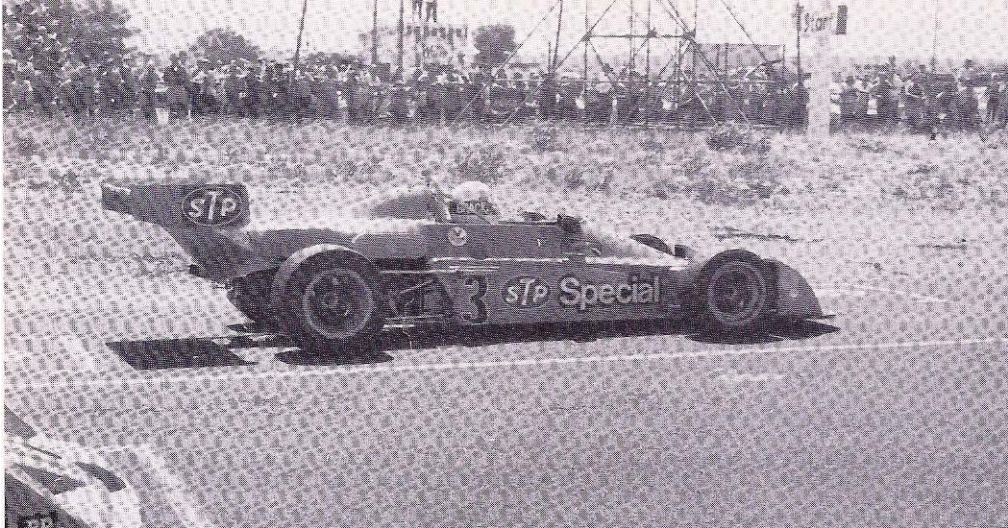
"The Porsche?" he stammered weakly.

"Yeah," I said.

"Does this arc welder work?" he asked.

"Yeah," I said.

He kissed me. "Welcome to the pit crew, A.J."



Brack moves his STP Chevron up to the final grid.

Brack in South Africa

Die weer was heerlik en die meises was vitstekend in meer geval as een. That bit of Afrikaner sort of describes the non-racing aspects of my trip to South Africa to test the new STP Chevron B34 Atlantic car and participate in the first two rounds of the Philips Car Sound Formula Atlantic championship.

For the opening race I flew to Johannesburg via London in an incredible 30 hour trip, but once there was met by Paul Owens (the Chevron development engineer) and my mechanics Doug and Jim Crosty. They had been in town for about a week prior to my arrival assembling the new Chevron B34. After a couple of days spent viewing the sights of Johannesburg, Doug and Jim headed off for the first race at Cape Town, a 1400 mile drive. It wasn't too tough for them as the car was riding in the back of the Gunston transporter, a big Mercedes that seats eight people in an air conditioned cab. It's an old Formula One transporter actually.

A couple of days later I headed down to Cape Town with Paul Owens and Tony Martin, who would drive the second new B34 sponsored by Bic Lighters. After some trouble sorting out hotel rooms we all ended up in the Holiday Inn. On Wednesday, January 21, we began setting up the new car, which is considerably smaller than the B29. I did a few laps and found trouble with my hands hitting the bodywork while turning the steering wheel. The next day was spent trying to sort out a lot of understeer, a lack of power and problems with the engine cutting out in the first corner, a long left hander.

Meanwhile the opposition was wasting no time and when practice finished Ian Scheckter, Jody's older brother, was sitting on pole with the Lexington March 76B, lapping in 1:11.4. Tony Martin joined Ian on the front row only four tenths of a second slower, while I was third fastest at 1:12.005. Completing the

top four was the only other serious runner, Dave Charlton, in the Lucky Strike Modus M1, who turned a 1:12.1.

The race was to have a standing start which I hadn't experienced for quite a while, but I did quite well and was second behind Scheckter into the first corner. Then the engine pulled its first corner-three cylinder trick and I slipped to third behind Tony. Two laps later Charlton was past when the same problem struck. His third place lasted only for a short while however as the engine in the Modus soon expired. I was back in third and could still see Tony, but I was

still suffering with the engine problems and a gearbox that refused to go into gear at the most inappropriate moments. Completing the problems a throttle spring soon broke leaving me with a flopping throttle pedal. I proceeded to drive the car as best as I could for the rest of the race, finishing third.

It was really a procession as Scheckter was about 20 seconds in front of Martin with me another 30 seconds behind. But it was the first Atlantic race in South Africa and a lot of interest was generated.

Our fun for the weekend wasn't over however for, the race being held on Saturday, we went to Dennis Joubert's place (the race organizer) on Table Mountain the next day for dinner. On the way we noticed a small grass fire, but by the time we got there the 50 mph winds were really starting to stir things up. There we were sitting on Dennis' lawn having drinks and looking around as big pieces of flaming wood were falling on his roof and in the grass, starting even more fires.

We all manned the garden hoses and began to soak down the area which was almost completely enveloped by smoke. We could see the fire marching up the street as trees were falling in flames. All our stuff was in the car and we were ready to evacuate at any moment, when the fire brigade finally arrived. They put the fire out and the smoke cleared quickly, but I reckon if they had been 20 minutes later that would have been it for Dennis' house.

After that excitement I spent a day on the beach at Cape Town and then flew back to Toronto via Johannesburg, Nairobi, Frankfurt and London for a week in the snow before heading back for round two. The return trip went to New York and then Johannesburg; luckily there were few people on the 747 so I had three seats in which to sleep my way through the 17-hour marathon.

I went a week early hoping to do some



(ABOVE) Ian Scheckter's March 76B with Dave Charlton's No. 1 Modus. (LEFT) Nols Neiman's Wheatcroft at the start.

testing at Welkom where the second race would be held, but I arrived in Johannesburg to find that Doug and Jim had gone to Durban for a weekend in the surf. Stuck in Johannesburg I was mad, and my temper wasn't eased by a day spent at the airport trying to find Doug's tools which had been shipped from Toronto in mid-January, and which now on February 9 had yet to show up at Johannesburg. Doug and Jim finally arrived back and noted, "Oh, didn't you know, we can't get on the track until Wednesday." So there were a couple of days to cool off before we finally left Johannesburg for the five hour drive to Welkom on Wednesday morning.

It rained all the way to Welkom and in some places the road was flooded up to the truck's axles. We finally made it to the Golden Orange Hotel in Welkom, where we would be staying and which we immediately renamed the Orange Peel Hotel. It was a real disaster, as they say in South Africa.

When Tony Martin arrived we decided to go and see the circuit, with everyone jumping in our van after we had dropped off the trailer. The access roads were deep in mud but Tony pressed on until we arrived at a locked gate. We should have turned back then but didn't, so proceeded to bury the van up to its axles in mud. It was unbelievable. A tractor came past and it was buried to its axles as well, trying to get us out. Everyone was in his shorts, up to his knees in mud trying to get the truck free which finally we did after five long hours.

I thought that adventure was a bad omen for the weekend but woke up the next morning to find it sunny and, upon arriving at the track, found a paved pit area fully equipped with water and power. A trip around with Dave Charlton in his road car showed that the two and a half mile circuit was very smooth. It was also very fast.

There was only one qualifying session and after playing with gear ratios and different pick up points for the upper radius rods, we got going and I did a 1:27.6, two tenths behind the elusive Scheckter. Tony was third this time, another two tenths behind me. We were the only cars under 1:28.0.

Before the race I did a booming business in T-shirts and posters which really surprised me as I thought most of the fans had hardly even heard of Canada, let alone Bill Brack.

I watched the starter drop the flag for the supporting Formula Ford race and in our start, as soon as he raised it, I dropped the clutch. I controlled the wheelspin and looked in the mirrors to see everyone disappearing behind me. Then I made my first mistake and muffed the shift to second. Ian was alongside me entering the first turn. I let him in and thought I could slipstream him down the long straight to the next corner and pass there. But I couldn't gain an inch.

He seemed to be better through the corners and was gaining about half a second a lap until lap 13, when I smelled oil and saw some on the circuit ahead of me. There weren't any flags but Ian got through and I was in a big hurry not to let him out of my sights. I lifted for a double left hand corner and, finding it covered in oil, went off and couldn't restart. I jumped out and gave the marshals a few Canadian expressions I'm sure they caught the meaning of.

Ian went on to win, with Charlton just nosing Tony for second. We packed up in disgust and headed back to Johannesburg

the next day for a couple of days of rest spent visiting the discos. Then it was off to London and the Chevron works where we found our two cars weren't finished yet, so it was back on the plane for Doug, Jimmy and I for the flight to Toronto.

The trip was worthwhile in several ways for we picked up Gavin Hardt who was the chief mechanic for the Gunston team and who will look after Kevin Cogan's car this summer. Our first North American appearance should be at Atlanta on April 11th, and from there it's off to the West Coast and perhaps a couple more IMSA events before the Player's series gets underway at Westwood on May 30th. I'll keep you all posted on our efforts throughout the summer in this column; until then, as they say in South Africa, totsiens.

AUTOHOUSE AMERICA

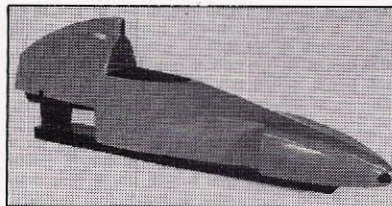
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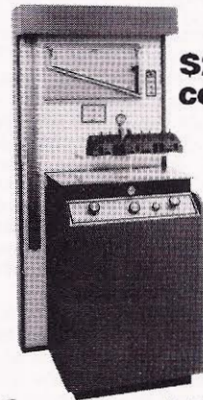
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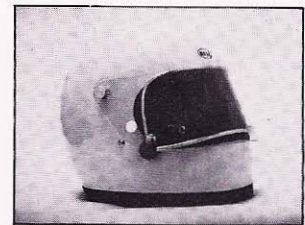


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Profile

Gary Witzenburg

Al Holbert

Those who were on hand in 1973 for the unveiling of Alvah R. Holbert, professional driver, may have been forgiven for thinking "Who's the new kid?" Bearing a striking resemblance to Ron Howard (Richie on TV's "Happy Days") doesn't contribute to being taken seriously in the tough Camel GT Series first time out.

But "The kid" drove like a man possessed, and the astute observer might have noticed the distinct aura of professionalism surrounding the Holbert truck, not to mention a certain proud father named Bob who was one fine driver himself not too many years ago.

Young Al, who at 26 was a bit older than he looked and who already had several years of SCCA amateur competition to his credit, became the STP Professional Rookie of the Year in '73 and returned the following year with a vengeance. Although he competed in only half of the 1974 season he won two races, finished third in the TransAm and fourth in the Camel series, and was the top money winner for the year.

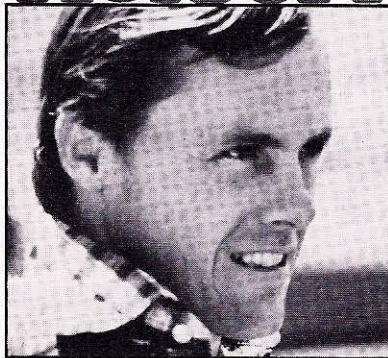
Last season Holbert was again the top money winner, won six races (more than anyone else) and still had a chance at the series championship going into the final November race at Daytona. But a broken axle late in the final laps knocked him out of second place and into a close third in points for the year. In July at Mid-America he became the first driver in IMSA history to win both heat races in a single weekend.

Holbert, who is married and has two children, is now 29. The strain of three tough seasons has begun to crease the boyish face, but the easy-going manner, quiet good humor and unobtrusive confidence have not changed in spite of the obvious pressure and the uncertainty about his plans for '76.

He graduated from Lehigh University in 1969 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, lives in Warrington, Pennsylvania, and is general manager of Holbert Porsche-Audi, Inc. in addition to his role as president of the Holbert Racing organization. His early years were occupied by competition on his high school track and wrestling teams and working for Roger Penske Racing — which may provide an insight into his present well-known passion for meticulous car preparation. Besides racing, he lists his interests as "sailing, flying, carpentry and cooking".

For '76, Holbert's racing calendar will certainly be full, but details were still uncertain as of early February. "I really wanted to do the Formula Atlantic series," he told me. "I tested a Doug Shierson car at Mid-Ohio, the March that Bobby Rahal drove last year, and we were quite pleased with the results of the test. I felt comfortable in it, but there is still a question of finances — whether I would try to do it on my own or on a rent-a-racer basis. That deal may still go together, but I know that Doug can't afford to wait around for my decision on it." One consideration is that he would like to have his own mechanic, '75 IMSA Mechanic of the Year Rick Routledge, taking care of his car, whatever it may be.

"There's another possibility in F/Atlantic, which I guess I can talk about



now," he continued, "which would be to compete as the second driver to Villeneuve on the Ecurie Canada team."

Holbert does have some less than satisfactory open-wheel experience in a Super Vee. He finished a creditable seventh in a Charlotte Gold Cup event, then had mechanical problems that dropped him from contention at Road America and Watkins Glen. "I found it very difficult," he candidly admits. "You really have to throw those cars around to make them go fast."

Like Peter Gregg, Holbert's plans to campaign a Porsche Turbo in the Camel series were squelched when John Bishop decided not to let the controversial Turbo compete. Yet there are no hysterics or theatrics from the Holbert camp.

"The Turbo deal was a big disappointment," said Al. "We have worked very hard and we had finally landed some factory support. But both Peter and I agreed that we would prefer not to compete unless we had a new car to develop. We feel that the RSR is totally developed, so in a way a lot of the challenge has gone out of it. If I were not so stubborn, I'd probably campaign the RSR for another year — but I said last year that I wouldn't run it again, and I guess I am a little tired of it."

The Turbo

I asked about the "show business" aspects of the sport in regard to IMSA's apprehension that allowing the Turbo Carrera to compete could open the door for another several years of Porsche domination.

"I agree with the concept that this is show business, but on the other hand I feel that John didn't give the car a chance. I don't really feel that it would be faster than the RSR, particularly at the tighter tracks like Laguna Seca, Mid-Ohio and Lime Rock. To begin with, the Turbo has more weight, less tire and less wing, and it's not the easiest car to drive.

"I drove a Turbo at Paul Ricard in France, and I don't think it's quicker than the better IMSA cars. Paul Ricard is a very fast track, and the Turbo was only a second faster than an RSR there — and I believe that our IMSA Carreras, because of rule variations and their level of development, are some three seconds quicker than the European RSRs. Even if the Turbo did prove to be dominant at places such as Daytona and Talladega, it

could always be restricted in some way to even up the competition."

Holbert confirmed the rumor that he might have a Monza in time for the Atlanta Camel event, but declined to give details of the arrangement because the backing was still uncertain. It will most likely be a Horst Kwech-built car, but the engine builder had not been determined. In addition, he has plans to run a Turbo in the SCCA TransAm "if the series is decent — more than just a few races".

At Daytona and Sebring, he drove George Dickinson's Carrera, the one that Hurley Haywood ran in '75, in the familiar Holbert number 14 blue and yellow trim, finishing second in the 24 Hour after a race-long battle with Haywood's Brumos RSR and Gregg's BMW CSL. Dickinson would undoubtedly like Al to stay in his car for the season, but it appears that the chances of that happening are less than slim.

Goals for the future? "I would like to do some European GT racing and perhaps some NASCAR. Mostly, I would enjoy an opportunity to do some racing and not have to spend my own money — to someday be in a position to get paid for it instead of the other way around."

"What about F1?" I asked dutifully.

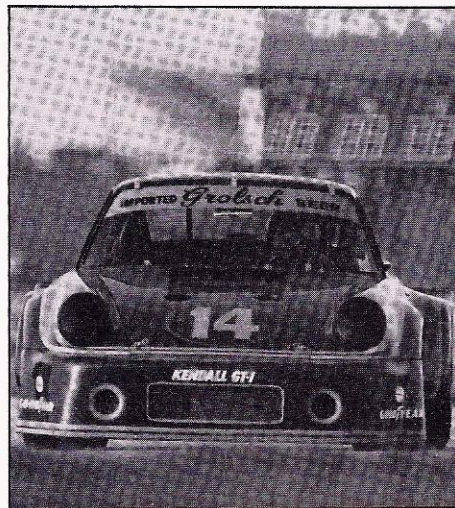
"It's a possibility, but I intend to take things one step at a time," was the logical answer.

It's easy to be envious of Al Holbert. How many of us, myself included, wouldn't give our proverbial eye tooth to have the opportunities he has had: the famous and helpful father, the Porsche dealership, the money and connections necessary for a chance to prove or disprove one's talent?

Yet it's hard to hold these advantages against the man if only because he has done so much with them in such a short period of time. A lot of people with more have accomplished considerably less. And no one ever claimed that racing was fair.

The comparison to Mark Donohue is inevitable, and Holbert does little to discourage it. His father reportedly sold Roger Penske his first race car, and Al grew up learning the lessons of racing strategy and car preparation from two of the best. His cars carry the Penske dark blue and yellow colors, he is an engineer who combines great driving talent with an equal knack for race car development, and he readily admits that Mark was his long-time number one hero.

We will all know more about Al Holbert's immediate future by the time this appears in print, but I feel safe in predicting that whatever he does, he will do it well. Time will tell where "the kid" will go from there. I may be envious, but I must admit that it couldn't be happening to a more deserving guy.



Profile:

Gary Witzenburg

Nick Craw

Nick Craw is your basic racing overdog: a skilled and experienced professional driver in a first-class professional car, running a relatively low-dollar semi-pro series.

Followers of the B.F. Goodrich Radial Challenge over the past several years have surely grown tired of watching and reading of his exploits in the Miller & Norburn BMW — not to mention his fellow competitors.

Craw shared the series title with arch-rival Amos Johnson in 1973 (the first season he competed for it), finished a close second to George Alderman in '74, then came back to win it last year after another outstanding, hard-fought, season-long battle. In the 1975 Mid-Ohio Six Hour he teamed up with John Morton to triumph even after carrying a lady journalist passenger for the first third of the race.

I had never met Nick Craw prior to our interview at Daytona and was frankly prepared not to like him. Anyone who wins with such disturbing regularity, I reasoned, couldn't help but be a little too impressed with himself. But I was in for a pleasant surprise.

He studied foreign affairs at Princeton, then went on to land a master's degree at John Hopkins University and ended up working for the government, rising to the position of Director of Operations for the Hospital Ship Hope.

Craw saw his first big race, an F1 event, in Switzerland at the age of 11 and remembers being much impressed. But the hook was not set until 1962 when he was driving past Daytona Speedway and stopped long enough to watch a prototype car do some test laps. Finally six years later, he made the big decision to quit his government job and go racing full time — even though, incredibly, he still had almost no driving experience.

Also, incredibly, he started in a Formula B car — and at the ripe old age of 32. "You're starting late," advised a knowledgeable friend, "so there's no point in getting into small production cars or sedans and working up from there. You'd better start right off in FB. If you're any good, you'll know it right away. If not, you'll save yourself one hell of a lot of time and money."

Nick won 18 races in the B-car competing in SCCA amateur events and in 1970 graduated to the L&M Continental Series, finishing fourth in the FB division. In '71 he was third in season points driving for Fred Opert and appeared to be well on his way to an outstanding open-wheel career. But L&M dropped its support prior to the '72 series. With the resulting cut in prize money, it became decidedly unprofitable to compete.

Meanwhile Craw had returned to work for the Big Uncle as Director of the Peace Corps and found himself able to compete only occasionally in '72. He did manage however to gain some valuable experience in a couple of European events and drove prototype cars at Daytona and Sebring.

Then in the last IMSA Camel GT event of that year, he drove a BMW in the under 2.5 litre class and ran against Russ Norburn. Craw finished third in class and apparently impressed the Nomex socks



right off Norburn, because after the race Russ came up and asked him: "Where did you come from?" The two made a deal for the '73 season and the most successful team in the history of the series was born.

I asked Nick if he missed open wheel competition and whether he had any plans to get back into it. "I'd really like to run an open wheel car again," he told me, "but I can't afford to get caught in the trap of investing in a series that does not have adequate financial backing."

Craw left the Peace Corps job in '74 to again become a full-time racer and appears to be satisfied for the moment with the Miller and Norburn ride. L&M's pull-out from the Continental Series just as he was reaching for the top was a bitter lesson; he intends to stay where the money is, and that appears to be IMSA as far as road racing is concerned.

While the uncertain financial situation in professional formula car racing may continue to keep him out of it, Craw has nothing but praise for open wheel competition, particularly in today's version of his old class: "I've driven single seaters, sports cars, prototypes and most everything else," he told me, "but nothing beats Formula Atlantic for sheer competitiveness."

How does racing a small-displacement sedan on street radial tires compare to the faster and more aesthetic forms of the sport? "It all boils down to getting four small patches of rubber around a given race course in as little time as possible," the ex-diplomat philosophizes. "The BFG sedans are fairly simple to set up, but they're no less competitive to drive. Still it did take a while to get used to having all that metal around me." Those who have seen BFG events, by the way, know there's truth in what he says. Enormous fields and super-close competition flag-to-flag make this series the Formula Ford of closed-wheel racing.

Did the danger factor bother him in the FB car? "I had a couple of pretty good shunts, one at Edmonton and one in South America, but you've got to put the idea of getting hurt out of your mind or there'll be a big, invisible spring pulling up on your throttle foot. I was able to do that."

Finally, I asked Craw what kind of driving he would like to try that he had not yet experienced. "One thing I'd really like to do is run a NASCAR Grand National car," he replied without a moment's hesitation. "I think that would be a real ball."

At 38, the BFG Series' most consistently outstanding performer is not the arrogant, cocksure young lion one might expect. On the contrary, Nick Craw couldn't be more personable, articulate and pleasant. I wish him continued success in 1976 and beyond — even if he does seem to be irreversibly converted to racing family sedans.



MODUS SUPER VEE

While Charlie Kemp was debuting the Mustang Cobra II to the press and IMSA tech inspectors in the garage area at Daytona Bill Alsup, slipping, sliding, and drafting for third position, was introducing the new Modus Super Vee to potential customers, the racers themselves.

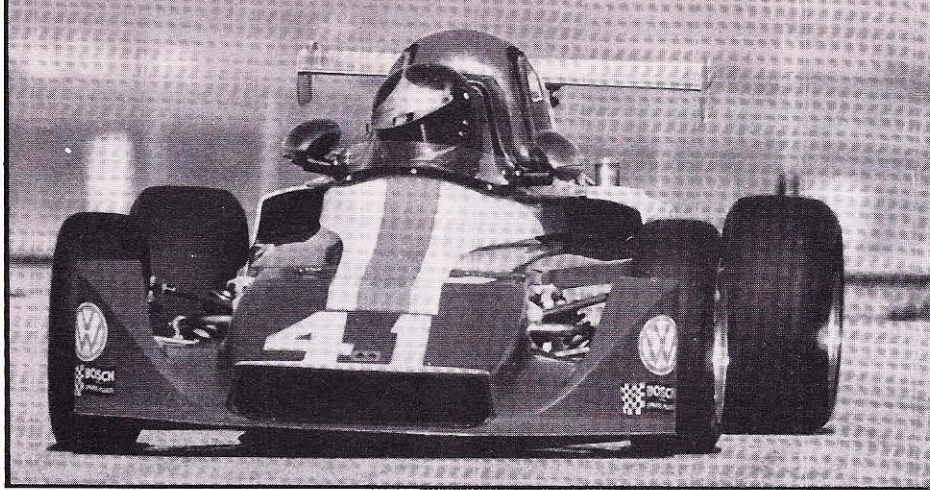
Bill showed the potential of the Modus in the way he handled the new machine in the crowd of six or seven vying for that elusive third spot. His company on the high banks consisted mainly of Lolas with two Fred Opert Tuis for good measure. Alsup showed the mettle of the John Zeitler-prepared machine to the people who count: the Super Vee competitors and car owners.

The Modus marque already has a history of success in England in winning both the F/Atlantic series with the late Tony Brise and the British Super Vee championship with Mike Young. Now they're bringing that record to the Colonies and, according to Alsup, the Modus has a chance to repeat its successful history in North America. "The car has the potential to run with anyone," stated the veteran Super Vee competitor.

The Alsup machine is the prototype and test-bed for the American version. In an on-going process to improve the machine to American standards John Zeitler is constantly making changes, like shifting the location of the radiators from the front to the sides, and redesigning the rear subframe for ease of maintenance on a car originally designed principally for Atlantic and F3. Any changes or modifications incorporated into Alsup's car will appear on Moduses subsequently imported into the U.S. Alsup cited two problems at Daytona: "We need some work in the braking area, and also the nose needs a redesign, now that the radiator's been removed." For such afflictions, a remedy has already been developed in the form of a master cylinder and a different nose, both in the works before the Daytona weekend ended.

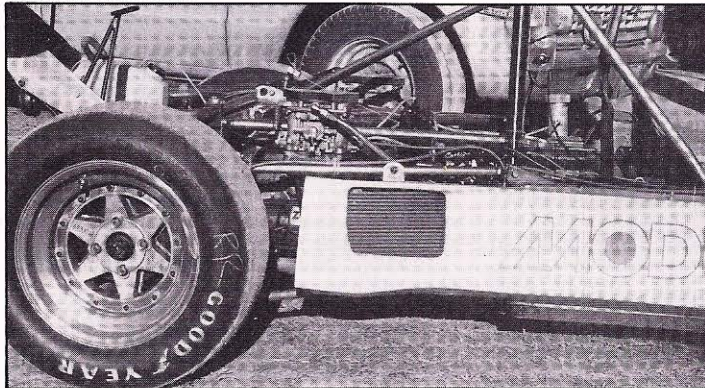
"The Modus seems to handle well," commented Alsup. "It's a good solid race car. This car doesn't go through the air as well yet as my former Lola T324 (a problem which will be solved soon), but the Modus doesn't push in the corners; the Lola, suffering from a heavy understeer, did just that. Both cars, however, can be caught nicely. I was worried about the narrow track, but the car does have a longer wheelbase which compensates for that design feature; as we've detected there's no twitchiness in the turns."

Other features he mentioned concerned the adaptability of the suspension. "The offset can easily be changed and there's double adjustable aluminum Konis adjustable for bumpsteer and rebound. Also good from the driver's standpoint is the very comfortable seat which has the nice Brickstar belts. The side radiators don't seem to affect the cockpit heat at all. As a matter of fact, one had to be taped over completely. Seeing the car taken in design and construction, and the very practical guide which the factory wrote, the Modus is a very nice race car all in all."



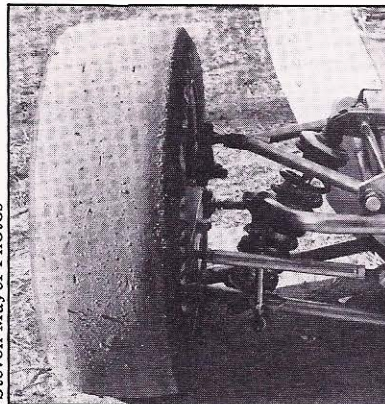
Sandy Lewis Photo

Steven Mayer Photo



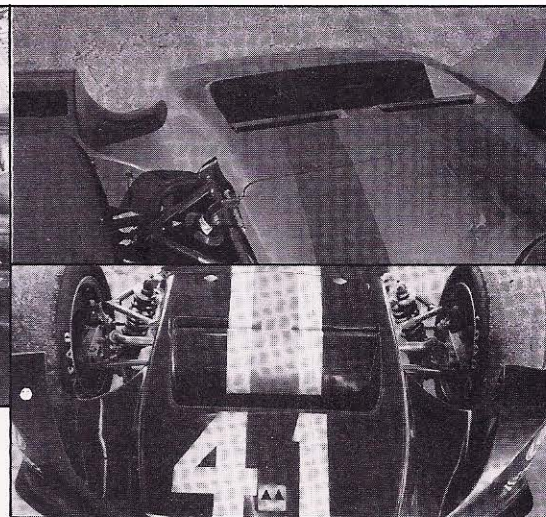
(TOP) Bill Alsup in the Modus at Daytona.
(LEFT) Note forward and aft facing roll bar bracing and forward seating position.

NEW RACE CAR



Steven Mayer Photos

The Modus Super Vee is simple and neat in design.



Maureen Fennelli Photo

MODUS M1 SUPER VEE SPECIFICATIONS

STEERING

Modus rack and pinion, fully adjustable steering column. Adjustable lock for twister circuits.

BRAKES

In compliance with SV regulations. Adjustable balance bar/aeroquip lines and fittings.

FUEL TANK

Foam-filled flexible 10 gallon fuel cell.

WHEELS

Spilt rims 13 inch diameter front and rear
6 inch front/3 inch rear

ELECTRICAL

Varley battery with aircraft cut-off switches cockpit and roll bar.

INSTRUMENTATION

9000 rpm Smith tach, oil temp and pressure gauges (rubber mounted).

SAFETY

Five pound Graviner fire extinguisher at driver's knees.
Six point (rotating release) belt system.

PRICE

Rolling chassis \$9600
Complete Approximately \$13,000

Available from Zeitler Racing Design, P.O. Box 3451, Stamford, Connecticut 06905.

KEMP COBRA II

Providing that social diseases are indeed communicable, IMSA banned Charlie Kemp's Mustang Cobra II from its 'All-American GT' category at the Daytona 24 Hours. Following on the heels of the controversial decision to exclude the Porsche Turbo-Carrera from IMSA competition, Charlie Rainville allegedly deemed the Kemp machine as "too illegal". A compromise decision by IMSA president John Bishop allowed the Mustang to run in a different class for the 24 Hours.

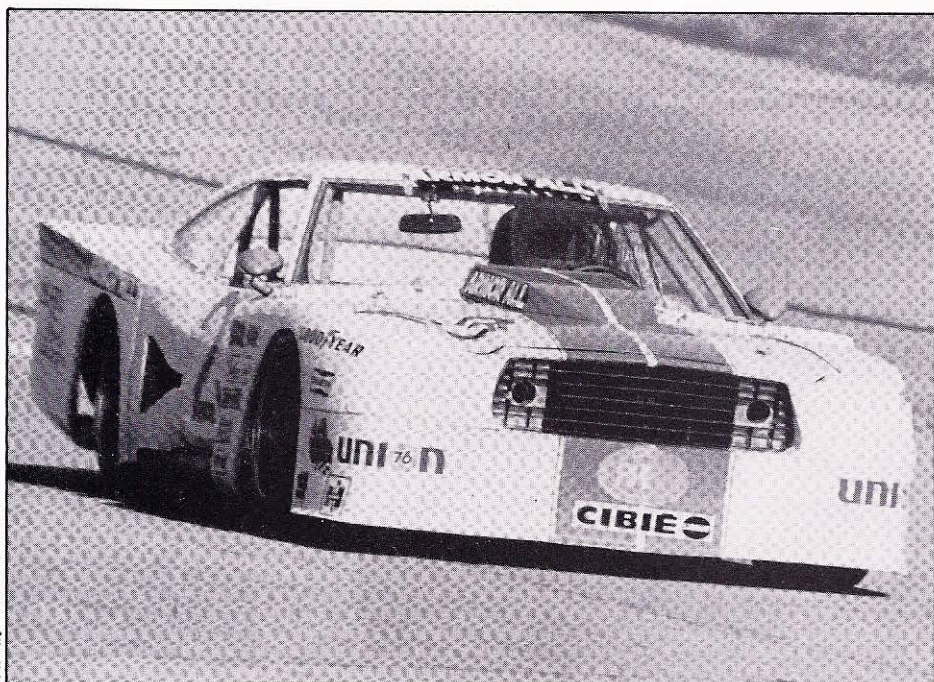
Charlie Kemp couldn't understand the sanctioning organization's ruling. Not surprisingly, he was angry too. "We requested and received in advance approval of various design features," he fumed. "I spent \$60,000 on this car. I invited him (Bishop) to see the car, expenses paid, in Detroit. He didn't even have enough time to look at such an important investment." Of course, Kemp has much more at stake than just a race car. Plans call for street versions to be produced and distributed through Dobbs Ford, the largest dealer/distributor in the Southeast.

"He (Bishop) was very blunt," explained Kemp to an inquirer. "Bishop disapproved of the front body panel, the aluminum floorboard, the louvers on the nose, and the exhaust pipe placement for starters." Yet all of these parts are found in one form or another on other cars competing on the Camel trail. As journalist Gordon Kirby commented, "It's not some of the parts; it's the sum of the parts," that IMSA can't approve.

Many observers were mystified by the IMSA politics. At a time when Bishop has been continually seeking new American entries for "spectator appeal", there seemed to be no logic behind his reasoning. Creatively bending the rules in the spirit of IMSA sedan racing, as exemplified by the Greenwood Corvette (also created by Cobra II designer Bob Riley) and the Kwech Monza (and after the Daytona RS race, most of the front runners in the Goodrich Series). With a new car with no development time, and consequently no chance to win, the decision made no sense at all. "They let him (Greenwood) run, but they wouldn't let me run. That's discrimination."

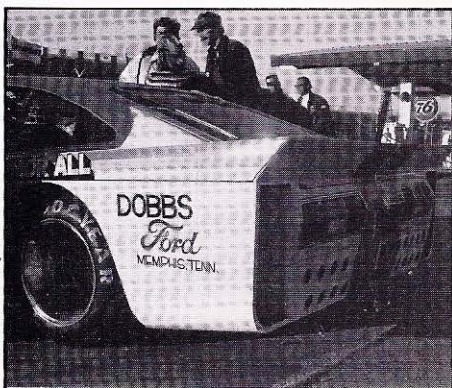
The car is, of course, the prototype for the special street production version. The race car less motor and sump runs \$25,000. The street racer with a 302 cid engine and special bodywork and suspension will cost approximately \$8,000. Many of the qualities of the Kemp Cobra II will be embodied into the street version (production on the street machine started last February). Perhaps the most important aspect of the project is a joint technical assistance program between Kemp, Dobbs and Gabriel shock absorbers. "I think it's the right time for an American shock manufacturer to get into racing," says Kemp. "A less inexpensive racing shock will result. Everyone in racing will benefit, as will the general consumer. Sam Posey agrees with me that the shocks are very good; there's no pitching.

Seeing how well the race car handled how stable it felt, I think both the race version and the street version have a lot of potential we haven't even touched yet."



Sandy Lewis Photo

INTRODUCTION



Steven Mayer Photo



John DeGarmo Photo

Kemp's Cobra was a bit too much for IMSA's John Bishop.

ARMOR ALL/KEMP COBRA II SPECIFICATIONS

DESIGNER

Robert W. Riley

FABRICATOR

Ron Fournier's Detroit-based Racecraft. Fournier has been associated with Penske, Foyt and the Greenwood Corvettes.

CAR SPECIFICATIONS

Height 44 inches
Width 4.5 inches wider than stock Mustang
Weight 2,500 pounds
Wheel base . . . 96 1/4 inches, (+) or (-) one inch as allowed by IMSA rules

ENGINE

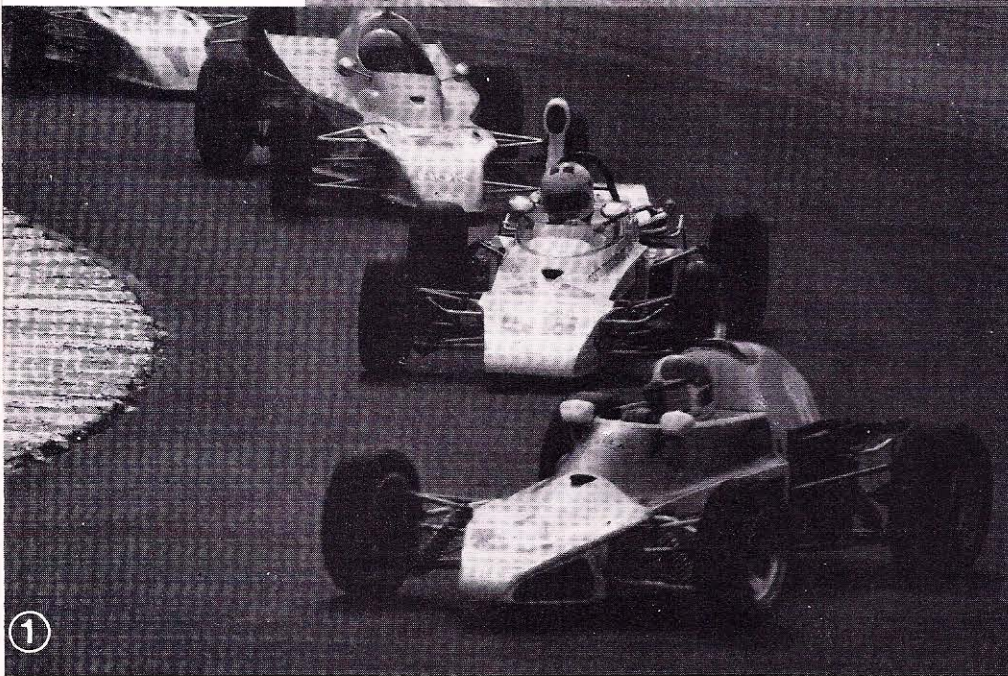
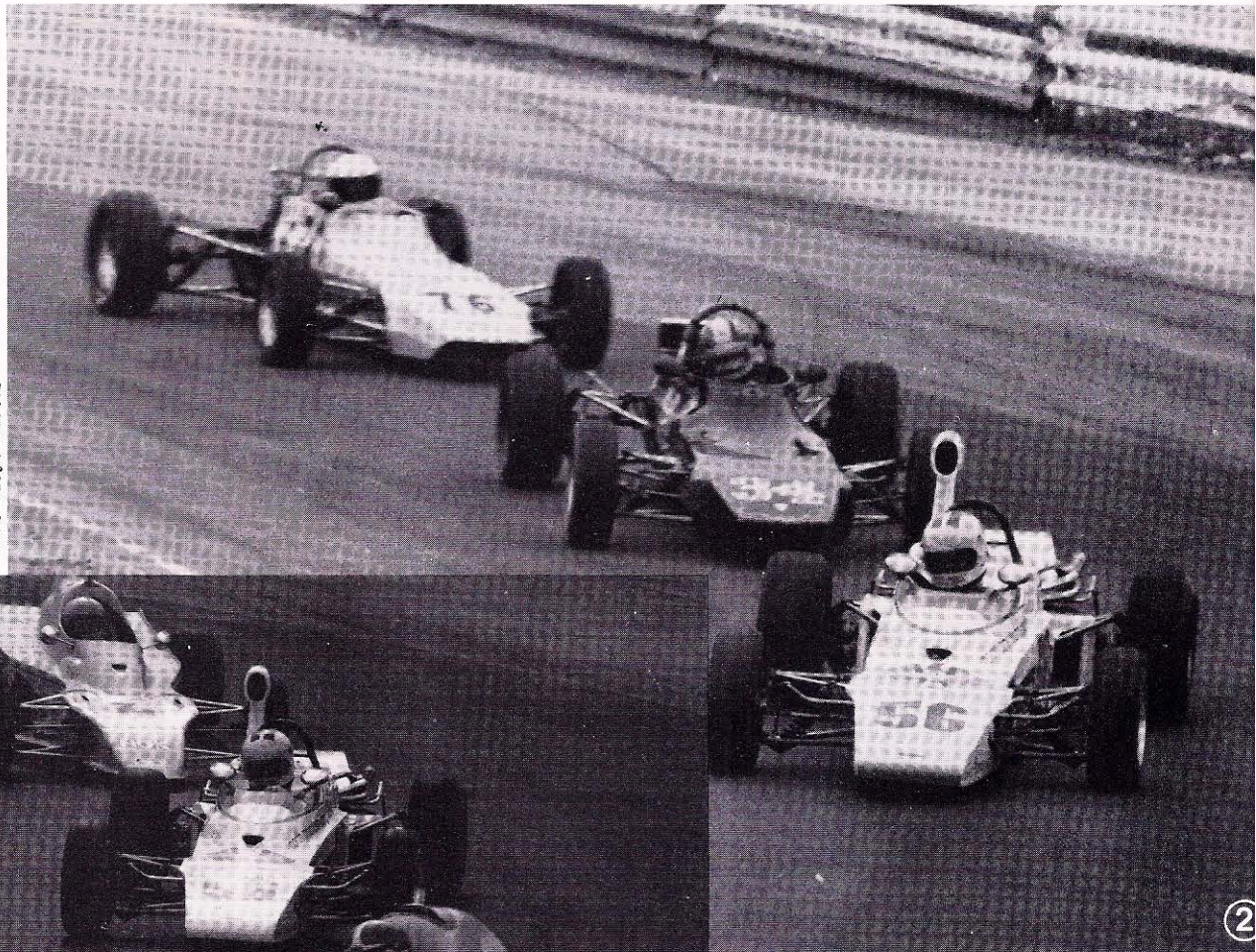
Built by Gapp and Roush
351 Cleveland with high-riser heads includes specially designed Kemp Cobra II parts, including cam shafts and pistons
Fuel injection system specially engineered by Kinsler for Kemp Cobra II
Manifold designed by Kemp
Horsepower in excess of 500 hp

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Gearbox — Ford Four Speed
Steering — Ford Rack and Pinion
Disc Brakes — Hurst/Airheart
Fly Wheel and Clutch Assembly — Hurst/Schiefer
Shift Linkage — Hurst Super Shifter
Wheels — 11 or 12 inch front, 17 inch rear, BBS by Intermag
Fuel Cell — ATL
Steering Wheel — Racemark
Shoulder Harness — Racemark
Fire Extinguishing System — Racemark (11 pounds freon)
Seat — Racemark trans-Am Safety Seat
Ignition System — ACCEL BEI
All Instrumentation — Stewart/Warner
Lights — Cibie
Fuel and Oil — Union 76
Tires — Goodyear
Shocks — Gabriel coil-over
Rear End — Full floater rear end with a quick-change option

RIVERSIDE NATIONALS

Rob Gloye Photos



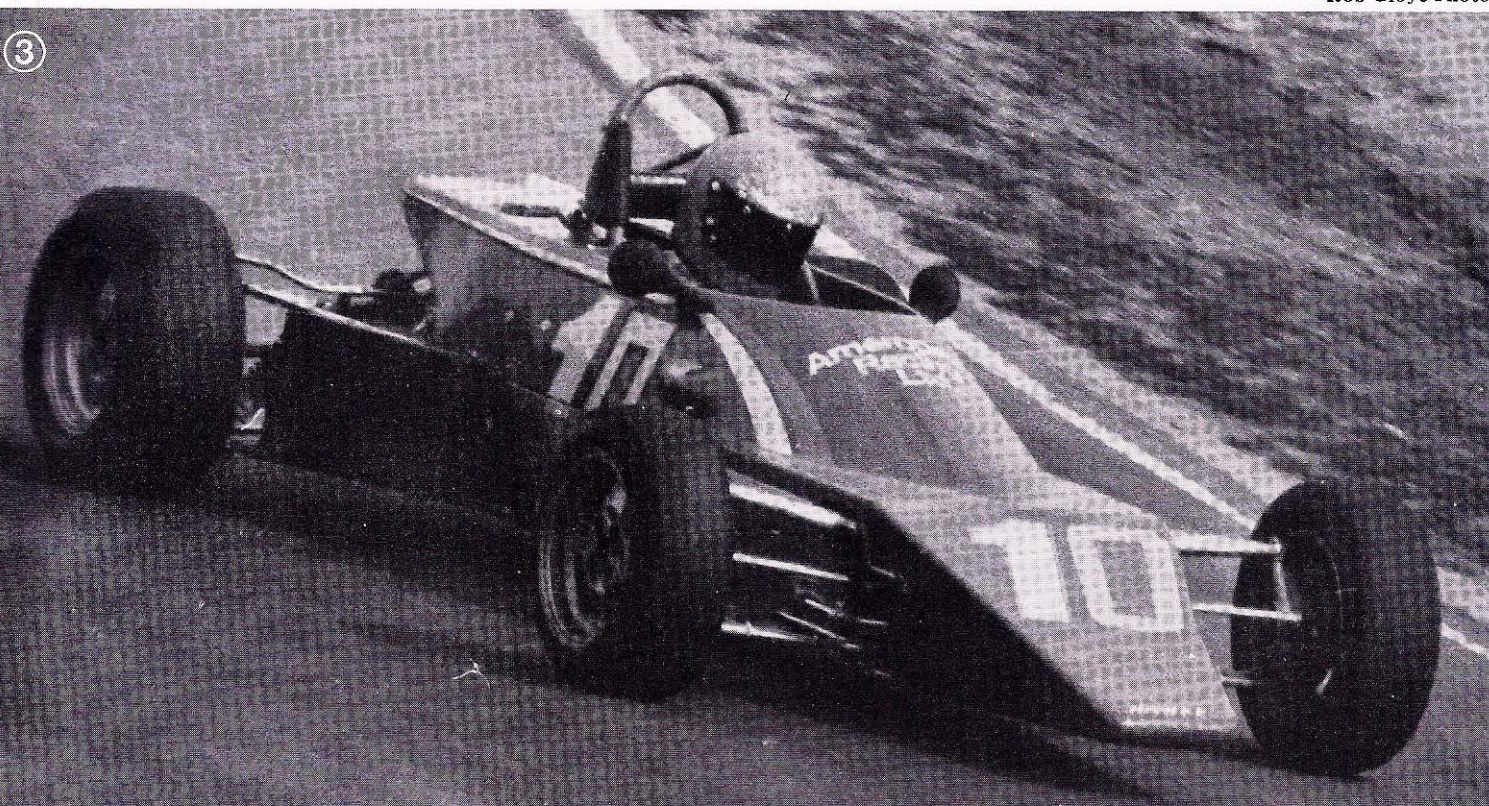
(1) Scyphers leads the first lap action. (2) Pittenger's new Lola in practice leads Nicolosi and Mike Roche. (3) Dan Marvin debuted the new Hawke. (4) Dick George was surprising.

by Ed Pitz

DICK GEORGE BEATS THE ADF'S

If only Horatio Alger could have seen the Formula Fords at Riverside.

The February 14-15 SoPac Divisional opener boasted a superb field, but a relatively unknown Crossle driver named Dick George beat all the established West Coast aces in a sensational race on the 3.3 mile long course. It was a field day for Crossle cars for, besides claiming their first-ever SoPac win, they carried off five of the top eight positions.



3

The many new and not-so-new driver/car combinations kept the air bristling with speculation; when the qualifying times were posted however, there were indications that perhaps things weren't so different after all. The names, if not the equipment, were certainly familiar.

Billy Scyphers, whose quiet demeanor conceals one of the brighter talents behind the wheel, captured the pole in his Lola T340. His time of 1:56.873 broke Richard Shirey's record by a half second.

Shirey, who has not lost a race at Riverside since his first race in the ADF two years ago, took the number two position in his rebuilt ADF. Now attempting to set up a F5000 program, the defending SoPac champion was hopeful that a good performance would speed the car's sale. He also improved on his old mark with a time of 1:57.191.

Having just received their new Shankle-powered Lola T342 five days before, the North Atlantic Racing Werks team spent the weekend sorting out the chassis. Chuck Pittenger was able to record a very respectable 1:57.261 that put him third on the grid. The car is being entered by North American Racing Werks although the chassis was supplied by the local Lola dealer, Autohouse America.

Just .34 seconds behind was David Bruns' ADF which had new front hub-carriers, springs and revised rear suspension geometry. Bruns, whose wit is as well known as his technical excellence, said that he made the changes "to keep me happy. A happy driver is a fast driver."

1975 Regional champ Wes Marumo, aided by a timely tow from Shirey, clocked 1:57.537 in his Crossle 25F to head the third row. Alongside at 1:57.715 was Ameropean Racing's new Hawke DL15 driven by Dan Marvin.

Hawke's latest model appears to be their best yet if this weekend was any indication. Dan had very little time in the car and was still able to record good times right out of the box, so to speak.

Seventh and eighth were the Crossle 30Fs of Brad LoVette and Dick George, followed by Johnny Kastner's Jim Russell School Merlyn Mk29 and Colorado's Bill Thomas in a Lola T342.

Bob Richardson came out from Denver but was back in 20th spot after crashing his own Lola on Saturday, then taking over Bill Henderson's Merlyn. Rick Paronelli ruined his Corsa as he went end-over-end at turn four. His team said a faulty CV joint caused the endo.

In view of their outstanding performance on the long course last July, the ADFs were expected to figure heavily. Scyphers had other ideas though as he took an immediate lead and held it for the first lap. Pittenger and Bruns moved past the pole sitter as they headed for turn two, with Pittenger having the advantage. The lead was short-lived as Bruns took over only to be passed by Kastner. As the cars headed down the long back straight Bruns moved back in front. Dick George, having the advantage of a multi-car draft, moved past Bruns in turn nine to lead his first Formula Ford National.

After four laps the order was George, Bruns, Scyphers, Kastner, Pittenger, LoVette, Marvin and Marumo. Then at turn seven Marvin spun and separated the top six cars from the rest of the pack. Marvin, attempting to get back on the track, was hit by Mike Mokler's Titan, putting both cars out.

Just back of this leading group was a good race between the Lolas of Noel Bennett and Page Roos and the Crossles of Marumo, Sam Nicolosi (who was running on M&H Tires) and Mike Roche. Al-



Phillip Salazar Photo

4

most unnoticed was the demise of Shirey whose ADF had circulated in midfield with a misfire before pitting on lap six.

On the ninth lap Kastner's motor ventilated itself in the middle of turn eight and the Merlyn driver, making rude gestures of disgust, coasted into the pits.

For the last five rounds it was a straight fight between George's Crossle and Bruns' ADF, Scyphers having fallen a couple of seconds behind. Pittenger had spun back into the Lola-Crossle scrap for fifth. Fourth man LoVette, handicapped by the loss of second gear, was also losing ground but was able to hold his place by just a few feet.

The key moment took place with one lap to go. George had the lead through the esses with Bruns right on his exhaust. As the cars approached turn five George made a move on two backmarkers — Bruns didn't. With a little breathing room Dick George went on to collect his first FF National win. Well deserved.

Automotive Development filed a protest against George's Minister motor, feeling it had a bit too much power. The protest was filed too late however and it was disallowed. *continued* ►



Jim Van Horn held off Cooper's March to the finish.

The entry list took your breath away. At least 15 well-prepared FBs (or F/Atlantics, if you prefer) were on the card along with 11 FAs of widely varying performance. This lineup shrank as the list of non-arrivals grew, however. Among the no-shows were Ken Hedman's newly acquired Lance, Bob Earl's Lola T330 and the Atlantics of Marc Bahner, Doug Turner, Pete Halsmer and Pat Walter, all of whom had crashed in testing prior to the weekend. Dick Hayes' Chevron was another no-show.

But there were still enough quality cars on hand to put on a good show. Cliff Hansen's immaculate new March 76B was the class of the field and qualified on the pole, breaking Breidenbach's lap record by over *two seconds* with a 1:44.439 (113.74 mph).

Rick Mears, driving Bill Simpson's Berta F5000 car, took up second spot with a 1:45.273. Dennis Firestone, ex-SoPac FF champion driving an undated March 722 for only the second time, headed the second row. Wilbur Bunce is preparing the car for Firestone and he didn't miss a trick. The car featured '75 suspension and sported a Formula One nose section. Firestone was very impressive and his ten month layoff from racing didn't seem to slow him down at all. He was a second faster than all the Atlantics except Hansen's.

John Briggs put his Lola T332 next to Firestone and was followed closely by Wink Bancroft, another returnee. Wink had taken a year's "vacation" to concentrate on business. He was in his same Chevron B27 that he campaigned in 1974 and was reasonably pleased.

In stark contrast was the situation in the Breidenbach camp where grim faces prevailed. The team found that their winter suspension modifications just wouldn't sort out, while the motor defied all efforts to produce power at low revs. Breidenbach's best was two seconds slower than his previous mark. Don has been doing his homework over the winter as he had a new sponsor in Monster Custom Tee Shirts.

Jon Norman's Lotus 69c, fitted with stiffer spring rates and Lockheed brake

calipers, filled the seventh spot just ahead of Tim Cooper's March 75B, which will be prepared during the season by Wilbur Bunce. Tom Sauerbrei was an optimistic ninth in his March after spending practice coping with a faulty brake master cylinder and dialing in changes to the rear suspension. Jim Van Horn's ex-Bobby Fisher Chevron B27 filled out the front qualifiers; the 19-year-old driver had finished second in the Regional just two weeks before and this was his first National.

Oddly the big-bore challenge had evaporated almost completely with only Mears, Briggs and Ray Stephens' 12th placed Lola T300 showing anything at all. The Lolas of Evan Noyes, Dick Workman and Dick Ferguson encountered nothing but problems and didn't start.

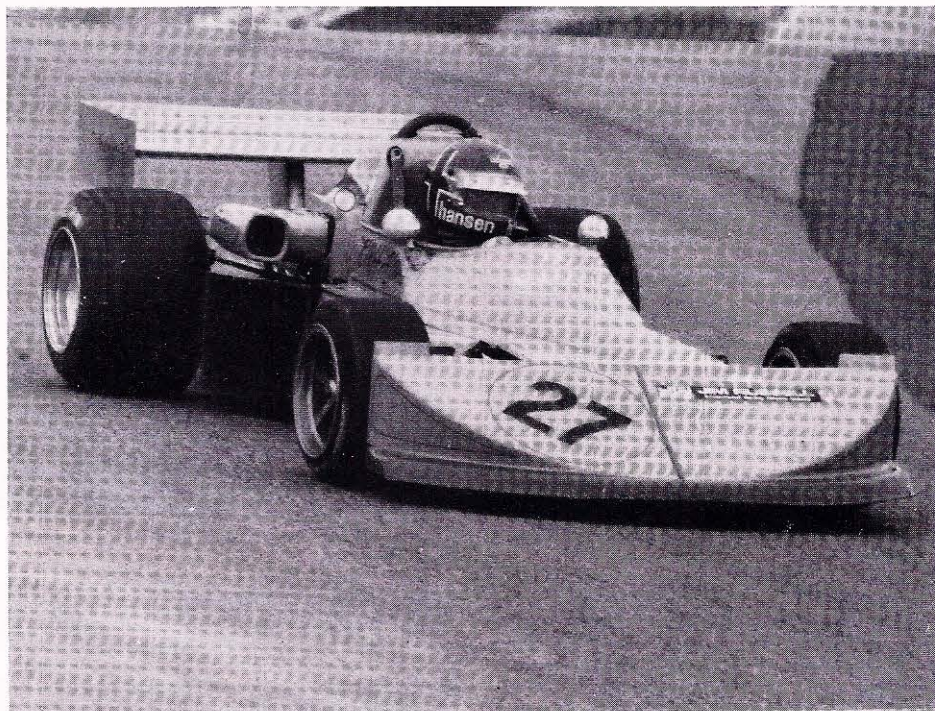
As the cars moved away from the pre-grid there was a flurry of activity around Firestone's March which had failed to fire up. Fortunately for the Bunce crew, the 29 starters needed an extra pace lap to settle down and they were able to solve the problem. A determined Firestone, having to chase the field after the start, put on a great show.

At the green, Mears blasted ahead and lost it in the first turn. Amazingly everyone managed to get around the Berta, although several pulse rates soared over the redline.

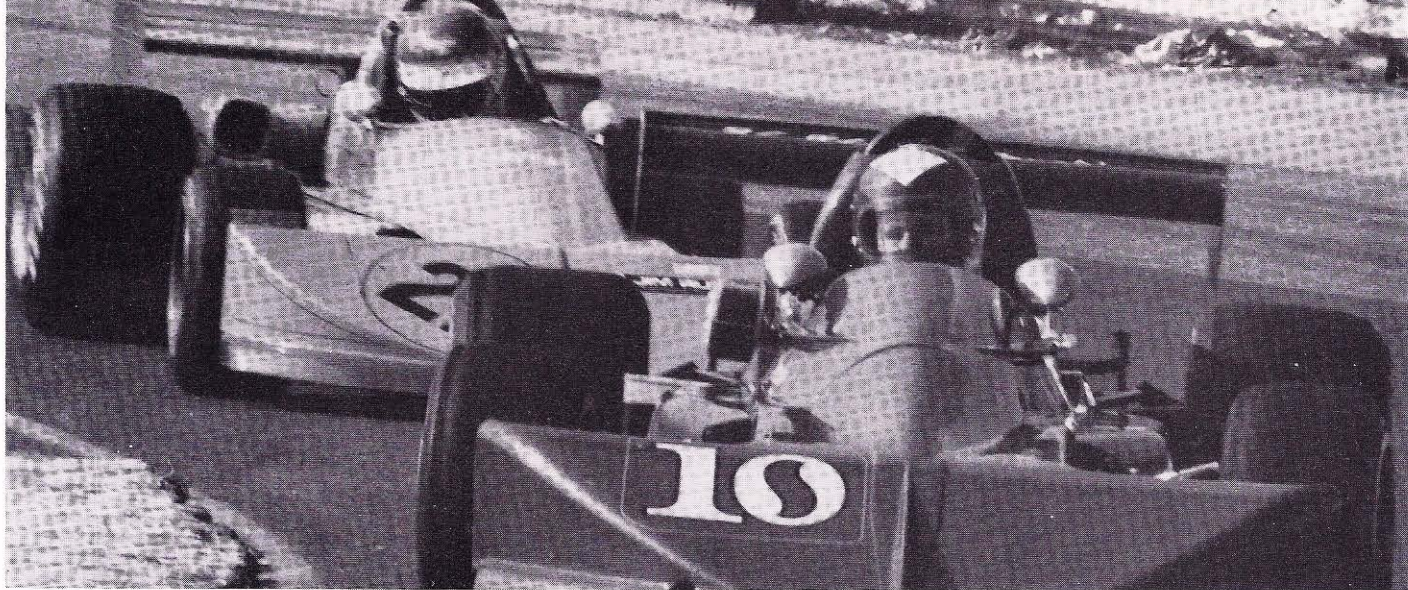
The incident jumbled the grid into a vastly different order. Hansen finished the first lap already several seconds in front of Breidenbach and Van Horn, both of whom were also well spaced apart. Sauerbrei and Cooper were next, followed by the Brabhams of Frank Monise, Jr. and Warren Pauge, Ray Stephen's Lola and Larry Wright's BT29. Bancroft had spun at turn seven and was a very brief tenth ahead of the Briggs' Lola. Firestone was up to 22nd and was annihilating the backmarkers.

Briggs quickly made up for his bad start and climbed to third on the fourth lap. Van Horn was clinging to a precarious fourth ahead of stiff challenges from Cooper and Sauerbrei, but Bancroft reeled them in and passed the whole lot at the halfway point. At the same time Firestone ousted Monise for eighth place. The Brabham in turn came under assault from Jon Norman who had fallen to 19th at the start.

Larry Wright and Warren Pauge argued over 11th with Jeff Alkana's Tom Boy March 74B. Bill Henderson's Lola led the



Cliff Hansen had it pretty much his own way in his nifty new March 76B.



Firestone was very impressive in his first outing in Wilbur Bunce's March.

FSV contingent comfortably in 14th place and Ed MacGrotty's Lotus had no problems dealing with the pathetic FC field.

Firmly set in the lead, Hansen's attentions were focused on the progress of Briggs who had overhauled Breidenbach for second and was closing steadily. Nothing was to come of it though. One lap from the end the Lola coasted silently over the finish line and stopped in the first corner.

As a rule everything settles down dur-

ing the final laps, but this race was an exception. Bancroft's pace carried him up to Breidenbach's gearbox by the eighth lap, at which point the March began taking up more and more of the road to hold off the attack. The March held on for second by barely a car length.

Sauerbrei finished fourth with Firestone only a couple of seconds back. In the final laps Firestone had closed on the Van Horn/Cooper debate and moved past the two of them, demonstrating the style Southern Californians are used to seeing.

Jim Van Horn had driven an excellent race, holding off Cooper's newer car to the finish to claim sixth.

Jon Norman made short work of Monise to collect a hard-earned eighth place while Larry Wright repelled a final effort from Jeff Alkana for tenth.

Despite his breakdown, Briggs was awarded 13th overall and the FA honors as Ray Stephens' Lola retired after seven laps. Henderson went on to capture Super Vee and MacGrotty took the Formula C win. *continued* ➤

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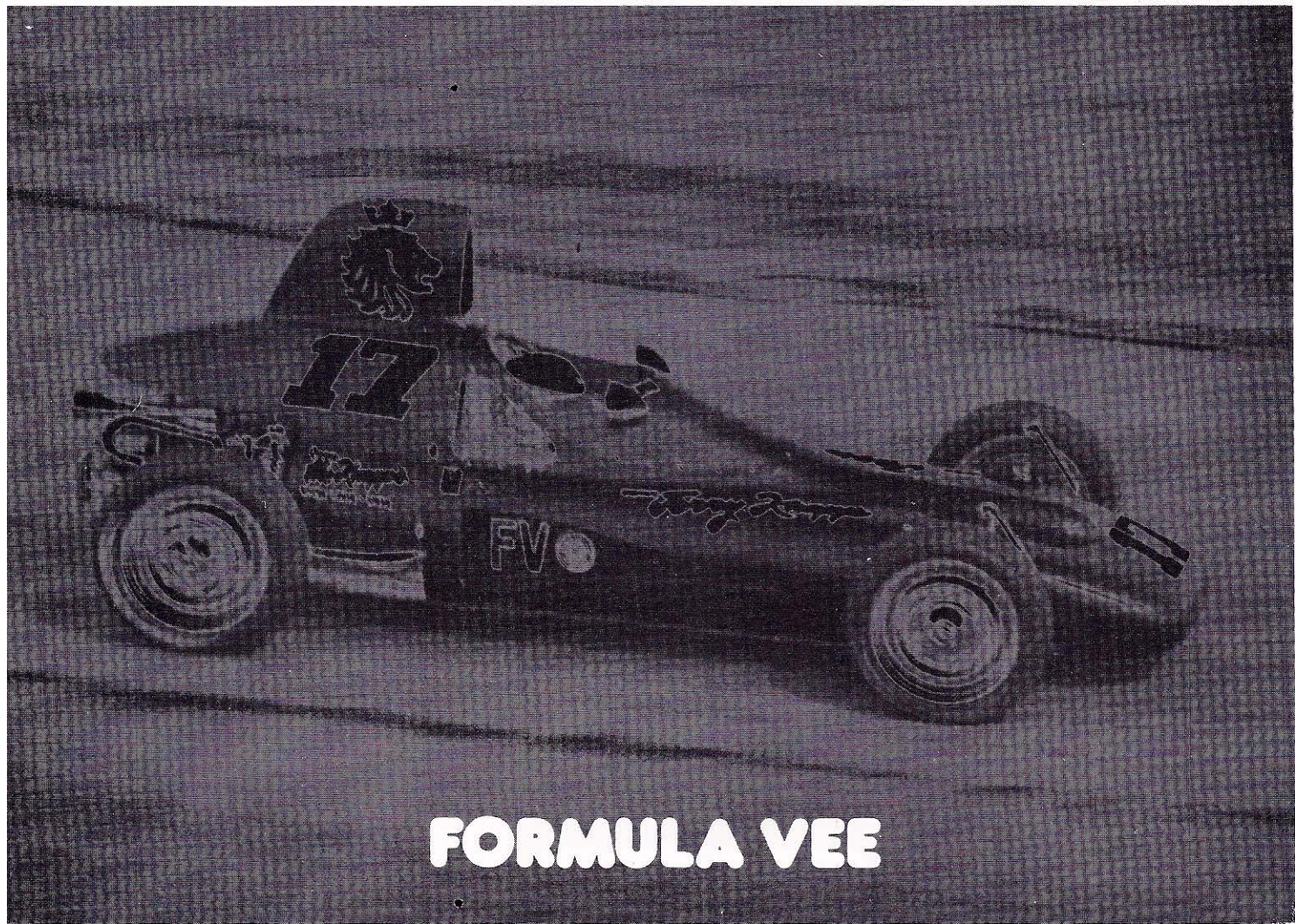
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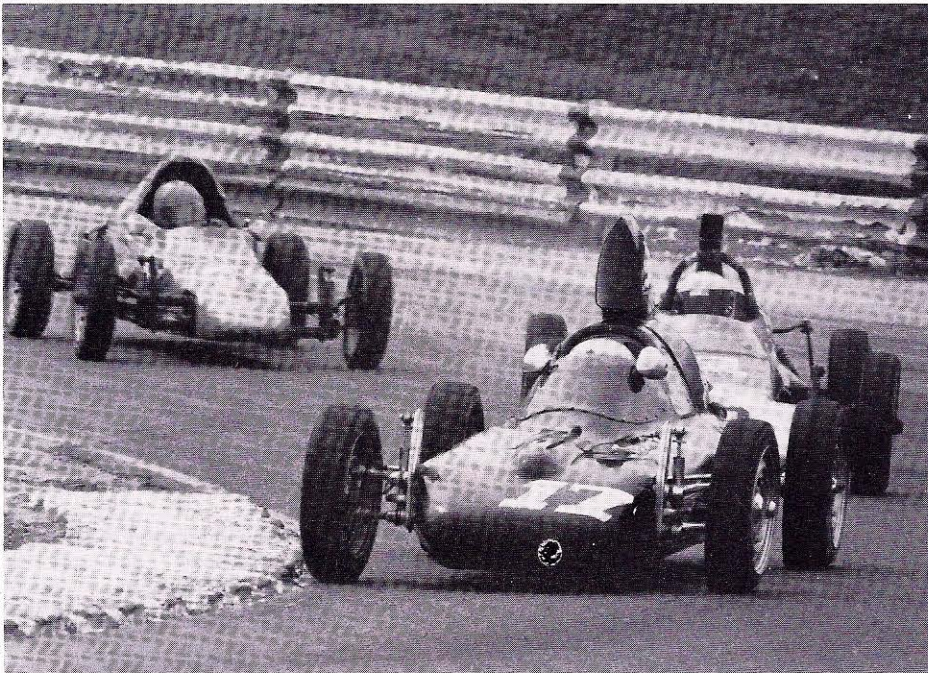
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Terry Cooking Photo

FORMULA VEE



Rob Glove Photo

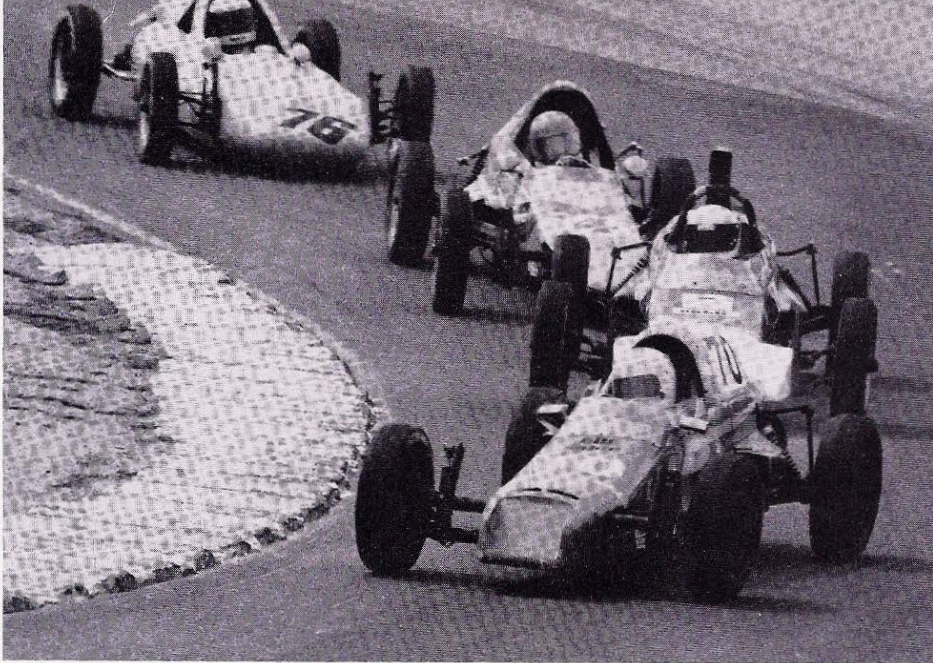
Gerry Knapp is nearly hidden by the windscreen on his Laser D13 as he leads Frangkiser and Noble.

The Vees achieved the distinction of having the most cosmopolitan entry of the weekend with contestants coming from all over. The winner came from Minnesota and less than one third of the field was composed of locals.

The main interest centered on a trio of Bill Noble-engineered cars from the Midwest, and it was these which almost dominated the event. The Wizard (Noble) himself secured the pole in his Lynx with 2:13.964 (88.68 mph). A half-second in arrears was the Caldwell-based Laser of Gerry Knapp, builder of the Laser 917 kit car and winner of the Lake Charles, Louisiana National the previous weekend. National Champion Mike Frangkiser completed the sweep with a time of 2:14.685 in his Lynx.

Next were last year's arch rivals, Brent Milner's Lynx and Stu Fisher's Lynx-based Phenix. The former machine wore the violet livery of its new sponsor, Envirotex, while Fisher's car retained the colors of the Chartered Bank of London. Regional winner Bob Campbell qualified sixth in the ex-Billesbach Caldwell, stating "there's big money at stake here", while the remainder of the top ten consisted of off-road ace Rick Mears' Zinkarella, Dick Murray's Zink, Seattle's Mel Kemper in a Race Prep Kwic, and Stan Townes' Zink.

Who grabbed the initial lead is anybody's guess, for the front half of the field fanned out to four abreast at the start, Murray in particular making a real



Bill Noble's Lynx leads Mike Frangkiser, Brent Milner and Bob Campbell through Riverside's turn six.

banzai charge. In the time it takes to make a stiff drink the leaders were back in view with Frangkiser heading Noble, Campbell, Milner, Murray, Knapp, Fisher, Townes, Mears, and Bob Booth's Cheetah (up from midfield after breaking two motors in practice).

After a few laps, the battle lines were firmly drawn. Knapp, Noble, Frangkiser, Campbell and Milner all had a chance at the honors, while the remaining point was hotly disputed by Townes, Booth, Murray, Mears, Kemper and Mike Cherry's Phenix.

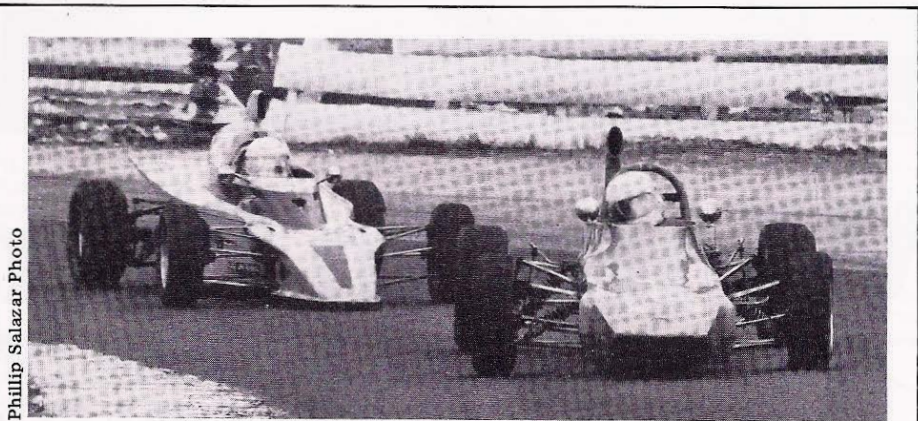
The pace set by the front runners began to show. Campbell found the struggle unequal and by the halfway mark was all alone in fifth. Stu Fisher was a lap down after pitting with a recurrence of a practice problem; the air intake caught a stone which clogged up the works fairly well. Mears indulged in a pirouette at turn nine and dropped several positions.

Noble and Frangkiser kept the lead to themselves (officially anyway), but no bets were being taken on that. Milner was jockeying up and down the order, snapping at everyone's flanks, and Knapp obviously had his plans for the last lap too.

The 12th lap rundown was Frangkiser, Knapp and Milner. Noble showed up several seconds behind this trio after suffering a sudden loss of adhesion at turn seven. Knapp moved ahead at the start of the last lap and the nailchewing began. Halfway around the Laser driver saw Milner in his mirrors but, as the NorPac champion said afterward, "He had too much of a lead for me to make a pass on the straight". Knapp was the winner by less than two tenths of a second from Milner, Frangkiser, Noble and Campbell.

The impound area was a joyous scene with a great deal of whooping, hollering, backslapping and bear-hugging. Rumor had it that one of Knapp's "rewards" was the honor of picking up the dinner tab at the caravan's next stop — Las Vegas!

The sixth place cliffhanger went to Murray from Cherry and Kemper. Stan Townes had spun away his chances at turn seven, while Bob Booth pitted on the penultimate lap with more motor problems. The Cheetah was the only one of the 27 starters not making the checkered.



Phillip Salazar Photo

Riverside National
Formula Ford
Riverside, California
February 15, 1976

Results

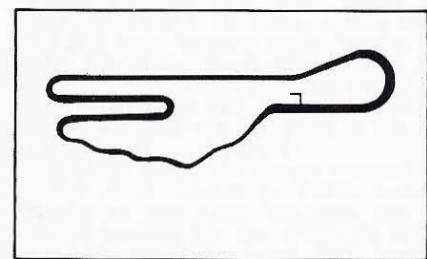
1. Dick George, Joyce George Crosle 30F, 26 min 53.378 sec, 99.391 mph, 14 laps; 2. Dave Bruns, Motor West Magazine ADF Mk II, 14 laps; 3. Billy Seyphers, Serphys Lola T340, 14 laps; 4. Brad LoVette, Mantu Cars Crosle 30F, 14 laps; 5. Chuck Pittenger, NARW Shankle Lola T342, 14 laps; 6. Sam Nicolosi, Nicolosi Restaurants Crosle 30F, 14 laps; 7. Mike Roche, Roche Crosle 30F, 14 laps; 8. Wes Marumo, Marumo Crosle 25F, 14 laps; 9. Noel Bennett, Bennett Lola T342, 14 laps; 10. Page Roos, Roos Lola T342, 14 laps; 11. Bill Thomas, Thomas Lola T342, 14 laps; 12. Ed Hoffman, Hoffman Lola T340, 14 laps; 13. Rocky Moran, Kent Morgan Dufon MP15, 14 laps; 14. Barry Young, Sav-On Glass & Screen Lola T340, 14 laps; 15. David Wilson, Sterling Racing Service Crosle 30F, 14 laps; 16. Kevin Cogan, Cogan Merlyn MK29, 14 laps; 17. Gary Dalziel, Dalziel Merlyn MK24, 14 laps; 18. Tom McKee, Miller's Outpost Merlyn MK25, 13 laps; 19. John Walter, Gopher Racing Winkelmann, 13 laps; 20. David McCune, McCune Merlyn MK20, 13 laps; 21. Tom Dvorak, Dvorak Lola T340, 13 laps; 22. *David Whitney, Whitney Racing Elfin, 10 laps; 23. *Bob Richardson, Performance Development Merlyn MK29, 10 laps; 24. *Rob Nuss, Team Fat Chance Elden Mk10, 10 laps; 25. *Johnny Kastner, Jim Russell Merlyn MK29, 9 laps; 26. *Ken Sharp, Seropan-Sharp Racing Merlyn MK24, 8 laps; 27. *Riley Hopkins, Hopkins Crosle, 7 laps; 28. *Jim Lawrence, Business Promotions Royale RP3, 7 laps; 29. *Richard Shirey, Flat Out Promotions ADF, 7 laps; 30. *Dan Marvin, Ameropan Racing Hawk DL15, 4 laps; 31. *Mike Mokler, Lockhart Industries Titan MK6, 4 laps; 32. *Steve Leedy, Leedy Merlyn, 3 laps.

* Not running at the finish

Riverside National
Formula Vee
Riverside, California
February 15, 1976

1. Gerry Knapp, Laser Sports Car Laser D13, 31 min 37.486 sec, 87.652 mph average, 14 laps; 2. Brent Milner, Envirolex Lynx, 14 laps; 3. Mike Frangkiser, Lynx, 14 laps; 4. Bill Noble, Noble Lynx, 14 laps; 5. Bob Campbell, Motorsport Ltd. Caldwell, 14 laps; 6. Dick Murray, Richard Murray Co. Zink, 14 laps; 7. Mike Cherry, Cherry Phenix, 14 laps; 8. Mel Kemper, Race Prep Kwic, 14 laps; 9. Stan Townes, Anderson Ethel Zink, 14 laps; 10. Rick Meass, Mario Panzavola Zinkarella, 14 laps; 11. Don Peppereing, H&K Import Auto Kwic, 14 laps; 12. Eric Schalansky, Paul Schalansky Crusader, 14 laps; 13. Pete Wildy, Weldy Racing AD Mk III W, 14 laps; 14. Peter Harris, Adpac Corp Caldwell, 14 laps; 15. Ron Fack, Lil Al, Paro's Bobby, 14 laps; 16. Henry Henschen, MV Wile Lynx, 14 laps; 17. Mike Patton, MAX Lynx, 14 laps; 18. Arthur Ayer, Import Auto Leech, 14 laps; 19. Kingsley Fife, Fife Zink, 14 laps; 20. Mike Walsh, Audi House Bandido, 14 laps; 21. Joe Abbamont, Abnelt Sport/Import Bandido, 14 laps; 22. John Courtright, Courtright Caldwell, 14 laps; 23. Stu Fisher, Chartered Bank of London Phenix/Lynx, 13 laps; 24. Tom Noon, Noon Beach, 13 laps; 25. Robert Booth, Safety Bulker Cheetah, 12 laps; 26. Bill Glore, Glore VW, 12 laps; 27. Bob Reed, The Pro Grid Fox, 10 laps.

* Not running at the finish



Riverside National
Formula SCCA
Riverside, California
February 15, 1976

1. Cliff Hansen, Hansen Racing March 76B FB, 24 min 47.791 sec, 111.78 mph average, 14 laps; 2. Don Breidenbach, Monster Tee Shirts March 75B FB, 14 laps; 3. Wink Bancroft, Performance Marketing Chevron B27 FB, 14 laps; 4. Tom Sauerbrei, Consolidated Aeronautics March 74B FB, 14 laps; 5. Dennis Firestone, KKW Trucking March 722-75B FB, 14 laps; 6. Jim Van Horn, Professional Polygraph Chevron B27 FB, 14 laps; 7. Tim Cooper, Bullseye Old March 74B FB, 14 laps; 8. Jon Norman, Boston-Bergen Metal Lotus 69C FB, 14 laps; 9. Frank Monise, Jr., Monise Motors Brabham BT29 FB, 14 laps; 10. Larry Wright, Red Baron Steak House Brabham BT29 FB, 14 laps; 11. Jeff Alkana, Tom Boy March 74B FB, 14 laps; 12. Warren Pauge, PRR Racing Brabham BT40 FB, 14 laps; 13. John Briggs, Biggs/Podge Racing Lola T332 FA, 13 laps; 14. Bill Henderson, Performance Development Lola T324 FSV, 13 laps; 15. Gas Saiten, Nairo Food Leda FSV, 13 laps; 16. Ed MacGrotty, Mei-Mac Racing Lotus 41 FC, 13 laps; 17. Ken Schley, Pennzoni Co., Tui AM29 FSV, 13 laps; 18. Pete Sharland, P.S. Motorworks Lola FSV, 13 laps; 19. Don Schoeey, Schoeey, Dalton & Friends Lola FSV, 12 laps; 20. Gordon Strom, Kay 1 Strom Chevron B29 FB, 12 laps; 21. Eric Stromwall, Century 21 Import Auto Cooper FC, 12 laps; 22. Al Stanchfield, Stanchfield Lola T192 FA, 11 laps; 23. Byron Snow, Snow Lotus FC, 10 laps; 24. Lee Pitman, Photo-Golf Racing Lola T240 FB, 9 laps; 25. Chris Price, Valkyrie Racing Chevron FC, 9 laps; 26. Dennis Blackwell, Blackwell Zetler FSV, 7 laps; 27. Ray Stephens, Fred and Lou's Lola T380 FA, 6 laps; 28. Rick Mears, Bill Simpson Berna FA, 1 lap; 29. Tom Contino, Sam Contino LeGrand FB, 0 laps.

* Not running at the finish



Andy Anderson Photo

Winter in Palm Beach

CARLIN, BUTLER, BROWN, GROB, ANSPACH & GUNN SCORE 9 AT PBIR

by Mike Powell

Palm Beach in the winter conjures up visions of elegant men in black ties extending perfectly manicured hands to ladies in original Cassinis who step demurely from gleaming Rolls Royces.

At Palm Beach International Raceway on this weekend at the height of the social season, there was another type of group assembled. Two hundred men and women were about to begin the run to the National Championships several months hence at Road Atlanta and with the exception of the Chief Steward, Tom Dupree, I am sure there was not a perfectly manicured hand in the group.

PBIR sits in the Everglades some fifteen miles from the yachts of Palm Beach, and more than one corner worker has made the familiar report of:

"Control, this is two."

"Go ahead, two."

"Sighted snake, sank same."

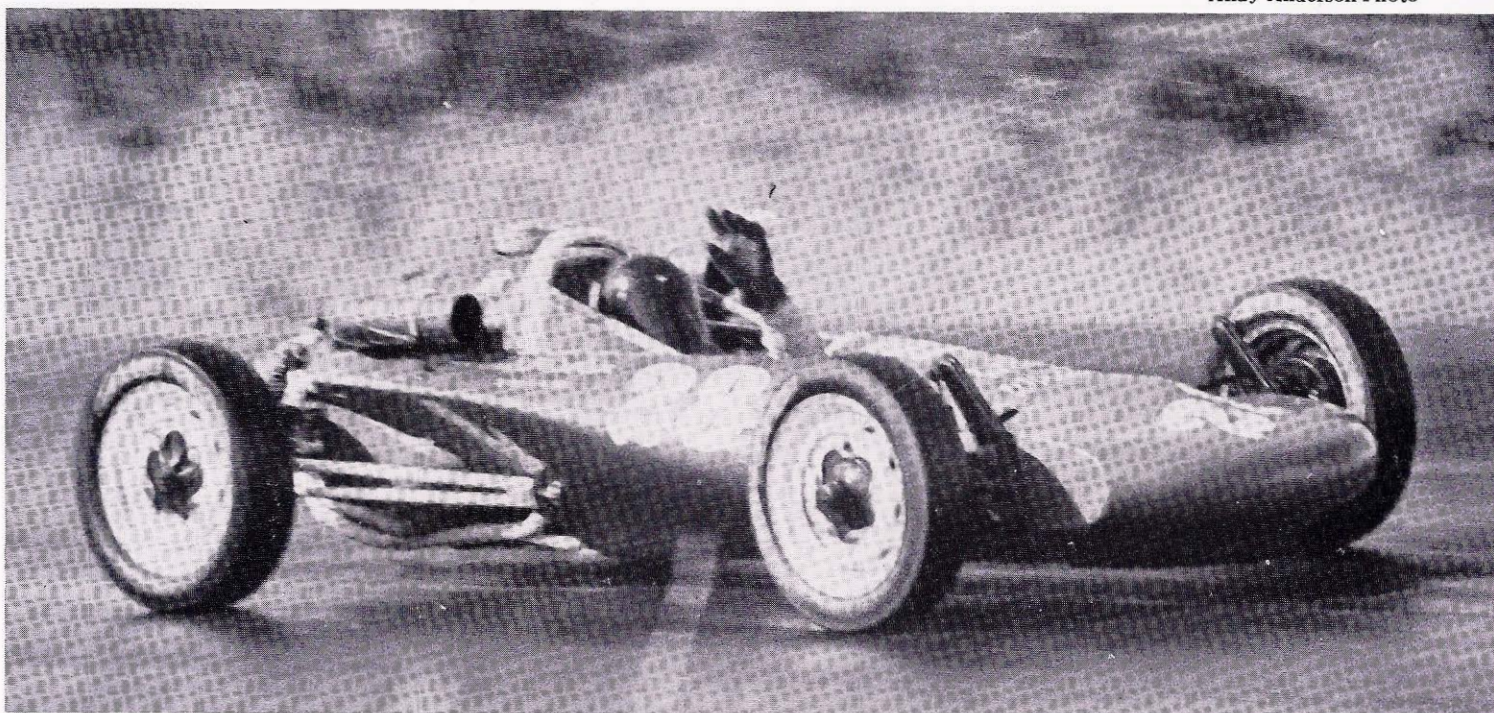
Not only are there snakes, but plenty of canals to sink them in.

The Florida Region, which is the SCCA sanctioning region at PBIR, has done a laudable job of erecting tire barricades to guard the canals in the most critical areas and still finds it must award

several of its drivers the non-coveted "Royal Order of The Inverted Alligator" each year. They have another called the "Royal Order of The Inverted Alligator with Crossed Rattlesnakes", the meaning of which I will leave to your imagination.

John Gunn who, at the request of his sponsors, had entered his Universal SL-1 Oil Lola in the Formula SCCA race said: "Basically the safety of the track has been improved tremendously over the last three years with the added tire barricades, but there are some other improvements that I would like to see made. All in all, it is a well-run race track with good scheduling and officiating." John has had a lot of experience at this track; back when he was the premier Alfa driver of the region this was home base.

Tech inspection, which always seems to be such a hassle at most SCCA races, works very smoothly at PBIR because as Chief Tech Inspector Doug Fowler commented, "We go by the book, but the objective is to make it as easy as possible on the drivers and crews." As a matter of fact, this year there was even a roving tech inspector who would come to your pit to tech your car. Amazing.



Jeff Carlin took his Wringwraith FV to a well deserved victory in the rain.

FORMULA VEE

The first turn in a FV race usually resembles a cross between the table in the basement of Macy's where twenty-dollar dresses are going for a dime and the start of a chariot race in the Colosseum where the Emperor only allows the first man through to retain his masculinity. On this Sunday turn one at PBIR was no exception.

Out of a field of thirty very fast cars, Rick Comer of Lynn, Indiana was sitting on the pole at 1:40.60, 0.28 seconds over the lap record set by Rollin Butler when he was still driving a Vee. Bill Cruse was on the outside pole with an identical 1:40.60. These two and the next three, consisting of Dick Rose, Steve Castner, and defending champ Don Courtney, were all within one second and it looked as if we had ourselves a convoy.

Alas, it was not to be. On the very first lap someone decided that he could outbrake the entire field going into turn two (which is really the first major turn) and smacked Courtney in the vulnerable rear of his immaculate D-13. This then began the sort of chain reaction that you would expect in Los Angeles, not in sedate Palm Beach. Courtney said later that as he sat in the middle of the track facing traffic, it looked like an old movie as one car would go to the left, one to the right, until finally Wally Reetz couldn't make up his mind and hit Courtney absolutely head on. Both cars were very badly bent, but the only driver injuries were a broken foot for Reetz and sore back for Courtney.

Miamian Frank Coleman then got Reetz, Georgian Wayne Moore got Coleman, and your author nearly got all four of them as he motored slowly through from his lowly last position on the grid.

The drafting train began to take shape as the pack entered the 3300-foot back straight with Comer leading, followed by Carlin, Cruse and Bob DeMarco. On the

third lap, Cruse made an inside move on Carlin at turn two to take second, and the train re-formed until lap seven when the rains came. It looked as if hurricane season had started early; within one lap the majority of the track was flooded and the real carnage began.

Comer went off and out of the race at nine going straight ahead with full right lock fed in. As he rode the aquaplaning Lynx into the bushes, just short of a very deep canal, Jeff Carlin took the lead.

Jeff held on to a thin edge of adhesion most of the time, then on three successive laps almost spinning at two, correcting, staying away from the barriers and retaining the lead. When I asked Jeff after the race why he was pushing so hard when he had almost a full lap lead on the rest of the field, he said:

"I thought I was in second place because in the rain I hadn't seen Comer go off and it was impossible to read my pit signals. Also in rain as hard as this was, the rooster tails from the rear tires block your vision in the mirrors, and you don't know if there is someone right there waiting for that first letup to pass."

From ninth on the grid Len Pleasants had driven smoothly through the pack, the rain and the wrecks (which at one point covered most of the track at turns two, five and nine) and was now in second place looking for a dry enough place to catch Carlin. At PBIR on this weekend, there was just no such place.

Brent O'Niell driving the Caracci Caldwell had started from eleventh place, and the nineteen-year-old from Miami really began to move in the rain. Wearing the same rain tires as everyone else, namely Goodyear slicks, Brent passed nearly a car a lap. By lap eleven he was sitting on Pleasants' tail going into turn two. Using half the track and a good piece of the dirt, which was probably drier, Brent passed Len and stayed out front until Len, trying to regain second, tapped him between one and two. Brent lost the air in a tire, ending probably the best drive of the day. Len Pleasants was left in solid control of second place.

Carlin went on to win nine points, the admiration of the corner workers, and more than a little respect from the many drivers who were parked in some very awkward positions around the track.

Bob DeMarco took third after being passed by Pleasants on lap eleven, and Ren Brennan was fourth having come from seventeenth on the grid with probably the only no-spin drive of the day.

FORMULA FORD

The national grid took shape with Gary Hackbarth up front, Rollin Butler and his new battery right beside, and John Christian, Scott Chapin and Dick Pyzynski close behind. It was a nice, dry, slightly overcast sky and the rains that wiped out half the FV field in the next race held off for the Fords.

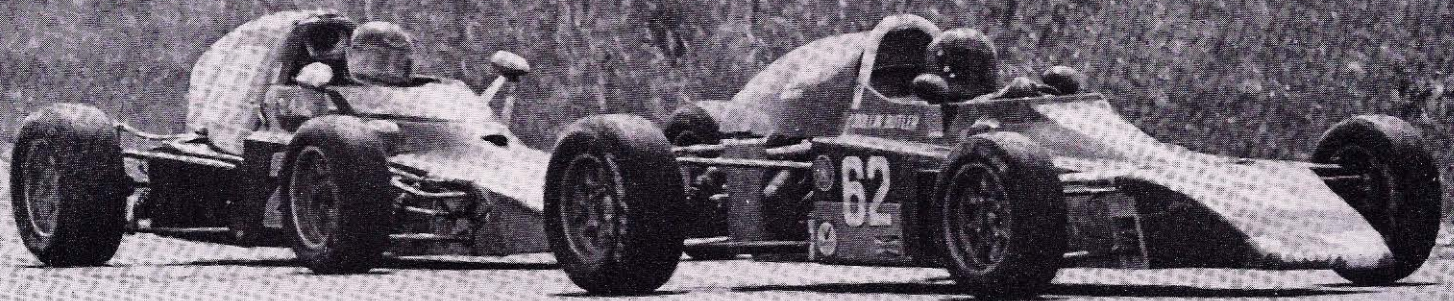
Stokely Hays, the retired steward who is the chief starter at PBIR, watched closely as the field rounded ten and started looking for the green. In second gear, an FF goes from 4000 rpm to 7000 before you can blink. You hit third before you get to turn one and by the time you catch fourth, you're looking at the graveyard for cars that they call turn two.

Rollin took the inside and with Gary on the outside they made it through.

From twelfth at the start, Don Mills made a first-turn run for the lead but when he got there he couldn't find the brakes. First he went up and over the Lola of Mike Field, destroying Mike's right rear corner, landing on Dick Pyzynski's Dulon and wiping it out. It was a Grade A turn one mess. What happened is anybody's guess. Why? You'll have to ask Don.

The first time by the timers, Gary had about a foot on John Christian. From there on back they were *really* spread out, some as much as two feet apart, and they were getting it on. *continued* ►

Winter in Palm Beach *continued*
FORMULA FORD



Andy Anderson Photos

(TOP) Rollin Butler and John Christian had a Class A dice, Butler was first with Christian in third. (ABOVE LEFT) Don Mills get his Lola airborne. (RIGHT) A view of the PBIR graveyard at turn two.

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Up to lap eight Rollin held on, then John late-braked, slid, and took first. Then they began to swap like it was a pet rock that had suddenly gotten too hot to handle. On the straights it looked as if they were welded together. As they approached the corners the fan opened up and every corner was two abreast, then three abreast, and the guys making the lap charts were flipping coins to decide which number to write down first.

The leader on 12 was Rollin.

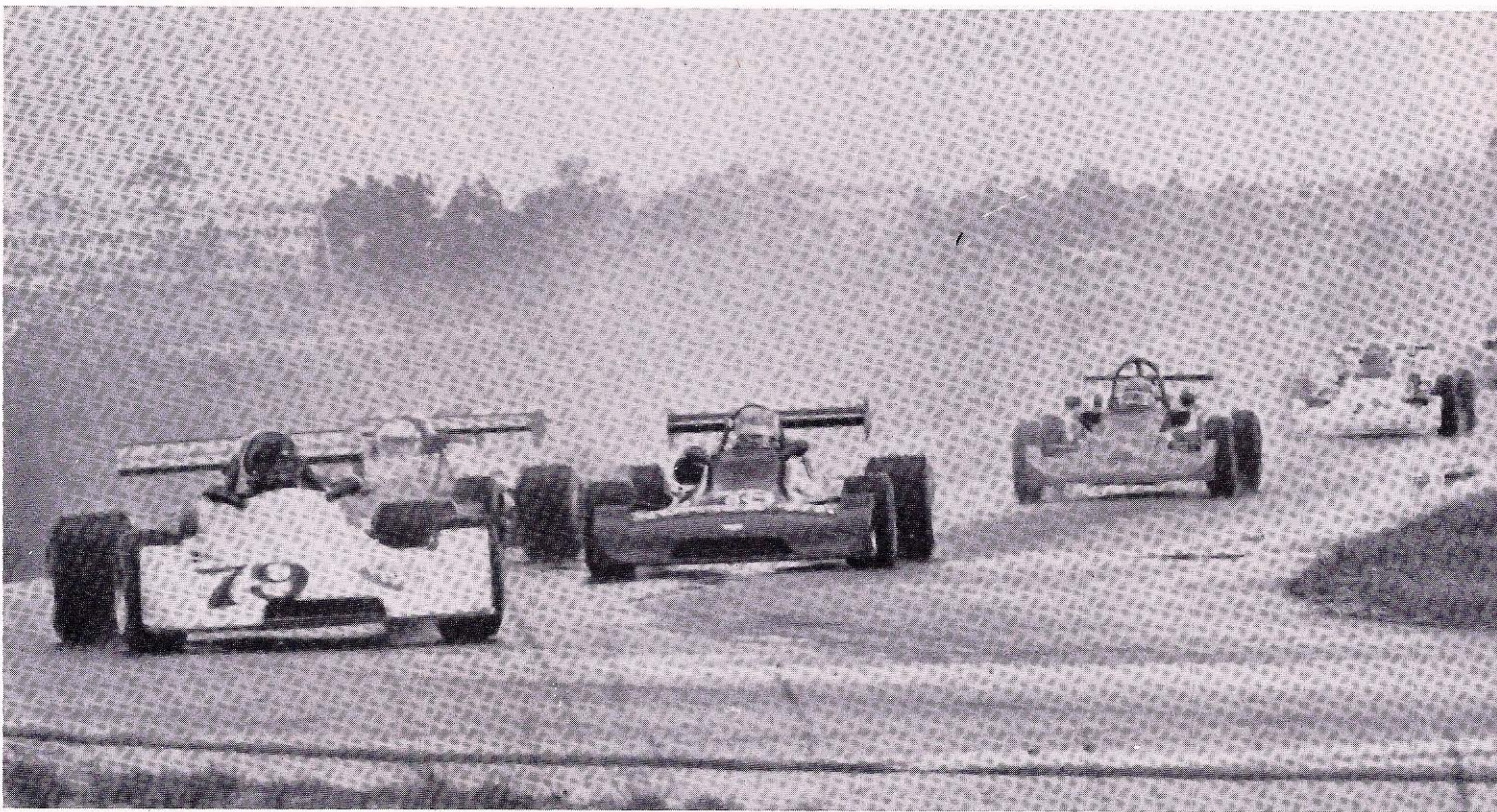
The leader on 13 was John.

The leader on 14 was Gary.

The leader on 15 was John.

Then they got serious and started racing. Gary seemed to have the power, Rollin the brakes, John the handling, and all three had more skill than you are likely to find outside the November runoffs. From that reservoir that only the very best know how to reach into, they pulled out all the stops on the last lap. Although the lead changed twice, when they headed for the very last turn it was three abreast with Rollin on the inside, Gary in the middle and John Christian on the outside.

They skidded through nine and aimed for the finish. They all knew from the race the day before this was at the apex of turn ten, not at the starter's stand further down. When they got there, Rollin was first, Gary second, and John third.



Bobby Brown led the SCCA event from start to finish in his Chevron Formula B.

FORMULA SCCA

FASTEST GUNN

The organizers at PBIR must be doing something right. Rather than the beer mugs with the wrong engraving, the Florida Region finds money to give away. You know, that green stuff that was for so many years considered evil by the purists at SCCA.

They had \$500 from the Universal SL-1 Oil people and a set of Semperit steel-belted radials for the fastest lap of the weekend.

Even the HP and FV drivers found Sanyo tape decks, Champion racing jackets, STP and Bilstein shocks in the region's goodies bag. At one point it looked like Ray Stone in his Corvette, disguised as an HP Bugeye, had a shot at the \$500 as he went out and immediately cut three seconds off the very old lap record.

Stone's charge lasted only as long as it took Bobby Brown from Hicksville, New York to warm up his new FB Chevron. The hot lap was then down to 1:21.60. The existing absolute record had been the three-year-old time of John Gunn's Lola at 1:21.80. We thought there goes \$500 the wrong way from Florida to New York. You see, in Florida we are accustomed to having New York money come to Florida, not the other way around.

Then in the distance we heard the soulful strains of the theme music from that western classic "High Noon" and we knew that the fastest Gunn in the South had arrived to save the day. As we looked down pit row we could see John driving

his Rolls Silver Cloud II . . . you know, the one with the Volkswagen front and rear kit installed . . . with car owner Dallas Heyser strewing African Water Hyacinths in his path. In Florida these hyacinths fill all the canals and are quite a bit cheaper than roses. Dallas could outpull a set of Vise grips for a dime to put in that car.

John wasn't trying to pick up an easy win but since his sponsors, the Universal SL-1 Oil Company, had opened a new territory in South Florida and since his lap record had been broken, he had no choice but to run. Run he did.

On some old tires left over from the Long Beach F5000 race in a car that had just been rebuilt from the tub up, John went out and demolished the record at 1:18.50. John worried about the water at PBIR, but as Dallas had thrown a few of the floating hyacinths into the cockpit, he figured if he hit the canal he could use them as water wings until the divers got there.

Then they began to set the rest of the grid: Bob Nelkin, Chevron 1:24.30; John Kowalski, Lola, 1:26.30; and the first FSV of Ron DeMarco at 1:28.00.

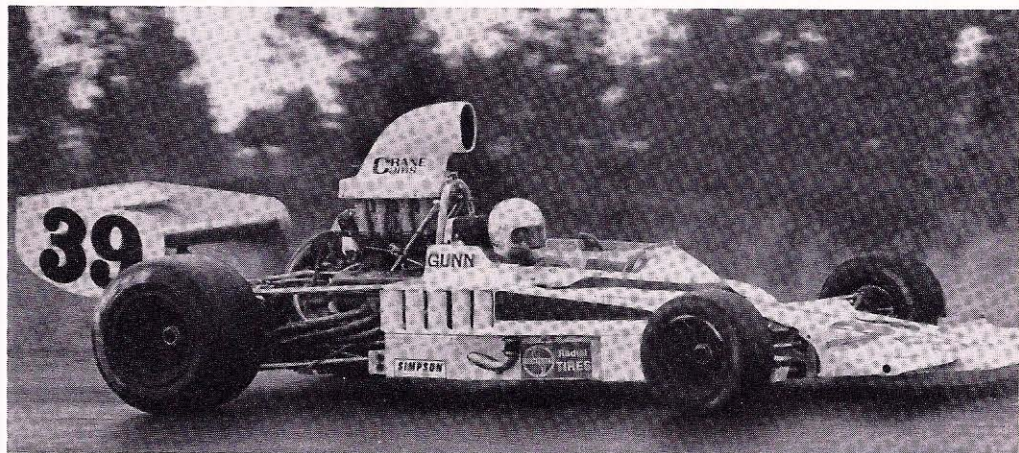
The top FC car was that of former national champ Bill Anspach under his own record at 1:28.40, but not far behind Anspach and right on the old record was Paul Tavilla of Miami with a 1:28.60.

On Sunday when they headed for the track it was hard to tell where the canals ended and the track began. It wasn't just wet; it was flooded from end to end.

Gunn's Lola misfired on the pace lap leaving Bobby Brown on the pole and John at the back on those same slicks from Long Beach.

continued ➤

John Gunn finished ninth overall and first in Formula A.



Winter in Palm Beach *continued*

FORMULA SCCA



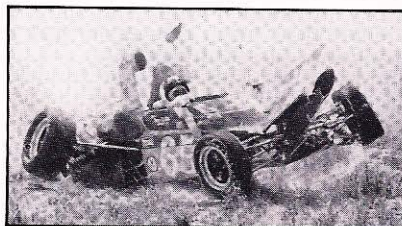
When the green came out Brown began to disappear and, driving in the rain as if he were part duck, just walked away from the rest. Bobby had just recently recovered from a broken neck suffered in his street Ferrari and, as he said, "It took only about ten laps to get comfortable in a race car again, but I am still nervous on the street and I do believe in seat belts." He certainly looked comfortable out there as he smoothly and professionally moved away in the pouring rain.

By the fifth lap Batchelor's SV had passed the FBs of Nelkin and Kowalski and was running second overall just inches ahead of Ron DeMarco's Royale SV. What they didn't know was that Jim Grob had moved from fourteenth and was catching them both by as much as five seconds a lap. In a wet-weather drive that would have turned heads at any Grand Prix anytime, anywhere, Grob gave lessons in slipping and sliding and going like stink. He passed DeMarco and Batchelor and damn near caught Brown before it was all over.

The frustration of trying to get 500 horses to the wet track through slicks was etched on Gunn's face each time he came around. Like the pro he surely is, he pushed and fought and passed nine cars, including all the FA cars and a bunch of others who had the magic rain shoes on.

When they sorted it out at the end Bobby Brown had lapped all the FBs to take first overall, Jim Grob had second overall, first in SV, and also had lapped all the B cars except Brown. Bill Anspach, in another fine drive, lapped the other FC twice and took fourth overall.

(TOP) Jim Grob had a fantastic drive in his Lola FSV. (ABOVE) Anspach took his brand new Chevron to the winner's circle.



Results

Palm Beach National Races
Palm Beach, Florida
February 21 & 22, 1976

FORMULA VEE

1. Jeff Carlin, Rinovaith; 2. Len Pleasants, Zink; 3. Bob DeMarco, Esko; 4. Ren Brennan, Renn; 5. John Grubb, Zeitler; 6. Terry Keifer, Lynx; 7. Sandy Thalheimer, Zink; 8. Dick Rose, Lynx; 9. Rod Mears, Zeitler; 10. Tim Smith, Zink; 11. Bob Sieck, Zink; 12. Glen Hareus, Zink; 13. Brent O'Neill, Caldwell; 14. Bob Mulligan, Zink; 15. Hal Smith, Zink; 16. Bill Cruise, Lynx; 17. Michael Powell, Beach; 18. Bruce Elfreth, Beach.

FORMULA FORD

1. Rollin Butler, Zink; 2. Gary Hackbarth, H&I Special; 3. John Christian, Lola; 4. Steve Lee, Lola; 5. R.B. Haynes, Zink; 6. Scott Chapin, Zink; 7. Howard Kelly, Crossie; 8. East Hartman, Rev; 9. Larry Belzer, Lola; 10. Dennis Hoimg, Merlyn; 11. Terry Kennedy, Royale; 12. Skip Tarquimio, Lotus; 13. Jerry Vetrick, SR101; 14. K. Quigley, March; 15. Tom Gaffney, Lola.

FORMULA SCCA

1. Bobby Brown, Chevron FB; 2. Jim Grob, Lola FSV; 3. George Batchelor, Lola FSV; 4. Bill Anspach, Chevron FC; 5. Ron DeMarco, Royale FSV; 6. Bob Nelkin, Chevron FB; 7. Chris Skoppe, Elden FSV; 8. Frank Marrs, Lola FSV; 9. John Gunn, Lola FA; 10. Ron Swartz, Royale FB; 11. Dave Yoder, Lola FSV; 12. Bob Simmons, Lola FA; 13. Paul Tavilla, Lola FC; 14. John Fowler, Brabham FC; 15. John Kowalski, Lola FB; 16. Bill Kneeland, Chevron FB.

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National Crusade Chairman



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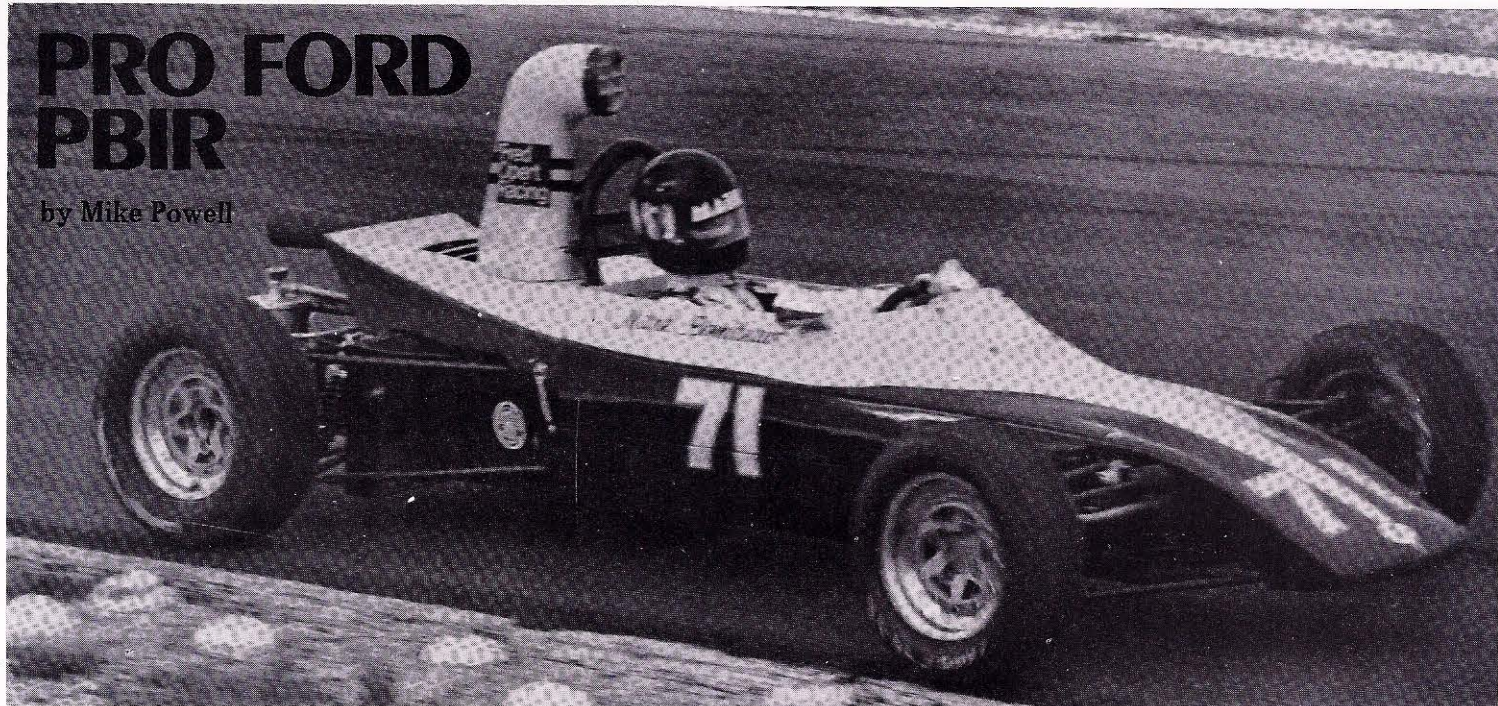


4121 Water Oak Lane
Jacksonville, Florida 32210
Attn: Peter E. Bower
904-389-1728

SEMPERIT

PRO FORD PBIR

by Mike Powell



Andy Anderson Photo

Mark Domiteaux of West Palm Beach was the winner in his Titan Mk9.

A purse of more than \$3000 and the opportunity to spend a few days in the Florida sun attracted thirty-one Formula Fords to PBIR for the Semperit Pro-Ford race on February 21.

Howard Kelly of Kingston, Ontario towed down and found that there would be no cherry picking at this one. John Christian from Johnson City, New York, Ed Mulford from Clinton, New York, and Mike Field from Galway, New York, were already there and nibbling away at the track record. In addition to the New York contingent, Steve Ice's Lola T340, Dick Pyzynski's Dulon MP17A, and Tom Gaffney's Lola T342 were there and ready. To defend the honor of SEDIV, Rollin Butler from Greenville, South Carolina, Dennis Hoinig of Pompano Beach, Florida, and Mark Domiteaux of Palm Beach, Florida came loaded for bear.

Times were hard to come by on the test day before the race since each team was keeping its own, but the few hot laps I caught were all being made by Rollin Butler's bright red Zink Z10.

PBIR is not a difficult course to learn, but it does take a while to get used to the scuba divers posted at several of the turns waiting for someone to take a dive. When you go off at this course, you can become very wet very quickly.

Generally the course is well barricaded, but at the exit of turn two there is an unprotected downslope which leads directly to a twenty-foot-deep canal where more than one driver has tried his water wings. Turn nine also leaves a bit to be desired and over the years the canal there has gobbled several cars including Joie Chitwood's Camaro and one unwary tow truck driver.

On Saturday morning when qualifying began, the unchanging sound of an FF flat out through the high-speed chicane

leading to turn nine easily identified the drivers who had learned to ignore the scuba divers and concentrate on keeping their foot down.

When the dust cleared and the cars in the bushes had been towed back to the pits, Gary Hackbarth in his H&H Special had the pole for the first qualifying heat with a 1:28.80. This was six-tenths of a second under the two-year-old record of Jack Baldwin's Lola T340 and eight-tenths of a second faster than the second place car of Rollin Butler. Just one-tenth behind Rollin was the Lola T342 of John Christian who really appeared to have the power and was beginning to pick through the twisting back section.

FIRST HEAT

When they lined up for the grid for the first qualifying heat, Gary Hackbarth had the pole with John Christian, Scott Chapin, Dick Pyzynski and R.B. Haynes closely tucked in behind.

The green dropped, the pack took off and as they lined up for turn two Howard Kelly forgot his brakes, dove to the inside and passed five of the six cars in front and started pushing Hackbarth. As they came around the first time, it was Hackbarth, Kelly, Pyzynski and Chapin pulling away from the rest of the field.

On lap three, R.B. Haynes started his move and in one fell swoop got by both Chapin and Pyzynski in turn nine. Next time around he took an impossible line through turn two underneath Kelly's Crossle and started out after Hackbarth.

As they headed down the back straight, R.B. managed to come out of turn six with just a few more revs and was wheel-to-wheel with Hackbarth through the chicane. He shut the gate at turn nine and took the checkered about twenty feet in front of the charging Hackbarth

who had led all but the last lap, the important one.

SECOND HEAT

The grid for the second heat had Rollin Butler on the pole, Ed Mulford second, Steve Ice third, and Dennis Hoinig fourth. Mulford took the first lap; after Rollin passed him on the front straight, Ed hit Rollin going into two, went high in the air and dropped to ninth place. Meanwhile Mark Domiteaux had started passing cars as if they were tied to stumps and by the second lap was close enough to cause Butler to pull a few extra revs out of his Zink in order to stay in front. Dennis Hoinig pulled up into third and they ran the last three laps in that order to the checkered.

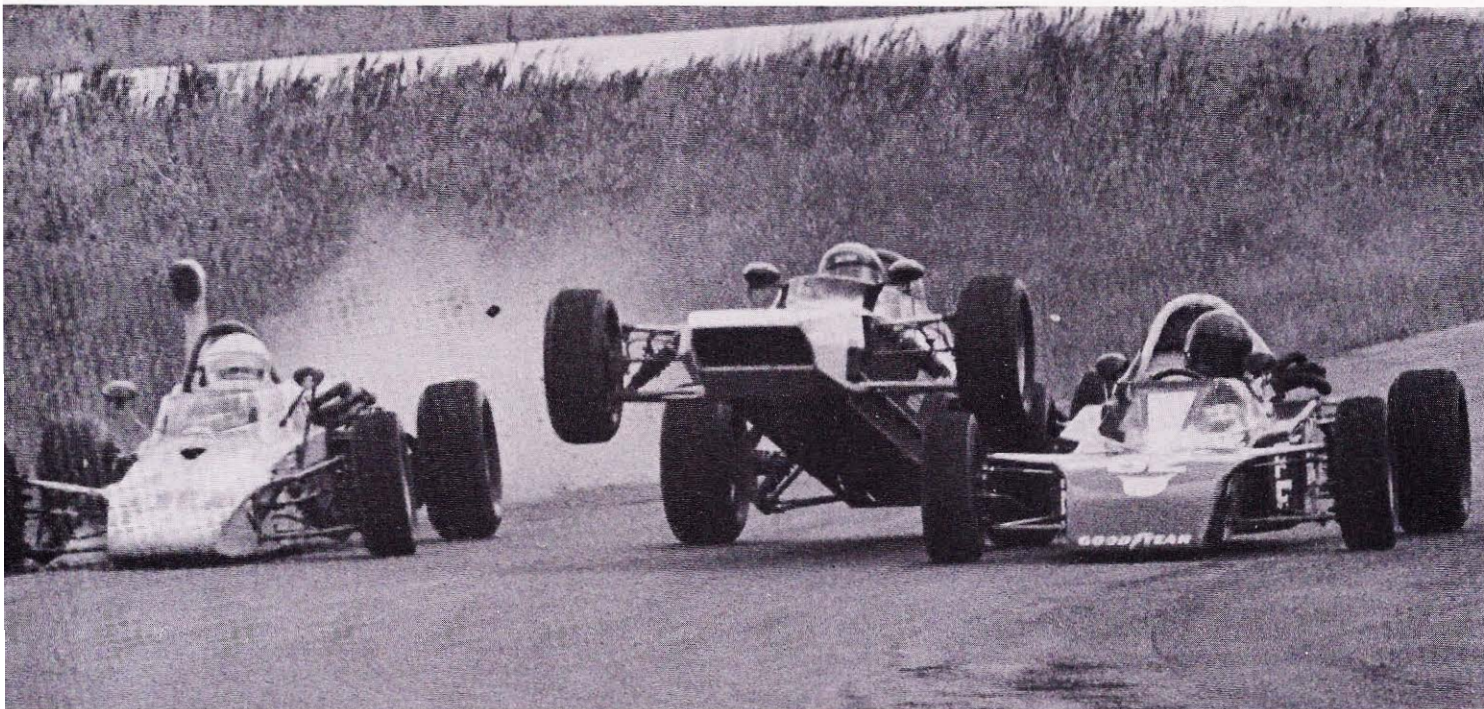
RACE

Under a Florida sky the color of Paul Newman's eyes, the twenty-one survivors of the two heats rolled onto the grid with Rollin Butler and R.B. Haynes on the front row followed by Mark Domiteaux, Gary Hackbarth and Dennis Hoinig. They were ready. Most had already been bloodied either up against the tires or in one of those spine-shaking spins straight toward dark canals. They stood around the cars talking about the small things, trying to ignore that black hole that sits somewhere inside. The whistle, the five-minute warning, and they headed for the cars.

It all goes through your mind. Will the damn thing start? Can I get a good jump at the green? What about that squirrel behind me, can he find the brakes when we get to two? Then it cranks and you're rolling and the black hole starts to disap- ➤

SEMPERIT PRO FORD PBIR *continued*

Andy Anderson Photo



Ed Mulford tries to pass Rollin Butler in the air during second heat action.

pear. This is what you came for.

Rollin's car wouldn't crank and he sat there in frustration as the rest of the pack took off, waiting for the push that would get him out there. Even from the back, Rollin came to race.

They came out of turn ten and headed for the start like a herd of prehistoric monsters bellowing noise and fire; when they saw the green, they exploded down the front straight. You could see the smoke from the locked wheels as they entered two and the dust as they widened the track by several feet on each side. When it cleared they were gone into the tricky back section, miraculously leaving no one in the car graveyard that had been turn two all weekend.

Down the back straight it was R.B. Haynes with Mark Domiteaux and Dennis Hoinig and Gary Hackbarth and everybody else in one giant Ford train. By the time they made it to the start-finish line, Rollin was flying and had passed seven cars on the first lap. Then he got by seven more and then he got himself. Coming through the chicane absolutely flat out, he lost it and in the midst of a very large cloud of dust you could see his hopes for the win spinning away.

Up front, Mark Domiteaux had fought off the challenge from R.B. Haynes and taken the lead. Ed Mulford led for two laps, then crashed, and it was beginning to look like graduation day at Kamikaze U. Mark began to pull away from the pack and, although Tom Gaffney came up and took a shot at the lead, he fell back. Then it was John Sager, who came from eighteenth on the grid for his chance; and he failed.

On laps 15 and 16, R.B. Haynes took another run at Mark and just couldn't get there. If by now you are beginning to get the idea that Domiteaux was driving an incredible race, you've got the picture.

Then on lap 17, John Christian, who had been gridded tenth and had driven on that thin edge separating the man and machine from canal, began to push Mark. We had a two-car race from there on in, the lead changing on almost every lap and sometimes two or three times a lap. At times you needed a feeler gauge to tell how far apart they were because they don't make clocks that good anywhere.

On one lap as the two drivers came through the chicane at about 130 mph, John had his right front wheel between and in line with Mark's wheels. If they had been so inclined, they could have held hands.

Finally on the last lap, John got by and Mark tucked in behind as they headed for turn nine. At PBIR, turn nine is at the end of the back straight. It's a wicked 120-degree right-hander across some very rough pavement and leads about 50 yards into the sweeping ten. Just at the apex of ten lies the finish line, not a hundred yards farther up the straight where the start/finish signals are given.

In nine, John went slightly wide and Mark made his move. Diving to the inside where old PBIR hands thought only John Gunn and God could go, Mark accelerated through side-by-side with John Christian; they looked at the line through ten which they knew was wide enough for only one car. They refused to back off. They pointed both cars in exactly the same direction heading for the same point. When they got there, they hit. But when they hit, Mark's Titan nose was one foot in front and he won.

John got sideways and slid off course to the left. Mark got knee-knocking loose but straightened it out to take a checkered in the closest FF race PBIR has ever seen.

Results

Palm Beach Pro FF
February 21, 1976
25 Laps, 56.25 Miles

Fin Pos	Driver	Car	Laps	Prize* Money
1.	Mark Domiteaux	Titan	25	\$300
2.	John Christian	Lola	25	150
3.	Steve Ice	Lola	25	100
4.	Dick Pzyvuski	Daikon	25	85
5.	Tom Gaffney	Lola	25	75
6.	Dennis Hoinig	Merlyn	25	70
7.	Mike Field	Lola	25	65
8.	Barton Hartman	Ray	25	60
9.	Harold Linslie	Lola	24	55
10.	G. Scott Chapin	Zink	24	50
11.	Larry Belzer	Lola	24	
12.	Skip Tarquinio	Lotus	19	
13.	Mike Scharnow	Merlyn	19	
14.	Philipa Curtis	Winklemann	17	
15.	R.B. Haynes	Zink	16	50
16.	John Sager	Lola	16	
17.	Edward Sims	Merlyn	16	
18.	W. Howard Kelly	Crosse	13	
19.	Gary Hackbarth	H&H Special	12	
20.	Ed Mulford	Crosse	7**	
21.	Rollin Butler	Zink	7**	50

* Prize money does not include contingency awards, but does include money awarded for heat race wins.

** DNF

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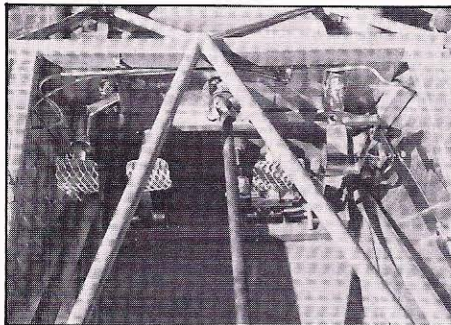
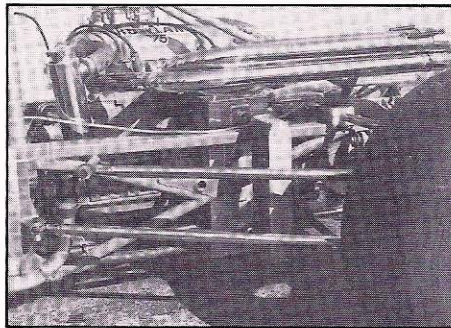
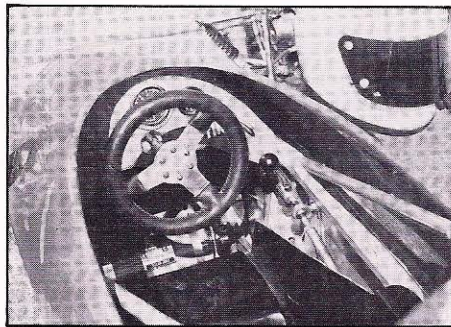
After an unsuccessful attempt at testing the Reynard Formula Ford a couple of months ago, arrangements were again made to make the trip up the coast to Sears Point International Raceway in Sonoma, California. On our last trip the engine took a dump before we could get in any good laps, and the car was experiencing some handling problems. With all these matters ironed out the car was at last ready for the test. Now that the new Ralt Atlantic car was back on the coast, plans were to test it as well.

Pete Halsmer, our tech editor, had decided to fly up on Sunday as he was scheduled to do some testing of his own at Willow Springs in Rosamond, California on Saturday. DeDe and I dusted off her '61 Porsche Karmann Coupe and drove up, leaving Saturday morning. The plan was to arrive in San Francisco in the early evening, take a cruise through Chinatown, have dinner at Fisherman's Wharf and then head on to Napa, which is about an hour north of San Francisco, where we would be staying over. Our plans went perfectly but, unknown to us, Pete's weekend had gone sour.

Sunday morning I arrived at the track a little after 10:00. Sears Point is a nifty little course located in the rolling hills of Northern California's wine country about 45 miles northeast of San Francisco. The weather couldn't have been better; it was warm, the sun was shining and there were only a few visible clouds. It was short sleeve weather in the middle of winter.

Just after 11:00 the Reynard arrived with Pat Walter, one of the principals in Ameropean Racing, importers of the Reynard Formula Ford and the Ralt Atlantic. Pat indicated that John Viljoen, the other principal partner, had been to the airport to pick up Pete but he wasn't on the flight. I made a couple of phone calls to see if I could find out what was happening but had no luck. It wasn't like Pete to miss a flight; besides, if he had, he surely would call at the track and let us know. The whole thing didn't sound good and I was somewhat concerned. We decided to just continue on and wait till we heard something.

Don Breidenbach, the FB track record holder at Sears Point, was also coming up to drive the Ralt so I figured we could do



RPM Photos

(TOP) The Reynard cockpit. On-board fire system is optional. (CENTER) Engine bay. Note oil tank and cooler system. (BOTTOM) Footwell and adjustable pedals.

the initial evaluation with him in Pete's absence.

The Ameropean Racing crew was changing the tires on the Reynard as I went over some of the minor modifications that had been made to the car since I last drove it. The only real changes were a relocated top link pick-up point at the rear and slightly longer halfshafts.

The car is small and compact in appearance but has ample leg room for most drivers. I'm barely 5 feet 6 inches so the pedals needed adjustment before I could drive, but they were made with minimum hassle. The pedal assembly itself is not adjustable, only the individual pedals. The steering wheel is adjustable for length but not for height.

The seat is barely adequate and has an unfinished appearance about it and could use some support under the thigh area. The safety harness belts leave a lot to be desired. Actually the lap belt and shoulder harness are fine; it's the submarine belt configuration that is poorly thought out. There are two looped straps that have to be fed through a metal belt-loop type goodie on each side of the lap belt. Then the shoulder harnesses are fed through the submarine belt loops and clamped in with a Williams belt type latch. The problem is it takes forever to get the darn submarine belt fed back through all the other junk. I didn't like it at all.

After the pedal adjustments were made and the tires changed, I was ready to strap in. Once situated, the seating is fairly comfortable and the gauges are easily seen. They had had a problem in getting the chronometric type tach we are used to and this car was fitted with a motorcycle unit. The tach didn't come close to filling the space provided and also had to be mounted loosely on rubber bushings. It was much too small to be read accurately. The only other gauges, oil pressure and water temperature, are mounted on either side of the tach.

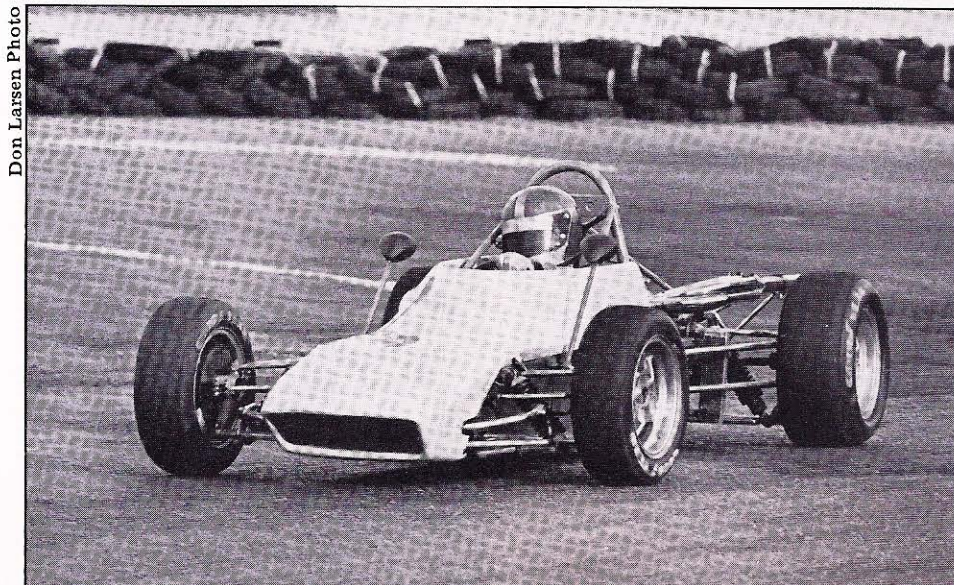
The shift lever falls right to hand and has a very short throw, so short in fact that at first I found myself thinking I had missed the gear or it hadn't gone in. The bodywork has a bubble around the shift lever area so you don't grind your knuckles away. I did find however that I would

continued ►

THE REYNARD

by Hugh Mooney

FORMULA tests the latest of the English Imports



Don Larsen Photo

THE REYNARD

hit the back of my hand on the forward facing roll bar brace as I shifted into fourth gear.

As I was warming up the car and making adjustments to the mirrors it suddenly quit running. They had neglected to fill the car with gas. So it was out of the car, fighting with the belts and all, then back in after the car was gassed.

As I left the pits I scrubbed the tires a bit to get some feeling for the steering response. The rack is extremely quick — in fact, much too quick for me. It felt like a go-kart. As I continued on around the track, it appeared to be just as rough as I remembered. I took it very easy through the first section trying to remember the lines and braking areas. Once out on the flat section I brought the car up in speed slightly; the Rowland engine felt strong.

Initially the car seemed much more stable than before but as I exited the first hairpin it felt a little loose. I shifted up through third gear, and then without any warning as I went through the second left hander in the esses, the car lurched around to the left and I was spinning toward the barrier. I saw the armco pass in a blur just in front of me. I didn't know what was happening, but I figured something must have broken. I sailed through the grass and ended up facing straight down the track just off to the left. As the car stopped I looked up in time to see a tire and wheel take a 20 foot bounce through the air and come to rest in a field of weeds. I fought with the damn belts to get out (which annoyed me no end) to see what had happened. Upon inspection I found that the left rear wheel had come off. They had neglected to torque down the wheel lugs when they changed the tires. It isn't too swift to forget to tighten lug nuts, especially when someone is evaluating your car. Nothing but my nerves was really disturbed; a couple of rod ends on the upright was the extent of the damage.

While the crew was repairing the Reynard, Pat Walter decided to warm up the Ralt Atlantic car before Breidenbach tried it out. Don never even got to sit

in it. Pat, attempting to show everyone how fast he could go, lost it exiting the esses, slid across the track, hit a dirt berm, launched the car in the air and landed it in a ditch some eighteen feet deep. End our test on the Ralt. Pat was unhurt but the car wasn't. Surprisingly, the tub suffered minimal damage.

Finally the Reynard was ready. (I use the word with some reservation.) Jon Woodner, who was just kind of hanging around, had done a quick and dirty string alignment and pronounced the car fit — more or less. I was somewhat skeptical about the alignment but nothing could be done in the amount of time we had available, so I hopped back in to give it another try.

In my estimation Sears Point is not an easy track to drive. It has some rough areas and the car bounces around a lot, making it difficult to set the car up for the corners if you are not really familiar with the layout. It has been two and a half years since I've run the full course. I ran the short course (which cuts out all the uphill/downhill stuff) twice last year at the pro FF races, so I had that section down pretty good.

I WANTED TO ASSURE MYSELF NOTHING WAS GOING TO FALL OFF.

I took a couple of very slow laps, just to assure myself nothing was going to fall off, before doing anything rash. As you exit the pits you immediately go past start/finish; then comes turn one which is done flat out in an FF. It's an easy left hander that leads you uphill, steeper and steeper and very rough as you approach turn two, also a left hander. Just as you apex turn two you stab the brakes and select second gear. The car tossed around a bunch here and I had a hard time setting it for the right hander at the top of the hill, which falls away to the outside and then goes slightly downhill as you shift to third. The next section, turn four, dips down suddenly but swoops back up fast as you exit the left turn. You then set the car for the next turn, a right, which is another off camber drop-away type turn like three. It is somewhat blind as you enter the corner and it is important that you don't apex too soon

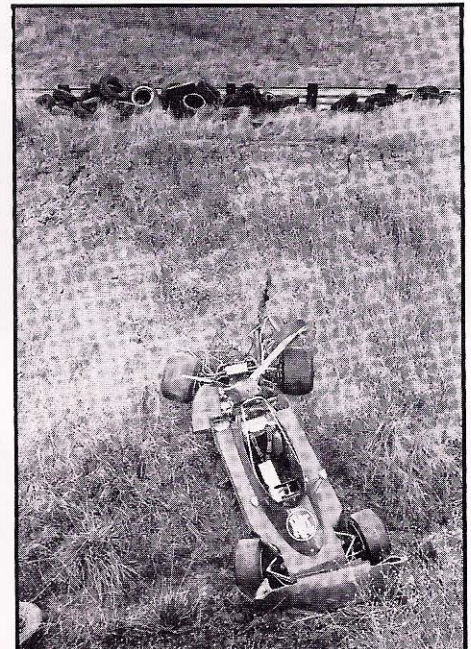
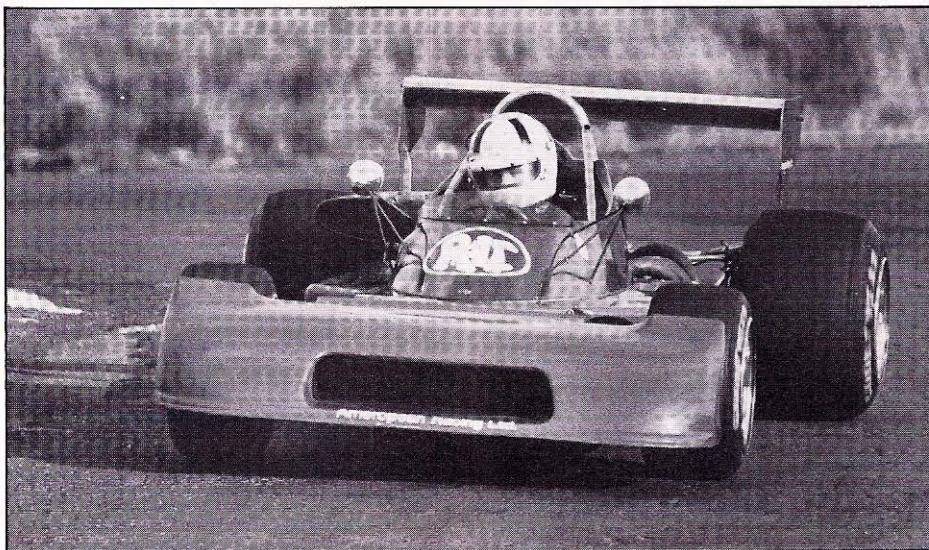
or you will run out of room on the left side. The track drops downhill and you must brake quickly, grab second, and toss the car into yet another right hander that drops off on the outside. It is necessary to pitch the car a bit and get the power on early to get a good exit here.

Once through five you accelerate through the gears and head uphill through a right hand sweeper. This area of the track is nasty and the car just tosses all over the place. Just as you crest this hill the road disappears into a downhill sweeping left hander called the carousel. The entrance to this turn is blind and there are a couple of bumps that make it hard to get the right line. I was going really slow through here, dragging the brakes as I crested the hill and selecting third gear. This is the roughest part of the course and getting through here well is very important if you want a good time. The car was tossing about so much that I was banging the hell out of my head on the forward facing roll bar braces. There was no padding on them so the rap against the helmet was very sharp. (There are only two or three inches of clearance on each side of your helmet.) The car didn't work well at all in the bumpy sections, partly due to the extremely quick steering rack which sure makes you work overtime. I found myself overcorrecting constantly. I believe the Spax shocks were a bit stiff for this course. I would have backed them way off and given that a try if more time had been available.

After the carousel, the track flattens out to a short straight that is slightly uphill at first and is only about 1200 feet long. The entrance to turn eight, which is the first of two first gear hairpin turns, is good and wide but a little bumpy and where a lot of heavy braking is done. It is one of the few safe places to pass. The car felt great here, the brakes were excellent and it pointed into the turn well. I was able to get the power on quick as the back end would come right around and the car would be pointed in the right direction as I exited the turn.

This hairpin, like the other one, is a first gear turn using something like an 18:34. You then upshift through third and set up for the esses which consist of a left, a right, another left, then another

Before and after shots of the beautiful Ralt Formula Atlantic car. Surprisingly enough, the tub sustained only minimal damage.



right. The first left/right combination is not too hard, but placement for the second left is very important if you want to get through without lifting off the throttle. All of this area is lined with armco and could be nasty if you go off, and a lot of people do.

As you exit the esses, you select top gear and head down a moderate downhill short straight that actually becomes a left hand sweeper as the track again flattens out. The car accelerates down the hill quickly and you get about 6200 rpm with a two-under fourth as you approach a tricky right hander that is maybe flat out and maybe not; it all depends on the car and the driver. The Reynard handled the flat section and this fast kink quite well with a touch of oversteer. Exiting this turn puts you on another short straight (1100 feet) that is followed by the second first gear hairpin. Braking in this area is most important, for if you make the pass here you can most likely hold on to the finish. This turn, eleven, is in front of everybody in the pits and is where many a race has been won and lost. The entrance is wide and fairly smooth but it gets a bit bumpy at the apex. Again the Reynard worked excellently under braking and I could get the car through the corner with great amounts of oversteer using the throttle. As you exit the turn you come as close as you dare to the three foot high cement barrier that separates the track from the pits and there you start your upshifts. You whiz past the pits, read your signals and head for start/finish as you exit turn twelve and reach for top gear.

As I became more accustomed to the uphill section, the car felt better and better. I might add that I never did the uphill section completely to my satisfaction and my lap times showed it. I was about three seconds off the lap record and about a second faster than I had been two and a half years ago in my Titan Mk6C. The car, as I drove it, would probably get close to that record with someone driving that knew the layout well.

In conclusion, the car performed beautifully under braking, was easily controllable in the slow corners in an oversteer attitude, but was a little too twitchy in the fast stuff. The rack was much too fast but I was told the cars would be delivered with one having a slower ratio. The seat was sub-par and the belts were worse. Cockpit layout was good except for the fact that I would hit my hand shifting to fourth. I didn't care much for the forward facing roll bar braces but with the proper padding they would be acceptable. Workmanship on the chassis was very good and the fiberglass is of your typical English quality. The design of the body itself leaves something to be desired. It isn't good looking and there is no engine cover, which gives the car an unfinished look about it. My estimation is that it is another English race car, probably as good as anything else they are sending over these days. The price delivered? About \$8500.00.

What happened to Pete? When we returned to Napa after the testing I made another call. Pete had been involved in an accident testing his Brabham BT38 and scared the hell out of everyone. He had been lapsing in and out of consciousness a la Donohue. He was taken by ambulance to the USC Medical Center in Los Angeles, was held for observation and was pronounced okay after a 48 hour stay. A few days' rest and Pete was back on the job.

TECHNICAL EVALUATION

by J. Peter Halsmer

The suspension offers a few deviations from the normal. Spax adjustable shocks with variable rate springs are on the front. The variable rate springs are a simple but effective way to get variable rate at the front without all the attendant problems of geometry on the typical rising rate systems. The springs start out at 133 pounds/inch at one inch of compression and go to 285 pounds/inch at five inches of compression! (Gerald Black in the April issue of FORMULA explains rising rate suspension.)

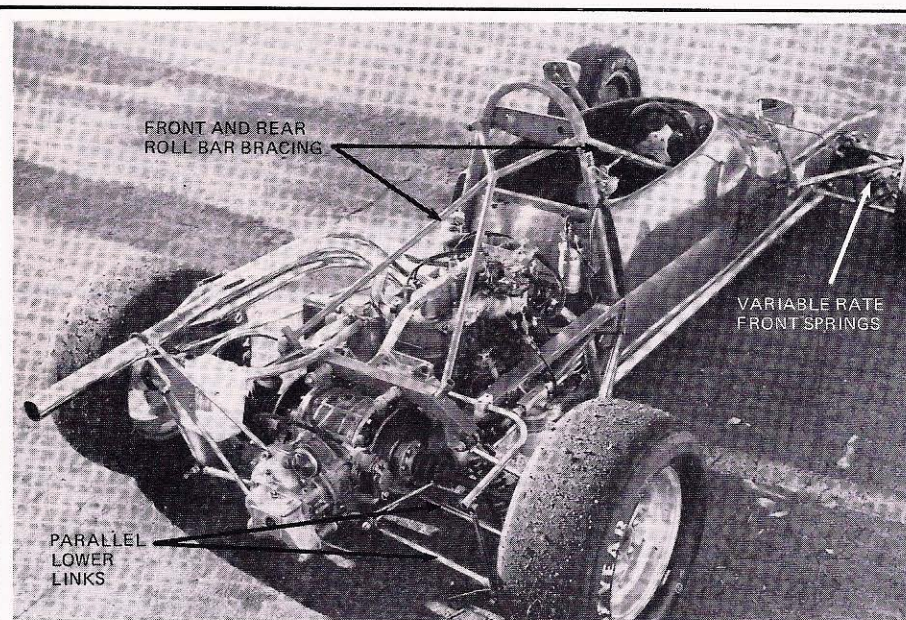
The rear uses a parallel link system with trailing links that are reminiscent of the ADF Formula Ford. External structural bracing is used to add lateral strength to the engine bay, and it also serves nicely as locating points for the trailing links.

The chassis itself is one part of the car that has a character all its own. It has particularly good torsional rigidity throughout all of the bays (engine, driver and footwell area). The rigidity should aid in the tuneability of the car's chassis. When you make a bar or spring change at the track, for example, you should be more able to feel that change and predict what bars or springs you do want than with a more flexible chassis. This stiffness

throughout the chassis is due primarily to a serious test program Adrian undertook. By measuring torsional deflection at different points longitudinally along the frame, he could tell where the weak areas in the chassis were. By adding or taking out tubes he found the right combination. That combination turned out to be triangulated bracing from the top-rear corners of the chassis to the roll bar, then forward from the roll bar to the driver compartment.

One other thing I liked about the car was its adjustability. It has a dead pedal that is adjustable; the steering shaft is adjustable for length; the throttle can be adjusted for different throws (giving different amounts of movement at the pedal for full action of the throttles at the carbs); and the brake and clutch pedals are adjustable for position not only at the normal place (at the master cylinder), but also at the tops of the two pedals.

All in all, the car offers most of the usual things a typical English product has, but with a few added attractions that I feel make the car easier to tailor to the driver and the track. With someone serious sorting, it could be a competitive FF.



RPM Photo

SPECIFICATIONS:

DESIGNER: Adrian Reynard, Bicester, Oxfordshire, England.

CHASSIS: Tubular space frame using a stressed roll cage achieved with forward support stays and overhead engine bay diagonals.

SUSPENSION: Front: Independent by trailing lower wishbone, upper link and radius rod. Telescopic double acting shocks. Fully adjustable using left and right hand rod ends. Rear: Independent with lower parallel links, top link and radius rods. Fabricated uprights front and rear.

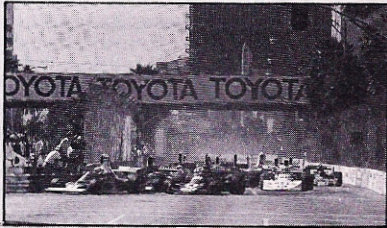
BRAKES: Lockheed calipers and Girling master cylinders. Thin 10 inch front discs and 9½ inch rear, with inboard rear brakes.

TRANSMISSION: Hewland Mk9 four-speed. Cooling, oil and fuel systems: Single front mounted radiators. Alloy oil tank, full flow filter and transparent catch tank. Aluminum 5 gallon foam filled fuel tank mounted behind driver's seat.

Wheelbase 89.4
Front Track 52.5
Rear Track 54.0
Dry Weight. 815

STEERING: Quick action rack & pinion.

NEXT MONTH



Long Beach Grand Prix
Brands Hatch Grand Prix
Sebring
Polar Prix and
Charlotte Nationals
Phoenix 150
Winkleman FF Test
Chris Amon Interview
Jon Batchelor and
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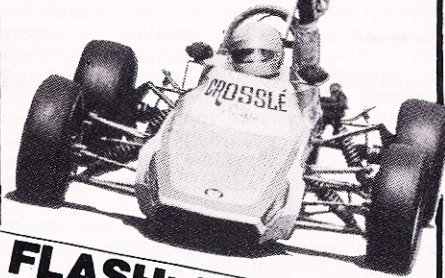
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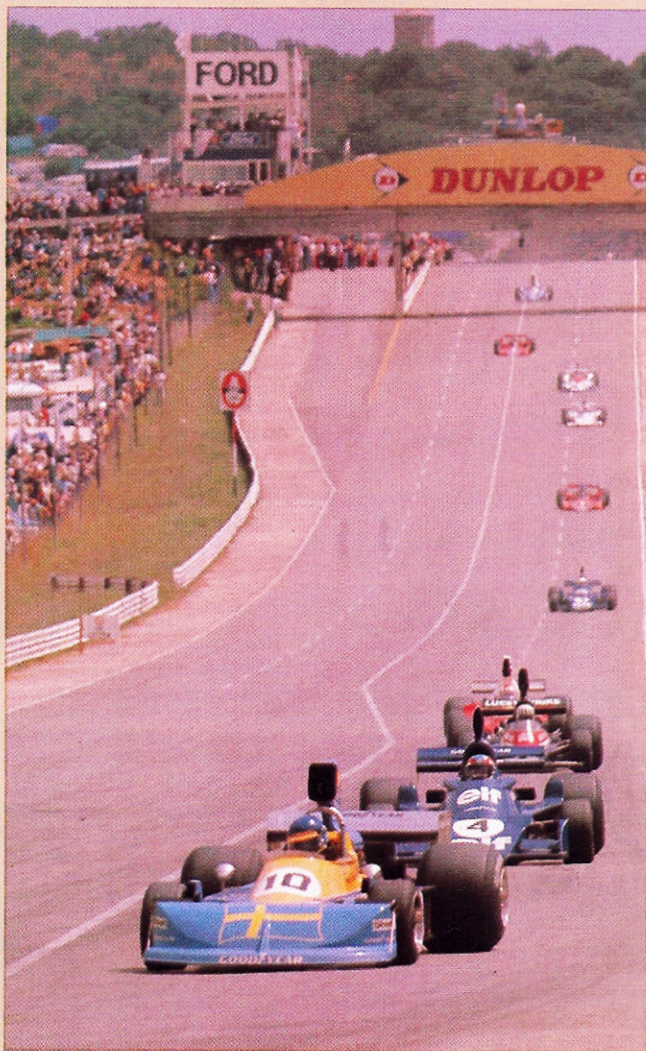
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SOUTH AFRICA

By Jeff Hutchinson



GRAND PRIX

To say that Niki Lauda scored a lucky victory in the South African Grand Prix would be unjust — but it *would* be fair to say that he sure had a lot of luck on his side. It was lucky that an 8mm bolt, which had broken on the rear suspension and bent the rear cross-member in practice, did not break in the race. It was lucky that a sudden race morning misfire was found to be cured on the warmup lap of the race after the Ferrari mechanics had frantically changed the metering unit and distributor.

It was lucky that poleman James Hunt got too much wheelspin at the start and let Lauda pull comfortably ahead into the first corner, lucky that Vittorio Brambilla bravely pushed by the two McLarens of Mass and Hunt on the second lap, staying there long enough to let Lauda pull out an immediate six second advantage. It was lucky that a failing rear shock absorber lasted as long as it did and, more than anything, lucky that his Ferrari's rear left tyre, picking up a puncture with just two laps to go, held its air just long enough to allow Lauda to hold off a tremendous last lap challenge from Hunt to win the race by just 1.3 seconds.

But his luck only backed up what looked like a certain victory right from the start. Lauda's cool skill in putting the 'fire-engine' Ferrari straight into the lead from the green light and keeping it there for the next 78 laps was a job which took more than just a good car.

The Austrian's skill was matched turn-for-turn, lap-by-lap, by the now highly polished skill of McLaren's James Hunt, who took pole position for the second time in as many races this year and in his career with McLaren, and who provided the only serious challenge to Lauda's domination. This time his efforts were not frustrated by mechanical failure as was the case in Brazil when Hunt came in a close second, almost catching the Ferrari and scoring six points towards its downfall. At present Lauda is still double that number ahead of the challenger but if any Ford powered car can do it, it looks as though Hunt and his McLaren are the partnership.

ENTRY & PRACTICE

Although it was only some six weeks since the opening Grand Prix in Brazil, it seemed almost like a second start to the season in South Africa, so major were the changes in the entry and the car/driver combinations.

Before talking about official practice which was on Wednesday and Thursday before the race, a mention must be given

than he had for a long time, managed to close the gap to just one-tenth of a second, but was once again sitting on the wrong side of the McLaren. It looked like it was going to be a great race as long as the fresh engine they slotted into Lauda's car after practice was as good as the one he had been using.

The McLaren was virtually unchanged from its Brazil trim, aside from routine adjustments. It was still equipped with

drama with the organizers before the race when they measured the distance between the air "dams" around the bottom of the car and the wing and found it to be over the regulations. Watson's team had decided to remove it for the race anyway, while the McLaren men had no choice. There was talk of Ferrari protesting Hunt's practice time because of the illegal state of the McLaren, but that was all forgotten in the light of things to come.

to the previous week of Goodyear tyre tests which saw most of the teams taking part.

Some 56 different tyres varying either in construction or compound were evaluated throughout the week "to prepare a baseline and reduce the number of varying tyres needed throughout the coming season," explained chief engineer Bert Baldwin. It was a massive operation which involved 1807 tyres being shipped to South Africa for the Grand Prix period and a budget of around \$150,000. The tyre testing also gave the participating teams valuable pre-race testing time and by the end of the week it looked as though Niki Lauda must start as the firm favourite for the Grand Prix, having consistently lapped his Ferrari quickest on all types of tyre. His quickest overall was 1:15.23 compared to the lap record, a 1:16.28 set by Hulme during practice for the 1973 GP.

James Hunt's McLaren was closest to Lauda, while the March runners and John Watson's Penske had also been lapping in similar times.

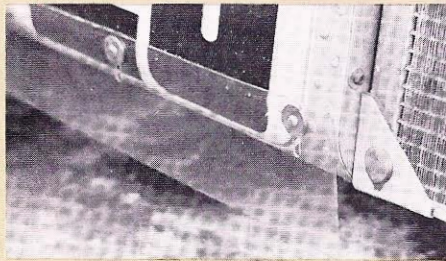
It looked like another Ferrari benefit by the time official practice started but Hunt and his McLaren team had other ideas. He was faster in the first session by a full three tenths of a second than Lauda, going even quicker in the second session to end the first day at 1:16.59, four tenths faster than the frustrated Ferrari driver. Hunt performed a small spin just to show how hard he was trying, fortunately without damaging consequences.

What had looked like another 'routine' practice was suddenly becoming very exciting indeed. Hunt was very much the man of the moment, not only because of his driving, but also because of the droves of photographers and girls attracted by the world-wide news of Hunt's wife's affair with actor Richard Burton. All the attention seemed to improve Hunt's spirits and performance.

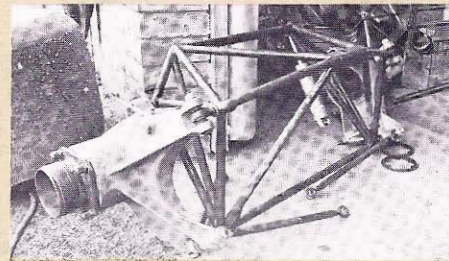
As in Brazil the third session of practice (held on Thursday morning) was left-untimed. In the final hour on Thursday afternoon we expected to see some interesting action. Overnight rain had improved track conditions slightly, but then a few falling spots of rain made things look slippery. Fortunately the rain stopped almost immediately and the cool overcast weather made conditions perfect for a fast lap. Soon Hunt was setting the pace once again; by the time the session ended he had streaked to his second pole position in two races with a scorching 1:16.10. He had a right to smile as he took off his helmet.

Lauda, sliding the Ferrari around more

McLaren's unique 6-speed gearbox, although it did have one new feature which had a few people guessing for awhile. It was an air starter system. Instead of the conventional starter, McLaren's ingenious team manager Alistair Caldwell had rigged up an air bottle-powered starter motor — similar to the principal of the air-operated wheel wrench. The cannister can be recharged from a larger pit-based bottle; the bottle on the car is sufficient



(LEFT) The Penske team tried a lexan skirt during practice but was judged illegal. (RIGHT) The Ferrari DeDion rear suspension.



for around four or five starts before it needs recharging. The object of the exercise was weight saving, the resultant lighter starter motor and smaller battery rumoured to be saving around 18 pounds. Although it worked virtually trouble free throughout testing, Hunt's car was put back to a standard system for the race "just until we get a better chance to test it properly," said Alistair.

Lauda's car was also in similar trim to Brazil; his spare chassis had the DeDion rear end fitted during tyre tests, but it proved to be around half a second slower and so was not seen in official practice. Lauda's earlier look of confidence had changed to a grim look of determination at the prospect of a race-long dice with Hunt.

Heading the second row of the grid was John Watson in the FNC Penske. After doing consistently fast times all week, despite annoying gearbox and engine failures, Watson continued to show improvement, ending up with a 1:16.43 — his most promising performance to date. The week of testing showed that the Penske team was rapidly beginning to mould together, their increasing experience showing up in their lap times. A plastic 'skirt' was tried around the outer edge of the monocoque, but Watson was not aware of any noticeable difference. Throughout practice he was using both the T car and the race car, his best time eventually being set in the T car which he opted to race. Both McLaren and the Penske team had a slight

shortage of securing rivets. By stiffening it up with three more, Mass' lap times suddenly dropped by a second. It was a big worry off his mind. He did a 1:16.45.

Brambilla was quickest of the three March 761 drivers, despite the presence of his recently acquired distinguished teammate Ronnie Peterson. Vittorio had been among the front runners right from the start and nobody was surprised when he set the quickest lap of 1:16.64. As usual Vittorio had few complaints, although he did look a little worried after a tyre semi-deflated at Crowthorne corner at the end of the straight and he spun, damaging the nose section against the catch fencing.

Sharing the third row of the grid was Patrick Depailler in the first of the two Elf-Tyrrells. His best time was a 1:16.77, which the Tyrrell team drivers had to work very hard to get. Both Tyrrells had reverted to last year's rear suspension geometry which entailed new uprights and other parts. The team was struggling to get their now outdated Tyrrells at the front end of the 25-car grid.

Next up came Tom Pryce who missed the testing because of the flu. He soon got going well during official practice however. With the Shadows set up in short-wheelbase form for the first time this year, both drivers found them much better than the previous year. For this race, the plain black Shadows put on the red and white colours of Lucky Strike Cigarettes.

THE LIGIER

Following Tom on the grid was the seventh different chassis in the first eight cars — the Ligier-Matra of Jacques Laffite. The French team's trip to South Africa had started off badly when Laffite crashed the car in tyre testing when a front wishbone broke. The car bounced off the barrier and smashed through a couple of catch fences, coming to rest

with three corners very badly bent. Fortunately the monocoque was not totalled and after a rebuild with stronger wishbones the car was ready in time for official practice. The first day it did not run too well, but by the second day a fresh engine and some aerodynamic adjustments saw Laffite set a 1:16.88.

The last of the sub-1:17.0 times was set by Clay Regazzoni in the second Ferrari, his best time actually set in the T car which had done most of the tyre testing, having had engine trouble with his own race car. He kept the T car, "on which I prefer the handling," said Regazzoni, and it was still fitted with the engine which had been used since the previous Wednesday during tyre testing.

On the first day only two drivers had managed to get below 1:17.0 but in the dramatic final hour, slowed a little by rain part of the time, nine drivers were in the sixteens. It was going to be close.

Next up was the March of Ronnie Peterson, who had been complaining in tyre testing of 'slow' engines which were "pulling 400 revs less than Vittorio on the straight". He was on his third motor by the final day of practice and it seemed to be much better, although at 1:17.03 Peterson was not much faster than he had been after his first day in the car during tyre testing. His car was set up virtually the same as Brambilla's, all the Marches running a new, more convex, nose section; this seemed to increase front end downforce without hurting top speed. His second engine had blown up on the first day, so Ronnie was hoping for better luck



in the race than he had had in practice.

Heading the sixth row of the grid was Carlos Reutemann in the first of the Martini Brabham-Alfa Romeos. Both cars were around 20 kilos lighter than they had been in South America "by changing just about everything worthwhile into titanium," said designer Gordon Murray, who was hoping to get the cars more competitive than they had been in the first race. Any chance of getting the cars

sorted out during tyre testing was lost when the team spent the entire week trying to get the engine running properly. By experimenting with fuel mixtures the engines were eventually running cleanly, but not reliably.

Pace used up a couple in testing and then blew a third one the first lap of official practice; other than a few laps in Reutemann's car he didn't run the first day. The second day still another fresh engine wasn't running right and by the time the race began the team had changed their sixth engine of the weekend. Reutemann had fewer problems and with a 1:17.09 showed the potential of the new Brabham-Alfa — a potential which unfortunately was not to be realized in the race.

Jody Scheckter was wearing his now familiar long face throughout practice as he tried hard to get his Tyrrell up to the front of the grid for his home GP. Delayed spares prevented having the 'old-type' suspension fitted to Depailler's car the first day, but it was in place for Thursday. "It feels a bit better, but the times are no better," said Jody, who also thought most of his problems lay with a poor engine which his own team timed at 3 mph slower down the main straight compared to his teammate's car.

ANDRETTI: FRUSTRATED

The seventh row of the grid was headed by Mario Andretti driving the Parnelli, the car greatly modified since its last appearance at Watkins Glen. It featured a three inch longer wheelbase after the oil tank had been repositioned between the monocoque and the engine. The rear suspension had also been considerably revised and the front torsion-bar setup used at Watkins Glen had been replaced by a simpler coil-spring and damper unit. The rear engine cover had also been reshaped into a more aerodynamic design, oil radiators were repositioned and there were new nose and rear wing setups on hand to be tried. The team's biggest problem was just a lack of testing time. Andretti had spent four frustrating days at Riverside unable

to test because of rain, while the team also missed the tyre testing sessions when a crate of spares got unloaded enroute and did not turn up until two days later.

Mario's eventual 1:17.25 best lap was encouraging considering Wednesday was his first chance to do any serious practice. "The car still has an oversteer problem and does not get the power down well," said Mario, a problem from which not only the Parnelli team were suffering.

Next to Andretti was an unhappy Pace, who did well to lap in 1:17.26, a time which he felt could have been bettered quite easily had the car run properly. Casual spectators had a job to recognise the Brazilian ace who was dressed up as "Bobby Deerfield" for the benefit of a film by that name. Pace was the stand-in for the 'real' Bobby Deerfield, played by Al Pacino.

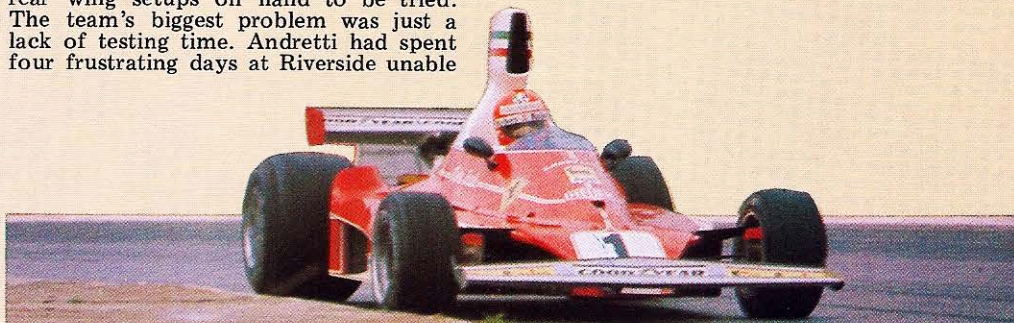
Heading the next row was Jean-Pierre Jarier in the second Shadow. His practice had been spoiled by a fuel feed problem so his best time was a disappointing 1:17.35.

Next to Jarier was Jody Scheckter's brother Ian, who was running his Tyrrell 007 with the backing of Lexington Cigarettes. It was his first F1 race since October the previous year, but he soon got back into the groove and for most of the time had been lapping as quickly as the two works cars. Only when it got down to the final tenths of a second did Ian find his lack of experience at getting the most from his car a disadvantage. His best time was a 1:17.40.

Hans Stuck was not showing up too well in the third works March. He complained of a poor engine and handling throughout practice, his best time only 1:17.44.

Next to Stuck on the ninth row with a time of 1:17.73 was Chris Amon. It was a frustrating effort by the New Zealander; after a long and serious foot injury in a road accident following the Long Beach F5000 race, he had only just started to walk again two weeks before the race. He was unfit and driving the old 1974 Ensign chassis while a new car was being readied, a car which is at least a second a lap faster than the old one he was using. This race was just a warmup for the Ensign team; needless to say they were more than pleased with the results.

Behind them on the grid was Jacky Ickx in the Williams FW05, while his new teammate for this race was Frenchman Michel Leclere driving a similar brand



new chassis. As in Brazil the Wolf-Williams team were having big problems with their cars which were being changed every session without much improvement. The rubber suspension ended up being replaced by coil springs all around on Ickx's car, while Leclere had them fitted to the front only. "We wanted to make the cars stiffer all round, but did not have the right rubber 'springs' so we had to resort to conventional springs,"

testing around the same times as Evans, but when it came to official practice he was plagued with troubles. The first day he did only one lap before stopping at the pits and the rear end of his car caught fire after the rear brakes had been jamming in the calipers. A complex brake overhaul cost him the first day's practice, while the second day wasn't much better as his gearbox gave him trouble. In the final timed session it was his engine that

25 cars finished the pace lap and waited for the green light.

When it came, Lauda made a perfect start. Hunt, who had chosen the inside of the track for pole position (which saw only the first two rows of the grid follow his example and change sides) made a bad start with too much wheelspin, and it was Mass who came through from the second row to challenge Lauda down the long drag to the first corner. Also well up as

explained Harvey Postlethwaite. Even these did not seem to help get the cars much higher up the grid.

Next to Ickx was Brett Lunger driving his Chesterfield Cigarettes-backed Surtees TS19 for the first time. After sharing the testing with John Surtees before practice, Lunger eventually got down to a best of 1:18.36 by Thursday, the American quite pleased with the way the car was developing.

Behind him on the grid was Emerson Fittipaldi in the Copersucar, the Brazilians having spent the first day of practice with the car set up with a five inch spacer between the engine and gearbox. Emerson set his best time of 1:18.40 with this setup; Thursday the car reverted to Interlagos trim and the wheelbase reduced, but Emerson never got the chance to try it. A mysterious alternator fault was damaging the electrical spark boxes so that the engine would not start properly. It took four spark boxes and an engine change before the fault was discovered, by which time Emerson had missed all of Thursday's practice. Undeterred he decided to leave the car in short wheelbase form for the race.

Leclere's best in the second Williams was a 1:18.82, his task made more difficult by his lack of F1 experience and by a brand new car which he did not drive until shortly before practice.

Lotus spirits were higher for this race than they had been in South America, spurred on by two fresh drivers, Bob Evans and Gunnar Nilsson, who provided the enthusiasm which Ronnie Peterson had long since lost. They settled in well to the job of sorting the cars in tyre testing, but a basic "front end not liking the back end of the car" syndrome appeared which proved a hard nut to crack. A clue to the problem appeared late on Thursday when, after setting a best of 1:19.35, Evans ended the day with a progressively worsening oversteer. A closer look at the car revealed a rear radius rod pickup point pulling away and a split in the chassis which pointed towards possible chassis flexing. The car was patched up for the race, but before it gets any better it will no doubt take a major re-think back at the factory.

Harald Ertl was having his first race as an official team Hesketh driver; his first day's practice and visit to Kyalami was spent starting and stopping around the track with an electrical problem. An engine change eventually cured the fault, but Ertl needed far more time than he had to get used to the track and the car. His best was a disappointing 1:22.11.

Bringing up the back of the grid was Nilsson. He had been lapping in tyre

went off and he remained stuck out on the circuit for most of the hour, hence his best time of 1:22.70.

RACE

Because of the constructors' efforts to standardize race times for all Grands Prix, the SAGP was moved up to 1 p.m. on Saturday instead of its normal 3 p.m. start. Despite all this, the circuit was packed to capacity, an estimated 100,000 crowd waiting for the biggest race on the South African calendar.

Ominous clouds drifted over the track before the start, but it stayed dry as the

field got away was Depailler, the blue Tyrrell darting around trying to find a way through the Ferrari-McLaren wall. He tried to find a way through under braking for the first right-hand corner at the end of the straight. He locked the rear wheels and the Tyrrell went into a vicious twitch, almost swapping ends in front of the entire field rushing in behind him. It was a heart-stopper.

Luckily he saved the situation, but as the field rushed side by side through the same corner, a fraction of a second later disaster did strike. Leclere tried to drive around the outside of Ian Scheckter's Tyrrell but ended up launching himself high into the air off the Tyrrell's front left wheel.

Leclere bounced down and managed to hold the car on the track in a vicious sideways slide, while Scheckter's car turned sharply left and into the catch fencing with a bent wishbone, ending his race. A shaken but undamaged Leclere carried on with the race, now at the back of the field.

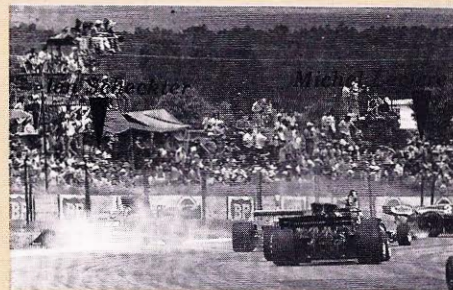
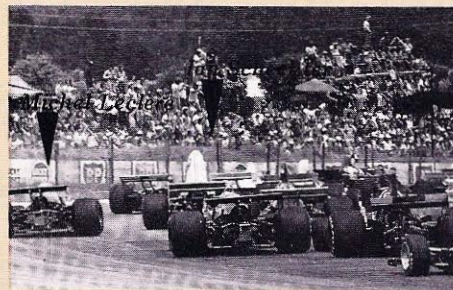
By the end of the first lap Lauda had begun to show that he meant business. He was several lengths ahead of Mass while Brambilla was in third place with Hunt, Depailler, Peterson, Reutemann (who gained several rows at the start by driving down the dirt edge), Pryce, Regazzoni, Andretti, Laffite, Scheckter and Watson (who had made a terrible start "because I got the revs all wrong," he explained later).

Into the first turn for the second time Brambilla dived inside Mass in what looked like a suicide maneuver, but he got away with it and was up to second place, while Hunt also moved ahead of his teammate to take third.

By the end of the second lap the Ferrari streaked over the line with an enormous lead, Brambilla still holding off the tightly packed bunch behind which saw Peterson move ahead of Depailler at the start of the third lap.

Brambilla was driving as hard as he knew how for the first few laps, locking up the brakes in white-knuckled last minute braking attempts and firmly shutting the door on anybody who tried to get a nose ahead. This soon took its toll on the front tyres; within four laps his front tyres were starting to go off. His car began to understeer badly, but he still would not give way to the pressure behind. Hunt took two shots at passing him at the end of the straight, but each time the Italian cut across and left him a "hit me or back-off" choice. Coming into Crowthorne corner for the sixth time Hunt had it all set up. He sat right behind the March on the straight, then

(BELOW) The Ian Scheckter, Michel Leclere first lap incident.





(LEFT) Brambilla had to pit for gas just four laps from the finish.
(BELOW) Andretti held on for sixth.



with the aid of the tow shot by and outbraked Brambilla before he could do anything about it. It looked very exciting.

Hunt must have been depressed at the sight ahead of him: an empty track. Thanks to Brambilla, Lauda was now almost eight seconds in front — a long way. Undeterred, Hunt pulled out all he could and kept the pressure up so that Lauda could not afford to relax. It would be Hunt's only chance.

Behind him it was Mass' turn to try and get by Brambilla; it was not until lap nine, by which time Hunt was also well away, that the second McLaren was through into third place.

Now Brambilla had his teammate Peterson breathing down his neck, but it made no difference. He still hung on letting Mass pull away half a second a lap with Peterson, Depailler, Pryce, Regazzoni and Scheckter behind. Reutemann's car had slipped back with an ominous smoke trail blowing behind. It was caused by the oil being blown out the engine breather; it was so bad that Andretti and Watson were finding it hard to see what was happening, while Pace had moved up to thirteenth place and was giving Laffite the same treatment. "I went through four tearaway visors trying to get by Reutemann," said Andretti, standing by his oil-soaked car after the race.

Also smoking on the overrun was Hunt's McLaren, but it did not seem to affect his lap times and once by Brambilla he could hold the Ferrari's pace, even though he was not able to do much about closing the gap.

Lap 14 eventually saw Reutemann stop at the pits to report low oil pressure. He restarted but went out for good with rattling bearings a lap later.

Amongst the now well-spaced first three cars things had not changed much, but in fourth place Brambilla was still holding off (or up) teammate Peterson.

RONNIE BUMPED AGAIN

The problem resolved itself on lap 16 when Depailler, troubled with too much braking on the rear but able to keep up with the reduced pace of the March,

decided to try and outbrake Peterson into Crowthorne. Just as Depailler got his nose ahead the Tyrrell gave a vicious lurch just like the first lap, but this time the Frenchman was unable to catch it and the Tyrrell went into a graceful spin across the corner. Peterson was committed to try and scramble around, but he was nudged off by the out-of-control Tyrrell and came to rest leaning against the catch fencing with the rear right upright broken. Depailler spun to a stop, still on the track, and made a dangerous looking three-point turn in front of the next approaching 170 mph bunch of cars. That was as frightening to watch as the accident itself.

With Peterson out and Depailler now at the tail end of the field, Tom Pryce inherited fifth place, the Welshman making short work of Brambilla whom he passed on lap 19 for fourth place. A few lengths behind Brambilla, Regazzoni started to close in for the kill, while behind Regga Jody Scheckter was keeping in touch.

The same lap saw John Watson take Mario Andretti after a fantastic battle between the two which had lasted almost since the start. Watson, troubled by oversteer and too much braking at the rear, was having a job to hold the Penske in shape at speeds he had been comfortable with all week. Early on he closed in on Andretti at Crowthorne, Andretti leaving the door open almost as if to invite Watson to try and go through the corner quicker than he.

A brave Watson was matched by the USAC-hardened nerves of Andretti who held his line. Watson was forced to take a tighter line than he thought and, as the cars rounded the corner out of sight, Watson's car was tail out with his rear wheel almost brushing Andretti's. Wow!

Andretti held his place, but he eventually had to give ground when he felt his engine start to lose power; from then on it got slowly worse until at the finish he was 400 rpm down along the straight. Times were getting no faster, though tanks were emptying, thanks mainly to the oily track, most of which had been laid down by the Brabhams. In fact, the fastest lap of the race (1:17.93) had been

set on the sixth lap by Lauda when he was trying to pull out as big a gap as possible.

Up front positions remained static during the mid-portion of the race, the gap varying only slightly between the first four cars as they started to lap the tail-enders. Regazzoni and then Scheckter moved ahead of Brambilla, Jody's overtaking of Brambilla sending the entire Crowthorne stands into wild shouting and beer can throwing — just up in the air fortunately.

By mid-distance, the gap between Pryce and Regazzoni was getting noticeably smaller, the Welshman losing fourth place on lap 44 when he cruised around to the pits to have a fast deflating rear tyre replaced. It was a disappointing end to what had started off so well. By the time he rejoined the race he was back in thirteenth place and was further troubled by oversteer with the one new tyre. Regazzoni's sudden fourth place was not to last long however. Eight laps later he rolled to a stop with a blown engine and now the crowd had something else to cheer about as Jody moved up to fourth. It was Brazil all over again.

After a slow start which was not helped by getting the worst of Pace's oil in the opening laps, Jacques Laffite started to make good progress through the field. He got by Andretti and Watson, then provided an exciting few laps trying to get past — guess who — Vittorio Brambilla. As the two cars rushed past the pits to start their 50th lap, Laffite made his move and pulled out of the slipstream of the orange March. He got just alongside; then suddenly there was a great cloud of smoke. Laffite coasted to the corner with his hand in the air, his race over with what he thought to be a broken piston.

THE FINISH: LAUDA VS. HUNT

This left just six cars still on the same lap, the gap between the first two varying in traffic, but now down to between six and seven seconds, Lauda finding his car oversteering more and more, because of a leaking shock absorber which was discovered after the race. Behind Hunt there was a long gap to Mass and an equally long gap to Scheckter, the third and fourth places cut and dried barring mechanical failures or the drivers making a silly mistake. Brambilla was being slowly caught by Watson, but both drivers' handling problems prevented any serious attempt at attack or defense. It appeared it would be an almost processional finish, but as is often the case there were still a few surprises in store for the last ten laps.

Scheckter came from eleventh to finish in fourth spot.



With just four laps to go, Brambilla's race-long effort to stay in the points was in vain when he was forced to peel off into the pits for more fuel. The excitement of this action almost distracted the crowd from noticing that Hunt was closing the gap to the leading Ferrari. Suddenly it was going to be an exciting finish. With three laps to go the gap was down to four seconds, the next lap it was down to three seconds and then on the

tently up amongst the mid-field runners throughout the entire race. With just three laps to go and over five gallons in the tanks, a faulty Bendix fuel pump forced him into the pits for more fuel. Despite the fact that "the last twenty laps I was feeling really tired", he had put up an incredible performance which deserved a happier ending.

Enjoying a close dice with Amon and Andretti in the closing stages of the race

SOUTH AFRICA G.P. PRACTICE

	First Session	Second Session	Third Session
Niki Lauda	1:16.93	1:16.90	1:16.20
Clay Regazzoni	1:17.71	1:17.35	1:17.04
Jody Scheckter	1:18.16	1:17.18	1:17.30
Patrick Depailler	1:17.89	1:17.18	1:16.77
Bob Evans	1:19.56	1:19.35	1:19.81
Gunnar Nilsson	2:25.45	---	1:22.70
Carlos Reutemann	1:17.84	1:17.21	1:17.09
Carlos Pace	1:57.25	1:17.67	1:17.26
Vittorio Brambilla	1:17.11	1:17.50	1:16.64
Ronnie Peterson	1:17.57	1:17.97	1:17.03
James Hunt	1:16.60	1:16.59	1:16.10
Jochen Mass	1:17.61	1:17.91	1:16.45

very last lap, the McLaren was noticeably closing and a watch was no longer necessary.

Around the long uphill left hand corner before the finish straight Lauda was just one second clear of the McLaren, but he urged every one of his 500 Ferrari prancing horses home to the finish and had no trouble holding off the Ford-powered McLaren to take the flag with a 1.3 second margin of victory. His desperate position over the last couple of laps became retroactively obvious when he pulled into the pits after it was all over and found that his rear left tyre was almost flat. He had picked up the puncture with just a couple of laps to run before the end of the race. Even world champions need a bit of luck sometimes. One more lap and Lauda's would have run out.

For Hunt it had been a fine ride, one in which he could not reasonably have expected to get so close to victory, since it was the Ferrari which was leading. Mass came home a strong third, while Jody must have been delighted with fourth place considering his prospects at the beginning of the race.

John Watson was lapped by Lauda shortly before the finish; nevertheless he had done a good job to take fifth for the Penske team in his third race, while Andretti took sixth and a single point for Parnelli as a reward for his and the team's efforts.

Seventh place behind Andretti would have gone to a courageous Chris Amon in his old Ensign which he had kept consis-

was Emerson Fittipaldi, who had driven his usual consistent race despite a weak engine. At the start of lap 71 he made his move under braking for Crowthorne and took them both for sixth place, then half a lap later he rolled to a stop with a blown engine, his hard work all for nothing.

So at the finish it was Pryce in seventh spot after a strong drive back through the field, his teammate Jarier having dropped out while well back on lap 28 with a leaking water radiator.

Brambilla came in eighth, while a distant ninth was Patrick Depailler. Tenth place went to Bob Evans who had driven a good race with the Lotus, holding off a long attack by Brett Lunger in the Surtees. Lunger eventually finished just a few yards behind; Brett had made a bad start in the opening laps and got left way behind when he selected third instead of first gear and was also slowed by a mis-firing engine. After changing the airbox, the mechanics had forgotten to refit the fuel breather pipe, so the fuel was breathing straight down the airbox which caused the engine to run rich until the tanks started to drain. Once the car was running right, Lunger made a strong finish and put up a good performance first time out with the car.

Hans Stuck finished a further lap down, his race spoiled by a slow engine which left him a tail-ender throughout the race.

Leclere finished behind Stuck, his race relatively trouble free after his first lap drama, although his teammate Ickx had more of a problem. After running at the front of the tail-end bunch, he was forced into the pits when his engine started to misfire. A change of spark box got it going better, but by that time Ickx was well down, the last car left running, in 16th place. Fifteenth place, four laps down, was the Hesketh of Harald Ertl who had a disappointing race with a car that was both slow down the straight and round the corners. After all his practice problems, his car was still a long way from being ready for the race.

When it was all over and Lauda stepped out of his car and slipped off his Bell Star, it was not surprising to see his buck teeth in a wide grin. He had just trebled his points lead over his nearest rival after two wins in two starts. That nearest rival was James Hunt, who has twice pipped Lauda for pole and twice pushed him hard in the race. It was no surprise that Hunt sported a smile similar to the winner. If anyone can beat Lauda this year, it looks like it might be the gangling Englishman who had just driven one of the best races of his career at Kyalami.

Ian Scheckter	1:17.91	1:17.98	1:17.40
Tom Pryce	1:17.41	1:17.41	1:16.84
Jean-Pierre Jarier	1:17.55	1:17.55	1:17.46
Brett Lunger	1:19.40	1:18.50	1:18.48
Jacky Ickx	1:19.34	1:19.51	1:18.13
Michel Leclere	1:19.26	1:18.82	1:18.86
Chris Amon	1:18.55	1:18.48	1:17.73
Harald Ertl	1:22.58	1:22.11	1:22.13
Jacques Laffite	1:18.05	1:17.72	1:16.88
Mario Andretti	1:18.78	1:18.25	1:17.25
John Watson	1:18.05	1:17.54	1:16.43
Emerson Fittipaldi	1:18.40	1:18.84	---
Hans Stuck	1:19.59	1:19.83	1:17.44

QUALIFYING GRID

Niki Lauda Ferrari 312T/023 1:16.20	James Hunt McLaren M23/10 1:26.10	John Watson Penske PC3/01 1:16.43
Jochen Mass McLaren M23/6 1:16.45	Patrick Depailler Tyrrell 007/4 1:16.77	Jacques Laffite Ligier-Matra JS5/1 1:16.88
Vittorio Brambilla March 761/1 1:16.64	Tom Pryce Shadow DN5B-2A/5 1:16.84	Ronnie Peterson March 761/3 1:17.03
Clay Regazzoni Ferrari 312T/022 1:16.94	Carlos Reutemann Brabham BT45/2 1:17.09	Jody Scheckter Tyrrell 007/6 1:17.18
Mario Andretti Parnelli VPJ/02 1:17.25	Carlos Pace Brabham BT45/1 1:17.26	Ian Scheckter Tyrrell 007/1 1:17.40
Jean-Pierre Jarier Shadow DN5B-1A/6 1:17.35	Chris Amon Ensign N174/MN02 1:17.73	Brett Lunger Surtees TS19/01 1:18.36
Hans Stuck March 761/2 1:17.44	Jacky Ickx Williams FW05/1 1:18.13	Emerson Fittipaldi Copersucar 1:18.40
Emerson Fittipaldi Copersucar 1:18.40	Bob Evans Lotus 77/2 1:19.35	Harald Ertl Hesketh 308B-3 1:22.11
Gunnar Nilsson Lotus 77/1 1:22.70		

RESULTS

- Niki Lauda, Ferrari 312T, 1 hr 42 min 18.4 sec, 187.73 kph
- James Hunt, McLaren M23, 1 hr 42 min 19.7 sec
- Jochen Mass, McLaren M23, 1 hr 43 min 4.3 sec
- Jody Scheckter, Tyrrell 007, 1 hr 43 min 26.8 sec
- John Watson, Penske PC3, 77 laps
- Mario Andretti, Parnelli VP43B, 77 laps
- Tom Pryce, Shadow DN5, 77 laps
- Vittorio Brambilla, March 761, 77 laps
- Patrick Depailler, Tyrrell 007, 77 laps
- Bob Evans, Lotus 77, 77 laps
- Brett Lunger, Surtees TS19, 77 laps
- Hans Stuck, March 761, 76 laps
- Michel Leclere, Williams FW05, 76 laps
- Chris Amon, Ensign N174, 76 laps
- Harald Ertl, Hesketh 308B, 74 laps
- Jacky Ickx, Williams FW05, 73 laps
- Emerson Fittipaldi, Copersucar FD04, 70 laps*

* Not running at the finish

Retirements:

Clay Regazzoni (Ferrari 312T) engine, lap 52; Jacques Laffite (Ligier Matra) engine, lap 49; Jean-Pierre Jarier (Shadow DN5) radiator damage lap 28; Carlos Pace (Brabham-Alfa Romeo BT45) engine, lap 22; Gunnar Nilsson (Lotus 77) clutch slipping, lap 18; Carlos Reutemann (Brabham-Alfa Romeo BT45) engine, lap 16; Ronnie Peterson (March 761) accident, lap 15; Ian Scheckter (Tyrrell 007) accident, lap 1.

Fastest Lap:

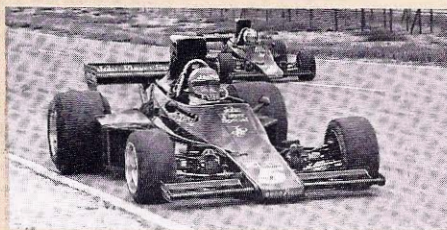
Niki Lauda, Ferrari 312T/023, 1:17.93, 189.5 kph

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (after 2 rounds)

Niki Lauda, 18 points; James Hunt, 6 points; Patrick Depailler, 6 points; Jody Scheckter, 5 points; Jochen Mass, 5 points; Tom Pryce, 4 points; Hans Stuck, 3 points; John Watson, 2 points; Mario Andretti, 1 point.



Bob Evans (LEFT) and Gunnar Nilsson (RIGHT) are the new Lotus boys.



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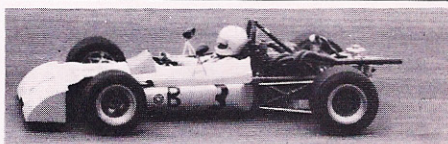
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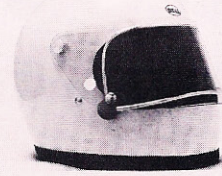
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