



MAYDAY

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF M.E.T.A.

Volume 8 Number 3

May 27, 1983

Long time, no read. Well, this is just the teaser, the calm before the storm & all that. Yes, the editor of this rag is getting down to some serious journalism (oh sure ..) and will be publishing an issue once a month from this point on. So this issue is comprised of a few bits of info, a few articles of interest and a joke or two. Pretty (yawn) exciting, huh?

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Next META meeting, as announced at the April gathering, is this coming Thursday, June 2nd at the North Van Community Centre at 8 p.m. So if you sho ed up on any other day, you can now be sure that you're still somewhat sane and know that we haven't disappeared off the face of the earth.

Race Dates

- June 4/5 Conference Race - Westwood
- June 11/12 Trans-Am, SCCA National (or more meaningfully, ROSE CUP) - Portland
- June 11/12 Conference Race - Seattle
- June 17/18 Driver Training - Westwood
- June 25/26 Trans-Am - Seattle

A little late, but entertaining nevertheless:

LONG BEACH GRAND PRIX

Oh Wow! My first F1 race, Long Beach's last. The weather was gorgeous and the cars were FAST. Saturday morning's F1 practice was red flagged three times, once for a car blocking the pit exit only a few minutes into the session. A bit of excitement was added when a TV camera, panning straight down at a car going under it, fell off its dolly and almost landed on the car.

The REAL excitement of the day was the Pro/Celebrity race. Talk about frontal lobotomies! Dan Gurney won the Pro class, but Ted Nugent was the star of the show. To give you a hint to his driving style, an L.A. paper opened their article with "If your car was anywhere near Long Beach Saturday, check it for dents. Ted Nugent probably hit it". He was also the most quotable driver. Eg. on ramming

LONG BEACH GRAND PRIX Cont'd

Robert Hays into Sam Posey, nosing Hays' door and bulldozing Posey's front end out of the way to take the lead - "It was strictly (censored) self-defence". Maybe he should use his prize money to buy a Formula Ford.

Sunday was almost a letdown after Saturday's blood-curdling, crash and bang fun. Of course, that could be because the only excitement we got to see was Manfred Winkelhock removing the advertising from the end of the straight-away. From there on, it was back to basic racing. (At this point I would like to suggest that all people over 5'4" sit at the back of the grandstands). Knowing Vancouver's extensive coverage of important events like F1 and hopscotch, maybe I should mention that Ferrari took the front row, with Tambay on the pole, and TAG Williams qualified 3rd and 4th. That order lasted 'til the green flag, when Rosberg bumped Arnoux out of the way and moved into second place. Rosberg went onto bigger and better things by pulling a "360 and contined" (just like figure skating) without losing second place. Tambay and Rosberg tangled a bit later in the race, resulting in both of them dropping out. Lafitte bumped around the incident, then proceeded to drop three seconds per lap for the rest of the race. Watson finally won, with about a 27 second lead over second place Lauda. Not bad, coming from 23rd position and 22nd position respectively for those two chaps.

About that opening comment - F1 won't be back to Long Beach, but rumour has it that a CART and/or CanAm race will be held next year.

Joey Humphrey

CAESAR'S PALACE PARKING LOT, THE STREETS OF DETROIT AND NOW.....

OLYMPIA AIRPORT!!!

The Pacific Northwest's newest sports car circuit was christened April 23/24 with an SCCA Driver's School and restricted Regional Race.

Only twenty-two cars turned out for the weekend; a bit disappointing, but much easier to handle for the first race for a new track.

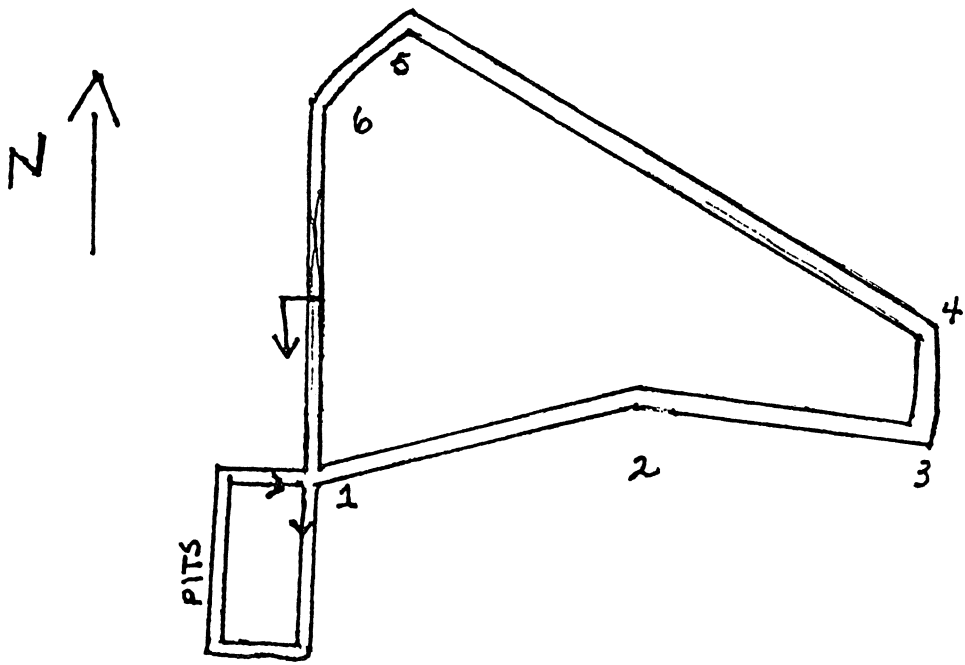
The track is a short but challenging 1.1 miles on the runways and taxiways at the north end of the airport. (The airport remains open during racing). Only six turns, five left and one right, but a lot of accelerating and braking. Some drivers reported up to 30 shifts per lap. A state trooper with his radar gun wrote out a ticket for Earl Pearson, #89 Corvette (our host for the weekend) for 108 mph on the "back strait". Earl finished his race with blisters on his hands.

Needless to say, most turns had plenty of run-off room, which made for a fairly safe track. One point, however, may require a bit of reconsideration from a safety standpoint: the entrance to and exit from the racing pits. Entering the pits from the track was accomplished by driving straight off Turn 1 about 100 metres, two 90 degree turns and coming back through the pits. To re-enter the track, another 90 degree turn and drive straight across the pit entrance into Turn 1. This creates a figure 8 for people entering and exiting the track, which encouraged some interesting moments. But with the small entry, no serious incidents occurred.

OLYMPIA Cont'd

The inaugural race for Olympia Airport may not have had the hoopla and glamour of Caesar's Palace or Detroit, but hopes are high for the future. Plans are in the works for a "winding taxiway" on the south end of the airport. Earl's dream of a Trans-Am in his backyard gets closer and closer to reality.

Dennis Paul



Catchpole

by Barry Foley



FORMULA WHO?

A somewhat disappointing entry of the newly-named Formula Mondial hit the circuit last weekend. Amid various improvements to the circuit, an exciting event occurred. The new paving (which thankfully cured properly this time) added to the quickness of the lap times. It has been a long time coming, but the 1 minute mark was broken in qualifying by Michael Andretti, the star attraction. In practice and qualifying he was fastest, with a time of 58:975, which gave him the pole. Area favourite Tom Phillips of Seattle was on the opposite side followed by Mike Rosen, Dan Marvin, John David Briggs, Victor Gonzalez (who broke the Formula Ford lap record at the last SCCA Regional at Westwood), Riley Hopkins, Marco Akerstream, Ross Bentley and Phil Simon.

Another change to Westwood was the installation of 12 foot high fences, strategically placed to interfere with the feeding path of our resident deer. This, along with spotters with radios along the fenced area was instituted after the death of Seattle's Steve Phillips, a Formula Ford driver, in the most recent Conference Race. So far the system has been effective, allowing the track to shut down the racing before the deer pose an on-track hazard, however, this will be tested and refined throughout the rest of the season.

The Mondial cars were joined this weekend by a good showing of Datsun Radial Challenge cars, including a new entry from Val Child, extolling the virtues of rosiness - "Show More Pink" says the right quarter panel. (Funny, I don't think she was wearing pink Nomex undies). Two terrific heats were run with Bob Davenport coming out on top in each with some excitement provided by Gordon McMeeking, Doug Almond and Harvey (Westcoast) in a few close, but no cigar situations.

The motorcycles added entertainment to the weekend, although their numbers were down also because of more points events south of the border. A gent named Goodfellow sponsored by CFOX, seemed to dominate the honours in 750 Prod and Superbike. On Saturday, a newcomer motorcycle to the scene, the Yamaha RZ350 did very well, particularly since it was competing in 600 Production. It is the fast two-stroke machine to ride and race according to people in the know. Those who wondered what wheel to wheel racing was all about had no need when the bikes went through Turns, 1, 2 & 3. They were so close that 3 bikes & riders could fit in the spot a Mondial car takes up - width wise! Simply unbelievable - one might think the bolts that may be loose are not just on the bikes.

Anyway, back to the reason for this weekend - the Pro Race. The race itself was quite clear with very little in the way of infractions or such. Of course, Michael Andretti was never challenged and ran away with the lead from the beginning. Locals Ross Bentley, Marco Akerstream & Phil Simon had differing strokes of luck. Marco, driving a RT4, rented from Pierre Phillips, retired when, having lost a good portion of his oil, spun a bearing. Phil Simon went off into the bushes at Turn Two and just didn't recover enough to get back into the race. Ross Bentley finished 7th, in spite of a recently broken collarbone and the seemingly non-competitiveness of the car.

Cont'd

As the Mondial series approaches mid season, one can hope that it will achieve the popularity and new international competitiveness planned by the organizers. If so, we can look for larger grids of cars for next year at Westwood. It could be a really exciting series once the loose ends are pulled together.

Overheard in Pre-Grid:

"Gee, I don't know what's going on. Everyone is calling Michael Andretti on the radio, you know, each turn and everything? Like Turn One, Green Andretti, Turn 2, Green Andretti..."
