

1981 Gold Crown Championship Dirt Car Race



**DU QUOIN
STATE FAIR**

Sunday, August 30

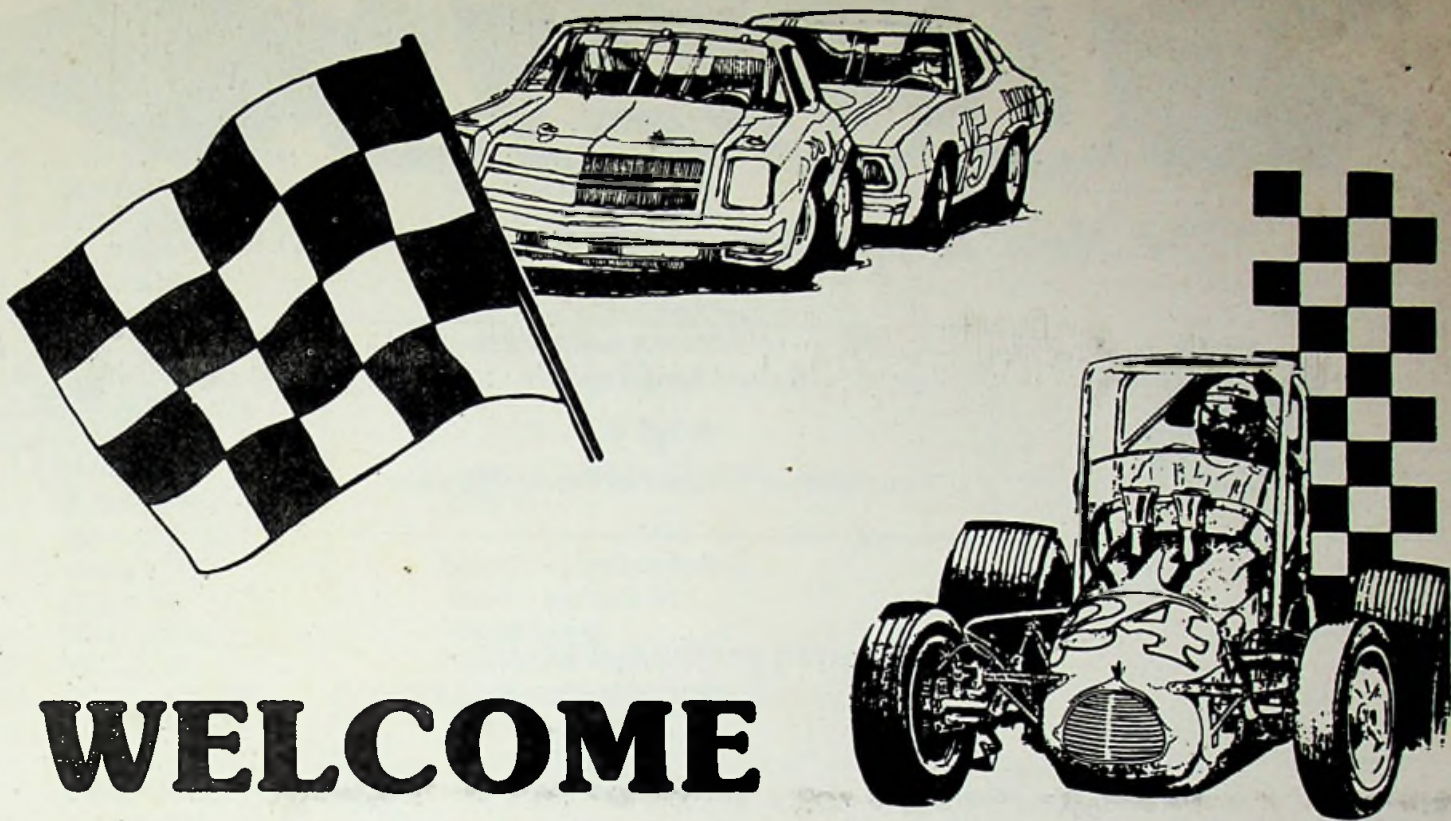
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OFFICIAL SOFT DRINK OF THE DU QUOIN STATE FAIR



WELCOME

The Du Quoin State Fair is proud to welcome you to our annual auto racing weekend featuring competition in USAC Stock Car and Championship Dirt Car series action.

We are quite proud of our record of achievement and production of fine auto racing here at Du Quoin and hope you, the fans, appreciate our commitment to bringing you the finest competition available under the best circumstances.

We hope you enjoy your weekend of auto racing and hope also that you will attend one of our traditional country music shows on either Saturday or Sunday night. It's a big part of this weekend and a proven attraction for people of all ages. Check advertisements in the program today for attractions on our big stage throughout the remainder of the Fair also. We have many of the top stars in the entertainment world to go along with the driving stars you will see performing today.

We hope you enjoy your stay at the 1981 Du Quoin State Fair.

— — FAIR OFFICIALS — —

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Curt Greene	Vice-President/Dir. of Public Relations
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USAC

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UNITED STATES AUTO CLUB NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP DIRT CAR OFFICIALS

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Mutt Anderson	Technical Committee Chairman
Don Bright	Registrar
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Bob Laycock, Jr.	Chief Timer
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Bob Timme	Steward
Carl McCormick	Steward
Joe Auriemma	Steward, Eastern Zone
Norm Philson	Technical Man, Eastern Zone
Willie Davis	Technical Man
Ray Chaike	Steward
Wally Scherer	Starter



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I want to become an active member of USAC. Enclosed please find my check for \$25. Complete this card and mail along with your check to:

UNITED STATES AUTO CLUB
4910 West 18th Street
Speedway, Indiana 46224 - Dept. A

Last Name _____ First _____ Initial _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

USAC DIRT CAR ENTRIES

Car No.	Driver	Car	Qual. Time	Start Pos.	Finish
1	GARY BETTENHAUSEN	Terre Haute 1st Natl. Bank (Chevy)			
3	RICH VOGLER	Aristocrat Products (Chevy)			
5	BOBBY OLIVERO	Moran Electric Special (Chevy)			
7	BILL TYLER	La Grande Inc.			
11	SHELDON KINSEY	Ben's Tire Clinic (Chevy)			
14	BENJAMIN HARRIS	Terre Haute 1st Natl. Bank (Chevy)			
17	JOHNNY PARSONS, JR.	Smith Speed Shop Special (Chevy)			
18	LARRY DICKSON J McELWREATH				
19	BOBBY MARSHALL				
20	LARRY MARTIN				
21	JERRY STONE	Oklahoma Fixture Co./Ofixco Spl.			
22	BILL COMPTON	Leslie Oil			
23	JIM McELREATH				
24	TRACY POTTER	MacPherson Brothers Sprinter			
25	DUKE COOK	Double A Racing Chevy			
26	BOBBY ADKINS	Club 30 Special			
27	MIKE GREGG	Roger Mauro Ferrari			
28	BILLY ENGLEHART	Mattox Ice Company			
30	J WEEKS	Plastic Express (Chevy)			
31	KARL BUSSON	Racewek Charger			
32	RONNIE BURKE S WALTER / S CHAPMAN	Montgomery Auto Rebuilders			
33	JOE SALDANA				
35	ARNIE KNEPPER	Tom Fischer (Chevy)			
39	KENNY SCHRADER	Rose Bros. Trucking			
41	GEORGE SNYDER				
43	GREG LEFFLER KINSEY	Armstrong Mould, Inc.			
45	GARY PATTERSON	AAI-MAACO Dirt Spc.			
47	GARY HIEBER	Scrappy's Auto Service			
49	STEVE CHASSEY	Cook/Stapp Rac. Ent.			
50	JOHNNY COOGAN	Vetzel Moving & Storage Spl.			
51	PAUL PITZER	G.C.Q. Racing			
53	EDDIT LEAVITT	Commercial Truck Components Racing Div.			
54	SMOKEY SNELLBAKER	Lloyd Racing Enterprises			
55	LARRY RICE	Pizza Hut of St. Louis			
56	TOM BIGELOW	Genesee Beer			
57	BILL TYLER J. Bloom	Roberts Steel Erection			
58	JACK HEWITT	Coon's Construction			
59	JACK ZIEGLER B. RUTER BANG-H	Competition Racers			
61	Gene SHIRLEY	W & W Molded Plastics			
65	JERRY MILLER				
66	RON FRELLER				
69		McClure Plastics Special			
71	BARRY CAMP	Stenger's Motorcraft Spec.			
72	ART BISCH, JR.	Speed Sport West. Patterson Drive Shaft			
75	STEVE KINSEY A UNSER	Stanton/Bill King's Brake-0 Special			
76	MANNY ROCKHOLD	Automotive Machine Special			
77	RICHARD POWELL	Comet Industries			
78	LONNIE CARUTHERS	Don Conrad & Sons			
80	RICK HOOD	Corsi Cabinet/Gaerte Engines			
81	LENNY WALDO	Red Roof Inns			
83	GARY GRAY	GAPCO Special			
84	BUD WILMOT	Madison Inn			
90	RON SHUMAN	Paul Oxman Publishing Special			
97	MARK ALDERSON	Hurry Sundown Saloon/D.J./Easthom			

22 NEIMER
85 J MILLER
29 TRIPP

62 - G. POTTER
61 -



1956 – 1980 Championship Dirt Car Races Du Quoin, Illinois

Year	Winner	Starting Pos.	Year	Winner	Starting Pos.
1956	Jimmy Bryan	5th	1969	Al Unser	11th
1957	Jud Larson	1st	1970	Al Unser	1st
1958	Johnny Thomson	1st	1971	George Snider	4th
1959	Rodger Ward	2nd	1972	Tom Bigelow	3rd
1960	A.J. Foyt	4th		A.J. Foyt	1st
1961	A.J. Foyt	2nd	1973	Mario Andretti	2nd
1962	-rain-		1974	Mario Andretti	1st
1963	A.J. Foyt	5th	1975	Tom Bigelow	2nd
1964	A.J. Foyt	2nd	1976	Bubby Jones	3rd
1965	Don Branson	2nd	1977	Tom Bigelow	4th
1966	Bud Tinglestad	12th	1978	Pancho Carter	2nd
1967	A.J. Foyt	3rd	1979	Bill Vukovich	1st
1968	Mario Andretti	6th	1980	Gary Bettenhausen	2nd

*Have a good time here
at the
59th Annual*



**DU QUOIN
STATE FAIR**

*and the
inaugural \$500,000
World Trotting Derby.*



SINCE 1915

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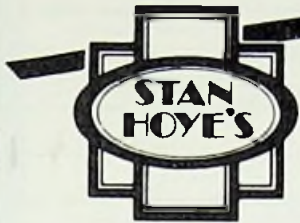
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shrimp, a variety of other dishes.



Another Stan Hoyer Restaurant Next To The Holiday Inn Carbondale

100-Mile Race Starting Line-Up

POLE ROW		OUTSIDE ROW	
Car	Driver	Car	Driver
14		1	
55		5	
17		3	
58		56	
41		51	
29		7	
21		59	
22		57	
33		47	
85		18	
43		30	
35		24	

Alternate _____

Fastest Qualifying Time

CAR No. _____ DRIVER _____ TIME _____

Order of Finish

WINNER _____ SECOND _____

THIRD _____ FOURTH _____

FIFTH _____ WINNING TIME _____

The 59th annual DU QUOIN STATE FAIR

August 28 - September 7

featuring the inaugural \$500,000



WORLD TROTTING DERBY
Sat., September 5th

- ★ Tractor/Truck Pull (2 Big Days)
- ★ Harness Racing (5 Big Days)
- ★ Livestock & Farm and Home Show
- ★ Acres of Free Exhibits & Entertainment

*plus
the greatest stars
of the
entertainment
world!*

**In All the World,
There's Nothing Like It!**

1981 Du Quoin State Fair SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Friday, August 28
MEDIA / LEGISLATOR'S DAY**
Free Admission until 4:00 p.m.
2p.m. National Cow Chip Throwing Contest
8p.m.-2a.m. Midnight Madness on the carnival
midway
6p.m. & 9:00p.m. Opening Night show
starring the Charlie Daniels Band
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. Dance at the First Heat
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Saturday, August 29
NAPA DAY**
9:00a.m.-5:00p.m. 4-H Presentations
11:30a.m. Hot Laps for USAC Center Line
Stock Car Series
Meet NAPA representative and film star
JOSEPH CAMPANELLA
6:00 & 9:00p.m. Don Williams and
Tammy Wynette
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Sunday, August 30
COCA-COLA DAY**
11:30a.m. Hot Laps for USAC Gold Crown
Championship Dirt Cars
Noon Judging of Beef Cattle Begins
1:00p.m. USAC Gold Crown Championship
Dirt Car Race
3:30 Garden Tractor Pull, show arena
6:00p.m. & 9:00p.m. The Statler Brothers and
Brenda Lee
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Monday, August 31
COUNTRY / WESTERN DAY**
8:00a.m.-8p.m. Livestock Judging:
Beef Cattle
11:00a.m.-3:00p.m. Livestock Judging: Sheep
10:00a.m.-3p.m. Free Entertainment on
The Big Grandstand Stage
6:00p.m. & 9:00p.m. Mickey Gilley/
Johnny Lee and The Urban Cowboy Band
8:00p.m. Country/Western Dance at
First Heat
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Tuesday, September 1
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS
APPRECIATION DAY**
Free Admission and Parking ALL DAY
8:00a.m. Livestock Judging: Sheep
10:00a.m. Livestock Judging: Beef Cattle
1:00p.m. Grand Circuit Harness Racing
10:00a.m.-6p.m. Cattle Judging: Heavy Horses
7:00p.m. B. J. Thomas With The Hinson's
8:30p.m.-12:30p.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Wednesday, September 2
SENIOR CITIZEN'S DAY**
9:00a.m.-6:00p.m. Livestock Judging:
Heavy Horses
1:00p.m. Grand Circuit Harness Racing
6:00p.m. & 9:00p.m. Eddie Rabbitt with
Sami Jo Cole
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Thursday, September 3
McDONALD'S DAY**
Redeem your McDonald's coupons at the
carnival
9:00a.m. Mule Judging begins
1:00p.m. Grand Circuit Harness Racing
7:30p.m. Paul Revere and the Raiders and
Jan and Dean
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Friday, September 4
LADIES' DAY /
KEMPER & DODD DAY**
8:00a.m.-7:30p.m. Livestock Judging: Swine
9:00a.m.-6:00p.m. Livestock Judging: Mules
1:00p.m.-3:00p.m. Livestock Judging: Dairy
6:00p.m. Livestock Judging: Heavy Horses
1:00p.m. Grand Circuit Harness Racing
featuring the Filly Division of the
World Trotting Derby
6:00p.m.-10:00p.m. The Charlie Pride Show
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Saturday, September 5
WORLD TROTTING DERBY DAY**
8:00a.m. Swine judging continues
9:00a.m. Dairy judging continues
9:00a.m.-6:00p.m. American Quarter Horse
Assoc. Show and Cutting Competition
Show Arena
Noon-First post for big harness racing card
featuring inaugural
WORLD TROTTING DERBY
7:30p.m. & 10:00p.m. The Suzanne Somers
Show
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

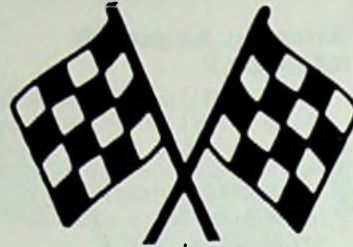
**Sunday, September 6
SIU DAY**
10:00a.m. Dairy judging continues
Noon-Midwest Championship Tractor Pull
8:00p.m. Pablo Cruise with Big Twist and
The Mellow Fellows
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

**Monday, September 7
COAL MINER'S DAY**
Noon-Midwest Championship Four Wheel
Drive Truck Pull
8:00p.m. Hank Williams Jr. and Sammi Smith
8:30p.m.-12:30a.m. First Heat Dance
Free Entertainment Hourly

BINGO EVERY DAY
Win big cash prizes in the big, new
bingo tent located in front of the Main
Grandstand.



The Flags . . . from the driver's seat



THE GREEN FLAG . . . Here we go again. This is the starting gun, the opening whistle—the race is on! The green flag tells us that the race is officially started, and during the long events, keeps us informed that the track is clear ahead — hang on! Here comes that first turn!



THE RED FLAG . . . As always, this is the danger flag. Just like the red in a stop sign, it means STOP—and right now! There may have been a bad spill —perhaps someone has been hurt, or the track is completely blocked—when we see this one, we get stopped as quickly as we can. The race will probably be restarted, but let's find out what happened first.



THE CROSSED FLAGS . . . Half way! Crossed flags tell us that the race is half over. It makes no difference which ones the starter uses. He holds the cloth of the flags along the handle so we don't confuse his meaning . . . if it's a 50-lapper, this signal means that there are only 25 to go . . . can't back off yet!



THE BLACK FLAG . . . This is the "Consultation flag," telling me to pull into the pits on the next lap . . . it is often called the disqualification flag, but it doesn't necessarily mean that I have done something wrong . . . I may be throwing oil or losing a part of my car. Can't ignore these signals; if I get it more than twice, I'll be disqualified!



THE BLUE FLAG WITH DIAGONAL STRIPE . . . This is the "passing flag." It indicates that a faster car is about to lap me . . . he has already passed me, and he now has a complete lap on me. This flag tells me to "hold my groove" or position on the track until I am passed. There he goes . . . but I'm not worried . . . he may not last long at that pace. If the flag isn't handy Bruce and Bud will use hand signals.



THE WHITE FLAG . . . This one means simply "one more lap" . . . we've been a little too busy to count them, and this lets us know that we are starting on that last long lap. We're always glad to see this one, but the one we really wait for is:



THE YELLOW FLAG . . . This is the "caution flag." It tells us to slow down; to hold our position until the green flag is thrown again. The yellow flag indicates that there has been an accident on the track, or that the track has been partially blocked by a stalled car or a thrown wheel or other object. The yellow flag will remain out until the officials have determined that no one is injured seriously or that the track is not completely blocked.



THE CHECKERED FLAG . . . This is the big one, the one we've been waiting for . . . it means it's all over but the shouting. We all want to get under this one first, but of course we can't all do it. We keep trying though, and I guess that's why you keep coming back. Thanks for the ride? Don't mention it . . . come again. And remember, when you drive your own car, although there are no flag signals, keep your eye on those traffic signs and obey them . . . they're the "flag signals of the highway."

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1980 USAC Championship Dirt Car Box Scores

USAC Championship Dirt Car Box Score — Pizza Hut 100 — May 31, 1980

Location:	DuQuoin, Illinois	Avg. Speed:	99.651 mph	Basic Purse:	\$30,285
Track:	DuQuoin State Fairgrounds	Time:	1:00:12.60	TV:	\$16,000
Type Track:	1-Mile Dirt	Distance:	100 Miles	Accessory:	\$ 600
Organizer:	Norb Bartosik	Event No. 1		Appearance:	\$ 500
Weather:	Sunny, Hot			P.F. Cont.:	\$ 500
				TOTAL:	\$47,885

FIN. POS.	ST. POS.	DRIVER	CAR NAME/ NUMBER	PTS. WON	MONEY WON	LAPS COMP.	RUNNING/ REASON OUT
1	2	GARY BETTENHAUSEN	First National Bank of Terre Haute (12)	200	\$7,836	100	Running
2	4	PANCHO CARTER	McCord Auto Supply (21)	160	\$4,886	100	Running
3	11	BOBBY OLIVERO	Hodgdon-Curb (21)	140	\$3,861	100	Running
4	5	RON SHUMAN	Pizza Hut of St. Louis (55)	NP	\$2,762	100	Running
5	10	STEVE CHASSEY	Kurtz-DiGeronimo Brothers (15)	100	\$2,406	100	Running
6	17	STEVE CANNON	L.O.F. Plastics (10)	80	\$2,121	99	Running
7	16	DEAN SHIRLEY	Sohm Racing (81)	NP	\$1,836	97	Running
8	22	BOB FREY	Rahn Racing (35)	50	\$1,694	95	Running
9	21	BILL BURKS JR.	Harris Racing (37)	40	\$1,622	88	Running
10	1	LARRY DICKSON	Genesee Bear (56)	30	\$1,551	85	Running
11	19	LARRY GATES	Stenger's Ford (71)	20	\$1,480	83	Engine
12	20	GARY HIEBER	McCafferty Ford (77)	10	\$1,409	74	Radiator
13	6	JOE SALDANA	Johnson Sheet Metal (33)	5	\$1,337	48	Overheating
14	7	MIKE GREGG	Olympia Beer (27)	5	\$1,265	41	Overheating
15	8	ROBERT SMITH	Jc-Ol Racing (18)	5	\$1,195	18	Steering
16	12	EDDIE LEAVITT	Seymour Enterprises (29)	NP	\$1,123	16	Engine
17	18	LEALAND McSPADDEN	Smith Speed Shop (17)	NP	\$1,052	16	Ring & pinion
18	3	RICH VOGLER	Siebert Olds (49)	4	\$ 981	10	Brake line
19	13	SHELDON KINSER	Smith Speed Shop (16)	4	\$ 981	8	Steering
20	9	BILL PUTERBAUGH	S & L Truck Stop (7)	4	\$ 981	7	Suspension
21	15	LARRY RICE	Weaver Excavating (28)	3	\$ 981	7	Accident
22	24	MACK McCLELLAN	Peterson-Niebel (20)	3	\$ 981	4	Engine
23	14	GEORGE SNIDER	LeFevre Automotive (59)	3	\$ 981	3	Clutch

FAST QUALIFIER: Larry Dickson (No. 56)--33.393 seconds (107.807 mph)

LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-6, Dickson; Laps 7-100, Bettenhausen.

YELLOW FLAGS: Laps 8-11, Rice hit guardrail in turn 3.

1980 USAC Championship Dirt Car Box Scores

USAC Championship Dirt Car Box Score — Ted Horn 100 — August 24, 1980

Location:	DuQuoin, Illinois	Avg. Speed:	99.530 mph	Basic Purse:	\$31,140
Track:	DuQuoin State Fairgrounds	Time:	1:00:17.00	TV:	\$ 1,625
Type Track:	1-Mile Dirt	Distance:	100 Miles	Accessory:	\$ 650
Organizer:	Norb Bartosik	Event No. 4		Appearance:	\$ 500
Weather:	Sunny, Hot			P.F. Cont.:	\$ 500
				TOTAL:	\$34,415

FIN. POS.	ST. POS.	DRIVER	CAR NAME/ NUMBER	PTS. WON	MONEY WON	LAPS COMP.	RUNNING/ REASON OUT
1	2	GARY BETTENHAUSEN	First National Bank of Terre Haute (12)	200	\$7,198	100	Running
2	7	PANCHO CARTER	McCord Auto Supply (21)	160	\$4,298	100	Running
3	1	RICH VOGLER	Siebert Olds (49)	140	\$2,723	100	Running
4	11	LARRY DICKSON	McClure Plastics (69)	120	\$2,124	99	Running
5	9	RICH LEAVELL	Peterson-Niebel (20)	100	\$1,768	99	Running
6	17	CHRIS CUMBERWORTH	LaGrande, Incorporated (87)	80	\$1,483	99	Running
7	21	KRAMER WILLIAMSON	Amerling (34)	NP	\$1,198	99	Running
8	26	LENNIE WALDO	Stenger's Ford (71)	50	\$1,056	98	Running
9	8	LARRY RICE	Weaver Excavating (28)	40	\$ 984	98	Running
10	4	TOM BIGELOW	Genesee Bear (56)	30	\$ 913	98	Running
11	27	GARY HIEBER	McCafferty Ford (77)	20	\$ 842	98	Running
12	13	STEVE CANNON	Double A Rac./Big 4 Chevrolet/Dairy Queen (10)	10	\$ 771	97	Running
13	19	GARY IRVIN	Higman Racing (47)	5	\$ 699	97	Running
14	24	FRANKIE SCHNEIDER	Raceweld Charger (31)	5	\$ 628	97	Running
15	14	JACK HEWITT	Radio Hospital (58)	NP	\$ 557	93	Running
16	15	JERRY MILLER	Luxury Racers (65)	5	\$ 485	93	Running
17	16	SAMMY SWINDELL	Smith Speed Shop (17)	NP	\$ 414	59	Engine
18	22	BILL BURKS JR.	Harris Racing (37)	4	\$ 343	56	Oil leak
19	10	GEORGE SNIDER	LeFevre Automotive (59)	4	\$ 343	48	Accident
20	6	JOE SALDANA	Johnson Sheet Metal (33)	4	\$ 343	37	Rear end
21	23	PAUL PITZER	Booth's Tow Service (45)	3	\$ 343	37	Engine
22	5	STEVE CHASSEY	Kurtz-DiGeronimo Brothers (15)	3	\$ 343	28	Oil leak
23	18	BILL TYLER	Smith Speed Shop (16)	3	\$ 343	18	Oil leak
24	20	LARRY GATES	Rose Brothers Trucking (39)	3	\$ 343	15	Oil pressure
25	25	JAN OPPERMAN	Miller-Vetzel Moving & Storage/Team Jesus (50)	2	\$ 343	11	Throttle
26	3	BOBBY OLIVERO	Hodgdon-Curb (1)	2	\$ 843	3	Engine
27	12	RON SHUMAN	Pizza Hut of St. Louis (55)	NP	\$ 343	3	Oil pressure

FAST QUALIFIER: Rich Vogler (No. 49)--33.426 seconds (107.701 mph)

LAP LEADERS: Lap 1, Vogler; Laps 2-100, Bettenhausen.

YELLOW FLAGS: Laps 50-53, Snider spun and hit inside wall on backstretch; Laps 55-59, removal of ambulance.

DU QUOIN TRACK RECORDS

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Driver</u>	<u>Car</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Speed</u>
CHAMPIONSHIP					
1 lap	8-29-76	Tom Bigelow	Leader Card	32.594	110.450
100 Miles	8-28-77	Tom Bigelow	Leader Card/Lodester Special	59:30.8	100.818
STOCK CARS					
1 lap	9-3-72	Jack Bowsher	1971 Ford	:36.41	98.874
100 miles	9-3-72	Jack Bowsher	1971 Ford	1:02:52.34	95.432
MIDGETS					
1 lap	7-2-72	Larry Dickson	Tyler Special	:34.87	103.241
50 miles	9-2-72	Tom Bigelow	Elder Cadillac Co. Spl.	29:21.35	102.194
100 miles	9-4-60	Jack Turner	Flatow Offy	1:05:14.29	91.970
SPRINT CARS					
1 lap	9-2-61	Elmer George	Tony's Special	:34.38	104.712
10 laps	9-2-61	Jim Hurtubise	Barnett Brothers Special	6:00.37	98.983
12 laps	9-2-61	Bob Mathouser	The Rebel Special	7:44.75	92.953
25 laps	9-2-61	Elmer George	500 Platolene Special	15:13.00	98.574

TIME-SPEED CONVERSION TABLE FOR ONE MILE DIRT TRACK

TIME	SPEED	TIME	SPEED	TIME	SPEED
33.00	109.091	35.00	102.857	37.00	097.297
33.10	108.761	35.10	102.564	37.10	097.035
33.20	108.434	35.20	102.273	37.20	096.774
33.30	108.108	35.30	101.983	37.30	096.515
33.40	107.784	35.40	101.695	37.40	096.257
33.50	107.463	35.50	101.408	37.50	096.000
33.60	107.143	35.60	101.124	37.60	095.745
33.70	106.825	35.70	100.840	37.70	095.491
33.80	106.509	35.80	100.559	37.80	095.238
33.90	106.195	35.90	100.279	37.90	094.987
34.00	105.882	36.00	100.000	38.00	094.737
34.10	105.572	36.10	099.723	38.10	094.488
34.20	105.263	36.20	099.448	38.20	094.241
34.30	104.956	36.30	099.174	38.30	093.995
34.40	104.651	36.40	098.901	38.40	093.750
34.50	104.348	36.50	098.630	38.50	093.506
34.60	104.046	36.60	098.361	38.60	093.264
34.70	103.746	36.70	098.093	38.70	093.023
34.80	103.448	36.80	097.826	38.80	092.784
34.90	103.152	36.90	097.561	38.90	092.545



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DIRT CAR DIVISION

Gary Bettenhausen and Pancho Carter, both the eldest sons of former great drivers, and both displaying awesome spirit and determination to overcome the lasting consequences of severe racing injuries, battled each other from start to finish for the 1980 USAC Dirt Car Championship, expanded this year to eight races.

Bettenhausen elected to pass up one of the events, but placed either first or second in all but one of the remaining seven to end up with the top honors. Carter, who started in all eight, missed the top five on only two occasions and was never worse than 12th. He entered the last race only 15 points behind Bettenhausen and lacked a mere 65 when it was over. The pair who are close friends, collected almost \$64,000 between them for their 1980 Dirt car performances.

Gary and Pancho established themselves as the drivers to beat right off the bat in the nationally-televised 100-miler at the beautiful DuQuoin circuit on May 31. Gary took the lead from his arch Sprint rival of a decade ago, Larry Dickson, on lap seven and as the race wore on, it appeared that he would win comfortably over Carter. But Gary's engine began to sour in the final stages and Carter reeled in the slack.

Pancho moved to the inside on the main straight of the final lap but came up a couple of feet short of beating Gary's smoking mount. No sooner had Gary climbed from the sweltering cockpit than he dunked himself thankfully into the inviting infield lake. Chris Economaki arrived with an ABC television camera moments after Gary had squelched up onto the grassy bank, and when Chris asked for a repeat performance for the benefit of television viewers, Gary was happy to oblige.

Bettenhausen did not compete in the 100-lap race on the half-mile dirt track in Williams Grove, Pa. but lost little ground as Carter gathered only a smattering of points for his lowest finish of the year, 12th. Sheldon Kinser had his hands full with Kramer Williamson at the Grove. Kramer, who knows those long straights and tight turns like the back of his hands, all but overhauled Sheldon in a dramatic last lap attempt.

Several weeks of dry heat and drought in Illinois came to an end in mid-August just in time to all but ruin the traditional 100-mile race named in memory of Gary Bettenhausen's father at Springfield. It ended up being postponed twice and was eventually held three days later on a Tuesday afternoon. A faulty fuel pump eliminated Bettenhausen at the halfway mark while this thrillingly competitive series set the stage for its third straight wild finish.

Defending race winner and 1979 Dirt Car Champion Bobby Olivero seemingly had the race won but Carter was

able to do to Olivero what he had been unable to do to Bettenhausen at DuQuoin and what Williamson had barely failed to put over on Kinser at the Grove. Pancho dug the grinding rear tire into the cushion of Springfield's fourth turn and rim rode around the disbelieving Olivero on the outside. Bettenhausen, who watched from the sidelines, became relegated to third place in the point standings as these two came weaving over the line, Carter ahead by inches.

Wild, last lap finish number four came five days later in DuQuoin's second date. This one had a third participant, Rich Vogler, in the final scramble. Vogler was sandwiched between Bettenhausen and Carter taking the white flag and he decided to go for the lead entering turn one. It was a costly gamble as he slid wide and not only lost ground to Gary, but gave Pancho enough room to dive beneath as he gathered it up.

Carter had 525 points to Bettenhausen's 404 with 200 available to the winner of the September 6 Hoosier Hundred at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

Steve Chassey paced three-quarters of the Hoosier Hundred as Larry Rice, Olivero and Bettenhausen's teammate for a day, A.J. Foyt, competing in his first

Championship Dirt car race in four years, each ran second only to drop out. Fading brakes began to hamper Chassey's lap times and persistent Gary Bettenhausen was there to take advantage of the situation, grabbing the front position on the 77th lap. Chassey held on for second and Carter, almost eliminated by a tangle with Rice, kept going for third and still retained the point lead. Bettenhausen, contemplating more and more the decision to miss Williams Grove, had won three races in four starts and was still second to Carter.

Bettenhausen finally got the lead even if only by 15 points after placing second in a pair of 75-lappers on the half-mile dirt track of the Tulsa State Fairgrounds in Oklahoma. Rich Vogler and Billy Engelhart split the wins as Carter managed a fifth and a 10th.

When three days of rain turned the Terre Haute surface into an unraceable quagmire on October 19, it presented a series of interesting situations. To have postponed the event by one week would have meant that Pancho Carter would have been unable to participate due to a previous engagement to race in Mexico. Gary Bettenhausen announced that he would not return if he could not race Carter for the title. In either case Bettenhausen would have won it by default. It just so happened that the race organizer, Don Smith, was also the President of the First National Bank of Terre Haute which sponsors the Tim Delrose/Dale Holt-owned Dirt car.



David Knox

GARY BETTENHAUSEN
1980 USAC National Dirt Car Champion

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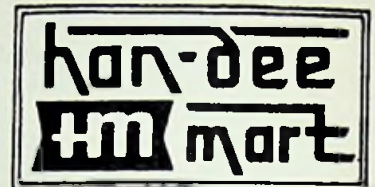
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