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1981

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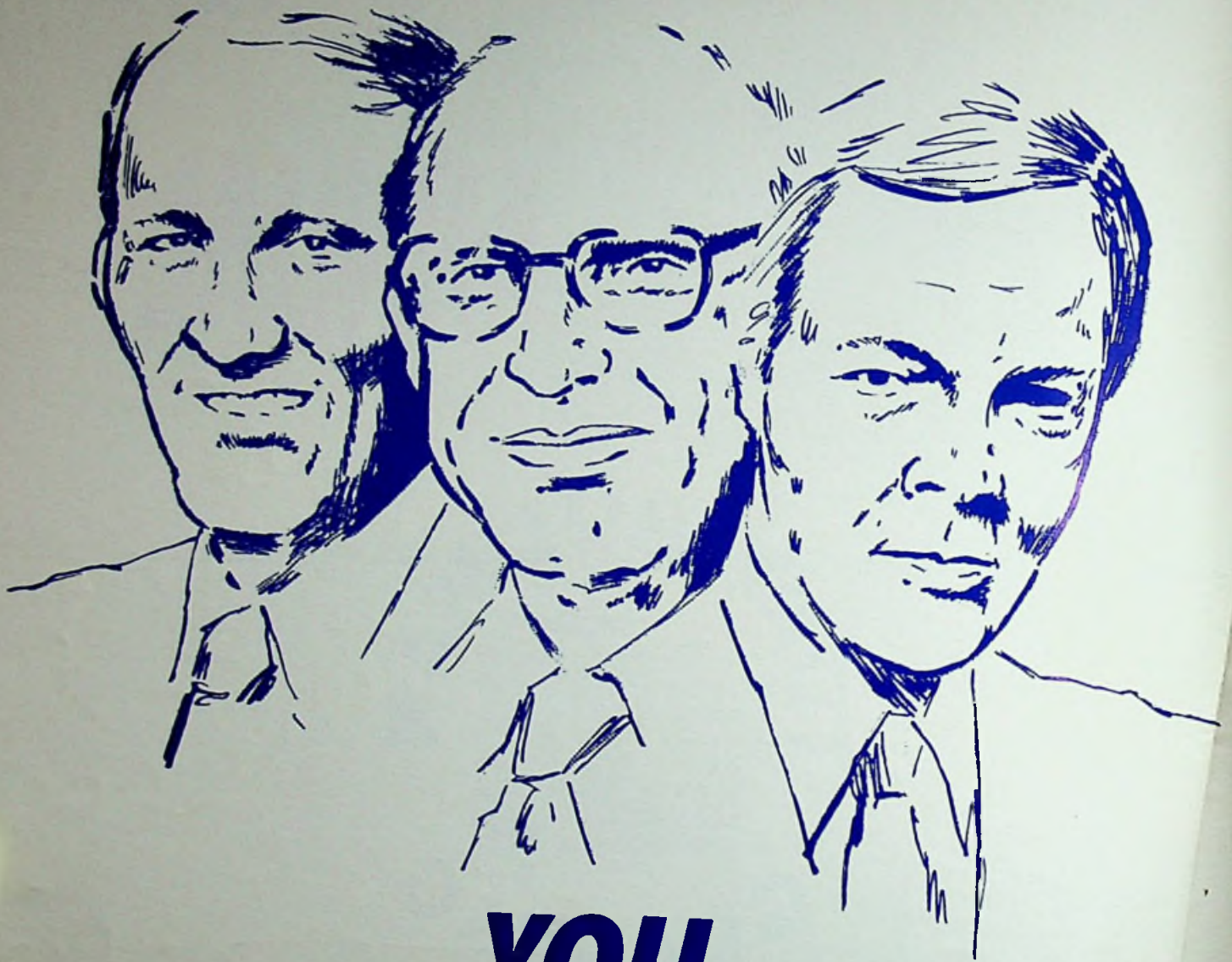
MAY 3, 1981




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'80 Action At The Action Track

The Tenth Annual "Tony Hulman Classic" sprint car race opened the season at the Terre Haute Action Track. Before qualifications got underway, practice crashes eliminated two drivers from the day's activities. First, Red Bledsoe got his Genesee Beer Wagon upside-down in turn three, then Gary Irwin upended in turn two, landing outside the track, clipping a guide wire steadying a platform used by ABC Wide World of Sports. Neither driver nor the cameraman were injured. After qualifications got started, Gary Bettenhausen brought a joyous reaction from the crowd by breaking Bubby Jones' track record by .007 seconds with a 22.643 second lap.

The feature was a race to remember. Johnny Parsons led the first 27 laps before Larry Gates in USAC newcomer Bill King's Powers Welding 51 took over. Gates looked like a winner until mechanical failure dropped him from the race. At almost the same time, Parsons and Larry Rice tangled and spun. Suddenly, a fourth running Eddie Leavitt was the new leader; a lead he held to the finish over Steve Chassey, Pancho Carter, Sheldon Kinser and Bobby Olivero in Ben Bowen's 25. The win was the third for Louis Seymour, whose cars previously took the first and second Hulman Classics.

Heat races were won by Bettenhausen, Mark Alderson, Joe Saldana in the Sycamore Engineering 70, and Kinser, with Leavitt grabbing the semi-feature.

The next day Gary Bettenhausen's 24 hour old track record was broken by the first car attempting qualifications; that being Clinton, Indiana's Dave Peperak, whose second lap of 22.528 seconds eclipsed Bettenhausen's record by a little more than a tenth of a second.

Mack McClellan led the opening two laps of the feature before vaulting the wall in turn one at the start of lap three. McClellan escaped with only a broken thumb.

Steve Chassey took the lead at this point and led the rest of the way despite repeated challenges from Bettenhausen. Gary's car overheated and dropped out of the feature two laps from the finish, allowing Larry Rice to come on and finish second, with Sheldon Kinser, Larry Dickson, and Johnny Parsons, Jr. rounding out the top five.

McClellan, Rice, Eddie Leavitt, and Chassey won the heats with Duke Cook winning the semi-feature.

On June 29, Joe Saldana started in 18th position and waited for first Rich Vogler, and then Eddie Leavitt to fall from the lead with mechanical failures to lead the final six laps for his first feature victory in two years. Steve Chassey and Larry Rice continued their impressive string of finishes at the Action Track by finishing second and third respectively. It wasn't easy for either of them, as Chassey started last after switching cars when his own machine was side-lined and Rice came from the 14th slot. Larry Dickson and Rich Leavell finished fourth and fifth respectively.

Heat races were won by Pancho Carter, Leavell, Vogler, and Leavitt, with Jeff Haywood bringing Ben Bowen's car home first in the semi. Johnny Parsons took the first flip of the afternoon, losing it in the fourth turn. After four or five quick rolls, Parsons escaped

uninjured. However, Phil Miller took top honors in the crash department with a spectacular semi-feature accident. Miller drove over the wheel of another car and flipped nearly the length of the front stretch. Miller's car was completely destroyed, but he suffered only a broken wrist from the mishap.

August 3 brought last year's most consistent winner, Bubby Jones, back east from California to drive Steve Chassey's No. 10. Chassey was injured the week prior at Eldora and was forced to miss the race while his shoulder healed. Jones was never a factor, however, leaving the race after only one lap. This race belonged to Rich Vogler as he led all but the first two laps. Larry Rice finished second, followed by Eddie Leavitt, Johnny Parsons, and Larry Dickson. Heat races went to Parsons, Larry Gates, Tom Bigelow and Vogler, while Clinton's Dave Peperak outran Dennison, Illinois driver Chet Johnson in the Bowen Olds car to win the semi, giving that race a real local flavor.

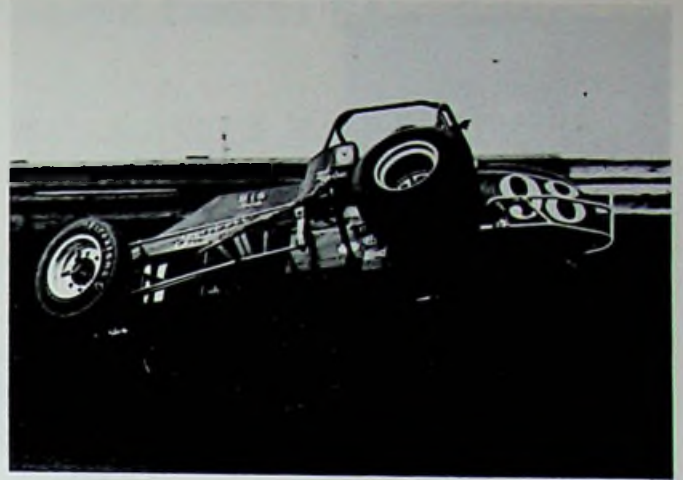
It took a one week rain delay to get the annual Hut Hundred midget race in the books. A total of 72 cars made an appearance with Larry Rice taking fast qualifying honors. Steve Chassey led from the second lap until his engine broke on lap 42 giving the lead to Rich Vogler who led to the finish. On the same lap Chassey had his misfortune, Ken Schrader's engine erupted in smoke entering turn one. Jerry Weeks and Bob Wente touched wheels, sending Wente's car rolling cage first onto the outside wall in turn one, before landing upright in the first turn. Wente was removed from the badly bent machine and taken for a checkup, returning to the track before the race ended.

Stan Fox managed to close in on Vogler slightly following the accident, but faded toward the end to finish second ahead of Sleepy Tripp, Steve Lotshaw, Greg Leffler, and Mel Kenyon. Last Year's winner, Johnny Parsons, finished ninth.

The Bowen sprint car got yet another driver for the September 21 race. Chet Johnson qualified the machine, but Rich Vogler had problems with his own car and took over the ride to finish second in the semi-feature behind Larry Rice. Vogler and Rice then swapped position in the feature with Vogler first and Rice second. Steve Chassey led a five car pack consisting of Gary Bettenhausen, Tom Bigelow, Johnny Parsons, and Sheldon Kinser for positions three through seven.

Joe Saldana, Mark Alderson, Pancho Carter, and Jerry Weeks won the eight lap heat races. Eddie Leavitt, in Bill King's 51, lowered the track record for the third time in four races to 22.325 breaking Dave Peperak's old record of 22.528 set May 4.

The 1981 USAC racing season came to an end at the Action Track November 2 with the running of the first MAB Paint 100 for Championship Dirt Cars. An extremely large crowd was on hand to view the Dirt cars on the Action Track for the very first time, and they were treated to some good racing. Eventual point champion Gary Bettenhausen led the 1st 62 laps before Tom Bigelow motored past. Gary got by Bigelow 12 laps from the end, but Tom's engine gave out eight laps from the finish, ending any hope he might have had of winning and dropping him to 10th in the final order. Johnny Parsons came on to take second, followed by fast qualifier Ken Schrader, Larry Dickson, and Pancho Carter. Rich Vogler, Larry Rice, Sheldon Kinser, Jim McElreath and Bigelow rounded out the top ten, while Kramer Williamson won the semi-feature.



Red Bledsoe bicycled his Genesee Beer Sprinter during hot laps for last year's Tony Hulman Classic. "Big Red" escaped injury and although out for the afternoon, did compete the next day.

Photos by John Mahoney

Larry Gates, one of Indiana's top outlaw drivers, came to the Action Track last season driving Bill King's Powers Welding No. 51. Gates led the Classic until mechanical failure sidelined the car.

Photo by Doug Lawhead



THE TOP TEN



RICH VOGLER



STEVE CHASSEY



TOM BIGELOW



LARRY RICE



GARY BETTENHAUSEN



SHELDON KINSER

1980 USAC Sprint Car Division Driver Standings

POS.	DRIVER/HOMETOWN	RACES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	FQ	PTS.	PURSE
1	Rich Vogler, Indianapolis, Indiana	24	6	5	1	3	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	742	\$33,346
2	Steve Chassey, Clermont, Indiana	22	5	7	2	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	681	\$29,530
3	Tom Bigelow, Whitewater, Wisconsin	22	4	-	4	1	1	4	2	1	-	-	-	1	5	606	\$22,721
4	Larry Rice, Brownsburg, Indiana	23	-	3	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	-	1	3	1	450	\$14,604
5	Gary Bettenhausen, Monrovia, Indiana	16	1	3	2	2	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	2	2	440	\$15,284
6	Sheldon Kinser, Bloomington, Indiana	14	2	1	3	1	1	-	2	2	-	-	-	1	-	384	\$13,954
7	Larry Dickson, Marietta, Ohio	18	2	-	1	2	1	1	3	-	2	-	1	-	-	376	\$12,035
8	Mack McClellan, Dayton, Ohio	20	-	-	-	4	2	1	1	3	2	-	1	1	-	351	\$11,066
9	Joe Saldana, Lincoln, Nebraska	13	1	2	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	299	\$10,625
10	Greg Leffler, Winchester, Indiana	15	1	1	2	-	2	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	294	\$16,261
11	Bill Tyler, Jackson, Michigan	19	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	5	4	-	-	-	255	\$ 7,252
12	Frank Riddle, Tampa, Florida	12	-	-	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	-	-	2	-	247	\$ 6,015
13	Mark Alderson, Timber Lake, South Dakota	14	-	-	1	-	2	2	2	-	-	1	1	1	-	224	\$ 6,519
14	Jeff Bloom, Kalamazoo, Michigan	13	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	213	\$ 7,010
15	Lennie Waldo, Columbus, Ohio	13	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	2	1	-	-	166	\$ 4,956
16	Pancho Carter, Brownsburg, Indiana	8	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	153	\$ 5,563
17	Johnny Parsons, Speedway, Indiana	8	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	147	\$ 6,501
18	Gary Iulig, Sanborn, New York	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	3	2	-	120	\$ 4,196
19	Karl Busson, Northwood, Ohio	7	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	119	\$ 4,730
20	Steve Ball, Ossian, Indiana	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	119	\$ 4,370
21	Bud Wilmot, Middleton, Ohio	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	113	\$ 3,590
22	Larry Gates, Evansville, Indiana	8	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	110	\$ 3,985
23	Bob Frey, Elyria, Ohio	8	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	109	\$ 2,920
24	Dave Peperak, Clinton, Indiana	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	1	103	\$ 4,051
25	Malcolm Lovelace, Springfield, Ohio	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	100	\$ 3,936
26	Rich Leavell, Elwood, Indiana	7	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	96	\$ 2,455
27	Paul Pitzer, Loganville, Pennsylvania	6	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	85	\$ 2,464
28	Tommy Thomas, Anaheim, California	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	81	\$ 3,916
29	Curt Kelley, Sherwood, Michigan	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	77	\$ 3,504
30	Jerry Weeks, Anaheim, California	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	67	\$ 2,754
31	Red Bledsoe, Avon, Indiana	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	66	\$ 3,125
32	Duke Cook, Sidney, Ohio	9	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	56	\$ 3,436
33	Ed Lute, Obetz, Ohio	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	52	\$ 2,025
34	Jim Childers, Tampa, Florida	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	37	\$ 730
35	Dick St. John, Cudahy, Wisconsin	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	35	\$ 2,106
36	Brent Whited, Richmond, Indiana	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	32	\$ 945
37	Tracy Potter, Indianapolis, Indiana	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	31	\$ 1,775
38	Jeff Heywood, Mission Hills, California	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	30	\$ 800
	Chris Cumberworth, Santa Ana, California	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	\$ 690
40	Bobby Olivero, Lakewood, California	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	\$ 2,002
41	Jeff Nuckles, Columbus, Ohio	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	23	\$ 335
42	Tim Boyd, Indianapolis, Indiana	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	\$ 1,095
43	Phil Miller, Shelbyville, Indiana	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	18	\$ 2,112
44	Robert Smith, Gibsonton, Florida	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	\$ 470
45	Bob Hale, Calumet City, Illinois	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	\$ 285
46	Jerry Carman, Burlington, Michigan	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	9	\$ 290
47	Roger Rager, Mound, Minnesota	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	\$ 1,036
	Jimmy Dinsmoor, Hollywood, Florida	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	\$ 500
49	Ron Milton, Jacksonville, Illinois	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	\$ 270
50	Gary Irvin, West Lafayette, Indiana	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	\$ 150
51	Gene Kurlonko, Hazel Park, Michigan	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	\$ 990
52	Chuck Mohr, Bettendorf, Iowa	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	\$ 460
	Quint Cullison, Newark, Ohio	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	\$ 320
	Tom Marks, Grand Rapids, Michigan	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	\$ 460



LARRY DICKSON



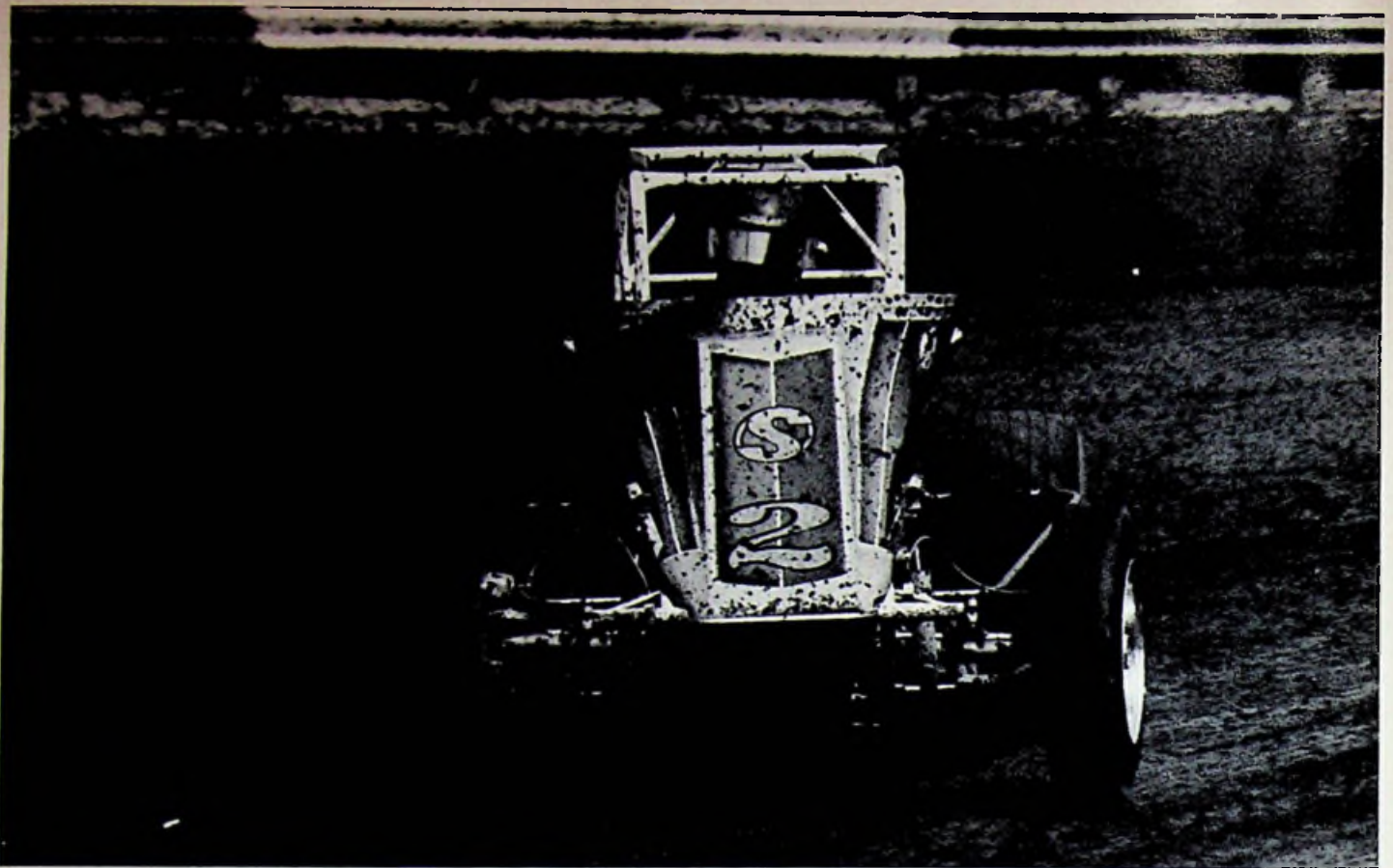
MACK McCLELLAN



JOE SALDANA

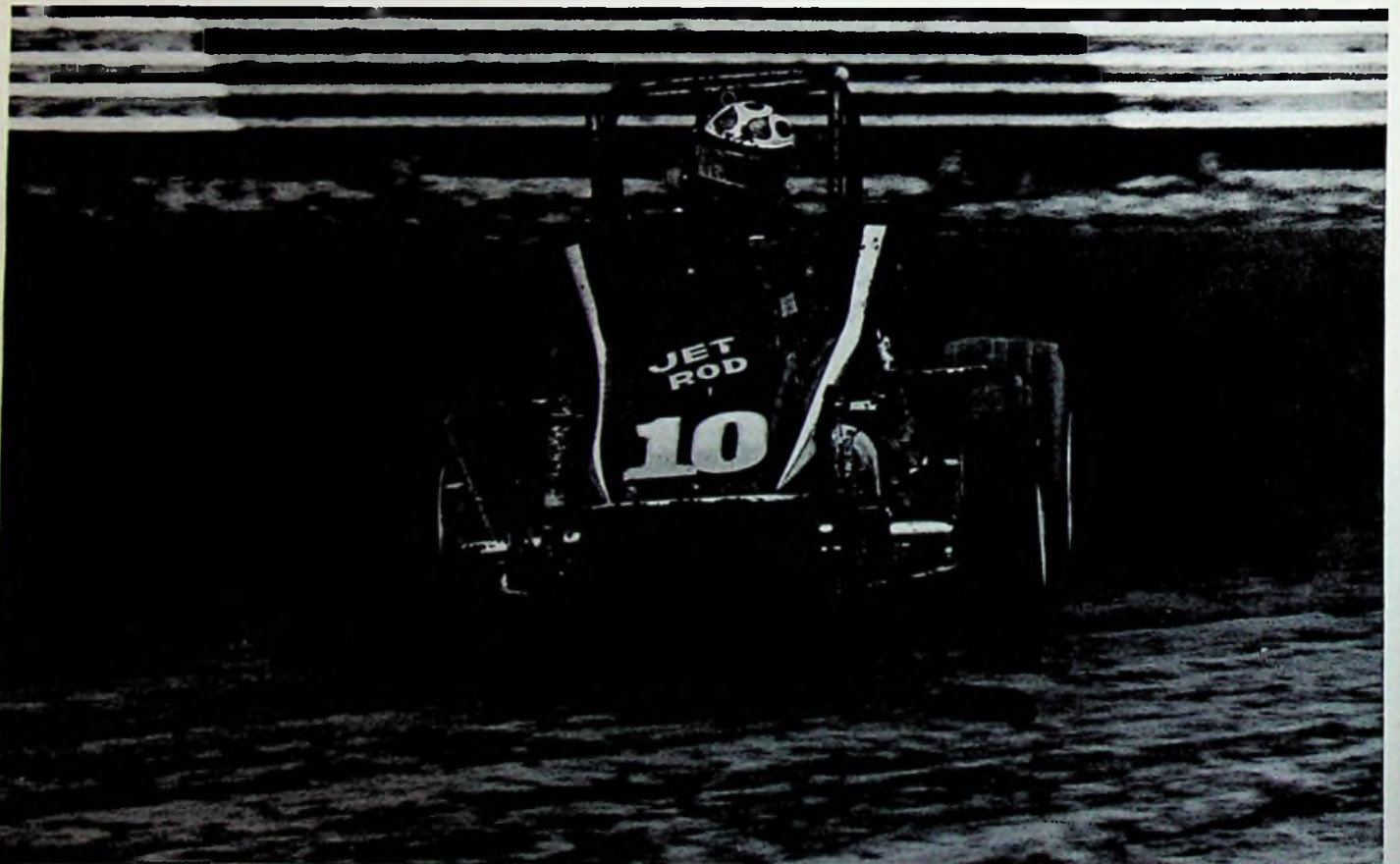


GREG LEFFLER



1980 Sprint Car Champion Rich Vogler in action at the Action Track September 21. This is the car he used to win the August 3 spring feature.

Jerry Trump Photo



Steve Chassey, second place finisher in the 1980 point standings, blasts through the turn September 21. Chassey went on to place third in the feature that afternoon.

Gene Crucean Photo

1980 USAC SPRINT CAR STANDINGS - Terre Haute Action Track

DRIVER	POINTS	BEST FEATURE FINISH	DRIVER	POINTS	BEST FEATURE FINISH
1. Larry Rice	110	2	30. Jan Opperman	12	16
2. Rich Vogler	92	1	31. Chris Cumberworth	10	14
3. Steve Chassey	89	1	32. Malcolm Lovelace	9	14
4. Eddie Leavitt	84	1	Jack Hewitt	9	16
5. Mack McClellan	80	6	34. Robert Smith	8	18
6. Larry Dickson	79	4	35. Roger Rager	7	17
7. Johnny Parsons	78	4	36. Paul Pitzer	6	17
8. Curt Kelley	69	6	37. Chuck Mohr	3	22
9. Tom Bigelow	61	5	Bubby Jones	3	24
10. Sheldon Kinser	58	3	39. Jeff Bloom	2	--
11. Bill Tyler	57	6	Quint Cullison	2	23
12. Rich Leavell	54	5			
13. Gary Bettenhausen	51	4			
14. Red Bledsoe	47	9			
15. Duke Cook	45	6			
16. Dave Peperak	44	7			
17. Gary Iulj	42	7			
18. Larry Gates	40	13			
Joe Saldana	40	1			
20. Pancho Carter	36	3			
21. Greg Leffler	33	10			
22. Mark Alderson	27	9			
Chet Johnson	27	11			
24. Bobby Olivero	23	5			
25. Jerry Weeks	21	8			
26. Steve Ball	19	13			
27. Tracy Potter	15	10			
Jeff Haywood	15	13			
29. Phil Miller	14	10			

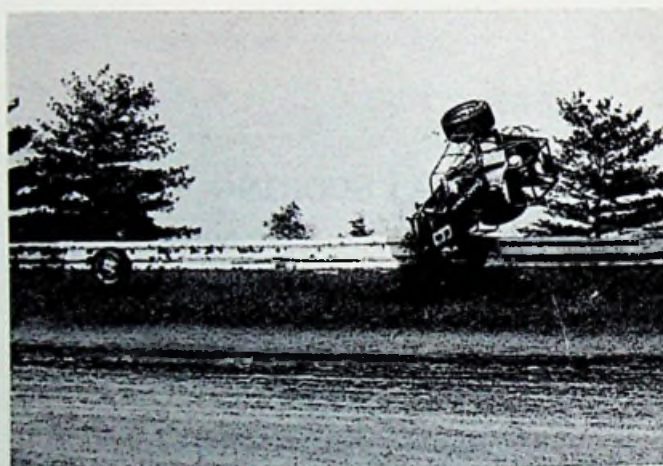
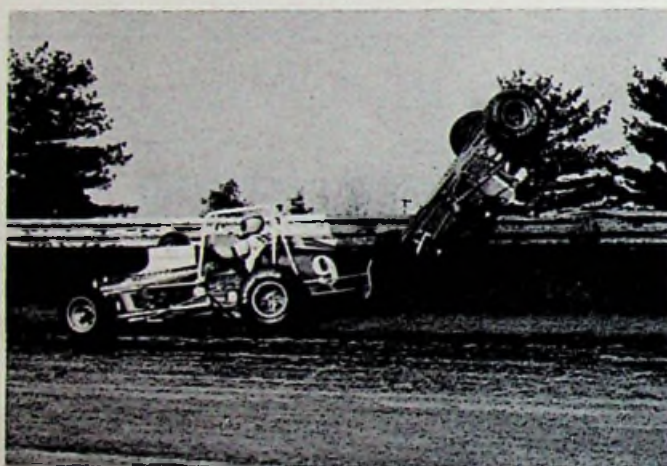
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1980 Hulman Classic heat race action with Phil Miller leading Bobby Olivero (25) and Rich Vogler (2) while others trail behind.
Photo by Doug Lawhead



Eddie Leavitt pressures Johnny Parsons Jr. (55) prior to taking the lead in the Tony Hulman Classic.

Photo by Doug Lawhead

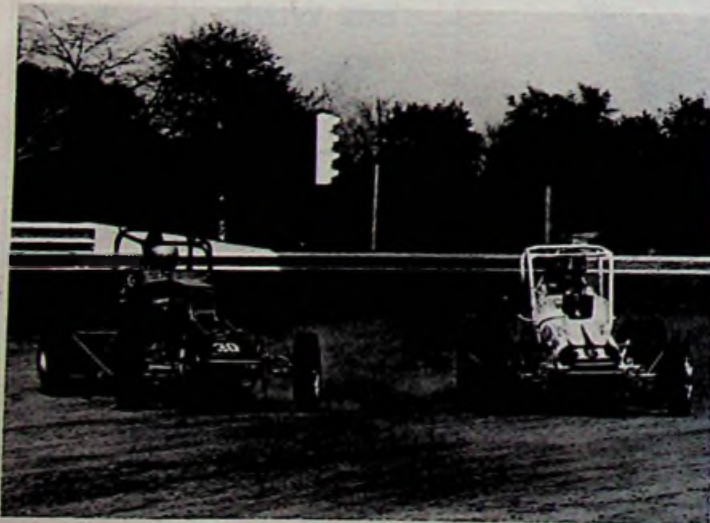


Steve Chassey hugs the inside guardrail as he leads Gary Bettenhausen (111) and Rich Vogler (2) in more Classic action.
Doug Lawhead Photo



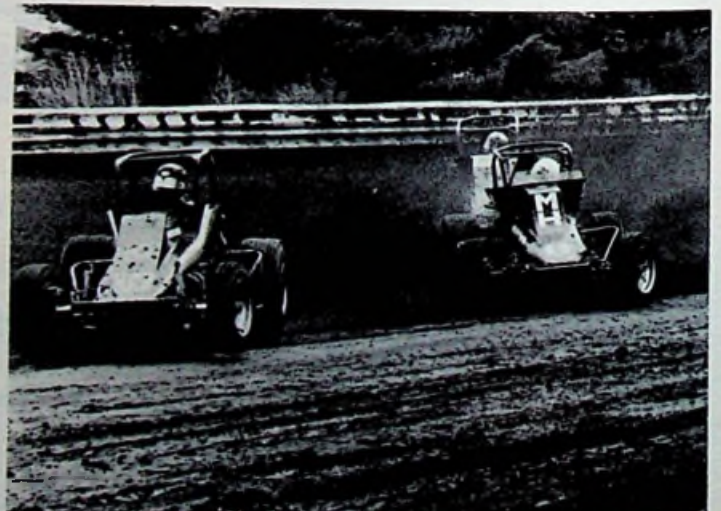
Sheldon Kinser lifts his left front wheel off the ground while qualifying for the 1980 Classic.

Photo by Doug Lawhead



Dirt Trackin' at its finest as displayed by Roger Rager (30) and Gary Bettenhausen.

Gene Crucean Photo



More close action featuring the classic broadside as Steve Chassey (10), Larry Dickson (8), and Joe Saldana do battle.

Photo by Jerry Trump

One of the young chargers on teh USAC circuit, Mack McClellan. Mack caused some concern May 4 by clearing the first turn guard-rail.

Photo by Jerry Trump



Larry Rice proved that the Weaver Special was a truly reliable racing machine by putting together a string of high finishes at the Action Track in 1980.

Photo by John Mahoney

A very happy Rich Vogler with the Action Track Queen and car owner Ben Bowen in victory lane September 21. Rich borrowed Bowen's car after his own car broke, to win his second Action Track Sprint feature of the year.

Gene Crucean Photo



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- Oct. 10 BALL STATE (Homecoming)
- Oct. 17 TULSA*
- Oct. 24 ILLINOIS STATE*
- Oct. 31 SOUTHERN ILLINOIS*
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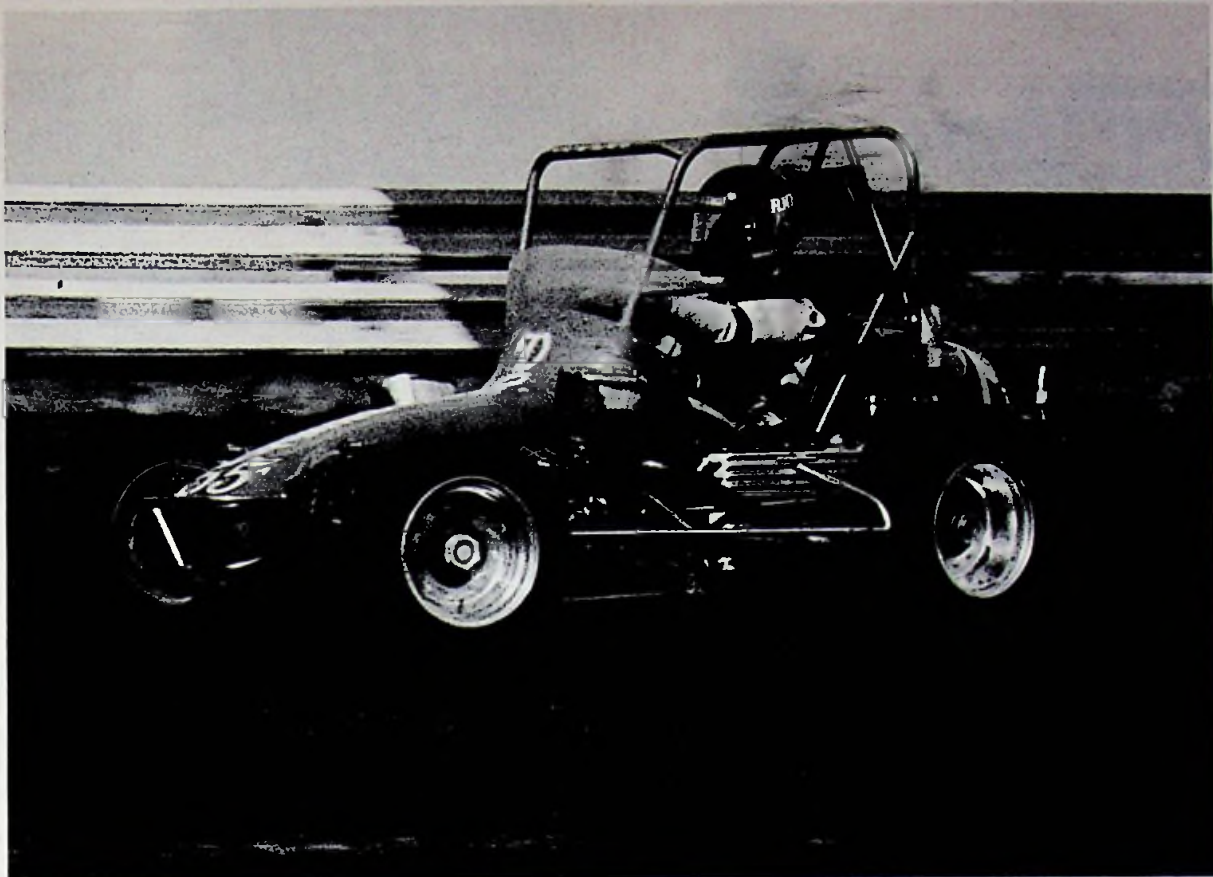


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Rich Vogler cruising to victory in his dad's number 55.

Doug Lawhead Photo

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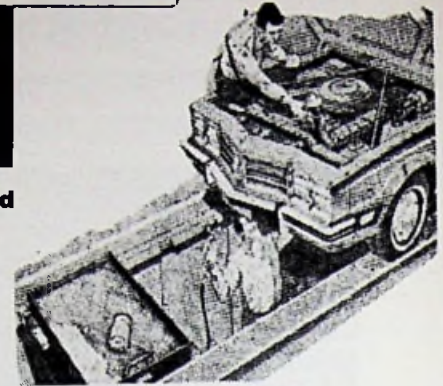
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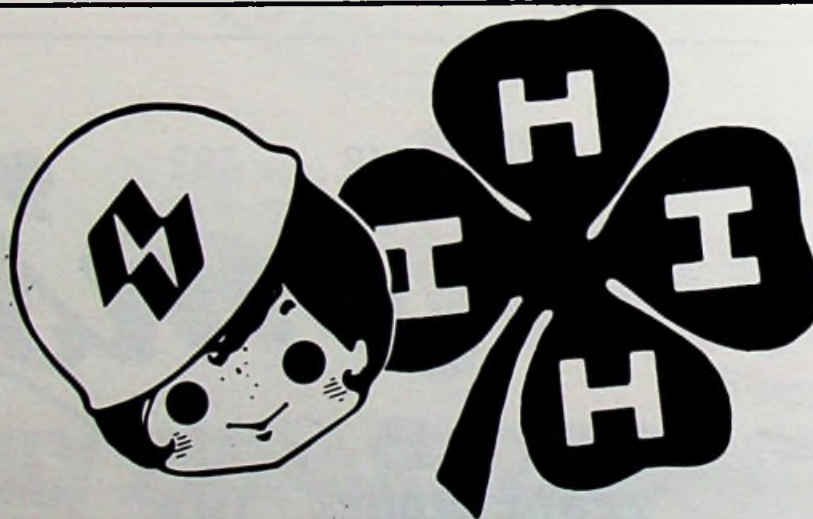
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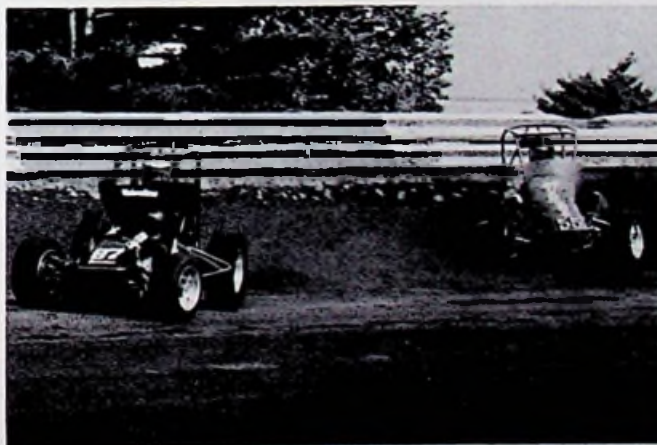


Rich Vogler and father Don (who owns and built the car) make pre-race checks of the Voglercraft Volkswagen midget.

Doug Lawhead Photo

The second lap of the Hut Hundred shows that four wide fit nicely with plenty of room left. Racing for the lead (from the left) are Steve Chassey (97), Johnny Parsons Jr. (79), Rich Vogler (55), and Larry Rice.

Doug Lawhead Photo



In the early going, Rich Vogler (55) chases Steve Chassey (97). Steve led until engine problems sidelined him, giving Vogler the lead.

Doug Lawhead Photo

Stan Fox closed on Vogler several times in the mid portion of the race, but could never quite take the lead, and finished second.

Gene Crucean Photo



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MAB 100



Teammates Ken Schrader (14) and Gary Bettenhausen lead the field for the start.

John Mahoney Photo



Bettenhausen holds the lead over Schrader and Sheldon Kinser (4).

Doug Lawhead Photo



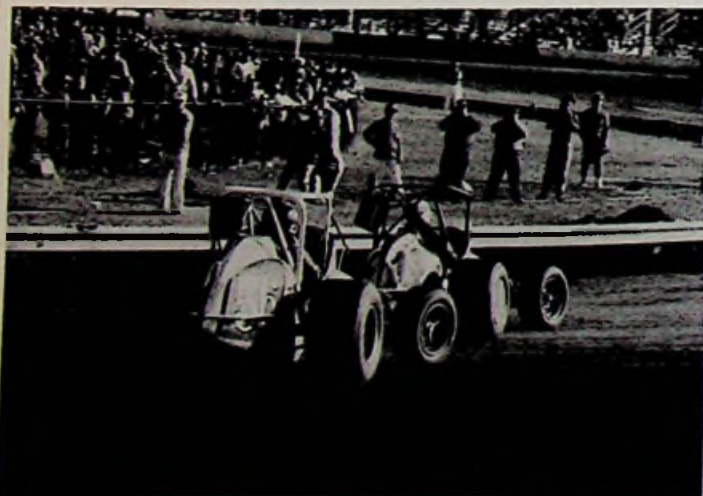
The action was close back in the pack. Billy Engelhart leads Jerry Weeks (59), Larry Rice (28), Larry Dickson (18), and Larry Gates.

Photo by G. J. Tiller



Pancho Carter's hopes to win the point Championship ended early when he blew a tire. Here he tries to make up ground with an outside pass of Larry Rice (28), Rich Vogler (49), and Larry Dickson.

G. J. Tiller Photo



Tom Bigelow is about to move past Schrader and then sets his sights on leader Bettenhausen.

Gene Crucean Photo



Bigelow has just lost the lead, as Bettenhausen regains the top spot to the finish. A short while later, Bigelow dropped from the race, finishing in tenth position.

Doug Lawhead Photo



Gary Bettenhausen brings the Hold-Delrose No. 12 through the turn on his way to winning the MAB 100 and the USAC Dirt Car Championship.



In victory, Gary with Vigo Fair Queen and MAB Paint President Lee Roads.

Photo by G. J. Tiller

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CAR #	DRIVER	CAR NAME	TIMES	
1.	RICH VOGLER	Aristocrat Products	_____	_____
2.	STEVE CHASSEY	Jet Engineering "Jet Rod"	_____	_____
4.	LARRY RICE	Weaver Special	_____	_____
5.	GARY BETTENHAUSEN	Terre Haute First National Bank	_____	_____
6.	SHELDON KINSER	Ben's Tire Clinic	_____	_____
8.	MACK McCLELLAN	Easthom-Owen Reed Spl.	_____	_____
11.	BILL TYLER	Batista-HVFF Racing	_____	_____
14.	MIKE BROOKS	Smith Speed Shop Special	_____	_____
20.	LARRY GATES	Peterson-Niebel Racing	_____	_____
21.	MARTY OEHLMER	Marty Oehlmer	_____	_____
25.	RON SHUMAN	Bowen Olds Sprinter	_____	_____
30.	JACK HEWITT	Radar Racing	_____	_____
31.	TIM BOYD	Curly Boyd	_____	_____
36.	BUCKY BOUGHAN	A-1 Fire Protection	_____	_____
37.	LARRY DICKSON	Ensign Racing	_____	_____
43.	GREG LEFFLER	Armstrong Mould, Inc.	_____	_____
45.	GARY GRIFF	John Bare	_____	_____
49.	BILL BURKS JR.	Smith Dodge	_____	_____
50.	JOHNNY COOGAN	Vetzel Moving & Stoarge Spl.	_____	_____
51.	EDDIE LEAVITT	Powers Welding-King's Custom Machine	_____	_____
52.	STEVE LONG	Circle City Coal	_____	_____
56.	TOM BIGELOW	Genesee Beer	_____	_____
56L.	SMOKEY SNELLBAKER	Lloyd Racing Enterprises	_____	_____
62.	JERRY POTTER	Booth Special	_____	_____
64.	CHRIS CUMBERWORTH	Varney Brothers	_____	_____
70.	JOE SALDANA	Tipp Machine & Tool Inc.	_____	_____
74.	PHILIP MILLER	Ivy Tech	_____	_____
77A.	DAVE PEPERAK	Robertson Gravel	_____	_____
82.	DAVID C. SMITH	NML "The Quiet Company"	_____	_____
83.	GARY GRAY	GAPCO Special	_____	_____
84A.	BUD WILMOT	Madison Inn	_____	_____
91.	DUKE COOK	Ram Video Services	_____	_____
95A.	STEVE BALL	B & G Racing	_____	_____
97.	CHUCK MOHR	Mohr's Standard/Beaver East Restaurant	_____	_____
98.	RED BLEDSOE	Genesee Beer/B & S Boarding Kennels	_____	_____

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