

#54 Tim Blakeney, 1972 Royale RP-16; #96 Nate Baldauff, 1969 Beach T11F; #53 Scott Clark, 1972 Merlyn 20A.

CVAR Thunder on the Cimarron

Hallett Motor Racing Circuit, Oklahoma

August 24-26, 2018

— story by Don Gwynne

— photos by Brandall Binion

Eighty racers came to Hallett for this year's Thunder, and Chief Steward Jack Marr and his Safety Committee were delighted that NOT ONE contact incident occurred the entire weekend. Well done, everyone!

The Feature Race of the event was on Saturday afternoon for Formula Fords. Just over 50 years after the first stand-alone Formula Ford race at Brands Hatch in England, CVAR's Formula Ford Feature at Hallett drew more entries than that original Formula Ford race. CVAR's newer FF2 & FF3 cars can run slicks, but the FF1 cars are limited to spec treaded tires. The twisting and swooping Hallett circuit is a perfect course for small formula cars, a fitting venue for CVAR's Formula Ford and Formula Vee feature races.

There was much rejoicing from the drivers when the planned 30-minute **FORMULA FORD FEATURE** race was shortened to 20 minutes due to the near 100° Oklahoma afternoon temperature. Jeff Norris' black #4

FF2 1978 Crossle 35F was on pole with Angus Lemon in his purple #86 FF1 1969 Merlyn 11A alongside. After an extra pace lap to remove a stopped car from the circuit, Lemon got on the gas a fraction sooner than Norris and took the lead into turn one. By the end of lap 2 Norris had his slicks up to temperature and retook the lead on the entry to turn 10.

During the third lap, Greg Hibbs moved his white & black #3 Merlyn 20A up into second overall, taking the FF1 lead from Lemon. Hibbs was pushing hard, dropping one wheel into the dirt exiting Hallett's high-speed turn 1. Greg Smith put his beautiful red #6 Swift DB-1 into third overall and 1st in FF3 at the end of lap 5 and set off in pursuit of Hibbs.

On Lap 6, James Stiehr, after towing all the way from Colorado, took over 2nd in FF1 after running side by side with Lemon the entire length of the front straight and taking the inside line into turn 1. Two laps later Stiehr's red & black #31 Winkelmann WDF1 took the FF1 lead and he never looked back. Stiehr is also promoting CVAR's Race Against Kids Cancer event at Texas Motor Speedway on November 30 – December 2, 2018, benefiting the Morgan Adams Foundation.

On lap 10 Nick Leonard put his beautiful white #195 Swift DB-1 into the tire wall in the recently renamed Turn 8/9 combination now called "The Toly" after Hallett Motor Racing

Circuit founder Anatoly "Toly" Arutunoff... we are guessing Nick still thinks the corner is a "bitch."

On the last lap, Hibbs spun in Turn 3. At the checker, Jeff Norris won overall and the FF2 class. Greg Smith finished second overall to win the FF3 class. At third overall, in FF1 it



#37 Scott Pfoehler, 1967 Corvette; #47 John Fershtand, 1969 Ford Mustang.

was James Stiehr for the class win. David Bell finished fourth overall to place second in FF2 in his blue & yellow #73 Lola T-342. Angus Lemon came third in FF2, and Bob Hancock came fourth in FF2 with his red #034 1969 Merlyn 11A.

Many thanks went to Race Chairman Art Summerville for hand-crafting the Formula Ford Feature trophies out of various engine parts including a 1928 Ford Model A piston. A thrilled Hancock thanked Art, stating "this is the first trophy I've ever won!" Thanks also went to the Barron Racing family for providing the post-race dinner and adult beverages for all the drivers, crews and workers.

After two 15-minute races for each group on Saturday, and another 15-minute race session for each group on Sunday morning, CVAR Championship points races began before lunch. As on Saturday's FF feature race, hot



#25 Steve Coleman, 1972 MG Midget; #60 Stefan Schluter, Porsche 914; #12 Berkeley Merrill, Porsche 914.



#05 Mike Rogers, 1969 Bobsy Vega.

weather led to a decision to shorten the run distance/time for all the points races.

First up was an 11-lap race for **GROUP 6** (FA, FF1, FF2, FF3, and S2000). Sixteen drivers produced the largest points race field, and some close racing, but it was not just a rehash of the Saturday FF feature by any means. Greg Smith was on pole in his red #6 Swift DB-1 with Angus Lemon alongside in his purple #86 Merlyn 11A. After the starter "threw" the green flag (literally in this case... it ended up on the ground under the starter's stand!) Smith held the lead through turn one only to be out braked into turn three by Lemon. Two laps later, Smith attempted to return the favor in turn three but lost it under braking, forcing Lemon wide and allowing James Stiehr through into the lead. At the checkered flag, the first six were all FF1 cars (!), with James Stiehr taking the win in his Winkelmann, Angus Lemon coming in second in his Merlyn, and Steve Lafferty grabbing third in his red #47 Merlyn 20A. The sole Sports 2000 car entered was Wally Meyer's gorgeous white & red #20 Swift DB-2. Greg Smith came home eighth overall but won the FF3 class unopposed. Bob Maurer was unopposed in FA, finishing tenth overall, in his yellow #144 Lola T-322. Likewise, David Bell was unopposed in FF2 for that class win in his Lola T-342.

A relatively small **GROUP 7** (C Production, D Production, and B Sedan) field of seven cars came to the grid, and after ten laps of racing, Michael Lovay's red/white/blue #57 Datsun 510 took the overall win and the B Sedan class win. Thomas Schluter's blue #77 Datsun 240Z trailed across the line by about 24 seconds, but that was good enough to win C Production class. In one of his best outings to date, John Kish and his red #58 Porsche 911E took second in C Production less than four seconds behind Schluter.

John credited his friend George Kopecky for helping him drop his lap times at Hallett dramatically from his last visit, after a rented-track private instruction day on Thursday. Relatively new to vintage racing, John was a racer on two wheels "back in the day" on a 250cc Husqvarna motocross motorcycle. Chris Beckwith was nipping at Kish's heels at the checker, finishing fourth overall less than two seconds back, to place second in B Sedan class in his yellow #25 BMW 2002. John Frymark won D Production class driving his yellow #114 Triumph GT6 to sixth overall.

Speaking of George Kopecky, he romped to the overall win in **GROUP 1** (A Production, B Production, A Sedan, and FIA class) driving his black #97 Porsche RSR to win the FIA class. A little over 12 seconds back came Joe Robau in his white #11 Chevrolet Corvette to win the B Production class. Jim Sandberg won A Production in third overall driving his #84 red Chevrolet Corvette. Scott Pfuehler came second in A Production with his red/white/blue #37 Chevrolet Corvette. The blue #47 Boss 302 Mustang owned and driven by John Fershtand took the A Sedan class win in fifth overall.

Following a lunch break, of sixteen drivers entered, a surprisingly small number answered the starter's orders for the **GROUP 2** (E Production and F Production) race. Just six cars started, and one of them DNF'ed. Stefan Schluter took the overall win driving his orange #60 Porsche 914-4, nipping his erstwhile driving instructor Berkeley Merrill by less than one second at the flag. They have been having battles like this for the last few races. Merrill's silver #12 Porsche 914-4 seems to be serving him well, after his years of driving a very well-prepared Datsun 240Z. The English were represented by the third overall, blue #21 MGB driven by Kenneth Barstead. First, second and third overall thus went to E Production cars. Richard Fisher won the F Production class in another English car, his blue #47 bugeyed Sprite.

The second largest points race field on Sunday was the 13-car gaggle of **GROUP 3** Formula Vees that came to the grid. This was a very good Sunday afternoon turnout from a total of fifteen FV entries. Equally noteworthy is that all thirteen finished the race on the same lap, and no DNFs. Several generations of the Barron family competed,



#61 Donald Racine, 1961 Austin Mini Cooper S; #177 Dennis Racine, 1966 Morris Mini Cooper S.

including the first and second place finishers. A close battle between Hunter Barron and Elliott Barron resulted in a win for Hunter, but his margin of victory was less than 0.3 seconds. Hunter's red #114 Kellison and Elliott's silver #23 Pegasus looked glued to each other. A ten second gap existed to the remainder of the field, with Dwight Calkins leading the second wave. He finished third in his red #87 Lynx B.

The smallest field of the weekend was **GROUP 4**, with only four of the seven entrants coming under the starter's orders. Perennial sweetheart Lou Marchant took the overall win and the VB class win in her dark green #186 MGA, but by only a 0.5 second margin over Bob Pinkston's red #7 VW Beetle C Sedan. Gary McFarlane trailed by about 16 seconds to win the VC class in his white #91 Thundermug. Chris Kellner took the VA win unopposed in his red and white #23 Austin Healey 3000.



#21 Kenneth Barstead, 1965 MGB; Richard Wright, 1972 MG Midget.

ENTRANTS LIST

GROUP 1

DRIVER/CAR

- M. Baker/AMC Javelin
- J. Fershtand/Ford Mustang
- G. Kopecky/Porsche RSR
- S. Pfuehler/Corvette Coupe
- G. Reynolds/Shelby GT-350
- J. Robau/ Corvette
- T. Robinson/Dodge Dart
- J. Sandberg/ Corvette
- B. Whitehead/Ford Mustang

GROUP 2

DRIVER/CAR

- B. Barnes/Austin Healey Sprite
- K. Barstead/MGB Roadster
- G. Blake/Triumph TR-3
- S. Clayton/Triumph Spitfire
- M. Coleman/MG Midget
- S. Coleman/MG Midget



#83 Russ Rosenberg, 1966 Yenko Stinger.

- G. Curl/MGB
- R. Fisher/Austin Healey Sprite
- L. Gladfelder/Morris Mini Cooper S
- T. Melady/MGB
- B. Merrill/Porsche 914/4
- D. Racine/Austin Mini Cooper S
- D. Racine/Morris Mini Cooper S
- G. Reed/MG Midget
- S. Schluter/Porsche 914/4
- R. Wright/MG Midget



#23 Chris Kellner, 1959 Austin Healey 3000; #541 Eddie Dick, 1967 Austin Healey Sprite.

GROUP 3

DRIVER/CAR

- H. Barron/Caldwell D-13
- H. Barron/Kellison Mk 2
- E. Barron/Pegasus Pegasus
- E.O. Barron/Taylor Stewart
- D. Calkins/Lynx B
- C. Chilton/Lynx B
- B. Griffith/Treuhaf
- D. McDowell/Zeitler FV
- W. Murphey/Lynx B
- S. Murphy/Bosby Vanguard
- D. Phillips/Zink C-4
- M. Rogers/Bosby Vega
- J. Strnad/Zink C-4

GROUP 4

DRIVER/CAR

- R. Blake/Triumph TR-4
- E. Dick/Austin Healey Sprite
- C. Kellner/Austin Healey 3000
- L. Marchant/MGA
- G. McFarlane/Thundermug H-Modified
- B. Pinkston/VW Beetle
- D. Piott/Porsche 911

- J. Walker/Austin Healey Sprite
- M. Winn/Fiat 850 TC

GROUP 6

DRIVER/CAR

- A. Acemyan/Beach T11F
- M. Ammer/Konig-Heath KHF-1
- N. Baldauff/Beach T11F
- D. Bell/Lola T-342



#68 William Wolff, 1968 Zink Z5.

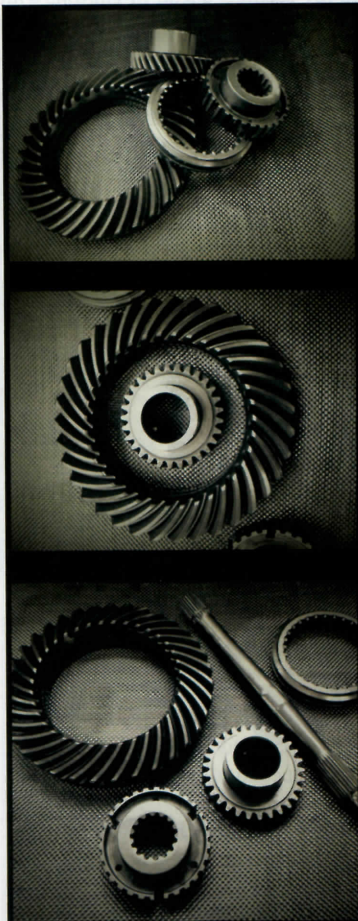
- T. Blakeney/Royale RP-16
- J. Carr/Caldwell D-9
- S. Clark/Merlyn Mk 20a
- P. Haggard/Hawke DI9
- B. Hancock/Merlyn 11A
- G. Hibbs/Merlyn Mk 20a

- S. Lafferty/Merlyn Mk 20
- J. Langham/Merlyn Mk 20a
- A. Lemon/Merlyn 11A/17A
- N. Leonard/Swift DB-1
- B. Maurer/Lola T-322
- W. Meyer/Swift DB-2
- J. Norris/Crosslé 35F
- R. Pink/Reynard FC
- G. Smith/Swift DB-1
- J. Stiehr/Winkelmann WDF-1
- G. Tussing/Titan Mk 6
- E. Ziegler/Beach T11F

GROUP 7

DRIVER/CAR

- C. Bailey/Datsun 510
- C. Beckwith/BMW 2002
- J. Frymark/Triumph GT6
- J. Kish/Porsche 911E
- C. Langley/ Yenko Stinger
- M. Lovay/Datsun 510
- D. Oliver/BMW 2002
- R. Rosenberg/ Yenko Stinger
- T. Schluter/Datsun 240Z
- C. Stutzman/Datsun 240Z
- G. Valdes/Daimler SP 250



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