



**CVAR Brad Balles
Drivers School and Races
Motorsports Ranch Houston, Texas
February 23-25, 2018**



#02 Jake Hilton, 1972 MG Midget;
#80 John Hamilton, 1965 MGB Roadster.

photo by Brandall Binion



photo by Brandall Binion

#12 Mike Vecellio, 1963 Empi Crusader.

— story by *Don Gwynne*

This event honors Brad Balles, a founding member of CVAR who is still active in support of the organization. The weather cooperated pretty well for his namesake event, but there had been rain much of the week before, so off-track areas tended to be a bit swampy. Friday and Saturday were mostly dry, but it rained quite a bit on Saturday night, leaving the track damp for most of the Sunday sessions. The track was slowly drying out until the Sunday morning Group 6 race, when it rained a bit more. Even after the rain stopped, the high humidity kept the track damp. Spray plumes were not prevalent but the lap times were long — sometimes 30 secs slower than dry. The cars with the most difficulty seemed to be light and small engine — read FF. The Group 1 “big iron” cars were remarkably well behaved except for one GT-350 that spun in

front of the pack on Lap 1 in the Carousel and then attempted to negotiate T2 backwards.

Special thanks go to Merl Hansen, our T&S expert, for his narrative inputs and continued support. Like the pun on a sign I once saw at Sebring: “These are the souls that time men’s tries.”

The Friday Driver School had eleven students, with a mix of experience level: #05 Dana Avery, red & white Triumph Spitfire; #8 Steve Clayton, yellow Triumph Spitfire; #10 Mike Olmstead, primer gray Zink C-4; #17 Colin

Lynch, silver Formcar FV; #17 Charles Schmidt, black & silver Porsche 914/4; #20



photo by Brandall Binion

#6 Robert Cobb, 1971 AMC Javelin; #19 Phil Mulacek, 1964 Shelby 289 Cobra.

Wally Meyer, white & red Swift DB2; #28 Ken Thomas, white Boss 302 Mustang; #85 Jacob Ammon, blue & orange Autodynamics FV; #95 Paul Hagggar, black Hawke DL9; #99 Karl Jackson, red Fiat Abarth 1000 OT Spider; #193 Jose “JM 2” Iturbe, white Porsche 911.

One student, Mike Olmstead, was last on track at an SCCA school at TWS in 1987. He assembled his Zink FV by piecing together a derelict from scattered pieces, some parts having spent years outside in a garden. It was not even close to being a “barn find.” Mike had scheduled the first shake-down session for the resurrected car at MSR-Cresson a couple of weeks before the CVAR school at MSR-H, but it was rained out, so the car still needed some sorting out. He plans to be ready for the fall CVAR drivers school.



photo by Brandall Binion

#84 Jim Sandberg, 1969 Corvette; #85 James Sharp, 1971 Camaro.

Another student, Colin Lynch, came to the CVAR school with quite a bit of racing experience under his belt, although not in sports cars. He did some karting when he was younger, and then got into racing Legend cars. His prior experience showed up quickly. Even though his dad's Formcar FV was one of the older, more historic cars on track, Colin demonstrated car-handling skills worthy of respect, especially during wet track conditions. He was invited to join the other Group 3 racers on Saturday and Sunday, and promptly proved that an old Formcar could still march from last to first, sometimes at impressive slip angles. That's exactly how the Group 3 points race went on Sunday afternoon. He started next to last of 16 cars, and by the fourth lap was first overall. His best time on Sunday afternoon was more than three seconds quicker than anyone else in the field. Some "student!" Welcome to CVAR.

The above paragraph pretty much tells the story of the first race on Sunday afternoon, for **GROUP 3** Formula Vee cars. There was



photo by Brandall Binion

#54 Bobby Whitehead, 1965 Ford Mustang; #18 Alain Vinson, 1966 Shelby Mustang GT 350.

early in the race. Student driver Karl Jackson moved up from ninth to a nice fifth place finish in his (rare) red #99 Fiat Abarth 1000 OT.

A small **GROUP 6** (FA & FF1) grid splashed around on a wet track. Gray Gregory's winning blue #11 Chevron FA started in fifth, moved into first overall by the third lap, and posted a best lap more than thirty seconds quicker than the second place car, Angus Lemon's purple #86 Merlyn 11A/17A. Angus won the FF1 class handily, with the next two FF1 cars down a lap. Two other FA cars were DNF on the first lap.

every lap to take the overall win and the C Production class win. Stuart Blackwood came up from fourth to second overall to win the



photo by Brandall Binion

#2 Rob Pink, 1972 Datsun 240Z; #77 Thomas Schluter, 1972 Datsun 240Z.

new B Sedan Championship class in his red & white #17 Ford Escort. Cynthia Trifilio finished third overall to take an unopposed win in the B Sedan class driving her blue #55 Fiat 124 Sport Coupe. Glenn Valdes took an unopposed D Production class win in his (rare) green #61 Daimler SP250.

Similarly, a small **GROUP 7** (C Production, D Production, B Sedan, and B Sedan Championship) field of five cars came under the starter's orders. Thomas Schluter sat on pole in his blue #77 Datsun 240Z, and led



photo by Brandall Binion

#43 Edward Copley, 1980 Ralt RT 1.4.



photo by Duncan Charlton

#48 Louis Gladfelter, 1960 Austin Mini; #960 Joseph Ware, 1971 Austin Cooper S.

young Colin Lynch in James Lynch's old Formcar, and then there was everyone else. Mac Wolff started in pole position in his red #62 Lynx, but had a tough first lap, ultimately finishing twelfth. Dwight Calkins started alongside Wolff, in his red #87 Lynx, and led the pack for a couple of laps, then slipped to fifth at the checkered flag. After starting in sixth, Hunter Barron's red #3 Kellison led by the third lap, only to be caught and passed by Colin Lynch who went from a last row start to take the overall win by a margin of about seven seconds. Impressive.

The second points race of Sunday afternoon was for CVAR's more historical **GROUP 4** cars. Duncan Charlton led from start to checker driving his (rare) green #00 Unipower GT. Jeff Walker moved his black #27 Sprite up from fourth to finish second after passing Eddie Dick



photo by Brandall Binion

**#17 Stuart Blackwood, 1971 Ford Escort RS;
#587 Bjorn Dischington, 1974 Porsche 911.**

The **GROUP 1** (A Production, B Production, A Sedan and FIA) grid included some impressive machinery, including some “real deal” Shelby cars. Alain Vinson started on pole in his blue #18 GT-350 Mustang, but didn’t have a good first lap, and had to fight his way back up the field to finish fifth overall at the checker for third in B Production class. Phil Mulacek won B Production in third overall with his #19 GT-350 Mustang. After starting on the second row, CVAR President Herb Hilton took the overall lead on the first lap and was never headed, to take the overall win and the A Sedan

Production, F Production and C Sedan). Jake Hilton started on the outside of the second row in his red #02 MG Midget, but eventually got by Louis Gladfelter’s pole-sitting red #48 Austin Mini to take the overall win and the F Production class win. After starting on pole in his orange #60 Porsche 914-4, Stefan Schluter took the E Production class win with a second overall finish, about 42 seconds in arrears to Hilton. Louis Gladfelter was having a good time splashing water

class win. Jay Zittler ran steadily from green to checker in second overall to take an unopposed FIA class win in his silver #39 Porsche 914-6. Jim Sandberg likewise took an unopposed A Production class win driving his big block red #84 Corvette.

The last race of the day was **GROUP 2** (E

on Jake Hilton at every apex, but Hilton eventually tired of the cold showers and got around. Louis spun while trying to catch Hilton, and eventually finished third overall to win the C Sedan class. The other Hiltons were laughing loudly after Louis admitted to them after the race that he was intentionally throwing up a shower of water into Jake’s open cockpit Midget wherever he could.



photo by Brandall Binion

**#8 Steve Clayton, Triumph Spitfire;
#80 John Hamilton, 1965 MGB.**

CVAR’s next race event will include Pre-War and a Formula Vee Feature, Apr. 13-15 at Hallett Motor Racing Circuit, near Tulsa, Oklahoma.



photo by Brandall Binion

**#119 John Strnad,
1967 Zink Lynx B.**

**GROUP 1
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 AS H. Hilton/1967 Ford Mustang 2:39.838
- 1 FIA J. Zittler/1970 Porsche 914/6 GT 2:38.891
- 1 BP P. Mulacek/1964 Shelby 289 Cobra 2:42.023
- 2 BP J. Robau/1964 Corvette
- 3 BP A. Vinson/1966 Shelby Mustang GT 350
- 1 AP J. Sandberg/1969 Corvette 2:55.478
- 4 BP S. Mulacek/1966 Shelby Gt350

**GROUP 2
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 FP J. Hilton/1972 MG Midget 2:17.955
- 1 EP S. Schluter/1973 Porsche 914/4 2:21.001
- 1 CS L. Gladfelter/1960 Austin Mini 2:20.025
- 2 EP J. Hamilton/1965 MGB Roadster
- 2 FP G. Reed/1967 MG Midget
- 2 CS B. Pinkston/1966 VW Beetle

**GROUP 3
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 FV C. Lynch/1972 Caldwell D-13 2:35.916
- 2 FV H. Barron/1969 Kellison Mk 2
- 3 FV M. Rogers/1968 Bobsy Vega
- 4 FV E.O. Barron/1963 Taylor Stewart
- 5 FV D. Calkins/1972 Lynx B
- 6 FV B. Griffith/1972 Treuhaft Kellison
- 7 FV E. Barron/1963 Kellison C4
- 8 FV D. Phillips/1969 Zink B
- 9 FV D. Fisher/1972 Lynx C4
- 10 FV J. White/1965 Zink
- 11 FV J. Ammon/1965 Autodynamics B
- 12 FV M. Wolff/1969 Lynx Aero
- 13 FV F. Iqbal/1999 Adams C4



photo by Duncan Charlton

**#7 Bob Pinkston,
1966 VW Beetle.**

- 14 FV J. Strnad/1967 Zink Lynx B
- 15 FV W. Murphey/1969 Lynx Zink C4

**GROUP 4
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 CSR D. Charlton/1967 Unipower GT 2:57.986
- 1 SFP J. Walker/1961 Austin Healey Sprite 3:16.219
- 2 SFP E. Dick/1967 Austin Healey Sprite
- 3 SFP D. Turner/1964 Austin Healey Sprite
- 1 Student K. Jackson/1967 Fiat Abarth 1000 3:21.215

- 4 SFP J. Williams/1972 Austin Healey Sprite
- 5 SFP R. Williams/1959 Austin Healey Sprite
- 6 SFP E. Robau/1965 Austin Healey Sprite
- 1 VCS J. Lemmons/1963 Morris Mini 3:27.322

**GROUP 6
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 FA G. Gregory/1977 Chevron B39 2:25.422
- 1 FF1 A. Lemon/1969 Merlyn 11A/17A 2:56.444
- 2 FF1 J. Langham/1972 Merlyn Mk 20a
- 3 FF1 T. Blakeney/1972 Royale RP-16

**GROUP 7
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 CP T. Schluter/1972 Datsun 240Z 2:31.831
- 1 BSC S. Blackwood/1971 Ford Escort RS 2:50.977
- 1 BS C. Trifilio/1971 Fiat 124 Coupe 2:59.924
- 2 CP T. Taff/1971 Porsche 914 6
- 1 DP G. Valdes/1961 Daimler SP 250 3:12.824

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