



photo by Don Gwynne

#74 R. David Jones, 1962 Lotus 23; #22 Lee Lydick, 1963 Merlyn Mk 6A.

CVAR Spring Driver's School & Races

Texas World Speedway

February 22-24, 2013
 – story by Don Gwynne and Dan Ruehs

CVAR's February 2013 Drivers' School drew a large turnout of 33 students enrolled and a total field of 151 entries for the first event of the season. There was some student attrition due to mechanical failures or failure to finish preparation on time, but 25 of those who enrolled completed the week-end successfully. CVAR is the only VMC organization to offer two vintage oriented driver schools each year. Several students stated that to them, CVAR represents a "kinder, gentler" form of vintage competition and a strong sense of community and fellowship.

CVAR sees development of new vintage racing drivers as its most important

responsibility. Every student must attend every "chalk talk" session, no excuses accepted. On-track sessions are supervised by experienced CVAR instructors. Each student's car is subjected to a rigorous safety inspection; full compliance with CVAR's vintage-correct car preparation rules can be partially overlooked the first time out, but safety provisions cannot.

Most of them will go on to compete in 3 more week-ends as Novices with a big "X" on the rear of their cars, and spend one day working at a corner station for perspective. Then and only then will CVAR process their application for a VMC competition license.

Per CVAR President Dan Ruehs, four sets of father/son students enrolled, two sets of brothers enrolled, and four students had been through the school before and were returning for review after being away from vintage

racing for a while. Half the students had racing experience and/or licenses through other venues or clubs. Four students were attracted by CVAR's experimental new Group 8. Three students came from out of state, one all the way from New York. The oldest student was 72, a "vintage racer" before he was "vintage", and the youngest was 20, who had to get an excuse to miss Friday's college classes. The average age was early 50's.

CVAR's Spring 2013 Student Class graduates are:

- Wiley Alexander, Camaro
- Bassam Alhaddad, Porsche 911
- Mike Briggs, MG Midget
- Curtis Brink, FV
- Bob Crow, FV
- Greg Dallen, FV
- Javier Espinosa, Porsche 911
- Mario Espinosa, BMW 2002
- Dave Foreman, Triumph Spitfire
- Jordan Harrison, FV
- Benjamin Hertzog, Lotus Elan
- Dan Hilton, MG Midget
- Doug Hilton, MG Midget
- Farooq Iqbal, FV
- James Jard, Corvette Stingray coupe
- Jarrell Jennings, Lotus Seven
- Dale Johnson, Pontiac (G8)
- Phillip Lee, Triumph TR-4
- Colby Lemmons, Mustang
- Willis Murphey, FV
- Adrian Sisk, Winkelman FF
- Larry Thacker, FV
- Wes Wigginton, MG Midget
- Ash Wineinger, Mustang
- Earl Zwickey, Ginetta G4

Some of the students and their crews had to work hard to make it possible to finish the school weekend successfully. One of the most interesting "bad news/good news" stories involves the red #661 Triumph TR-4 driven in the school by Phillip Lee. The car was originally raced in SCCA's Midwest and Southwest Divisions by John Lee beginning in 1964. In 1967, the car was loaned to an Alfa racer, Red Stanford of Bartlesville, OK, so that



photo by Don Gwynne

#193 Jose Iturbe, 1972 Porsche 911.

Red could attend the American Road Race of Champions at Daytona, because his Alfa was not ready. Since Bartlesville is the home of Phillips 66 Oil, and since Red owned a Phillips 66 gas station, naturally Red painted the car red and put #66 on it for the SCCA Runoffs. Sadly, it was DNF, but no matter. It was later purchased by John's brother James Lee, who raced the car from 1974 through 1990 in the southwest. Then it sat until James' son Phillip was old enough to come to driver's school in it. Phillip is quite tall, so the lower dashboard required some modifications to accommodate his knees. At the CVAR school, Phillip was off to a good start when his gearbox jammed up in fourth gear and would not budge. Here is where the "good news" part gets interesting. Fellow Triumph racer Bob Kramer had urged a friend of his to bring a trailer to TWS carrying some old Triumph engine blocks and an old transmission to see if he could sell them. The rusty old transmission was purchased for \$100 by Kramer who then traded it to James and Phillip for some race tires. Even though it looked ratty on the outside, its heart was



This year's class of students at CVAR's Spring Driver's School.

Mario is no stranger to going quickly, but in PCA Porsche events. The change from a fast rear engined Porsche to a front engined, rear drive BMW sedan was quite an adjustment, but he handled it well, and promised he would soon return with a fresh motor. Mario's son

fine in Group 2. It resulted in some spirited racing against otherwise unfamiliar cars and drivers, with zero incidents.

First races on Sunday afternoon were for the Students only, 15 minutes each. In the 5A student group, Doug Hilton came from fifth on the grid up to first overall in the black #110 MG Midget. He took the lead away from pole-sitter Earl Zwickey's yellow #20 Ginetta G4 after the second lap and was leading by eight seconds when the checkered flag fell.

The second student race for Group 5B saw one of CVAR's new Group 8 cars, black/green #07 Pontiac, driven by Dale Johnson, lead from start to finish. Bassam Alhaddad drove a tenacious race in the #13 white Porsche 911 to come up from fourth on the grid to finish second overall.

The first points race was for **GROUP 6** (FA, FF1, FF2 and BSR). In a real come-from-behind charge, Jim Kelleher in his yellow #80 March started dead last. He didn't push hard for the first 2 laps, placing him 20 sec behind Steve Smith in his red #27 Ralt. Then he turned the wick up. When the checkered flag fell, he had closed to finish less than one second behind. Fun to watch! Tom Murphy placed third overall and third in FA class driving his red #180 March. Jeff Anderson really built a fire in his black #16 Brabham, coming from



#38 John Slade, 1972 March 722 Atlantic; #5 Mitchell Hibbs, 1969 Merlyn Mk IIa.

pure, and on Saturday morning, Phillip only missed one track session as it was being installed. The red TR-4 ran great the rest of the weekend. Phew!

CVAR regulars were glad to see the lime green #175 BMW 2002 again. Bill Thacker retired from racing and sold the car to student Mario Espinosa. The car may have driven quite a few mosquitos away, but it carried Mario through the entire school successfully.

Javier was also a student, driving the Iturbe family's white #193 Porsche 911.

In order to make it possible to have two run groups (5A and 5B) for the huge student class, Group 7 was split up, with the C Production cars racing in Group 1 for the weekend, and the B Sedans and D Production cars racing in Group 2. The temporary assignments were successful, with the CP cars playing well with the Group 1 cars, and the BS/DP cars doing



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15th on the grid to finish fourth overall and first in Formula B. Mitchell Hibbs drove a strong race to finish sixth overall and first in FF1 in his green #5 Merlyn. Steven Jacobs won FF2 class in ninth overall with his white #69 Dulon. FJR winner was David Martinez in his green #1 Cooper, and FC winner was Dan Chapman in his #28 green Cooper. R. David Jones took an unopposed BSR win driving his red and black #74 Lotus 23.

A total of 17 **GROUP 1** (ASR, AP, BP, CP, AS and FIA) answered the grid call next, of which nine were CP cars temporarily transplanted from Group 7 for the weekend. Without them, the G1 grid would have looked a bit thin, in fact. Although Tom Upton started the race in fourth, by the second lap he had blasted into the lead driving his red #77 Pantera FIA car and never looked back. It was Tom's day, it seemed. Jim Caudle came from sixth to second overall to challenge Upton, but was still four seconds back when the checkered flag came out. At that, he won A Production. In third and fourth overall, Mark McIlyar and Jeff Garrett had a close race at the end, with McIlyar's blue #33 AP Corvette finishing just a tenth of a second ahead of Garrett's blue #389 AS Mustang. Behind Garrett, Steven Seitz won BP in his white #10 Mustang. John Fershtand's blue #47 Boss 302 Mustang finished second in AS and sixth overall, but behind John came a freight train of eight CP cars, led to the wire by Skip Duplissey's green #71 Porsche 911T.

The **GROUP 2** (DP, EP, FP and BS) field was relatively large, at 24 cars. A race-long battle erupted between Jay McClanahan's



#91 Gary McFarlane, 1961 H-Modified Thundermug; #51 Dan Ruehs, Chevrolet Corvette.

black #100 FP Midget and Tim Woodruff's blue #74 BS BMW 2002. The lead change back and forth several times, with McClanahan ahead of Woodruff at the checkered flag by less than a half second. One of the more impressive charges was mounted by Bucky Hutchinson, who started in next to last place, and deftly brought his red #524 Alfa Romeo Giulia Spider up to finish first in E Production and fourth overall. D Production was won by Joe Foster driving his black #16 Alfa Romeo Spyder to eighth overall.

The **GROUP 3** (FV and SFP) field included 22 cars, of which seven were driven by student class graduates. The entire three day school and racing weekend was contact-free until the Group 3 starting lap, when two FV cars touched nose to tail on braking, with only very minor damage. Bigger Hammer's Bill Griffith fought his way from third on the grid, only taking the overall lead and the FV class win on the last lap in his black and silver #33

Warrior. Dwight Calkins led most of the race in his red #87 Lynx, only to see Griffith go by at the end. The "Spec Sprite" SFP class was won by Eddie Dick in his red/white/blue #54 A-H Sprite, at 13th overall.

Last race of the weekend was for the historic **GROUP 4** (VA, VB and VC) cars. CVAR President Dan Ruehs drove his white #51 Chevrolet Corvette to the overall and VA class win from start to finish. Second overall from start to finish was Mike Vecellio in his black #12 EMPI Crusader for the VB class win. Gary Bauer won VC class, finishing seventh overall, in his yellow #05 A-H Sprite.

CVAR's next events are the Mike Stephens Classic and Formula Vee Feature Weekend at the Hallett Motor Racing Circuit, near Tulsa, Oklahoma, on April 19-21, and the 22nd Annual Marvelous May Races at Eagles Canyon Raceway, Slidell, Texas, on May 17-19, with a feature race for British Small Bore Cars up to 3 Liters. Don't miss either event!

GROUP 6

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 S. Smith/1978 Ralt RT1 1:46.718
- 2 J. Kelleher/1980 March 80A
- 3 T. Murphy/1980 March FA
- 1 J. Anderson/1969 Brabham BT-29 1:54.910

GROUP 1

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FIA T. Upton/1972 Detomaso Pantera 1:54.304
- 1 AP J. Caudle/1969 Chevrolet Corvette 1:55.196
- 2 AP M. McIlyar/1971 Chevy Corvette
- 1 AS J. Garrett/1967 Ford Mustang 1:58.295



#58 Ralph Kuehnhoefler, 1973 Porsche 911.

- 1 BP S. Seitz/1965 Ford Mustang 1:58.720
- 2 AS J. Fershtand/1969 Ford Mustang
- 1 CP S. Duplissey/1971 Porsche 911T 2:00.740
- 2 CP R. Williams/1970 Porsche 911
- 3 CP T. Yemington/1970 Porsche 911
- 4 CP A. Tomita/1973 Porsche 911T

- 5 CP B. Merrill/1971 Datsun 240Z
- 6 CP T. Taff/1971 Porsche 914/6
- 7 CP R. Kuehnhoefler/1973 Porsche 911
- 8 CP A. Nigro/1972 Porsche 911
- 3 AS T. Hassell/1966 Ford Mustang Notchback
- 9 CP D. Piott/1972 Porsche 914

GROUP 2

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FP J. McClanahan/1972 MG Midget 2:03.361
- 1 BS T. Woodruff/1974 BMW 2002 2:03.278
- 2 FP T. Aguilon/1969 MG Midget
- 1 EP B. Hutchinson/1962 Alfa Romeo Giulia Spider 2:06.666
- 3 FP H. Hilton/1971 MG Midget
- 4 FP P. Sandy/1959 Austin Healey Sprite
- 2 EP K. Morris/1969 MGB
- 1 DP J. Foster/1972 Alfa Romeo Spyder 2:11.824
- 5 FP T. Colley/1959 Austin Healey Bugeye Sprite
- 2 BS D. Gwynne/1970 Ford Escort RS1600
- 3 EP M. Floyd/1973 Porsche 914
- 3 BS C. Trifilio/1971 Fiat 124 Coupe
- 6 FP J. Walker/1961 Austin Healey Sprite
- 7 FP B. Collins/1972 Triumph Spitfire
- 8 FP S. Barrett/1969 MG Midget
- 9 FP S. Knight/1968 Austin Healey Sprite
- 2 DP R. Blake/1963 Triumph TR4
- 10 FP P. Glawe/1966 Austin Healey Sprite
- 3 DP A. Kramer/1962 Triumph TR4
- 11 FP R. Barrett/1972 MG Midget

- 4 DP B. Kramer/1966 Triumph TR4A
- 12 FP G. Reed/1967 MG Midget
- 13 FP J. Hovey/1967 Triumph Spitfire
- 14 FP M. Vecellio/1972 MG Midget

GROUP 3

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FV B. Griffith/1969 Warrior 2:08.881
- 2 FV D. Calkins/1972 Lynx B
- 3 FV J. Ridings/1968 Zink C-4



#20 Earl Zwickey, Ginetta G-4.

- 4 FV E. Ziegler/1967 Beach 5C
- 5 FV M. Callahan/1968 Zink Z-5
- 6 FV D. Harrison/1965 Zink C-4
- 7 FV J. Yule/1969 Kaimann FV
- 8 FV T. O'Grady/1969 Lynx B
- 9 FV M. Rogers/1965 Autodynamics FV
- 10 FV M. Smith/1969 Beach 5C FV
- 11 FV C. Singletary/1965 Autodynamics Mark IIB FV
- 1 Student C. Brink/1980 KG1 2:19.017
- 1 SFP E. Dick/1967 Austin Healey Sprite 2:21.969
- 2 SFP B. Barnes/1967 Austin Healey Sprite

- 2 Student F. Iqbal/1999 Adams Aero
- 12 FV J. Revennaugh/1967 Zink C-4
- 3 Student G. Dallen/1999 Adams Aero
- 4 Student B. Crow/1972 MG Midget
- 5 Student J. Harrison/1970 Zink C-4
- 6 Student L. Thacker/1968 Zink C-4
- 7 Student W. Murphey/1970 Caldwell D-13

GROUP 4

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 VA D. Ruehs/1959 Chevrolet Corvette 2:13.469
- 1 VB M. Vecellio/1963 Empi Crusader 2:14.916
- 2 VB D. Charlton/1952 Morgan Plus 4
- 3 VB J. McClanahan/1955 A-H 100-4
- 4 VB R. Yates/1959 MG A
- 5 VB C. Kuehnhoefler/1965 Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce



#91 John Delane, 1965 Brabham BT18.

- 1 VC G. Bauer/1959 Austin Healey Sprite 2:22.868
- 2 VC G. McFarlane/1961 H-Modified Thundermug
- 2 VA C. Kellner/1959 Austin Healey 3000