

The VINTAGE *Spirit*

NEW YEAR 2020



2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

GINGERMAN

BLACKHAWK CLASSIC

GRATTAN

ELVF

BLACKHAWKTOBERFEST

ANNUAL MEETING AND BANQUET



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Editor
Jessica Johnk

A Message from President Alex Rorke

One of the many pleasures of writing this column is reading drafts of the latest issue of Vintage Spirit before we hit print. I get to see all the work our Editor/Chief Photographer/Writer Jessica Johnk has put into celebrating our club. It is always inspiring. Thanks to Jessica, I just relived our 2019 season. What a year!

As shown by this edition of Vintage Spirit, 2019 was an extraordinary year for VSCDA. Certainly, the Formula Ford 50th at the ELVF was our signature event. You, the members of VSCDA, proved a group of dedicated volunteers could put on a world class event that earned praise from participants and racing press from across the planet. It was a monumental organizational achievement. Many thanks to Mike and Deb Korneli, Steve Beeler, Kathy Newton, Scott Reif, Gary Kropf, Stacey and Jim Donato, Jeff and Jan Freers in particular, for giving so much for so long to make the FF a success. Because of their selfless work starting a year or earlier in advance, the infrastructure was in place for all of us to bring it home when the first trailer pulled up at Road America. If you have not looked at it, please follow the link to: <http://racer.com/2019/09/24/ff50th-and-elvf-vscda-the-club-that-could/> on how all of us pulled it off.

FF at the ELVF was only part of the story for VSCDA. Driver's School, Gingerman, both Blackhawks and Grattan went off without a hitch. Additionally, innovations like Express Tech saved huge amounts of time at Registration and Tech, eliminating a choke point and enhancing the fun and camaraderie of our events. We have ideas for 2020 that should make it even easier to register. Our annual meeting and banquet at the Osthoff provided the right venue for enjoying the past year and setting goals for 2020. A new award, reflecting how VSCDA succeeds, was inaugurated at the dinner: Volunteer of the Year. By VSCDA Board acclamation Kathy Newton was selected. The Club is indebted to her for so many things, but particularly without her spectacular work arranging paddocking for the ELVF (she contacted all drivers or their crew long before the event), we could not have properly handled all the drivers/crews/cars, etc.

It is great to look back (we are vintage racers, after all) and so important to say thank you. It is also very exciting to look forward. All our signature events are in place - our board members, event chairs, group reps and members keep looking for ways to make our club stronger. We will continue to grow and thrive. There are new twists and tweaks on the way all built around continuing to give our membership the most camaraderie and value in vintage racing.

Winter is starting to fade. There is more sunlight. Unobtainium parts are somehow being found. Engines are being tested. Safety equipment is being ordered and installed. Registration for Drivers School and Gingerman just opened. Our 2020 racing season is about to begin.

See you at Gingerman in April!

-Alex





SPRING BRAKE DRIVER'S SCHOOL MAY 2 - 3, 2019

Article by: Jessica Johnk

Photos by: Chauncey Moran and Jessica Johnk

It was foggy, it was wet, it was the 2019 Spring Brake Driver's School. All of the elements kept the new racers on their toes and taught them some invaluable lessons when it comes to racing in the Midwest in May. Led by an experienced group of instructors, over a dozen new racers graduated from the school to line up on the grid with the best of them. Besides getting tips and tricks from the instructors, it was awesome to see some of the fastest guys on the track lend

a hand throughout the day, give pep talks on the grid, assist the new racers with getting ready for their on track sessions, and be there to help prepare the cars.

Standing in the grandstands, I got to witness a lot of really good saves in the wet, some nervous yet proud parents rooting on their offspring, instructors taking notes and admiring the raw talent, and a lot of current racers cheering on

the new racers as they turned lap after lap.

It's fun to see so many family members of current racers take the school and join in on the fun. Plus seeing new faces in the paddock throughout the year led to seeing new cars on the track which also led to seeing new faces volunteering at the events. Look at our race family, continuing to grow!





GINGERMAN

MAY 4 - 5, 2019

When I was asked if I could provide a recap for last years Spring Brake at Gingerman I said sure. I thought about it for a minute and realized I can't remember what I had for breakfast let alone what happened the beginning of last May. What I do remember is that we had approximately 113 cars with an above average count of Alfas and the weather was again above average considering some years prior. The food and the fellowship on Saturday were on point and a great way to wrap up the first race day of the season.

What I will tell you is that we have some new exciting stuff coming up. We are going to be starting the season with our new Chief Steward Gordon Ensing in the tower who is more than qualified for the position. We will also have track side tire support from ROYALE RACE TIRES this year and the information will be provided below. Please go online to their website and check them out and remember to make sure you support them so they will come support you.

And now for the announcement you've all been waiting for! The featured Marque this year will be ALFA ROMEO! The plan is to get enough Alfa and Alfa powered cars to have a feature race with an inverted or handicap start to try to level the playing field. No matter what you drive, as soon as you finish reading this, get out in the garage and finish your car prep and we will see you at the Gingerman Spring Brake to shake it down. And always remember to thank our volunteers, corner and grid workers.





ROYALE RACE TIRES

TIRE SERVICE:

Royale Race Tires will be on hand at GingerMan and Grattan, to provide tire sales and service for the 2020 GingerMan Spring Brake and 2020 Vintage Grand Prix au Grattan.

Royale Race Tires is a Hoosier, GoodYear, Toyo, Pirelli, Hankook direct dealer; as well as other performance tire brands. Please contact Royale Race Tires directly or fill out the 'Pre Order Form' to reserve and ensure your tires are on the trailer (preorders close 2 weeks prior to event).

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Horst Kwech
1937-2019

VSCDA
VINTAGE SPORTS CAR DRIVERS ASSOCIATION

GingerMan
Spring Brake & Driver's School

April 30th - May 3rd
South Haven, MI

Alfa Romeo Featured Marque
Horst Kwech Tribute Race

616.916.2650

www.vscda.org

BLACKHAWK CLASSIC

JUNE 14 - 16, 2019



Article and Photos by: Jessica Johnk

The Blackhawk Classic weekend also happens to fall on Father's Day and I'm all about celebrating the incredible dads out there, as well as, getting passed by them on the track (passed is a very loose term... more like I'm pretty sure I got passed so fast, one of my numbers blew off my door).

Ron Soave and Jeff Porasik never, ever disappoint with this event and I always look forward to running it every summer. The track time is unbeatable and the friendship level is off the charts (high five your nearest friend for maximum effect). I don't know about you, but race weekends just feel like a family reunion where everyone talks about

cars and racing and there aren't any weird aunts that hound you about when you're getting married - so a win all around in my book!

I'm going to try real hard to recap what happened in Group B... to be honest, this is what I think happened based on who lapped me when. The Heat and Sprint race were both won by David Swernoff in his BMW M3. Norbert Bries in his Lotus Europa was always in the top five, and kept fast company with Brian Davis in his Elva Courier, Jeff Jagusch Sr. in his Datsun 240Z and Joseph Ziltener in his 240Z.

The King of Blackhawk aka Ron Soave, took the win for the Race C Heat and Sprint Race. Rumor has it, it's just as much fun to be in the Sprite battle as it is to witness it from the stands. Between Ron, John Salisbury and David Brown, their passes were so close, I caught myself holding my breath for them! Always gentleman racers though, they made sure those passes were friendly and clean. Group C ended the weekend with the Feature Race, and with a Mini one-two: Dylan Wittenauer crossed the line first, followed by Dennis Racine and Allan Thom rounding out the top three.



Alan Wong and Garrett Van Camp put on a show in Group D with close finishes less than a second apart. It was Wong that took the win in the Heat Race, then Van Camp took the win the Sprint Race, and it was Wong who finished off the weekend with a final win in the Feature Race.

The Group 6/Group E Heat and Sprint Races was dominated by Jesse Jurgenson, with Tom Walega chasing him down in his Ford Mustang Fastback. Patrick Riley beat out the American muscle in Sunday's Feature Race by taking

the checkered flag first in his BMW 325i.

In Group F, we saw Guy Morter in his speedy silver bullet aka Ford Model A Speedster, take the Heat Race win. In the Feature Race, Russell Lane in his MG TD took first with Edson McCord finishing second.

Avery Stuckart and John Boxhorn dined it up all weekend in the Group A races. Stuckart took the Sprint Race win with Boxhorn less than a second behind, but it was Boxhorn who took the win in the

Heat Race and Feature Race.

I'm kind of kidding, but is anyone else still slightly deaf in one ear after getting passed (I can't find a synonym for dusted so I'll use passed) by Ian Wood's McLaren M12 during the Enduro? They threw the passing flag at me 3 corners in advance and I still blinked and missed him flying by me, but I do have a little whistle that I can still hear to remember it. Needless to say, Wood took the Enduro win with Daniel Hayes and David Swernoff taking second and third.





The Trans Am B-Sedan race had an all Alfa Romeo podium: Mike Pranka in first, Barb Nevoral in second and Marshall Moore in third.

Everyone's favorite race to watch (the Handicap Race) was won by Barry Heuer in his Jabro MK I, Paul Ricco in his TR4 finishing second and Patrick Riley's BMW just inching out Ron Soave for third.

Get your cars ready now so you don't miss the 2020 Blackhawk Classic weekend! It's always a blast and you don't want to miss out on this fun!



An American Classic



Blackhawk CLASSICXXVIII

June 19-21, 2020
Blackhawk Farms Raceway
South Beloit IL

VSCDA
VINTAGE SPORTS CAR DRIVERS ASSOCIATION



FORMULA VEE SERIES
TRANS AM B-SEDAN SERIES
SPRITE - MIDGET SERIES
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GRATTAN

AUGUST 16 - 18, 2019

Photos by: Chauncey Moran

I am going to give a quick shout out to Jeff Janus and Don Kelly who took over as race chairs in 2019 for the Vintage Grand Prix au Grattan. I wasn't there so I can't provide you with an in depth recap so I will just post some beautiful photos provided by Chauncey Moran and give some of the highlights from each of the race groups.

Jeff Porasik Raymond James Endurance Series Race

- 1. David Michele #64 (1972 Alfa Romeo Alfetta) - 1:30.832
- 2. Dave Burton #201 (1964 Porsche 356C) - 1:30.885
- 3. Andrew Rich #62 (1963 Alfa Elva Courier) - 1:34.996

Formula Fords

- 1. Steve Beeler (1979 Lola T-540) - 1:28.347
- 2. Robert Burnside (1969 Brabham BT29) - 1:29.663
- 3. Sharon Frey (1970 Caldwell D9) - 1:30.416

Spridget Series Race

- 1. John Salisbury (1962 AH Sprite MKII) - 1:34.870
- 2. Doug Bruce (1959 Bugeye Sprite) - 1:35.994
- 3. Jim Donato (1962 AH Sprite) - 1:38.334

Group A

- Sprint Race 1 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Garrett Van Camp (1969 Lynx B) - 1:32.734
 - 2. Eric Coppock (1969 Lynx B) - 1:32.169
 - 3. Alan Wong (1969 Lynx B) - 1:32.521

- Sprint Race 2 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Garrett Van Camp (1969 Lynx B) - 1:32.342
 - 2. Eric Coppock (1969 Lynx B) - 1:32.760
 - 3. Alan Wong (1969 Lynx B) - 1:32.424

- Feature Race with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Alan Wong (1969 Lynx B) - 1:50.729
 - 2. Brian Styczynski (1970 Lynx B) - 1:49.468
 - 3. Chuck Buysse (1967 Kellison FV) - 1:54.108



Group B

- Sprint Race 1 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Dave Burton (1964 Porsche 356C) - 1:31.628
 - 2. Donald Dickey (1963 MGB) - 1:33.677
 - 3. Doug Bruce (1959 Bugeye Sprite) - 1:34.204

- Sprint Race 2 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Donald Dickey (1963 MGB) - 1:34.636
 - 2. Tony Drews (1963 Triumph TR4) - 1:36.295
 - 3. Jim Donato (1962 AH Sprite) - 1:37.511

- Feature Race with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Tony Drews (1963 Triumph TR4) - 1:50.836
 - 2. Nathan Burress (1959 AH Sprite) - 1:51.444
 - 3. John Salisbury (1962 AH Sprite MKII) - 1:51.063

Group C

- Sprint Race 1 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Tom Pixley (1978 Wheeler Supervee) - 1:21.313
 - 2. Ron Smit (1971 Royale RP9 FSV) - 1:23.972
 - 3. Jim Shanel (1989 Lola T89/90) - 1:23.079

- Sprint Race 2 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Ron Smit (1971 Royale RP9 FSV) - 1:23.620
 - 2. Tim Holland (1968 Lotus 41B) - 1:25.197
 - 3. Jim Shanel (1989 Lola T89/90) - 1:25.396

- Feature Race with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Jim Shanel (1989 Lola T89/90) - 1:24.871
 - 2. Ron Smit (1971 Royale RP9 FSV) - 1:24.385
 - 3. Tim Holland (1968 Lotus 41B) - 1:24.231

Group D

- Sprint Race 1 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Patrick Riley (1989 BMW 325i) - 1:27.861
 - 2. Mike Besic (1964 La Boa MKII) - 1:30.213
 - 3. David Michele (1972 Alfa Romeo Alfetta) - 1:30.336

- Sprint Race 2 with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Patrick Riley (1989 BMW 325i) - 1:29.203
 - 2. Mike Besic (1964 La Boa MKII) - 1:30.625
 - 3. David Michele (1972 Alfa Romeo Alfetta) - 1:30.828

- Feature Race with Best Lap Time:
- 1. Patrick Riley (1989 BMW 325i) - 1:28.339
 - 2. Mike Besic (1964 La Boa MKII) - 1:29.882
 - 3. David Michele (1972 Alfa Romeo Alfetta) - 1:29.723





**VINTAGE GRAND PRIX
AU GRATTAN XXXIV**
AUGUST 14-16, 2020

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THE ELKHART LAKE VINTAGE FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 12 - 15, 2019



Article and Photos by: Jessica Johnk

What was your favorite part of the weekend besides friendship? The Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival brought in racers from all across the United States and even some from overseas! Big grids, lots of cars, lots of track time, made for a very busy weekend! To start this article out, I want to first of all thank Mike and Deb Korneli for putting on a great event. The time, effort and planning they put into this showed in the smiles of the competitors. Mike ran around all day Thursday in the rain to plan out the group shot and all of that planning paid off! Look at that group! Next, I want to thank Kathy Newton for all of her tireless planning when it came to paddock spaces. She had every spot mapped out and an army of volunteers ready to help park. Also, a BIG thank you to all of the volun-

teers that worked registration with giant smiles on their faces, the workers and volunteers that kept everyone safe on and off the track, the safety team for responding to any incidents and worked hard to keep the sessions on schedule - the weekend wouldn't have happened without you!

Now to try to recap all of the on track fun! We had 3 fully packed run groups (I accidentally typed 'fun groups'.. same thing) for the Formula Fords. I watched a few starts from the Start/Finish line and it felt like a never ending stream of cars! No matter what position you were running in, it looked like you had a good dice with the cars around you. For Group 11, it was Kyle Tilley that took the win during Saturday's Sprint Race, but it was Ryan

Lewis to cross the line first during Sunday's Feature Race. In Group 12, we had a close race between Jeremy Treadway in his 1975 Titan MK9, Dan Cowdrey in his 1970 Titan MK6 and Tom Stephani in his 1978 Crossle 35F. It was Treadway that inched out Cowdrey to finish first. Treadway made it a two-peat on Sunday during the Feature race, with Scott Fairchild mixing it up with a second place finish, followed by Cowdrey to take third. In Group 13, Garey Guzman took home the lead with almost a 4 second lead, with Keith Hall and Bill Fickling behind him. On Sunday during the Feature, it was Reid Hazelton in a 1992 Van Dieman RF92 who took the race win.



Rex Barrett took a double win in both the Sprint Race and Feature Race in his beautiful 1933 Ford Indy Racer.

Group 2 we saw the usual suspects in the front with Paul Joyaux leading the group in his Crossle Sportsracer, closely followed by the Ecurie 356 Porsches, Michael Hart's bright blue Turner 1500 and Rob Davenport's Datsun B-210. The Group 10 Formula Juniors were also added into the group with Mitchell Beiser and John Hertsgaard giving the Group 2 crowd a run for their money. I also laughed out loud the first time I saw Mikel Jackson coming around the corner in his Templeton Ringwraith because I saw the red flag he at-

tached to his car before I saw him making his way into Turn 5.

We had a combined Group of 3 and 6 with Brian Garcia leading the charge in his Cheetah with Mr. Ray Mulacek close behind in the yellow Quiksilver Camaro and Tim Cornelius rounding out the Top 3 in Saturday's race. On Sunday, the Cheetah took the checkered first, followed by Brian Kennedy in his new Mustang with Evan Pecore taking third.

On Saturday, James French took the Group 4 win with Mark Stratford in his Elan DP02 taking second place and Fritz Seidel taking third. On Sunday, it was Jason Miller who won first in his Wynn-furst West P1.

Group 7 was a treat watching James French literally scream past in his Jordan 197. I swear he was turning 1 minute lap times, but I could be wrong. Phil Stratford was across the line next in his Williams FW19 and Tom Pankratz rounded out the top 3 in his Dallara Indy Lights. On Sunday, French came screaming into first place once more, with Pankratz in second and George Bruggenthies in his 1970 Surtees TS 8 in third.

Colin Comer took the win both Saturday and Sunday in Group 9. In the Sprint Race, Robert Blain edged out Randy Rupp to take second place, but on Sunday it was Randy Rupp in second place with Lance Wiskirchen in his Ford Mustang Cobra in third.

Some of the feature races on Sunday had smaller grids due to the wet (almost said moist, but didn't want to make you all cringe) track. But, the sun lent a hand and dried out the track just in time for the cup

races and we saw a lot of good racing with a nice mix up of cars. In the Kimberly Cup, the Bugeye Sprite of Jon Bauer just beat out the Saab Sonnett of Mark School, with the red Volvo piloted by Tim Detwiler coming in third.

Next we had the Sheldon Cup which was dominated by the Datsuns - Ed Dulski took the win over Joe Ziltener with Michael Hart close behind in his Turner with Travis Mjsoles right on his tail in his M3. Matthew Gerdisch (also in a 240Z) rounded out the Top 5.

Randy Rupp was on top of the podium in the Elkhart Lake Cup, with Colin Comer in second and Lance Wiskirchen in third.

The Enduro on Saturday had a massive grid. I was standing in the control room when they got the green and it was a steady stream of cars crossing and beeping as their transponders registered for what seemed like forever! Our

Group 5 friends dominated the Top 5 with Mark Stratford finishing first with almost a two minute lead, followed by Andy Jaekels, Avery Stuckart, Ralph La Macchia and Jeff Boston. George Balbach was able to throw his Porsche 911 into the mix with a sixth place finished, closely followed by Jeff Porasik in seventh and Jonathon DeGaynor in eighth.

It was definitely a weekend to remember and the best part was making new friends across the country! Hopefully we get to see more of you all at the VSCDA events this year!





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EAST MEETS WEST



Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival XXXV®

September 18-20, 2020

70th Anniversary of Racing at Elkhart Lake

Featured marques:
West Feature Race - Pre War - Where It All Began
East Feature Race - Japanese Marques
Datsun/Nissan, Honda, Toyota, Mazda

Jeff Porasik
Raymond James Enduro
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Honored Guest
David Hobbs

BLACKHAWKTOBERFEST

OCTOBER 12 - 13, 2019



Article and Photos by: Jessica Johnk

When I was writing the Blackhawk Classic article and collecting photos to include, I noticed that the only corners I apparently made it to were Turns 3 and 4. So, not to brag, but look at all of the corners I made it to this time! Anyways, back to what you're really here for: Blackhawktoberfest! It was the last weekend of the 2019 season for a lot of us and Ron Soave and Jeff Porasik gave us all a great season send off with a memorable weekend of racing. I took a knee this weekend while my dad raced his car (Austin Healey 100-6) at Blackhawk for the first time in 10 years. Maybe my race recap will be a little better since I actually got to see more of the racing and can tell a better story besides what flash of color passed me at what corner.

Before I talk about cars and racing, let me just say how being greeted with a big hug from Ron and a giant smile from Jeff as soon as you walk into the registration building sets the mood for the entire race weekend. Everyone is always welcoming right from the get go and they're all genuinely happy to see you. You feel appreciated and just so at home before you even put a tire on the track. You can't find that feeling anywhere else.

The grids were full and the friendship cup was overflowing once again. The sun was out and there were a few swampy/wet areas left over from previous weekends. The leaves were turning and it just set the stage for the perfect end to the race season in the Midwest.

Group 1 was filled with familiar cars and the three races had the same

mix of guys in the top three. Russell Lane took the Heat Race win with Guy Morter and Douglas Stuart finishing close behind. The Sprint race showed an almost identical finish except Marvin Primack was able to get his Wolseley Hornet Special into the third place spot with Stuart finishing fourth. Building off of that momentum, the final race of the weekend, the Feature Race, was won by Primack with Russell Lane in second and Guy Morter finishing third.

Brian Davis absolutely dominated the Heat Race and almost lapped the entire field. Ron Soave in his white Sprite held off Donald Dickey and Scott Fohrman's MGBs the entire race. In the Sprint Race, we saw the continued battle between Soave and John Salisbury Jr. for first and second place;



the TR4 of Tony Draws, the Big Healey of Jeff Johnk and the blue TR4 of Paul Ricco rounding out the Top 5. In the final race of the weekend, Ron Soave crossed the line with over thirty seconds to spare between him and Tony Draws. Behind Tony, Mason Hoeper in his Elva Courier finished his first race season with a third place.

Group 3/4 started off with a race between John Boxhorn and Jeff Porasik, with Boxhorn getting the checkered first in the Heat Race with a .174 gap between him and Porasik. In the Sprint Race, Boxhorn took the victory again with Jesse Jurgenson and Mike Kaske finishing second and third behind him. But the weekend ended with

three different people on the podium: Robert Burnside in his Brabham BT29 was the final winner of the weekend with Steve Montgomery in his Mallock 11B in second place and Gail Barrows in the Crossle 35F Formula Ford taking the last step of the podium, finishing third.

Group 6 was the battle of the Brians: Brian Garcia in his 1967 Plymouth Barracuda and Brian Kennedy in his 1970 Ford Mustang switched places so many times, I lost track. In the Heat Race, Garcia edged out Kennedy with Steve Gross in the 1986 Corvette close on his wheels. Garcia took another victory in the Sprint Race with the #777 of Steve Martin in a Ford Mustang in second and the Corvette of Gross in third. Kennedy saved it all up for the final race of the weekend, the Feature Race. He gave Garcia a good battle, but it was the Barracuda to take the final win.

In Group 8, Marshall Moore in his Datsun 510 was the winner of the Heat Race with Alex Amys in his white Triumph GT6 in second and Robert Cowen in his blue Alfa

Romeo in third. After dominating in the Group 2 Heat Race, Brian Davis moved into Group 8 for the Sprint Race, and yep you guessed it, dominated that race as well. Moore finished in second place with Amys taking third. Moore finished the day just as he started it with a first place finish. Behind him, two Saab Sonnetts were leading the charge, but couldn't quite catch him. David School in the yellow Sonnett finished second and the orange Sonnett driven by Brian Lynch took third.

The two specialty races of the weekend were a hit (as always) - the Endurance Race on Saturday was won by Mr. Jeff Porasik himself with John Boxhorn in second place. Finishing third was Robert Cowen in his speedy Alfa Romeo

and David Brown right behind him in fourth. The Handicap Race on Sunday was won by Gabrielle Lynch in that hard to miss purple Bugeye Sprite (I caught her in my rearview during the Enduro and tried to hold her off in those final laps)! Russell Lane was catching her but ran out of time, finishing second and Brian Lynch was close behind Lane to finish third.

If you're anything like me, you're already taking time off so you don't miss any race weekends and believe me, you won't want to miss Blackhawktoberfest 2020 - so make sure to get your weekend off now!





ANNUAL MEETING & BANQUET

NOVEMBER 16TH, 2019

Article by: Kathy Newton
Photos by: Chauncey Moran

The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin was the perfect venue for the VSCDA annual meeting and banquet in November. The women were dressed beautifully, the men were decked out and full of stories to share. We were treated with a night full of great food, wonderful company and presentations from the members of the board.

Highly deserving award winners were:

Driver of the Year: Bob Maurer

Distinguished Service: Steve Beeler

Vintage Spirit Award: Mike and Deb Korneli

Volunteer of the Year: Kathy Newton

President's Award for Safety: Gary Kropf

Perseverance Award: Jeff and Jan Freers

In all, over 80 attendees enjoyed a wonderful evening with friends and had fun reliving the race events of 2019. Put this awesome event on your calendar for November 2020 because you won't want to miss it!



SPRING BRAKE DRIVER'S SCHOOL (GINGERMAN)

April 30th - May 1st

GINGERMAN

May 1st - May 3rd

BLACKHAWK CLASSIC

June 19th - June 21st

VINTAGE GRAND PRIX AU GRATTAN

August 14th - August 16th

ELKHART LAKE VINTAGE FESTIVAL

September 18th - September 20th

BLACKHAWKTOBERFEST

October 17th - October 18th

ANNUAL BANQUET

November

2020 VSCDA SCHEDULE

www.vscda.org
616 - 916 - 2650

WHERE DO I GET PICTURES?

Jason Britt

jasonbrtt83@gmail.com

Peter Bukowski

www.imagescapturedbypeter.net

images_captured@hotmail.com

Pete Gorski

www.GorskiPhotoServices.com

info@gorskiphotoservices.com

Chauncey Moran

criverwalkerr@aol.com

Bill Nesius

www.billnesius.com

bill@billnesius.com

Michael Nowotny

www.fastcarphotos.com

Scott Paceley

scott@scottpaceley.com

<http://scottpaceley.smugmug.com/Photography>

Dan Sheehan

www.blackwindsix.com

Visors Down Motorsports Photography

www.facebook.com/VisorsDownMotorsportsPhotography

Jay Vogt

www.flickr.com/photos/148620541@N02/albums

Larry Zucker

hdzucker@gmail.com





Article by Andrew Newton
Photos courtesy of BH Auction

The Lotus 88 could have been one of Colin Chapman's great quantum leaps in racing car design. It also could have been a big flop. We'll never know, because it never raced and it never finished development. The 88's potentially revolutionary two-chassis layout drew swift and harsh protests from rivals, and it was never allowed to compete in a Grand Prix, relegating it to Formula 1 history's long list of unrealized dreams.

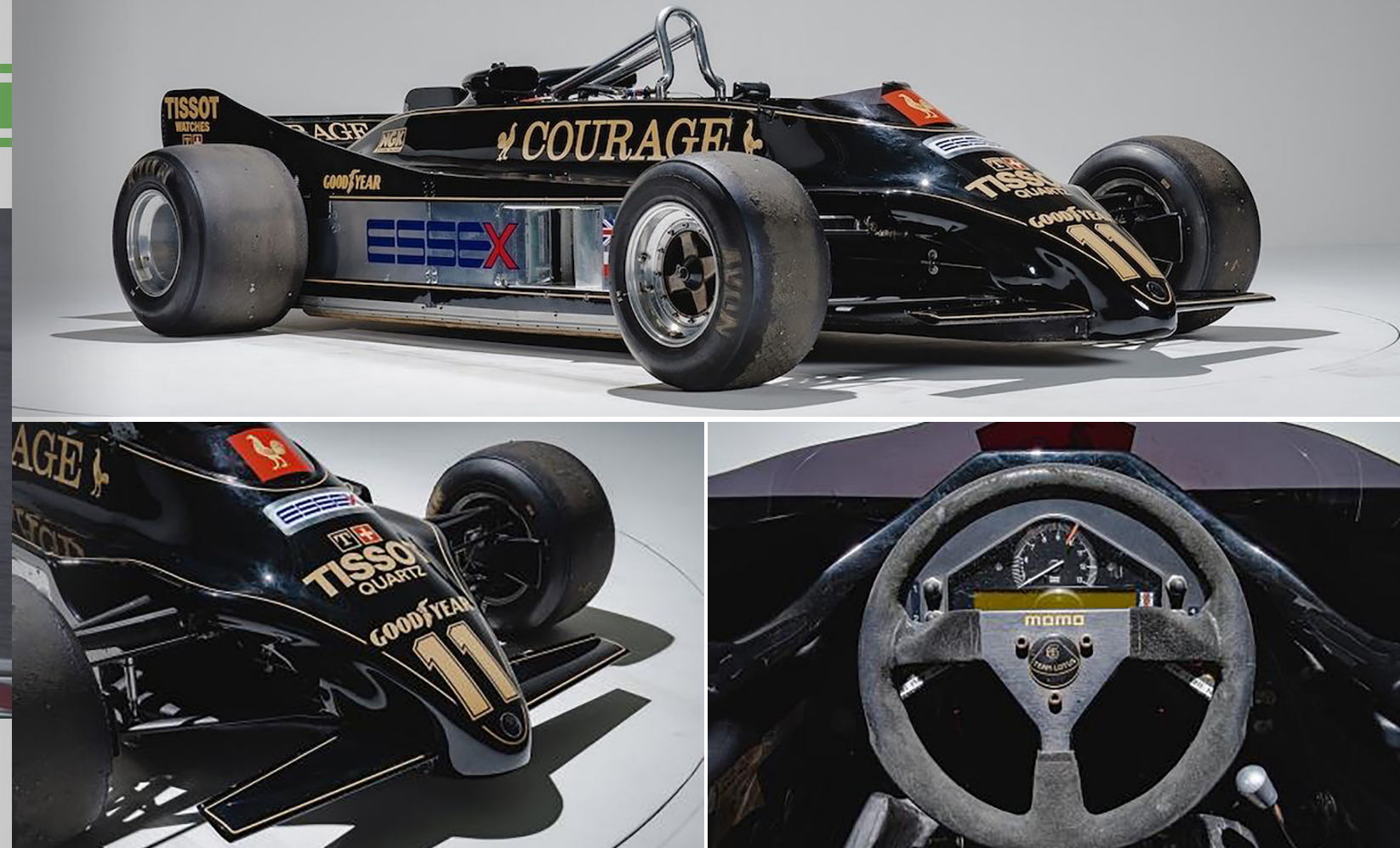
Lotus built just two Type 88s, and one of them is up for grabs at the Best Heritage auction in Tokyo on January 11-12. Even though a handful of practice sessions was as close as the 88 ever got to the grid, this could potentially be one of the most expensive Lotuses ever sold.

The pace of change in the de-

sign of Grand Prix cars in the late 1970s and early 1980s was dizzying. When it came to engines, the 1.5-liter turbos from Renault were starting to chip away at the dominance of the 3.0-liter Cosworth DFV. Meanwhile, designers were understanding downforce to optimize cornering speed. The cars' shapes, both in terms of bodywork and the undertrays beneath, were rapidly evolving.

Central to the hunt for downforce in the late 1970s was something called ground effect, and Lotus was at the forefront of this endeavor. Team Lotus had already turned the racing world on its ear several times with groundbreaking Grand Prix cars like the Types 25, 49 and 72, and introducing ground effect to Formula 1 was Colin Chapman's and Lotus's last great triumph in the sport. Pioneered on the Type

78 and perfected with the Type 79 that won the 1978 World Championship, a ground effect or "wing" car features inverted aerofoils underneath with flexible skirts on the sides of the body between the wheels that bridge the gap between the car and the track surface. This seal creates a low pressure area underneath the car and effectively sucks it to the ground, maximizing downforce for better traction without the drag produced by a conventional wing. Jim Hall's Chaparral 2J "sucker car" and Gordon Murray's Brabham BT46B "fan car" both used rear-mounted fans to create the vacuum that pushed the car to the ground, but both were banned on grounds of the fans being "movable aerodynamic devices," which were forbidden by the FIA.



Lotus dominated the 1978 season, taking the Manufacturers' title and the top two spots in the Drivers' Championship, but the rest of the field quickly caught up. Now aware of Lotus' aerodynamic trickery of the future, the other top teams responded with ground effect cars of their own.

Chapman's next ground effect car, the Type 80, was a swing and a miss. Lotus didn't win a single Grand Prix in 1979 or 1980. Meanwhile, cornering speeds were getting faster and faster—dangerously so. For the 1981 season the rules banned sliding skirts and mandated a six-centimeter ground clearance in order to slow the cars down a bit. To achieve as much ground effect as possible without the skirts, the teams used incred-

ibly stiff suspension to keep the ground clearance low. It was hell on the drivers.

That's where the Lotus Type 88 came in, designed by Peter Wright, Tony Rudd, Martin Ogilvie and Colin Chapman. While it was conceived before the ban on sliding skirts, its design addressed the two issues of maintaining as low of a ride height as possible while keeping the suspension from being overly harsh.

Central to the 88's layout (and the controversy surrounding it) are its two chassis, one aerodynamic and one mechanical. The bodywork and side pods joined by three titanium cross members make up the aerodynamic one, which is directly attached to the uprights but also featured soft springs. Once the

car picks up speed and produces enough downforce, the springs will compress to lower the undertray and maintain an even seal with the track. That chassis takes most of the stresses and pressures of producing ground effect. It also allowed the car to follow the six-cm ground clearance rule, at least at tech inspection, and then squat lower at speed. (Try following an F1 car onto the track with a tape measure.) The other chassis, meanwhile, is a conventional monocoque housing a Cosworth DFV, the cockpit, and relatively soft suspension. The main inner chassis utilizes a compound of carbon fiber and Kevlar, making it among the first F1 cars, along with the McLaren MP4/1, to use carbon fiber in significant quantities.

The first round of the 1981 World Championship was the United States Grand Prix West at Long Beach. The 88 initially passed scrutineering and put in some laps in practice, but was black flagged and disqualified after protests by rival teams on the grounds that the 88's second chassis was a "movable aerodynamic device." The rules state that any part of the car influencing its aerodynamics need to be "rigidly secured to the entire sprung part of the car and must remain immobile in relation to the vehicle." Nevertheless, "entirely sprung part of the car" is not clearly defined in the rules. Neither is the word 'chassis,' for that matter, and there's also the fact that chassis is spelled the same in both singular and plural.

Team Lotus persisted at the next race in Brazil, but again the 88 was disqualified after only a few practice laps. The car didn't even pass scrutineering at the next round in Argentina and an outraged Colin Chapman boycotted the next race at Imola in San Marino, which was the first Grand Prix in many years that didn't feature a Lotus on the grid.

"Meanwhile everyone is happily cheating on the footnote to Article 274/3 which says, 'Under no circumstances shall any suspended part of the car be less than 6 cms.

From the ground,'" says a 1981 article in Motorsport magazine. "At Imola official observers on the fast parts of the circuit said that 'everyone, but everyone, had the sides of the coachwork touching the ground.' If everyone cheats then it is all right."

Chapman hired ex-Nixon lawyer Robert Hinerfeld to appeal the FIA's decision but lost the case. He tried one more time with a revised 88B at the British Grand Prix, but the car was banned there as well and Lotus reverted to a single-chassis 87 for the rest of the season.

Even though the 88's few timed practice laps had been well off the pace, it was a step too far from a team that had redefined F1 design just three years before. Frank Williams complained that "if it is accepted as legal finally, then we shall all have to build similar cars to remain competitive, and the costs will be enormous."

Chapman died in late 1982 and Team Lotus never returned to its winning ways, aside from some bright spots in 1985-87 when Ayrton Senna drove for the team. Whether the 88 actually would have been any good or not is still something of a mystery since "the other teams, scared that Chapman had moved the goalpost once again, connived in its downfall," according to a 2005 Motorsport arti-

cle on the car.

One of the two 88s that Lotus ever completed is up for grabs at auction in Tokyo on January 11-12 and, confusingly, the car has two chassis numbers—88B/2 and 87/2. It may have never turned a wheel in anger when it was new, but today it is eligible for historic racing and even won the Historic Monaco Grand Prix.

It has a presale estimate of ¥80,000,000 - ¥120,000,000, or roughly \$735,000 - \$1,102,000. The high end of that range puts it in contention to be the most expensive Lotus sold at auction, which is surprising given that the 88 never raced, not to mention all the other groundbreaking, successful racing cars from Lotus' past. Two bidders are going to have to really want the 88 for it to take top spot, though, since an ex-Graham Hill 1968 49B Grand Prix car sold in Goodwood in 2014 for £673,500 (\$1,147,135 at the time) and a 1964 34 Indy car sold for \$1,150,000 at Quail Lodge in 2017.

All that said, we'd love to see this wonky Lotus experience redemption when the hammer drops in Tokyo.

