

■ American City Racing League: Round 6

## Hot Time For All

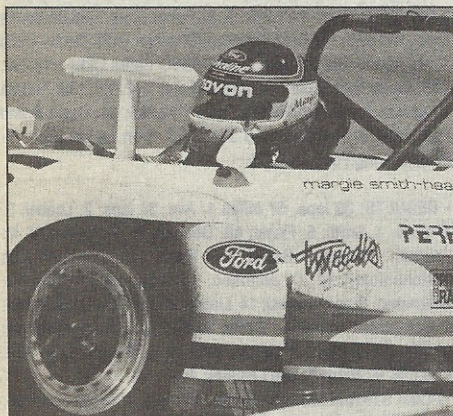
• **WILLOWS, CALIF., July 3** In 106-degree heat at Thunderhill Park, ACRL points leader Margie Smith-Haas claimed her first professional pole position—and the first for a woman in the series—but reigning ACRL Champion Lee Lucas claimed his third win of the year in a sweltering battle where most of the racers had bags of ice stuffed inside their driving suits.

The stage looked set for Team San Diego's Smith-Haas to take her first ACRL race win as she was fastest in both practice and qualifying. Shadowing her was Larry Vollum of Team Portland, who qualified second by a mere 0.009sec. Lucas was quietly confident about his chances in the race after qualifying third. First-time Top 5 starters were San Diego's Gary Green (fourth) and Portland's Scott Gibson (fifth).

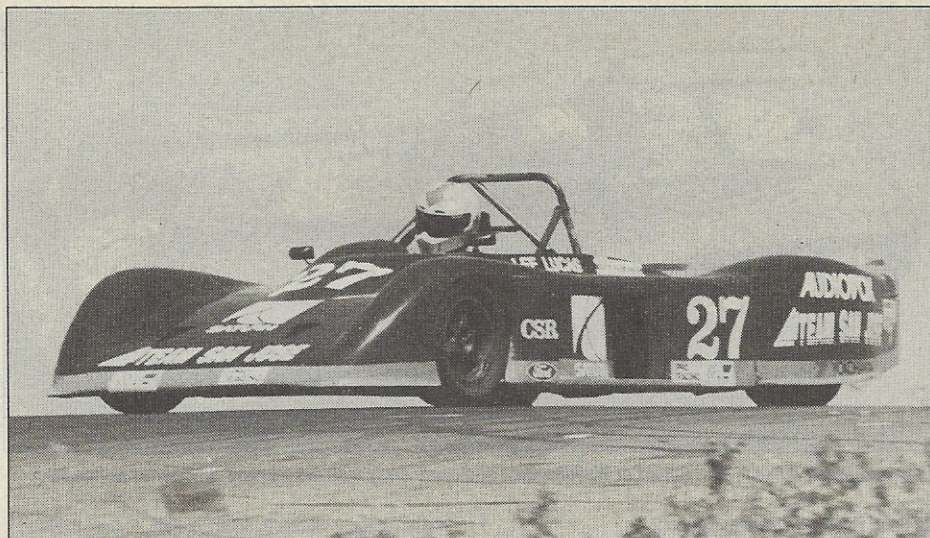
Also impressive, Team Anaheim driver Simon De Louie qualified ninth in the 23-car field. Apparently someone had forgotten to tell him he was driving an older Pinto-powered Group B car!

At the start of Sunday's race, Smith-Haas' plan to hold the middle ground into the first turn worked, as she led Vollum and Lucas, plus a fast-starting Peter Zarcades (up from sixth) and Gary Green. She built up a 1.5sec lead during a skirmish between Vollum and Lucas, who kept swapping positions for second place during the early laps. On lap 7, however, Vollum eased by Smith-Haas on the front straight to take over the lead. Smith-Haas maintained the second position until lap nine when a failed third gear slowed her to fifth ahead of Portland driver Scott Gibson.

Lucas and Vollum renewed their battle, but this time for the overall lead. A wild duel took place, with Lucas sometimes positioning his Swift off the track in an effort to pass Vollum. The torrid pace, combined with occasional showers of rock and dirt behind Lucas, saw the two front runners maintain nearly a 10-sec margin over the third- and fourth-placed cars of Zarcades and Gary Green. These two were embroiled in their own war and never separated by more than a second for the entire distance, as Green constantly harried Zarcades.



Taking her first ACRL pole, Margie Smith-Haas also became the first woman to do so in the series.



JOHN BLANEMORE PHOTOS

In brutal 106-degree heat conditions at Thunderhill Park, Lee Lucas (27) took his third ACRL win of the year.

Lucas eventually pushed past Vollum on the 15th lap and the race looked set to finish in this manner. One lap later, however, Vollum's right rear tire exploded, shredding his rear bodywork and a portion of the sidepod. A frantic pit stop returned him to the track, but he finished 21st. Vollum's fate moved the Zarcades/Green tag team into second and third respectively, which held to the finish of the 20-lap race.

Coping with only three gears, Smith-Haas was nonetheless able to maintain an undisputed fourth place, happy to add some useful points to her championship lead while helping bring San Diego the team victory. "I was elated to not only sit on the pole, but to lead the race in the early going," Smith-Haas said. "It was a disappointment to have the gearbox problem—that's the first time I've ever had that happen. I really felt I could win here. Now we'll have to go for it at the next race in Vancouver."

In his second year of ACRL competition, Green is coming on strong, running in the lead pack at Portland and Thunderhill and with two podium finishes to show for his efforts. Reflecting on his battle with Zarcades, Green noted, "My car was working better in the high speed stuff and under braking. Peter's car was working better in the low speed, off-camber twisty stuff. Second place would have been better, but I feel I've come a long way if I'm dicing with Zarcades."

Lucas ran the final laps uncontested and credited both his crew and a large cup of ice down the back of his suit for the win.

Vollum's Team Portland partners Scott Gibson and Brad Krause capped off their strong weekend by finishing fifth and sixth overall. Craig T. Nelson worked his Swift up from 11th on the grid to finish seventh, followed by Spokane teammate Kimball Williams. Hardest charge of the race must be credited to Jim Paul of Team Los Angeles, who started last on the grid and sliced his way through the field to finish 10th.

The Sports 2000 Division victor was class polesitter Simon DeLouie, who held off many of the Cosworth-powered cars and eventually finished ninth overall. Second in class was Spokane driver Dan Clark, highlighting a successful weekend as well. ACRL newcomer

Jeff Glenn, representing Team Willows, finished third. A season-high total of eight non-Cosworth cars started the event.

It was a fantastic inaugural race at Thunderhill for the ACRL cars, notable not only as the first time in the series a woman driver won the pole and led the race, but with race-long battles for position throughout the field.—Marshall Pruett and Bob Kehoe

• **QUALIFYING: Pos. Driver (chassis/engine/all Yokohama tires) Time over 1.814-mile course.** 1. Margie Smith-Haas (Swift Falcon/Ford-Cosworth) 1:10.263; 2. Larry Vollum (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:10.272; 3. Lee Lucas (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:10.652; 4. Gary Green (Swift DB-2/Ford-Cosworth) 1:10.956; 5. Scott Gibson (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:11.496; 6. Peter Zarcades (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:09.877; 7. Brad Krause (Lola 89-90/Ford-Cosworth) 1:10.904; 8. J.R. Parrish (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:11.352; 9. Simon DeLouie (Swift DB-2/Ford) 1:11.539; 10. Leo Sismani (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:11.812; 11. Craig T. Nelson (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:11.835; 12. Dan Clark (Swift DB-2/Ford) 1:12.268; 13. Jim Paul (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:12.463; 14. Jeff Glenn (Tiga SC85/Ford) 1:12.550; 15. Rick Ferguson (Swift DB-2/Ford-Cosworth) 1:12.873; 16. George Beegle (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:12.991; 17. Joe Gioski (Tiga/Ford) 1:13.752; 18. Kimball Williams (Swift DB-5/Ford) 1:13.930; 19. Jay Leeman (Swift DB-2/Ford) 1:13.961; 20. Gordon Clark (Swift DB-2/Ford) 1:14.305; 21. Ian Wood (Swift DB-2/Ford) 1:15.573; 22. Bob Dorricott Sr. (Swift DB-5/Ford-Cosworth) 1:15.900; 23. Joe Casanova (Swift DB-2/Ford) 1:17.442

• **RESULTS: 20 laps, 36.280 miles** 1. Lucas, 20 laps; 2. Zarcades; 3. Green; 4. Smith-Haas; 5. Gibson; 6. Krause; 7. Nelson; 8. Williams; 9. DeLouie; 10. Paul; 11. Clark; 12. Glenn; 13. Parrish; 14. Sismani; 15. Ferguson; 16. Gioski; 17. G. Clark, 19 laps; 18. Leeman; 19. Wood; 20. Vollum; 21. Casanova; 22. Dorricott Sr., 17 laps; 23. DNF Beegle, 12. **Time of Race:** 24m0.834sec; **Winner's Average Speed:** 90.647mph; **Margin of Victory:** 7.173sec; **Fastest Race Lap:** Vollum 1:10.329; **Lap Leaders:** Smith-Haas 1-7, Vollum 8-15, Lucas 16-20.

• **POINT STANDINGS (after 6 of 8 rounds): Team:** 1. San Diego, 996; 2. Spokane, 932; 3. Portland, 909; 4. San Jose, 905; 5. Los Angeles, 902; 6. Anaheim, 375; 7. Woodland, 260; 8. Vancouver, BC, 241; 9. Reno, 215; 10. Greenbank, 183; 11. Burnaby, 148; 12. Vancouver, WA, 111; 13. North Vancouver, BC, 104; 14. Willows, 61. **SS2000 Driver:** (top 10, best 5 of 6 races): 1. Smith-Haas, 458; 2. Lucas, 426; 3. Zarcades, 423; 4. Vollum, 390; 5. Nelson, 381; 6. Lee, 370; 7. Green, 357; 8. Gibson, 348; 9. Krause, 339; 10. Sismani, 311; **S2000 Driver:** (top 3, best 5 of 6 races): 1. Dan Clark, 275; 2. Gordon Clark, 259; 3. Jay Leeman, 182.