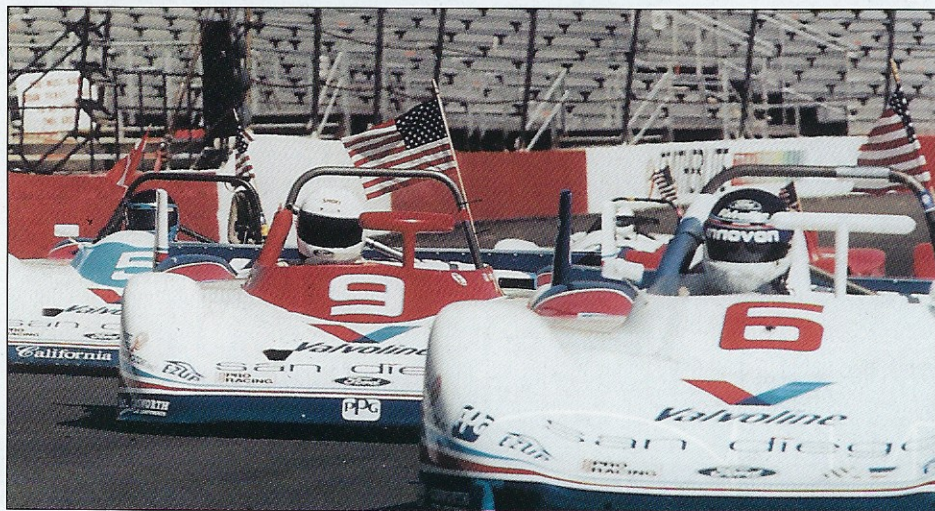


Root, Root, Root for the Home Team in the ACRL



The ACRL highlights the team concept. Here, Team San Diego runs in formation on a parade lap. Kevin Lake

In 1988, City-Team auto racing burst on the West Coast sports scene. In this kind of racing, both fans and media can identify with their city's team in a rivalry with other cities. San Francisco has the 49er's, Los Angeles has the Dodgers, and Phoenix has the Suns, but no one had ever seen City-Team auto racing. This exciting new sport was introduced by The American City Racing League, the new kid on the block. The ACRL is sanctioned by the Pro Racing Division of The Sports Car Club of America, and managed by a Board of Directors.

There are currently 11 West Coast cities represented in the ACRL, allowing

spectators to cheer on their favorite city's team. The minimum team size is two cars; the maximum is four. Before qualifying,

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each team must designate its three points-scoring cars. The top two finishing cars

score team points and all score driver points and participate in the drivers purse.

The ACRL has two divisions—Super Sports 2000 with Ford Cosworth 2-liter, 16-valve DOHC power, and Sports 2000 using the Ford 2-liter single cam engine.

The weather was not very cooperative for the 1995 season opener at Firebird Raceway in March. Two of the three practice/qualifying sessions were declared “wet” by chief Steward Dick Templeton, meaning all cars went out on rain tires to start the session. Team San Jose's Lee Lucas was the class of the field in the wet with lap times almost three seconds faster than Team San Diego's Gary Green. They were both hoping for a wet race but that was not to be as race time was warm and sunny.

Lucas dropped back at the start due to a fouled plug, allowing ACRL rookie Jeff Glenn to lead his first series race in a Cosworth-powered car. He was soon passed by Rick Lee of Team Reno/Tahoe. Team Los Angeles' Peter Zarcades charged through from the ninth starting position to take the lead on the seventh lap. Meanwhile, the recovered Lucas challenged Lee for the remainder of the 25-lap race, swapping second and third spots seven times; Lee ahead when the checkered flag waved. The Sports 2000 winner was Paradise Valley's Ted Guenther, representing Team Los Angeles.

Team Los Angeles leads the city team points coming into this weekend's races at Phoenix International Raceway with 173 points, followed by San Jose with 166. Defending champion San Diego is third with 142, thanks in part to the steady drive of Green and to Leo Sismani, who rented a local competitor's car after suffering terminal mechanical problems on test day.

The American City Racing League is looking forward to a successful season with increased participation. With the demise of the North American Pro Series for Sports 2000, the ACRL is welcoming the Oldsmobile-powered cars to join the ACRL. After this weekend at Phoenix, the series travels to Seattle, Willow Springs, Portland, Laguna Seca and Vancouver. The season finale is here at Phoenix International Raceway, October 7-8.



Peter Zarcades (4) hounded Lee Lucas at Firebird Raceway and won the ACRL opener in March. Kevin Lake