

Mahre Leads The Way

Phil Mahre missed the first ACRL round but battled back to win the championship

BY MARY MITCHELL

The fight for the 1995 American City Racing League titles came down to the last race of the season with Phil Mahre winning in Super Sports 2000, Ted Guenther in Sports 2000 and Team San Jose taking the city championship.

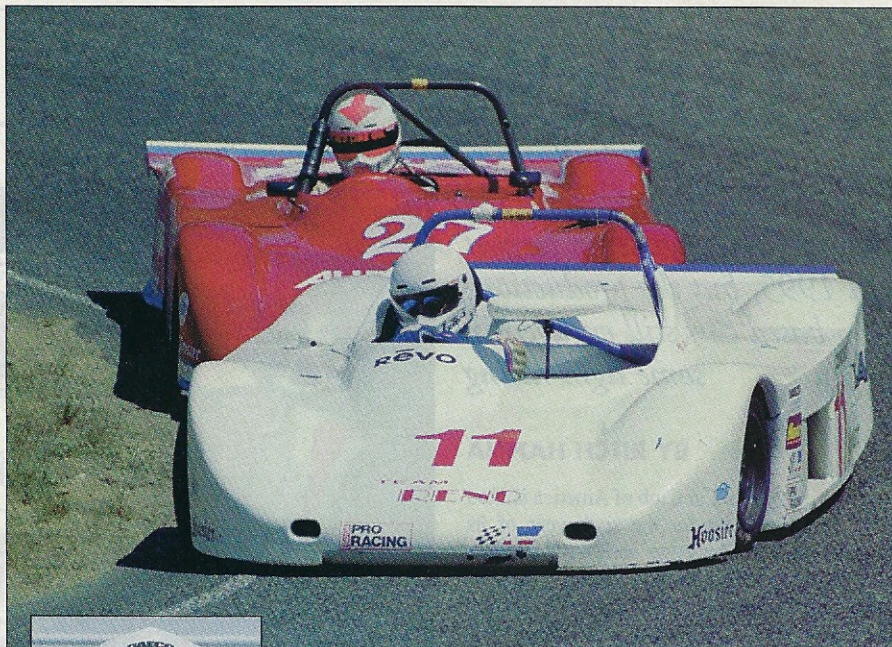
The series began at Firebird Raceway in Arizona where Peter Zarcades won from ninth on the grid. He was followed to the checkers by Rick Lee driving the Lola that would be campaigned by teammate Mahre for the remainder of the season — after Lee purchased a Van Diemen.

Mahre, not present at the season opener, certainly made his presence felt in the second round at Phoenix International Raceway. He qualified on the pole and went on to victory after a hard-fought race with Zarcades, who was unable to finish after making contact with Mahre. Bob Schader made his first appearance of the season but had an off-course excursion and retired on the first lap. Lee Lucas was the runner-up, and Margie Smith-Haas finished third.

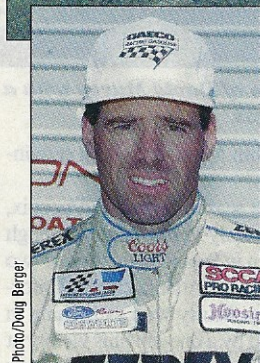
Round 3 in Seattle saw Mahre on pole again. He also set fast lap en route to his second win in as many tries. Lucas finished in the runner-up position for the second of five times during the season. He finished third in the other three races.

Lucas was fast qualifier at California's Willow Springs in June, but the victory and fast lap would go to Zarcades. Lucas and Mahre took the other podium positions.

Portland, Ore., in July was the site for Round 5. Different place, but the same scenario. Mahre claimed pole and again set the fastest race lap — Mahre qualified in the top five in each race that he entered. However, Schader, in his second outing of the year, won the race. Lucas led the first 15 laps but was passed by both Schader and Mahre re-



Photo/Doug Berger



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Phil Mahre (above No. 11 and left) earned three wins over the course of the 1995 American City Racing League season.

gating him to third at the end.

The twisty Laguna Seca circuit in Monterey, Calif., hosted Round 6. Zarcades put his Swift on pole, but Schader surprised Zarcades and Lucas at the start by driving his Lola between them and going on to victory, followed by Mahre and Lucas, as a spin dropped Zarcades to fifth.

The final two rounds were held at Sears Point, Calif. Schader qualified on the pole for both events — one race each on Saturday and Sunday. He went wire to wire on Saturday, setting fast lap along the way, but he was penalized 10 seconds, which dropped him to fourth, for racing before the green flag. However, Schader appealed the ruling and has since been reinstated as the winner. Mahre inherited the victory over Lucas and former North American Pro Series competitor Greg Loebel driving an Oldsmobile-powered Miller.

The season finale saw Schader win convincingly — the margin of victory was 28 seconds — over Lucas. Mahre drove a smart race to take third place and the SS2000 Championship.

Ted Guenther held off a late-season charge by Joe Giroski, who took his class win in the

last three races of 1995, to win the S2000 title.

Team San Jose won the championship thanks to the consistency of Lucas, Jeff Glenn and Chris Ronson and the support of teammates Bob Dorricott Sr. and Joe Casanova. Defending Team Champion San Diego finished second ahead of Team Los Angeles.

Glenn took rookie-of-the-year honors and third in the SS2000 championship by one point over Ronson. Glenn's competitors also picked him as the "Rising Star" of the series. Rick Ferguson received the "Most Improved" award.

1995 ACRL DRIVERS' POINTS

Pos.	Driver	Team	Pts.
1	Phil Mahre	Reno	661
2	Lee Lucas	San Jose	640
3	Jeff Glenn	San Jose	520
4	Chris Ronson	San Jose	519
5	Peter Zarcades	Los Angeles	506
6	Rick Ferguson	Anaheim	489
7	Bob Schader	San Diego	450
8	Leo Sismani	San Diego	444
9	Ted Cuenther	Los Angeles	409
10	Brad Krause	Santa Barbara	402

1995 ACRL TEAM POINTS

Pos.	Team	Pts.
1	San Jose	1364
2	San Diego	1189
3	Los Angeles	1143
4	Santa Barbara	839
5	Reno	809
6	Anaheim	745
7	Woodland	701
8	Portland	380
9	Vancouver	335
10	St. Petersburg	298