

## Schader's Streak Continues

### American City Racing League Season Opener

Laguna Seca - Monterey, California  
March 31, 1996  
by Bill Freed

After winning the final two races of '95, Bob Schader opened '96 American City Racing League season without missing a beat, taking a 6.7 second victory at Laguna Seca over Team San Jose's Lee Lucas (Saturn/Red Line Oil Swift DB-5/Purcell) and Jeff Glenn (Bank of The West/KJWL Swift DB-5). The Team San Diego driver pushed his PPG/Valvoline Lola past polesetter Peter Zarcades of Team Las Vegas, capturing an early lead in the driver's standings, while City Team honors went to San Jose for its 2-3 finish. Joe Gioski of Team Woodland (Washington) won the Sports 2000 class in a Tiga.

#### Qualifying

Daeco Fast 5 qualifying saw Zarcades (Pennzoil Swift DB-5) establish quick time with a 1:31.131 on Laguna's reconfigured 2.238 miles, modified in the off season to provide larger pits for the IndyCar crowd. Second was Schader, posting a 1:31.84, the only other driver in the 31's. Jeff Glenn qualified third at 1:32.263 while San Jose teammate Lee Lucas annexed fourth with 1:32.374. Making his first-ever appearance in the Fast 5 was Team Santa Barbara's Brad Krause, posting 1:33.084 in his Kinko's sponsored, Cameron-McGee prepped Lola.

Joe Gioski of Team Woodland took the Sports 2000 pole in a Tiga, followed by John Ostlund of Team Fresno (KJWL/Alistar) and Ian Wood of San Diego (IWE Rear Ends Only/PPG/Valvoline) in Swift DB-2's.

#### Race

ACRL's opener was the inaugural pro event at the remodeled California circuit, and birthday boy Peter Zarcades led fourteen cars to the green using SCCA Pro Racing's new start procedure that makes the polesetter pace the safety car in pit lane. Zarcades held point only to Turn 2, where Schader moved past as a result of a good start. Lucas, running a Steve Jennings engine and sporting new aero tricks from crew chief Eric Purcell, passed both Zarcades and Glenn on the inside, finding himself second before the end of the opening lap.

As the ever-aggressive Lucas took the lead from Schader in Turn 2 on the second lap, Glenn and Zarcades were having an outstanding braking duel in Turn 11. Zarcades dived under Glenn in an attempt to re-take third spot, and Peter hit the binders just a bit too late — and with help from dirt on the track, he spun off. Unfortunately, Zarcades' return to the track resulted in a collision with Las Vegas teammate Leo Sismani, who was running 5th at the time. By lap 3 the running order settled with Lucas, leading Schader, Glenn, Krause, Lee, Werner, Paul and rookie Buddy Dold in Super Sports 2000, while Gioski led Ostlund (Team Fresno) and San Diego's Ian Wood in the Sports 2000 division.

Schader's Lola, prepped by Jim Lachenmaier and Margraf Racing, began to work its Hoosier tires really well, and Schader set fastest lap on the 6th circuit, at 1:32.406. "By then, third gear went away," said Lucas, who relinquished the lead only after trying to lap Laguna on three speeds. Further back, Glenn nursed fading brakes in 3rd, as Krause's Lola stayed fourth just adrift of Glenn. Rick Lee (Reno) and Jim Paul (Long Beach) held sixth and seventh, while Dold dropped back from brake gremlins. Gioski and John Ostlund continued a major scrap for leadership in Sports 2000, with Ian Wood and Joe's father, Leo Gioski at the tail end of the field.

Although Zarcades retired with a stuck throttle and deranged front suspension, Leo Sismani fought back from 13th place for Team Las Vegas. Despite flapping bodywork, Sismani charged through the field to an eventual 6th place, battling high-speed understeer and "oversteer every place else." Roger Werner of San Diego wisely decided to retire his Swift late in the race, due to engine problems that oiled down his rear tires and sent him spinning.

Schader held off the field until the checker on lap 18, establishing both the driver points lead and his position as the ACRL driver to beat. San Jose looks strong in both driver and

City Team championships, while Gioski, Wood and Ostlund look set for a season-long tussle in Sports 2000. With the anticipated return of 1994 series champion Margie Smith-Haas (Team San Diego) and 1995 rookie contender Chris Ronson (Las Vegas), the series' next race at the Mesa Marin oval on April 27 should be very competitive.