

Storybook Ending



ACRL Action

American City Racing League
by Roger Diez

The American City Racing League wrapped up its 10th season of racing in grand style with the Oct. 18 Reno Hilton Challenge at the Reno Grand Prix.

The festive atmosphere was in evidence from the start, as the Reno Hilton staged a Meet The Drivers party Friday that saw Hilton's VIP guests and ACRL drivers enjoy the Hilton's first-class hospitality. Now the ACRL drivers know how Formula 1 drivers live!

Friday's qualifying was an occasion for much head-scratching on the part of drivers and crews, as most teams struggled with setup. The ACRL session was just the fifth session on the new track, and the racing line was still very green, making for a lot of educated guesswork. The Beverly Hills team was faced with the additional need to work far into the night on Friday to rebuild the entire rear end of Mark Neuhaus' Carbir after severe contact with the wall in qualifying. But with hard work all around, everybody made the grid on Saturday.

The race itself was a storybook finish to the season, with the veteran gunslinger—Peter Zarcades—up against the lightning-quick kid—Jeff Glenn. In the end, Zarcades crashed while attempting a pass for fifth place, a position that would have sewed up the championship for him. Glenn and his crew fulfilled the promise of the Carbir chassis, scoring the third win and sixth pole of the season. Late in the race, when Glenn was under heavy pressure from Steve Romak, crew chief Eric Purcell suggested on the radio that Glenn yield first place and concentrate on the championship.

"No way, we came to win this thing," was Jeff's reply, and he held off the charging Romak, setting fast lap of the race in the process. Team Vancouver BC's Jeff Clegg finished third, with Joe Giroski of Team Woodland posting his best finish of the season in fourth.

John Bachofner of Team Wilsonville came

from behind to take the S2000 win, with San Diego's Jay Messenger in second. Messenger, fresh off a 1300-mile drive from Muleshoe, Texas, had only a few orientation laps before starting the race. His efforts won him S2000 Rookie of the Year honors. Fresno's Frank Arnold, who had already clinched the S2000 championship, raced to third place ahead of Woodland's Leo Giroski.

It was recently reported in another publication that an astonishing percentage of Winston Cup drivers are named Rick, Ricky or Jeff. In the latter part of the ACRL season, it seemed as though you had to be named Jeff to win a race. I refer not only to new Champion Jeff Glenn, who won the final two races in convincing fashion, but to Team Vancouver BC's Jeff Clegg as well. Clegg won his first professional race at his home track at the Molson Indy race. Not only did he take the driver's crown, but Vancouver BC also won the Team Title and North Vancouver's Craig Simmiss won the S2000 class at that race. It was a stunning result for team and race sponsor Ferenco. Clegg was even invited to ride in the Parade of Champions lap on Sunday morning with all the CART Indy Car drivers.

The ACRL's 10th Anniversary season was a resounding success, with a variety of winners, lots of drama, and some really great racing. The addition of the Reno Hilton as sponsor of the Reno Hilton Challenge season finale was one of the high points of the season. Series administrator Margie Smith-Haas attributed the successful season to the harmonious teamwork of the officials and staff as well as the enthusiastic support of the competitors and crews. The ACRL board, staff and competitors look forward to a continued increase in entries and professional recognition as the series enters its second decade of competition. The ACRL is still finalizing the 1998 season schedule, and more information will be available in the near future.

ACRL Board President Paul Haas suffered a heart attack in his room at the Reno Hilton in the early hours of Oct. 20. Quick action on the part of hotel personnel, paramedics and the emergency room staff at Washoe Medical Center kept Paul with us. After an angioplasty two days later, Paul and Margie flew home to Del Mar on the following Friday. Paul was even able to joke from his hospital bed about waiting until the season was over to have his attack...like the perfect race car that lasts just to the checkered flag. The entire ACRL family is glad that Paul's problem turned out to be a clogged fuel line instead of a blown engine! ■

American City Racing League Round 7: Las Vegas Speedway Las Vegas, Nev., Sept. 20, 1997

FINAL RESULTS: 24 laps, 46.560 miles.

Pos. (Start)	Driver	Chassis	Laps									
1. (1)	Jeff Glenn	Carbir	24									
2. (3)	Peter Zarcades	Swift DB-5	24									
3. (6)	Rick Lee	Lola T-89/90	24									
4. (4)	Dennis Pavlina	Swift DB-5	24									
5. (5)	John Ostlund	Lola T-89/90	24									
6. (12)	Leo Sismani	Swift DB-5	24									
7. (10)	Bill Bachofner	Swift DB-2/5	24									
8. (13)	Joe Giroski	Tiga Wasp	24									
9. (19)	Brien Pariseau	Swift DB-2	23									
10. (14)	Edd Ozard	Swift DB-2	23									
11. (16)	Frank Arnold (Swift DB-2)	23; 12. (17) Jay Messenger (Lola 89/90)	23; 13. (20) Ian Wood (Swift DB-2)	23; 14. (18) John Bachofner (Swift DB-2/5)	23; 15. (8) Chris Ronson (Lola T-89/90)	22; 16. (21) Leo Giroski (Tiga Wasp)	21; 17. (7) Jeff Clegg (Lola)	20, mechanical; 18. (15) Spencer Trener (Swift DB-2)	19, mechanical; 19. (11) Mark Neuhaus (Carbir)	19, off course; 20. (9) Larry Vollum (Swift DB-5)	11, mechanical; DSQ. (2) Stephen Romak (Lola)	24.

Time of Race: 31m15.900sec

Average Speed: 69.352mph; Margin of Victory: 5.256sec

Track Length: 1.94 miles

Fastest Qualifier: unavailable

Fastest Race Lap: Glenn, 1:16.561

Lap Leader: Glenn, 1-24.

American City Racing League Round 8: Reno Hilton Challenge Reno, Nev., Oct. 18, 1997

FINAL RESULTS: 30 laps, 38.100 miles.

Pos. (Start)	Driver	Chassis	Laps													
1. (1)	Jeff Glenn	Carbir	30													
2. (2)	Steve Romak	Lola T-87/90	30													
3. (8)	Jeff Clegg	Lola T-90	30													
4. (7)	Joe Giroski	Tiga Wasp	30													
5. (4)	Rick Lee	Lola T-89/90	30													
6. (5)	John Ostlund	Lola 89/90	30													
7. (12)	Gary Hewett	Swift DB-5	30													
8. (13)	Chris Ronson	Lola T-90	30													
9. (9)	Bill Bachofner	Swift DB-2/5	30													
10. (11)	Bob Young	Lola T-89/90	30													
11. (19)	John Bachofner (Swift DB-2)	30; 12. (24) Jay Messenger (Lola T-89)	30; 13. (15) Frank Arnold (Swift DB-2)	30; 14. (20) Leo Giroski (Tiga Wasp)	30; 15. (16) Edd Ozard (Swift DB-5)	30; 16. (17) Ian Wood (Swift DB-2)	30; 17. (21) Margie Smith-Haas (Falcon H-97)	30; 18. (22) Mark Neuhaus (Carbir)	29; 19. (10) *Dennis Pavlina (Swift DB-5)	30; 20. (18) Bill King (Swift DB-2)	21, crash; 21. (25) Leo Sismani (Swift DB-5)	21, crash; 22. (23) Joe Casanova (Swift DB-2)	20; 23. (6) Peter Zarcades (Swift DB-5)	13, crash; 24. (14) Greg LeMond (Lola T-89)	8, mechanical; 25. (3) Mike Wright (Lola T-90)	1, crash.

* Time penalty per Chief Steward

Time of Race: 39m43.205sec

Average Speed: 57.553mph; Margin of Victory: 0.314sec

Track Length: 1.27 miles

Fastest Qualifier: Glenn, 1:03.256 (unavailable)

Fastest Race Lap: Glenn, 1:02.592 (73.044mph)

Lap Leaders: unavailable.