

# Return of the ACC



## Formula For Competition

U.S. F2000 National Championship  
by Eric Prill

For the first time since 1994, the American Continental Championship moniker returns to professional racing with the U.S. F2000 National Championship's replacement of the "B" class for older cars.

Designed to offer a more cost-effective series for Club racers and young drivers interested in gaining experience before moving on to the National Championship,

the ACC will be an eight-race series run with the National Championship on five of the six 1999 road course weekends. A year-end prize fund valued at \$22,000 has been posted for the top-10 ACC finishers under a separate points system.

All homologated Formula Continentals manufactured between 1990 and 1996, as well as 1997 Van Diemens, are eligible for the 1999 ACC. With the exception of ACC drivers finishing on the overall podium, no prize money will be offered on a race-by-race basis, although entry and registration fees have been cut in half.

"In creating a separate, real championship for drivers in older cars, we've opened the door to drivers who normally wouldn't compete in the series because of either cost issues, or their lack of desire to run on ovals," says series co-promoter **Dan Andersen**. "This is also a perfect opportunity for younger drivers to get a taste of professional racing before having to deal with a professional budget. New series drivers who compete in the ACC in 1999 can shoot for the National Championship Rookie of the Year in

the year 2000, creating a steppingstone within the series."

ACC is not a new name to Formula Ford 2000 racing, as it was an SCCA Pro Racing-run series from 1992-1994, before being absorbed with the USAC series in 1995 to form the U.S. F2000 National Championship. Former champions of the ACC include IRL driver **Greg Ray**, **Ernest Sikes** and **Mike Borkowski**.

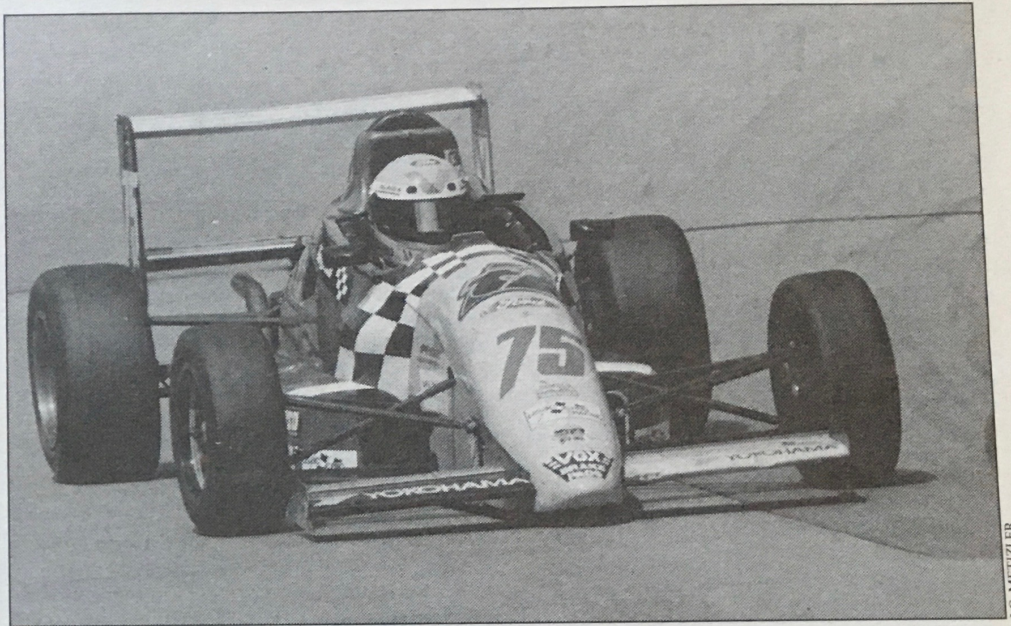
"The essence of this new championship lies in the Formula Continental class," continued Andersen. "Resurrecting the ACC name was a logical choice."

For more information regarding the U.S. F2000 ACC and National Championship, contact the series office at (973) 575-2626.

As this column is written, **Key Motorsport** is actively seeking a teammate for 1998 U.S. F2000 Rookie of the Year **Marc-Antoine Camirand**. **Greg LeMond**, who reached the podium twice (Mid-Ohio and Homestead) in 1998, was initially expected to return to the team; but a new spokesperson obligation for an exercise equipment company took him away from the track on too many race weekends, meaning no season.

Camirand was impressive in his debut season, finishing fifth in the National Championship despite missing the initial two rounds (Disney and Phoenix). The 19-year-old from St. Leonard D'Aston (near Trois-Rivieres, Quebec) comes into his sophomore season as one of the favorites to win the National Championship, and looks to add the U.S. F2000 title to the Player's Driver Development Program drivers' résumé of championships, which now includes Formula 1, CART, Indy Lights and Toyota/Atlantic. Player's sponsors drivers at all levels of open-wheel racing in North America, including **Greg Moore**, **Patrick Carpentier**, **Lee Bentham**, **Alex Tagliani**, **David Rutledge** and Camirand in 1998.

Key Motorsport's owner and part-time U.S. F2000 driver **Steve Djelebian** said that Camirand has not only become the team's lead driver, but also their top test driver, driving both 1998 and 1999 F2000s as well as the team's field of Canadian F1600s over the past few months.



J.C. METZLER

Replacing the "B" class in the U.S. F2000 National Championship, which **Guy Cosmo** won at Mid-Ohio last year, is the American Continental Championship, an eight-race series for 1990-'96 cars and pre-'98 Van Diemens.

Other top returnees for 1999 include Oval Crown Rookie of the Year **Bobby Oergel**, back with DSTP Motorsports in a brand-new Mygale chassis, which topped the Formula Ford world with **Jensen Button** in 1998. Minneapolis winner **Jonathan Bottoms** (Roppe Corp./Team Great Northern Van Diemen Ford) and **Steve Rikert** (Van Diemen Ford) give Richard Morgan Racing its best opportunity to date for a championship in 1999. Each showed flashes of brilliance in 1998, finishing in the top-10 overall in points.

**Alex Garcia** (Indigo Racing/Dixie Numerics Van Diemen Ford) was very quick in testing with Primus Racing and will again field his own car. **Rolando Quintanilla**, who became a top-five contender by the end of 1998, will return with the Transportes Quintanilla Van Diemen Ford.

**Larry Foyt** (Terre Haute First National Bank/Z Water Works) and **Larry Oberto** (Oberto Beef Jerky) will be the top Tatuus privateers, with Foyt running a full campaign and Oberto running sponsorship from the snack food giant. A Tatuus team is also

expected from importer Transatlantic Racing's stable with one or two cars. Drivers have yet to be announced.

Top Rookie of the Year candidates look to be **Jeff Glenn** (Bank of the West Carbir Ford) and **Ian Lacy** (DSTP Motorsports Mygale Ford). Both had F2000 starts in 1998, with Lacy, the 1998 Formula Mazda Champion, finishing in the top 10 in all three appearances, including a best finish of fifth at Pikes Peak. Although Glenn had a more troubled start (a practice crash eliminating his chances at Atlanta and mechanical woes plaguing the team at PPIR), he ran in the Top 10 before finishing 13th at PPIR's first race.

**Bryce Miller** could be a wild card in the Rookie chase, entering the Seacoast Builders Corp./Venture Marketing Int'l Van Diemen Ford under the guidance of 1995 F2000 Crew Chief of the Year **Brendan Cunnane** and his father, former Trans-Am star, **Paul Miller**. Miller impressed many at the SCCA Club Racing Florida Winter Nationals, placing in the top three in his first two Nationals despite running an older car. ■