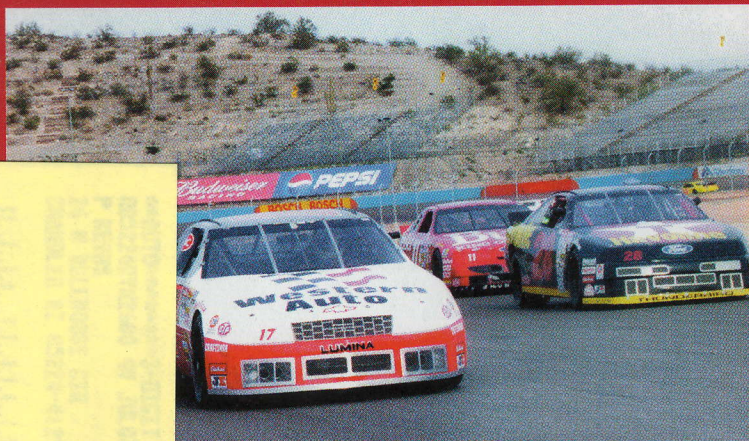


THE VIN AND HISTORIC RACING NEWS MAGAZINE

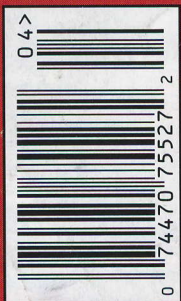
VINTAGE

# VICTORY LANE

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Launching Into 2002  
From Phoenix



11th Annual

**VARA Copperstate Classic**

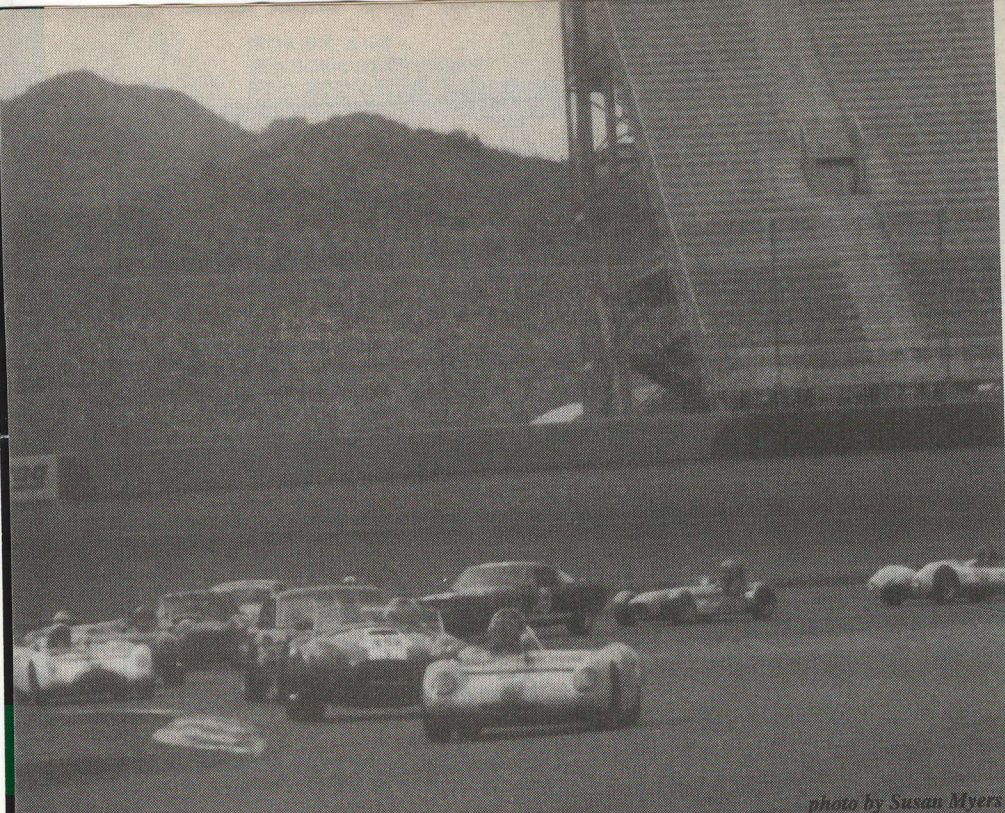


photo by Susan Myers

**Victory Lane USRRC Seniors Tour: Gil Nickel in the Lotus 23B followed by Jim Click in his Cobra and Dan Luckow in the Ford Mustang; Dick Dorris in his Lotus 23B and Greg Mathews in the Lotus Elan, follow.**

## VARA's Place in the Sun

### Phoenix Int'l Raceway, AZ

**February 15-17**

**-by Pam Shatraw**

Over 225 entrants took their place in the sun for the traditional VARA Copperstate Classic, featuring the USRRC Seniors Tour and the Historic Stock Car Racing Group presented by Tuttle Click Automotive Team. The February 15-17th event is a traditional event for many seeking an early reprieve from all the snowing and blowing Winter brings. The entrants came from all over, Washington, Colorado, North Carolina, California - to race, see friends and

to have fun. Friday and Saturday were each filled with a morning practice and afternoon qualifying. Only the race times counted in the Friday qualifier but Saturday finishing position was Sunday's feature grid position. Saturday night was the traditional VARA party co-sponsored by Victory Lane, with numerous awards being presented.

The brisk temperature Sunday morning was no surprise to the many that attended the morning drivers meeting. But as the sun cleared away the light fog... we all knew that this was going to be a great day for racing.

The first race Sunday was the **Victory Lane USRRC Seniors Tour**. Two dozen sports racers and GT/Production cars took the green. On the pole was a traditional pole sitter Gil Nickel driving his Lotus 23B. Second on the grid was Jim Click driving his 1965 Cobra. In years past the spirited competition between these two drivers in this race is legendary. Some have referred to it as the Click and Nickel Show. This time there was more history with Bill Sadler in the Sadler MK III.

The action was spirited as the bright yellow 23B increased the lead in the corners and the thundering Cobra caught up on the straights. Gil made an uncharacteristic bobble about halfway and the Cobra roared thru to victory. Class wins were Click GTO, Nickel SRU, Sadler SRO, and Hatch GTU.

**The Group 1 Flag Race** (EP, ESR, EP1, EP3, CP3) Over 30 cars saw the green flag and Charles Gee's Triumph Spitfire had the fastest lap as well as the overall win. Jim Sechrest, A/H Sprite, went home with the ESR class win. In back of him Wayne Blasman, BMW 2002, clenched the EP1 class win. Michael Ward, BMW 2002 won the EP3 Flag class and Howard Glaesner, Porsche 911S won the CP3 class.

**Group 2 Flag Race** (F2,F1,FA,FB,FSV2, FSV3, Mod-Ford) was a colorful combination of front, mid, and rear engined cars. Not only a thrill to drive but a thrill to have the opportunity to see some pretty rare machinery take to the track. Gil Nickel, driving his Chevron set the pace and kept the pace for the overall win. Doug Mockett, Penske PC-3, Harry Mathews, Brabham BT-40, Randall Smith, Brabham BT29, Paul Lise, Ralt RT-5, Tom Modisette, Lotus 69, finished in that order all running within a half second of each other.

All of the Big Bore cars thundered around the track with unquestioned authority in the **Group 3 Flag Race**. Ross Thompson, Corvette, won the overall and the AP3 class. Dan Luckow, Ford Mustang, and Robert Scheer, Comaro, ran within .01 of a second of each other. Pete Sabeff, Sunbeam Tiger, and Jim Click, Ford GT350, ran quite evenly

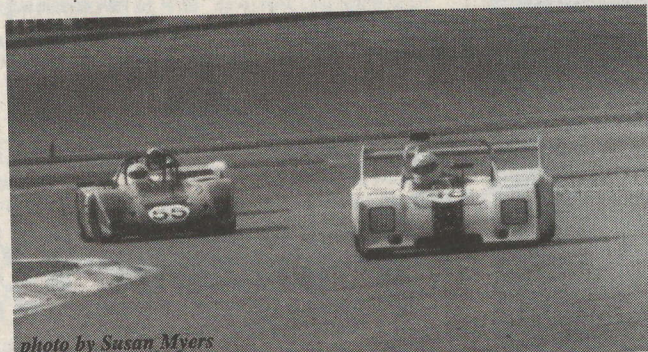


photo by Susan Myers

**Dave Vegher in the Chevron B26 leads Philippe Reyns in the Lola T212.**

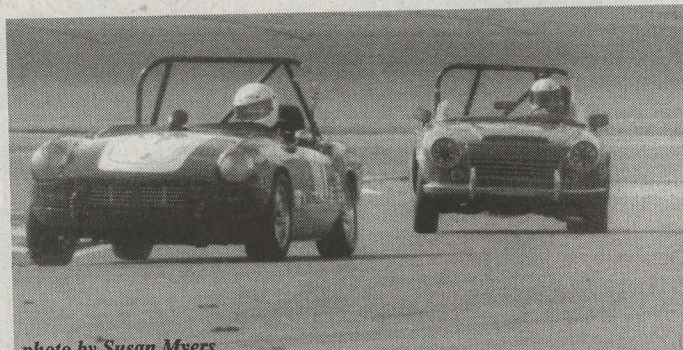


photo by Susan Myers

**Meredith Alford in the Triumph Spitfire leads Karen Chalmers in her Datsun 1600.**



photo by Susan Myers

**Patrick Maynard in the #199 Zink following Chuck O'Connor in the green #22 Zink C4 in the Group 7 Race.**

matched in time and performance. Craig Jackson, Javelin, took the BP3 class win.

**The Group 4 Flag Race** was all Formula Fords except for the one Cooper T-56 Formula Jr. piloted by Doug Mockett. Chuck Pittenger, Titan, took the overall win, Tom Morgan, Lotus 51, taking second and Ronald Enlow, Winkelmann, placing third. It looked like Dennis McIlree, Merlyn MK20, and Peter Martin, Winkelmann, had a well matched race, as did Jay Diamond, Lola T202, and Steven Kupferman, Titan. It seems that the self policing efforts by the Formula Ford drivers is working and the results are apparent in the lap times. The time between the first car to finish and the last car to finish is just over 6 seconds difference.

Without earplugs for the start of this next race, you were a goner. Sixteen of the loud, thunderous, **Historic NASCAR** cars took the green with Garland Self, Ford T-Bird, taking the overall win. Past NASCAR winner, Lake Speed (I thought that name was made up) placed second driving a Pontiac Grand Prix. Ron

Huber, Ford T-Bird, placed third. I had a chance to talk to Lake during the weekend. Once getting straight on the name, he also said that he was having a great time and that he is looking forward to doing more events like this. Right after he left the contemporary NASCAR circus, he was real glad to sit at home and recoup from 18 years of "Racin'" but after the first six months he really started to miss driving,

so this will really scratch the itch.

Over 30 cars presented themselves for the **Group 6 Flag Race**. Brian O'Shaughnessy, Porsche 911S, took the overall and CP class win. David Hatch, Lotus Super 7 set the fastest lap with a 1:11:367. Jack Hinze, Lotus, won the DP class, with Tom Zelesky, BMW 1600, taking the BS Class win. Bill Sadler, Sadler MK III, not only made the most incredible throaty, big V8 noise down the front straight, took the win in the DSR class. Dave Sturm, Lotus Elan, placed 1st in the DP3 class, with Phil Eglin, Datsun 240Z, taking the CP3 class win.

**Group 7 Flag Race** was composed of a mixed bag of small Sedans, Roadsters, and Formula Vees, Michael Denering, A/H Bugeye took the overall win and FP class win. Not far behind Chuck O'Connor, Zink C4 took the FV-1 class win. Alan Berry, Morris Mini Cooper, not only won the Mighty Mini Special award (see sidebar but also took the FP class win. Rex Linde, Caldwell D13, won the FV class. Steven Feig, Abarth, placed first in the GP class with

photo: Mad Happenings

**Dan Davis and Lake Speed discuss Stock cars with new car owner David Goodell.**

Bud Bourassa, Jado Scorpion, winning the H-mod class. Karen Chalmers, who kindly let Bud Byrnes driver her Datsun 1600 in the Seniors Tour, won 1st in the FP1 class. Some discuss the merits of mixing open and closed wheel cars together. With this group of FVs drivers and this group of Sedans... the mix works.

**Group 8 Flag Race** Cars with this group you only need to know the beginning to the alphabet. Chevron, Darren, Lola, Lotus. A small group in size compared to the 30 plus grids in other classes... but by no means small in show. Dave Vegher, Chevron B26 lapped the field, won the overall win and the SSB class, also set the second best lap time of the day of 1:02:670 (Gil Nickel set the best lap time of the day driving his Chevron with a 1:01:723). Phillippe Reyns, driving his new toy, a Lola T212, placed second overall, Dick Dorris, Lotus 23, took the CSR win.

The VARA Copperstate Classic as always is one of my favorite ways to kick off a new year. The racing was great, the Saturday party incredible, and the organization great to work with.

## Mini Madness

-by Alan Berry

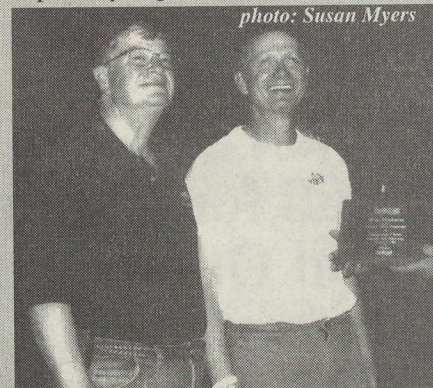
I was very pleased to be the recipient of the "Mini Madness" after a delicious and beautifully catered VARA dinner hosted by Victory Lane Magazine at the "Copperstate Classic," February 17th, 2002 at P.I.R. This capped an awesome three day race weekend with some great dicing and close competition in my green and yellow "Heritage Garage" sponsored 1964 Morris Mini Cooper.

Certainly the best part of the weekend was the great people we get to mingle with, but the racing was a close second. Our normal group of F and G production was small so the field was bolstered by the addition of the Formula Vees. On Friday's race I was happy to finish 5th overall with four very quick Vees and a well driven dark blue sprite of Mike Denering in front. In Saturday's race I managed to improve to 4th overall, three seconds back from Mike's Sprite, a Spitfire driven by Alan Weins and one Vee. My Mini

did double duty on Saturday as I "forced" a momentarily reluctant Graham Reid of Heritage Garage in Costa Mesa to take over the wheel in E production. His own mini had a serious mechanical problem Friday afternoon. He was gridded dead last in a fast field but he got 1st. past 20 cars and it was great fun to see someone so skillful race my car.

On Sunday afternoon I enjoyed the best race I have been in to date. Being gridded 4th. I nailed the green flag (for once), split the two lead cars and popped out to the lead for a few glorious laps! The Bugeye and the Spitfire were totally filling my mirrors, and the Bugeye was just too quick and finally broke by me. The Spitfire went "four off" to get by and was invited to visit "Black Flag". After 14 incredible laps the race finished with the Vee of Chuck O'Connor inches in front of me and the Bugeye taking first overall, 2.9 seconds in front of the Vee and I. The Mini ran flawlessly. It was one of those weekends

where you load the car on the trailer and feel you could drive all night going over every corner on the racetrack and every close call in your mind with my lovely and patient wife, Joanne, filling details I had not been aware of or probably forgot.



**Dan Davis presented Alan Berry with the Victory Lane "Mini Madness" Award.**

