

CRDA – VARAC Regional Races at Mosport – August 27-28, 2005

By – Malcolm Haylock, roving race reporter, photographs by the author.

The Canadian Racing Drivers Association (CRDA)-VARAC competitors were welcomed to Mosport with the most glorious summer weather where a huge number of Vintage racers (VARAC) attended the weekend. The VARAC Vintage racers were arranged into three groups: Vintage A (the faster crowd); Vintage B; and G70+ with 19 entries. A really great attendance! The CRDA portion included Ontario Challenge Cup for GT1, GTA, GTB, GTC and GTD as well as open-wheel formula libre race.

A New Twist or What Will Twisted Minds Think of Next

Something new and different was cooked up by Doug McKenzie (clerk of the course) and John Greenwood (president of VARAC). A Vintage relay race was planned for late Saturday afternoon. A team would consist of one driver from each group (A, B and G70+). Each group would race a 20-minute leg and each driver's completed laps would contribute to their team's overall completed laps. The winner would be the team that covered the most distance (completed laps) in the 60-minute race. All of the competitors had to line up on the pit road prior to the start of the race so their transponders would not trigger false readings after the start of the race. The entire G70+ field of drivers watched the first two legs of the race as a group on the pit wall. This was quite a fun social scene! Some problems arose as some competitors failed to finish their particular leg, obviously this severely handicapped their team-mates—read team couldn't win.

Some confusion arose when the Vintage Group B finished and G70+ was to start their part of the race. Doug and John were missing



"Ron Brown's Datsun 240Z stops in pit row before some much anticipated test sessions"



"Greg Whitehead steps into Datsun 240Z #13 for some practice laps"

in action! Fortunately others stepped in to make the race happen and the G70+ part of the race finally got underway—confused or not, it was the best fun ever! The winning team was Vintage A – Joe Lightfoot (MGB); Vintage B – D. Soper; and G70+ – Markus Glarner (BMW M1). Second place went to Vintage A – Brian Thomas (Mallock); Vintage B – N. Jenkins; and G70+/Marque – Bob Gay (BMW). Third place went to Vintage A – Jonathon Brett (72 BMW 2002); Vintage B – J. Sale; and G70+ – John Noble (BMW). The relay race proved to be a lot of fun for all the competitors and an excellent way to bring the Vintage Groups A and B together with G70+. Hopefully this racing event may become a feature of future VARAC race weekends.

The Datsun's

After 5 years of work, Ron Brown of Ingersol, Ontario finally debuted his Datsun 240Z racecar. Previously Ron used this Datsun on the street for over 10 years. Ron was assisted by Greg Stage of London (ex Datsun vintage racer #240). Ron had plenty of new car teething problems since the furthest it had been previously driven was onto the trailer to come to Mosport! Initially clutch adjustment problems lead to transmission failure. For Saturday, an old transmission was installed from a parts car. Unfortunately, after a few laps this transmission also failed prematurely ending

the weekend for Ron and Greg. Ron was happy that he did complete some reasonably competitive laps and that the car felt good with lots of potential. Greg got in a few laps



"Blaise Csida's GT-1/Trans-Am Corvette uncovers its internal beauty"

as well, all of which should augur well for the future. Greg then went on to help out Lee Good, the new owner of Greg's old racecar by performing a critical valve adjustment that enabled Lee to have a lot of fun (read – competitive racing) over the race weekend in Vintage Group A. Rob McCord was once again was competing in G70+ in his BRE replica Datsun 240Z. Unfortunately his weekend was also cut short with transmission trouble – seemed to be a small epidemic



"VARAC's Group 70+ grid - growing strong!"

occurring with Datsun's! Yvon Lepinay from Quebec competed in Vintage Group B in his immaculately prepared Datsun 510 sedan that looked and sounded great. It should be noted that later this year we might see the "ex-Ron Freeman IMSA-style Datsun 240Z back on the track. Ron competed in the GT category races in the late 90's in this car. Jonathon Brett had previously acquired Ron's car and used the engine to power his #9 Datsun 240Z that was regrettably damaged early this year. Now Jonathan is putting the engine back into the original car and plans to race that car. We may also see the return to racing by Greg Stage. So Datsun lovers should have some exciting racing to look forward to in the future!



"Aram Tourikian checks his tire pressures on his 1979 BMW M1"



"Ron and Greg take out the transmission, sigh!"

been leading the race to that point with a best lap time of 1.32.534). Aram is using Goodyear tires and Markus is trying Avon tires, a new tire combination with a little harder compound that lasts longer than the Goodyear tires Aram is using. Last season Markus had a lot of tire troubles with blowouts for no apparent reason; consequently, his desire to find another suitable tire to run. John Hawkes, driving his



"VARAC G70+ drivers take to pit wall to cheer on their partners in the President's Cup Relay Race"

The G70+ Races

The big winner this weekend was Aram Tourinian campaigning his Markus Glarner Motors (Port Perry, ON) prepared 1980 BMW M1. His best lap time of the weekend was 1.29.850—an excellent time for a 1980 spec racecar! In spite of transmission trouble that meant using only 3rd gear in the last race of the weekend, Aram still won handily. In a feature race on Saturday, Aram started at the back of the grid. Aram worked his way through the pack and a couple of laps before the end of the race he passed Markus Glarner for the win. Markus in his BMW M1 had

very fast Porsche 914-6 (best lap time 1.35.725), ran either 2nd or 3rd in every race of the weekend. Russ Gorochowski in his 944 Turbo Porsche had an excellent weekend as well with a fine 4th place finish in Saturday's feature race and a podium finish (3rd) in Sunday's feature race. Russ' best lap of the weekend was a 1.37.145. Diane Dale in her Datsun 240Z had an off weekend as the car seemed to still be suffering the after-effects of a previous weekend's incident.

The OCC - GTI Races

The Blaise Csida/Rod Harris GT-1/Trans-Am 2004 Corvette was entered in an attempt to



"Markus Glarner connects the battery – check out the BMW M1 engine bay!"

shakedown the new racecar. Friday and Saturday proved very challenging for the team! The nose came loose after just 3 laps on Friday—a problem had previously plagued them at the Molson Toronto Indy Trans-Am race. So the team went back to the drawing board. Then the power steering was

an issue. Rod finished the feature race on Saturday in a distant 6th place even though the power steering quit on lap 1! This Trans-Am legal car has a castor angle of 7 degrees and therefore is virtually impossible to drive (steer) the car without the power steering. Needless to say Rod was very tired at the end of the race but at least he finished (best lap 1.31.497). The race was won by Jacques Villeneuve (not the Jacques Villeneuve of Formula 1) driving a very quick Porsche twin turbo (best lap 1.26.620) followed home by Joe Reiser in his GT-3 Porsche Turbo (best lap 1.27.453 and in third place Jay Flegler in his Camaro (best lap of 1.27.603).

On Sunday it was Blaise's turn to drive the Corvette that now had a new power steering rack. For the first race on Sunday, Blaise had to start from the back of the field of 30 cars! This was an exciting race as Blaise carved his way through the field during the 20-minute race. Blaise was lapping in the 1.25's. Finally he caught a break when the leader Jacques Villeneuve had to pit with a collapsed rear wing. Just before the end on the race Blaise passed the then leader Alex Habrich in his competition Dodge Viper coupe (best lap time 1.28.264). Third place went to Lee

Romano in his Ford F150 truck (best lap time 1.28.423). Despite the new rack, once again Blaise's Corvette suffered from power steering problems and his lap times suffered. For the feature race on Sunday, his car fitted with temporary cooling for the power steering unit, Blaise started on the pole while this time Jacques Villeneuve started at the back. Jacques managed to carve his way through the field snatching 3rd place on the last lap from Lee Romano. Joe Reiser finished a strong 2nd place (best lap time 1.27.013). Blaise led easily for the win with a best lap time of 1.24.314. More development is needed but this car has the potential to get into the teens. The corvette is currently running a Trans-Am legal Chevrolet 311 cubic inch motor (small V8), along with mandated muffler, weight and BF Goodrich tires. They are about 2-3 seconds a lap slower than Goodyear slicks, which most of the other competitors are using.

It is expected that Blaise and Rod will compete at the next regional race (BMEC Indian Summer Trophy Races, September 17-18/05) as will Diane Dale and many of those I listed in my article. See you at the races!

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