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- JUNE 23rd JUNE 30th
- JULY 6th 7th INTERNATIONAL
- JULY 21st DRAG RACING NEWS TROPHY MEET
- AUGUST 4th
- AUGUST 25th 26th HOLIDAY WEEKEND SUPER NATIONALS
- SEPTEMBER 8th G-MAX TROPHY MEET
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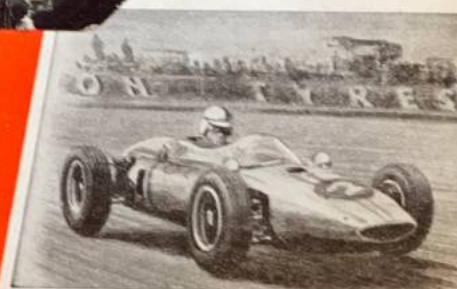
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Due to the present dire situation we are unable to forecast what will happen with regard to government regulations regarding fuel rationing etc. But don't forget that this crisis do not rise petrol, so order to help all concerned, Spectators and Racers, Santa Pod Raceway will make a statement in the Entertainment Guide, Automobiles or Leisure Guide of the Daily Mirror and Sun newspaper and Capital Radio for 5 days before an scheduled meeting.



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JOHN DICKSON'S



DRAG RACING

Drag racing took what could well prove to be its biggest step forward in this country recently with the admittedly overdue publication of the new rules and class structure. Formulated by both clubs at some considerable length, all events will run to exactly the same system, so entrants not only of the RAC/Castrol Championship (the sport's biggest so far) but all other events will know that they will always run in the same class eliminator unless they make considerable modifications to their cars.

Basically, the system will be run on a weight to cubic-inch basis for all types except Production, which will be run on weight to advertised brake horsepower. A weighbridge at Santa Pod will ultimately be joined by one for the NDRC, but, meantime, all racers will be weighing their cars to see how they will classify.

The 'Production' classes will start at 'A', with a rating of 8-9.99 lbs per bhp, and go on down through 14 groups to 'N' at 55 lbs and upwards to the

bhp. Generally, 16 cars will qualify to race in one hand-capped eliminator to give the overall Production winner. After the first meeting, at which new records will be established, the handicap will work on the class record, so that a small car will race against a bigger one with a start equal to the difference of their respective class records. Should either go faster, or 'break-out' of their records by more than 1 sec. except on the final run, they will be disqualified; although this may seem strange, its purpose is to stop cars deliberately qualifying slower than their potential to get an easy draw on the handicap.

So you can see that to win here, not only will all cars have to be very competitive in their class, but they will have to be very consistent as well. To qualify as Production they will either have to be produced in quantities of over 5,000, or be listed in the RAC Blue Book as a production sports car.

The more modified Street cars and supposedly legal Street Altered will have five classes to run in this year, with 'Super Street' as the fastest group with a 7.8 to 8.99 lbs per cubic inch factor. 'Top' will be 9.0 to 10.99, 'Senior' 11.0 to 16.99, 'Middle' 17.0 to 21.99, and 'Junior' from 22.0 up. Street Altered-type cars will have a 5% handicap added to their capacity to offset their more lenient construction rules (engine set-back etc.), while conversely, front wheel drive cars will have a 5% reduction to allow for the poorer traction of the front drive.

In the competition classes, 'Pro Stock' remains the same for this year, with much tighter rules set for next year to keep the original concept of the class. All 'diggers', Funnies and Altered will carry an additional 25% factor for the use of fuel in any percentage. For years it has been common to add 40% for a blower, and now this extra 25% will be added to that. A typical 392 Chrysler rail (6.3 litre) will thus rate as around 684 cubes, (about 11.2 litres). To qualify as a 'Pro Fueler', then, ten litres

will be the smallest-rated allowable motor.

The next fastest eight cars will make up 'Top Dragster', with a weight factor of up to 4.49 lbs per cubic inch. This will include the injected fuel burners and blown petrol rails, an interesting match that will provide some very close and exciting racing. 'Senior' will be from 4.5 to 5.49, 'Middle' 5.5 to 6.99 and 'Junior' from 7.0 up, and all will be eight car eliminators unless sufficient entries warrant a 12 or 16 car field.

'Top Competition' will include the Funny Cars for the time being, with the fastest eight up to 2.99 lb per cube; 'Senior', which will be mainly for the petrol burning, big-block cars such as 'Panic', and some of the smaller engine cars on fuel, will run from 3.0 to 4.49, 'Middle' from 4.5 to 6.99 and 'Junior' from 7.0 up.

In all cases the weight of the driver will be included in the calculations at an average of 150 lbs—a considerable percentage of a 'Junior' class car or kart.

Some of the weight ratios may prove to be less than ideal in the actual light of day, in which case they can be adjusted, whilst finer divisions and more classes in the future will make the system even better; overall, it stands as the best thing yet.

More good news comes with the increased involvement of STP in dragging this year. Apart from continuing their Pro Stock and Top Street championships at Santa Pod, they will also be backing a similar scheme at all eight NDRC events, to the tune of £1500 with each club.

They will also be supporting both Dennis Priddle's cars, his 'Mr. Revell' Fueler and the Avenger Funny. The Avenger was slated to sit in the garage to await sufficient finance to run it but now, thanks to STP, the public will get to see the sleek car at most meetings around the country. Its performance is virtually guaranteed, with the six second engine under the bonnet, and it must lead the ranks of British built cars against the two American Funny Cars owned by Santa Pod, the ex-Schumacher 'Stardust' car and the former Paula Murphy car, (which is no longer connected with STP, and will now be known as the 'Houndog' Funny, like its digger team mate).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The NDRC have announced their full programme for the '74 season. Consisting of four Castrol/RAC National and four International Championship events, these meetings will be held at various venues, including Blackbushe, Silverstone and the new strip incorporated in the track alterations at Snetterton circuit. Facilities have been improved this season, with Armco and a new grass bank at Silverstone and a removable Armco barrier at Blackbushe; these changes should allow for better, closer spectator viewing.

The first meeting on the programme will have taken place by the time you read this (Blackbushe, April 7)—the rest are as follows. . . .

DATE	VENUE	EVENT
April 28	Wroughton, Wilts.	Castrol/RAC + Castrol Drag Bike International
May 11/12	Blackbushe, Surrey.	C./RAC + C. Bike
June 2	Fulbeck, Notts.	Int.
June 15/16	Silverstone, Northants.	Int.
Aug. 17/18	Blackbushe	Int.
Sep. 14/15	Silverstone	Int.
Sep. 29	Snetterton, Norfolk	C./RAC (Finals)

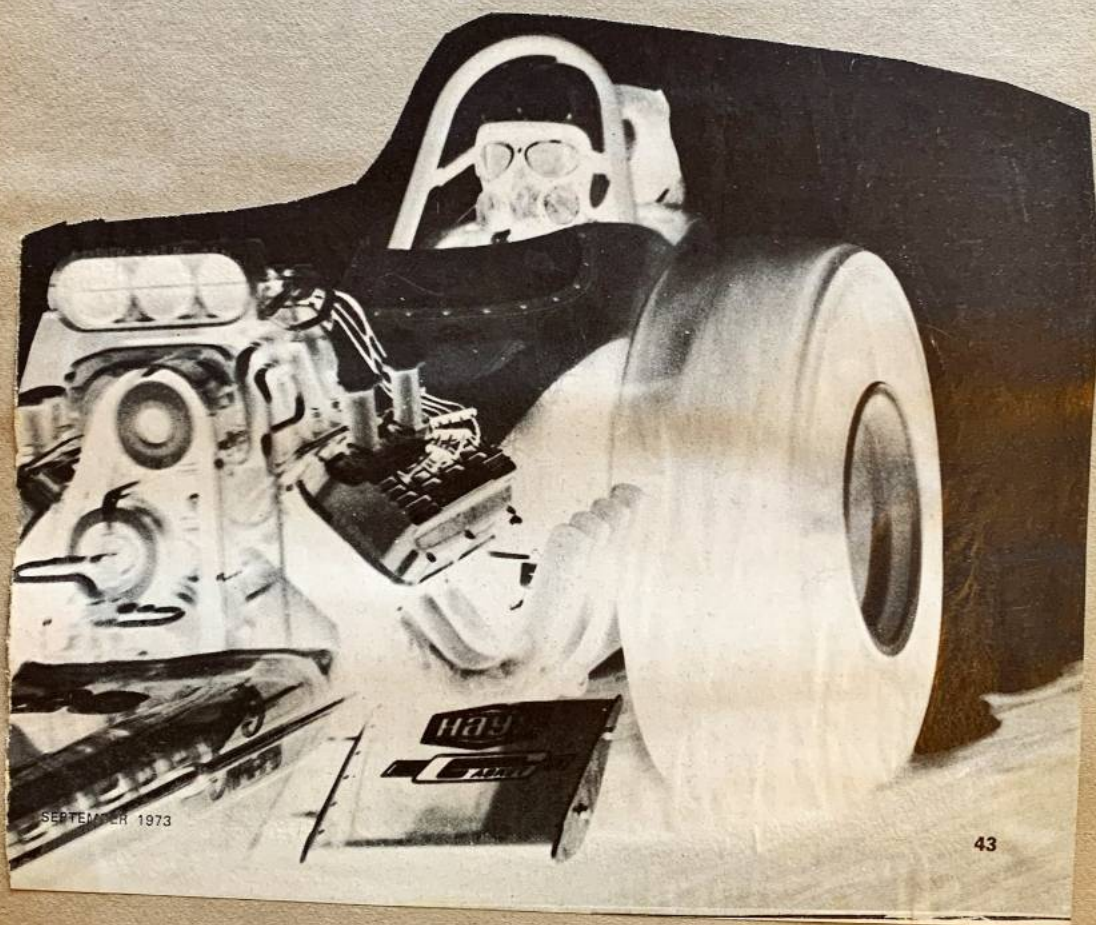
The BDR & HRA have also given us details of their next two events; these are. . . .

May 5	Santa Pod, Northants.	'May Day Meet'
May 26/27	Santa Pod	'Big-Go'

Both are listed as restricted meetings.

Practice had just finished and all was relatively quiet as I wandered aimlessly among the tightly-packed transporters, the wire fences, the numerous controlled gates, the dust and the "happiness" behind the pits. Then I heard it. An engine was running somewhere in the middle of all this confusion, and it was not a simple 450 b.h.p. Grand Prix engine, it had the unmistakable sound of a supercharged engine running on alcohol fuel, with that "bubbling" sound at tick-over and the ear-splitting sharp bark as the throttles were "blipped". I did not need to hear it twice to know that it was an engine that would develop well over 1,200 b.h.p. at the touch of the throttle, and I just had to

see it before it was switched off. I actually found myself running through the crowds to get close to it before that wonderful sound disappeared. It was a supercharged 8-litre Dodge V8 engine running on an 80% nitro-methane fuel mixture and needless to say it was mounted in a full-length Dragster chassis. If you haven't heard a highly-tuned Dragster engine being warmed up your motoring education is not complete, for just one of them makes the whole Formula One field pale into insignificance. Why this one was in the paddock was because Marlboro thought it would be a good idea to let the public see real acceleration and hear some real horsepower being developed, so they had invited a small group of Drag Racing enthusiasts over from England and arranged for Alan Herridge to give "Firefly" a quick squirt up the main straight during the lunch interval on race day. It was much appreciated by a lot of people, and helped keep a sense of proportion.



JOHN DICKSON'S



DRAG RACING

In the May issue, I gave details of the new class structure that both organizing bodies have adopted; in common with most people, I felt that it was a well thought-out and promising system.

After the first couple of meetings, it was decided that one or two of the figures needed adjusting to even things out, which was understandable. However, in the case of Super Street, it was not merely a case of adjusting by a point or two, but a reduction in minimum weight of over 20%; hardly an 'adjustment'!

This came to light when someone was interested in buying 'Money Hungry', my brother's Pro Stock Camaro. Although work was in progress on updating the car to make it competitive with the '75 season in mind, the prospective buyer wanted to put it back together and run it in Top or Super Street—not really a fair thing to do, as the car is some way from being a 'streetable' car in the everyday sense. Nevertheless, assuming that some 300lbs ballast would have to be added in the form of seats, trim etc, it might be considered a reasonable idea.

Incredibly, though, it turns out that with the reduction of the weight factor in Super Street from 7.8 lbs per cubic inch to 6.0 lbs per cubic inch, the car could in fact be made

some 300lbs lighter than it is already in suitable trim for Pro Stock, which is meant to be the ultimate street car class.

With Gary Goggin's recent 10.0 times, several other people had considered 'dropping down' a class, in the hope of being more competitive, but the fact is that on paper they will now face even stiffer opposition in a supposedly junior class. The change apparently came about to allow for one or two Altered-type cars around that couldn't meet the original figures (one in particular being literally an open Competition Altered with front brakes and the barest minimum of equipment) rather than run them in Competition, where such cars not only belong (remember the Swedish Jeep that aroused such controversy last year), but where they had been intended to go under the new set-up. There are also a handful of hybrid sports cars that allegedly cannot meet the 7.8 lb classification and would also have to run in CA, though I cannot think of any myself with the exception of a 427 Cobra, which would be quite quick enough to compete in Junior (or even Middle) Competition under the original set-up. No system will ever suit every car made, and it is a shame that the clubs have apparently yielded to pressure on this point. It would not be impossible to have a funny car made street-legal under current rules, and the sooner it is realised that this sort of rule bending is neither fair to the bona fide competitors nor sensible for drag racing, the better.

In a related vein, there is some ill feeling about the latest entry in the Pro Stock class, the ex 'Brooklyn Heavy' Dodge driven and looked after by Colin Mullen and Adrian Yorke, both old hands at dragging. The car is actually owned by a third party who wishes to remain in the background, and apart from some very sophisticated Pro Stock equipment that does fit in with our rules, has a Lenco planetary transmission, which will be outlawed in this class from '75 onwards. In an

attempt to keep the class within the already stretched boundaries of 'production', this and other exotica were felt to be too far from the norm, and too expensive to warrant their worth, and, thinking that no-one would be likely to spend the \$2700 this year, those concerned felt sure that the problem would not arise. Despite being told that the unit would not be allowed next year, the owner brought it in anyway, and has apparently tried to sell more of the transmissions to other drivers—who have happily united against the idea. Meanwhile, this year, they will be stuck with racing against the car.

The car hardly needs the advantage the transmission gives over the best slick-shifted four speed, for with its 16-plug 426 and unbelievably good traction, the best of the Chevrolet Camaros (i.e. that of Gary Goggin) will be hard put to stay within sight of it anyway. At Swindon the car ran a 10.04 at 143 on its first full run, while at the Pod with Mullen driving for the first time it ripped off a sensational 9.64 at 139 without looking strained. As it happened, Gary did beat it that day, with one of the biggest hole-shots of his racing life, 10.3 to 9.7, and was well rewarded for it with the biggest applause of the day, though it must be said that Colin was as well received by the crowd after his record qualifying run.

At the same event Pete Crane finally got it all together with his Camaro and made a good run at 10.7. Unfortunately this was at the expense of a set of bearings, as the rear main picked up and seized the engine, luckily without further serious damage. Shortly afterwards, he announced that he would be selling the car and moving to another class but at the time of writing he wouldn't say which one.

Also improving beyond expectations was Freeman Rodgers in the 'Aardvark' Altered. One of the most consistent Senior Comp cars last year with its carburetted 427 Ford, many felt that he was taking on more than was

wise when Santa Pod loaned him the blown engine from Commuter, which despite a fluke win at Easter last year has hardly run properly for more than a few seconds at any one time, with a particular appetite for head gaskets. When Phil Elson only beat him with a small hole shot with a slower 9.14 to 9.11, and then again just pipped him with a 9.1 to 9.2 in a second run, people sat up in amazement, for the big Ford was sounding and going well again, and talk of eight's no longer seemed a dream in Freeman's eye.

Other recent times of note include the first seven second run by a British-built funny car, achieved by Dennis Priddle in the STP Avenger at Swindon with a 7.8 run at 181 mph, which indicates that the car will be a strong challenge to the two Santa Pod funny ones, one of which, the 'Stardust' car, recently gained a 7.11 low ET of the day, driven by 'Bootsie' Herridge, before destroying the motor in the biggest possible way on a back-up attempt. The Dorset Horn team got their 428 Pontiac A35 down to a good 10.7 at 136 and are still looking for improvement, whilst gradually creeping closer to the tens is 'Strip-teaser', variously driven by Roger Bishop and Bob Messent, which has now got down to 11.40 with its new transmission sorted out.

The Top Dragster battle has yet to see all the promised entrants, but Roz Prior and Gerry Andrews have been putting on a great show in the Accles and Pollock and Stone Racing team cars, with 8.4 and 8.1 respectively to their credit, and although the odds would favour Andrews dipping into the sevens first, Roz has been steadily getting closer whilst Andrews has remained consistent with low 8s for some time. When you think that only some four years ago Skilton and Priddle were running these times with AA Fuelers, it makes you appreciate the progress that not only these two have made but the sport as a whole (neither car being supercharged, or running particularly high nitro loads).

Priddle and Skilton at Long Marston

Although the round of the RAC Castrol championship at Swindon was rained out, and is in fact now planned to re-run on June 30, the fifth round goes ahead this weekend at Long Marston with the NDRC's biggest entry yet this year.

Dennis Priddle, Clive Skilton and Roland Pratt make up the Top Fuel field again, though not that far behind are the two very fast injected Chevrolet top dragsters of Gerry Andrews and Roz Prior, who will incidentally be moving up to the Top Fuel class at Silverstone, and will probably be making her last appearance in her current car this weekend. Ed Shaver's Castrol Vauxhall/funny will have the two altered of Stone and Hall as

well as Priddle's STP Avenger funny to contend with, with furious action promised from these four exciting cars. Gary Goggin, leads the Pro Stock class again with his Camaro, and as the track proved to be one of the very fastest last year for both him and Tony Dickson when they raced each other at the venue, he could go over 140 mph for the first time.

The meeting opens at 9.30 am for qualifying, with the last runs at around 5.30 pm, and with Radio Luxembourg's Peter Powell on hand to watch all the other cars and bikes, a report of the event will go out on Monday night on 208.

Sports extra



Pratt forwards, Skilton backwards. Roland Pratt leaves the line at Long Marston while Clive Skilton is still being manoeuvred into position, unseen by the starter.

LONG MARSTON

Conditions hamper quick runs

The fifth round of the Castrol championship at Long Marston at the weekend started like the same event last year with miserable weather and rain showers that kept the track damp for some time. Strong crosswinds added to the difficulties of the racers, who also had to cope with the bumpy surface that made the second half of the course a bit hazardous for the faster cars and bikes.

But by midday conditions had improved so far as the weather was concerned and the running of the meeting progressed smoothly throughout the afternoon, with no hold-ups of any consequence. The pit arrangement at Long Marston seems more suitable than at other venues for drag racing, and is, in fact, a near perfect layout for a permanent site.

Dennis Priddle was unable to have his dragster ready for the meeting, although a new Donovan engine is in the pipeline for the car, but had the STP Avenger funny with him, fresh from its Whitsun success at Santa Pod. But he was alone in the big competition class, with Dave Stone electing to leave his altered at home after the troubles at Blackbushe with a bumpy surface, so a novel handicap between Priddle and Colin Mullen in the "London Heavy" Pro Stock was arranged. Gary Goggin having also elected to miss the event and concentrate on his car for Silverstone. With a 2 s lead it should have been a close race, but on each occasion Priddle's motor ran erratically and he lost both races. The trouble was traced to the aluminium panelling inside the body, touching the mag and shorting the ignition out as the car went over the bumps. Times for the Pro Stock stayed at mid-10s, with Colin, too, taking it easy at the top end. For the final run of the day Priddle had fixed the trouble with his car and after a fine and long burn out recorded a respectable 9 s time before shutting down as the car started to bounce around alarmingly. With the engine already sold to Roz Prior for her upcoming Top Fuel debut he obviously was not "leaning" on it too hard either.

So, getting back to Top Fuel, this was between Skilton, axle repaired after Santa Pod, and Pratt in the second Skilton car. On the first run, both oversteered and had to be pulled back by the start-line crews, but while Pratt was pulled back, the starter had missed seeing that Skilton, too, was waiting to be pulled back and started the countdown so that Pratt left in a haze of smoke as Skilton sat and waited before chasing vainly after him.

The second time out, though, Pratt left first with a pure "hole-shot" and although as both cars eased off the throttle at the top it looked as if Clive was going to free-wheel past him in the closing inches, he held the lead to win with an 8.49 s to a quicker 8.29 s, a second slower than the best times last year when conditions were better.

In Top Dragster Roz Prior made her last appearance in the Accles and Pollock car and led the three entrants with a strong 9.39 s

run. Second was Ray Hoare's smaller 292 rear-engined car with a 9.9 s that put him back to somewhere near his form of last year after a lean spell to date this season, while last in was Gerry Andrews in the Stones car at 10.67 s, another time aimed at conserving the rear axle rather than breaking any records, the soft slicks on the car seeming to be particularly susceptible to the track as the car left the track on several occasions.

Ray Hoare improved to a 9.98 s against Andrews in the first round but was left by the bigger car's 9.33 s run. Roz took it easy on her bye run as her car, too, had been sold just after the Whitsun meeting. With Andrews eager to avenge himself for his defeat almost a week ago as the meeting drew to a close, tension again surrounded the final. This time he left first and made no mistake about it by keeping his foot down all the way and riding out the bumps with a terrific 8.66 s, 149 mph, run to Roz's 9.26 s as she went up in smoke on the line.

In Senior Dragster Ian Frazer took the immaculately-engineered transverse-mounted V6 Ford to a win over Jim Read's Thunderbird-powered rail with an 11.49 s run, the same time that won Middle Dragster for John Whitmore in his rear-engined blown Minor rail, now getting sorted out, although still a long way from its 9 s potential. John Rotherham continued his recent good performances with a very close runner-up.

With Dave Page absent in Senior Comp, and, in fact, still chasing Castrol points by entering his rather battered Cortina in the handicap Production class, Dick Sharpe took the win again, though the new injection on his Pontiac motor was still far from right and his times were way off the mark. Tony Preston in his neat 292 "T" altered improved with each run, but as is so common among altereds, had gearbox or shifter problems. John Morton took the neat ex-Mullen "Invader" to a 12.40 s win in Senior over Pete Smith's Ford-powered 1100 for another good win for the car.

In the Street classes, Super Street was between Dave Rose in the 440 Cuda and Dave Stone in the DLT Escort Chev, the Hairy Monster being on the air at the time. On each run the smaller car was out first to record 11.9 s victories over the 12.6 s for the bigger car. After John Ledster blew his clutch apart in his Mustang, taking the back of the block with it, Ivan Fryer had an easy win in his 351 Mustang with a 14.2 s time over Morrie's E-type in Top Street, while in Senior, after spinning several times in the damp qualifying period, Bill Marshall took his Lotus 7 to a win in 15.0 s.

After having made great strides elsewhere, it was a shame that the NDRC was cursed with bad weather and less than ideal conditions, not to mention a spate of non-arrivals after a rather expensive Whitsun event at the Pod, but they should be well prepared for the big Silverstone meeting in a fortnight, a full preview of which will appear next week.

This weekend at SILVERSTONE

Both Dennis Priddle and Roz Prior hope to be running this weekend at Silverstone for the second international event, though Priddle "Revolution Three" as her car will not be ready in time, but this depends on whether Roland Pratt will have his funny car ready, and therefore be unable to have his regular Top Fuel drive.

The meeting has attracted over 200 entries from home and abroad, and will be one of the highlights of the drag racing year. Silverstone Circuit and Clive Lanson Enterprises have invested over £6,000 on developing the track, which last year proved to have unbelievably good traction. Both sides now have Armooc barrier for the entire length, with banking right down one side and a 1,000 seat grandstand on the other giving the close up view that has been impossible at similar sites in the past. The paddock has been enlarged to take the expected entries

and camping facilities will be available for both entrants and public again.

Qualifying takes place from 9 till 5 on Saturday, with an additional practice period on Sunday morning from 11 till noon and racing from 1 o'clock. The meeting will count as rounds for the STP Pro Stock and Street championships and for the Castrol Bike championship, but not cars. Motor Cycle News are sponsoring the bike side, while Queensway Travel, Spexex, and John Woolfe Racing will put up contingency awards. A stunt motorcyclist and a barbecue on Saturday night complete the weekends entertainments and all at the bargain price of £1 per day or £1.50 for the weekend with pit admission



centre: the massive Chrysler-supercharged engine that gives driver Dennis Priddle about 1500 bhp to use



AUTOSPORT, JUNE 6, 1974



Sports extra



Drag racing returned to the unfamiliar setting of Silverstone last weekend where the NDRC slickly ran their International.

DRAG

Stones team victorious

Once again the NDRC pulled out all the stops and put on their best show yet this year, if not ever, with the second International Drag meeting at Silverstone, now equipped with suitable grandstands, barriers and other facilities for easier running of a drag meet.

With virtually every drag vehicle in the country apart from the handful of Santa Pod owned cars and the usual cream of the Swedish cars, the qualifying on Saturday and racing on Sunday was non-stop entertainment, but if any one driver stood out at this event, it was Dave Stone, whose incredible performance was backed up by his two team mates, Gerry Andrews and Dave Lee Travis.

Following the axle breakages they had experienced with their blown altered the team had installed a Summers Brothers spool and halfshafts in the Olds axle, and equipped with this unbreakable combination, Dave unleashed the beast for the first time with an 8.1 s run at a fantastic 189 mph, some 20 mph up on the car's best speed prior to the event.

Mike Hall ran his usual good performance with the Chrysler altered, but his low 9 s/160 mph runs were somewhat eclipsed by Stone. The two cars were to face each other three times during the afternoon, but only in fact ran twice as the meeting over-ran by half an hour or so, and was followed by a cloud-burst seconds after the Top Fuel final. But when they did meet, Stone walked away from Hall with a blistering 7.96 s, the first seven for the class in this country at an even more staggering 194 mph, at that time faster than any other car except Skilton. The second run was a virtual repeat with Hall trying hard with a 9.4 s at 165 mph, and Stone again dipping down to a 7.98 s at an almost impossible 198 mph, a speed that only a handful of American alters beat regularly. Without a doubt the car is capable of topping the 200 mph mark, and with more than the quite modest nitro that they are currently running, will probably do so before long.

Meanwhile, four funny cars were on hand, Priddle's, Shaver's and the two Swedish cars of Bjorn Anderson and Leif Dabach. Both these had run sevens in Sweden, but could only manage low eights on Saturday. Priddle's STP car was quickest with a 7.7 s time, whilst Shaver's car with hurriedly rebuilt frame didn't get on to the strip until Sunday to make a couple of exploratory runs. So with three cars to run, a "round robin" was laid on with first Priddle running an 8.05 s at 187 mph to the 8.8 s/180 mph of Dabach's 427 Chevrolet powered Volvo. Dabach then ran Anderson's Hemi/Opel Manta and won with another 8.80 s at 177 mph as the Opel slowed to a 9.5 s at 158 mph.

For the final round Priddle was out again with the Avenger and laid down the best

burn-out of the day before handing out another 7.8 s defeat to Anderson's Opel as he slowed again with a 9.9 s after holding on well for the first hundred yards.

But Priddle was not so lucky with Mr Revell, his Top Fuel car, qualifying with a leisurely 8.3 s behind Roland Pratt at 7.8 s in the Revolution. Three car John Anderson in the Swedish "Valkyrian" fueller was in at 8.34 s ahead of Clive Skilton, who had the shifter cable break on his new two speed transmission and coasted through with a time in the teens.

The first run was between Skilton and Anderson, and the bad fortune of the normally dominant Swedes continued, with Anderson trailing with a shut-off 12.3 s to Clive's 7.04 s at 202 mph. Priddle and Pratt were next: out in the slickly organised meet, and Roland took a giant lead on Priddle at the start and held it all the way until the chute opened prematurely and slowed him down to 116 mph as the big motor tried desperately to tow the car through ahead of Priddle. But it was not to be as Priddle's 190 mph took him past in 7.3 s to 8.0 s for Pratt. So once again the usual twosome met in the final, and after a really wild burn-out that rivalled Priddle's earlier funny car one, Skilton leapt away using his two speed to advantage to record a 6.7 s at 220 mph in the Castrol car over a 7.5 s at 171 mph for Priddle's car.

Top Dragster was the next class where the Stone team dominated, leading the qualifying with an 8.4 s for Gerry Andrews. Peter Baker, driving the ex-Prior dragster, ran a 10.3 on his first run in the car, whilst also appearing in new hands was the Pontiac dragster of Tony Froome, the car formerly owned by Benbow and Fullerton and also running tens. Ray Hoare was getting back in form with his small-block car with times well into the nines, and won his first round against Froome with a 9.5 s to 10.3 s. Andrews then ran an 8.3 s to beat Baker's 11.0 s before going into the final against Hoare, repeating his 8.3 s to Hoare's 9.5 s. In a run-off for third Baker ran a strong 9.5 s against Froome's 10.1 s, so both new drivers can be well pleased with their first outings.

In Senior Dragster Russ Carpenter took the Tony Anderson built Daimler 2.5 to an impressive 9.2 s win over Keith Dancy's 9.8 s in the old Crescent Coupe, now running sons body for the first time.

Senior Competition, still without the Pages' Fiat was livened up by Freeman Rodgers, who had left the Santa Pod owned supercharged engine at home and installed his own carburetted 427 Ford and dropped back to the class he did so well in last year. He got to the final once again to meet Dick Sharpe in the "Dorset Horn" A35, the team having got

the injection nearer the mark and improved to mid elevens. For the all important run Sharpe leapt away, wheels just off the ground, to an 11.1 s at 120 mph, just holding off Rodgers' 121 mph run, though a time was not given.

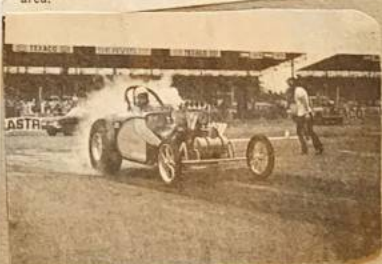
The action in Middle was even better, with a 16-car field to get through. Predictable favourites were John Moreton in "Invader" 350 Chev Firenza, and Jim Brett in "Strip-teaser" 3.8 Jag Minivan, though both had a hard ride through to the final. Brett was taking his first run in the car after having worked on it for some years, and was pulling enormous wheelies all weekend to the delight of the crowd. Moreton's car had a similar tendency and both went skyward in the final, with the Minivan just leaving first and holding on to win with an 11.59 s to a 11.44 s.

In the Street classes, headed by the five-car Pro Stock class, the racing was equally close. Colin Mullen in the "London Heavy" Dodge was first with a casual 10.0, whilst team-mate Adrian Yorke in the new sister car had one or two problems with the car and left it in the pits. Gary Goggin had his new truck block in his Camaro, complete with Weslake worked heads, but sheared the distributor drive gear and also had to leave it on the trailer.

The two Swedish cars of the popular Gunne Backe and Bo Holstrom, both Camaros, ran 11 s but Backe broke a valve and destroyed one head and had to work most of the night to get running again. In another "round-robin" event, Mullen started off with a 9.7 s over Backe's 11.0 s, whilst Backe then defeated team-mate Holstrom with a 10.99 s as the other car shut off with engine trouble. Mullen also took care of the Holstrom car with another 9.8 s as once again mechanical failure slowed the Chevrolet after a fine wheels-in-the-air start.

In Super Street, as in all the classes they ran, the Stones again led qualifying with a 12.2 s for the DLT driven Precision Tapes Escort, Mustapha Errol and Dave Rose were both close with the ex-Crane Camaro and Cuda respectively at 12.2 s, with Al O'Connor next in his Chev Anglia. Errol red lit against DLT in the first run as the Escort got down to a 12.0, whilst Rose beat O'Connor to get to the final only to lose to a perfect start from the flying DesJag as he further improved to an 11.99 s, making the weekend a truly memorable one for the Stone team, who must be rated as one of the most successful families in any branch of the sport.

Silverstone certainly seems ideal for drag racing, and although the traction was not quite as good as last year by most people's reckoning, the smoothness of the strip certainly helps immeasurably for the faster cars when they don't have to worry about stopping on the bumpy Santa Pod braking area.



THE second running of the Silverstone International drag race meeting was an even more enjoyable affair than the first, and to those remembering the occasion last year, that is quite an improvement on what was certainly the best NDRC event of the season.

With an excellent entry including the usual top Swedes, all the classes were well subscribed with entries, although a few were thinned out by race time.

Top Fuel had four cars with John Anderson from Sweden joining the usual Priddle, Pratt and Skilton. Clive was running a Lenco two-speed transmission for the first time in the Castrol car and when the shift cable broke was left with a roll-through to qualify. Anderson and Priddle both ran 8.3s, whilst Pratt led with a 7.8s. But he was treated to cruel luck in his run against Priddle when it looked as if he was pulling off a real upset by putting two car lengths between them and holding it until his parachute suddenly blossomed before the finish and dragged him down to a mere 116 mph. Priddle powered past in the Revell car at 190 mph in 7.3s to 8.0s.

Anderson had mechanical trouble in his run against Skilton, who ran an untroubled 7.04s at 202 mph to go through to the final against Priddle. After a burn-out reminiscent of Tony Nancy's demonstration last year he was gone in devastating form to a 6.7s at 220 mph to Priddle's 7.5s at 171 mph.

But Priddle fared better in the Funny Car range leading the four cars with a 7.7s from the STP Avenger. The other home entry of Ed Shaver in the rebuilt Castrol Vauxhall was not ready for competition, but the two Swedish cars, Bjorn Anderson's Opel and Leif Darbach's fierce Volvo, certainly were, both running in the 180 mph range to qualify. Priddle started with an 8.0s, 187 mph win over the Chev/Volvo's 8.8s, 180 mph, the Volvo then returning to another 8.8s, 177 mph run over Anderson's Opel at 9.5s as he shut down early.

Priddle then ran the Opel and stormed off to another win in 7.88s at 9.9s as the Swedish car again encountered problems.

But amazingly, none of these runs matched the top speed of Dave Stone in his big blown Chev altered. Running against Mike Hall's equally fearsome Chrysler altered, he stunned the crowd with an 8.1s qualifier at 189 mph, so far ahead of any other altered that he might have been in another class. In racing Hall he first clocked a 7.96s at 194 mph to what in any other circumstances would have been a good 9.6s at 163 mph then backed it up with a 7.98s at a fabulous 198 mph to 9.4s, 165 mph. A truly staggering performance.

In Senior Competition, Dick Sharpe and his injected Pontiac A35 ran better and better although still not as fast as the times achieved on carburation, and faced Freeman Rodgers in the final run. Rodgers, who has been running the Ford-powered car in Top all year with the Santa Pod owned blown engine, took the ex-Commuter engine out and put back his own 427 to drop back into Senior. But Sharpe's start won him the very close race with an 11.1s, 120 mph to 121 mph for the Ford, no time being recorded.

John Moreton showed considerable improvement in his Firenza/Chev in Middle, steadily

getting down to low 11s but just losing in the final with an 11.4s run to 11.5s for Jim Brett, who was having his first drive in the famed Jag Minivan "Strip-teaser" after having helped work on the car for so long.

Also going well in this well-subscribed class was Glen Searle in the Fiat Chev. After some year and a half of effort the car finally seems headed in the right direction, and although it didn't win its round, an 11.99s run at 120 mph was a big improvement.

Moving back to Top Dragster, Gerry Andrews scored a second success for the Stone team, by leading the pack with an easy 8.4s in their rail. Ray Hoare ran a 9.5s to be second, whilst reappearing for the first time this year was the injected Pontiac of Benbow and Fullerton, now owned by Tont Froome. He ran a respectable 10.3s in losing to Hoare, whilst Roz Prior's old car, now being driven by Peter Baker also went out to Andrews with an 11.0s.

He later improved to a 9.5s over Froome's 10.1s in third place run-off, but not until Andrews had taken care of Hoare with an 8.3s at 176 mph to 9.5s at 163 mph.

Leading the Pro Stock class was once again Colin Mullen in the Dodge, partnered by Adrian Yorke in a similar Duster that didn't actually race following some minor problems.

Gary Goggin was going his best to hit back at the Chrysler domination with his truck block installed in his Camaro, but a sheared distributor drive and subsequent contamination of the oil put him out of the picture, which left the two Swedes the unfortunate task of racing Mullen. Gunne Backe was over with his 454 Camaro but dropped a valve and did extensive damage to both heads before getting ready to run on Sunday, while team-mate Bo Hollstrom ran an 11.0s in his Camaro, a full second off Mullen's 10.0s.

Also running a round robin tournament with the three cars, Mullen ripped off a 9.7s, 138 mph run to defeat Backe's game 11.0s. Backe then ran and beat Hollstrom 10.99s to a shut-off 13.9s for the other Camaro. Mullen then returned to beat Hollstrom 9.8s to another shut-off as the Swede conceded victory.

The Stone's third success came in Super Street, where Dave Lee Travis led qualifying with a 12.1s from the Precision Tapes Escort Chev to edge ahead of Rose and Errol, Cuda and ex-Crane Camaro. These were both on 12.2s, just ahead of Al O'Connor's Chev Anglia. DLT had his first racing win when Errol red-lit away his chances as the Escort ran to a 12.0s. Rose then avenged his recent defeat by O'Connor by catching up and passing the Anglia after a very close race. Then newboy Travis really read the lights well and was away to an 11.99s that Rose could do nothing about.

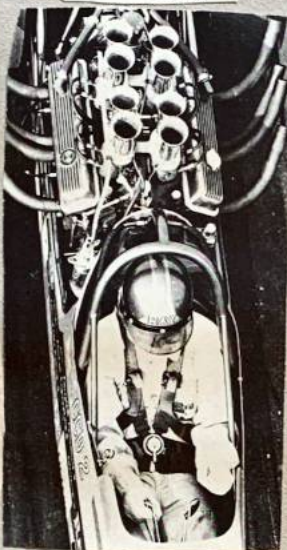
It was a good weekend for the NDRC and the promoters, a good weekend for the crowd, but most of all a good weekend for the Stone team, Dave in particular.

J.T.D.



Clive Skilton at the controls of the fastest dragster in Europe as it reaches 224 mph in 440 yards from a standing start. Good car for nipping to the pub before closing time

Below
The modified Chevrolet engine of driver Ray Hoare's Dragster



Woolfrace Trophy

SUNDAY's drag racing at Santa Pod, the Woolfrace trophy meeting, was a rather disappointing event with no funny cars and only two Top Fuel entries. One of them, Firefly driven by Alan Herridge, was being used as a test bed for a big 484 cubic inch motor that will be going into a new rear-engined car, the current front-engined car being the other fueler present.

Herridge only made a couple of half passes to try the big motor because with the 4.5 diff suitable for the higher revving 426 it was not wise to turn the big stroked version over 8000 rpm.

Mike Hutcherson meanwhile was down to run Dave Stone three times in an interesting match, and with the 198 mph run still fresh in everyone's memory from Silverstone, it was well on the cards that Stones' altered would win. But the first run had Stone losing traction altogether on one wheel which sent him veering towards the barrier in another of the hair raising drives he is so well known for.

By the time he had got it back together, Hutcherson was out of reach with an 8.1s to 10.8s. For the second round though, he came out of the hole arrow straight and shut off early rather than risk another high speed run on the bumpy braking zone. Nonetheless his time was down to an all-time low of 7.8s at 167 mph to 8.3s for the dragster.

The deciding round again went to Stone when Hutcherson had to shut off whilst staging with engine trouble, leaving Dave an easy 8.5s for the win. It was another first, for not only had an altered set the lowest time of the day, but it had won against a Fuel Dragster.

The other two Fuel Altereds of Elson and Rodgers, who was running the blown 427 Ford again in his damaged car following a fuel fire at Silverstone, also ran three times. Freeman was stunning with a terrific 8.9s 162 mph defeat of Elson's 9.2s at 146 mph. This makes the Ford-powered car only the fourth altered to record an eight in this country, and the only other one this year apart from Stone. The second round went to Elson with another 9.2s as Freeman had trouble, whilst the Ford came back on top in the third run with a 12.3s. That was enough to win as Elson shut down on the line with troubles of his own.

Senior Competition was devoid not only of the Pages but also the

successful Dorset Horn Pontiac, and had but three cars, Vic Hammond's 392 Model T, Tony Preston's 283 Chev T, and John Dickson in the long overdue 474 Olds/Pop.

This was not running too well with injection troubles, with a 15.3s and went out to Preston's 13.6s, but when Hammond couldn't get fired up in his car, it came back in on the break rule to run the Model T again in the final, losing with a 16.6s to 12.6s for the nicely turned out Chevy.

Action in Middle Comp was far better with another sixteen place elimination. Dominating the racing throughout were the cars of Dick Fielding and Bob Messent. Fielding's blown twin cam device running 11.08s, 11.09 to get to the final, and the Messent Stripsteaser running 11.3s, 11.4s to get there. Messent's better start was the decider though as he clocked another 11.4s at 117 mph to Fielding's later but faster 11.29s at 124 mph.

Top Dragster went to the Stone team again as Gerry Andrews ran an 8.15s, his best yet, to defeat Tony Frome's promising Pontiac at 10.8s, though he had earlier run at 10.1s. Senior went to Keith Dancy, whose incredibly high revving Chevy clocked an impressive 9.56s 150 mph to beat Martin Rowat's similarly powered car.

The times here were faster than in Senior Competition, which was down to three cars with not even the popular Dorset Horn in attendance. The two T buckets of Hammond and Preston, 392 Chrysler and 283 Chev powered respectively both ran in the 12's to qualify, whilst your correspondent ran a rather dismal 17.6s on his first competitive run in Good Vibrations, 474 cubic inch Olds/Popular. Assorted teething troubles was the excuse for not doing better as Tony Preston went away with a 13.6s to 15.6s, whilst Hammond could not get fired up for his bye run. This meant another

chance for the Popular on the break rule, and with the car still running far too rich, the little Chevy ran away again at 12.6s to 16.6s.

Top Competition was a three round event between Freeman Rodgers in the Ford powered Altered and Phil Elson's Chrysler car. The first round went to Rodgers with a staggering 8.9s from the ageing Commuter engine at 162 mph, Elson running close at 9.2s. In the second round he turned the tables as Freeman had engine problems and coasted through with an 11.2s to 9.2s again. In the final it was Elson's turn to suffer as he lost his engine on the line and had to let the Ford trundle through at an even slower 12.3s, 100 mph.

With Dave Stone going so well at Silverstone in his altered, he was down to run against Mike Hutcherson in the Hounddog fueler. Getting terribly out of shape and nearly clouting the barrier on his first run, he lost the first round 8.1s to 10.8s but hit back later to win the second event with a record 7.8s at 168 mph. Hutcherson backed off early to a 7.8s and lost fire just before the start of the last running to let Dave take the win with a careful 8.56s at 167 mph.

The other fuel dragster present was Firefly which had the big stroked 484 cu. in. engine. Alan Herridge only made a couple of exploratory runs before handing over the motor to the crew to take home for their new car, so the quickest time of the day was Stone's.

Once again the team did well in all divisions, for not only did Gerry Andrews win Top Dragster, he also set a new low time for the car at 8.15s while running Tony Frome's ex-Benbow Fullerton Pontiac rail that was running low tens.

Keith Dancy was also improving in Senior Dragster, with a good 9.5s. His time beat Martin Rowat's rear-engined Chev as he ran a slower than usual 10.9s.

This weekend the NDRC are re-running the third round of the RAC Castrol championship at Wroughton rained off in April, and apart from all the usual entries, Roz Prior will make her competition debut in Top Fuel in the ex-Pride Mr. Six. Having run at 8.1s at 190 mph in Revolution Three at Silverstone, her performance in the Accles and Pollock car should prove to be one of the highlights of the rescheduled event.

J.T.D.

