

# MAGEE TAKES SUMMIT POINT OPENER

by Rick Wilder

## Vees at the Point.....

Summit Point, W. Va., Speedway opened its doors to the four wheel fraternity, and the public, on Oct. 5th. The coming of motor racing to the mountain state was a Formula Vee Grand Prix worth \$3,000 in prize money posted by SPS and Volkswagen, South Atlantic Distributor's, Inc.

One race started days before the proposed money event. The action began when IMSA bowed out of their sanction and left the Oct. 5 date hanging. SPS approached the D.C. Region to conduct the race and the challenge was accepted with a lead time generally reserved for scrambling Air Force fighter pilots. It is rumored that a book is to be published, entitled "9 Days to the Summit" (censored), with detailed accounts of the mobilization of our army and its victory in the rolling hills of West Virginia.

Other factors, beside the short lead time, resulted in a thin spectator count and entry list. The newspaper strike, baseball ending, football starting, the U.S. GP, season and weariness, and the closeness of the last NE Div. National accounted for the absence of many.

The race was run under cool and cloudy skies with a smoothness second only to a baby's bottom. "Never", quoted the many, "have I seen a better organized or conducted event." To say the least the whole inaugural shooting match was a tribute to our Chief's, their staffs, and SPS for installation of needed facilities in an uphill venture.

Preliminary races for SCCA closed-wheel cars was like the 'good ole days' as Woody Woodruff piloted his Lotus C-SR to overall victories in the 5 and 10 lap tours. It was a popular win, Woodie's first, and well deserved after breathing new life into the ageing MK II.

Two heat races were staged to determine the starting grid for the one hour F-V Grand Prix. John Magee, in his Rochester, N.Y. based Auto D, picked up the win in race one with Alexandria's Jim McDaniel second in the UPAR Zink.

Heat two saw a struggle that was to continue in the feature as Bill Scott and Glen Sullivan towed each other around the Point's 7 turn circuit. Scott crossed start-finish in the lead nine times, while Sullivan led past that mark on six occasions, during the 15 lap go. It was anybody's race as those two entered the main straight for the last time. Sullivan's AU to D was being drafted by Scott's McNamara as they headed down to the wire. Within yards of the flag, Scott dipped a wheel in the dirt and pulled even with Sullivan as they flashed toward the line. The official nod went to Scott, by a whisker, in a real crowd pleasing finish.

The die was now cast for the feature as Magee and Scott headed the column of two behind the Porsche pace car. It was a grand sight as the multi-colored parade rolled toward starter John Fitz. The green went out and the race was on.

Everyone got away to a clean start with Magee leading the pack through turn one. Within fifteen minutes he had built up a five second lead over the dice for second place. McLean's Bill Scott and Arlington's Glen Sullivan were at it again as they cooperated in slingshots down the straight in an effort to reel in the fleeing Magee. Jim McDaniel was very much a part of this action as he led the three way fight for second every few laps.

By mid-point, Magee had a fifteen second cushion over the duel for second, stopping the watches at 1:25 with regularity for an average of 84.7 mph. Ed Empink and Dr. Lee Talbot had settled their dispute over fifth place. Ed held the advantage by about four seconds. Dr. Talbot, only just returned from a Smithsonian field trip to Siberia, held a similar lead over the remainder of the field. Roanoke's Bill Ross, in the ex-Empink AutoD, and Arlingtonian Hugh O'Riley, Zink mounted, headed up the five way tussle for seventh. Meanwhile, a pit stop set Dick Williams, in the I.T.C. Mc Namara, well back while Bob O'Connor began moving among the top ten in his shamrock bedecked Zink.

As Magee's lead widened, some of the drama departed the scuffle for second. Caught in slower traffic, Jim McDaniel was the member of the threesome to lose contact and his tow. From there on, Jim was firmly in fourth.

Checker flag time for Magee saw Scott make his bid to secure second. Sullivan had lost his cordiality and refused to offer the McNamara a tow, feeling Scott should play the host. Knowing the implications of Glen's refusal to be kind, Scott rolled along side a slower car and at the last instant dove through the turn with the net result a car length's margin at the end. Jim McDaniel, Ed Empink, and Dr. Talbot were all alone in their Zink's as they finished 4th, 5th, & 6th respectively. Hugh O'Riley continued the Zink parade when he secured 7th after Bill Ross spun himself back to 10th. Bob O'Connor finished his come-from-behind drive in 8th, forcing Juan Perez into 9th spot.

On hand in the winner's circle were Jack Peters and Larry Horton from VW. Jack did the honors by presenting the beautiful VW-Grand Prix trophy to John Magee, who for his efforts was \$500 richer. Bill Scott earned \$280 for his second place and the distinction of setting the fastest race lap at 1:23.6 or 86 mph. Glen Sullivan, after driving all night from IRP to compete, pocketed \$225. Jim McDaniel counted \$195 in change. Ed Empink plans to spend part of his \$155 earnings on stripes and patches for his new drivers suit. The remaining money distribution, to all entered, was perhaps the best ever authorized.

So, it was over. The inaugural automobile race at Summit Point was history. Competitors and fans trundled home over the rollercoaster roads, toward the setting sun, and the mammoth Sunday traffic jams.

In years to come, those present will look back and remember that first weekend at the Point. While now, many are looking forward to an exciting 1970 racing season in the apple orchards of West Virginia.

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John Magee of Rochester, N.Y. drove his F-A Motors Autodynamics to the winner's circle in the Oct. 5 inaugural F-V Grand Prix at Summit Point, W.Va., Speedway. (left) (Photo - VW)



John Magee (13) and Jim McDaniel (44) lead the field on to Summit Straight for the first of two heat races preceding the Oct. 5F-V GP. Magee won both times out. (below)(Photo-VW)

