

MID-AM REPORT

Seven races into the 2004 Mid-Am season is still a little early to think anyone has an unbeatable lead in their class, but some drivers have already run up some pretty handsome early margins.

Two have already passed the 60-point threshold to be listed on the Driver of the Year chart. **Loren Moore** in ITE has made all seven races, winning six of them. Down in ITC, **Nick Chinopulos** has made six of the seven, winning five. Moore has three outright wins and Chinopulos two -- the tiebreaker if more than one driver matches up on total points and Mid-Am wins. An "outright" win means he beat everyone in class that day that was on the track, not just those signed up for Mid-Am.

Spec Miata

The phenomenon of Spec Miata just keeps on. Thirty drivers registered so far! We don't have 30 drivers total in all the Production and GT classes combined. We don't have 30 in all the Formula classes. Even with SRF, we don't even have half that in all the SportsRacer classes! So far, **Bill Pemberton** (Neb) is the only driver to win two races, but he's only raced three, so **Tom Kraft** (DMV) leads on the basis of five finishes including one win, but just one point up on **Dick Faxon** (OzMt) who has one win in four finishes. Pemberton is third in points, ahead of **Charles James** (NeOk) and the most recent winner, **David Steward** (MidS), who are both tied.

Improved Touring

Paul Lerman (StL) won at MAM and ran second at Gateway to lead ITS by just three points over **Dan Crossett** (Ark). In ITA, **Timothy Finley** (StL) added two wins at MAM and Gateway to take a 5-point lead over two-time winner **Steve Bachenberg** (KC). **Chris Albin** (SIII) is atop ITB as usual, but not as comfortably as usual. He's won four for a 24-point margin over two-time winner **Patrick Findley** (MidS). The two traded wins at the two March races, but Findley didn't race again until winning May 1 at Gateway. **Scott Peterson** (KC) picked up a third IT7 win at MAM and continues to lead that class, as of course do **Loren Moore** (OzMt) in ITE and **Nick Chinopulos** (MidS) in ITC.

Production

Steve Schmidt (KC), **Ronald Davis** (Kan) and **Chuck Leighton** (OzMt) wield the early power in the Production classes. Schmidt's second win in EP came at the MAM round, the same race in which Davis in FP and Leighton GP took their third victories of the year. Also at MAM, **Loren Moore** (OzMt) became the first SP driver to score points this year. Similarly, **Rob Horrell** (MidS) remains the only points scorer in HP.

Grand Touring

The only GT-class drivers active in the past month have been **Ken Probst** (SIII), who won GT5 at Gateway for his second victory of the year, and **Cliff Koehler** (KC), who won at MAM to stand second in GT2 points behind **Dan Guterman** (NeOk). **Mary Daly** (StL) and **Ken Raley** (KC) remain tied for the GT1 lead.

Sports Racing

Jack Donnellan (Okla) won races at Hallett and Gateway to vault into the SRF lead, but just one point ahead of MAM winner **Franklin Stone** (KC). The class is so tight among the five drivers who have scored points only 12 points separates first from fifth. **Ed Smith** (StL) scored the first S2000 points this year with an MAM win. **Mike McGinley** (KC) still tops CSR.

Formula

For whatever reason, the Formula Fords, including Club Fords, have only raced at Gateway so far this year -- several at the two races there and none anywhere else. **Bryan Cohn** (StL) was runner-up to **David Livingston Jr.** (MidS) at the most recent race there, but has the points to lead FF over **Gary Payne** (StL). In Club Ford, **James Krispin** (StL) won both races to lead **Michael Dierkes** (StL). **Willard King** (KC) took a win in F/Continental to move ahead of **Patrick Donnelly** (Kan) in the standings. **Phil Gumpert** got his second F/Atlantic win at Gateway. **Nick Grapsas** (StL) used the Gateway race to score the season's first FV points.

Showroom / Touring / American Sedan

The most action has been in SSC, where **Paul Sherman** (Wich) outran **Candy Gerber** (Neb) at MAM, but a Sherman DNF earlier in the year leaves Gerber still in the points lead. **Sharon McBride** (Okla) made the first SSB noise so far at Hallett. **Scott Bettinger** (Wich) scored an AS win there but **Jeff Kopp** (KC) still leads the standings. Ditto **Mike McGinley** (KC) in T1.

The Midwest Division I.T. Tour

Two-time winners **Bill Denton** (MidS) in ITS, **Timothy Finley** (StL) in ITA, and **Chris Albin** (SIII) in ITB hold the points lead in those three classes. The other four are a bit more contested after three Tour races.

Larry Orr (MidS) leads ITC over **Nick Chinopulos** (MidS) after the Greek DNF'd at Gateway. **Loren Moore** (OzMt) has won two in ITE to lead, but **Jeff Demetri** (Neb) got the MAM win. Sandwiched between them is **John Waldbaum** (Neb).

Mark Jeffrey (Ark) is the only IT7 driver to race twice and so leads **Scott Peterson** (KC) and **Nadeem Bari** (StL) who won the last two races. It's almost identical in Spec Miata, where Gateway winner **Dick Faxon** (OzMt) took the lead over **David Harber** (MidS) and **Bill Pemberton** (Neb), who each won his only start.

--Rocky Enriken