

MID-AM REPORT

There was some concern in my mind this year at the sharp dropoff of drivers registered for the Mid-Am, but now that we can look back upon the season just concluded, it turns out that what we “lost” were only the drivers who really were never in the game anyway. More drivers met the participation requirements in 2001 than in 2000, and we have 21 new champions.

KANSAS CITY – For the second straight year, KC is home to the most Mid-Am champions, led by **Ron Lentz**, who won the always-tough Spec Racer Ford class for a third straight year after a 7-win season. He was also fourth in the Driver of the Year rankings, and one of three KC drivers with perfect 84-point scores. Also up at that level was **Ronald Davis**, the E Production winner, and **Charles Guenther** in GT3. **Bill Van Keppel** won six times in his BMW to take F Production. **Al Essig** won his second S2000 crown (the other was in 1994) from five wins. **Harlan Moore** won a fourth Super Prod race at the Gateway Bonus Race to create an unbreakable tie (with Chester Bailey) for the SP championship. Taking runner-up awards are **Kyle Ritter** in EP and **John Nelson** in S2000. Third-place honors go to **Rob Gill** in ITS, **David Long** in ITA, **Daniel Davis** in FP, and **John Hemmingson** in ITE.

ST. LOUIS – On the other side of the Show-Me State five champions reside. **Chris Flier** and **David Bryson** have been dueling all year in ITS. In five previous meetings the edge was 4-1 Bryson, but it came down to a Bonus Race showdown. Flier set a new track record as he led Bryson to the checker. They were 1-2 in the race, 1-2 in the championship, and also 5th and 8th on the Driver of the Year chart. And Bryson ended up with more points than the other for St. Louis champions -- **Mary Daly** taking GT1 for a fourth time, **Steve Willenbrink** winning F/Continental, **Donald Strathearn** taking a third clock in Club Continental, and **Tim Blythe** winning at the Bonus to take Formula Ford. **Bob Eichelberger** won FP at the Bonus to take 2nd in FP and **Tom Coppage** is runner-up in Club Ford. **Bob Briggen** takes the third-place award in ITB.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS – This little Region comes up with three champions and two of them are **Chris Albin**. Yes, he is first on the Driver of the Year list again, winning a ninth ITB championship with 15 race wins, but then he turned the car into a GP racer (changed the doors and the grille) five times and took that class also by winning the season’s last five races. So he also was 7th on the DotY chart, right behind **Bob Stretch**, the ITA champion for a second straight year. **Bill Briggen** took 2nd in ITB

MID-SOUTH – The new Spec Mista class was one of the toughest, but **Don Wiseman** came out on top after seven wins. It is Wiseman’s fourth Mid-Am clock. He has three others from SSC championships. **Phil Harris** won five times, including the Bonus Race, to take ITC.

NEBRASKA – **Jeff Demetri** dominated ITE this year with his winged Mustang, winning seven times. In American Sedan, **Ted Johnson** won five for his second Mid-Am championship.

OZARK MOUNTAIN – **Chris Ingram** won three times in six starts to take the Club Ford laurels. One has to feel for two Ozark drivers who were runners-up in arguably the toughest two classes in the series. Both **Court Whitlock** in G Production and **Dick Faxon** in Spec Miata came to the Bonus Race tied for the points lead, but placed second in that contest to end up runner-up in their classes. **Michael Eden** took home third-place honors in E Prod.

WICHITA – **Chester Bailey** won four times in Super Production for his second straight championship, but this year has to share it with Harlan Moore as the two never raced each other. **Mitch Johnson** was runner-up in ITA and ranked ninth on the DotY list. **Craig Voigt** won twice in his Porsche 944S2 to be the runner-up in ITE. **Scott Bettinger** drove David Guinn's Mustang in American Sedan, winning two to place second in class.

NEOKLA – **Bob Hancock** became the first to win a Mid-Am championship in Formula Mazda after five wins. **Chuck Gillis** was the F/Continental runner-up.

KANSAS – **Ken Tripkos** and **Bill Allman** ran the Bonus Race and got points for 2nd and 3rd in SRF. **D.J. Manis** didn't make the Bonus Race and fell to 2nd in ITC.

SALINA – A gearbox full of neutrals on the 2nd lap of the Bonus Race left your pointskeeper third in G Production.

–Rocky Entriken