

## MID-AM REPORT

### NOVEMBER 2004

**C**hris Albin (Sill) wasn't supposed to win Driver of the Year this year. It wasn't even in his plans. What he wanted to do was be the presenter, passing the torch to a successor.

It looked like the winner would be **Loren Moore** (OzMt), who had run 14 of the first 15 races in his ITE Corvette, winning all but one. But romance moved in and a honeymoon at Graceland did not fit into the plans. Moore missed the Bonus race at Memphis and was stuck at 72 points.

Right behind Moore in the standings was **Ron Davis** (Kan) with 10 wins after taking his 2-time EP champ MGB to FP this year. But Davis was not on the grid at Memphis either.

Albin was there, shaking down a brand new ITB Volkswagen (but running his old nail in the race). He won to boost his score to the max possible 84. Only one other driver at Memphis would match that total -- ITC champ **Nick Chinopulos** (MidS). At season's end Albin had 10 wins to 7 for Nick the Greek and his 10th Driver of the Year honor. A dozen drivers made the final list, all earning 60 or more points with at least four outright wins.

**Loren Moore** will have to be satisfied with being this year's only double champion. In addition to dominating ITE, he also raced and won in Super Production.

Two classes ended in ties for first place with tiebreakers deciding them. The toughest had to be in the new IT7 class, split out from ITA this year. Going into the Bonus Race, **Scott Peterson** (KC) led over **Lynn Lamb** (Okla) and **Mark Jeffery** (Ark) -- 69-62-54. But Peterson did not make the trip to Memphis, nor did he go to the season-ending doubleheader at Gateway. Lamb and Jeffery did. Jeffery won the Bonus and went to St. Louis leading 78-75. **Nadeem Bari** won the Saturday race which was no points help to either Lamb or Jeffery. On Sunday Lamb got past Bari for the win and a 78-78 tie. Tiebreaker to Lamb, 5 wins to 4 for Jeffery.

In ITS **Bob Gill** (KC) applied the Peterson strategy also, but it worked for him. Before Memphis he had 7 wins for the max possible 72 points. **Paul Lerman** (StL) was in second at 53 while **Jack Schultz** (OzMt) was down in 5th at 48 and **Bill Denton** (MidS) was 6th at 36. Gill did not run the last three races. Denton did. He won the Bonus ahead of Schultz and went to St. Louis two points behind Schultz. Ah, if only he could have won at Gateway. Both days there the finish was Lerman-Denton-Schultz and Denton ended in a 72-point tie with Gill. Gill's 7 wins to Denton's 2 was the difference.

The ongoing phenomenon that is Spec Miata concluded with little change at the top, but it took some fierce racing to keep it that way. **Charlie James** (NeOk) led **Tom Kraft** (DMV) 63-62 going to the Bonus. **David Harber** (MidS) won there and vaulted himself from 5th to 3rd, while James and Kraft finished 3rd and 4th to take a 68-67 score to Gateway. James won the first day and the score became 71-69. On Sunday Kraft was a DNF while James won for a fifth time to boost his score to 74. Thirty-three drivers registered in SM this year, 20 of them eligible at season's end. Other than Improved Touring, no other *CATEGORY* had 33 drivers registered.

Here's a rundown of each Region's award winners:

**KANSAS CITY REGION** tops the tally again with five champions and 12 award winners led by ITA champ **Bob Gill**, 9th on the DotY chart. **Jeff Kopp** won American Sedan with 81 points. Also at 72 were ITA champ **Steve Bachenberg** and F/Atlantic winner **Jason Mabee**, first to win in Mid-Am with a Formula SCCA car. **Gary Phillips** scored five times to win F/Mazda. Taking second place awards are **Steve Schmidt** in EP, **Willard King** in Club Continental, **James Lorenzetti** in ITA, and **O.L. Kinney** in SRF one point ahead of **Franklin Stone** who is one of three picking up third-place awards. Also finishing third were **Jarold Boettcher** in ITC and **Scott Peterson** in IT7.

**ST. LOUIS REGION** claims four champions with **Mary Daly** atop the GT1 list for a fifth time. **Gary Payne** took Formula Ford. **Ed Smith** got his needed fourth finish in the very last race to win S2000. St. Louis went 1-2 in Club Ford, **James Krispin** ahead of **Michael Dierkes**. Also taking second was **Bob Eichelberger** in FP. Third-place awards go to **Paul Lerman** in ITS and **Dennis Schneider**, who needed both Gateway races to qualify in AS.

**MID-SOUTH REGION** has five award winners, led by ITC champion and DotY runner-up **Nick Chinopulos**. Runner-up awards go to **Patrick Findley** in ITB, **Bill Denton** in ITS and **Larry Orr** in ITC. **David Harber** took third in Spec Miata.

**OZARK MOUNTAIN REGION** has three champions and two of them are **Loren Moore**, winning both ITE and SP. **Forrest Tindall** came out on top of EP this year.

**OKLAHOMA REGION** had the drivers 3rd and 4th in the Driver of the Year standings, SRF champion **Jack Donnellan** and IT7 champ **Lynn Lamb**. **Russ Neely** took 3rd in ITB.

**NEBRASKA REGION** is led by SSC champion **Candy Gerber**. Placing 2-3 in ITE were **Buddy Cisar** and **John Waldbaum**

**NEOKLA REGION'S** **Charles James**, the Spec Miata champ, was 5th in the Driver of the Year rankings. **Donald Tessier** took the F/Continental crown.

**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS REGION** has a familiar name and a new one as its champions. **Chris Albin** won ITB for a record 12th straight year. It is one in a row for **Ken Probst**, racing in GT5.

**KANSAS REGION'S** **Ronald Davis** won his third championship, his second in a row, but his first in FP, all in the same MGB that raced in EP previously. The revived Club Continental class was taken by **Patrick Donnelly**, who won Club Ford a year ago.

**ARKANSAS REGION'S Mark Jeffery**, ITA champ last year, came out on the wrong end of that tie in IT7 to take the second-place award.

**DES MOINES VALLEY'S Tom Kraft** took second place in that hard-fought Spec Miata class.

**WICHITA REGION'S Scott Bettinger** was second in AS in the Bonus Race and that gave him second in the championship.

In all, 21 championships were won this year. Most were won by first-time champions -- some new face, some drivers who had been chasing the dream for a few years. Only five were won by former champions and two of those won for the first time in new classes.

*--Rocky Entriken*