

MID-AM AND IT TOUR REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2004

Only one race remains, next month at MAM, before the double-points Bonus Race at Memphis. After that the double-regional at Gateway (regular points both days) will conclude the 2004 Mid-Am Championship. Drivers with three finishes need to run MAM to qualify for the bonus, those with just two finishes so far can still qualify for the championship but can't get the bonus.

PRODUCTION -- SP: **Loren Moore** (OzMt) has a solid lead, not untouchable but solid. ~~ EP: In the best Production battle, **Forrest Tindall** (OzMt) leads **Steve Schmidt** (KC) by 12. If **Court Whitlock** (OzMt) and **Michael Eden** (OzMt) both run MAM, they qualify for the bonus and it could be a 4-way shootout. ~~ FP: **Ronald Davis** (Kan) with nine wins almost has it locked. **Bob Eichelberger** (StL) or **Philip Leonard** (KC) would have to win all four remaining races to take it away. ~~ GP: **Chuck Leighton** (OzMt) has it won, if he does not go to the Runoffs.

GRAND TOURING -- GT1: For **Mary Daly** (StL) to get beat, **Ken Raley** would have to sweep the four remaining races. ~~ GT2: **Dan Guterman** (NeOk) and **Cliff Koehler** (KC) are tied at 36 points, three races each. Each needs MAM to earn double points at the Bonus. Both need one more finish somewhere even to qualify. **Ward Herst** (StL) could still sneak in with Memphis and Gateway scores. ~~ GT5: **Ken Probst** (Sill) just needs one more finish.

SPORTSRACING -- S2000: **Ed Smith** (StL) also just needs one more finish. ~~ SRF: Barn-burner! **Frank Stone** (KC) has won six but has lost three too. **Jack Donnellan** (Okla) and **O.L. Kinney** (KC) are tied, just six behind Stone. **Rob Sherwood** (StL) and **Jeff Stehney** (KC) are not out of it yet either with the impact the Bonus Race could have on this quintet.

FORMULA -- FA: **Jason Mabee** (KC) has it won unless **Phil Gumpert** wins all four remaining races and Mabee skips the Bonus. ~~ FC: **Donald Tessler** (NeOk) needs one more finish to qualify. ~~ CC: **Willard King** (KC) has opened up a 21-point lead on **Patrick Donnelly** (Kan), but with Bonus points Donnelly, who has won every direct matchup, is not out of it yet. FM: **Gary Phillips** (KC) won his fifth race at HPT and has the class locked. ~~ FF: At last someone ran somewhere besides Gateway! **Gary Payne** visited MAM and became the only qualified driver. ~~ CF: Ditto here, but double. **James Krispin** (StL) and **Michael Dierkes** (StL) trekked to HPT for their usual 1-2 finish. It's not done yet. ~~ FV: **Nick Grapsas** (StL) needs one more finish.

STREET TIRES -- AS: **Jeff Kopp** (KC) opened a 12-point lead on **Scott Bettinger** (Wich) at HPT. Will they meet at the Bonus? ~~ T1: **Mike McGinley** (KC) has it won. ~~ SSC: **Candy Gerber** (Neb) has it won after both of her competitors broke past the barrier of 36 National points at MAM and HPT.

SPEC MIATA -- **Charles James** (NeOk) won at HPT while **Tom Kraft** (DMV) took a DNF, moving James one point past Kraft on the chart. **Dick Faxon** (OzMt) is very much still in the mix, as is **Bill Pemberton** (Neb) and **David Harber** (MidS). **Ryan Pemberton** (Neb) only has three finishes, but a good finish at MAM would put him into the Bonus Race dance too.

IMPROVED TOURING -- ITS: **Bob Gill** (KC) has a perfect [so far] 72 points. Small comfort with **Dan Crossett** (Ark), **J.J. Perodeau** (Okla) and **Jack Schultz** (OzMt) covered by just 2 points and within Bonus Race range. ~~ ITA: **Steven Bachenberg** (KC) has a solid, but not unbeatable, lead. **James Lorenzetti** (KC) threatens. ~~ ITB: **Chris Albin** (Sill) leads, but not a done deal. The Bonus Race is at the home track of **Patrick Findley** (MidS), just 6 points behind. ~~ ITC: **Nick Chinopulos** (MidS) could use some home-track sugar too. **Jarold Boettcher** (KC) is 17 behind but a Bonus Race win with Chinopulos 2nd would put Boettcher up by 1. **Larry Orr** (MidS) lurks also. ~~ ITE: **Loren Moore** (OzMt) has been making a statement all year, now with 13 victories in hand in his quest for Driver of the Year. But he dare not stumble at the Bonus Race. But for the championship he about has it locked. **Buddy Cisar** (Neb) and **John Waldbaum** (Neb) would need a Bonus win and some others to toss lower scores to catch Moore. ~~ IT7: **Scott Peterson** (KC) turned two quick wins at MAM and HPT to go 15-up on **Mark Jeffery** (Ark). But either Jeffery or **Lynn Lamb** (Okla) could win the Bonus and one other and still give Peterson fits.

--Rocky Entriken

THE I.T. TOUR REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2004

Hearthland Park was the last race of the season. **John Schultz** and **Chris Albin**, both second in class, won their races to claim I.T. Tour gold medallions. Several other medals also changed hands on the Labor Day weekend.

Schultz (Kan) won ITC in a heartbreaker for **Nick Chinopulos** (MidS) who made the long haul up from Memphis only to finish 4th and end up in a 48-point tie for the gold medal. Nick the Greek has won twice this year, but HPT was the fourth win for Schultz and that was the tiebreaker. **Jarold Boettcher** (KC) finished 2nd on the track to take the bronze away from **Larry Orr** (MidS).

Albin (Sill) did not do his usual run-every-race schedule this year in ITB, and so won only his fifth Tour race of the season. Meanwhile, **Patrick Findley** (MidS) did not make the trek from Memphis and slipped to silver ahead of **Russ Neely** (Okla), who had bronze locked.

Steve Bachenberg (KC) raced to second place at HPT and became the only ITA driver to reach the 3-race minimum, winning the gold medal.

In ITS, **Jack Schultz** (OzMt -- different Schultz) finished 2nd at HPT and passed **Paul Lerman** (StL) for the silver medallion. **Bill Denton** (MidS) did not need to make the long cross-Missouri haul as he had the gold sewed up. **Chuck Davis** (KC) made his first Tour appearance, winning in the first Acura to try this series - a portent for 2005?

The top places in ITE were virtually a done deal. **Loren Moore** (OzMt) had it won with six victories. **John Waldbaum** (Neb) was not totally secure for silver, but neither of his closest challengers raced. **Buddy Cisar** did, and won for the first time this year. That put him in a tie with **Andy Ruggiero** (KC), who finished 3rd on the track, and Cisar's victory was the tiebreaker for the bronze.

Mark Jeffery (Ark) was untouchable for the IT7 gold, but silver was up for grabs and **Lynn Lamb** (Okla) came to grab it. His race win moved him past **Nadeem Bari** (StL), who settled for bronze.

The final headcount in Spec Miata was 56 drivers on the points list, but at the top a familiar name -- **Dick Faxon** (OzMt), for a fourth time. When he won the first-ever Spec Miata title, he beat eight guys. Finishing 1-2 for the second straight race was the father-son team of **Bill and Ryan Pemberton** (Neb). Ryan was first across the line, but those two second-place finishes gave Bill the silver while Ryan passed **Tom Kraft** (DMV) to take the bronze. -- *Rocky Entriken*