

FORMULA FORD RACING IN AMERICA

*Essays on Life And
Good Times at 20*

By Steve Nickless

Formula Ford racing will celebrate an important anniversary in spring '89—20 years of SCCA National racing. On March 23, 1969, Californian Jules Williams romped to victory in the newly recognized Formula Ford class in a National at Willow Springs. The Cal Club event on the fast 2.5-mile circuit at the threshold of the California high desert was the first National of the '69 season and, in FF, Williams' green Lotus 51 bested 10 other Cortina-powered spaceframe single-seaters to the flag. The American club racing scene was never to be quite the same again.

Formula Ford had gotten off to a rousing start in England during the summer of 1967. Conceived as a low-maintenance racing school class, FF's low price of admission and "F3 feel" would quickly attract the interest of hundreds of drivers and a dozen chassis manufacturers.

The class spread like wildfire to the Euro-



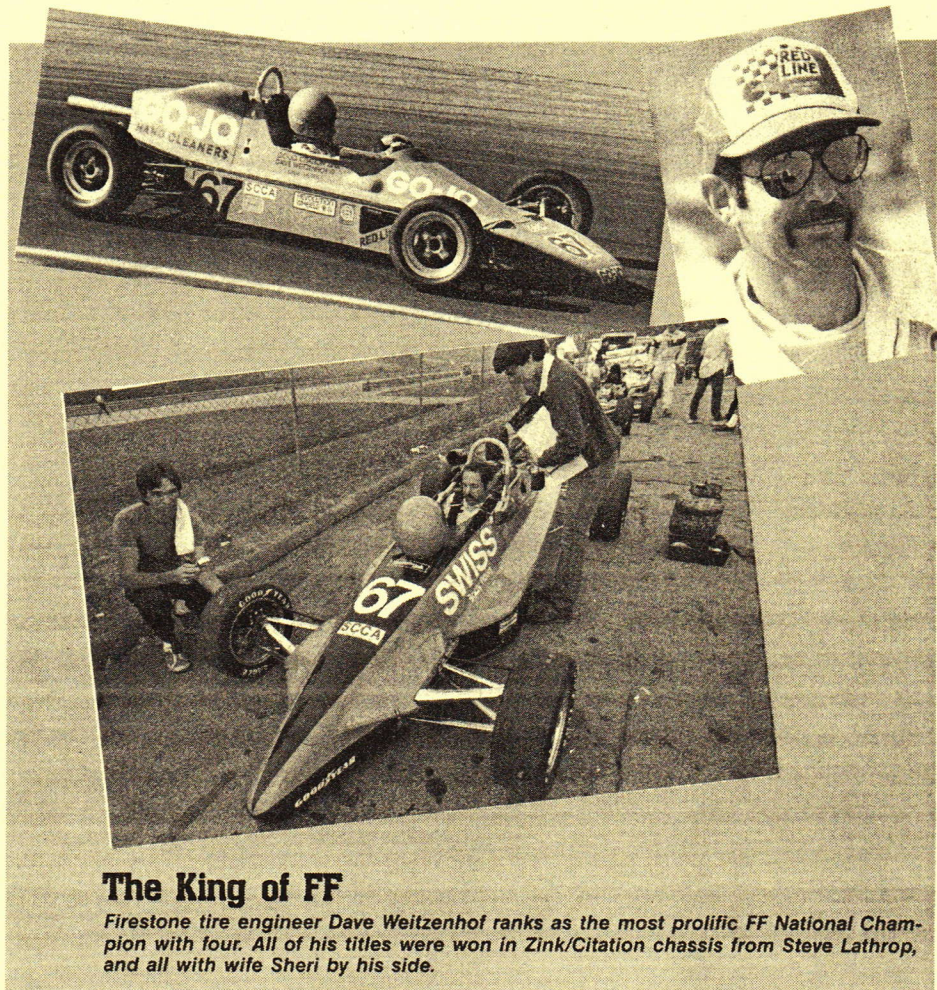
pean continent and Scandinavia, but it was a harder sell in an America which had a very healthy Formula Vee and an orientation toward fenders on its entry level road racing cars that was more pronounced than in Europe.

The number of FFs which began filling up Formula B fields in '68, and a letter-writing campaign to the SCCA's Board of Governors spearheaded by driver/businessmen like Fred Stevenson, however, had an effect, and both the Comp Board and the Governors soon (mid-fall) resolved in favor of a separate, new class for '69.

A wonderful decision: Formula Ford has had more impact on the sport worldwide than any class other than Formula 1, quickly overtaking and leapfrogging Formula Vee which had a 10-year head start. Only Sports Renault—which coincidentally set about addressing the low-cost, entry-level void filled by FF itself years before—brought with it the three-digit sales numbers enjoyed over the years by several FF manufacturers.

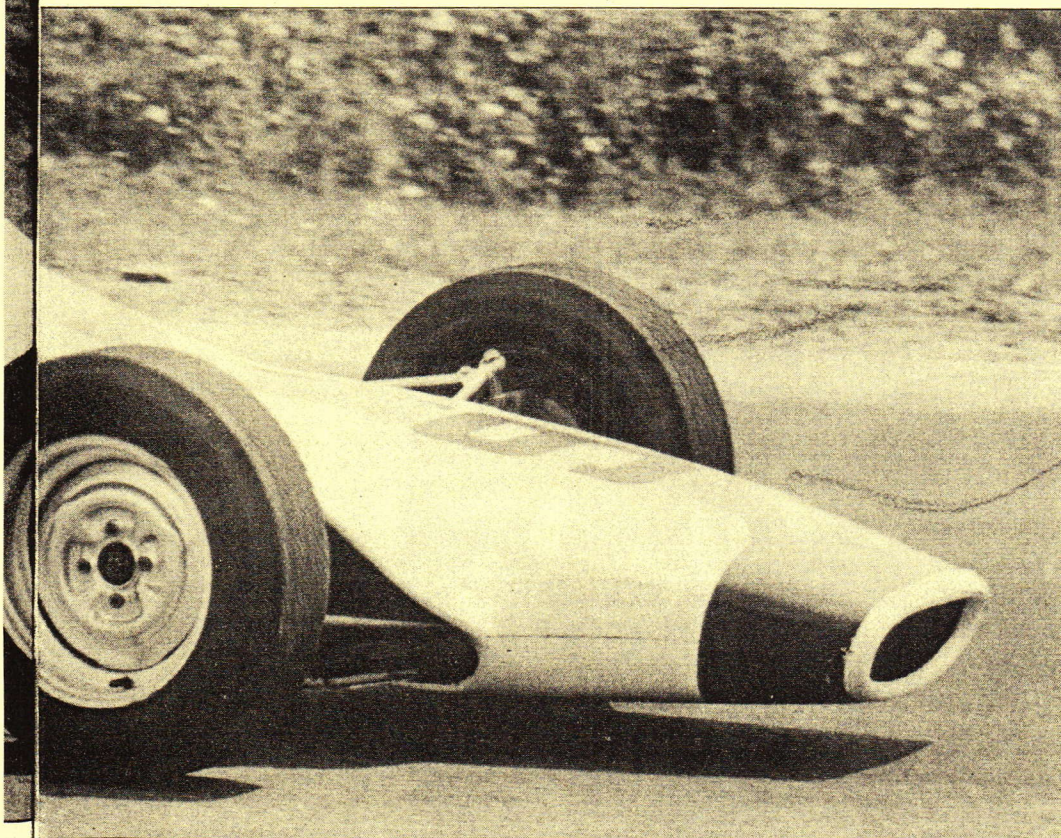
In 1977, author Nick Brittan guesstimated in *The Formula Ford Book*, published by Patrick Stephens Ltd., that over 4000 FF chassis had been constructed in the class' first decade—a startling number. While the '80s have brought considerably more "entry level!" class competition, and slowed FF's growth dramatically, it's reasonable to assume that another 2000 Fords have been sold since 1977.

Which means that if the new resurgence of interest now being observed fully



The King of FF

Firestone tire engineer Dave Weitzenhof ranks as the most prolific FF National Champion with four. All of his titles were won in Zink/Citation chassis from Steve Lathrop, and all with wife Sheri by his side.



blossoms, we may yet live to see the 10,000th Formula Ford emerge from a quiet workshop in England or the U.S. (although such is the chaos of the class' history that no one will be able to celebrate the occasion with any accuracy).

Not bad for a racing class which, according to legend, was conceived by two bored businessmen waiting on a Sunday afternoon for a London bar to open...

Strictly Personal

Like thousands of others, I have a deep personal attachment to Formula Ford racing. The first Fords I saw—at Connecticut's Thompson Speedway in '71—made an indelible impression on a teenager who'd only just gotten a weekend job as gofer for a tiny Formula Vee manufacturer. I watched Caldwells and Merlyns leap the ridge separating the road course from Thompson's banked oval—real race cars, they were, with proper adjustable independent suspension. The days when Fred Stevenson could sell you a new race-ready Lotus for under \$3,000 were gone but not far gone; you could still buy a competitive used Ford ▷

The First Champion: Skip Barber not only won the first two titles, but also remains the only FF champ to reach Formula 1.

FORMULA FORD

CONTINUED

for that. Vees, despite the incredibly close racing they provided, lost their magic for me.

Four years later, my impatience won out. I quit college and traded my tuition refund check (plus all the overtime earnings I could amass busting tires at Sears) for half of a Crossle 16F and set off after a dream.

(Does the plot sound familiar to anyone? I'll bet...)

It soon transpired that I was neither talented enough nor ambitious enough to advance beyond a Regional license. At Bridgehampton, my SCCA Drivers School instructor Bruce MacInnes strolled over early on and asked cheerfully, "You the guy in the Crossle? Yeah? Well, you're probably going to die in the accident you're going to have...!"

No, I wasn't very good. But I learned some things about myself that bitter cold weekend in March; I discovered character and desire and confidence all at once in those blind, fast, downhill corners at the end of Bridgehampton's pit straight. And I didn't crash at Bridgehampton until my second SCCA school...

The Promise

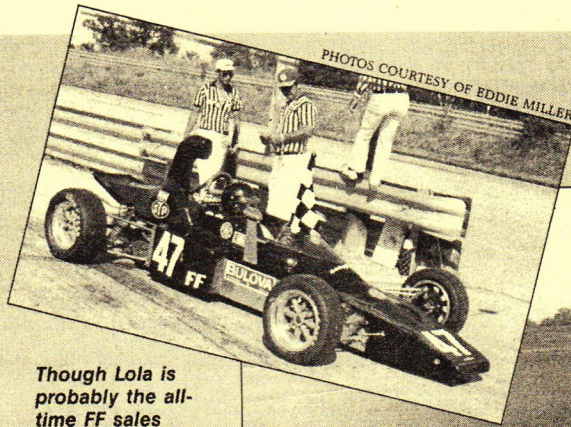
Bruce MacInnes was one of FF's best, a driver who could dominate on the strength of an utterly unique mixture of skill, humor, aggression and an intuitive understanding of his competitors' personality. He could use his rivals' own seriousness as a weapon like no one I've seen since, and found ways to punish them psychologically—as often before the race as during.

Great as he was (and is!), MacInnes would fall victim to the "Formula Ford promise."

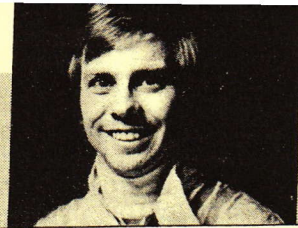
To understand fully FF's impact and significance, it's important to understand this unwritten but very real "promise" which took root as early as fall 1968, with Formula Ford just a year old. As befits a driver training class, it wasn't the cars but a driver grabbing all the European headlines in '68: Australian Tim Schenken had an awesome season, winning 28 of 33 races in a Merlyn Mk11 and Mk11A with a Chris Steele engine. The trade journals were full of stories about Schenken's Formula 1 potential and just two years later he proved the stories correct, making an F1 debut with a De Tomaso chassis in 1970.

Schenken was the first and initiated FF's reputation as a spawning ground for Grand Prix talent. When Emerson Fittipaldi won the 1972 World Championship after making a brief stopover in FF on his way from karts to Gold Leaf Team Lotus 72, the "proof" was in.

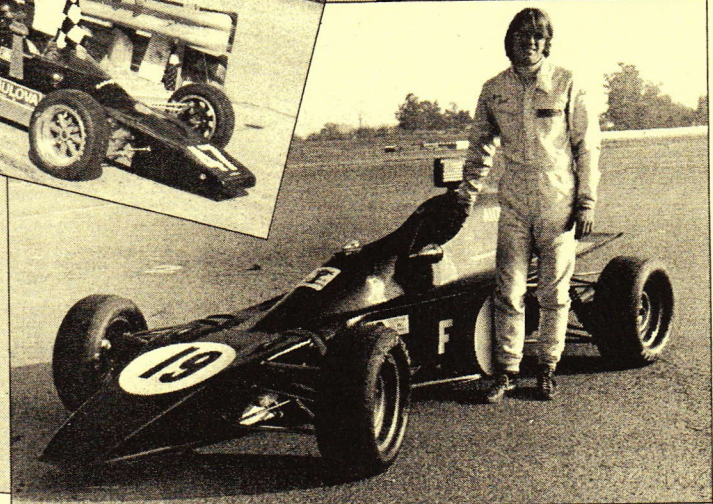
The early to mid-'70s were Formula Ford
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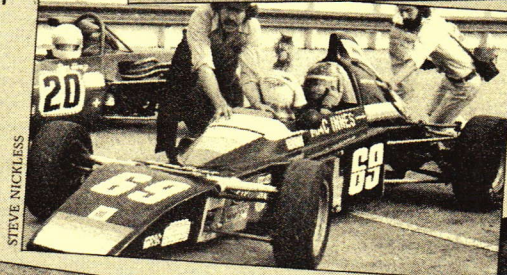
PHOTOS COURTESY OF EDDIE MILLER



Though Lola is probably the all-time FF sales leader, two-time champ "Fast Eddie" Miller (ABOVE AND TOP RIGHT) scored the British marque's lone championship win in 1974. Californian Bob Earl (RIGHT) won with break-through ADF in 1973.

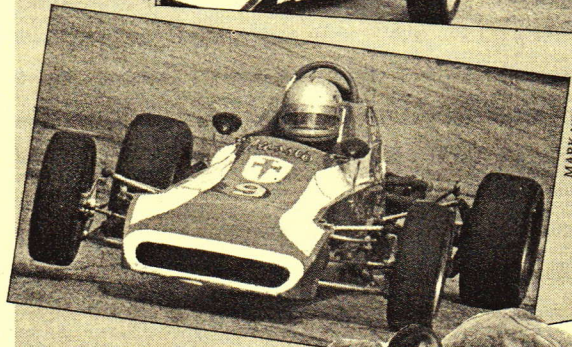


JIM HANSEN

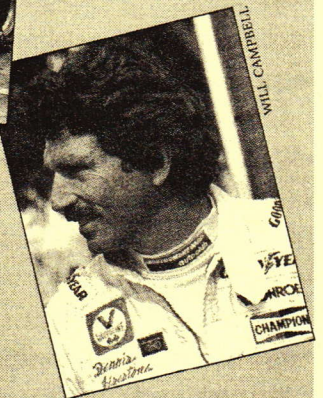


STEVE NICKLESS

Perennial FF front runner Bruce MacInnes with his trusty mascot Seymour the Chicken.



MARK WEBER



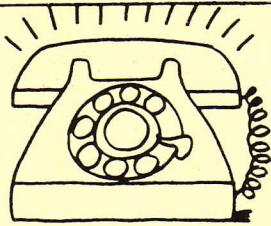
WILL CAMPBELL

The Golden Age

California flash Dennis Firestone (ABOVE) won Crossle's only title with 30F in 1976. Although always a threat, William "The Fox" Henderson (ABOVE LEFT) never won the National crown. Here he corners one of all-time best FFs, Crossle's 35F. Braintrust for the '78 championship, John Ward, David Loring and Dan Gurney discuss the Eagle FF (LEFT).



DAVID HAYS



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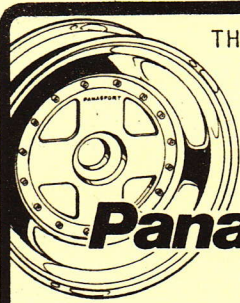
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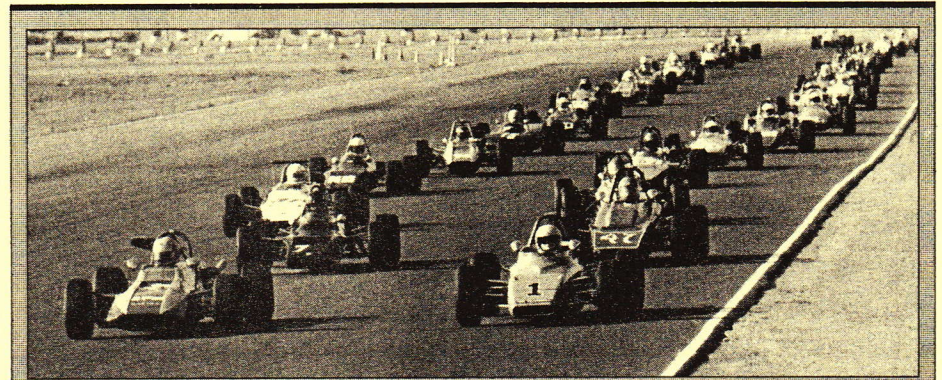
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racing's glory years, especially in America. The various energy crises are now blamed for the disappearance of several notable (and otherwise) FF marques, but a shakeout had been in the wind anyway. Those firms that weathered the energy drought found a

steady stream of willing buyers for cars beginning to approach the \$5,000 threshold.

The reason was this "promise" built in to every chassis sold: Every FF came with a promise that here begins the path to racing stardom. It's easy to report now that the statistics don't bear that out; that it was more often than not a false promise; that the promise was without guarantee and therefore no promise at all.

It's easy to say now that the promise was a lie—here's 20 years worth of data and a long, long list of FF stars who never made it. But... I still believe the promise!



STEVEN MAYER

March 25-26, 1989

Racing Reunion Re-lives Glory Days: 20th Anniversary Formula Ford Festival

Virtually 20 years to the day of the first American National Formula Ford race, and on the site of that historic event, *SportsCar* magazine will present the 20th Anniversary Formula Ford Festival. The March 25-26, 1989 event will be sanctioned by the California Sports Car Club region of the SCCA, and will include five race groups: Vintage Ford; Spec Ford; Formula Ford; Sports 2000, Club Sports 2000 and FF2000; and Toyota Super Production.

The program will also feature an Exhibition of selected FF, SF and VF cars for parade laps. A special effort is being made to lure as many past FF National Champions as possible to the event, and entrants are being encouraged to allow these former National Champs and other FF luminaries to make demonstration runs in their cars.

The Vintage FF race (for cars built before 1973) will run under an SCCA Vintage sanction, and holders of Vintage racing licenses will be allowed to compete.

The Spec Ford races will include older FFs that meet any of the Cal Club, San Francisco or San Diego region Spec Ford rules, and will include several sub-classes.

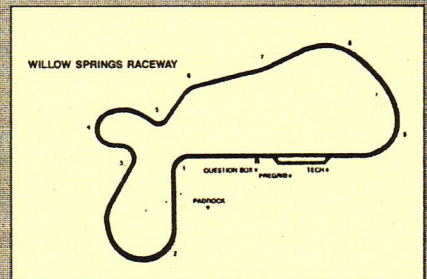
An interesting addition to the feature event for present day Formula Fords, which will be billed as the "20th Anniversary Formula Ford Race", is a sub-class for all pre-'84 Formula Fords (non-Swifts).

Entry fee for the Festival is \$100. With the multiple race format encouraging the sharing of cars, an additional \$50 entry fee will be required for extra drivers.

All past FF National Champions are asked to call Paul White at (714) 633-6672 to discuss their possible participation in the event.

For Festival entry information and supplemental regulations, please write or call Cal Club,

12444 Victory Blvd., Ste. 405A, North Hollywood, CA 91606 (818) 508-7811, regarding all classes except Vintage Ford, for which Vern Jacques (619) 429-1958 should be contacted.



Tentative Event Schedule
20th Anniversary Formula Ford Festival
March 25-26, 1989

Saturday, March 25

7 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration and Tech
8 a.m. 15-minute practice sessions in group order
15-minute qualifying sessions in group order
LUNCH
Exhibition—15-minute practice
8-lap "English style" sprint races, Groups 1-4
Party/Car Show/Group Photo

Sunday, March 26

7 a.m. to 10 a.m. Registration and Tech
8 a.m. 15-minute warmup sessions, Groups 1-5
8-lap qualifying heats, Groups 1-4
Exhibition—15-minute lapping parade
LUNCH
15-lap races, VF, SF, 2000
Toyota Super Production Race, 20 laps
21-lap Feature Event:
20th Anniversary FF Race

And, more importantly: I bet Bruce MacInnes still believes...

Credit Where Credit Is Due

We're in the era of the "spec car" series (Sports Renault, Corvette Challenge, etc.). And when we look around, all we see is one-marque domination of single-seater racing (McLaren Honda F1, Ralt then Swift Atlantics, Ralt Super Vee, Swift FF, etc.). And the sport has perhaps never been healthier. Thus it may be hard to fathom why one of the strengths of Formula Ford racing in the '70s was the doubt about which car and engine to buy!

But make no mistake: The fierce rivalry between chassis constructors and importers, and the competition between engine tuners had a lot to do with Formula Ford's success in America.

Paul White, whose corporate personage as Automotive Developments was a prime mover of both the ADF and Swift FF projects, helped me understand this (but please don't blame him if the hypothesis is incorrect): Though Formula Ford has always been "relatively inexpensive," the "relative-to-what?" factor has bounced up and down a lot, and it's true to say that many of the most talented FF drivers over the years probably couldn't have afforded to do it if they'd stopped to think for a minute.

Into that financial breach in Europe, particularly England, stepped hundreds of small businesses which, in exchange for a few stickers on the cars, doled out some small amount of sponsorship money to hundreds of drivers with otherwise small racing budgets—ofttimes barely enough money for a good meal, but oftentimes that was the difference between racing and quitting.

For some reason, probably related to an enormous geography, that assistance from the business community never happened in the U.S. (It's still tough for an American FF racer to generate small amounts of sponsorship.) The enormous vacuum was filled in the '70s by... ah, you've gotten the connection too: by the chassis constructors and importers, and by the engine tuners. Parts, engines, cars, there was a lot of activity in the '70s—cars and components "on loan," "sold for \$1," "the works car," "the development car," "the development engine."

Many FF constructors and importers could no more afford to play the game than the racers they were helping, and more than a few met with financial disaster, but optimism and adrenaline got a lot of builders, retailers, tuners, mechanics and drivers through.

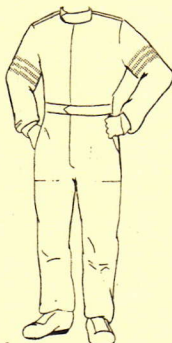
Those of us who had to pay for our racing—the majority, certainly; don't get the wrong impression—debated the relative merits of cars and engines constantly. Everyone who made their choice was quickly riddled with fierce doubt, but the sheer number of choices had a lot to do with FF's success here.

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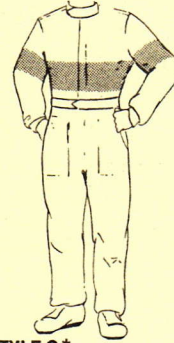
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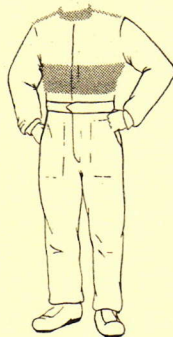


STYLE B
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STYLE C*
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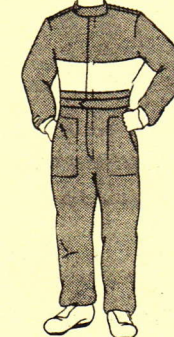
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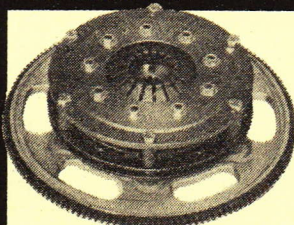
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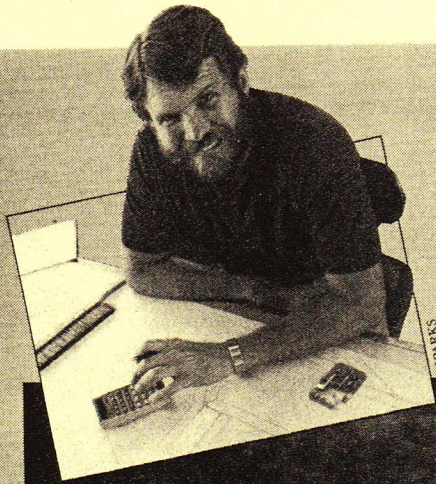


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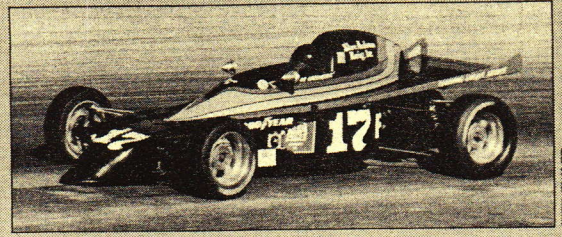
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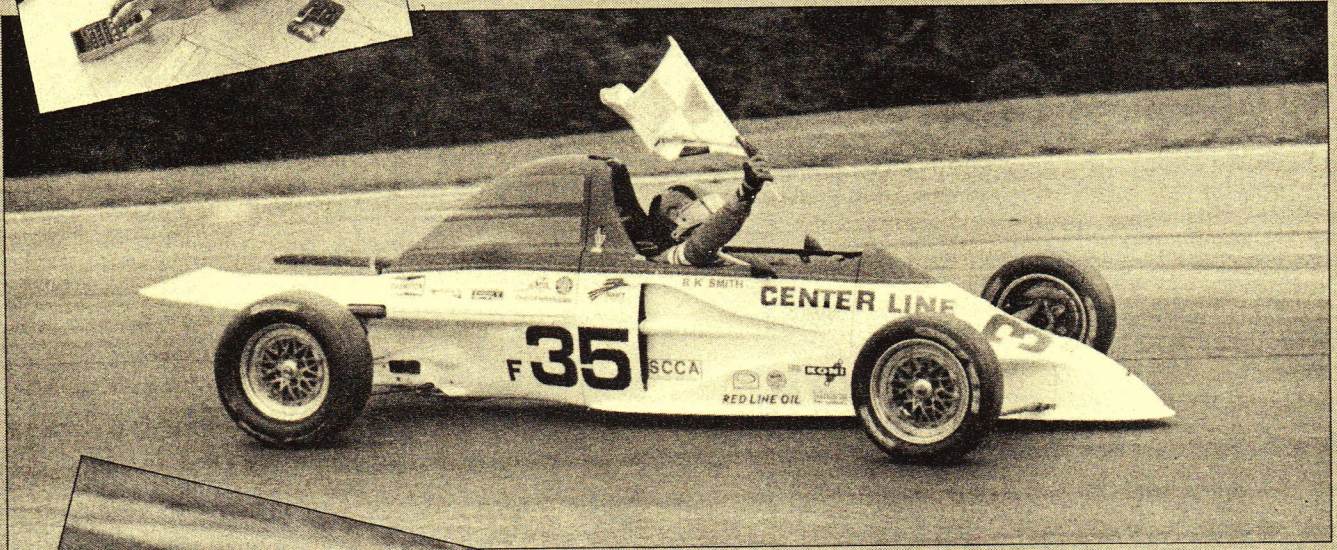
In 1973, master designer David Bruns (LEFT) created ADF MkII in which two-time titlist Bob Lobenberg won his first crown in 1980 (RIGHT), followed it a decade later with dominant Swift DB-1 (BELOW) that carried partner R.K. Smith to '83 championship.



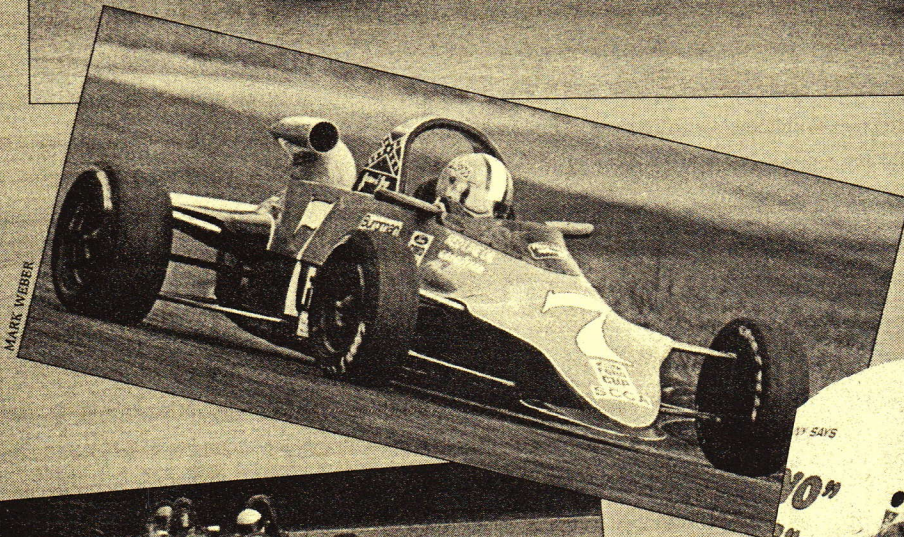
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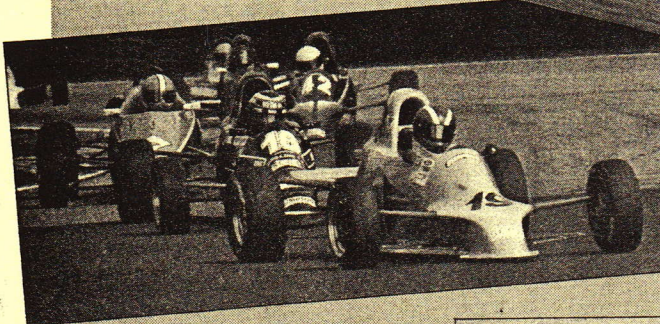


JIM ALVIS



MARK WEBER

The only victory for an English chassis in '80s came in 1984, courtesy of Jackson Yonge's disputed win with Reynard 84FF (LEFT).

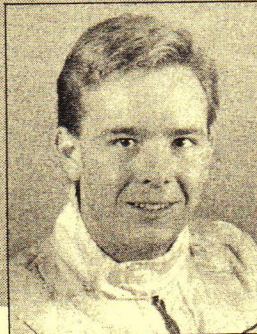


KEN BROWN



JANE SHAW

Young California drivers have dominated the championship in recent years, all driving Swifts. Scott Atchison (ABOVE) won in 1985, while Jim Vasser Jr. (RIGHT) did the honors for '86. Reigning king Kenny Hendrick (FAR RIGHT) was born the same year—1969—as Formula Ford.



DICK JOHNSON

FORMULA FORD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

On Your Marque

Lotus had the 14-car grid to itself in the very first Formula Ford race (held at Brands Hatch, England on July 2, 1967), but the next constructor on the scene—Alexis, though since the FF project had been funded by the Jim Russell School the car was called "Russell-Alexis"—went on a winning spree in August and sold as many cars in that first year.

By spring '68, when Americans first began to notice, the FF manufacturing gold rush was on: There were nine different marques on the grid for the F1 Race of Champions FF supporting event in March, and within 12 months a dozen more FF prototypes would bow.

Tim Schenken was the FF Star of the Year and his 28 victory romps focused attention on Merlyn's Mk11, a chassis the first "mass-production" American-built FF—Autodynamics' Caldwell D9—closely resembles. Very closely resembles.

The rush for market share and the focus on "low cost" kept innovation to a minimum in Formula Ford's first few seasons. The first FF—Lotus 51—was essen-

tially a type 31 Formula 3 car (which in turn was essentially a 22...) fitted with a 1500cc production engine instead of 1-liter F3 race motor. Spaceframe F3 cars were popular initially, and everyone copied from everyone else or used the same suppliers—Arch Motors for frames, Specialised Mouldings for bodywork, etc.—because buyers wanted cars "Right Now."

As FF caught on in America, examples of just about everything seen in Europe made their way across the Atlantic. Jules Williams raced a Lotus 51 in FB in '68 and to victory in the first American FF National race in '69 but he didn't go to the Runoffs. They were held at Daytona that year, and the race was won by Skip Barber who'd mopped up in the Northeast driving the Caldwell D9 prototype. (Skip claimed his first National Championship despite starting last in his spare after his pole-winner was wrecked on Saturday morning; Caldwell was an even bigger winner, selling 55 D9s and 48 of the lightly modified D9Bs over three seasons.)

There were seven different marques represented at the first FF Runoffs race, and four different marques in the top five.

In 1970, Barber won the Runoffs again—hosted by Road Atlanta for the first time—driving a "custom-made" Italian Tecno F3 chassis. Royale probably had the best "production" FF car there that year—James King qualified his RP3 on the pole and Bill Scott finished second in a similar car—but there

were no fewer than five different marques in the top six.

In '71, Titan began to make inroads. Builder Roy Thomas offered a good car (the long-wheelbase Mk6A was very stiff, exceptionally quick and comfortable in the fast corners of the southeastern and western circuits), a good engine (remember the Titan Gold Seal?), and had two aggressive importers (Fred Opert and Pierre Phillips who combined to sell over 150 Titans from '70 to '75).

Titan won the '71 Runoffs—Doug Shierston Racing's Jim Harrell triumphed over the late Gordon Smiley (Merlyn Mk20)—and almost the '72 Runoffs. Californian Boyd Pearce took pole but fell out of the lead when a misrouted fuel line chafed through, handing victory to Eddie Miller in a Hawke DL2B. There were six different marques in the '72 FF Runoffs top six!

Titan's purposeful new Mk6C finished second, fourth and seventh at the '73 Runoffs, but the advanced American-built ADF won the race—and played havoc with the FF market that winter. A lot of really good new FFs debuted between fall '73 and spring '74, the Mk6C Titan, Lola's stunning T-340, Crossle's sensible 25F and Zink's sturdy Z10 atop the heap.

Everyone worried about the ADF that winter, but since few could afford one, drivers flocked to Lola instead. Cigar-chewing importer Carl Haas sold a bound-

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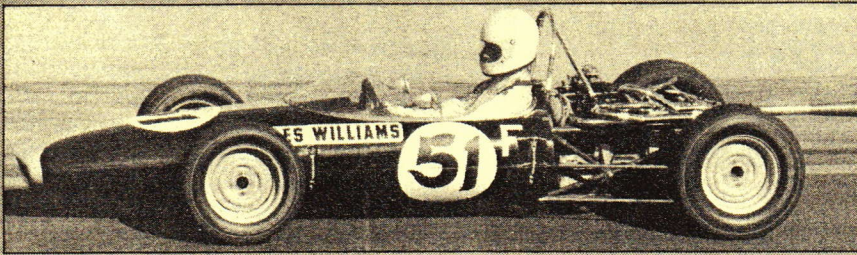
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The first SCCA National of the 1969 season unfolded under clear, cold spring skies at southern California's Willow Springs Raceway on March 22-23. Unbeknownst to many in the sizeable crowd of competitors, this SPDiv event would have special significance: On that Sunday, Jules Williams—driving a green Lotus 51B with a 1600cc crossflow Cortina GT engine he'd tuned himself—would win the first official Formula Ford race in America.

Sadly, there were no seers on the grounds and no one paid any special attention or celebrated in any unusual style afterward, even though it was a good race.

"I qualified third or fourth," Williams struggles now to remember, "and I

passed all the guys ahead of me, one at a time, between Turns Four and Five. They were in Merlyn Mk11s and one Titan Mk4, I think, and my Lotus was not as good a car. I was also running Goodyear Blue Streaks, and they weren't supposed to be as good as the Dunlops, but I had a real advantage in that spot..."

Williams, who later achieved great notoriety as builder of some of this country's very best FF engines and as a partner in the ADF venture, took the lead for good with three laps remaining. His crew (consisting of his fiancée and "two guys from Edwards Air Force Base we found at the gate looking for a way into the races") was delighted. A few drivers congratulated him. And that was that; on to the next race. —Steve Nickless

FORMULA FORD

CONTINUED

tiful number of T-340s and T-342s between '73 and '76 on the strength of a solid marketing formula: Gorgeous cars which drivers of all skill levels liked, sold for a fair price with awesome spare parts availability and support. (The small-tube-and-tearoff-tab-frame 340s/342s were also a bitch to work on and I've often wondered if it wasn't a mechanics backlash as much as anything else which led to Crossle taking over from Lola as sales leader '76-'80!)

ADF worries proved somewhat unfounded. At the '74 Runoffs, Marty Loft—a great young talent from the Northwest—qualified on the pole with a Crossle 25F and broke the ADF spell. Loft finished third as Coloradoan Eddie Miller's Lola T-340 snatched victory from ADF-mounted Tom Wiechmann.

Wiechmann laid on another ADF scare by winning the Runoffs in '75, but by then everyone knew they were strictly low volume items and that they were beatable (if not easily beatable).

In about '73, America got out of sync with England largely because of big differences in tires: In the U.K., Fords raced on tall,

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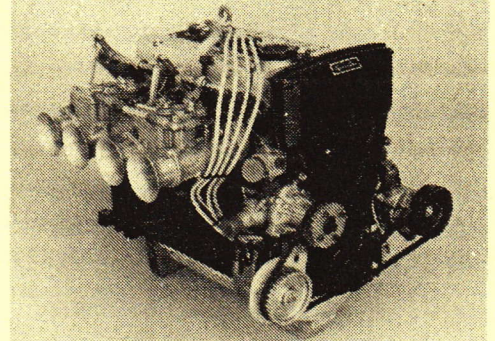
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treaded radials; in the U.S., on low-profile racing slicks. The good American chassis—Zink's Z10 as a for instance—did nothing abroad. And several successful English cars—like Royale's all-conquering RP21—were all but invisible in America.

In '76, the paths converged again briefly as Crossle's '76 30F—a wonderful car—was victorious in every arena. Dennis Firestone gave importer Ken Dieter a richly deserved Runoffs victory after a terrific season, and America's commitment to the Irish marque persisted long after Ralph Firman's Van Diemens took over in Britain.

The U.S. came late to the Van Diemen party, but did so finally when the European marketing king found an importer up to the job: Mike Gue got some good cars to sell, and did so in great numbers in the late '70s and early '80s.

Van Diemen arch-rival Reynard scored some American successes with its attractive '82-'84 while PRS, Tiga, Royale and to a lesser extent Hawke and Merlyn achieved regional success over the golden period '73-'83 as well.

Competing against the English marques' price advantage was tough, and Zink was the only American manufacturer to stick with it through that period; the fit and finish was not up to English standards, but the Z10 and Z16 chassis were plenty fast and extremely safe—and won a lot of races.

Marque wars were among American Formula Ford racing's strongest attractions, and how wonderful it is to relive them in Club Ford and now Vintage racing. . .

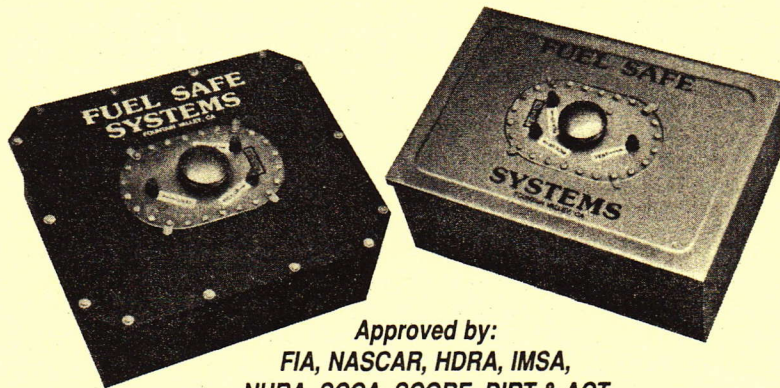
Runoffs Roulette

The Runoffs settled in to Road Atlanta in 1970 (Club racing's premier event had previously alternated between East and West coasts), and that forever changed the course of FF racing in America. The central Georgia circuit has some unique features, and is not at all as easy to set up properly for as the preponderance of long straights and fast corners would imply.

Brute horsepower, clean aerodynamics and driver bravery count for a lot at Road Atlanta, but subtleties are important there, too, in ways they are not on the tight, twisty courses of the Northeast, Central and Midwest Divisions. Or of England.

It was some while before the English chassis manufacturers truly came to grips with Road Atlanta, a point not lost on an eclectic group of Southern Californians who stood the FF community on its ear by winning the '73 Runoffs with a hideously complex, previously unraced, California-built machine. Paul White was a former drag racer and the founder of Automotive Developments, a detail man who'd never been to the Runoffs before; Jules Williams was an engine specialist, his new partner in Automotive Developments; David Bruns was an exceptional designer (and gifted FF driver in his own right) who'd just quit an aerospace job; Al Thomas was Bruns'

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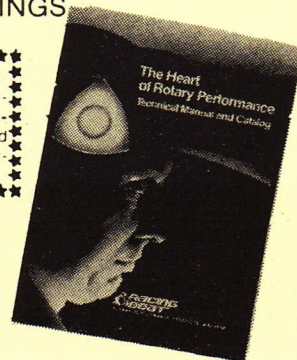
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FORMULA FORD

CONTINUED

engineer friend; and Bob Earl was a talented young driver who'd found the money to finance this prototype machine.

They were something of an unlikely team, and their victory in the startling-looking ADF was all the more unlikely for it.

The black ADF MkII ("MkI" was a car Bruns literally designed and built in his basement, known during its lifetime only as "The Homebuilt") was a heretical machine. It featured inboard front shocks/springs, inboard front brakes and ponderous if functional bodywork. It also featured a ponderous price: a cool \$10,000 in a year when one could buy anything else for slightly more than half that.

Earl won the Runoffs in '73, customer Tom Wiechmann won in '75 and the brilliant Bob Lobenberg gave the ADF marque—by then gone from the race car construction business—still another Road Atlanta victory in 1980. The '80 triumph came in the middle of a streak of Runoffs success by American chassis: Firestone's Crossle won in '76, but it was the last time an English chassis won the Runoffs until 1984.

Bizarre this was because although the English constructors dominated the sales charts and won most of the Regionals and Nationals during that decade, American cars always won the Runoffs.

It wasn't all ADF down there in Georgia, although Bruns/White et al. might have claimed a few more trophies if Dave Weitzenhof had driven one of their cars. The Ohio resident and Firestone tire engineer is a driver now synonymous with American Formula Ford racing, and he appeared on the FF scene in '73 after winning the '72 Formula Vee National Championship. His first Ford was a Royale RP16, but his next was a Zink Z10, and Dave has been faithful to the marque and its American built Citation successors ever since.

Weitzenhof won a barn burner of a '77 National Championship race, and backed it up by winning with the new Z16 in '79. He won again in '81 with the Z16, and yet again in '87 driving a Citation (the Indiana and North Carolina "Zinks" having gone their separate ways), although he was helped to the '87 title by the disqualification of the on-track winner.

Also in on the American marque Runoffs win-streak was Eagle: David Loring, Formula Ford's boy wonder in '71-'72, utterly dominated the '78 event but Dan Gurney's FF project, sadly, went nowhere. And then there was the Viking: ace engine

tuner Arnie Loyning produced a small number of FF slipstreamers, one of them used by Bob Lobenberg to strike Runoffs gold in '82.

More about Swift, which won the '83 Runoffs for the first time, elsewhere; suffice it to conclude this essay on the Runoffs by saying the Swift streak at Road Atlanta has been broken twice: in '84 by Jackson Yonge with a Reynard; and in '87 when the winning Swift was disqualified for a carburetor infraction.

The numbers are: 20 Runoffs, 14 victories by American chassis; five victories for the U.K.; and one for Italy.

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Ten years after they made history, principals Paul White and David Bruns repeated it, taking a radical Formula Ford to Road Atlanta for its first race and returning home to Southern California with a National Championship gold medal.

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And although a Reynard won the Runoffs in '84 (courtesy Jackson Yonge), Formula Ford became all but a one-marque class in

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the face of the Swift DB-1's staggering capabilities.

There were some extenuating circumstances. Van Diemen's '84 car was not its best, Royale was in the throes of a corporate reorganization at that time, and Reynard had other priorities, but the Swift was streets ahead of anything else. By the time the competition had regrouped, Swift had a lock on the American FF market.

The California company sold over 100 Formula Fords in its first two years, saturating a shrinking market. While others—notably Citation and Reynard—won National races, the American FF scene took on a chrome-moly character.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 85

The Champs

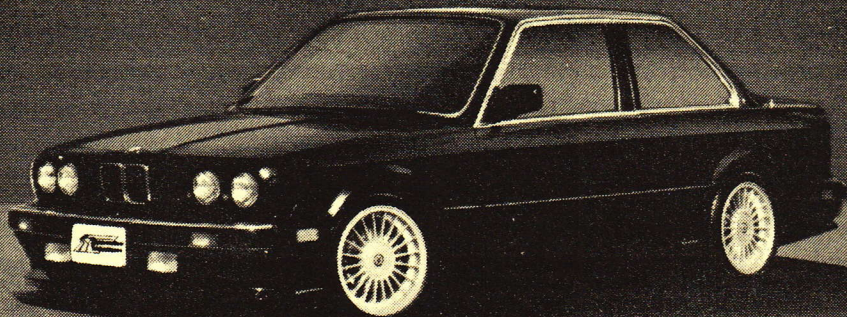
Over the 20 years of the Formula Ford National Championship, the title has been won by only 14 different men. This elite group is led by Ohio's inimitable Dave Weitzenhof, whose collection numbers four, while Skip Barber, Eddie Miller and Bob Lobenberg are all double winners. The complete list:

1969	Skip Barber	Caldwell D9 (USA)
1970	Skip Barber	Tecno (I)
1971	Jim Harrell	Titan Mk 6 (UK)
1972	Eddie Miller	Hawke DL-2 (UK)
1973	Bob Earl	ADF Mk II (USA)
1974	Eddie Miller	Lola T-340 (UK)
1975	Tom Weichmann	ADF Mk II (USA)
1976	Dennis Firestone	Crossle 30F (UK)
1977	Dave Weitzenhof	Zink Z-10 (USA)
1978	David Loring	Eagle (USA)
1979	Dave Weitzenhof	Zink Z-10 (USA)
1980	Bob Lobenberg	ADF Mk IIB (USA)
1981	Dave Weitzenhof	Zink Z-16 (USA)
1982	Bob Lobenberg	Viking (USA)
1983	R.K. Smith	Swift DB-1 (USA)
1984	Jackson Yonge	Reynard FF84 (UK)
1985	Scott Atchison	Swift DB-1 (USA)
1986	Jim Vasser Jr.	Swift DB-1 (USA)
1987	Dave Weitzenhof	Citation 87F (USA)
1988	Kenny Hendrick	Swift DB-1 (USA)

Below is an educated guess, year by year, at the most successful FF marques in terms of American race wins and car sales in the USA.

Year	Wins	Sales
1969	Caldwell D9 (USA)	Caldwell D9 (USA)
1970	Caldwell D9 (USA)	Lola T-200/202 (UK)
1971	Titan Mk6A (UK)	Titan Mk6A (UK)
1972	Titan Mk6A/B (UK)	Titan Mk6B (UK)
1973	Titan Mk6A/B/C (UK)	Lola T-340 (UK)
1974	Lola T-340 (UK)	Lola T-340 (UK)
1975	Lola T-340/342 (UK)	Lola T-342 (UK)
1976	Lola T-340/342 (UK)	Lola T-342/440 (UK)
1977	Crossle 32F (UK)	Crossle 32F (UK)
1978	Crossle 32F (UK)	Crossle 32F (UK)
1979	Crossle 32/35F (UK)	Crossle 35F (UK)
1980	Crossle 32/35F (UK)	Lola T-540 (UK)
1981	Crossle 32/35F (UK)	Van Diemen RF81 (UK)
1982	Van Diemen RF82 (UK)	Van Diemen RF82 (UK)
1983	Van Diemen RF83 (UK)	Van Diemen RF83 (UK)
1984	Swift DB-1 (USA)	Swift DB-1 (USA)
1985	Swift DB-1 (USA)	Swift DB-1 (USA)
1986	Swift DB-1 (USA)	Swift DB-1 (USA)
1987	Swift DB-1 (USA)	Citation 87F (USA)
1988	Swift DB-1 (USA)	Reynard 88FF (UK)

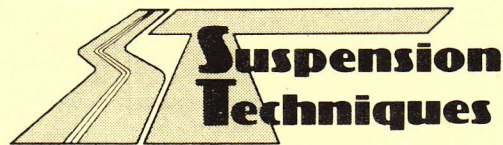
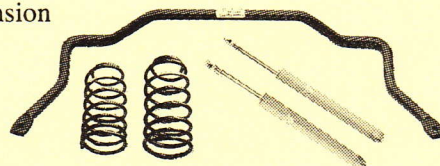
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FORMULA FORD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

I miss the great old Zink vs. Lola and Crossle vs. Van Diemen battles and curse David Bruns frequently, but how do you hold a grudge against greatness? Bruns designed and Swift built what 50 other FF constructors claimed they had over 20 years: a worldbeater.

Resurgence

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Plagued by rising costs of components growing scarce and besieged by a wide variety of inexpensive and semi-pro one-marque and "spec car" entry level classes, Formula Ford racing in America has been on the wane. I heard someone say in '85 that "Sports Renault killed it."

Well, the reports of Ford's demise are perhaps premature. It's true that two factors—Sports Renault's amazing popularity and the Swift chassis' stranglehold on the FF grids—combined to spark a dramatic decline in SCCA National FF field size. But, while FF interest in the premier club racing events may have been stifled for a while, the class's popularity in North America as a whole has perhaps never been stronger: Regional FF fields are extraordinarily healthy, Club Ford fever is raging in all seven SCCA Divisions and the class' sudden status in Vintage racing is wonderful to see.

Everywhere, Fords of every variety and vintage are being spiffed up and towed back to the tracks to play again.

The "grass roots" resurgence is having an effect on enthusiasm in the National arena—there are some serious new "Swift attackers" on drawing boards in England, and new interest in the American marketplace for them. Swift, with new owners, must prepare for new challenges...

The most important development of all occurred three to four years ago when the Ford Motor Company declared its support for the thousands of FF1600, FF2000 and Sports 2000 owners by agreeing to produce otherwise obsolete components for them.

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