

## ROCKY'S ROAD

MIDWEST DIVISION  
BY ROCKY ENTRIEN

### MIDIV SALUTES ITS RACING CHAMPIONS

**W**e have a new class of Club Racing champions to celebrate – 25 in National racing, 15 in the Mid-Am Championship and six in the Midwest Division I.T. Tour.

SCCA changed the rules this year so a driver could count his best seven finishes (best six previously) in National races – the maximum possible points score is now 84. Only one MiDiv driver managed that, **Ken DeNault** from Des Moines Valley, running all but one of the eight MiDiv Nationals and winning every one.

In fact, only two others even reached the old maximum standard of six wins – **Andy Wolverton** of Nebraska Region in Touring 2 and **Chris Albin** of Southern Illinois Region in H Production.

Four champions scored five wins, and then it got to where it wasn't so easy for some. **Shawn Gray** of Mid-South Region won American Sedan, but through the first four races he and **Jim Wheeler** of Kansas City kept trading places with their 1-2 finishes – and with three to go they were tied at 42 points each. Gray went on to win the final three rounds to take the championship by 12 points.

Perennial SSC Champ **John Saucier** of Oklahoma was chasing Ozark Mountain's **Rob Jones** for much of the early season. Jones had run up three wins and was leading the points. Saucier closed in with victories in both ends of a Heartland Park Topeka Double National and then went out to Pacific Raceways in Seattle to win two more. Jones, by that time, had all but parked his SSC Sentra to concentrate on SSB with a new Spec V. For Saucier, it was his 18th consecutive SSC championship and his career 26th since 1971.

Jones in SSB only raced once against **Dennis AuBuchon** of St. Louis, the two meeting on the second day of Heartland Park Topeka's Double National in May. AuBuchon won, and that three-point difference ended up being the championship difference for the season – the closest class this year in MiDiv points.

Two other five-time winners, **Brad Stout** of St. Louis in Formula Vee and **Jesse Prather** of Kansas in E Production, basically went out and won five times then called it good.

Others this year winning the coveted leather director's chairs given to the MiDiv champions are: Des Moines

Valley's **Scott Goolsbey** in SRF; from Kansas, **Kent Prather** in GTL and **Bob Bramlage** in FP; from Kansas City, **Cliff Johnson** in FF, **Tom Bootz** in DSR and **David Bennett** in STU; from Mid-South, **Bill Gray** in GT-1; Nebraska's, **Jeff Demetri** in STO; Oklahoma's, **Lee Walther** in FE, **Jack Donnellan** in S2000 and **Jim Duea** in GT-5; from Ozark Mountain, **Crispin Beaver** in GT-2; from St. Louis, **Jack Walbran** in F500, **Jim Lynch** in T1 and **Richard Wiese** in SM; and from Wichita, **David Wilcox** in FA and **Richard Learned** in FC.

### I.T. TOUR CHAMPIONS

There were just six races in the I.T. Tour this year, and a driver could score his best four. The only driver to run up a perfect 48-point score was **Chris Albin** in ITB, winning his 12th championship in 13 years. The busiest class was ITA, where NeOkla Region's **Brian Laughlin** topped a class in which 32 drivers scored points.

The closest class was ITS. **Ryan Staub** and **Brian Landers**, both of Kansas City Region, each raced three times but, in the two times they were on track together, Staub won to take the gold medal by six points.

Other gold medalists were **Scott Orr** in ITR and **Trey Scott** in IT7, both from St. Louis Region; and **Jerry Behnke** of Kansas City in ITC.

### MID-AM CHAMPIONS

This was an off year for the Mid-Am Championship. Geared toward the low-budget racer, it showed the effects of the economic recession on the budgets of those who race on a shoestring.

Only two drivers even reached the maximum possible score of 84 points – Driver of the Year **Chris Albin** (winning that honor for an 11th time and SSB for

the 17th straight year), and **James Wood** of Nebraska in SSC.

The only class that ended up in a real battle was ITA between **Brian Laughlin** of Oklahoma Region and **Ray Yergler** of Des Moines Valley. Yergler led early with three wins, but then Laughlin put up five wins to pass him. Yergler won the double points Bonus Race at the end of the season but ended up three points short.

Kansas City Region had the most champions, with **Jeff McCormick** winning GT-5, **Brett Whitney** in EP, **Ryan Staub** in ITS, **Gerald Behnke** in ITC and **Todd Smith** in IT7. Other Mid-Am champions: from Arkansas, **Kenneth Kirkland** in F500; from Kansas, **Ronald Davis** in FP; From Mid-South, **Mark Hamilton** in SM; from Nebraska, **Kim McDonald** in AS and **Ralph Woodard** in ITR; from Oklahoma, **Glen Tomlinson** in SRF; and from Wichita, **Bill Lauer** in FV.

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