

HOF TALK

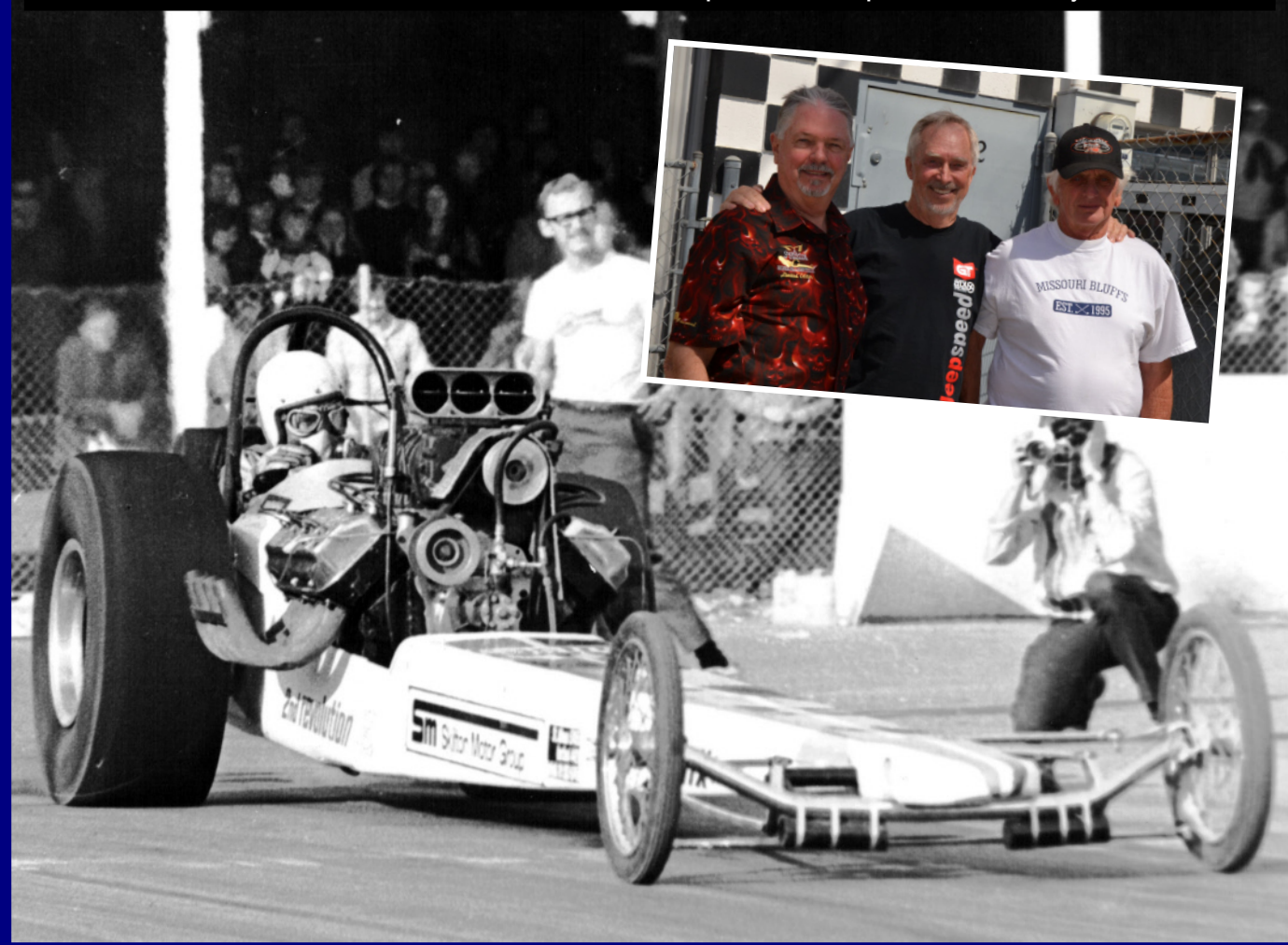


The *British Drag Racing Hall of Fame* News Bulletin

Compiled and edited by Jeremy Cookson; additional words by Andy 'Tog' Rogers & Simon Groves

Spring Edition Issue 9 2020

Clive Skilton; another founder member of the BDRHoF in 2006, seen here at the wheel of the Castrol GTX sponsored Second Revolution at Santa Pod in 1971 with butterflies wide open on another quick launch. *Photo by Peter Quinn*



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

All the news & photos from the 14th annual British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala Night & Bench Race, Retrospective look at 2007, HoF People & HoF Diaries and part 1 of Eurodragster's interview with Clive Skilton, Carl Olson & Mike Kuhl

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Welcome From The Editors Chair

Welcome to the ninth issue of HoF Talk, the online newsletter for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame. Well what a fantastic Gala Night. I heard many say 'the best one yet', and I have to agree. We couldn't ask anything more of what is the ideal venue for our annual function. Steeped in history and positively oozing with so much character Oatlands Park Hotel is the perfect choice, and I for one am pleased to hear that this years Gala Night will be returning again in November. By now the Selectors Panel will have been hard at it deliberating their thoughts about this years inductees. As always this will be announced on Eurodragster.com on Friday midday of



Santa Pod Raceway's Dragstalgia which this year will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. Where has all the time gone! Mentioning Eurodragster.com I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt sorrow and the departure of news editor and BDRHoF member Andy 'Tog' Rogers following last month's announcement and to welcome roving reporter and former HoFTalk editor Simon Groves to the 'hot seat'. Having known Tog for over 20 years through my association with Eurodragster whatever he decides to do he'll do it well as he has done with developing Eurodragster into the daily news portal it is today. Its not just another web site, its an institution that will live on, and probably out live us all. See you at the strip!



On The Cover: BDRHoF member **Clive Skilton** began his drag racing career in 1967 driving an E Type Jag. A year later he took over the driving of the AA blown Allard dragster from Alan Allard and promptly set a new speed record of 163 mph at Santa Pod. In 1969 Clive debuted a new look car with a top mounted blower and instantly became the first European to run a seven second pass at Elvington. In 1971 Clive became the first person in the UK to run 200 mph at the wheel of *Second Revolution* before importing the ex Carl Olson and Mike Kuhl dragster that became *Revolution 3*. Clive moved into Funny Cars in 1975 where he raced a Vauxhall-bodied car to his first Funny Car six at Snetterton. In 1976 Clive was back in a Top Fuel car and beat the legendary Don Garlits at Santa Pod. Clive moved to America at the end of 1976 and raced on the US circuit with some success.

An enthusiast for all types of motor sport BDRHoF member **Carl Olson** started to visit drag race events as a spectator during the mid-1950s. He first drove a fuel dragster in 1964, but his greatest success on the strip came when he joined up with Mike Kuhl and by 1972 he was IHRA Top Fuel World Champion and a regular Top Fuel Dragster winner at NHRA events. He won the last Top Fuel dragster eliminator to be held at Lions. By 1976 he had finished his racing career and took a Vice President's role with the NHRA and the FIA Drag Racing Commission.

Inset Photo: 'The Three Amigos' - Clive Skilton pictured with Carl Olson (left) and Mike Kuhl (Right). Photo courtesy of Simon Groves.
Header Photo: A rare appearance of 'Stardust' with Allan 'Bootsie' Herridge at a 1975 NDRC International meeting at Snetterton. Photo courtesy of Dick Parnham

MEET OUR PARTNERS

BDRHoF Primary Sponsors

USAutomotive & Santa Pod Racers Club



BDRHoF Supporters:

Beech Underwriting, Santa Pod Raceway, Atlantic Fluid Tech UK, DialAFlight Straightliners, Shakespeare County Relics, Chair Office, Jeff Bull Racing Engines Rat Trap Racing, Kelsey Media, Mopar Performance, Mopar Muscle Association, IOPD Eurodragster.com Prop Portfolio, Julian Hunt.net

Thank you for your continued support.

HOF TALK

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Hall of Fame do the honours

The fourteenth annual British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Gala Awards Dinner, sponsored by USAutomotive, Santa Pod Racers Club, Beech Underwriting Agencies and BUA Motorsport, was held last November at the Oatlands Park Hotel, Weybridge, Surrey, and enjoyed by more than 200 attendees. An entertaining Bench Racing session took place earlier, compered by hot rod and race car builder and driver and drag racing announcer Bob Beck. The Gala is one of the leading motor sport presentation events in the world and the BDRHoF would like to thank everyone who made it possible.

The evening, compered by writer and former NHRA Motorsports Museum Director Tony Thacker, included the induction of five new members of the BDRHoF, presentation of the Mopar Performance Lifetime Achievement Award and a special award to multiple IHRA Champion and NHRA racer winner Doug Herbert.

The 2019 inductees to the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame were:

Leading European Drag Racing web site **Eurodragster.com**, represented by founding editor Andy 'Tog' Rogers, Simon Groves, Kirstie Tramm and Julian Hunt, presented by Philip Evans of Atlantic Fluid Tech.



Builder and racer of the iconic *Gonzo the Great* Altered and former Project Foreman at York Raceway **Ian Lloyd**, presented by International Organisation of Professional Drivers chief executive Steve Murty.

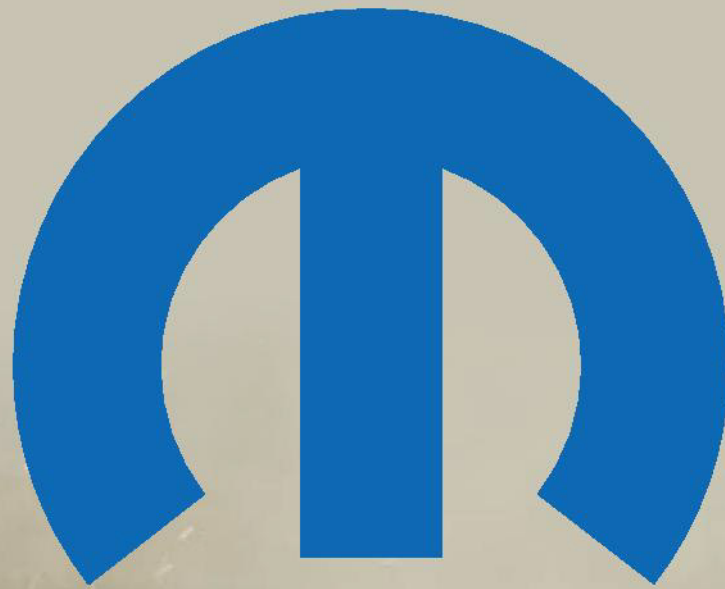
Great motorcycle drag racing innovators known for their *Jade Warrior*, the **McCoy Dynamics** team of Angus 'Ag' MacPhail, Mick Hand and Keith Parnell, represented by Mick Hand, and presented by BDRHoF member Ian Messenger, formerly of the Pegasus bike team.



Pioneers of UK Nostalgia drag racing, the **Wild Bunch**, represented by Claire Meaddows, Chris Hartnell and Roy Wilding, trophy presented by hot rod and race car builder and driver and drag racing announcer Bob Beck.



From Finland, winner of four FIA Top Fuel Dragster Championships and two European Top Methanol titles, **Anita Mäkelä**, presented by Keith Bartlett, CEO of Santa Pod Raceway. Hall of Fame member trophies were sponsored by Santa Pod Racers Club.



MOPAR®



Mopar Performance congratulates Bill Simpson on being presented with the 2019 Mopar Performance Lifetime Achievement Award by the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame

The top three Lucas Oil Junior Dragster Championship racers Matthew Dowdy, Frankie Fordham and Kai Cooper, and top three ACU Junior Drag Bike racers Liam Holgate, Blade Dummer and Ciaran Lucas [below left] were presented by Cheryl Lynch, Race, Speed and kart Executive, Motorsport UK. Champions Matthews and Liam each received cheques for £100 sponsored by Atlantic Fluid Tech, Jeff Bull Race Engines and Performance Parts, Mopar Muscle Association, Santa Pod Racers Club and USAutomotive.



The Mopar Performance Lifetime Achievement Award, presented for global impact in the world of drag racing, was awarded to **Bill Simpson** in recognition for his innovation in safety in motorsports in general and drag racing in particular. New products such as modern fire suits, driver restraint systems and helmets and the drag racing parachute have undoubtedly saved many lives. Accepting the award from Steve Gibbs [above right] on behalf of Bill Simpson, who was unable to attend for health reasons, was his longtime friend 'Waterbed' Fred Miller.

A BDRHoF Special Trophy was presented by Hall of Fame consultant and Land Speed Record holder Geoff Stilwell to **Doug Herbert** on behalf of the Herbert family [below left] in recognition of their contribution to drag racing, Land Speed racing and road safety.



The evening was closed by British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Chairman and former Santa Pod Raceway Chief Starter Stuart Bradbury [above right], thanking everyone for their participation and support.

Earlier the fifth Bench Racing Session, sponsored by USAutomotive and *Custom Car* magazine had a former NHRA Board member and US nitro racers and crew entertaining a packed audience with tales of their on and off track exploits back in the day. The panel comprised Steve Gibbs, Doug Herbert, Ron Hope, Fred Miller and Dan Richins. A video recording of the Bench Racing Session is available on Bob Beck's Facebook page, along with several interviews of Honourees.



The distinguished panel comprising of Steve Gibbs, Dan Richins, Ron Hope, Doug Herbert and Fred Miller



Geoff Stilwell honoured by Dan Richins for his 258 mph achievement on the salt flats of Bonneville

Photos courtesy of Julian Hunt for Eurodragster.com

The event would not have been possible without practical help and support from primary sponsors USAutomotive and Santa Pod Racers Club and event sponsors Atlantic Fluid Tech, Beech Underwriting Agencies, BUA Motorsport, Chair Office, Custom Car magazine, DialAFlight, Eurodragster.com, the International Organisation of Professional Drivers, Jeff Bull Racing and Performance Parts, Kelsey Publishing, the National Street Rod Association, Mopar Performance, the Mopar Muscle Association, Prop Portfolio, Rat Trap Racing, Straightliners, Santa Pod Raceway and Shakespeare County Relics.

Gallery of stars at the 2019 Bench Race & BDRHoF Gala



BUA Motorsports Geoff Stilwell introduces the panel



Irwindale track announcer 'Hot Rod Bob' Beck



Everyone likes to hear a 'Waterbed' Fred Miller story!



'Hot Rod Bob' interviewing Junior racer Kai Cooper of Fenny Racing for a live segment on the *Great American Auto Scene* webcast



Doug & Mimi Herbert pictured with Ken & Bev Coleman, Belinda & Jeff Bull, and Gala MC Paul 'Oz' Wright.



A proud father & son moment for BDRHoF member Ian Lloyd and son Alan



A very happy moment for four time FIA European Top Fuel Champion and BDRHoF inductee Anita Mäkelä and daughter Hanna



'Hot Rod Bob' Beck and his charming wife Peggy share a moment on the BDRHoF Gala stage



Another momentous occasion for the racers and gentleman of the Wild Bunch led by founder Roy Wilding and 'Crazy Chris' Hartnell



Behind all successful racers there are very supportive women. In the case of the Wild Bunch we have these very supportive ladies

Photos courtesy of Andy Willsheer, Simon Groves and Julian Hunt for Eurodragster.com

SANTA POD RACEWAY

2020 DRAG RACING DATES

FESTIVAL OF POWER

10-12 APRIL - www.SantaPod.com

An action-packed Easter weekend for the whole family featuring the famous annual Jet Car Shootout! See the awesome Nitro Funny Cars, 300mph Top Fuel Dragsters and the National Drag Racing Championships including 200mph Pro Mods. A full line-up of displays and attractions with Monster Trucks, stunts, sideshows, traders and more.

FESTIVAL OF POWER



DRAGSTALGIA

10-12 JULY - www.Dragstalgia.co.uk

The 10th Anniversary! A vintage lifestyle weekend dedicated to race cars, bikes and hot rods from a bygone era. Enjoy Championship racing with the headlining Cannonball class for supercharged nitro and alcohol fuelled Altereds and Funny Cars, the Slingshot Showdown, period correct Gasser Circus, invited historic bikes and lots more. See vehicles from Santa Pod's illustrious history return to the strip. Plus live music*, Jet Car, Show & Shine with the NSRA, Vintage Fair, Cracklefest, beer festival and much more.

Dragstalgia



SPRINGSPEED NATIONALS

2-3 MAY - www.SantaPod.com

National Drag Racing Championship event, with a huge variety of race cars and bikes that will keep the track action packed all day long.



NSRA NOSTALGIA NATIONALS

8-10 MAY - www.NostalgiaNationals.com

The 27th annual Nostalgia Nationals, supported by the NSRA. Pre-'73 RWYB for Hot Rods, Kustoms and Street Machines alongside traditional front-engine Dragsters, Competition Altereds and early Doorlammer race cars. Live entertainment, trade stands and 'power parking' show area.



THE DOORSLAMMERS

15-17 MAY - www.TheDoorslammers.co.uk

Huge cash pay-outs attracting the best Doorslammers in Europe. The quickest cars go head to head including the unlimited Pro Doorslammer class, True Street class, Big Bracket and FWD.



'THE MAIN EVENT'

22-25 MAY - www.SantaPod.com

The Spring Bank Holiday weekend presents Round 1 of the eagerly anticipated FIA/FIM European Drag Racing Championships. This hugely popular extravaganza features over 250 teams across 17 classes of cars and bikes. Witness ground-shaking, nitro-burning, 10,000-horsepower Top Fuel Dragsters accelerating from 0-100mph in less than 1 second, plus 200mph Drag Bikes, plus a full range of supporting classes. The Main Event is unrivalled for both the quality and quantity of racing. With the famous Jet Car, Monster Trucks and Live Action Arena shows, this is the ultimate adrenalin-inducing family day out with a difference.

THE MAIN EVENT



SPECIALIST EVENT

FAMILY EVENT

SUMMER NATIONALS

18-19 JULY - www.SantaPod.com

National Drag Racing Championships headlined by Motorsport UK 200mph Pro Mods, Drag Bikes, Nostalgia classes and the Jet Car.



GREEN LIGHT NATIONALS

22-23 AUGUST - www.SantaPod.com

National Drag Racing Championship event in the peak of the British Summer, with a huge variety of race cars and bikes that will keep the track action packed all day long.



'THE EUROPEAN FINALS'

10-13 SEPTEMBER - www.SantaPod.com

Santa Pod's most prestigious Drag Racing event features over 250 of Europe's finest teams. Witness the awesome power of 300mph Top Fuel Dragsters, 200mph Drag Bikes and over 20 supporting classes. See Europe's elite do battle on the quarter-mile in a bid to be crowned 2020 European Champion. A full schedule of family-style entertainment is lined up away from the track with the Live Action Arena show featuring Monster Truck and Stunt Displays. The Friday Nitro Session provides a rare opportunity to witness drag racing at dusk and header flames galore with a grand finale of Jet Cars and fireworks.

THE EURO FINALS



NSRA HOT ROD DRAGS

18-20 SEPTEMBER - www.SantaPod.com

Now celebrating the 32nd annual Original Hot Rod Drags, supported by the NSRA. It's a hot rod show at the race track! The usual, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' formula with Pre-'73 RWYB, invited race classes, fireworks, live music and much more. See you at the track.

THE ORIGINAL HOT ROD DRAGS

NATIONAL FINALS

26-27 SEPTEMBER - www.SantaPod.com

National Drag Racing Championship Finals headlined by the wild 200mph Pro Mod doorslammers! See over 20 supporting classes including ACU Championship Drag Bikes, Junior Dragsters and many more.



CALL 01234 782828 OR VISIT WWW.SANTAPOD.COM

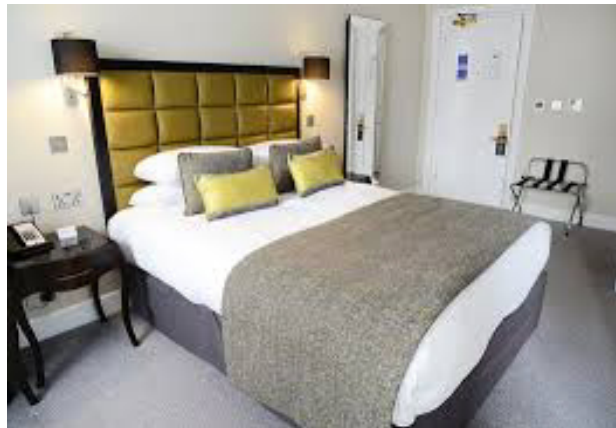
HISTORIC HOTEL TO HOST 2020 GALA AWARDS

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame will for the fourth year running hold its Annual Gala Awards Dinner at the luxurious four-star Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge, Surrey. The Gala takes place on Saturday 21st November.

Oatlands Park's magnificent grounds were originally the site of a grand Tudor palace built for Anne of Cleves by Henry VIII in 1538. Other monarchs, including Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I also resided here during their reigns. Oatlands Park opened as a hotel in 1856 and has hosted world-famous guests including writer Emile Zola, novelist Anthony Trollope and artist and poet Edward Lear.



Added to its royal and literary assemblage, the hotel has welcomed a modern guest-list of American drag racing luminaries. Connie Kalitta, Roland Leong, Ed 'The Ace' McCulloch, Steve Gibbs, Doug Herbert, Clay Millican, Jeff Lutz, Jim Oberhofer, Marvin Graham, Dan Richins, Tom Hoover, Dale Emery, 'Waterbed' Fred Miller, Bob Muravez, 'Gentleman' Joe Schubeck, Rich 'Pure Hell' Guasco, Ron 'Rat Trap' Hope, journalist and photographer Bob McClurg and broadcaster Bob Beck have all rested their heads in Oatlands Park's comfortable bedrooms and dined in its elegant restaurant.



Stu Bradbury, Chairman of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Limited, said, *"It is difficult to find a venue that's convenient, that can take our numbers and enables us to pay tribute to our pioneers in a fitting yet affordable style. Oatlands Park Hotel can handle all the activities we hold during the day and, most importantly, has a properly British character and sense of style. We like to place our event in an environment where guests can socialise with old friends they haven't seen for years and have time to mingle with the celebrity guests. Oatlands and its associated history certainly achieves that with the added convenience of offering local interest for those who might like to make a weekend of it. With easy access from junction 11 on the M25, the hotel is only a few minutes' drive from the world-famous Brooklands Motorsport and Aviation Museum and its collection of historic aircraft and cars, including one of the few Concorde in existence and the fabulous 24-litre Napier Railton which set many records on the Brooklands circuit in the 1930s.*

"On the same Brooklands site you can find Mercedes-Benz World where you can test your driving skills on the Handling Circuit in a range of Mercedes-Benz vehicles – or let the Silver Arrows Display Team show you how it's done. There are many Mercedes vehicles on static display too. Also nearby you can find Hampton Court, Windsor Great Park, Legoland, Windsor Castle and lots more. Trains from Weybridge station can take you to Waterloo Station in London so Oatlands Park has all angles covered. We are always trying to improve the event, particularly the social environment for guests to mingle with old friends and celebrity guests."

The main part of the Gala Awards Dinner evening is of course devoted to introducing and inducting the class of 2020 British Drag Racing Hall of Fame members and these will be announced at Dragstalgia held at Santa Pod Raceway on 10th-12th July.

We are now taking reservations for the 2020 Gala Awards Dinner by email at stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk, telephone 01933 279102. Payment can be made via bank transfer, cheque, cash or PayPal. This year the tickets are priced competitively at £75 each. The event always sells out well in advance, so if you would like to join us for the occasion we suggest you make your reservation sooner rather than later. On receipt of your reservation, we shall give you the procedure to book rooms at the negotiated room rate of single occupancy £96, double £119, which includes breakfast and VAT, use of the hotel facilities and parking. Ongoing news about the Gala, our sponsors and other events in which the BDRHoF is involved will be published on the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame website, www.britishdragracinghof.co.uk, on www.eurodragster.com and on Facebook and Twitter.

NEW APPOINTMENT FOR HALL OF FAME



Following the shock announcement of Andy 'Tog' Rogers' departure as News Editor of the world-renowned European drag racing website and news portal Eurodragster.com, the appointment of British Drag Racing Hall of Fame [BDRHoF] adviser Simon Groves as the new Editor from March 1st 2020 has left a vacant position to cover Press & Member Liaison within the BDRHoF.

With immediate effect the BDRHoF is delighted to welcome respected British nostalgia drag racing enthusiast and former Shakespeare County Raceway Promotions Manager Jeremy Cookson to the board of directors to assume this responsibility.

Jeremy, better known to the drag racing community as Jerry, has a varied past in the sport dating back to the early 1960s, after his father Gerald [Gerry] had visited several ground-breaking festivals, notably the 1965 Drag Festival at Blackbushe when Jerry was five years old. Following that, Jerry helped support his father's racing career in what was then classed as Junior Dragster with a supercharged BMC slingshot dragster, *The Joker*, followed by a late-1950s Berkeley Sports Car, an MG Midget and back again to the Berkeley *Super Joker*.

Since that time Jerry has written and produced features and articles for well-known high street publications as well as taken on the role of editor of Fire Up and European Dragster magazines. Jerry later became more actively involved with Avon Park Raceway, which later morphed into Shakespeare County Raceway in the late 1990s, providing the voice of the raceway as racetrack announcer/commentator.

In 2006 Jerry officially joined the team at Shakespeare County Raceway in a full-time capacity as Promotions Manager, supporting many roles at Long Marston Airfield, where the race track was located, as well as writing a regular column for Street Machine magazine and serving for two years as starter until the raceway's closure at the end of 2017 to make way for the inevitable Garden Village project.

"I am delighted to further my involvement with the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame," said Jerry. "After serving on the Panel of Selectors since the BDRHoF's inception in 2006, and after my family's name was inducted in 2018, I can think of no better way to put more back into the sport which has given our family so much pleasure since those ground-breaking days of the sixties. Drag racing has had its ups and downs but it's still alive and kicking in many varied forms from grass roots right up to anyone's ultimate goal – becoming a professional racer. The BDRHoF is an important medium honouring those who have built the sport to where it stands today and I'm happy to be involved on this scale."



SNAPPED WITH SUCCESS

What is drag racing without photography? And most important of all, what is photography without drag racing? For one of motorsport's most diverse, colourful and totally addictive pastimes is required to have its moments captured on film for posterity. Julian Hunt is a photographer who has that passion for drag racing, with a keen eye to make that magic moment stand out from the rest, and in 2020 we are delighted to announce that JulianHunt.net is joining us as an associate sponsor of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



From an early age Julian enjoyed a keen interest in all types of cars and would visit Brands Hatch, his local racing circuit, whenever he could convince someone to drive him there. In 1990 Julian managed to talk a buddy into driving him to Santa Pod Raceway where he got his first taste (and smell) of drag racing. It was then that he knew this was the sport for him. Drag racing was now his favourite motorsport and he would attend as many race meetings as possible, always hoping for a whiff of Nitro!

With his own transport issues resolved in the form of a screaming two-stroke motorcycle, Julian then moved on to four wheels, owning several vintage Volkswagens and a classic Porsche. His career followed a similar path on which he spent 20 years working in the air-cooled Volkswagen and classic Porsche restoration business.

In 2007 Julian was inspired by another drag racing photographer's work. He decided that, instead of keeping his camera on auto, he would learn how it functioned and try to improve his own work. His ultimate aim was to match the quality of the photographer who had inspired him and he spent many hours trawling through hundreds of instructive articles on the Internet

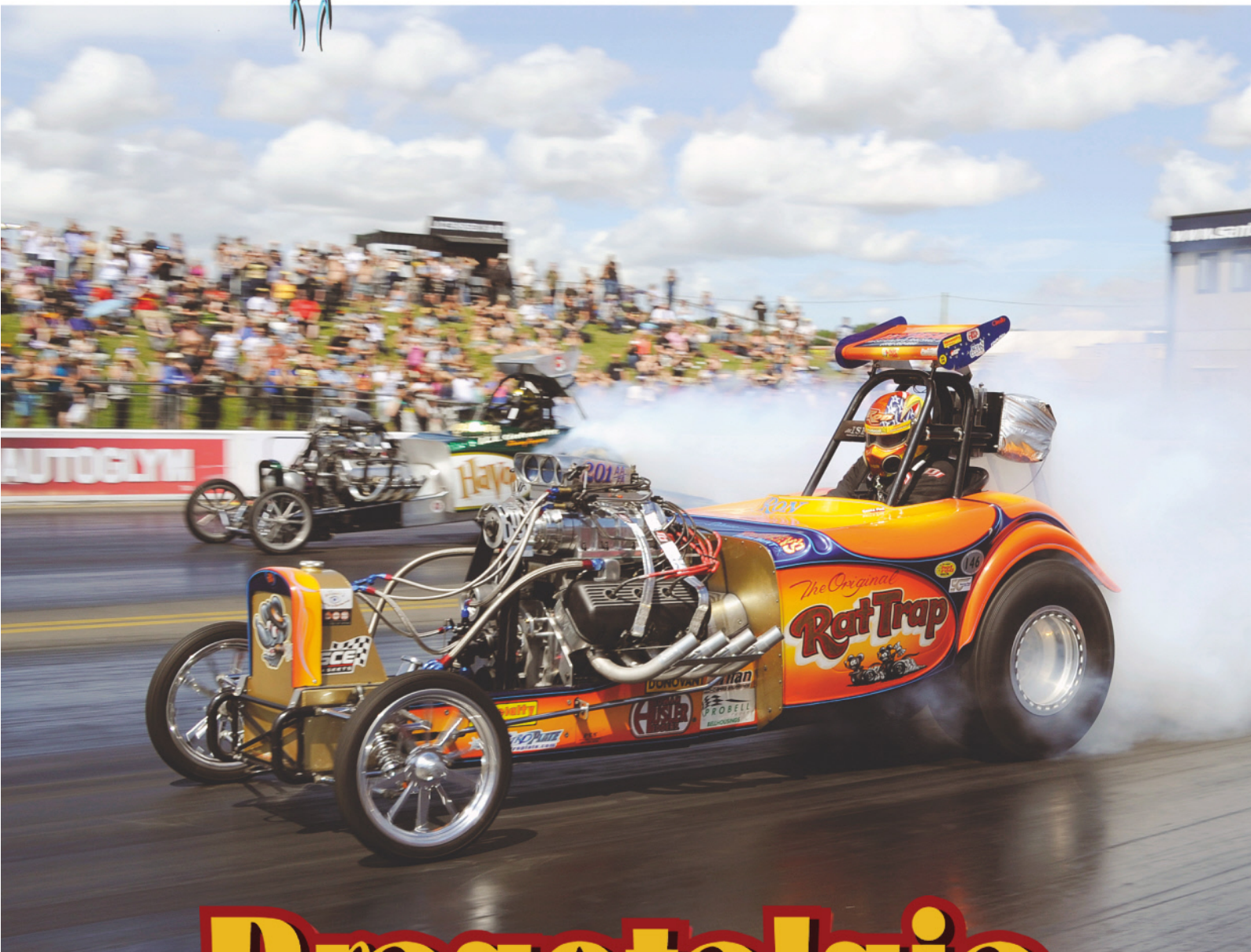
Thirteen years later and it's still all about the drag racing. Julian and his trusty Canons attend many race meetings throughout the season in the UK and in Europe. His work can be seen across many web sites, primarily Eurodragster.com, and he has had regular commissions published in automotive magazines such as *Volksworld* and *Custom Car* as well as contributions to the BDRHoF's *HoFTalk* on-line magazine.

In 2016 a panel of judges recognised Julian's talents with the presentation of the BDRHoF Sydney Allard Media Award for Photo Journalism sponsored by Mintex, a former supporter of the 1964 Drag Fest and of Sydney's original Allard Dragster. From the entries received the panel eventually chose Julian's fire burnout photograph of Bob Hawkins' stunningly quick, blown methanol-injected, Chevrolet-powered slingshot dragster called Time Traveller, which Julian had captured in full flame at Santa Pod Raceway's 2016 Dragstalgia meeting. Julian's choice of camera that day to create this magnificent image was a Canon EOS-1D x with a Canon Lens EF100-400mm. F/4.5-5.6L IS II USM.





VS



Dragstalgia

July 10-12, 2020
SantaPod.co.uk
01234 782828



USA Automotive
Santa Pod
Raceway

7707 on show

BDRHoF sponsor and supporter Geoff Stilwell debuted his updated 7707 Lucas Oil Land Speed racer at this years Grand National Roadster Show in Los Angeles mid-January. Geoff writes:



The Grand National Roadster Show is probably the largest car show in world. Set out over the 7 halls of the Pomona County Fairground. On the Saturday they have the drive in "Rod" show. Believe it or not 700 pre entered and on the day over 1200 street rods drove in. Plus there were over 500 on display in the halls, adding the "here and then" dragster show brought it up to over 2000 cars. I had the updated 7707 Lucas Oil Land Speed car on display in Hall 4. It's a long day with loads of celebs coming to say hi. From Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top to TV Presenter Brad Fanshaw. Many of our racing friends came and said hello, including, Ron, Steve and Brian Hope who will be at Dragstalgia, SEMA Hall of Fame members Joe Schubeck, Gigi Carleson, Bob and Sharon Muravez AKA Floyd and Mrs Lippencotte, 'Fast' Jack Beckham who tried the car for size, Harry Hibler, Bill Schultz, Bonneville 200mph Club Member Donny Cummins and John Beck, Tom Bognor from Lucas Oil, Jimmy White of Circle City Hot Rods and not forgetting my good friends Johnny Martinez world famous pin striper and announcer Bob Beck who will be over for Dragstalgia. In May we will be testing 7707 on the El Mirage Lakebed and then we will be representing Lucas Oil at the Nitro Revival 4 happening at Irwindale Raceway. You can follow this project on Facebook by searching *Geoff Stilwell*.



Photo Captions:
Top Left: Geoff with 7707. **Middle Left:** 'Fast Jack Beckman tries out 7707's cockpit for size. **Middle Left:** The gangs all here, Saltflat Racer, Bill Schultz, Gene Bedernik, 'Fast Jack' Beckman & Harry Hibler. **Middle Right:** The world famous Johnny Martinez hands Geoff a specially created piece of artwork. **Bottom Left:** The Lucas Oil/BUA Motorsports 7707 salt racer in all its glory.

Photos courtesy of Geof Stilwell

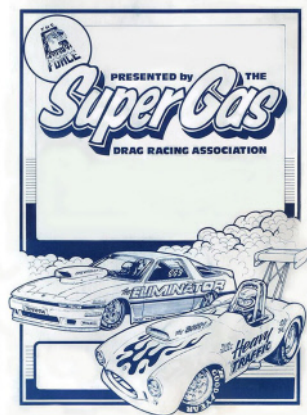
UK Super Gas named for 2020

The UK's Super Gas class will carry the official title of the Dave Grady Super Gas Shootout after the late, legendary originator of the Super Gas Drag Racers Association [G Force] and BDRHoF member, ended on Valentine's Day with a commanding lead in a vote held on Eurodragster.com.

When submitting his vote UK Super Pro and Supercharged Outlaw racer Mark Flavell, who was himself involved in the SGDR, commented "There were lots of people who had a lot of very valuable input but Dave was the glue that bonded us all together", whilst Wayne Jackson added that Dave was "The nicest man you could meet in drag racing and in life", and Allan Flavell said

Dave was a "True legend of British Drag Racing and frankly no one has had more influence that he has".

Inducted into the BDRHoF in 2009 Dave Grady (right) campaigning a Holden in what was then a Street Eliminator class at Santa Pod and Blackbushe in 1973, and at Pennine's first events at Crosland Moor near Huddersfield in 1974. Shortly afterwards Dave's trusty black '57 Ford took on the mantle of *High Spirits* for Senior Competition racing at Melbourne. A new unique race vehicle followed, the famed Thundertruck designed to compete in the new Super Gas class. Not content with just racing in the new class, he set to work coordinating it too. G Force, a totally new concept for a single class of vehicles to offer themselves to show and race promoters as a complete demonstration or race class with sixteen Northern Super Gas cars were available to run under the G-Force banner for a championship spanning the three existing tracks. You can read the full citation in honour of Dave on the BDRHoF web site.



Melbourne fund passes 80%



Following the closure in 2017 of Britain's second permanent drag strip for more than 40 years; Long Marston Airfield's Shakespeare County Raceway to make way for the government backed Garden Village, there is a huge push at the moment to revive the old York Dragway site to help re-establish drag racing and sprinting again at the Vale of York's Melbourne Airfield.

Situated not far from Elvington Airfield, home to many British Land Speed Record breakers, motorcycle drag/sprint organisers, and BDRHoF sponsors **Straightliners** led by founder Trevor Duckworth, and the UK Timing Association, have mounted a campaign to get the old facility up and running again since the main run and drag strip has been occupied by the Mintex Corporation for its straight line test strip.

Although a crowd funding scheme had been established in 2018 to assist in generating the required funding to resurface the existing drag strip, and prove to the land owners that a drag racing facility in the north can exist, fell at the last hurdle after a breakdown of communications!

Now, after a successful revival meeting held last year, a fresh incentive instigated by Trevor and his team have already raised over £80,000 towards the required £100K target to resurface both lanes up to and beyond the eighth mile distance in a time scale for the intended reopening in August this year.

"Our aim is to have a new track with two six metre lanes and for the track to be 500 metres in length," says Trevor. *"We will start eighth mile racing and have ample braking area on the same surface as the race track. When funds become available we will extend the braking area so we can run full two lane quarter mile events."*

Work is expected to start this month with the removal of the old spectator banking and planing of the old surface so that any repairs needed to the sub-structure can be made before the new racing surface is laid.

"Our aim is to have the first event in August 2020, but to help us with that final push we have many on-line auctions running, some items simply 'money cannot buy' items", added Trevor.

York Raceway first opened in 1977 by the Pennine Drag Racing Club who, before York ran eighth mile events at Crosland Moor and Aintree. During the war Melbourne was home to the RAF No.10 and No.575 Squadrons operating the Douglas Dakota's and Handley Page Halifax four engine bomber. Melbourne was also one of only a few airfields in the country where planes could land when visibility was non-existent but made possible with fuel injected pipes laid down the side of the runway. Fuel was pumped into the pipes and came out of nozzles and lit when planes had to land.

Local club Motorcycle sprints also took place at the airfield in the early sixties which later followed with a rally school, semi-permanent kart track, and organised stage rallies regularly took place making it a proper Motorsports Park.

Photos courtesy of Mike Burrowes



USAutomotive sponsor Fuel Alteredds

BDRHoF and Eurodragster.com sponsor **USAutomotive** are excited to announce that they will be sponsoring the 2020 Dragstalgia Cannonball featuring the *Rat Trap* and *Havoc* AA/Fuel Alteredds.

Chairman of USAutomotive, Stewart Bassett, said *"USAutomotive has been involved with Ron Hope's Rat Trap and Nick Davies' Havoc for a number of years now and to be instrumental in bringing them together at Santa Pod Raceway for Dragstalgia is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It might well be the last time these two cars race side by side."*

"This year will be the tenth anniversary of Dragstalgia", said organiser James Forster. *"Each year, Dragstalgia has grown until it is now Europe's premier nostalgia drag racing event attracting more than 300 vintage race cars and thousands of spectators."*

The rivalry between these two legendary, nitro-powered AA/Fuel Alteredds began at Santa Pod in 2016. The action then moved to the US where *Havoc* driver Nick Davies went on to win the Fuel Altered Shootout at the California Hot Rod Reunion. Dragstalgia will be the first time Nick and Ron have faced each other since then and this might be the last time as *Havoc* is being retired so that Nick can concentrate on the USAutomotive-sponsored Pontiac Pro Mod. It's a race, well, four races actually, not to be missed" concluded Stewart.

In conjunction with the event sponsorship, USAutomotive will be hosting competitions and give-aways so be sure to visit their Facebook page under USAutomotiveUK



Photos courtesy of Julian Hunt for Eurodragster.com





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8-10 May 2020 - Nostalgia Nationals, Santa Pod Raceway

12-14 June 2020 - Fun Run, Rutland Showground

10-12 July 2020 - Dragstalgia, Santa Pod Raceway

6-9 August 2020

Hot Rod Supernationals, Old Warden

18-20 September 2020 - Hot Rod Drags, Santa Pod Raceway

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£45 for overseas membership

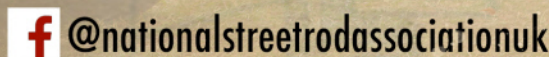
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To find out more about joining the NSRA and information on 2020 events,
visit www.nsra.org.uk





Host of the Great American Auto Scene internet show and Irwindale Track Announcer 'Hot Rod Bob' Beck writes....

Last November I was honored to be the moderator of the Bench Racing session of the BDRHoF Gala. The panel was comprised of drag racing history makers whose exploits I had only read about in books and magazines. This was my first meeting with most of them.

Dinners leading up to the bench racing session were spent telling stories of their past experiences and tall tales. I was able to use these exaggerations and factual accounts to guide these racing heroes into revealing information of their accomplishments in a way they may not have explained them before and in a way that we could all enjoy and even laugh about. These men were truly having fun sharing their fables and I was more than willing to let them. The audience seemed to also enjoy the lighthearted banter. The more enthusiastic the audience reacted, the taller the tales became. There was no stopping the always animated Waterbed Fred and his humor relaxed the rest of the panel members.

We had never been to the UK before and my wife and I were overwhelmed with the rich history we saw at every corner. The countryside was breath taking to us. We were taken to see where my father was stationed during WW2 and I was astounded by the town and the surrounding area. Words cannot describe the feeling I had being there with all that history.

As two car nuts, my wife and I took notice of most every vehicle we do not see here in the states. We have tried to conceive a plan to have a great British car follow us home when we return to the UK for Dragstalgia in July. Our trip for the BDRHoF Gala was truly a memorable experience. Thank you for allowing us to be part of your celebration and the friendships that it has fostered.

Photo courtesy of Julian Hunt for Eurodragster.com



BDRHoF Roll Of Honour 2006 - 2019



Members of the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame are shown below in order of induction.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Allan Herridge* | 24. Rune Fjeld | 47. Yvonne Tramm |
| 2. The Phelps Family | 25. Harold Bull | 48. Ken Cooper |
| 3. Phil Evans | 26. Geof Hauser | 49. John Cliff |
| 4. Dennis Priddle | 27. Al O'Connor | 50. Bob Keith* |
| 5. John Ledster* | 28. Peter & Erica Bartlett* | 51. Santa Pod Raceway |
| 6. Tony Densham* | 29. Krister Johansson | 52. Rob Loaring |
| 7. Roz Prior | 30. Peter Crane | 53. Paula Marshal* |
| 8. Dennis Stone* | 31. Terry Gibbs* | 54. Karsten & Per Andersen |
| 9. Clive Skilton | 32. Brian Sparrow | 55. John and Lesley Wright |
| 10. Sydney Allard* | 33. Pete Davies | 56. Steve Woollatt |
| 11. John Hobbs | 34. Harlan Thompson | 57. Lawrie Gatehouse |
| 12. Nobby Hills | 35. Barry Sheavills | 58. Pip Higham |
| 13. Custom Car Magazine | 36. Dave Lee Travis (DLT) | 59. Stuart Bradbury |
| 14. Ton Pels | 37. The Brachtvogel Family | 60. The Cookson Family |
| 15. The Page Family | 38. Tony Murray* | 61. Steve Horn |
| 16. The Read Family | 39. Carl Olson | 62. Peter Lantz |
| 17. Brian Johnson* | 40. Keith & Frances Parker | 63. Team Pegasus |
| 18. Alan Wigmore* | 41. Brian Chapman | 64. Andy Robinson |
| 19. Sammy Miller* | 42. Russ Carpenter | 65. Eurodragster.com |
| 20. John Bennett | 43. Gerry Belton | 66. Ian Lloyd |
| 21. Dave Grady* | 44. John Whitmore | 67. McCoy Dynamics Team |
| 22. Alf Hagon | 45. Dennis 'Stormin' Norman | 68. Wild Bunch |
| 23. The Murty Family | 46. Don Garlits | 69. Anita Mäkelä |

*indicates member passed away

Looking back through time!

Way back in 2007 the news stories dominating the UK headlines included January's freaky weather storms, the disappearance of Madeleine McCann, Tony Blair's final election day as prime minister, and the collapse of Northern Rock Bank to name but a few. Back in the world of European drag racing Santa Pod announced its planned resurfacing of its legendary quarter mile was now complete, Richard Hammond crashed the Vampire Jet Dragster, Urs Erbacher became the years FIA Top Fuel Champion, and the world mourned the loss of Wally Parks; the driving force behind the NHRA. The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame and its board of selectors inducted another five inductees to join the initial ten in this historic and prestigious list of individuals for their significant contributions and achievements to the sport. The 2007 inductees were Sydney Allard, John Hobbs, Nobby Hills, *Custom Car* magazine, while the first overseas inductee was The Godfather; Dutch drag racer Ton Pels. All four were presented with their 'Boostie' awards during February's annual Inter-Clubs APIRA/SPRC Joint Dinner Dance held at Northampton's Park Inn while Ton Pels received his award on the start line at Santa Pod's FIA/FIM Main Event a few months later from former Top Fuel Bike rider Ian Messenger.



Sydney Allard was a Ford dealer who in the years before the Second World War produced his own 'Allard Specials' using the 1930s Ford Flathead V8 engine. In later years Sydney began to take an interest in drag racing and built Europe's first dragster, the Allard Chrysler. In truth he built it to add a 'bit of jazz' to the then ailing British sprint scene. He formed the British Drag Racing Association and in 1963 Dante Duce and Mickey Thompson visited the UK to run with Sydney. In 1964 and '65 he collaborated with Wally Parks to hold a series of Drag Festivals. Meanwhile in '64 he brought out the Dragon, a four-cylinder-engined dragster sold in kit form to help people get started in drag racing, driven by son Alan. Sadly, this founding father of British Drag racing passed away only days after Santa Pod had opened its doors for business in 1966.

The racing career of **John Hobbs** began in 1966 in the long-established sport of sprinting. He combined this with Drag Racing and many successful National and World record attempts before migrating totally to drag racing where he became a dominant force in Europe. In the late 1960's he began running a series of Triumph powered machines christened Olympus and gained his first championship in 1968. In the early 1970's he moved on to Olympus II - a twin-engine machine - before building the legendary double Weslake, The Hobbit. By 1979 The Hobbit was knocking on the door of the seven-second barrier - picking up an array of event wins on the way - incredible when only a decade earlier the record was in the nine-second bracket.

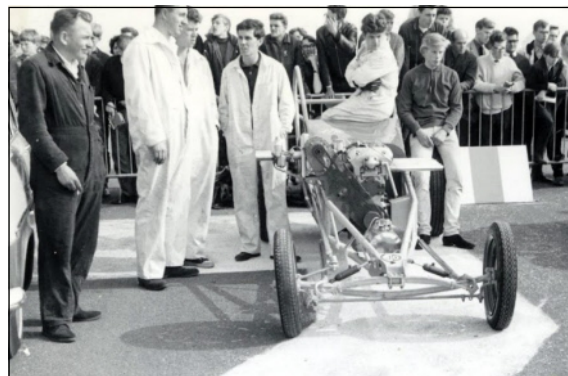


Photo courtesy of BDRHoF member Brian Sparrow

Nobby Hills has been involved in drag racing since the sport started in Europe in the 1960s. He was inspired to build his first car after having witnessed match races between Sydney Allard and Dante Duce in 1963. The first in a line of Houndog cars was introduced at the 1964 Drag Fest meetings. Nobby was primarily interested in the engineering side of the sport and mainly used hired drivers, including Les Hill, Mike Hutcherson, Owen Hayward and Alan Bates. After having run six front-engine dragsters, the opportunity to buy Paula Murphy's STP Plymouth Duster Funny Car in '73 was grabbed and Nobby ran Funny Cars from this point onwards, following the Duster up with a Vega, Challenger and a Corvette that was the first to record a five in 1986. After a hiatus from active involvement of almost two decades, Nobby Hills Racing constructed a nitro-involving Camaro Funny Car for Owen Haywood's son Simon to test and drive at Shakespeare County Raceway.

Custom Car magazine was first published in March 1970 and to the drag racing deprived fans of the era was a breath of fresh air. With its generally irreverent and rebellious early style, it quickly took the opportunity to cover the recently established drag racing scene, with full reports from both the UK and US. Regular features on cars of the era were included along with news and rumours. The Custom Car shows at Crystal Palace and Alexandra Palace took place, starting in 1972, for over ten years. *Custom Car* magazine's support for our sport over the years has remained undiminished and in recent years has expanded to sponsorship of events and class sponsorship. Under current editor Dave Biggadyke it has enjoyed a new lease of life with even more drag racing coverage and support promised for 2007. Importantly, it has been the only UK drag racing-related periodical to appear consistently on the high street for over forty-five years.





Photo courtesy of Keith Lee

The Godfather **Ton Pels** has been racing since 1970 and started on a variety of 250cc two-stroke bikes, soon changing to a 500cc Triumph on nitro. In 1977 he brought out a double-engined Triumph and this machine received the first-ever set of Puma cylinder heads in 1980, which were designed by Ton. Rebuilt in 1982 and renamed The Double Dutch Puma, in the next six years this bike won Ton a string of National Championships. Then, having started the Zodiac business selling aftermarket and performance parts for Harley Davidson, Ton went Pro Stock with a Harley and ran this machine until 1991, becoming the first ever Harley Pro Stock bike to run an eight. In 1992, Ton and son and Crew Chief Vincent built their first Godfather Supertwin and won the European Championship in the bike's first season. This also became the first European Harley (and third in the world) to break the 200 mph barrier, winning the 1996 European Championship in the process. In 2004 Ton repeated this feat with the Zodiac bike, which went on to more success with Roel Koedam in the saddle.

As awareness for the Hall of Fame began to grow at a rapid pace, partnerships began growing too with the signing of specialist automotive PR consultancy KJ Partnership whose client list was a who's who of Formula One and World Motorcycle Championship teams. Bedford-based USAutomotive also joined as a sponsor and still remains as a primary sponsor today. A new website was constructed and maintained courtesy of Andy 'Tog' Rogers and hosted by Eurodragster.com, and a new logo was launched, commissioned and designed by motorsports and drag racing graphic designer Darren West. All in all 2007 was another banner year for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame.



2007 BDRHoF Presentations



Gavin Allard accepting the BDRHoF 'Bootsie' award on behalf of his late grandfather Sydney Allard



The ultimate accolade for John Hobbs, a true pioneer of motorcycle drag racing and the legendary Hobbit



Accepting on behalf of BDRHoF inductee Nobby Hills was former Santa Pod Raceway starter Stu Bradbury



A very happy and proud moment for Custom Car editor Dave Biggadyke with over four decades of drag racing reporting



The BDRHoF class of 2007 with inductees John Hobbs (middle left) and Dave Biggadyke (right).

All presentation photos courtesy of Tom 'Sharkman' Ward of Eurodragster.com



Dutch drag bike legend Ton Pels accepting his 'Bootsie' from BDRHoF member Ian Messenger on the start line at Santa Pod during the 2007 FIA/FIM Main Event.

Photo courtesy of Roger Gorringe

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Photos: Dunk Ross, Mannmotorsports.co.uk

These are stories about BDRHoF members and what they have been up to recently. Send your stories and photos to the editor at quartermileneismakers@yahoo.co.uk so that we can include them in the next issue.

HOF people



Photo courtesy of Julian Hunt for Eurodragster.com

The '68 Pontiac Firebird campaigned by leading Silverstone based V8 engine builder ICE Automotive, BDRHoF member **Rob Loaring** and Nick Davis, and sponsored by USAutomotive and BUA Motorsport became the fastest UK pro Mod with a terminal speed of 249 mph at the 2019 FIA/FIM European Finals at Santa Pod Raceway. Driver Nick Davis, who typically drives the US Championship winning Havoc Fuel Altered, said "My partner, Rob Loaring, and I learned a lot during the six MSUK Championship races we campaigned, as we continue to lower our times and increase our speed. Indeed, during the European Finals, Nick attained a new Personal Best elapsed time of just 6.06 seconds and hit that top UK speed of 249 mph".

"It was an encouraging start", said Rob Loaring. "We accumulated data that will benefit us next season where a few changes are planned, some larger than others."

2020 is looking to be a busy season for the ICE Automotive team as not only will they campaign the Motorsports UK Pro Modified Championship with the Firebird, but they are looking forward to a match race series with American Ron Hope and the Rat Trap Fuel Altered at the tenth anniversary of Santa Pod's Dragstalgia, as well as a return trip to Bonneville Speed Week with BUA Motorsport for some unfinished business. Oh, and the advancement of a couple of new projects destined for the quarter mile. "It will be a full and exciting season", concluded Nick.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the Firebird super crew Nick, Rob, Scott, Dave and Callum, partners USAutomotive, BUA Motorsport, Roberts Motor Bodies, and Tony Thacker & Friends.



Shortly after accepting the BDRHoF Overseas Award Finland's **Anita Mäkelä** was on her next official engagement to Paris and the Carrousel du Louvre for the prestigious FIA Prize Gala Ceremony with daughter Hanna where Anita was officially crowned for a fourth time in her illustrious drag racing career FIA European Top Fuel Champion. In the star studded glitz and glamour occasion of motor sporting royalty Anita was certainly the shining star of the evening representing her chosen sport of drag racing among the many stars of Formula One, Rallying and Sports Car Racing. "It was a special evening to be part of the motorsport family and with big names as Lewis Hamilton, Valtteri Bottas and Ott Tänak. Many people came over just to congratulate me and gave kind words about our sport that I am so proud of" said Anita.



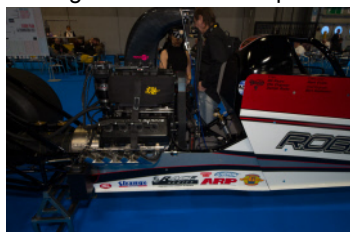
Photos courtesy of Lars Pettersson.

Robinson Race Cars and BDRHoF member **Andy Robinson** have launched a new web site to coincide with the companies rebrand. "We are excited to announce the all-new web site and branding", says Luke Robinson. "Our goal with the new web site is to create a user-friendly browsing experience for our trusted and valued customers and business partners, to showcase projects past and present, and to create a platform which can be kept up to date. We also have a new E-Mail address at info@robinsonracecars.com, so please update your contacts. Out phone number remains the same; 01256 880589 (outside the UK +44 1256 880589). You can find the new web site at www.robinsonracecars.com.

BDRHoF Chairman **Stuart Bradbury** and Treasurer **Bev Bradbury** were both honoured with the John Ledster Memorial Trophy at the recent Santa Pod Racers Club Awards Evening. Held in Milton Keynes the trophy was presented in John's honour by his widow Liz in recognition for all they have done for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame. "Bev and I were very honoured to have received the John Ledster Memorial Trophy For Selfless Dedication to Drag Racing award from the SPRC committee", said Stuart. "It's nice for Bev to get something for all the work she does behind the scenes to help not only the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame but also the BDRHoF Benevolent fund. You know what they say, behind every good man there's a good woman. I'm only the one that stands up and gets all the credit but as with everything there's a lot more goes to it than meets the eye". John Ledster was a big man in every sense of the word. He was of course physically a big man, a family man with a big heart and friend, especially in the world of motor sport, and particularly drag racing. John was one of the original Hall of Fame inductees in 2006. Photo courtesy of Julian Hunt for Eurodragster.com

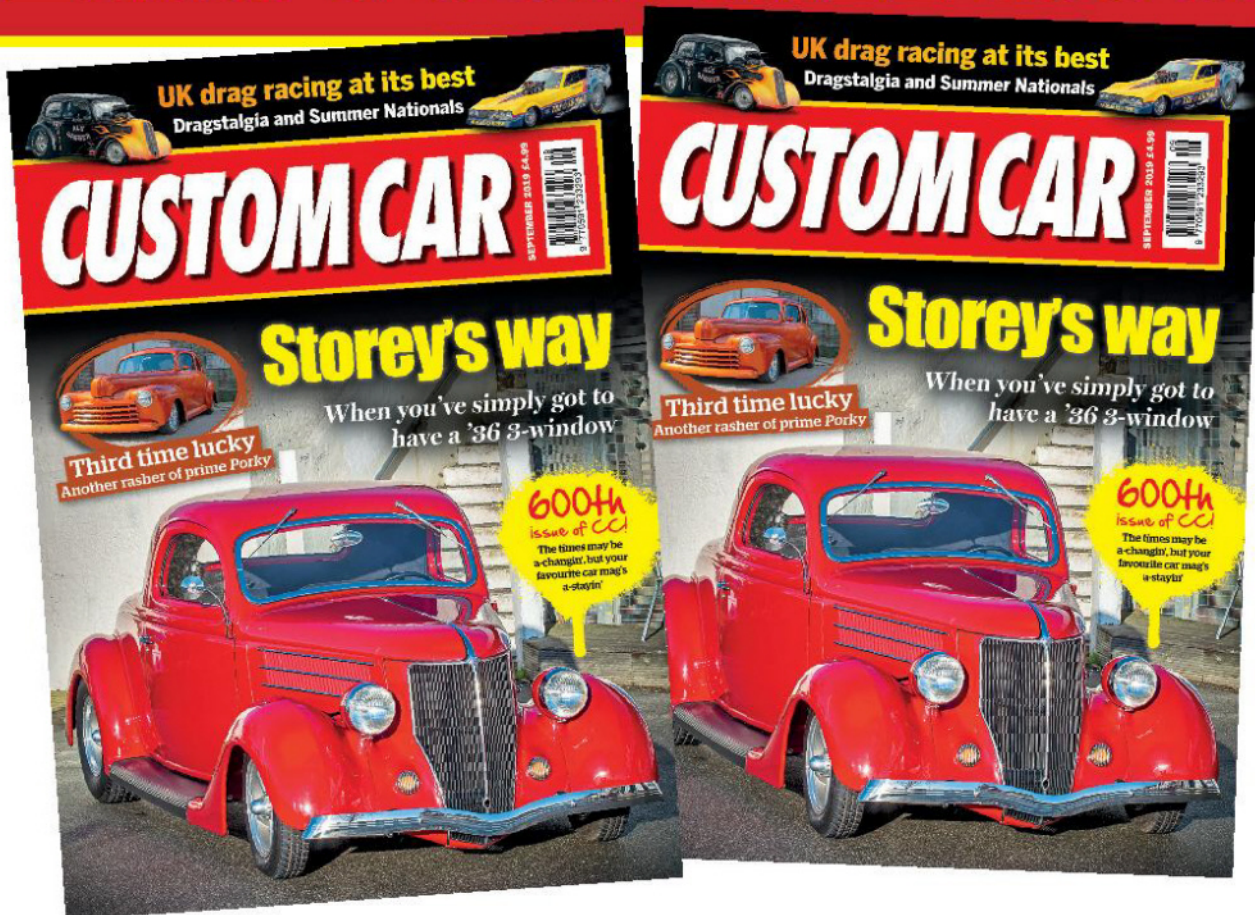


At January's Autosport International Show in Birmingham BDRHoF member **Robin Read** debuted his all new supercharged Daimler powered dragster. Here's a few photos of the new Bad Habits dragster captured by Bob Roberts.



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Remembering those the sport has lost



Eileen Cattley

We were very sorry to hear from Mike Lintern of the passing at the age of 84 of Eileen Cattley, long-time partner of BDRHoF member Bob Phelps, co-founder of Santa Pod Raceway.

Mike writes: While Bob was the man who in 1966 almost literally constructed Britain's first drag strip, Eileen was the great supporting woman who took on the role of Company Administrator, remaining involved with the sport even after Bob's death in 1988 to achieve almost thirty years of service to the sport.

Eileen lived in Shortlands, Bromley, close to the Phelps family's Fibre Glass Repairs workshops, and while Bob and son Roy were busy building dragsters and wheelie cars, plus fabricating bits of infrastructure for the track, it was Eileen who took care of the day-to-day running of the business. She maintained a close relationship with competitors, personally ensuring racers got their share of event proceeds at the end of each meeting. Eileen is recognised with the Phelps family in the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame. At the time of her death, although in failing health, she was living in the same house in Bromley.

Our deepest sympathies to Roy and Jason Phelps, and to all of Eileen's family and friends.

Gerry Belton

We were very sorry to hear from Simon and Adi Belton of the death of BDRHoF member Gerry Belton, who was instrumental in establishing drag racing in the UK.

Anyone who went along to the original International Drag Festivals of 1964 and 1965 will be familiar with the name Gerry Belton. Not only was he part of the organising team as the Drag Festival General Manager and Secretary of the British Drag Racing Association [BDRA], but Gerry was also one of the voices heard commentating at the meetings as well as the narrator on the subsequently released Dragfest LP.

He really was in the thick of the action right from the very beginning, being the Allard Motor Company PRO. At the outset Sydney Allard handed Gerry the job of organising the 1963 International Drag Racing Challenge that featured Dante Duce in *Mooneyes* and Mickey

Thompson driving his *Harvey Aluminium Special*. This series of events was instrumental in anchoring the sport in the UK.

Gerry then went on to organise the British International Drag Racing Festivals in 1964 and 1965. This was no small task given the American entries arriving and the complications raised by setting up six meetings to be held at different airfields with different organising bodies over three back-to-back weekends. Given the perfect weather throughout, not credited to Gerry, some 120,000 spectators enjoyed the meetings, still said by some as never to be forgotten. Gerry was also involved in organising World Record meetings in the UK and Europe with the International Sprint Organisation [ISO].

His off-track activities were matched by some personal success on track, as he has the distinction of winning Top Eliminator at the first ever British Hot Rod Association 'Big Go' meeting. He was at the wheel of a Ford-powered Allard Dragon dragster designed by the company to be sold as kits to expand participation in the then fledgling sport. He was also part of the consortium that purchased Bob Keith's 1964 Dos Palmas dragster which he drove in 1965. He drove his own '65 Cobra 289 at Santa Pod in the late '60s. In fact he set the CC/SP Class Quarter Mile Record at 13.582secs and 104.60mph - pretty small beer by today's standards but very quick back in the day - and it is for his work with Sydney Allard organising these European ground-changing events that Gerry was inducted into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 2014. BDRHoF sends its deepest sympathies to Simon and Adi and to all of Gerry's family and friends.



Gerry at the wheel of his beloved 289 Cobra in 1968 against the Ford Anglia of Graham Bean.
Photo by John Bennett/DragRod c/o Mike Collins



Bill Simpson

We were sorry to hear from Geof Stilwell of the death of motorsport safety legend Bill Simpson. Bill had been in ill health for some time and had to miss the presentation of his Mopar Performance Lifetime Achievement Award at the BDRHoF Gala. He was admitted to hospital some weeks after where he later passed away after suffering a stroke. He was 79. Bill, himself a former racer, was founder of Simpson Performance Products and Impact! Racing, and played a pivotal role in raising the safety standards and creating a safe environment throughout motorsport in general, and drag racing in particular. His safety innovations include the modern firesuit, driver restraint systems and helmets, and the drag racing parachute. He once legendarily volunteered to put on one of his firesuits and then be sprayed with racing gas and have a match put to him. Needless to say, Bill came out of that exercise unscathed and with a point well made.

It is beyond dispute that Bill saved countless lives in his long and innovative career, and we are sure that every drag racer in Europe and elsewhere feels they owe him a debt of gratitude whether or not they have an accident. There can be no more fitting memorial or solid legacy than for Bill's products to continue to keep racers safe.

Accepting the Mopar Performance Lifetime Achievement Award from Steve Gibbs was Bill's long-time friend and former Blue Max Funny Car crew chief 'Waterbed' Fred Miller. Bill was also inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America in 2003.

BDRHoF sends its deepest sympathies to Bill's family and friends. He will be sorely missed. A celebration of Bill's life is being planned at the IMS Museum for May 2020.

Peter Granica

We were sorry to hear of the death of European Super Street Bike racer and tuner Peter Granica of Team Joker. At the age of 48 Peter died in November after battling a long illness.

Eurodragster.com wrote: Peter was an absolute top bloke, ever cheerful, who bought right into the Super Street Bike ethos of racing hard on condition of having a good time. He and brother Thomas have always been a very welcome and popular duo on the European scene and have always been big supporters of Eurodragster.com. Peter was a credit to his class and to the sport and will be very sadly missed. BDRHoF sends its condolences to Thomas and to all of Peter's family and friends.

Tim Mugridge



We were very sorry to hear of the passing of UK Comp Eliminator and Super Modified racer Tim Mugridge. Father to junior racers Nick and Luke, and loving husband of Jan, Tim was a true drag racing sportsman in every sense of the word. Tim's first foray into drag racing was in the Street Eliminator class where he finished runner-up twice in the first two years of the class's inception before stepping up to Super Modified with a Dave Monday Race Cars-built Camaro. That very car will be remembered for its many wins, but also for its start line nitrous explosion at Shakespeare County in 2011. Soon after, with sons Nick and Luke now entered into the Junior Dragster class and with Tim not racing, he would still find time to be out there on the start line supporting and cheering his sons on for the win.

Sadly Tim was diagnosed with Oesophagus Cancer early last year. Following a series of hard core treatments a secondary cancer in the spine was diagnosed. Tim's eldest son Nick wrote: Dad loved his family and his friends deeply, and his passion for the sport of drag racing was great. He

loved every second of being a part of it and would help anybody who asked. Spending time at the race track and sharing it with his family was what he lived for. Even till the end he was trying desperately to enable Luke and me to carry on racing. God bless you, Dad, love you so much. BDRHoF sends its deepest sympathies to Jan, Nick, Luke and to all of Tim's family and friends.

Peter Schöfer

We were sorry to hear in the last few weeks the death of German Top Methanol racer and European Champion Peter Schöfer. Supported by his brothers Rudi and Wolfgang Peter started his drag racing career in 1985 at the wheel of a Plymouth Roadrunner. However, Peter had already established a career in motorsport as an accomplished motorcycle racer racing 250cc and 350cc class bikes on circuits, road courses, and later in hillclimb competitions. In fact in 1979 after spending a season and a half chasing times up hills Peter was crowned European Champion.

After attending his first drag race in Hanau, Germany in 1984, Peter was hooked and PSR [Peter Schöfer Racing] was born. The following year PSR purchased the Famous Chevy Powered Citroen 2CV 'Wildente' from Rico Anthes. For the next four years PSR began to develop the Citroen altered to the point when it started to become unsafe to drive. In 1993 PSR bought their first dragster chassis; a rear engine 'streamliner' from Sweden. Soon afterwards the team started to bring down the numbers and count the race wins which led to the team becoming German as well as European champions over the next four years.

In 1998 Peter became the first racer outside America to run a 5 second elapsed time with a small block Chevy; a 5.99 at Santa Pod. More race wins against British rivals and friends Dave Wilson and Rob Turner followed as all three chased the FIA title round Europe and Scandinavia. Peter's racing career came to an end, after 32 years, at the beginning of 2016. The 'Bavarian Thunder' dragster was sold. Peter, Wolfgang and Rudi continued running PSR repairing and certifying PSI blowers.

BDRHoF sends its deepest sympathies to Peter's family and friends.





DON GARLITS **Bobble Head** DRAGSTER AUCTION MOVES TO THE NEXT LEVEL



Don and Donna Garlits would like to donate this exclusive limited edition 'Bobble Head' die-cast Dragster signed by the man himself "Big Daddy" Don Garlits to the Melbourne Raceway Appeal.

Don has not only signed the dragster, but also the box as well. It will come with a letter of authentication signed by Don himself as being a genuine 1/100 hundred signed by him.

This is a **MUST HAVE** item of drag racing memorabilia for any NHRA or Don Garlits collector. Don't miss out on the chance to own a piece of Drag Racing History. The current bid is for **£350**. If you are lucky enough to find another it will not come with a signed guarantee of authenticity.

This has now elevated this prize to truly one of a never to be repeated opportunities to own such an item.

Ship to UK address only.

All proceeds go to the Melbourne Raceway appeal.

Drop Stu a message or email stuarbrd@aol.com or britishdrhof@aol.com.

Happy bidding, best of luck everyone!



Eurodragster/HoF interviews

The following interview with Eurodragster.com's Simon Groves was conducted in 2014 at Mike Kuhl Racing Enterprises in Santa Ana, California, and it's with their kind permission that we can republish Simon's interview with BDRHoF members Clive Skilton, Carl Olson, and Mike Kuhl with additional archive material made available by BDRHoF historian Nick Pettitt. At the time of writing Eurodragster.com thanked John Woolfe Racing's Dave Riswick for helping to arrange the interview.



BDRHoF member **Clive Skilton** started drag racing in the UK in 1967 and from 1968 raced Top Fuel Dragsters *Revolution* & *Second Revolution*, in which he ran his first 200 mph terminal speed, and the revolutionary rear-engined *Revolution III*. He entered the 1973 Winternationals at Pomona along with arch-rival and BDRHoF member **Dennis Priddle** and bought the proven race-winning Kuhl & Olson dragster. In 1975 Clive built a Funny Car and rekindled his rivalry with Dennis Priddle. After racing a Top Fuel car again in 1976, when he won an eight-car field that included American racing legend and BDRHoF member **Don Garlits**, he moved to the USA and in 1977 match raced around the country and in the NHRA Championship. After retiring from drag racing at the end of 1977 he settled in the United States, ran some successful car dealerships in the country, and became involved in Off-Road Racing with his family including promoting a Jeep racing Series. Clive was inducted into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 2006.

Inducted in 2012 BDRHoF member **Carl Olson** was a successful NHRA Top Fuel racer based in Los Angeles with business partner Mike Kuhl. In 1972 and with a new 417 Donovan aluminium Hemi engine they won the 1972 NHRA Winternationals and later that same year Mike went on to win the IHRA World Top Fuel Championship. After the 1974 season Carl became the General Manager of Waterman Racing Engines. Two years later he retired from racing to become Vice-President of the NHRA and went on to be Vice President for International Relations. This position grew into formation of an FIA Drag Racing Commission that would propose rules for ratification by the World Motor Sport Council, establishing standards for conducting the sport around the world. Carl served as FIA Drag Racing Commission President from 1993 to 2005. In 2001 he served as Motorsports Manager for the SFI Foundation and is a Board Member on the Quarter Mile Entertainment Foundation/Project 1320. Carl is also a member of the Bonneville 200 MPH Club.

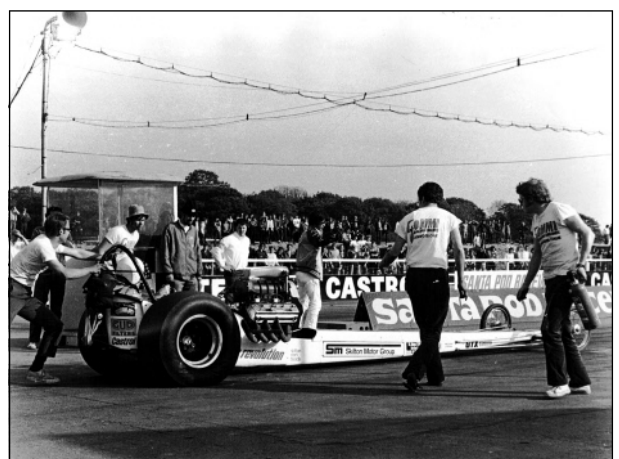
Mike Kuhl was raised in St Louis, Missouri and raced in the 1950s and 60s. After moving to Long Beach in 1964, he raced Top Fuel Dragsters locally and opened his shop in Santa Ana supplying engines for racing before teaming up with Carl Olson on 1971. Mike became the co-owner and Crew Chief on the Kuhl and Olson rear engine Top Fuel Dragster winning many events and becoming, with Carl, a member of the NHRA Five Second Club before selling their racing operation to Clive at the end of 1976. Mike is co-owner and Crew Chief of the Kuhl, Olson and Bowman A/Blown Fuel Rear Engine Modified Roadster that can be found competing for land speed records at the Bonneville Salt Flats.

Carl and Mike are also members of the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame.

Clive Skilton: Who would have thought we would be sitting here all these years later? 1971 was when I first met Mike and Carl.

Eurodragster.com: In 1971 you were running *Second Revolution*...

Clive Skilton: And I bought an engine for it from Paul Gommi. Gommi used to work for Keith Black and he broke off and opened up his own shop, and when we built *Second Revolution* I wanted a good motor for it. We had been building our own motors which were alcohol 354 cu in and I got introduced to Paul Gommi. He later put me in contact with Mike. The Gommi engine came in a crate complete and we put it in the car but it would never run. The Beadle brothers Don and Tony (Tony sadly passed away in 2012) were at Santa Pod and I had sort of given up. Don said "I can fix this for you". I came back half an hour later and they got this brand new motor all apart in the dirt, they put it back together and fired it up and ran it. I guess that the cam had been 180 degrees out or something like that. It could have been any one thing or any of fifty things!
Later I got to meet Carl because I hadn't been to the States and that was in 1971 when I drove down there.



Carl Olson: Clive met me through BDRHoF member Dennis Priddle who was buying parts from me at the time. The first time I met Clive he brought Don Beadle with him to pick Mike's brain, and at the time Don hadn't been anywhere but was as smart as a whip and a really good mechanic, then afterwards Mike did some engine work and we sold Clive some parts. In 1972 we crashed the car and rebuilt it and sold it to Clive in 1973.

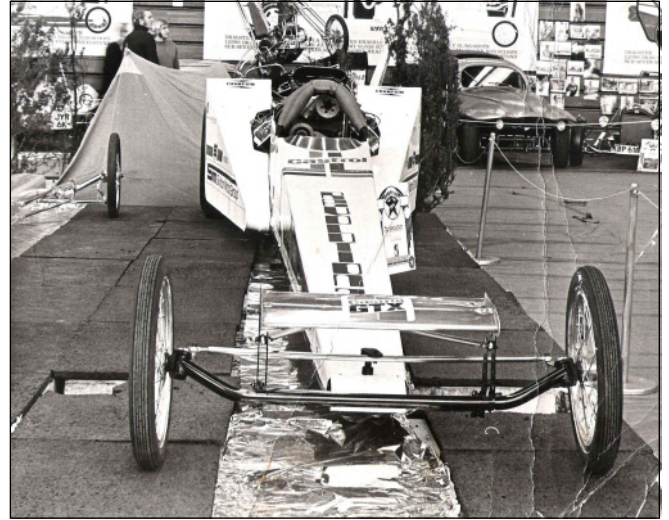
We had the car (that Clive bought) built in 1971 and was one of the first in the rear engine revolution. We saw immediately what was happening and said "We've got to have one of those". So Clive's was our original rear engine car. The car won the NHRA Winternationals, the Orange County International Raceway All-Pro Series and a bunch of other big races.

Clive Skilton: Somehow or other I found out the car was for sale and bought it in 1973. But I had a rear engine car built in the UK before, in 1972.

Revolution III was way ahead of its time. If you look at the fuel cars today, that's how it was, it was all straight tubes, there wasn't a bent tube in it and you lay down in the car like a F1 car and the frame came up to my shoulders. It was designed by a guy called Ian Fraser and he was an engineer who had contact with the guys at McLaren and they were involved. Behind me, the chassis went up over the top of the engine and you had to take a bar out to get the cylinder heads off, which was a pain so we changed that.

The rear engine car we were building in the UK was the same time as Garlits'. There was an article in Motor magazine when we were building in 1971. That car was a great car, I loved driving it and it won in 1976 when I borrowed it back.

What it had, which no-one had done at that stage, was that you could take the car and split it behind the seat so (although I didn't have the money to do this) if you blew a motor, there were just six bolts and the fuel line to disconnect and like a current Audi Le Mans car you just rolled the back out and rolled a replacement in with everything in it. I don't know how that would have fitted the rules?



Carl Olson: Frakes and Funk here in the USA had a car like that, a complete engine and rear end, everything but the wheels and tyres and that would just unbolt.

These rear engine cars at the start were just a front motored chassis with the motor bolted on at the back. The first rear engine dragsters were influenced by front engine cars. In fact there were a number of cars that were converted from slingshots to rear engine cars.

Mike Kuhl: That first one that I had, one that Carl didn't drive, was later converted. A guy bought it from me and took it to Texas and raced there and got mad because the rear engine cars were taking over so he just welded a back end with a motor on it and ran it. He wasn't the only one.

In 1970, three weeks after I had a new slingshot with Billy Tidwell, it got wrecked at Long Beach, it threw the crank out of it and it completely destroyed the car. I built a new slingshot after that one and it had a full body on it. That was the first of my cars that Carl drove and my last slingshot.

Eurodragster.com: Was the rear end revolution in California happening in parallel to Garlits or a result of him bringing the car to Lions?

Carl Olson: A lot of people are under the misconception that Garlits built the first rear engine car, far from that. What Garlits did was build the first successful rear engine car and he brought that car to Lions Drag Strip early in 1971.

Garlits showed up at Lions but didn't win the race, he made it to the final against Gary Cochran and lost, but everybody could see the writing on the wall. At that time I had my own car which I was running and Mike had his car with different drivers. I ended up crashing my car at Fremont, totalling it and when I got home the phone was ringing. Mike said "I just fired my latest driver", which wasn't uncommon, and wanted to know if I would be interested in driving his slingshot until I got mine back together, and I said "Sure".



At our first race together at Orange County International Raceway in Southern California, we won and never looked back. We did very well with the slingshot.

We both agreed that we needed to pool our parts and resources and build a new rear engine car. So the car that Clive ended up with was built in the early summer on 1971. We ran it at the US nationals in 1971, won Best Appearing Car and reached the semi finals when it was a thirty two car show. Woody Gilmore built the chassis and Tom Hanna built the body. Mike built the engine and we were running cast iron 392 cu in Chrysler engines with 3/8 inch stroker crankshafts.

Clive Skilton: I think that's how I hooked up with these guys because Priddle was going to a 426 and Gomme and you were still running the 392.

Carl Olson: During the winter of 1971-2 was when Donovan Engineering came up with the 417 cu in (cast aluminium block), and we had engine number 003.

The International Organisation of Professional Drivers



The International Organisation of Professional Drivers (IOPD) was formed in 1990 by Steve Murty, Edwin and Karimah MacKnight to regulate and support the driving experience sector of recreational motor sport in the UK. This was brought about by the MSA/ RAC refusal to recognise and permit Run What Ya Brung events, including so called outlaw events, and track driving activities thereby denying participants and organisers a route to legitimisation and parity with mainstream motor sports.

From the IOPD's recognition by the DOT and subsequent statutory empowerment in 1991, (giving the IOPD the same authorising powers as the MSA) the IOPD soon grew to be disapplying the Road Traffic Act for some 70,000 to 100,000 participants per year, not only for driving experiences but for full competition and Drag Racing.

The IOPD also took on the authorising (permitting) some 38 other disciplines of recreational auto activity across 1,2,3,4,6 and 8 wheeled activities, including tracked and jet thrust vehicles. In fact any discipline from Mini Moto to F1. Through its statutory powers the IOPD also authorises and permits many of the world's international motor manufacturer's driving experience programmes and track days.

The IOPD is proud to authorise and licence 12 sprint and drag racing venues in the UK, including speed record testing and demonstrations. These venues have catered for more than 10,000 participants and 1 million spectators over a 20 year period. The IOPD has also pioneered permitting closed road motor racing demonstrations in city centre locations for up to ¼ million spectators per event.

The IOPD continues to defend organisers and participants for corporate manslaughter charges and charges of death by dangerous driving including HSE/ EHO prosecutions. The IOPD is currently at the forefront in the consultation process on the British Government sponsored review of the EU Motor Sport Insurance Directive (Vnuk) and Motor Sport Safety Guidance.

The IOPD is happy to support the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame as a totally non-political, impartial organisation dedicated to recognising and celebrating the special people who have given so much to create our sport today.

Tel 01422 843651 Email info@iopd.org.uk

Mike Kuhl: John Wiebe had the first one and then when Donovan built the second one he took the first one back and gave number two to Wiebe and we got number three and Herm Petersen got number four. We went to the 1972 NHRA Winternationals and blew everyone out.



Carl Olson: You could run the car so much harder with the 417 because you didn't have to worry about cracking a cylinder walls or main webs and throwing crankshafts on the ground. Because we won the Winternationals, we decided to go on tour. I was General Manager of a speed equipment company in Long Beach. Mike had an engine building shop here in Santa Ana, he closed up his shop and I quit my job. We both had families, wives and kids and mortgages and just said "Screw it man, we're going on tour". We did really well. We won a good many races and the IHRA Championship, but at the NHRA US Nationals in Indianapolis, Indiana, we broke a crankshaft in the Donovan and didn't have a chance to get back to California to get another one. At the final IHRA race of the season, the Nationals in Dallas, Texas, we ran a spare cast iron 392 motor which threw the crankshaft out. We won the race but lost the war and wrecked. We took what was left of the car to Woody Gilmore and said "Is anything salvageable?" and he said "Yes I think the roll cage is good, but the front end is gone and needs welding some tubes on, it needs straightening things in the engine bay" as the rear end had come completely out of the car.

Clive Skilton: That car went through a series didn't it? (Jokingly) I never wrecked that... oh yes I did! The people who bought it from me wrecked it too. It's funny they talk about at speed things slow up, I remember going through the lights at about 210, and I saw the front tyre part from the rim and the tube between them came out, and then I saw the wheel collapse and that's when then it got hooked on the barrier and you know how they had holes in the barrier, we got right in one, the barrier came up the car and the Santa Pod wood barrier came over my shoulder in the roll cage. You should see the photos.

Mike Kuhl: The same thing happened to Kalitta, he almost got cut in two by it, it was very common in those days.

Clive Skilton: I then sold it to Liz Burn and she crashed at Snetterton. I was late coming to the track and was driving up the road towards it when I saw the car go off the end across a field, hit a bank and take off. It seemed to take forever. I didn't know it was her at the time until I got in.

You talked about Mike firing drivers; we went to Tulsa, Oklahoma and took Carl and Mike with me. We were doing OK, had won the first round, went to the second round and whoever we were racing red-lit. So I just drove up gently to the other end and the boys were then coming up to me yelling and screaming and "Why did you lift off". I said the guy had red-lit and I wanted to save the equipment and they were mad at me because we had screwed up on lane choice. I was worried about oil pressure, got in the car for the next round and found the oil pressure gauge had gone, they had taken it out and said "Just drive the car!"

Eurodragster.com: When you had the car repaired by Woody Gilmore were you looking for someone to buy it?

Carl Olson: Actually the car was sold to someone else before we crashed it. We had a \$2500 cash deposit which we had to give back to the guy so after Woody rebuilt the car and Hanna put a new body on it, somehow we got talking about it with Clive and made a deal.



Clive Skilton: The idea was come here and run it at the Winternationals, and it rained and got postponed, and I was stuck in a hotel for three weeks and I had a car show to do back in England at Crystal Palace. In the end I told Wally Parks and NHRA "We've got to go" and that was it. We had got to the point where we couldn't ship it, we had to put it on a plane. Although he hadn't offered me a penny in the three weeks I was stuck in a motel, Wally Parks called me when we were on our way to the airport offering me all sorts of money and stuff but we never got to race it here.

We took the rear wheels off and put some stock wheels on the back so we could manage to get it in the hold of a 747. It was the weirdest sensation, I flew on the same plane and looked out of the window and saw it go in the hold.

We will pick up on Simon's interview with Clive, Carl and Mike in the next issue.



Photo Credit Matt Woods

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About the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame (BDRHoF) is a not for profit organisation that was established in 2006 to recognise significant contributions or achievements in the sport of British drag racing. The twelve Selection Panel members include club & track officials, promoters, former racers, journalists and fans with a long background in the sport. The Selection Panel convenes annually to nominate candidates for inclusion into the Hall of Fame. Eligibility is extended to any person who has driven, piloted, owned, designed, built, maintained, prepared, promoted, officiated, supported or taken part in any capacity connected with British drag racing. An inductee must have been retired at least three years or must have been engaged at the top level of his/her area of British drag racing for at least 20 years, or made a recognisable and significant contribution to the sport. Inductees are characterised by their desire to win, mastery of their own particular field and courage to innovate.

British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Selection Panel

Stu Bradbury – Former Santa Pod Raceway Chief Starter and BDRHoF Honorary Chairman.

Keith Bartlett – Santa Pod Raceway CEO and FIA Championship Promoter

Philip Evans – Member of FIA Drag Racing Commission and Chair of Motorsport UK Speed Committee.

Robin Jackson – Motorsport UK British Drag Racing Championship and Santa Pod Raceway Press Officer.

Jeremy Cookson – Former Shakespeare County Raceway Promotions Manager, UK Nostalgia enthusiast & editor of HoFTalk.

Graham Beckwith – Former Santa Pod Raceway and York Raceway Commentator.

Ian Marshall – Santa Pod Racers Club Chief Starter.

Phil Cottingham – Spectator Representative and former Carter Motorsport Marketing Manager.

Ian Messenger – Former drag bike racer.

Darren Prentice – Santa Pod Raceway Track & Race Operations Manager.

Andy Rogers (Tog) – Eurodragster.com News Editor.

Keith Lee – Photo journalist, Santa Pod Raceway commentator and BDR&HRA committee member.

Drag Racing History Consultants – Nick Pettitt and Keith Lee

British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Limited

The management of the BDRHoF is carried out by a separate Limited company which looks after strategy, finance, commerce, marketing, sponsorship, press & public relations, membership liaison, international liaison, events and general secretary duties. The company's title is British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Limited and the Board consists of the following Directors and Advisers:

Directors

Stu Bradbury – Honorary Chairman

Bev Bradbury – General Secretary and Treasurer

Ian Hart - Sponsorship

Jeremy Cookson – Press Liaison

Nigel Payne - Transport liaison

Advisers

Phil Cottingham - Outdoor Events

Phil Evans - Special Motorsport Liaison

Simon Groves - Company Secretary

Julian Parsons - Gala Technical Advisor

Tony Thacker - Gala Announcing and Script

Andy Wheeler - Gala A/V display

Jordan Payne - Gala logistics

Lesley Wright - Membership Liaison

The Board meets regularly to discuss issues associated with finance, operations and structure.

British Drag Racing Hall of Fame Supporters

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame is sponsored by many businesses, individuals and associations. Without this support it could not exist. We thank all of them for helping us to celebrate our pioneers in some style.

Honorary International Ambassadors

Eileen Daniels, Donna Garlits, Ron Hope, Traci Hrudka, Fred Miller, Bob Muravez, Sharon Muravez and Carl Olson.

BDRHOF Benevolent Fund **Caring For The Drag Racing Community**

The BDRHoF Benevolent Fund was established by the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame and registered with the Charities Commission in 2016 to create a professional fund-raising platform to support injured racers and the Air Ambulances that support Britain's Drag Racing tracks. During 2019, the Benevolent Fund made a donation of a patient-monitor device to Santa Pod Raceway's medical services team, and in previous years there were grants to the charities that operate the Air Ambulances that serve Santa Pod Raceway and York Raceway. The BDRHoF Benevolent Fund charity registration number is 1167197. It is run for drag racing by trustees who have had many years' experience in the sport. They are: Stu Bradbury, Simon Groves, Robin Jackson, Ian Messenger, Graham Beckwith and Phil Cottingham. They would like to thank all those who have contributed during the year.

Help Required

If you would like to help the BDRHoF we welcome assistance with event management tasks such as journalism, script writing, programme producing, liaising with sponsors, and more besides. In working for the BDRHoF you will have a chance to network with legends of drag racing around the world and enhance your CV skills base. Contact stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk.

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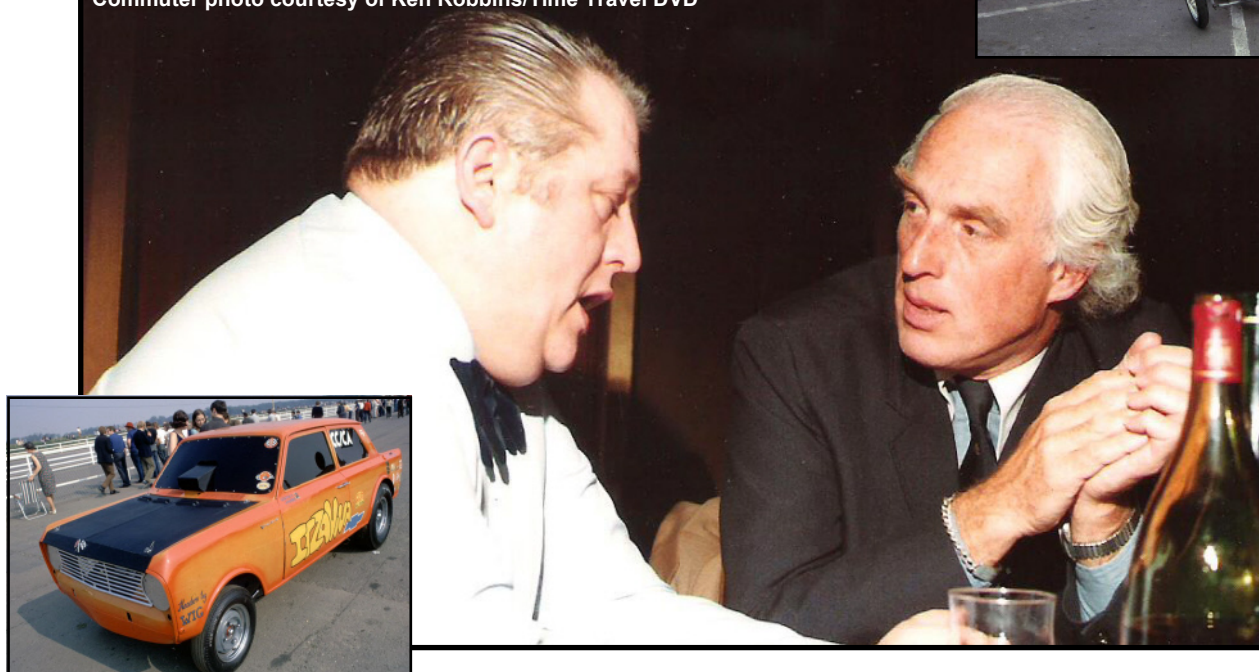
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The BDRHoF could not exist without the support of its sponsors. Three levels of sponsorship are available - Partnership, Primary and Regular/Event sponsorship. If your company would like to join these supporters please contact stuart@britishdragracinghof.co.uk

Items for sale

The British Drag Racing Hall of Fame has a range of branded items for sale. You can find details on www.britishdragracinghof.co.uk/shop/.

...and finally Deep in conversation BDRHoF members Alan Wigmore (left) and Tony Densham discuss the future of the National Drag Racing Club during a 1970s awards presentation evening. Alan, a racer with *Itsaviva*, was then NDRC chairman while Tony, a British Land Speed Record holder with *Commuter*, was the clubs president. Alan was inducted in 2008 while Tony was one of the original BDRHoF class of 2006. Commuter photo courtesy of Ken Robbins/Time Travel DVD





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