



## Cal Club 50th FV Birthday Party/ Restricted Double Regional/Pacific F2000, FF Series

May 18/19 2013

Beautiful weather awaits us for a weekend of racing at Buttonwillow Raceway Park. We are using course configuration 25CW. This is an unusual grouping for the club as we have the 50<sup>th</sup> FV birthday party, a restricted double regional, and the Pacific F2000 series races, and Time Trials. Two of the race groups were under SCCA sanctioning and the FV and F2000 races were held under the track's auspice.

### Race 1

The first race for Saturday will be for IT, T4, SM, RS, HP, FP, Pro-7, and STU. Cal Club's 240 SX pace car driven by Steve Lowery leads the field around and ducks into the pit lane and the starter waves the green. Both Corey Taguchi (STU Acura) and Steven Champlin (SM) reach the first turn ahead of pole sitter Paul Gassen in his ITE Mustang. At the exit of Riverside Gassen accelerates into the lead followed by Taguchi and Champlin. 5<sup>th</sup> place qualifier Michael Tsay in his T4 Civic quickly moves up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot and sets his sights on the more powerful Acura of Taguchi. Champlin has another SM driven by Mark Lange start to challenge him for the class lead. On lap 6 Lange will get by Champlin. A little further back Jim Bishop in his former LBGP Celebrity Toyota Celica and Jim McEachean's ITA Acura are having a good race. Soon they are both passed by Jim Whitton's FP Miata. Bishop's transmission starts to balk going into 4<sup>th</sup> and he starts dropping back from McEachean. With 6 laps left Kathy Guerla enters the race from the pit lane but unfortunately ends up between the lead Miatas and slows down Champlin going through Grapevine allowing Lange to pull away. With 4 laps left lapped traffic slows down Tsay some in Riverside and Taguchi is able to open the gap between them, which was 1.5 seconds before the lapped car incident. A few laps before the end our STL leading Miata of Dale Shoemaker starts to misfire but makes it to the checker. Taking the checker first is Paul Gassen's ITE Mustang, in 2<sup>nd</sup> is the winning STU Acura of Michael Taguchi, 3<sup>rd</sup> is T4 winner Michael Tsay, 1.9 seconds back from him is SM winner Mark Lange. Dale Shoemaker wins STL,

Jim Whitton is the FP winner, Jack McEachean's Acura wins ITA, Jim Bishop wins RS, Pro-7 is won by Lonny Sheek, and the lone HP entry is won by Mike Bachman in his Sprite. Bachman's Sprite is also serving double duty with Candy Rucker using it for the Time Trials.

## Race 2

The 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday of FV started off with many drivers telling the organizer that they'd be here and enjoy the fun. Well, because of this or that only 8 cars showed up and the oldest one ended up with engine problems and never made it to the races. That car, which was a beautiful 1963 Formcar, made people smile as it looked like it did the first day it raced! 4 individual tail pipes, the old stock cooling fan, and aerodynamics of a car sized stink bug was just great! For the race we have 7 cars take the green. Mark Edwards just checks out on the field but there's a really good race between Kim Madrid, Eric Inkrott, and Bob Hatle. Of those 3 the Vee of Inkrott is classified as FV2. Sometimes it appears that Inkrott's Vee has some extra hp but less suspension than Hatle and Madrid. Madrid pulls away from the battling pair of Hatle and Inkrott. Charlie Turner decides he wants to be part of the fun and pulls up on both Inkrott and Hatle. At one point Inkrott has an Off and On at the Star Mazda turn allowing Hatle to close in and pass him going into Riverside. With 3 laps left Inkrott blasts by Hatle on the back section but is soon passed by Hatle. Finally on the last lap Inkrott passes Hatle going into Sunrise. Then at the last turn Hatle tries out braking Inkrott but that ends up as a trip out into the dirt and Turner catches up with him and ends up only .8 seconds back as they cross the line. Mark Edwards slowed down some towards the end and beats Kim Madrid by 3.5 seconds. Eric Inkrott finishes in 3<sup>rd</sup> and wins FV2. Rudy Madrid wins FV1. BTW, FV1 runs treaded tires! Edward's fastest lap was a 2:09.8 and Kim Madrid's was 2:10.04, so she almost had the fastest lap.

## Race 3

This is our pro group with F2000's and F1600's. This is a split start and when the F2000's get the green Tom Hope takes the lead followed by Ira Fierberg. Soon the F1600's get the green and an epic battle between Joey Bickers and Colton Herta starts to take place. As the laps tick off Hope has a 2.5 second lead over Fierberg and the gap between Bickers and Herta is pretty much nonexistent! Sometimes it will get as large as 2 car lengths. Bickers went though the Cal Club Driver's School in March in a Spec Miata. Students got a free entry for the regional the day after their school and Bickers won his class! I can't remember this ever happening before! Bickers is maybe 17 years old, which is old compared to Brian Herta's 13 year old son! To put it in perspective, would a High School kid ever hang with a Junior High kid? Well, Herta and Bickers make no mistakes racing in close quarters like they are doing and Herta is biding his time on the transaxle of Bickers. Back to the FF2000's there is a good race for 4<sup>th</sup> between Les Phillips and

Bob Negron. That comes to an end during the 6<sup>th</sup> lap in the Star Mazda turn as both of them tangle and need to be towed in. With 6 laps left there is a 1.1 second gap between Hope and Fierberg. Next lap Fierberg out brakes Hope going into Sunrise and is the new leader. With a 4 laps left Fierberg gets held up slightly lapping F1600's in Riverside and Hope is able to carry some speed and takes the lead back. Our F1600 battle get dramatic with 3 laps left when Herta pull out and passes Bickers going into Sunrise but Bickers the takes the lead back at the Off ramp. Herta then crosses the finish line in the lead on lap 15 of 16. Right behind them Tom Hope takes the checker. The leader started to catch both FF's on the last lap but wisely backs off to let them race. When our F1600's come out of Sunset it is Bickers still in front with Herta right in his draft. They cross the finish line .3 seconds apart. Tom Hope wins, 2<sup>nd</sup> is Ire Fierberg, and 3<sup>rd</sup> is Peter West. For F1600 it is Joey Bickers, Colton Herta, and Andrew Evans.

#### Race 4

The last race of the day is a group of 9 Open wheel/Sports Racers. On the pole by over 13 seconds is Jon Van Caneghem's CSR Elan. When the green is waved Van Caneghem heads off into another dimension. When he crosses the line to complete the first lap he is over 12 seconds ahead of Michael Alfred's CSR. Alfred will lose his 2<sup>nd</sup> overall spot to Ed Lever in his FM on the 5<sup>th</sup> lap. Mark Ballengee leads the SRF field. When the checker falls on Jon Van Caneghem he had lapped our 2<sup>nd</sup> place car of Ed Lever by one lap and the 3<sup>rd</sup> place car of Michael Alfred by 2 laps! Mark Ballengee wins SRF and second place in that class will be Don Palla. Herb Williamson wins Thunder Roadster. There are 2 lap records set during this race... Herb Williamson and his Thunder Roadster turns a lap at 2:14.080 and the CSR of Jon Van Caneghem has a fast lap of 1:41.589

#### Sunday

#### Race 1

This is the is the first of 2 races today for the FF2000 and F1600's

The 12 car field gets the green from the starter and they roar into the Sunrise turn. The field of F2000's is tightly bunched led by Ira Fierberg followed by Les Phillips. On the next lap going into Cotton Corners 2 cars tangle taking both of them out of the race. After the F1600's get through Cotton Corners it is like yesterday... both Joey Bickers and Colton Herta pull away from their group. The Cal Club Emergency crew show up with 2 tow trucks and remove the cars of Phillips and Fierberg. After Phillips and Fierberg tangle the F2000 of Tom Hope assumes the lead followed by Bob Negron. Both Hope and Negron motor away from their competition. After 7 laps Hope has a 4 second lead over Negron and Bickers and Herta are nose to tail. After 9 laps

Hope come up to lap a slower car in Riverside and has contact with him causing the F1600 of Alex Kirby to spin and continue. That's not good! Around the 11 lap point Herta makes a mistake finally in the Off Ramp and drops back about 7 car lengths. On the 12<sup>th</sup> lap Hope hits another car he's lapping in Riverside. Andrew Evans spins and continues and Hope's front wing is bent vertical. Negron now has the opportunity to take over the lead spot and he does. There's a big change in the F1660 race when Bickers spins on lap 12 also handing the lead over to Herta as he gets back on the track at the Star Mazda turn. Bickers experienced shifting problems, which spun him out. 4 laps later the checkered flag is waved for Bob Negron and 9.5 seconds behind him is the bent winged Tom Hope. 3<sup>rd</sup> will be Peter West. Colton Herta beats Joey Bickers across the line by about 8 seconds, 3<sup>rd</sup> in F1600 is Alex Keyes.

### Group 1 Race

The front row of the IT and everything consists of pole sitter Paul Gassen and the STU car of Corey Taguchi. Sitting on the grid is the STL Miata of Dale Shoemaker and he starts about a half lap late. Gassen will lead the race for 5 laps and will park it with a mechanical problem allowing Taguchi to take the overall lead. The 5<sup>th</sup> place SM of Mike Rose will also park it with mechanical problems around then. The lead SM of Ian Thomas also parks mechanical the next lap! Mike Bachman has a burned valve in his HP Sprite and soldiers on. At the half way point Taguchi has a 12 second lead over the SM of Mark Lange. A dust devil travels through the east end of the paddock and destroys the 2 canopies of Jim Bishop, who is racing at the moment. A couple good Samaritans gather them up and Bishop has a big surprise waiting for him after impound! Always tie down your canopies; you never know when strong winds from a dust devil will hit your area! The Spec Miata's freight train of Steven Champlin and Darwin Felix are catching the 2<sup>nd</sup> place SM of Bill Nelson. Kathy Guerla's SM has its wipers merrily wiping away till she has time to shut them off! As Taguchi is getting closer to the end the SM of Felix passes Champlin and next lap passes Nelson. Our lead SM of Mark Lange catches and passes the T4 Civic of Michael Tsay on the last lap. Another last lap battle further back is the SM of Chuck Datte who has been following the ITA Mazda of Gary Corsiglia. He pulls out to pass going into Sunrise and can't do it and will finish .8 behind him. Corey Taguchi wins 1<sup>st</sup> overall by 12 seconds over Mark Lange. Behind him is the lone T4 car of Michael Tsay. 4<sup>th</sup> oa and 2<sup>nd</sup> in SM is Darwin Felix. 1st in FP is Jim Whitton, 2<sup>nd</sup> in STU is Ed Lever, soon to be surprised Jim Bishop wins RS, Pro-7 is Lonny Sheek, ITE is won by Roy Mallory, Dale Shoemaker wins STL, and finishing 1<sup>st</sup> in HP is the Sprite of Mike Bachman. Taguchi sets a STU lap record with a 2:06.639. Not bad for a guy who is racing his first weekend after completing school last March.

### Group 2

## FV

Mark Edwards and Kim Madrid are occupying the front row of this 7 car field. The pace car pulls off and the starter gives them the green and Mark Edwards waves good-bye again, like yesterday. This will not be boring for 2<sup>nd</sup> thru 4<sup>th</sup> positions and Kim Madrid, Eric Inkrott, and Bob Hatle will provide us with a race long battle. Inkrott will move to 3<sup>rd</sup> by the first turn but be passed by Hatle going into Cotton Corners. Hatle will get Madrid and cross the line in 2<sup>nd</sup> to complete the first lap. Lap after lap Madrid, Hatle, and Inkrott will swap places. Hatle is much faster than his 2 racing partners over in the Riverside turn. After 2 laps Rudy Madrid will slow and pull into the pits. The lap charts will show 2<sup>nd</sup> place will be Hatle or Madrid, in reality out on the track 2<sup>nd</sup> place will be Inkrott, Hatle, and Madrid and they share that spot many times. With 5 laps left Edwards has an 18 second lead over the ever changing 2<sup>nd</sup> position. For some reason Hatle has dropped back 3.4 seconds behind 3<sup>rd</sup> place Inkrott. It looks like he either has problems or is taking a breather! Without Hatle pressuring him, Inkrott closes right up on Madrid. In Riverside Inkrott takes 2<sup>nd</sup> place away from Madrid. Madrid's pink Mohawk on her helmet is getting its race of a lifetime! Edwards comes by to make it 2 laps left and behind him Madrid has put her Laser back into 2<sup>nd</sup>. Hatle has put another charge back on and moves to within 1.6 behind. Inkrott puts his front wheel up beside Madrid in Riverside but Hatle is showing his superior speed and rockets up on both of them in that big turn. Edwards puts the field on its last lap and way behind him Madrid leads Hatle and Inkrott by a car length. Going up into Phil Hill Hatle has his nose right on the transmission of Madrid. Exiting the turn Madrid spins! Mark Edwards comes by to take the checker by 24 seconds over 2<sup>nd</sup> place Bob Hatle. Only .9 behind Hatle is the FV2 of Eric Inkrott. 4<sup>th</sup> is Kim Madrid and a distance behind her is Charlie Turner. That was a really exciting race for 2<sup>nd</sup>. This was a small field but had a race that kept you on the edge of your seat!!

## Group 3

### Final race for F2000 and F1600

So far these 3 races for this group have had more accidents than the entire last 2 seasons had! What will happen this time? The Steward for this group had a talk to Tom Hope, so he's probably not going to be a bad boy. The FF2000 group and then the F1600 group get their green flags and the F2000's only make it 2 turns before the poo poo hits the fan! Bob Negrón and Jim Stewart have a coming together and Negrón cannot continue. Both Negrón and his wife Terri have been doing a lot of repairs and maintenance on this car and it ends 2 turns into this race. Stewart will continue and finish 4<sup>th</sup> in class. For the F1600 race again it is Joey Bickers and Colton Herta doing a Groundhog Day type of race. There is no room between those two cars. Hope leads this race followed by Peter West and Ira Fierberg. Fierberg passes West on the 3<sup>rd</sup> lap and pulls away. Bickers and Herta do something a little different this race, they start

swapping positions early on in the race. Their tires have to last from qualifying to the last race, so now they can let it all hang out! Even Mike Miserendino, who is 4 time SRF National champion, is racing a F1600 for the first time and is picking up positions as the race goes on. He is also getting more bruised and swollen from not really fitting in the car properly. It was a last minute ride and like a good racer he went for it. At the half way point Herta leads Bickers and Miserendino is 3<sup>rd</sup> in class! Hope continues to pull away from the field. For F1600 Herta and Bickers keep swapping and challenging each other, not letting either one of them to relax or take a deep breath. With the leader on his last lap he catches up with the F1600 race and backs off. Behind him 2<sup>nd</sup> place Fierberg drops off the pace with a deflating back tire. Tom Hope takes the checker and the two battling teenagers continue on with their last lap. Coming out of the last turn they are side-by-side and sliding like drifters at Long Beach! Herta has the inside line and Bickers takes to the dirt with 2 wheels in the loose stuff dropping him back just a tiny amount. Colton Herta crosses the line .3 seconds ahead of Joey Bickers. Those two were some happy drivers!

#### Last Race of the Day

Jon Van Caneghem in his CSR Elan will be the top dog of this group again. He out qualifies 2<sup>nd</sup> place Michael Alfred's CSR by 12 seconds. When the green flag waves it is déjà vue as Van Caneghem walked away and laps the entire field. This time he takes it easier and does not set a lap record. Finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> will be Ed Lever in his Formula Mazda. Mark Ballengee leads Jack Willes across the line to win SRF. Jon French finishes in 3<sup>rd</sup>. Herb Williamson wins Thunder Roadster.

Up next is the Double Rational at Auto Club Speedway where the Formula Pacific series will join us again as well as the 3dCarbon S2 Cup!