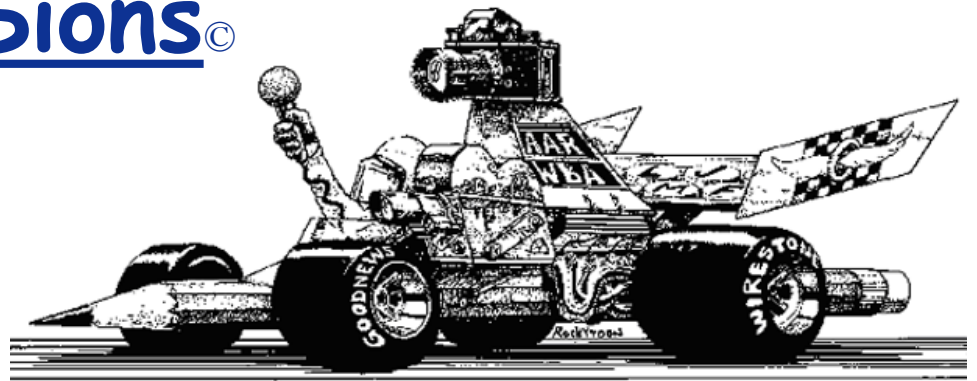


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**50th
Anniversary**



The Official Newsletter Of The American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association

February 2005



Vol. 38 No. 2

AARWBA Thanks Our Official 50th Anniversary Sponsors:
(Click on any logo to go to that sponsor's website!)



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American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association, Inc. - www.aarwba.org
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CIRCLE THIS DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 28

Chevrolet and **Firestone** have confirmed they will continue as co-sponsors of the annual breakfast meeting at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway the day before the Indy 500. That will be Saturday, May 28.

Make plans now to be there. We expect a large turnout of members and VIPs in honor of AARWBA's 50th Anniversary Celebration. There should be some surprises, too, and of course, distribution of the \$10,000 in prize money from the Speedway for winners in the annual journalism contest. Our thanks to Chevrolet and Firestone for their continued support.

Fernandez Racing Backs Return Of AARWBA 'Straight Shooters' Award



Adrian Fernandez



The "Straight Shooters" Award, in memory of photographers **Art Flores** and **Ron Hussey**, will be presented by AARWBA for the next three years with support from Fernandez Racing of the Indy Racing League.



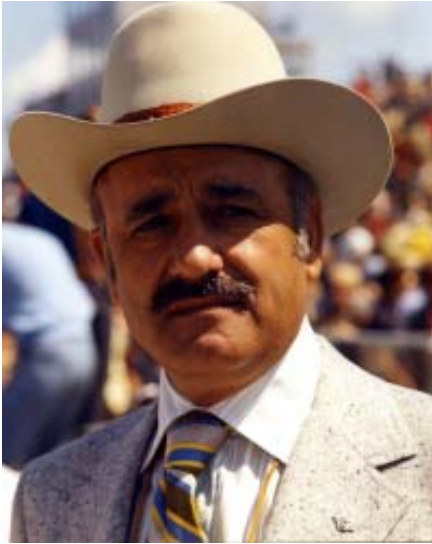
Tom Anderson

The "Straight Shooters" Award is intended to recognize an individual or group who show care for others in the racing photographers' community or for special achievement. It was the idea of Flores, the late AARWBA photo committee chairman, and was first presented three years ago. Flores, who died last year, and Hussey, who died in 2000, were both long-time award-winning motorsports photographers. Fernandez Racing driver-owner **Adrian Fernandez**, and team co-owner **Tom Anderson**, suggested renaming the honor in recognition of Flores' and Hussey's contributions to racing.

The winner will be chosen by an AARWBA committee. A plaque and \$250 prize will be presented to the recipient at AARWBA's annual members' breakfast meeting May 28 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. "On behalf of all our members, I want to thank Adrian and Tom for this wonderful idea," said President Dusty Brandel. "Their support allows AARWBA to remember two distinguished photographers. This also enables us to acknowledge our gratitude to those who give special help to the photo community, or show special achievement behind the lens, in the spirit of Art and Ron."

Adrian Fernandez won three IRL races in 2004. The team has announced plans to field Honda-powered cars for veteran **Scott Sharp** and '04 League Rookie of the Year **Kosuke Matsuura** in the full '05 IndyCar season. The media contact for the team is **Tamy Valkosky**, 949/459-9172, pr@fernandezracing.com .

J.C. Agajanian Selected To Receive Eagle One-Shav Glick Award



J.C. Agajanian, one of racing's most successful promoters and team owners, has been selected to receive the sixth annual Eagle One-Shav Glick Award. The award is symbolic of distinguished contribution to motorsports in California.

The award, presented by the car-care products company (owned by Valvoline, an AARWBA official 50th anniversary sponsor), is named in honor of the Los Angeles Times Hall of Fame motorsports writer. Previous winners were Dan Gurney, Wally Parks, Parnelli Jones, Rick Mears and Les Richter.

Agajanian's sons, Cary, Chris and J.C., Jr., will accept the award during pre-race ceremonies at the NASCAR Auto Club 500, Feb. 27, at California Speedway.

Agajanian, who died in 1984 at age 71, was the premier racing promoter in Southern California for 25 years, beginning in 1959 as operator of Ascot Park, in Gardena. He promoted races throughout the U.S. for more than 50 years. Among them were 250 USAC events, ranging from midget races such as the traditional Turkey Night Grand Prix at Ascot, to numerous Championship Car races at state fairground tracks. From 1948 through 1971 his cars won the pole position for the Indy 500 three times, setting four track records, and won the race twice. The winning cars were driven by Troy Ruttman in 1952 and Parnelli Jones in 1963.

Said Glick: "There has never been anyone in Southern California motorsports with the enthusiasm and savvy of Aggie. He was a legend at Ascot and other tracks and at Indy where the sight of his handsome Stetson brought an immediate response from the folks in the grandstands. Wherever he went Aggie was an asset to racing and the fans knew it. His legend lives on. It is an honor to salute him with this award."

Judges included national and California motorsports writers and track executives.



All photos provided courtesy of Chris Agajanian





Gaining Respect While Achieving Our Goals Chairman's Update

As I have previously reported to you, we have set two primary goals for our 50th Anniversary Celebration: 1) Increase recognition for AARWBA within the motorsports industry; 2) Increase the benefits of AARWBA membership for current and potential new members. In recent months, we have continued to advance on achieving those goals.

The week after Tony Kanaan received the Jerry Titus Award as AARWBA's Driver of the Year — and YES, let me be sure everyone knows Tony actually was PRESENT at the All-America Team dinner — the IRL, Honda and Firestone joined forces to place a color ad in the nation's largest circulation newspaper, *USA Today*, to herald Tony's achievement. The ad was attached to the January newsletter, but let's again note that the ad prominently credited AARWBA, and included our 50th anniversary logo. This represented a very important FIRST in our history. I can assure you this ad was noticed within our industry and attracted considerable attention to AARWBA and what we are doing with the 50th Anniversary Celebration. Our great thanks to the IRL, Honda and Firestone for this very important recognition – and sign of respect for our organization.

And speaking of respect, it is appropriate – and right – that all of our members know the drivers, executives and representatives who made time in their busy schedules to attend the 35th annual AAT dinner in Pomona last month. They respected us, so let's respect them.

From the first team, Kanaan, Max Papis, Ron Fellows, John Force, Bobby East, Bill Auberlen and Thiago Medeiros were on-hand. Force brought his Funny Car drivers, Eric Medlen and Robert Hight. Pioneer Award winner Kenny Bernstein was there with wife Sheryl and PR rep Susie Arnold. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway and IRL had one of the greatest turnouts in dinner history, their delegation including new IMS President Joie Chitwood, IRL Senior VP of Business Affairs Ken Ungar, Executive VP Fred Nation, League PR VP John Griffin, and IMS PR Director Ron Green. The NHRA was well represented, too, including founders Wally and Barbara Parks, President Tom Compton, Board member Dick Wells and media relations director Anthony Vestal. New ALMS media VP Bob Dickinson came to get to know AARWBA, as did Grand-Am's Adam Saal.

The list of VIPs also included: Jim Michaelian, president of the Long Beach Grand Prix; Kevin Kennedy of Ford Racing Technology; T.E. McHale of Honda; Doug Stokes of Irwindale Speedway; Dennis Bickmeier of California Speedway; Brad Nelson of Lexus; Michael Lewis, VP of Don Schumacher Racing; insurance guru John Gorsline and his Gorsline Scholarship winner Colin Braun; former driver Jerry Grant; J.C. Agajanian Jr.; Dave Densmore of John Force Racing; Rick Lalor of the Auto Club; member Gil Bouffard brought Racing for America drivers Rusty Buholz, Sergey Shleikin and Charlie Kimball; Sam Jackson of the Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum; Long Beach councilwoman Rae (Mrs. Gary) Gabelich; Pomona councilman Elliott Rothman; PR man Chip Williams and — of course! — Linda Vaughn. My apology to any industry official inadvertently not included on this impressive list.

I provide you with this information – and ask you again to carefully note the logos of those who have stepped-up to help AARWBA as official 50th anniversary and newsletter sponsors – because it is a sign of respect for us as the country's oldest and largest organization of motorsports media professionals. Lots of members have asked me, "Have you contacted X about being a sponsor?" The answer usually is yes. There are valid reasons why a company might not be able to sponsor us. However, you would be surprised – and disappointed – to learn of those who have not even had the courtesy of returning phone calls or E-mails. One team owner actually refused to accept a packet of AARWBA information. (By the way, he routinely complains about the way he's portrayed in the media.) A sad reality is many sponsors these days think their PR job is done if they get a few seconds of coverage on a race telecast.

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Chairman's Update continued

Fellow members, I say to you once more, let's acknowledge, appreciate and RESPECT those who respect us.

Former president Johnny McDonald (founder of the All-America Team) and founding president Bob Russo's daughter Terri and her husband Earl Freeman also were in the AAT audience. Charter members Dick Mittman and Bill Marvel, area VPs Mike Harris and Lewis Franck, and Board member Dr. George Peters made special efforts to attend. Speed Channel sent a cameraman to cover the ceremony for its news show. Dave McClelland was gracious and great as a last-minute MC substitute for Bob Jenkins, who was unable to make the trip from Indianapolis due to illness.

Kenny Bernstein, a veteran of many AAT dinners, called it "probably the best" he's attended!

Meanwhile, we have been successful in adding more benefits for our members. Kevin Kennedy announced at the AAT dinner Ford's "Sweepstakes" journalism prize. As you read earlier in this newsletter, we have the return of the "Straight Shooters" photo award, in memory of Art Flores and Ron Hussey, made possible by Fernandez Racing.

Finally, I ask ALL members to please VOTE for Newsmaker of the Half-Century. This is, quite simply, the most important event of the 50th Anniversary Celebration. YOUR participation will make this award truly meaningful – and help show our respect for those in this great sport.

By the way, ESPN2 plans a feature story on the Newsmaker award, to air on its NHRA telecasts. Tentatively, look for a brief report on NHRA2Day Sunday, Feb. 27. A more in-depth piece is penciled in as part of the coverage from the Nationals in Gainesville, Fla., Saturday or Sunday, March 19-20.



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AARWBA Appreciation Awards



Karen Holschlag (left) and Dave Brunette of Anheuser-Busch Sports Marketing receive an appreciation award from Dusty Brandel at the NHRA season opener at Pomona. Budweiser is the exclusive beer category sponsor of AARWBA's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

AARWBA Appreciation Awards



Bob Carlson, manager, Automotive Media, Porsche Cars North America (left) accepts AARWBA's appreciation award from Southern Vice President **Mike Harris** at the Rolex 24 at Daytona. Carlson, a long-time friend of AARWBA, was the first to say "yes" to an official 50th Anniversary Celebration sponsorship on behalf of Porsche.



Mike Harris presents appreciation award to Roy Oliemuller (right), BMW U.S. Communications Manager for Motorsports and Motorcycles, at the Rolex 24. The official 50th anniversary sponsorship is BMW's first involvement with AARWBA.

AARWBA Members! Tell Us Your Story!

We think AARWBA members would enjoy hearing about the events and activities their peers are involved with. That is why we are encouraging every member to always feel free to send a "News Note" to AARWBA President, **Dusty Brandel** so we can share your news with your peers.

AARWBA@compuserve.com

News Notes

BOB JENKINS RECOVERING AT HOME

Bob Jenkins is now at home, recovering from an illness which prevented him from MCing the All-America Team dinner. Jenkins developed a cough about three weeks before seeing his doctor, who immediately had Bob admitted to a hospital. The diagnoses was bronchitis, but X-rays found that Bob broke his back (L-7) and two ribs from coughing. There also were other complications. Bob was released the week following the All-America dinner but as of the first week of February remained weak. "It hasn't been a very happy period. My faith does not flounder, and I know there are better days ahead for me," Bob said to Michael Knight. Members can contact Bob at bojen5111@sbcglobal.net.

...continued on next page

News Notes Continued...

O'Reilly/NCRA Names Randy Fisher as Media Relations Director

The O'Reilly/National Championship Racing Association (NCRA), presented by Hoosier Tires, has appointed AARWBA member Randy Fisher as its Media Relations Director.



Fisher has served in a similar capacity for the Valvoline ProVee Series, a semi-pro open wheel road racing series, since 1998. As a freelance writer for the NCRA the past three seasons, he provided extensive coverage of the modified series last year.

"We are excited to have someone like Randy, with his skills, to provide a needed extension to the media for both the O'Reilly/NCRA Racing Series and our sanctioning tracks," said C. Ray Hall, president of the NCRA. "Randy will be a great addition to the series."

He will cover all NCRA divisions, compiling stats and generating information for both the fans and the media, including track announcers, throughout the season. He will also create and oversee the distribution of stories, releases and driver features to the media.

The complete press release is available on the NCRA site at www.ncraracing.org. Fisher will work from the NCRA's media relations office in Topeka, Kan., and can be reached by phone at (785) 633-2407, or by e-mail at ncramedia@swbell.net.

Sandra McKee Wins Miller Lite Motorsports Journalism Award

AARWBA Vice President Sandra McKee won the daily print category in the Miller Lite Motorsports Journalism Awards announced during last month's NASCAR pre-season media tour in Charlotte. The competition honors the memory of Russ Catlin, a motorsports journalism pioneer. A record number of entries were submitted to the Indiana University School of Journalism where faculty members selected the winners.

McKee's story in the *Baltimore Sun*, about the Hendrick team airplane tragedy, earned her a plaque and a Rolex. The judges' comments: A complete story about the tragic Hendrick plane crash and how people connected with racing dealt with it. No gratuitous conclusion; variety of sources; fine lead; integrated quotes in a timely manner; a good read.

AARWBA Founding Member Charles T. Brockman Passes

Charles T. (Charlie) Brockman, a founding member of AARWBA, died Jan. 18 at age 77. He was a former U.S. Auto Club president (1969 - 1972) and long-time Indianapolis radio and TV broadcaster. He served as the AARWBA's first treasurer in 1955. Charlie was a charter Member, and he was the Association's Treasurer in 1955. He was a sportscaster and became a member of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Radio network for several years. He conducted the Indianapolis 500 winner's interview from 1954-59. Charlie also became the anchor of the entire run of MCA closed-circuit telecast of the Indianapolis 500 from 1964-70. He was also one of the original announcers for ABC's Wide World of Sports.

Former NSSN staff photographer C.V.Haschel passes

C.V.Haschel, former NSSN staff photographer, passed away Jan. 6 in Florida at age 90. Haschel was a photographer at the now defunct 16th St. Speedway in Indianapolis. His work also appeared in Life Magazine, Racing Pictorial and the Indianapolis Star. One of Haschel's most famous photos was of the 1959 Daytona 500. It was used to prove officials had declared the wrong winner. Haschel was a member of AARWBA and the Indy 500 Oldtimers Club.

STEVE KINSER LEADS "CLASS OF '05" INTO NATIONAL SPRINT CAR HALL OF FAME AARWBA Member John Mahoney To Be Inducted

19-time World of Outlaws (WoO) and 12-time Knoxville Nationals champion Steve Kinser of Indiana leads the induction 'class of 2005' into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame. Thirteen individuals will be inducted into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame on Saturday afternoon, June 4th, during the sixteenth annual ceremonies on the Marion County Fairgrounds in Knoxville, Iowa. The inductees are:

Drivers: Steve Butler, Bob Carey, Elmer George, Bill Holland, Steve Kinser, Robbie Stanley, Ray Tilley.

Owners-Mechanics-Builders-Manufacturers-Car Sponsors: Don Brown, Dick Simonek, Kenny Woodruff.

Promoters-Officials-Media Members-Event/Series Sponsors: John Mahoney, Jim Raper, Norm Witte.

According to National Sprint Car Hall of Fame & Museum Foundation executive director Thomas J. Schmeh, "Sometimes the result of the final voting seems to have a theme to it and this year it appears to have a Hoosier flavor, with Bloomington's own 'King of the Outlaws' leading the way. In addition to Steve Kinser, the state of Indiana will be represented by photographer John Mahoney of Greenwood and such great United States Auto Club driving champions as Steve Butler of Kokomo, the late Elmer George, and the late Robbie Stanley. Even veteran sprint car builder Don Brown now lives in Indy. Of course, we are very proud to be inducting champions like Ray Tilley of Pine Grove, Pennsylvania, Kenny Woodruff of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, and the late Jim Raper of Skagit Speedway in Washington. And older fans will remember outstanding achievers like drivers Bob Carey and Bill Holland, mechanic Dick Simonek and Central States Racing Association publicist Norm Witte, all of whom will also be enshrined in Knoxville on June 4th."

Historians Dave Argabright and Pat Sullivan will emcee the induction banquet, which is open to the public at a cost of \$20 per ticket, on Saturday at 12 Noon. Knoxville Raceway will host the Hoosier Tire Midwest Masters Classic (for drivers age 50 and over) and the Pepsi/Mt. Dew King Doodlebug Classic on Friday night, June 3, and the Kin Folk's 410-cubic-inch winged sprint car Shootout and the Pepsi/Mt. Dew Knoxville Midget Nationals on Saturday night, June 4. Those seeking more information on the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame are encouraged to visit the museum's web-site at www.sprintcarhof.com.



This month's issue of ImpRESSIONs is presented by



The Grand American Road Racing Association was established in 1999 to stabilize professional sports car racing in the United States. Having just kicked off its sixth season with a star-studded Rolex 24 At Daytona, the Grand American Rolex Sports Car Series has emerged as the premier road racing championship in North America. Catch all the action on SPEED Channel, globally through ESPN International, and at www.grandamerican.com.