

BULLET FROM A GUN . . .



By KEVIN BACKS

There are many ways in which cars and drivers compete against one another, but the best known is probably circuit racing. Literally any type of car may be raced if it is mechanically fit and equipped with the proper safety devices.

Circuits may vary from Indianapolis-type where cars will complete a lap in under a minute, to 23km courses with hairpin corners for which cars have to slow down to under 50 km/hr.

All competitors must have competition licenses. The drivers must wear approved crash helmets, goggles or visor, and fire resistant clothing covering arms, legs and torso.

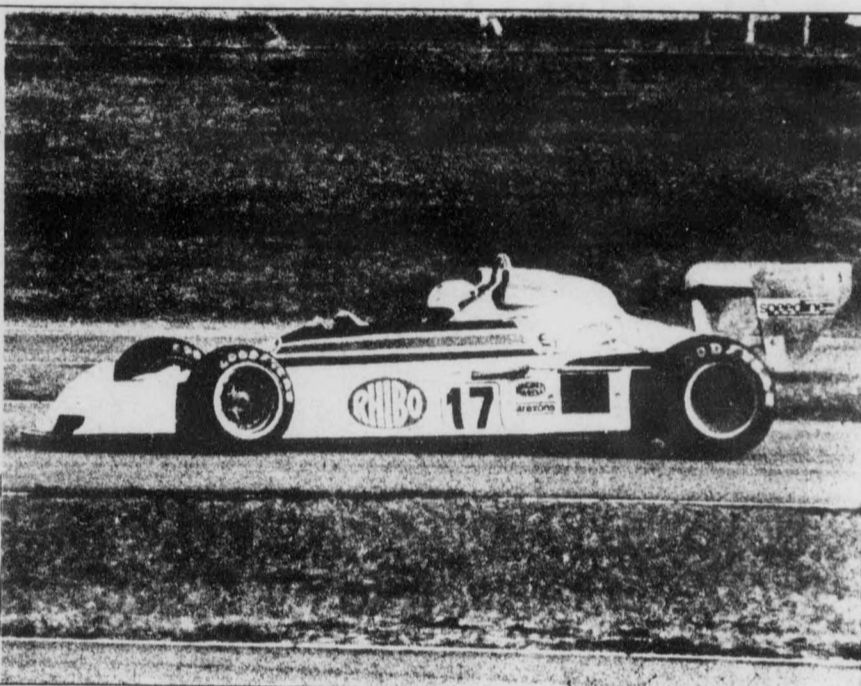
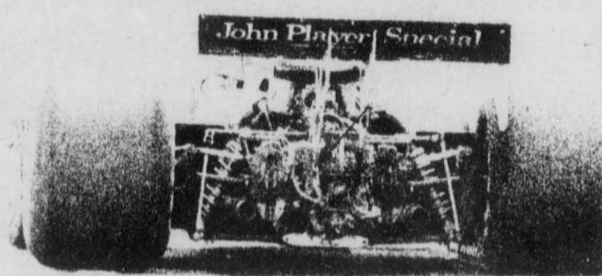
Before a race, all cars are tested to keep the fields as competitive as possible. The positions on the starting grid are determined by how fast the cars were in practice. The faster cars are placed closer to the front with the fastest car in the pole position (the position that will give the driver the most advantage going into the first corner.)

The race begins when the starter lowers the flag. Some races use a rolling start, in which a pace car leads the field in their grid order, one lap around the track. It then leaves the circuit and the race begins. Any car moving off before the flag incurs a time penalty.

Circuit races last either set times (eg. the Le Mans 24 hour race) or a set distance (the Moosehead 300). Formula One races are arranged to give about 2 hours or 200 miles of racing, whichever is shorter.

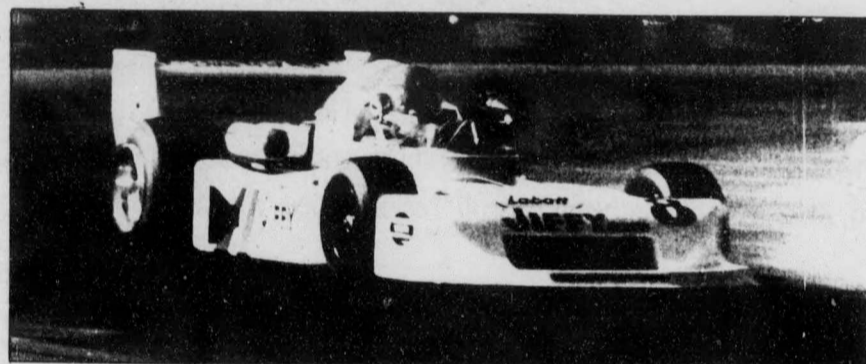
INTERNATIONAL FORMULA TWO

Up to 2000 cm³ with engines derived from production engines. This is the traditional training ground for future Formula One drivers.



INTERNATIONAL FORMULA THREE

Up to 2000cm³ with engines derived from 4-cylinder production engines. Cars are fitted with air restrictors, limiting power and speed. This is the usual step before Formula two.



FORMULA ATLANTIC

Similar to Formula two but with smaller engines and less modification allowed. It was from Formula Atlantic that Gilles Villeneuve got into his first Formula One Team.

FORMULA FORD

Production Ford 1600 GT Cortina engines, with only minimal modifications.

FIA GROUP 1

These are four seater touring cars with only minimal modifications allowed.

FIA GROUP 2

Limited Productions. Four seater touring cars with extensive modifications allowed.



FIA GROUP 3

2seater GT cars with similar restrictions to Group 1.

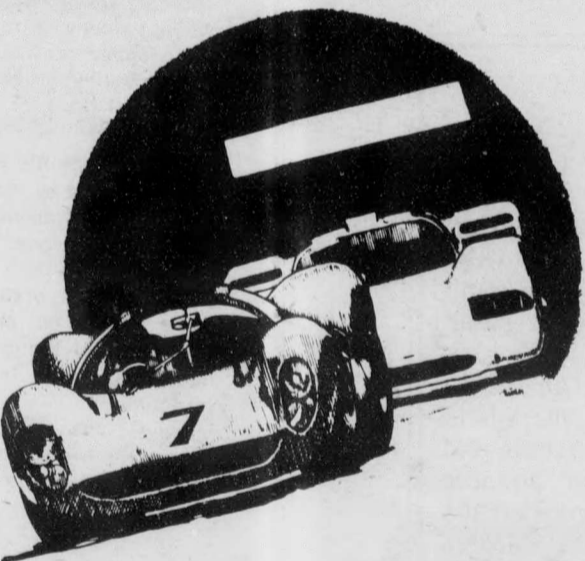
FIA GROUP 4

Limited production. 2 seater GT cars with extensive modifications.



FIA GROUP 5

Long distance sports cars. There is scope for all engine sizes. These are the cars raced in the 24 hour Le Mans, to be run June 7 and 8 this year.



Basic rules and meaning of flags

Drivers receive instructions from officials during the race by means of flags. Internationally recognized signals include:

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|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Blue motionless | Another car following |
| Blue waving | Another car trying to pass |
| Yellow | Danger, do not pass |
| Yellow with red stripes | Slippery surface |
| White | Official, non racing vehicle on track |
| Red | Stop race |
| Black | Car indicated to stop |

Although drivers attempt to improve their race position they are not allowed to drive dangerously and must reduce speed or stop if ordered to do so.

Drivers may receive advice and mechanical assistance.

A car may be ordered to withdraw if it becomes unfit to race.

The winner is the car which completes the distance first or is leading at the end of the allotted time.

The classifications of cars used in Circuit racing are generally set by the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile)