



www.earhs.org



Eastern Auto Racing  
Historical Society

### MISSION STATEMENT

A) To discover, identify, gather, preserve, and display documents, records, items, etc. pertaining to eastern auto racing facilities, competitors, personalities or events.

B) To assist writers to publish and/or research articles regarding historical eastern auto racing topics.

Our organization collects & displays articles dealing with any eastern auto racing facilities for any racing enthusiast to enjoy. Please consider either joining our organization or contributing to our projects.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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AREA OF INTEREST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 SUPPORTER  
Non-voting supporter of the mission statement of the EARHS. Admission to show room by appointment.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$40 INTERNATIONAL  
Non-voting international supporter with basic benefits.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 CORPORATE SUPPORTER  
Corporate supporters are non-voting supporters whose contribution to the EARHS will be permanently noted in the EARHS show room. Contributions will be used to develop additional displays, catalog information collected, and to defray expenses in pursuit of the mission statement.

PLEASE MAIL TO:

EARHS, P.O. BOX 333, OREFIELD, PA 18069  
Make checks payable to EARHS.

For additional information  
call 610 395-5303 or 610 398-2188

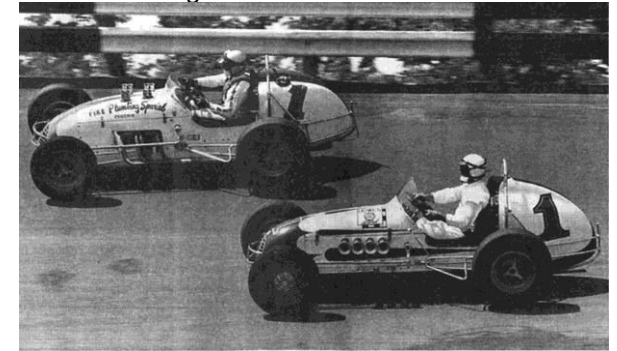
\*\*EARHS is recognized as a federally tax exempt charity by the IRS under section 510c(3).

**EARHS**  
P.O. Box 333  
Orefield, PA 18069

**Newsletter Vol. XVIII 2021 Ed. #1**

**Sixty Years Ago.....**

For the 1961 season the United States Auto Club abandoned the practice of its first five years as a sanctioning body (and the practice of AAA dating back to 1933) of awarding separate Mid-West and Eastern sprint car championships. The schedules for both circuits occasionally showed either an overabundance of or too few events and occasionally races were booked or rainouts rescheduled against dates for the other circuit.



**1960 USAC Mid-West Sprint Car Champion, Parnelli Jones, Harlan Fike Chevy #1 battles 1960 USAC Eastern Sprint Car Champ, A.J. Foyt, in his own Bowes Seal Fast Offy #1 on the paved high banks at Dayton, OH on 7-23-61. Parnelli won.**

USAC's solution was to merge the two circuits into one National Championship sprint car series. The new schedule insured the USAC National Sprint Car Champion would be proficient on both dirt and pavement and allowed promoters to advertise the 'best sprint car drivers in the country' for their USAC sprint car date. Of course the new format injected excitement into USAC events, which led to higher purses and allowed professional race drivers to commit to the USAC series to chase their Indy dreams. New tracks joined the circuit, the drivers liked the money, the fans went wild over the competition, and the promoters liked more cars and big name drivers, but some weren't too keen on the increased purses.



***astern Champion, Tommy Hinnershitz, powers past USAC's Mid-Western Champ, Don Branson, in a 1960 match race at Reading. Two #1 cars and drivers on the same track was a rarity and savvy promoters energized their hard-core fans with it.***

Most of the privately owned tracks made the transition to the unified circuit seamlessly, but some of the county and state fairs, once a staple of big time sprint car racing, hung on to their dates by a thread. In the past they filled their stands for their afternoon of sprint car racing, often despite low car counts with only a few drivers with 'household names'. To the fairs a full grandstand was a full grandstand and increasing the quality of the field while at the same time increasing their costs for the event, didn't make any business sense. Some fairs bundled two or three USAC events at some cost savings per event to give their patrons a view of USAC midgets and multiple USAC sprint car shows. These mid-week shows were well received by the racers, but often didn't fill the stands and the fair's auto racing profits dipped even further.

In 1961 the new USAC sprint car circuit was a three-way battle between '61 Indy winner, A.J. Foyt in his venerable Offy and the Chevy twins of Parnelli Jones and Jim Hurtubise. Foyt (twice at Reading & Salem, Indy Raceway Park dirt, Lancaster, NY Fair) and Hurtubise (twice at Terre Haute & Langhorne, Allentown, and Ascot) posted six wins each, but Jones took nine checkers (three at IRP dirt, including a title saving appearance in Wally Meskowski's sprinter in October, New Bremen and Salem twice, and singles at Dayton and Williams Grove. Roger McCluskey (Williams. Grove), Jim Hemmings (Salem), and Elmer George (DuQuoin mile) were the only others to post wins. Twenty-four races were run, coast to coast, and the fans loved it.

The Allentown Fair remained a part of the USAC national series through the 1966 season, even double-dipping in 1965, hoping to make the decision a financial winner. However, for 1967 and 1968 the fair board signed on with the International Motor Contest Assn. to present two races each year at reduced purses. The board's replacing of the dirt surface with all-weather cinders to appease the horsemen's assn. trotters and pacers ended sprint car racing at the Allentown Fair. Only the 1976 SMRC midget race won by Ronnie Dunstan would be added to the final history of the Allentown half mile.

***EARHS 2021 Open House Dates  
Sundays, April 25 & October 31  
5080 Kernsville Road, Orefield, PA  
10 am – 5 pm***

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PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS***

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**Freddy Adam – The Kutztown Komet**

*From Freddy's family, friends, and fans*

Your monetary support in any denomination or donations of historically significant items, photos, documents, etc. toward projects undertaken by the EARHS are welcomed and encouraged.

EARHS is recognized as a federally tax exempt charity by the IRS under Section 501c(3).

**EARHS “wants and needs”**

**Wanted:** Racing photo collections – share and preserve programs. If you have vintage racing photos, EARHS would like to be able to scan and copy these items. All items will be returned intact and we can provide you with a computer disc of those items from significant collections.

We are especially interested in Dorney Park items from the 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's and all Allentown Fair items, including indoor racing events, but all items are welcome.

**Wanted:** Showcases and display cases. Often cases of unusual configuration can be used for displays of trophies and memorabilia. Also, race programs from the '55 & '58 Allentown Fair.

Group tours of the EARHS showroom are available by appointment for civic and auto related groups, car clubs, etc.

Call 610 398-2188 or 610 395-5303 for details.

We continue to fill our showroom—all members are invited to visit and check our progress.

Please call Pete Trumbauer (610 398-2188) or Paul Weisel (610 395-5303) to arrange a time to visit.

