

Racing Through the Years

Historian Brian Pratt looks back over the decades

100 years ago

June 19, 1911, at Hastings Park, motorcycle races were held. Red Sebastian, who would go on to race a car at the AAA Tacoma road race the next year, won many of these races. The free-for-all 3-mile race clocked in at 3:05 2-5, nearly a mile a minute.

90 years ago

June 15, 1921, again at Hastings Park, the automobile races included U.S. stars like Jack Ross, driving a Stutz, and Mario Bianchi, driving a Romano Special. Ross won the 15-mile free-for-all in a time of 17:49 1-2.

70 years ago

The 1941 midget and motorcycle season at Con Jones Park was short but included American drivers like Allan Heath, Wayne Gaffney and Ernie Spalding. Victoria drivers included Victoria Auto Racing Hall of Famers Bud Green and Jack Spalding. Local Vancouver racer, and GVMPS Pioneer, Mickey McDowell also raced.

GVMPS Pioneer Trev Deeley continued to race and win on his motorcycle. There was even the introduction of jalopy racing for cars from 1927 or older.

Admission prices were 40 cents for adults, 20 cents for students and 12 cents for children. The last few advertisements noted the races were being sanctioned by the BC Midget Auto Racing Association, which would come back after the Second World War to establish racing again in the greater Vancouver area.

60 years ago

Digney Speedway started its season with special shows including midgets and hot rods. Future national midget champion Shorty Templeman picked up one feature win in July. And GVMPS Pioneer Trev Deeley won one of the few motorcycle races.

The jalopies, local racers, were reintroduced and featured GVMPS Pioneers Roy Long, Reg Royle (racing under the name Bill Anderson) and Don Bennett.

Sports car enthusiast, and GVMPS Pioneer, Roy Shadbolt went to try to

win the Pikes Peak Hill Climb.

During the Pacific National Exhibition two unlimited hydroplanes from Seattle, Slo-Mo-Shun IV and V, were on display and then did some laps in Burrard Inlet in front of 100,000 spectators.

50 years ago

Go-Karts moved to a 3/10ths mile circuit at Westwood. Top drivers during the year included GVMPS Pioneers Al Charters, Bob Whitehead, John Randall and Milt Goodman.

On the big circuit Bellingham's Pat Pigott won many races with Seattle's Pete Lovely setting a new track record at 85.15 mph. On the motorcycles GVMPS Pioneer Pete Kellond's name showed in the winner's circle often.

Haney Speedway was paved for the 1961 season and so began GVMPS Pioneer Ralph Monhay's domination. Also faring well was Pioneer Les Diack along with the return to racing by Pioneer Mel Keen.

In the hydroplanes GVMPS Pioneers Ross Blewett and Ron Bestward won at the Tin Cup Regatta on Hatzic Lake. At Kelowna Vancouver's Jim McGuire took a Gold Cup race.

40 years ago

The NASCAR Western Grand National series appeared at Langley Speedway for the first time. After a rain postponement Portland's Hershel McGriff won the 150 lap event.

At Mission, during an NHRA points

and record event, GVMPS Pioneer Bob Nottingham set an elapsed time record for his class.

GVMPS Pioneer Gordie Hemrich took the "A" Super Stock points championship. Spokane's Chuck Little took the Langley \$2500 Super Stock Open race that closed out the season.

The national Player's Centennial Race of Champions set for early October got wet so many of the principal racers in the national driver's championship for Formula B did not start. Ontario's Craig Hill won that race. GVMPS Pioneer Don Lamont won his B Sedan class race and Pioneer Tony Morris upset Pioneer John Hall in the A Sedan race.

30 years ago

Surrey's Terry Hofoss won 125 cc motocross races at Aldergrove's Little Rock Raceway and at other courses across Canada on his way to a national championship.

The Formula Atlantic race at Westwood was won by Mexico's Rogelio Rodriguez. Second was Allen Berg, of Calgary.

Drag boat racing happened on the Fraser River by the new Mission Raceway. Ray O'Hara set numerous records through the season.

At Skagit Speedway GVMPS Pioneers Tom Berrow and Al Tourond finished one-two in the Super Stock point standings.



Tony Morris Heavy Chevy Camaro Westwood, 1981 (Tom Johnston collection)