

# WINDING ROAD

**McKeefery Sweeps;** *Christensen, Raduechel & Rard Take Victories - Austin, Jr., Brown & Gibson Championships*

BY DARREL KRENTZ

**P**aint a picture in your mind of the perfect big race weekend. Certainly weather would be high on the list; a large roster of great Legends and Thunder Roadster drivers all having a good time would be important too. Add in the enjoyment of having San Francisco and the famous Napa Valley close by for evening excursions and you have this year's RACEceiver Legends Car and Thunder Roadster World Finals at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, Calif. Nov. 11-13.

The competition could not have been better. With the national points championships up for grabs in all Legends Divisions, every top driver brought his or her "A" game. Thursday's all day tech saw some passing clouds but no rain as more than 125 racers pushed their cars through the pre-race inspection.

There were a record number of Thunder Roadsters at the event. If you walked through the pits, you could also not help but notice the large number of foreign competitors. Finland was represented as was France, Belgium, England, Scotland, Spain, and Canada. After tech was closed, rental car trips around the track were provided to several of the new drivers. The drivers' meeting was also very interesting, some

of the driver's names were difficult to pronounce. During each drivers meeting and sign up, translators were repeating instructions to their drivers.

Friday's practice started at 8 a.m. with drivers getting their first close look at the spectacular Infineon Raceway Course. The Pros were first, followed by Thunder Roadsters, Semi-Pros and the largest class, the Masters.

The heat races were set by draw and started at 12 p.m. The first group to run was the Pros. Local favorite Steve Fensler showed his strength early with a convincing win over Oklahoman Bobby Pugh. England driver Jamie Clarke finished a strong third followed by George Sheldon, Jr. and Rasku Jussi from Finland. All classes were divided into two heats. The second Pro heat was a Christensen demonstration with Corey winning and Jeremy second. Virginia drivers Michael Bryant and Roger Austin Jr. were third and fourth respectively. Finish driver Ari En finished fifth. The second round of Pro drivers had the fast Pros out front again. California oval champ turned road racer Randy Raduechel won heat one with Pugh, Fensler, G. Sheldon Jr. and Clarke in tow. Bryant found his way to the front in heat two ahead of C. Christensen, Austin, J. Christensen and En. Each heat race



Hardware: The World Finals trophy await their perspective winners. EP-KODAK Sports Photography Photo.

awarded points. The points tallies set the lineup for the Pro main with several top Pro racers at the front.

The Thunder Roadsters were next to run their heat races with several Roadster drivers running their first Thunder Roadster race ever, not to mention their first road race. This included Bill O'Neil and Michael Ward. Smiles were the order of the day with the Thunder Roadster drivers as everyone had a great time. Randy Raduechel had a clean sweep in the heats.

In heat one, Raduechel was followed by Mike Montes, Stuart-Forbes "Rocky" Robinson, Barry Yost, and Brian Gibson. Heat two had two time World Finals champion Duane Swanson show his cards in a great second-place finish behind Randy Raduechel. Montes was third with North Carolina driver Marty Williams and Las Vegas's Roger Hocking following.

The Semi-Pro heat races included a who's who of upcoming Legends racers. California started out with all the top-five drivers in heat one. Martin McKeefery won followed by relative newcomer John Green, James Landon, Troy Kamisky, and Brian Kamisky. Heat two had East Coast flair as Virginia driver Robert Hall finished first ahead of Malaga, Spain driver Alain Goffin. Third place was California driver Johnny Morrissey, followed by Robert Raduechel and Jason Alsop. The second round of heat races saw B. Kamisky get the win followed by McKeefery, Jeff Mueller, Young Lion Conner Cantrell and Pennsylvania standout David Adcock. This mix set up a great starting field for Saturday's main event that would ultimately determine the Semi-Pro World road race champion.

The largest group was the Masters. The class included no less than 14 drivers with a mathematical shot at the title. England driver Jim Clarke won the first heat on a temporarily wet track. The ageless veteran Robert Gayton showed he still has what it takes by finishing second in front of Clifton, Va. driver Will Campbell, Bobby Christensen, and Steve Kamisky. The "Rocket" Ricky McNeill showed Washington state drivers could run up front by winning heat two. Gary Sheldon finished second with Oklahoma driver Mike Rard third, Dennis Fromm fourth and Gary Scheuerell fifth.

The second round of heat races saw some new faces near the front. Gayton prevailed with Mark Gaiser, Danny Glenn, Clarke, and Peter Morton following. Heat two in the second round saw George Sheldon win with Rard, Masters point's leader Skip Brown, Scheuerell, and Greg Garcia following.

The great folks at NASA again put on their annual barbecue Friday night for the Legends and Thunder Roadster racers. Jerry "the Governor" Kunzman and his crew again



CAST OF CHARACTERS: Drivers listen during one of the World Finals driver's meeting.. EP-KODAK Sports Photography Photo.



**THREE-WHEELING:** Michael Diaz throws his No. 11 Legends Car around Infineon Raceway during the 2005 World Finals. EP-KODAK Sports Photography Photo.

provided a great meal complete with drinks. This is always a great opportunity for all drivers to do some well-deserved bench racing among their fellow road racers. There were no doubt some challenges issued among friends when it came to predicting the next day's championship races.

#### SATURDAY

Saturday came with a rush of sunshine and the promise of another great California day. A short last-chance practice allowed drivers to get their last adjustment in for the World Finals features.

#### PRO

The Pro division had its twist as the strong favorite, Fensler Jr. was disqualified from Friday's heat race for a compression infraction. With adjustments made, he would start near the back, but had plenty of speed to get to the front.

Oklahoma drivers C. Christensen and Pugh occupied the front row with Bryant and J. Christensen in row two. After the first lap, it was clear it was going to be a fight to the finish between the top five drivers. Pugh lead the first lap, but C. Christensen dropped from the race on lap two, eventually finishing 29th. Fensler was on a mission as he worked his way to 11th by the end of lap two. On lap four, J. Christensen took the lead. Fensler was up to seventh. Last year's Semi-Pro winner, Dustin Ash, was also moving up, and by lap five, had moved to seventh. By lap seven, Ash was sixth after starting in 23rd.

Fensler's hard charge was thwarted when a vibration forced him out of the race, and relegated him to a 24th-place finish. Frustrated to see his championship hopes dashed by

a mechanical problem, Fensler was gracious, expressing how much fun he'd had and vowing to compete for the 2006 crown. In a bright note for Fensler, he turned in the fastest lap of the day for all Legends competitors.

George Sheldon, Jr. moved to the lead on lap seven, and looked poised for victory, taking the white flag just a tick ahead of J. Christensen.

It was a dog fight to the checkered flag as J. Christensen won by a mere .0144 of a second over Sheldon. Austin finished third, giving him just enough points to claim the RACEceiver Legends Car World Road Racing Pro championship. Jamie Clarke was fourth with Pugh, Ash, Raduechel, Scott Sheldon, Jussi and En rounding out the top 10.

#### THUNDER ROADSTERS

The Thunder Roadster race looked great as 18 drivers took the green flag. Randy Raduechel led lap one with a Montes tail. Montes led laps two and three, but Raduechel took a commanding lead after Montes dropped out on lap six. The remaining positions were hotly contested as two-time champion Swanson battled with Gibson and Forbes-Robinson.

Raduechel won easily. Swanson was second, followed by Forbes-Robinson, Jordan Yost, and the ageless Bobby Ruppert. Barry Yost finished sixth followed by J.T. Montes, Robert Cooke, Robert Warren and Brian Kizer. Gibson was crowned the 2005 Thunder Roadster Road Course champion. The Roadster drivers all had a great time. First-timers O'Neil and Ward were excited about their new Roadsters and look forward to a great 2006.



**SEMI-PRO SWEEP:** Martin McKeefery (center) poses with his World Finals trophy and his parents, James and Lou Anne after sweeping the Semi-Pro division, collecting the race victory and the championship. McKeefery Photo.

#### SEMI-PRO

The Semi-Pro race followed. Rob Hall had secured the pole, and looked to the World points championship in his sights. Hall was the driver to beat as he won both of his heat races on Friday. Martin McKeefery started on the outside of the front row. McKeefery was the only Semi-Pro driver to post a lap faster lap than Hall in Friday's heat race.

On the first lap, Hall slipped up and slid to sixth. McKeefery led lap one followed by John Green. By lap two, Hall had moved to third and took the lead on lap four. But McKeefery wouldn't be denied, and retook the lead on lap five. Hall suffered a flat tire on lap seven, ending his championship hopes.

McKeefery cruised to the easy victory over Jean Mevart, Green, Robert Raduechel, who started 33rd, and Morrissey. East Coaster David Adcock was sixth, followed by Troy Kamisky, Brian Wong, Michael Diaz and John Scharf. On the strength of his victory, McKeefery was crowned the RACEceiver Legends Car World Road Racing Semi-Pro champion.

#### MASTERS

Mike Rard and past World Finals winner Robert Gayton lead the 41 drivers to the green flag in the Master division. The World Championship season points seemed to change with each lap.

At the front, it was all Rard who led every lap followed by Gayton. Third place swapped between Peter Morton, Skip Brown, and Bobby Christensen.

Christensen faltered on the final lap giving third to Skip Brown. Morton and North Carolina oval specialist Clay Hair, in his first road race, followed.

Brown took the RACEceiver Legends Car World Road Racing Masters championship.

It was great to see each region well represented in the top-five with Rard from Oklahoma, Gayton from New Mexico, Brown from California, Morton from England, and Hair from North Carolina.

The final race of the 2005 Road Race Season was a "Regional Challenge" where each region's top Semi-Pros, Masters, and Pros took to the track to crown the top team.



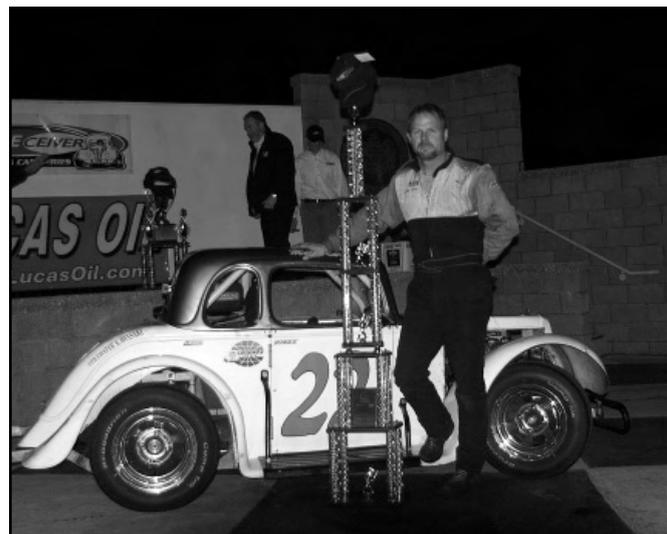
**PRO WINNERS:** (From left to right) Jeremy Christensen, George Sheldon, Jr., Jamie Clark and Bobby Pugh get their World Finals hardware. Third-place finisher and 2006 World Road Racing champion, Roger Austin, Jr. is not pictured. EP-KODAK Sports Photography Photo.

Europe, US East, West, and Central were all represented. Twenty drivers participated, and received points for their team. Pugh took the honors ahead of Rard, Brown, Austin Jr., and Ash. With the points added up, the US West team had the best score and the trophy was given to Chris Carli, the local Legend dealer from California.

Chris as well as Randy Raduechel have really done a great job with the road racers in California and winning the Regional Challenge team race was a great accomplishment for them.

After the dust had cleared, the last engine was silenced, the trophies were awarded and the last light was turned off, it was time to reflect on a great Road Course World Finals. Once again, great friendships were formed, champions were crowned, and all that remained were the memories of a great weekend.

Now is the time to prepare for next year. INEX will look at how to make it better and more enjoyable for all who attend the 2006 Road Racing World Finals.



**MASTER:** Mike Rard topped the Masters division at the World Finals. EP-KODAK Sports Photography Photo.

## World Cup Challenge

Each year at the RACEceiver Legends Car World Finals at Infineon Raceway in California, the American Legends Car drivers compete against the very best of the foreign teams represented at the World Finals in the World Cup Team Challenge.

The winning team gets a trophy to take back to their respective country to admire, and most of all bragging rights for an entire year. The great road race aficionados from Europe have been at the top of this fun contest for the past two years. The American drivers have come close in 2003 and 2004, but after the final points tally, Europe has prevailed.

In 2005, the largest contingent of European drivers ever were present for the challenge. Fourteen drivers matched up, class for class, with their American counterparts. In each qualifying heat race, as well as the main events, drivers are awarded points based on their finishing position. By the end of the weekend, a team is crowned World Cup Championship Team winner.

The heat races would find the American contingent scoring some great finishes as Semi-Pro Rob Hall won both of his heats. Martin McKeefery also had great first and second heat race finishes. The Pros were led by Steve Fensler and Bobby Pugh. Masters Gary Scheuerell and Skip Brown led the charge for America's Masters.

European drivers stood fast in the heats with great runs by Semi-Pro's Jean Meynart from Belgium and Spain's Alain Goffin. English Pro Jamie Clarke and Finland Pro Ari En also posted valuable points to the Europe total.

The Semi-Pro main finish would increase the narrow lead the American team enjoyed as McKeefery won, followed by Meynart. Michael Diaz would add to the total as would John Scharf. Finnish driver Perttu Repola would also add points to the Europe total.

The Masters top points driver was Skip Brown in third and Peter Morton posting the best European finish in fourth.

The Pro final sealed the fate of the World Cup Team Challenge. Jeremy Christensen's victory and Roger Austin, Jr. and Pugh finishing in the top five proved to be insurmountable for England. Jamie Clarke ran well and finished in the top five but not quite enough to make up the points lead the American team had built over the two days of racing. For the first time since the start of the World Cup, the trophy would remain in America.

It was a great contest as drivers swayed the points total for their team back and forth. The European team would lead at different times during the heat races and looked poised to win yet another World Cup, but in the end, after the dust had cleared, the Americans were the winners.

The drivers on the winning team included Skip Brown, Gary Scheuerell, Bobby Christensen, Dennis Fromm, Danny Boyle, Steve Fensler, Bobby Pugh, Roger Austin, Mike Mahieu, Jeremy Christensen, Martin McKeefery, Rob Hall, and John Schaarf. Their names will join those of the previous team winners on the side of the World Cup trophy.

## WORLD FINALS RESULTS

### SEMI-PRO

1. Martin McKeefery
2. Jean Meynart
3. John Green
4. Robert Raduechel
5. Johnny Morrissey
6. David Adcock
7. Troy Kamisky
8. Brian Wong
9. Michael Diaz
10. John Scharf
11. Ryan Raduechel
12. Nick Johnson
13. Perttu Repola
14. Phil Joy
15. John Summers
16. Mel Main
17. Larry Stone
18. Rob Cantrell
19. Conner Cantrell
20. Zach Whetstone
21. Brian Kamisky
22. Robert Hall
23. Alain Goffin
24. Bobby Noll
25. Desiree Robinson
26. Jason Alsop
27. Matt Mawhinney
28. Randy Schaaf
29. Jeff Mueller
30. Kasi Aussi-Jahha
31. James Landon
32. Brian Vandhey

### PRO

1. Jeremy Christensen
2. George Sheldon, Jr.
3. Roger Austin, Jr.
4. Jamie Clarke
5. Bobby Pugh
6. Dustin Ash
7. Randy Raduechel
8. Scott Sheldon
9. Rasku Jussi
10. Ari En
11. Tom Landreth
12. Mike Mahieu
13. J.D. Hendley
14. Simon Belcher
15. Joe Martin
16. Matthew Hicks
17. Duane Swanson
18. Jim W. Smith
19. Jason Ingram
20. David Bongiovanni
21. David Fisher
22. Thomas Lovelady
23. Austin Grabowski
24. Art Nevill
25. Steve Fensler, Jr.
26. Butch Summers
27. Michael Bryant
28. Dave Newsham
29. Corey Christensen

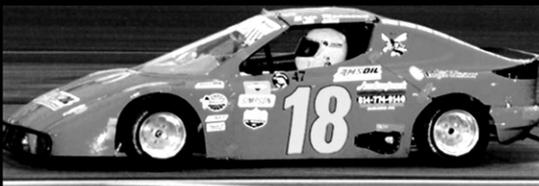
### MASTERS

1. Mike Rard
2. Robert Gayton
3. Skip Brown
4. Peter Morton
5. Clay Hair
6. Danny Glenn
7. Gary Scheuerell
8. Ricky Ray McNeill
9. Gary Sheldon
10. Aly Hunter
11. David Neveaux
12. Bob Landreth
13. Greg Garcia
14. Robert Hornbeck
15. Danny Williams
16. Steve Wilson
17. Chuck Scott
18. Norm Smith
19. William Crisp
20. Danny Boyle
21. Will Campbell
22. Jim Akard
23. David Thorburn
24. Steve Kamisky
25. Jim Flynn
26. Larry Alsop
27. David Allen
28. John Stutsman
29. Bill Vose
30. John Peters
31. Mark Gaiser
32. Larry Meredith
33. Bobby Christensen
34. Richard Ferreira
35. Carl Wuersch
36. James Spann
37. Tom Skahill
38. Jim Clarke
39. George Sheldon
40. Dennis Fromm
41. Rick Zollman

### THUNDER ROADSTER

1. Randy Raduechel
2. Duane Swanson
3. Stuart Forbes-Robinson
4. Jordan Yost
5. Bobby Ruppert
6. Barry Yost
7. J.T. Montes
8. Robert Cooke
9. Robert Warren
10. Brian S. Kizer
11. Edward Hohmann
12. Marty Williams
13. Bill O'Neill
14. Michael Ward
15. Mike Montes
16. Roger Hockings
17. Ron Duprau

# 2005 INEX NATIONAL CHAMPIONS





# RACEceiver Legends Semi-Pro Road Racing Champion

## Martin McKeefery

### Martin McKeefery

Single, Age 18

Milpitas, Calif.

**Stats:** (Asphalt & Road Course)

46 races

27 victories

43 top-fives

46 top-10s

**M**artin McKeefery, 18, began his racing career at the age of 10. He began short-track inline speed skating in the beginning before moving to BMX competition in his early teens. For three years, the California native raced mini-cups, beginning at the age of 12. He won the Altamont Raceway Championship in 2002.

As an asphalt racer, the goal for 2004 was to race twice on each of the five tracks where the Legends of the Pacific visits. One overriding philosophy Martin got from his father (and crew chief) was, "always change something and get out there to test it." The team did just that in 2004, asking lots of questions and trying lots of setups.

After the 2004 Asphalt Nationals in Las Vegas, the team decided to try road racing at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, Calif. They attended the last 2004 NASA event, and found it was fun and fast racing.

In 2005, Martin and his family decided on an ambitious goal of winning both the Asphalt and Road Course championships in Semi-Pro. The family felt Martin had the talent, and there were plenty of great road courses in their area. The biggest challenge proved to be finding enough asphalt races, and enough weekends to get them in along with their road racing schedule. The team competed in 18 road races, and 21 asphalt races (six tracks in the area; three out of the area).

Martin won both local Regional Qualifiers. He won the RACEceiver Legends Semi-Pro Road Racing National championship, finished sixth nationally in the RACEceiver Legends Semi-Pro Asphalt standings and was the California State Champion in both asphalt and road racing.

"It was a real challenge for my dad and I to learn how to race the road courses and still race the asphalt all in the same year and with only one car," Martin said. "My dad and I do all the work on the car in our home garage. He's a great engineer and has taught me how to solve problems in a very methodical method and to invent and build stuff if it's cheaper or the product isn't available commercially.

The most challenging weekend was when an early wreck in the race put Martin's car into the wall causing some major damage. Not only did that give the team a DNF late in the race season, but they had plans to set the car up for the next day's road race two hours north. At the encouragement and monumental help from fellow drivers, the team spent all night working on the car and made the race at Thunderhill.

Not only was that an accomplishment in itself, but Martin won his first feature race and posted fast time. The day not only delivered 100 points to the championship chase, but he learned that perseverance and a positive approach in the face of adversity is what makes a champion.

To close out his season, Martin competed at the World Finals at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, Calif. He won the Semi-Pro division, clinching his title. "My victory at Infineon in the World Finals was the best feeling I have ever known in my life," Martin said. "I'm living my dream."

Martin believes road racing improves his asphalt skills and asphalt racing adds to his road racing skills. Together they contribute to good car control and great racing experiences. Legends cars are a blast to drive turning both left and right!

Martin would like to thank his sponsors Milpitas Health and Fitness, Pacific Tire Outlet, The City of Milpitas, 2ShopHomes.com, Shypulski Salon of Menlo Park, HE.net, My5Minutes.com, Precision Transmission, and State Farm Insurance. And a special thank you to his family and Hank Scott.

