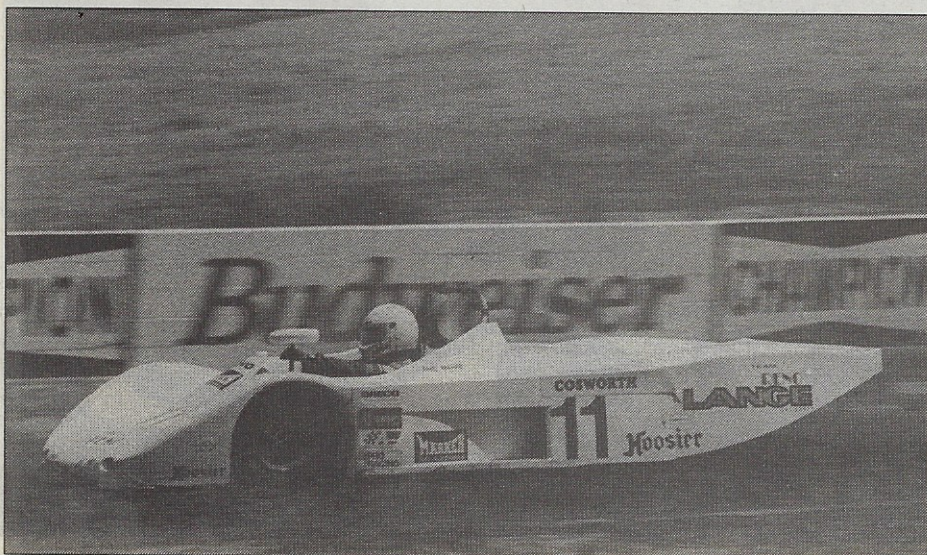


# Phil Mahre Wins Second ACRL Driving Title and San Jose Regains City Championship



STEVEN SCHINABEL PHOTOS

Phil Mahre's return to professional auto racing was triumphant, as he won his first race and the season title.

## *It Was All Up for Grabs in the ACRL Until the Final Doubleheader Weekend of the Season By Mary Mitchell*

If you were looking for close racing, the 1995 ACRL season had it. It wasn't until the eighth and final race of the year that all three championships were settled, with Phil Mahre taking the Super Sports 2000 Division (Cosworth DOHC engines), Ted Guenther the Sports 2000 Division (Ford SOHC engines) and Team San Jose capturing the city championship, beating out defending title holder Team San Diego.

For Team San Jose, the consistency of Lee Lucas, Jeff Glenn and Chris Ronson earned them the city championship and Blackaller Cup, which they shared with fellow teammates Bob Dorricott Sr. and Joe Casanova. It was San Jose's second title in the last three years.

Mahre, Lucas and Peter Zarcades were the SS2000 front runners all season. In adding a second ACRL driving title to his 1990 championship, Mahre was consistently quick. He notched two victories, three seconds and two third-place finishes in the seven races he entered, and indicative of his strong performance, he qualified in the top five

in every single race. He was also credited with the fastest race lap in three events.

While consistency kept 1993 ACRL driving champion Lucas in the hunt all year, victories eluded him. He had to settle for four second-place finishes and an equal number of thirds. Zarcades had a chance at the championship until a test-day mishap before the last race weekend of the season precluded him from competing and defending his third-place points position. Adding insult to injury, this year's season finale was a doubleheader, with lots of points up for grabs. Zarcades wound up fifth in the final standings, with two victories, one pole position and three fastest race laps.

The most prolific overall race winner was Bob Schader, who swept the last four events of 1995—and only competed in five events! He was also on the pole twice and had the fastest race lap in two events. He finished seventh in the points.

Jeff Glenn took "Rookie of the Year" honors and was third in the Super Sports 2000 Division by one point over Chris Ronson. Glenn, the youngest ACRL

competitor at age 23, had a good year after overcoming more than his share of bad luck. He was voted "Rising Star" by his fellow competitors. Rick Ferguson received the "Most Improved" award.

The season commenced in March at Firebird Raceway in Arizona, where Zarcades came from ninth on the grid to the victory. He was followed home by Rick Lee, who was driving the Lola that would be campaigned by teammate Mahre for the remainder of the season (Lee switched to a Van Diemen). Phoenix resident Ted Guenther used home track advantage to take the Sports 2000 victory and seventh overall.

Mahre, who was not present at the

### Championship Profile: Phil Mahre



Phil Mahre made a triumphant return to American City Racing League competition in 1995, winning the Super Sports drivers championship to add to his 1990 ACRL title.

That was also the year the Team Reno, which Mahre drove for, won the city championship. It turned out to be only the first racing title for an athlete with an already impressive list of victories. His non-racing credits include a Gold medal at the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo and a silver in 1980 in Lake Placid, both in Slalom skiing. He also had many wins on the professional skiing tour as well.

The 38-year-old father of three from Yakima, Wash., started his racing career in the IMSA Firehawk series before moving to Team Reno and the ACRL for 1989 and '90. In 1991, along with brother Steve, he ran some Trans-Am races in an Oldsmobile Cutlass, but couldn't ever quite put together the effort for a win in the professional series. That same year, however, he did win GT1 at the Runoffs® at Road Atlanta, for his second racing championship.

After sitting out a few years, Mahre came back to racing, driving Rick Lee's Lola in seven of this year's eight ACRL events with sponsorship from Lange ski boots, Marker ski bindings, Revo sunglasses, Rain-X and E/Z Up. He missed the season opener as car owner Lee waited for his new Van Diemen, but sat on the pole, set fastest lap, led the most laps and won at Phoenix International Raceway and Seattle. Although these were his only victories this season, his consistency—he had three second-place finishes and two thirds in the final five races—allowed him to finish on top.



season opener, certainly made his presence felt in the second round at Phoenix International Raceway in May. He qualified on the pole and went on to victory after a hard fought race with Zarcades. Unfortunately, the two had contact, Zarcades spun off and was unable to continue. Schader also made his first appearance of the season, but had an off-course excursion and retired on the first lap. Lee Lucas was runner up followed by Margie Smith-Haas. It would be the defending Super Sports 2000 champion's best result of the year, as she drove a limited schedule. Guenther once again used home track advantage for 11th overall and the Sports 2000 Division win.

Round three at Seattle saw Mahre dominant, as he was on the pole again, set fast race lap and took the checkered flag. Lucas was runner-up and Zarcades third. Joe Giroski took his first of four Sports 2000 Division victories ahead of Ian Wood and Ted Guenther. Once again Team San Jose was the city team to beat thanks to Lucas, and Glenn's fourth-place finish.

Lucas was fast qualifier at Willow Springs in June, but the win and fast race lap would go to Zarcades. In his first ACRL appearance, Fiorenzo Tirinnanzi finished seventh overall and first in Sports 2000. Zarcades victory and the sixth-place finish of his teammate Jim Paul, gave Team Los Angeles the team win.

Portland, Ore., in July was the next meeting place for the ACRL group to assemble. Mahre took the pole during the Daeco Top Five qualifying session and set fastest race lap, but in his second outing Schader came home a winner. Lucas led for the first 15 laps but was passed by both Shader and Mahre, relegating him to third at the end. Not to be outdone, the Sports 2000 group also honored a different winner, Ian Wood.

Laguna Seca was the venue for round six in August. Zarcades put his Swift on pole but Schader surprised both Zarcades and Lucas at the start by driving his Lola between them and going on to victory, followed by Mahre and Lucas. A spin dropped Zarcades to fifth.

The final two races were held at Sears Point during the Pacific Coast Road Racing Championships event in mid-September. The weekend belonged to Bob Schader, who qualified on the pole for both events and won both. On Saturday he went wire to wire, setting fastest race lap on the way, but he was then penalized 10 seconds for "racing before the green flag." However, he filed an appeal, heard in November, and the penalty was overturned and his win reinstated.

Sunday's race saw Schader win even more convincingly, with a 28sec. margin of victory over Lucas. In his defense, Lucas was definitely not at his best,

suffering terribly from a sinus infection all weekend. Mahre drove a smart race to take third-place points, enough to secure the title. Giroski took his third straight Sports 2000 victory with a last lap pass of Guenther, but Ted earned points in seven races to Joe's six, allowing Guenther to hang on to the points lead at the end. ■

• **FINAL SUPER SPORTS CLASS STANDINGS** (best seven of eight results counted): 1. Phil Mahre/Reno, 661; 2. Lee Lucas/San Jose, 640; 3. Jeff Glenn/San Jose, 520; 4. Chris Ronson/San Jose, 519; 5. Peter Zarcades/Los Angeles, 506; 6. Rick Ferguson/Anaheim 489; 7. Bob Schader/San Diego, 450; 8. Leo Sismani/San Diego, 444; 9. Ted Guenther/Los Angeles, 409; 10. Brad Krause/Santa Barbara, 402; 11. Gary Green/San Diego, 377; 12. Larry Vollum/Portland, 374.

• **FINAL SPORTS 2000 CLASS STANDINGS:** 1. Ted Guenther/Los Angeles, 642; 2. Joe Giroski/Woodland, 568; 3. Leo Giroski/Woodland, 486; 4. Ian Wood/San Diego, 457; 5. Tom Bungay/Santa Barbara 339; 6. Leslie Clark/Santa Barbara, 315; 7. Joe Casanova/San Jose, 310; 8. John Ostlund/Anaheim, 251; 9. Dennis Reed/Anaheim, 230; 10. Fiorenzo Tirinnanzi/Santa Barbara, 173; 11. David Seuss/Boston, 93; 12. Jay Messenger/San Diego, 88; 13. Michael Mayfield/Santa Barbara, 84.

• **FINAL TEAM STANDINGS:** 1. San Jose, 1359; 2. San Diego, 1205; 3. Los Angeles, 1143; 4. Santa Barbara, 839; 5. Reno, 802; 6. Anaheim, 745; 7. Woodland, 701; 8. Portland, 380; 9. Vancouver, 335; 10. St. Petersburg, 294; 11. Columbus, 76; 12. Boston, 61; 12. North Vancouver, 61; 14. Claremont, 48.

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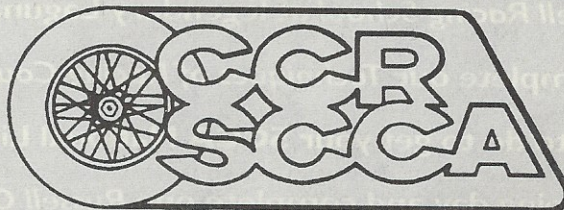
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