

## Paul Kaiser reins in the rain at Road Atlanta – Dave Riha sets new track record

Well, maybe we ought to select another month to race at Road Atlanta. For 3 years in a row there have been either tornados, floods, or just out-and-out down pours during most of the weekend.

Friday's 3 hour Enduro was very wet from start to finish. Paul Kaiser and Carl Thompson co-drove Carl's car and John George did a solo session in the E1 class that had 8 entries. There were 40 cars signed up for the Enduro and only 24 braved the conditions. Did I mention that it was pouring for all 3 hours? The downhill before the esses ate a lot of cars with very slippery conditions and it got to John too. He left the course and hit the tire wall at 37 mph and did a bunch of damage. Paul & Carl won the E1 class, and were 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. If one rocker arm bolt hadn't stretched or come lose, they would have probably been 1<sup>st</sup> overall. What an experience.

Saturday dawned sort of wet but the track seemed to dry a little as the day went on. Jim Schenck & Dave Riha joined the others to round out a class of 5 cars. John George turned a blistering 1:40.988 for the best of the FFR gang (obviously the gang jumped into action and got John's car mended and "de-mudded"). Paul had the next best time followed by Dave Riha, Jim Schenck and Carl bringing up the rear. Unfortunately Paul, Dave and Carl got DQed for passing under the yellow during qualifying and were relegated to the rear of the grid. When the green flag dropped, everyone was on dry's, except Jim, who had only R888 rains – a fortunate problem. Did I say RAIN? Paul quickly moved up through the cars moving to the front of the pack with everyone chasing. Then, for a change – about half way into the 40 minute race - the bottom fell out and it began to POUR! Since Jim was the only FFR car on rains he moved up and passed Paul. Dave decided to call it a day after 8 laps – "I don't race in the rain on dry tires". John had overheating problems and retired after 6 laps. Carl was running at the end of the gang and hit that slippery spot on the downhill where John went off and had a similar problem to John's, and lightly tapped the concrete wall getting a "black eye" on the right front of the car. It took Carl a while to get "un-stuck" but in the mean time Jim's mass air meter filled up with water and he retired after 13 laps. So, after all the "slipping and sliding", Paul won the race and Carl finished 2<sup>nd</sup>. You just have to take 'em anyway you can get 'em.

Sunday started out DRY for a change. Qualifying found John George with the best time at 1:41.908, with Jim close behind at 1:42.129, Paul and Dave were in the 1:43's and Carl was bringing up the rear. Paul and John went head to head for the race with Paul beating John by about 10 seconds. Jim Schenck finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and Dave Riha finished 4<sup>th</sup> (they battled back and forth, but a flat tire on 2-4 year old tires dropped Dave to 4<sup>th</sup>. In spite of all that, Dave turned the fastest lap of the weekend – and new track record - with a 1:40.562, Carl finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

So, the first races of the East Coast Championship are in the books. The weekend was wet and wild. There was some damaged fiberglass, lots of fun, and impending excitement about the next race at Summit Point in April.

Joe Camire attended his first HPDE and seemed to have a grand time. Carl prepared some goodies on the grill (eat your heart out Scott since you missed the fried egg sandwiches) and Jim Schenck unleashed some cooking talents and roasted a tasty pork loin. All in all, a fun & wet time was had by all.