

VSRN-ONLINE

Vintage Slot Racing Newsletter

Greg Holland, Ye Olde Editor

Issue 107 Oct 2001 / Feb 2002

From The Editor

Hi Gang-

Due to some scanning projects that came up unexpectedly, I haven't made much progress on the Daytona Coupes. Maybe someday... Yes, Bill Shaw, I've worked on the Super Coupe a little, too! But there's some casting work that needs to be done to finish that one properly.

Thanks to Daryl Payne, Wally Jabs and Ben Jones for their contributions to the VSRN Library.

Daryl came up with the Strombecker Table Top Topics Vol 1 No. 3 Spring 1963 that I was looking for last time. Wally sent me a bunch of the track plans I was missing, and old buddy Ben filled a lot of holes in the collection of Strombecker Inside Track magazines.

I'm looking to borrow the following publications to scan for the VSRN CD:
Strombecker Inside Track V2 No.1, V2 No. 2, V2 No. 3 and any Inside Track magazines V2 No.6 and up. I have 2 unnumbered issues from 1966 - one with the Cheetah on the cover and one with a Dino Ferrari. Anybody know for sure which issues these were?

If you are the first to help me out with these, I'll trade you for a copy of the CD. Thanks.

As always, your comments and suggestions are welcome - I do appreciate the feedback! You can contact us at: greg@vsronline.com

Keep It In The Slot !!!

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CAR MODEL and AutoWorld Cover Gallery

This issue, we finally get around to adding Car Model Magazine to the Cover Gallery.

History: 133 Issues

Bi-Monthly: Jul / Aug, Sept / Oct, Nov/Dec
1962, Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/June and
July/Aug 1963

Monthly: September 1963 through April 1973,
September 73, October 1973

 Bi-Monthly: November/December 1973

 Monthly: January 1974 through July
1974

Background:

The first of the major US model publications, Car Model jumped in as model car building was booming, and just as the slot craze was getting started.

Published by OLR Publications - the initials stood for:

Oscar Koveleski of AutoWorld

Bob McCloud, publisher

Jose Rodriguez, mastermind behind it all

The first 7 issues were "Digest" sized (4"x5"), as made popular by Hot Rod magazines of the 50's.

In the 90's, Jose told me that they had no idea what they were getting themselves into when they decided to publish a magazine. But he quickly found out! Jose did most of the work of putting the issues together. However, it was four or 5 issues before his name appeared as a "technical editor", (Continued on Page 2)

CAR MODEL and AutoWorld Cover Gallery*(Continued from Page 1)*

afraid that there would be people who would not buy the magazine because there was a Hispanic associated with it. As it turned out, his fears were totally unfounded.

Oscar didn't even use that first name on the masthead - using his initials A.M. instead, in order to try to hide the association with AutoWorld. He was a financial partner but wasn't involved in the day-to-day operations. Bob McCloud took care of the publication and advertising, and apparently was somewhat of a "wild child". At one point, Jose left Car Model because of this, but soon came back to try to rescue his part of the investment.

In 1969, they tried publishing Air-Space Model Magazine. The style of the magazine was very similar in appearance to Car Model. Jose said they were totally out of their element, but were trying to latch on to a segment of the model industry that was still strong. This didn't last long....

In April 1973, several years after the slot car "crash", the once grand Car Model folded. A few months later, in September 1973, it reappeared under new publisher James T. Emmott. In his first editorial, he announced that the previous owners had been "giving away the store" with discounts and gimmicks, and that the new direction for Car Model was to become a publication that was worth every penny of the full subscription price. Reading between the lines, I wonder if he also tried to eliminate discounted advertising rates that the major advertisers had come to expect. The result was a total lack of manufacturer's advertising. Several issues later, he must have relented, and a few ads appeared from AMT and MPC, but not many other sources. Without a lot of advertising, there weren't nearly as many pages per issue. In addition, the circulation appeared to be almost entirely by subscription - and most of those (like mine) were simply fulfilling subscriptions left over from the old publication. After several months of editorial pleas for support, Car Model folded for good after the July 1974 issue.

AutoWorld Catalogs

40(?) Editions #1 to #41? (no #13?)

Published: 1958 to 1991

Background:

Auto World was started in 1958 by Oscar Koveleski and R.A. "Smitty" Smith, as a mail order source for the rapidly expanding model car market, which was spurred by the release of the first AMT/SMP 3 'n' 1 kits. The first 9 editions were "digest sized", but grew to full size at the slot boom neared the peak in 1966. My copy of the 1962 catalog shows a small amount of slot car stuff - Aurora HO Vibrators, VIP, Scalextric, and Strombecker. By 1965 1/2, there were MANY pages devoted to slot.

At the time, we lived an hour or so from Scranton, and occasionally were able to take a drive to visit the retail store. The first place I went to was the Jefferson Ave store, where the infamous Auto World "Car54, Where Are You" Ferrari was parked out front - minus the Ferrari motor, but before the Chevy V8 went in! "Smitty" waited on me. He required crutches to get around - I believe I found out later that he had Polio as a child. It was an effort for him to go back into the warehouse, so he grabbed my list out of my hand, and kind of grumbled as he went off. After he brought everything out to the counter and I paid for the stuff, I thanked him for his time. He grumbled "Sure, kid, it's my job". But I caught a little smile on his face as he turned to go back into the warehouse...

Mike Baltus was the main one who put the catalogs together. You might notice his name on the side of some of the "Cover Cars" ! The last time I visited one of the stores (at 10 North Green Ridge St), Mike told me that they had 1 of every catalog - the "Store Copy", with handwritten notes in the margins as to what sold & what didn't, and what to reorder. All of the files of material that had been used to create the catalogs were thrown out during the move from the famous 701 N. Keyser Ave location.

He also confirmed my suspicions that the "Experimental" 36D motor that they frequently gave away free with the purchase of other items

(Continued on Page 3)

Auto World*(Continued from Page 2)*

they were trying to get rid of, was indeed the "mysterious" Atlas 36D motor that had been advertised by Atlas right before they folded.

Auto World had a "behind the scenes" relationship with Atlas. Oscar was a partner in Car Model magazine along with the late Jose Rodriguez, Jr, who designed the Atlas 1/32 & 1/24 slot kits and motors. When Atlas was folding, Jose told Oscar, and Auto World ended up buying 2 tractor trailer loads of merchandise. This accounts for why there was Atlas stuff on "Special Clearance" and in their "Grab Bags" for years! Regretfully, even this stuff is now gone. When I was there in the early 90's they had 3000 of the Atlas 1/32 BB Pittman-type motors left, but once we started mentioning them in VSRN, they finally sold out. Now they could sell more of them!

Oscar donated the remaining 1/32 Rigen slot track to VSRN so that we could set up a portable track at various 1:1 Vintage Races. Only curves were left – they had sold most of the straights as part of the "Drag Strip" set (which included one of the Atlas "Experimental" motors.

Auto World Catalogs are highly prized by modelers and slot racers alike, because they offer a snapshot of the hobby through the years.

As far as I know, AutoWorld finally folded in 1999.

Letters To The Editor

Greetings Fellow Slot Car Nuts,

Does any one know of any slot car tracks in North Florida or South Georgia ?

I haven't run any of my cars since 1983 and I am really am getting a bit wound-up about it. I still have most of my stuff that I started with in '65 some of it is kinda banged up like the 7 Cox Cheetahs ,those wind shields and chrome trim just would not stayed glued together .

I am thinking about making up some kits out of boxes new parts that I have left over the only thing I am short of is motors most of the Dynamic chassis that I have take k&b bobcat/36d motors but some take Kemtron , General Electric Globe and some other obscure motors .

When the belt drive cars came out I used some of the enclosed motors but it was not the same.

I have a tip on cleaning the cox chassis ,instead of using glass bead blast use a mixture of water and baking soda as a blast media WARNING THE BAKING SODA WILL GO THROUGH ANY AIR FILTRATION BREATHING APPARATUSES AND WILL DO MAJOR HARM TO YOUR LUNGS ,SO USE A FRESH AIR BREATHING SYSTEM FIRE FIGHTERS USE OR SCUBA TANKS at a ratio of 75 to 1 and at 50 to 100 psi I have used this on old Honda carburetors which are made out of zinc and have had excellent results no erosion of the metal no heat build up and any gum or goo are cleaned away and when you are done just rinse of with cold water and dry off with a hair drier on low then leave it as is or paint it with a anti-corrosive compound.

This will also clean brass,aluminum, motors and yes even armatures.

If any body out there needs any new old parts send me an e-mail with your list and I'll see if I have it.
Buddy (cb77dude@webtv.net)(Edward Vitt)

(ED NOTE: Got an e-mail out of the blue, from Don Typond, who was the editor of Model Car Illustrated, in the 60's. Here is some of the correspondence:)
Hi Greg,

Just read your comments on MCI. Thought you might like a little more information. The magazine folded in early 1965 because the publisher, SMP Publishing, went belly-up, due to the failure of their other publications, mostly in the music business. MCI was actually doing quite well, both ad-wise and readership-wise. SMP was kind of flaky, which was one of the reasons you couldn't find MCI on the newsstand most of the time. So when SMP locked the doors, MCI disappeared with them.

The lovely Nicole and I continued our tempestuous relationship for a while, then I moved to Los Angeles to become Managing Editor of ROD & CUSTOM at Petersen. A couple of years later I got my pilot's license and returned to New York to be M.E. at FLYING. Then Editor of AIR PROGRESS, and later Editor of PRIVATE PILOT. I pretty much dropped out of the model car business. Bill Byshyn and Pat O'Rourke picked up where MCI left off, but didn't want or couldn't get the MCI title from SMP. A couple years after MC&R folded, Bill came to work with me at PRIVATE PILOT. We had been old college buddies and airplane nuts long before the MCI days.

It was also good to see Jose Rodriguez's name on your site. I had the pleasure of meeting him in the early days of MCI; super guy, super model builder.

Anyway, just wanted to add a little to your MCI info.
Best regards, Don Typond

(Continued on Page 4)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*(Continued from Page 2)***(ED NOTE: More from Don Typond)**

Hi Greg,

Gotcher e-mail. Here's some background on MCI, SMP, the lovely Nicole, and me.

SMP was a tiny publishing company stuffed into three rooms in an office building in Manhattan with an elevator about the size of a phone booth. One of the principals was a guy named Murray, who I guess was the "M," I don't remember ever meeting "S" or "P." They had a few music magazines, and MCI. Why MCI? I have no idea.

I had been working for Ziff-Davis, a BIG publishing company with titles like POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY, FLYING, and CAR&DRIVER. I worked for C&D when it was still known as SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED. Then I got into the New York freelance photographer game, which was hectic and fun. Then a friend who worked for another car magazine, and knew I was a model builder, told me about MCI needing an editor.

I went up to the third floor in the phone booth, walked into the SMP office, met the lovely Nicole (who was receptionist, secretary, coffee maker, lunch gopher, proof-reader, girl-monday-friday) and accepted the job.

You were correct when you said MCI looked like a one-man job. Actually it was two-man, Bill Byshyn and me. Working out of my one-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn. The one bedroom being the shop, darkroom, and office. All the SMP magazines were done this way, there were no editorial offices at SMP, just Pat O'Rourke slaving over a table doing paste-ups for all the magazines, a strange guy in a darkroom in the back, the lovely Nicole, and Murray.

We had virtually NO budget, and relied on friends to donate articles in return for products we got from advertisers to write up. Bill and I created most of the editorial content. Deadly Dudley worked for either Polks or America's Hobby Center, I can't remember which (ED NOTE: It was Polk's), and was one of the local hotdog slot racers. He wrote what and when he wanted to, and was out of control most of the time. The lovely Nicole was only 21 years old, smart as a whip, and pretty much ran the office, keeping everyone on schedule. She and I became "socially involved," and life was never boring! We put her in the magazine on occasion, giving her the pen-name "Big Mother Retch" as a takeoff on Big Daddy Roth. She did build a little, but mostly we just hung out at my place.

MCI was intended to be a general model car magazine, not just a slot racing magazine, which is why it had a lot of how-to on plastic kits, and some really nice examples of scratch-built display models. Of course, slot racing was THE big activity, but the problem all of us magazines had was the almost two-month lead time from production to newsstand. In an atmosphere of hot-

motor-of-the-week, we were eight motors behind by the time you read about the "latest hot motor!" It was difficult.

Then, as I told you, SMP ran out of money. Nikki and I drifted apart, and I was offered the job at Petersen in L.A. working for ROD&CUSTOM. R&C had a model car section, but I wasn't all that involved in it; as Managing Editor I was responsible for production of the entire magazine. I'm sorry to say, I have no issues of MCI. If I did, you'd be welcome to them.

It was a fun time in my life, I was young and not very wise, New York was (and still is) a great town in which to be crazy and single, and the lovely Nicole was, truly, lovely.

Anything else you wanna know?

Best regards, Don

Greg,

Just looked at one of your sites that lists the staff of MCI...

I don't remember who Jim Gray was. I later had a pilot friend named Jim Gray, but not the same guy. Maybe he was fictional.

Ted Navarro was the strange guy in the back room. I think we put his name on the masthead just to fill it up. Like Jim Gray?

Don't remember William Sauer either, but he might have assisted Pat with pasteups at the office.

Murray's first name was Maurice! I didn't remember if Murray was his first name or last name. Just remembered Murray.

Frank Coggins was the first editor, and was the friend who worked for another (full scale) car magazine. He did MCI freelance, and ran out of time. That's when he asked me if I'd be interested. Seeing the names jogged my memory a little. Hope this helps to fill in blanks.

Don

Hi Greg,

I thank you for the offer to put some MCI stuff on CD. It would be fun to look at it. I really can't think of anything specific. It was all fun; the fiberglass Porsche project with Nikki, the midget and stock car short-track race cars that I loved during my teen years but which very few slot racers ever bothered with...

I have a CD drive, but almost don't know how to use it. I am just about completely computer illiterate. Do I need a special program to view a CD? I've recently been scanning some of my articles in old model airplane magazines, just in case the basement floods... again. Putting them on zip disk, don't have a CD burner.

You pick 'em. Don

(Continued on Page 5)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR*(Continued From Page 4)*

(ED NOTE: I sent Don a scan of an ad from MCI showing a clean-cut young man building a model, and asked "Who's This"?)

Beats me. He looks much too clean-cut to be anybody I associated with. None of my friends even OWNED a tie, much less wore one while building models. It ain't me. It ain't Byshyn. It ain't Pat O'Rourke. Maybe it's the mysterious Jim Gray.

And it ain't the lovely Nicole. Definitely too much clothing.

Don

Hi Greg,

I received the CD, and it plays just fine. It was fun to see the old articles. Lordy, the writing was corny back then! Thanks so much for taking the time to scan and burn. It's much appreciated.

Now the big news: Because you and VSRN made me think about her after all these years, I've found Nicole! She lives near ***** , with a kennel full of Great Pyrenees dogs. We've talked on the phone a few times, and I'm going up to see her within the next couple of weeks. It should be quite a reunion after almost 35 years. I'll take the CD so we can reminisce about the good old days at MCI.

Thanks again, Greg. You're making my life interesting!

Happy New Year, Don

Hi Greg,

I spent a day with Nicole last week. Lunch, dinner, and a lot of conversation. Also much frolicking with her 23 (or is it 27?) dogs, including a hilarious puppy jailbreak that took a while to control.

It was a wonderful reunion. Nikki's as funny and crazy as ever, even after just celebrating her 60th birthday. My 67th was a few days later. Couple of senior citizens renewing old and good memories.

I'll be seeing her again next week. We're allowing for the possibility of a future together, but we've got a lot of catching up to do.

If we do indeed live happily ever after, it's all your fault!

Very best regards, Don

(ED NOTE: I told Don that if things do work out, that they need to name the next puppy after me!)

WHAT'S NEW?

Monogram is stealing my thunder! They've announced their first Slot Car releases - the Cobra Daytona Coupe, like I did the article on last month, and the Greenwood "Batmobile" Corvette.

They are both 1/32 scale, and come pre-decorated. There are 3 different versions of the Cobra: The #5 that Dan Gurney drove to a 2nd place at Lemans in 1964, the #13 that won Daytona in 1965, and the #54 from Nurnburgring 1965.....

There are 2 versions of the Greenwood Corvette from the 1975, with the patriotic American flag color scheme.

The pictures shown so far are only photos of the 1:1 car, so we don't know yet what the actual cars are like. I also haven't seen a promise date for release, but it's still exciting to think that a US manufacturer is getting back into slots!

I'll keep you posted as additional info becomes available.

Bare-Metal Foil has expanded their offerings with decal paper, and a variety of casting resins and mold materials.

I've been wanting to try some white decal film, and Bare Metal offers it by the single sheet, and 3-packs, at a lower price than other "big name" suppliers. For those of you, like me, who don't have a good hobby shop nearby, Bare-Metal sells direct, and I got my order quite promptly. I hope to get a chance to try it out in the near future - and I'll show you the results.

There are quite a few options available in the casting supplies department. I haven't taken that plunge yet - but I will!

Check them out at: <http://www.bare-metal.com>

Old buddy, L. M. (Mike) Gillett has his 2002 list out. Lovingly titled "Crap From the Past", he has a bunch of goodies from way back when, along with new items of interest to the Vintage Racer.

For your copy, send a 2 stamp SASE to:
Li'l Mikey Gillett
4021 2nd St. NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421

763-788-5816 (Noon-10PM)

If you wake him up, don't forget to blame it on VSRN!

Tell 'em you saw in at VSRN Online!

Home Track Plans - Part II

By Ye Olde Editor

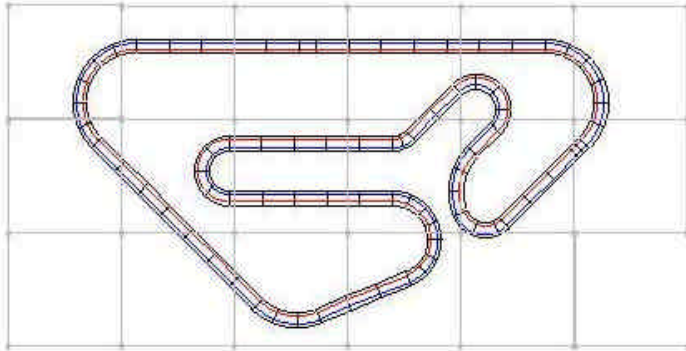
Last time, I showed you a bunch of tracks, and asked for help in locating some of the ones I was missing.

Santa brought me a Can-Am book that showed Edmonton and Stardust.

Wally Jabs was kind enough to send in most of the others. Thanks Wally!

So here we go again.....

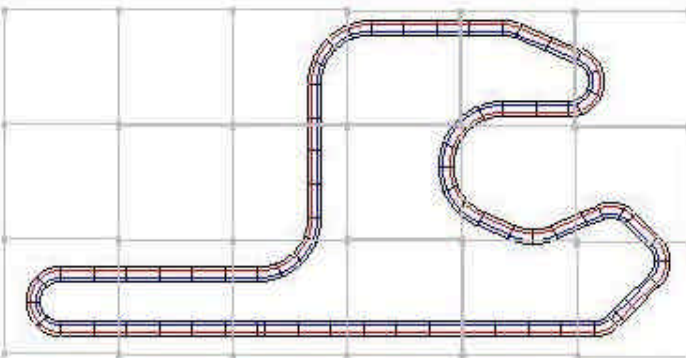
How could I forget Daytona?



This was the configuration before they put the chicane in the back stretch to slow things down - a little!

USRRC 1963

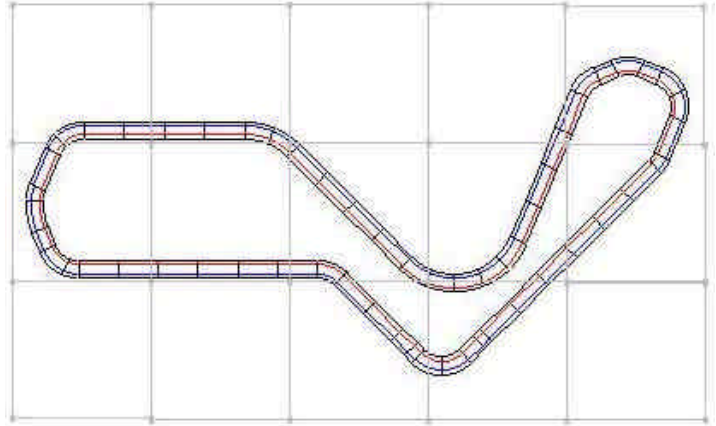
Trans-Am 1967-68



Edmonton

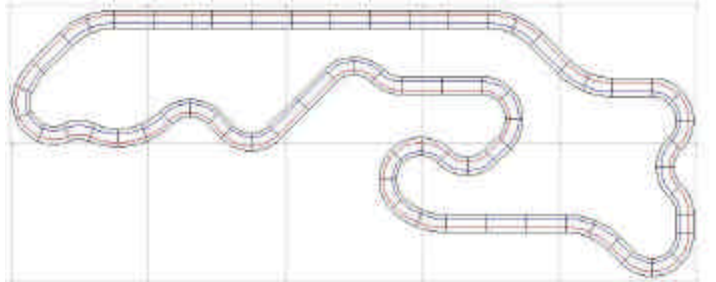
Can-Am 1968-73

Trans-Am 1971



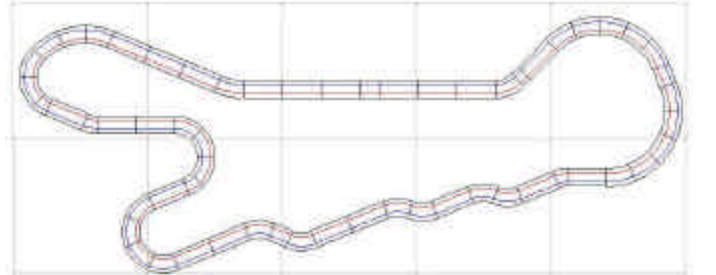
Stardust (Las Vegas)

Can-Am 1966-68



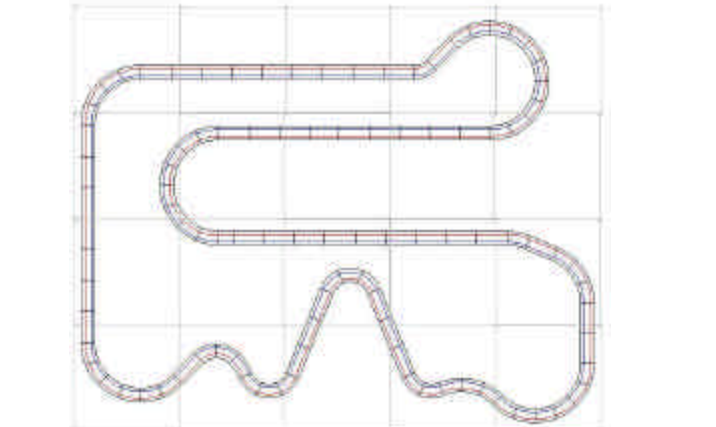
Continental Divide (Colorado)

Trans-Am 1967-68



Kent (Washington)

Trans-Am 1967-70



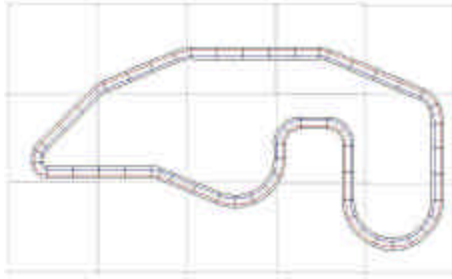
Meadowdale (Chicago)

Trans-Am 1968

(Continued on Page 7)

Home Track Plans - Part II

(Continued from page 6)



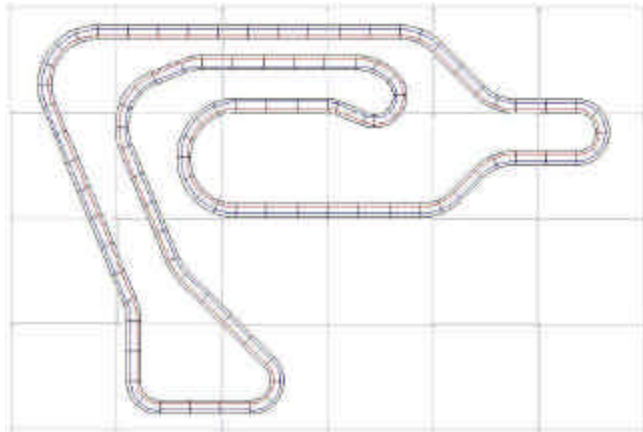
Lake Garnett, KS
USRRC 1963

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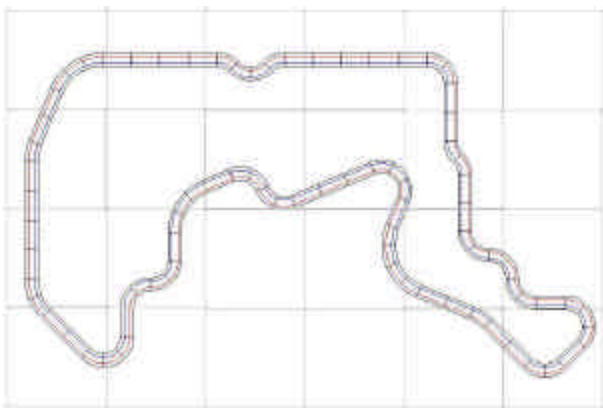


Green Valley, TX
Trans Am 1966-67

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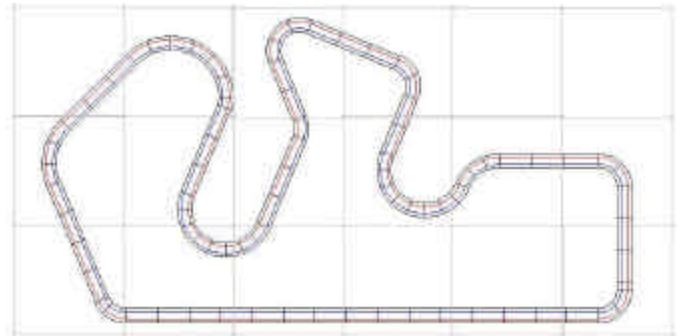


Marlboro, MD
Trans-Am 1966-67

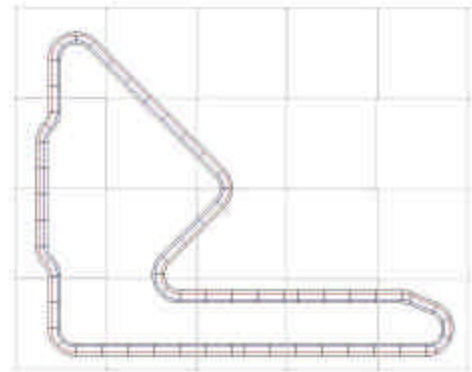


Michigan International Speedway

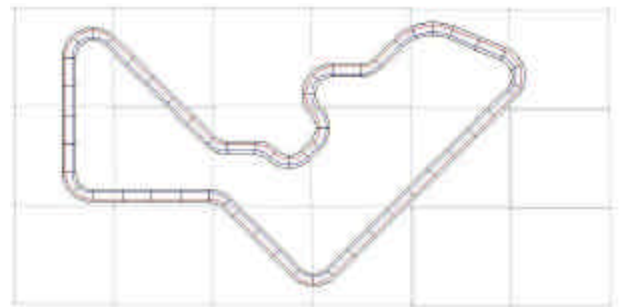
Trans-Am 1969, 1971



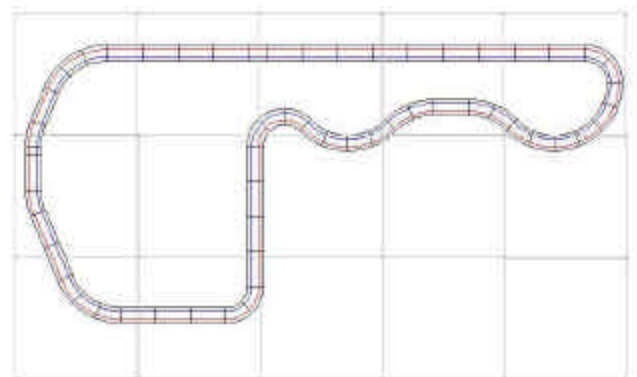
MidAmerica, Missouri
Trans-Am 1966



Olathe, KS
Trans-Am 1971

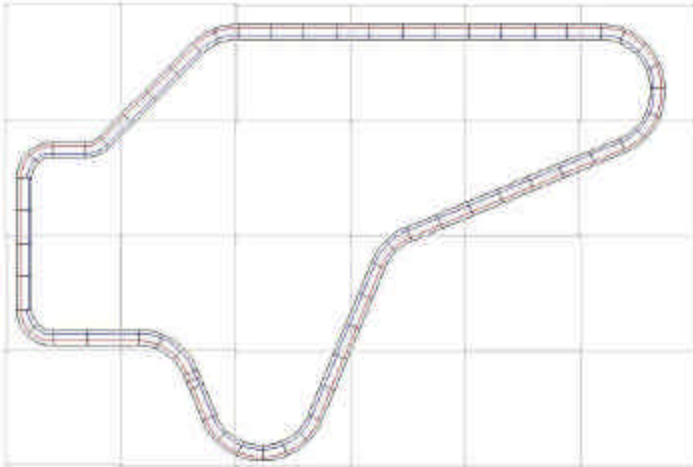


Pensacola, FL
USRRC 1964-65



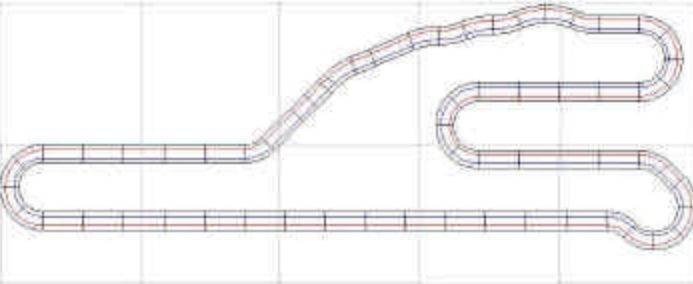
Sanair, Quebec
Trans-Am 1972

Here's an older version of Watkins Glen prior to 1971:



Watkins Glen
Can-Am 1969-70
Trans-Am 1968-70

And also an older Riverside:



There are several other tracks that have eluded me:
Augusta GA, Greenwood IA, Crow's Landing (Modesto CA) and War Bonnett. OK. If you have any info on them, please let me know.

The Lost Cobra Final Outcome (?)

If you'll recall, last time I mentioned the soap opera that was going on concerning the true ownership of CSX2287. The Feb 4, 2002 issue of AutoWeek reports that the case was finally settled out of court last December. In a nutshell, the physician who currently has possession of the coupe gets to keep it, and the "friend" of the owner, who had the title to the car (!) gets \$900,000, contributed by the other parties in this deal. For further info, check the AutoWeek article, and www.thecarsource.com.

While we are on the subject, I've just received a copy of the Nov/Dec 2000 issue of the French publication "La revue de L'automobile historique", which has an extensive article on each of the coupes, including a number of pictures I hadn't seen before. This is a high quality, glossy magazine, along the lines of Vintage Motorsport, only better! This particular issue, includes a large poster of Juan-Manuel Fangio at speed in his Mercedes W196! The rest of the "filler" for this issue included coverage of Goodwood and Laguna Seca vintage events, Targa Florio 1973, the AutoUnion V16 (including the streamliners), the Cunningham C2R, a story on Nino Farina, the Panhard-Levassor car from 1904, and a photo review of the book Porsche in Motorsport. Available in many European countries, it apparently was also available in Canada with a \$14.95 price tag. These's a place in the US that specializes in all kinds of foreign publications – I think it's called EWA. You might check with them.

I am deeply grateful to Don Seigel for chasing one of these down and sending it to me!