



BRIAN MURPHY

SUPER SPRINT

The 1987 Escort Season Opened With An Exciting Six Hours Of Flat-Out Racing

BY WILLIAM C. MITCHELL, LAURA CULLEY AND DEE DUNCAN

If there is such a thing as a sprint endurance race, the 1987 SCCA Escort Endurance Championship opener at Sears Point May 25 was certainly one. And the excitement wasn't over even after

six hours of nose-to-tail-in-the-dark racing.

The SS race was decided by fewer than four seconds, but post-race tech inspection eliminated the slim margin and gave the win to Bobby and Tommy Archer in the

Bakeracing started 1987 the same way it finished 1986: with a win. Bobby and Tommy Archer shared the victorious No. 4. The No. 5 Bakeracing entry took third.



The No. 98 Morrison-Cook entry was promoted to second in post-race impound.

Goodyear-tired Bakeracing Chevrolet Corvette. In SSGT, Lisa Caceres and Desire Wilson scored the first all-female victory in the series, driving a General Tire-shod Saleen Mustang. Proving that three seconds a lap beats better gas mileage, Mike Rutherford and Ray Kong scored the SSA win in Dave Wolin's Toyo Tire Mitsubishi Starion ESR-I. In SSB, Phoenix Racing, with Phil and Bill Pate and Alistair Oag driving a Goodyear-shod Volkswagen Golf GTI 16V, edged the Team Honda's pair of CRX Sis.

SS

After six hours of racing, fewer than four seconds separated first and second place in the SS class. Though you may think that is the slimmest of margins, in the end a quarter-inch notch in a fuel filler decided the outcome of the event.

MARK WEBER



The MPS Motorsports Corvette charged through to fourth.



Powell's lead car (No. 50) tried hard but finished sixth.

The story of the race was the General Tire-shod No. 33 Doug Rippie Motorsports Corvette, driven by Bill Cooper and Mark Dismore. General has been working on its new XP 2000Z since the day after the 1986 SCCA Valvoline Runoffs. As the paddock emptied last October at Road Atlanta, a lone Corvette, driven by Dismore, circulated on General's XP 2000 tires. Many more testing miles later, General has a tire that seems to be the equal of Goodyear's Eagle ZR-S and BFGoodrich's Comp T/A R1. All three tires are about three seconds faster than last year's showroom stock rubber.

Bondurant instructor Cooper used his intimate knowledge of Sears Point—and the new Generals—to take the overall pole with a 1:50.311 (82.33mph). Ten years ago that would have been a respectable Trans-Am time. There were rumors the Generals were special qualifying tires. But Cooper started on the same tires he qualified with and got two hours on the left side tires and nearly four hours on the right side pair.

Qualifying second, nearly a second behind Cooper, was the BFG-shod Morrison-Cook Corvette driven by John Heinrich/Stu Hayner, with the second Rippie entry and

the Archer's Bakeracing entry just tenths behind.

The race began in bright sunlight and Cooper took a commanding lead. But Cooper's advantage wasn't all in speed; he also got outstanding fuel mileage. The Archers were the first of the front-running Corvette teams to pit, coming in after one hour and 40 minutes. Ten minutes later, Mitch Wright brought the other Bakeracing Corvette into the pits. Team owner Kim Baker suggested later that the Archer Brothers Corvette pitted first because Bobby Archer had backed it into a wall Saturday morning and the fuel tank might be crimped.

Cooper made it past the two-hour mark before pitting, using the same fuel conservation techniques that brought victory at Sears Point last year: He used second gear only in the Turn 11 hairpin and stayed in overdrive as much as possible. Cooper continued even after the car began to starve for fuel exiting the Carousel. But the quest for ultimate mileage cost him the lead as the opposition gained time when the No. 33 coasted and coughed and then spent extra time in the pits totally refilling its tank.

After four hours, the No. 97 Morrison-Cook Corvette (an '86 model) was leading the No. 5 Bakeracing Corvette of Mitch Wright and Shawn Hendricks. But the No. 97 car was destined to lose time in the pits changing brake pads and the No. 5 car eventually slowed when track debris hit the slave cylinder and left the transmission stuck in third gear. Ironically, the No. 99 Morrison-Cook car of Tommy Morrison and Don Knowles would later get stuck in fourth gear.

At the five-hour mark, there were four teams on the lead lap: Heinrich/Hayner, Cooper/Dismore, Wright/Hendricks and Archer/Archer. Cooper was able to run down and pass the Morrison-Cook car for the lead, but both were running low on fuel.

SPLASH AND GO

With about 20 minutes remaining, Cooper ducked into the pits for what NASCAR calls a "splash and go," and the Morrison-Cook car followed him in. The Morrison-Cook car beat the Rippie car out of the pits and took a three-second lead. But Cooper needed just about three laps to run down his adversary and retake the lead. It turned out Cooper's



Josele Garza could manage no more than a seventh in his Escort debut.



Rick Hurst's 944 Turbo was the top-finishing Porsche, coming home eighth.

SUPER SPRINT

CONTINUED

charge wasn't necessary, though, as the Morrison-Cook car had to pit because of a broken wheel stud. This left Bobby Archer chasing Bill Cooper—two chargers dueling for the victory. Archer was able to reduce the gap from 8.09 to 6.89, 5.99 and finally 3.8 when the checkered flag ended the battle—at least until it resumed in the tech shed.

In impound, it was discovered that the Cooper/Dismore Corvette had "irregularities in the fuel tank." To explain: On the Corvette there is a metal cylinder below the fuel inlet valve. This cylinder, which is about four inches long and two inches in diameter, restricts the height of fuel in the tank and allows the bladder to breathe. The DR Motorsports Corvette had several holes drilled in this cylinder and then a notch cut



Powell's journalist car took a ninth with Rich Ceppos, Csaba Csere and Gary Witzenburg driving.



Bakeracing's quick pit work kept the team in the running.

from one of the holes to the bottom of the cylinder. The notch was not finished in any way, making it obvious the part did not come from Chevrolet in that condition. This notch would allow the tank to hold more fuel, thus increasing the distance between pit stops—a vital factor in Escort races.

The No. 33 DR Motorsports Corvette was disqualified and the Archers, in the No. 4 Bakeracing Corvette, got the win. The No. 98 Morrison-Cook car finished third on the track and was promoted to second after the race. The No. 5 Bakeracing Corvette wound up third after completing the same 185 laps as the leaders. Bob McConnell (who rolled a Corvette in pre-race testing) and Max Jones finished fourth in the '86 Morrison-Cook Corvette. (The '87s have a stiffer chassis and roller cams in the motor.) Two laps back was the Corvette of Izzy and Luis Sanchez, Martinus Dieperink and P.D. Cunningham.

Rick Hurst Racing took Porsche honors with a 944 Turbo driven by Bob Strange and

John O'Steen. They were four laps back from the winners in eighth.

—William C. Mitchell

SSGT

Women drivers! If you give 'em half a chance, they'll just drive away from the competition. That's exactly what Lisa Caceres and Desire Wilson did to the 11-car SSGT field at the Escort opener. For the first time in this series, an all-female driving team brought home the bacon.

Wilson and Caceres took the GT pole in the No. 20 General Tire Saleen Mustang. Hot on their trail were the Goodyear-shod Motorsport International Porsche 944 of Bob Bogan, Paul Brand, Scott Lagasse and Don Parr and the Ramsay Motorsports Toyota Supra (on Toyos) driven by David Ramsay, Derek Scallet and Lee Mueller.

Perry King, Bob Bergstrom and Logan Blackburn qualified fourth in the second Supra. Following a Friday morning crash and overnight repairs, the second Saleen



Desire Wilson and Lisa Caceres scored the first Escort victory for an all-woman team by taking the GT win.

GEORGE TWINELL

BRIAN MURPHY PHOTOS

followed in second, one lap down. Charles Downes and John Norris finished third.

The Audi Quattro, after running a solid race within striking distance, finished fourth, followed by Hexom and Bob Sweet in the bent Team Wolin Mitsubishi.

Then came the race through the tech shed. Both Mitsubishis were picked apart with a fine-toothed comb. Both were legal. The Pomo Nissan, however, was not so fortunate. The decision in impound was that the car's 7-in. rear wheels were one-half inch too wide. Pomo and Hendricks were penalized back to seventh place. That left

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RESULTS

SCCA Escort Endurance Cup—Round 1 April 25/Sears Point International Raceway 185 laps of 2.523-mile course, 6 hours

OA/POS	CL/POS	DRIVERS	CAR	LAPS	QUAL. POS. (CL/QUAL)	QUAL. TIME
1	SS/1	Bobby Archer/Tommy Archer	Corvette	185	6/SS/6	1:51.883
2	SS/2	John Heinrich/Stuart Hayner	Corvette	185	2/SS/2	1:51.183
3	SS/3	Mitch Wright/Shawn Hendricks	Corvette	185	4/SS/4	1:51.415
4	SS/4	Bob McConnell/Max Jones	Corvette	184	5/SS/5	1:51.731
5	SS/5	M. Dieperink/P.D. Cunningham/ I. Sanchez/L. Sanchez	Corvette	183	14/SS/14	1:54.111
6	SS/6	R.K. Smith/R. Buck/P. Lockhart/ S. Goodyear	Corvette	183	7/SS/7	1:52.433
7	SS/7	D. Gitzis/J. Garza/M. Englage	Corvette	181	12/SS/12	1:53.455
8	SS/8	B. Strange/M. Puskar/J. O'Steen/ K. Nierop	Porsche 944 Turbo	181	8/SS/8	1:52.575
9	SS/9	R. Ceppos/C. Caere/G. Witzenburg	Corvette	179	11/SS/11	1:53.372
10	SS/10	G. Michaux/D. Rose/M. Roberts/ S. Durt	Corvette	178	18/SS/18	1:58.260
11	SS/11	Tommy Morrison/Don Knowles	Corvette	177	13/SS/13	1:53.880
12	GT/1	Lisa Coates/Debbie Wilson	Saleen Mustang	176	19/GT/1	1:59.167
13	GT/2	Mike Puskar/Kees Nierop	Porsche 944S	175	51/GT/10	no time
14/NR	SS/12	G. Hopkins/J. Garza/H. Hawkins/ M. Englage	Corvette	173	15/SS/15	1:54.191
15	GT/3	Steve Saleen/Rick Titus	Saleen Mustang	173	23/GT/5	2:00.461
16	SS/13	G. Burney/M. DeMere/G. Perkins/ J. Fuchs/S. Gaylord	Corvette	172	16/SS/16	1:56.287
17	GT/4	G. Doan/G. Provo/B. Gardner	Porsche 944	171	24/GT/6	2:01.113
18	GT/5	P. King/B. Bergstrom/L. Blackburn	Toyota Supra Turbo	169	22/GT/4	2:00.079
19	A/1	Ray King/Mike Rutherford	Mitsubishi Starion	169	26/A/2	2:01.469
20	GT/6	D. Ramsay/D. Scalani/L. Mueller	Toyota Supra Turbo	169	21/GT/3	1:59.681
21	A/2	John Norris/Charles Downes	Mitsubishi Starion	167	25/A/1	2:01.454
22	B/1	W. Pate/A. Oag/P. Schwartzott	YW Golf GTI	167	31/B/1	2:04.045
23	GT/7	A. Rocca/T. Lopez/T. Adamowicz/ D. Day	Nissan 300ZX Turbo	167	30/GT/9	2:03.630
24	B/2	L. Stewart/B. Short/M. Wolocattuk/ D.S. Landon	Honda CRX Si	167	35/B/4	2:05.334
25	A/3	Michael Hoppen/Gene Felton	Audi Quattro	165	29/A/3	2:03.573
26	B/3	L. Stewart/B. Short/M. Wolocattuk/ D.S. Landon	Honda CRX Si	164	36/B/5	2:06.130
27	B/4	Patrick Naasen/Bob Criss	Nissan 200SX Turbo	163	33/B/2	2:05.155
28	B/5	Alan Pope/TC. Kline	VW GTI	161	37/B/6	2:06.617
29	B/6	W. Pate/P. Pate/A. Oag/P. Schwartzott	VW Golf GTI	161	34/B/3	2:05.350
30	A/4	Charley Hexom/Bob Sweet	Mitsubishi Starion	160	47/A/8	2:11.887
31	B/7	Clint deWitt/Mike Rickman	Toyota MR2	160	41/B/9	2:07.900
32	B/8	John Torok/Bob Wolf/Don Fuller	Toyota FX16	158	43/B/11	2:08.900
33	GT/8	N. Hanselman/S. Harvey/J. Bronke	Dodge Shelby	156	28/GT/8	2:02.221
34	GT/9	Ron Nelson/Riley Hopkins/Ron McKay	Nissan 300ZX Turbo	156	27/GT/7	2:02.171
35	A/5	John Rowe/Bill Bagby/Gene Fritts	Mazda RX-7	156	44/A/6	2:09.524
36	B/9	S. Alexander/M. Carder/E.B. Lunken	Toyota MR2	154	42/B/10	2:08.680
37/NR	SS/14	D. Ripplet/J. Hogdal/M. Dismore	Corvette	153	3/SS/3	1:51.404
38	B/10	Brian Dunbar/Dick Pyszni	Honda CRX Si	152	45/B/12	2:09.919
39/NR	SS/15	B. Bogan/P. Brand/S. Lagasse/D. Parr	Porsche 944 Turbo	150	9/SS/9	1:52.847
40	A/6	Bob Gill/Ronn Langford	Nissan 200SX	146	29/A/5	2:07.009
41	A/7	Pepe Pomo/Larry Hendricks	Nissan 200SX	148*	32/A/4	2:04.959
42/NR	GT/10	B. Bogan/P. Brand/A. Freed/R. Scott	Porsche 944	128	20/GT/2	1:59.431
43/NR	B/11	Ron Cortes/Fred Fialea	VW Scirocco	81	40/B/8	2:07.170
44/NR	A/8	P. Fortner/G. Copeland/D. Prather/ B. Long	Nissan 200SX	37	38/B/7	2:06.659
45/NR	B/12	L. Pierce/J. Schofield/G. Doan	Honda CRX	3	50/B/13	no time
DNS	SS	D. Nichols/R. Thompson/J.D. Piarresi	Corvette	—	17/SS/17	1:58.009
DNS	SS	J. Fuchs/P. Dallenbach/S. Gaylord	Corvette	—	10/SS/10	1:53.231
DNS	B	P. Pearson/B. Criss/P. Crows/B. Dickey	Nissan 200SX Turbo	—	38/B/7	2:06.659
DQ	SS	Bill Cooper/Mark Dismore	Corvette	185**	1/SS/1	1:50.311

*Penalized from second to seventh in SSA for illegal wheels.

**Disqualified from first overall and first in SS for illegal fuel system modifications.

SCCA/ESCORT ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM STANDINGS—After 1 of 6 events

SS	SSGT	SSA	SSB
1. Bakeracing No. 4 Corvette	20	1. Dave Wolin No. 87 Mitsubishi	20
2. Morrison-Cook No. 98 Corvette	16	2. Dave Wolin No. 88 Mitsubishi	16
3. Bakeracing No. 5 Corvette	14	3. Steve Betzer No. 2 Audi	14
4. Morrison-Cook No. 97	12	4. Dave Wolin No. 86 Mitsubishi	12
5. MPS Motorsports No. 76 Corvette	11	5. Rown Technologies No. 56 Mazda	11
6. Powell No. 50 Corvette	10	6. Hy-Tech Autosports No. 72 Nissan	10
1. Saleen No. 20 Mustang	20	1. Phoenix Racing No. 29 VW	20
2. Rick Hurst No. 45 Porsche	16	2. Team Honda No. 63	16
3. Saleen No. 19 Mustang	14	3. Team Honda No. 54	14
4. Delta G Racing No. 89 Porsche	12	4. Pearson Racing No. 48 Nissan	12
5. Ramsay Motorsport No. 38 Toyota	11	5. Pyramid Racing No. 16 VW	11
6. Ramsay Motorsport No. 5 Toyota	10	6. Phoenix Racing No. 41 VW	10

SCCA/ESCORT ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP SPORTSCAR MANUFACTURERS STANDINGS After 1 of 6 events

SS	SSA	SSB	
1. Corvete	9	1. Mitsubishi	9
2. Audi	4	2. Audi	4
1. Ford	9	1. VW	9
2. Porsche	6	2. Honda	6

SCCA/ESCORT ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP SPORTSCAR DRIVERS CUP STANDINGS After 1 of 6 events

SS	SSA	SSB	
1. Bobby Archer	9	1. Ray Kong	9
Tommy Archer	9	Mike Rutherford	9
3. John Heinrich	6	3. John Norris	6
Stuart Hayner	6	Charles Downes	6
1. Mitch Wright	4	3. Michael Hoppen	4
Shawn Hendricks	4	Gene Felton	4
7. Bob McConnell	3	7. Charley Hexom	3
Max Jones	3	Bob Sweet	3
9. Martinus Dieperink	2	9. John Rowe	2
P.D. Cunningham	2	Bill Bagby	2
Izzy Sanchez	2	Gene Fritts	2
Luis Sanchez	2		
1. Lisa Coates	9	1. Alastair Oag	9
Debbie Wilson	9	Peter Schwartzott	9
3. Mike Puskar	6	3. Lance Stewart	6
Kees Nierop	6	Bruce Short	6
5. Steve Saleen	4	5. Mark Wolocattuk	4
Rick Titus	4	Donna Sue Landon	4
7. Gregg Doran	3	7. Patrick Pearson	3
Geoff Provo	3	Richard Dickey	3
Barney Gardner	3	9. Alan Pope	2
Perry King	2	TC. Kline	2
Bob Bergstrom	2		
Logan Blackburn	2		

SCCA/ESCORT ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP TIRE SCOREBOARD—After 1 of 6 events

Sears Point, April 25, 1987					Year To Date—After 1 of 6 events				
	SS	SSGT	SSA	SSB		Firsts	Seconds	Thirds	Poles
First	Goodyear	General	Toyo	Goodyear	Goodyear	2	0	2	1
Second	BFGoodrich	BFGoodrich	Toyo	Yokohama	Toyo	1	1	0	1
Third	Goodyear	General	Goodyear	Yokohama	General	1	0	1	2
Pole	General	General	Toyo	Goodyear	BFGoodrich	0	2	0	0
					Yokohama	0	1	1	0

SHOCK ABSORBER SCORECARD

Sears Point, April 25, 1987					Year To Date Results—After 1 of 6 events				
	SS	SSGT	SSA	SSB		Firsts	Seconds	Thirds	Poles
First	Bilstein	Monroe	Tookico	Sachs	Bilstein	1	1	1	1
Second	Bilstein	Koni	Tookico	Tookico	Monroe	1	0	1	1
Third	Bilstein	Monroe	Koni	Tookico	Tookico	1	2	1	1
Pole	Bilstein	Monroe	Tookico	Sachs	Sachs	1	0	0	1
					Koni	0	1	1	0