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Richards claims victory at 57th annual Rose Cup Races

 Jeff Zurschmeide  Monday, July 10, 2017

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Fuel pump problems plague defending champ White at PIR; Harris wins Spec Racer Fords feature for late friend; Johnstone also aong winners

(<http://cni.pmgnews.com/images/artimg/00003582513609.jpg>) Brian Richards drove his No. 12 Canned Heat Chevrolet Camaro to his third career Rose Cup victory Sunday at Portland International Raceway.

His third time atop the podium came 24 years after his first Rose Cup win.

"I won my first Rose Cup in 1993, which is a long time ago," Richards said. "Then I came back for 2011 and won again, but I'm older now and not as fast as I once was."

Richards, of View Royal, British Columbia, was fast enough to qualify his Camaro on the pole for Sunday afternoon's 30-minute Rose Cup race.

Trevor Baek of Beaverton qualified his No. 224 Vital Speed Motorsports Ferrari 488 Challenge on the outside of the front row. Baek finished second.



COURTESY: JEFF ZURSCHMEIDE - Canada's Brian Richards drives his Canned Heat Chevrolet Camaro to his third career Rose Cup victory Sunday at Portland International Raceway.

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Starting inside on the second row was 2016 Rose Cup champion Scotty B. White of Auburn, Washington, driving his distinctive No. 0 Got CDL? Dodge Viper Competition Coupe. White went into the weekend as the general favorite to win again but was plagued by fuel pump problems on Sunday morning.

At the start, White drove only about 50 feet before his Viper lost power and coasted to a halt.

"I'm frustrated, sure, but that's why they call it racing instead of just winning," White said.

Fourth-position starter Rob Holden of Woodinville, Washington took the lead briefly in his No. 71 Oxford Suites Corvette, before falling back to third place. Holden drove the fastest lap times of the race, but he couldn't make up the distance to challenge Baek and Richards again before the checkered flag dropped.

"We were going fine," Holden said, "but we lost the brakes and I had to slow down and wait until they came back."

(<http://cni.pmgnews.com/images/artimg/00003582513704.jpg>)

The Rose Cup Races are an annual event dating to 1961, when the Portland Rose Festival, Cascade Sports Car Club and the Portland Jaycees organized a sports car race on the old Vanport streets in West Delta Park.



COURTESY: JEFF ZURSCHMEIDE - Rose Cup winner Brian Richards acknowledges the crowd.

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The event has grown up along with Portland International Raceway and is a favorite chance for amateur racers to compete in front of spectators.

The race is now organized by Friends of PIR, a nonprofit group dedicated to the maintenance and enhancement of the track.

Also on the weekend schedule were races for the Sports Car Club of America Spec Racer Ford and Spec Miata classes, as well as a combined small-bore sports car group, the Great American Stockcar Series and the Wemme Trophy race for vintage race cars.

Todd Harris of Tigard, owner and chief instructor at Pro Drive Racing School at PIR, won the feature race for Spec Racer Fords. Harris abandoned his usual No. 24 to run No. 32 in honor of William Costello, a fellow racer who died last month.

"This one was for Willie," Harris said. "It was an honor to drive his car with the Irish flag and all of his friends in attendance. It was an emotional day, but a very fitting retirement of his car."

The Spec Miata victory went to Ken Sutherland of Sherwood. Sutherland is a consistent leader in the popular class based on Mazda's iconic Miata sports car. Chris Evans of Portland claimed the GASS win, and the small-bore production race honors went to former IndyCar driver Parker Johnstone of Wilsonville, now driving a 1962 MG Midget.



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Johnstone brought his old Indy car to the event and ran several demonstration laps during the lunch break.

The Wemme Trophy vintage race recalls a 1909 street race held on a makeshift course running between East Portland and Gresham. Portland businessman E. Henry Wemme sponsored that early race, and the modern Wemme Trophy recognizes consistent sportsmanship, excellence in driving and service to the sport.

David Franks of Durham was selected as this year's recipient for his longtime participation and support of vintage racing.

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