



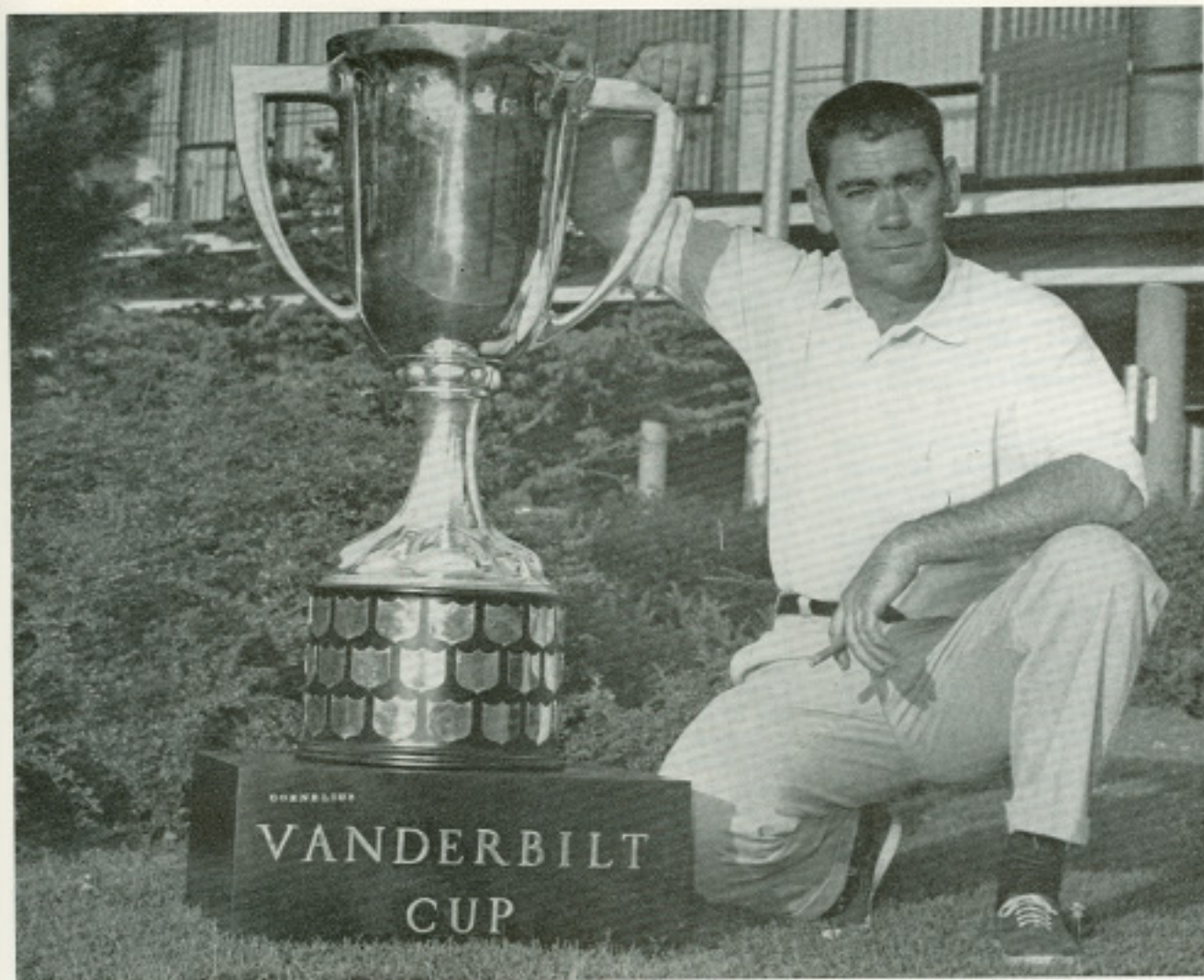
AUGUST 1960

SPORTS CAR



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REPORTS ON: LE MANS AND RHEIMS, AND FOUR NATIONAL EVENTS



Harry Carbar, the first winner of the current Vanderbilt Cup series. You can be sure he was not this unexcited the previous day when he took the checkered flag! Photo by Gary L. Meyer.

INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL—

Vanderbilt Cup Races-1960

—Story by John M. Miller, Jr.

NEARLY 50,000 spectators watched a thrilling weekend as big-time auto racing returned to its birthplace of 56 years ago.

Starting a report on the Rickenbacker and Vanderbilt Cup Races held at Roosevelt Raceway on June 18 and 19 can best be done by a flashback to the time when the 1960 racing calendar was set up. The New York Region scheduled a Regional race to be held on the parking lot and service roads of the famous harness racing plant: Roosevelt Raceway. Soon it was decided to present a Vanderbilt Cup for the feature race. One thing led to another, until the entry list had grown to

almost 200 cars and included some of the world's best-known drivers. (Ed: It should be explained at this point that the Vanderbilt Cup Race was given, at the request of the New York Region and in accordance with existing policy, the status of a special event. This allows professional drivers to enter that specified race—our amateur requirements, however, are maintained in that no prize money can be given.)

The track is basically triangular, and its mile and a half leads through 11 turns and includes a 2,350-foot straightaway. Speeds vary between 35 mph in the 45-foot radius hairpin and 135 mph on the straight. The circuit proved

to be thrilling, safe and challenging, which is a real accomplishment in road circuit design.

The first race on Saturday was won by Paul Richards—by a margin of only 3 feet—in a G Production FIAT-Abarth at 60.2 mph. To the amazement of many spectators, Vincent Tamburo drove his Sunbeam Alpine, usually considered a rally car, to second spot, and was followed by Charles Callanan in another FIAT-Abarth. Chandler Lawrence took H Production honors to make the team victory complete. The little FIATs were by far the best suited to the tight third of the course, and drifted the hairpin beautifully.



Left—Early in the race Walt Hansgen set the pace in the new Lotus (#61), but a flat tire put him out. P. Revson (#48) and Low Flink (#41) lead the pack through the inside of the turn. Photo by Herb Barrows.—Center—Lorenzo Bandini of Italy takes his Walner (#47) through the esses, followed by George Constantine in a Volpi—the latter car suffered from carburetion bothers, but finished. Photo by Jack Dolan.—Right—The race finally boiled down to an exciting finish between Pedro Rodriguez (Scorpion, #201) and Harry Carter (Stanguellini, #80). Pedro had what appeared to be a safe lead, only to lose it due to a pit stop in the final laps. Photo by Jack Dolan.

Race 2 was all E Production, and proved to be a battle from start to finish between Francis Gorman in his Austin-Healey and John Wright in a Porsche. Wright finally came out of the chicane ahead of Gorman in the last lap, and stayed there to win by six feet. Matt Kleinman drove his Alfa to third spot.

The third race saw Ted Buckley leading in his Elva Courier until it burned a valve in the 13th lap. Charles Kolb blasted from 28th starting position to third, but failed to finish due to mechanical difficulties. First place went to Dick Webster in an MG A, with John Heyer in an Elva Courier second and Bill Haenelt third in a Porsche.

Race 4 was the first qualifying heat for starting positions in the Vanderbilt Cup Race, and consisted of five laps of the most hotly contested racing we had seen to date. Walt Hansgen drove the Lotus to first spot by one car length, at an average of 68.8 mph, followed by Ricardo Rodriguez—the younger of the two famous Mexican brothers—in one of Luigi Chinetti's OSCA's, and Harry Carter in his jet-black Stanguellini. Jim Rathman, winner of the recent Indianapolis race, placed fifth.

The second qualifying heat was won by "Slim" Kolb in an Elva at 70.0 mph,

making his 12th win in as many starts in Formula Junior events. Charles Wallace drove his Scorpion to second place, only 50 yards behind Kolb—he was followed by Jim Hall, the Sebring Formula Junior winner, in an Elva-DKW. Newton Davis placed fourth in a Stanguellini, and Ray Heppenstall fifth in one of his Scorpions. On the last lap Carroll Shelby drove his Mitter-DKW over the wheel of another car and became airborne. After reaching an altitude of five feet he came down hard, blowing his left rear tire and taking an excursion into the gravel—he came back onto the course before the Martini and Rossi Bridge, and finished seventh. Lorenzo Bandini of Milan, Italy, drove to eighth spot in a Walner, and George Constantine, 1959 Sports Car Driver of the Year, finished ninth. Pedro Rodriguez of Mexico City placed 12th in a Stanguellini, and Roger Ward, the "Brick Yard" champ, having trouble with our flat, tight lefts and rights, wound up in 13th place.

The Rickenbacker Trophy Race of 20 laps was for class C, D, E and F Modified and Unrestricted cars. Walt Hansgen drove the "Birdcage" Maserati to an easy victory at an average speed of 73.6 mph, followed by Stutz Plaisted in a Formula 2 Cooper and Charles Kolb in a Cooper Monaco. Stutz and George Constantine, driving the Kelishev (Kelso Autodynamics' Lister-Corvette), had quite a dice until George suffered a broken driveshaft and coasted to a stop off the course. Thus ended the first thrilling day of our International Regional.

Activities got underway Sunday with practice sessions for all cars, and then an exhibition run of "Old 16," the 120-hp Locomobile that in 1908 became the first American car to win a Vanderbilt Cup contest.

Henry Austin Clark, Jr., of the Long Island Automotive Museum, was Chairman for the first race of the day

which featured a grid full of vintage sports cars. The speed and handling demonstrated by these fine old machines was an unusual experience for many of the spectators.

Next came the B, C and D Production race. Bob Grossman purred into the lead in his Ferrari, and stayed there to win at an average speed of 66.0 mph. John Caley drove his Corvette into second spot, followed by Jerry Loman in another Ferrari. Grossman proved very hard to time as he slipped by in his smooth, quiet Ferrari. The C Production contest was made up of six Porsche Carreras, and was won at 64.1 mph by Joe Buzzetta of Centerport, New York. However, there was a limited-slip differential in Joe's car, which was protested as non-production. The next three places were taken by Chandler Lawrence, Stephen Searce and John Nibert, in that order. D Production honors went to Walt Diver in an Austin-Healey 100-6. He was followed by Arch McNeil in his green Morgan, and Pete Schmidt in an XK 140 Jaguar.

Race 8 was for G and H Modified and Formula III cars, and gave "Slim" Kolb his second win of the weekend—this time in an Elva Mk. V at 68.1 mph. Dick Barker drove his Lotus to second place overall, and John Gadwa was third in his Cooper F3. Joe Wexler in a Cooper made a spectacular dive into the snow fence, as spectators scattered in front of him, when as he approached the hairpin turn and started braking down from about 90 mph the brake pedal broke! The thoughtful track designers had provided plenty of escape area, and by utilizing it no one was hurt. The spectators helped him back under the fence, and the flag crew push-started him on his trip back to the pits.

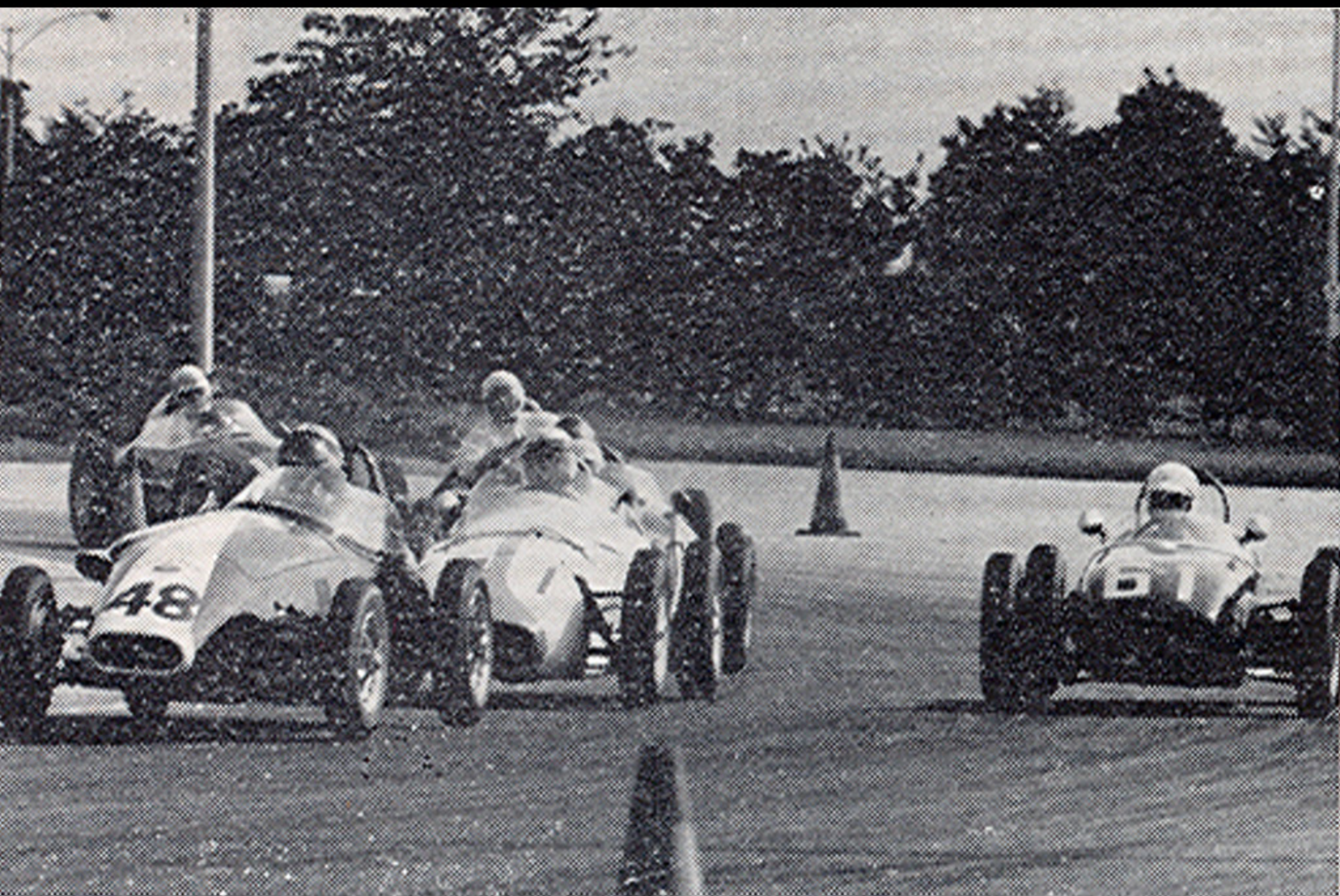
Next came the contest we had all waited for—the Vanderbilt Cup Race. Thirty-three cars took the green flag as Chief Starter Bert Wheeler got the race

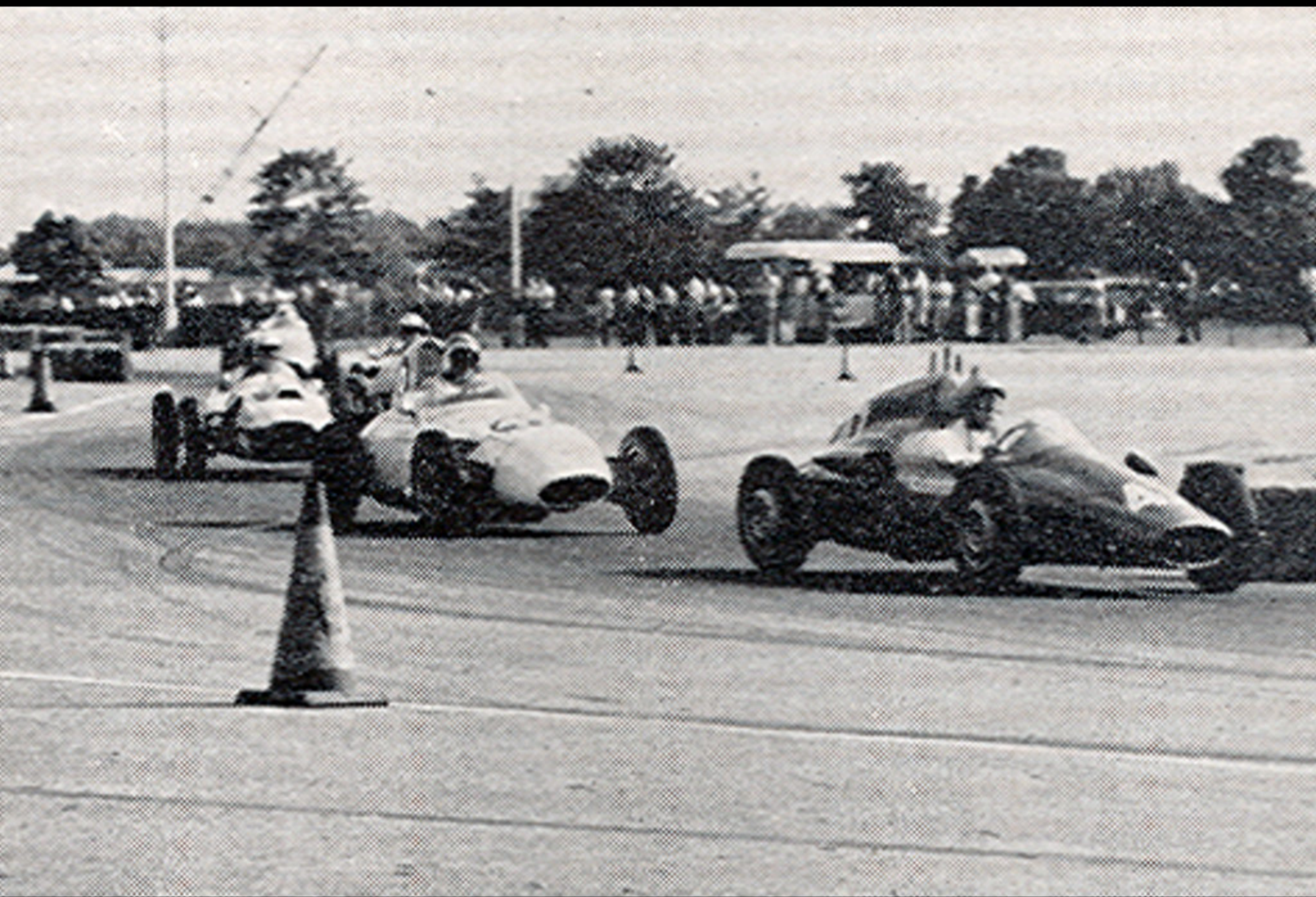
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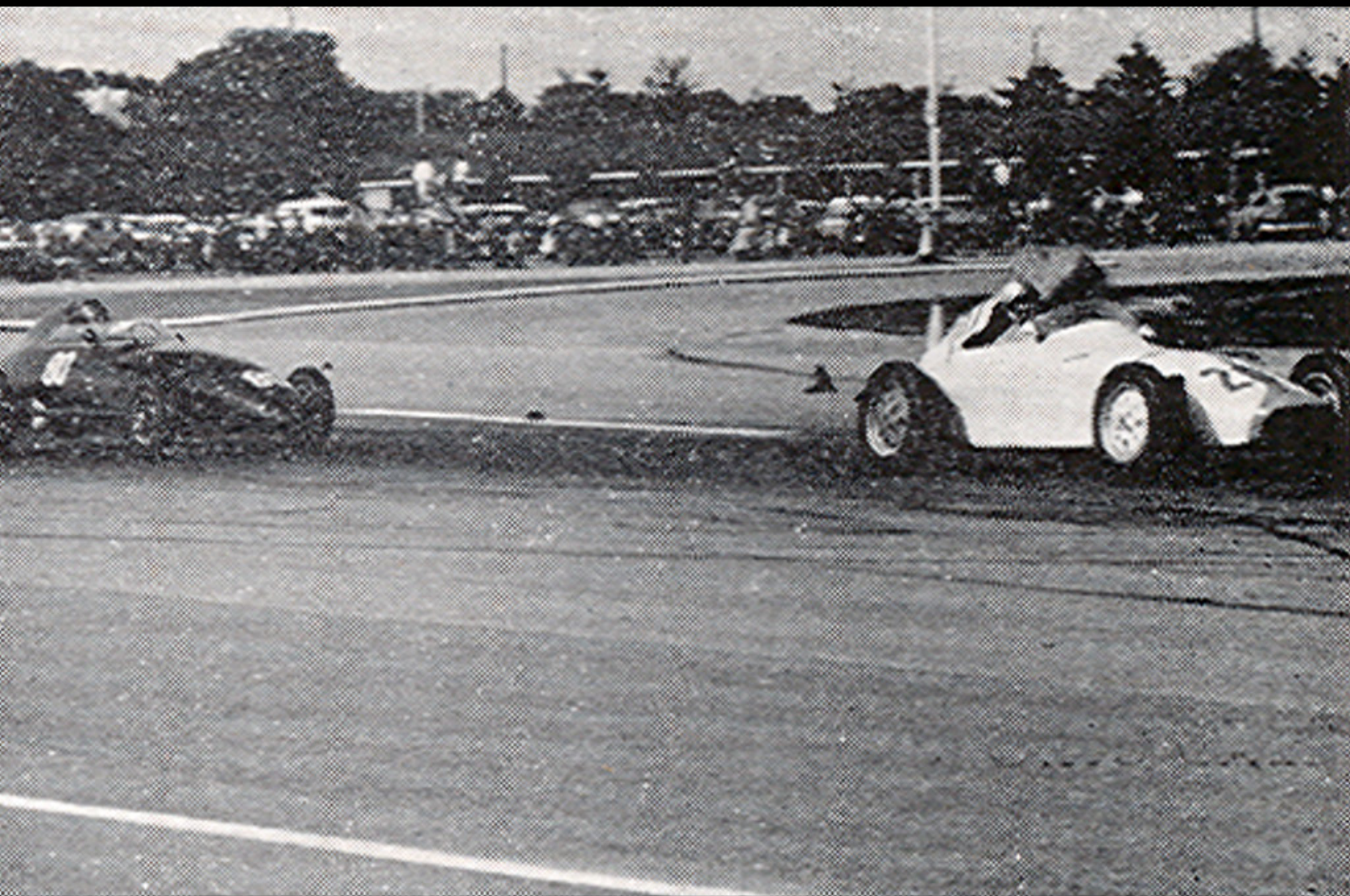
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under way. The pace was even hotter than in the qualifying heats — it was hard to believe that this was to be a fifty-lap race.

As the cars roared off the grid, Hansgen moved into the lead to set a blistering pace, and the pack began to sort out behind him. Ricardo Rodriguez stayed close to Hansgen; "Slim" Kolb, favored to win in his very fast Elva, took it easy in eighth spot. The lead was exchanged a number of times as the race progressed. Other leaders were: Ricardo in an OSCA; Charles Kolb in an Elva-Austin; Jim Hall in an Elva-DKW; Pedro Rodriguez in his Scorpion-DKW; and Harry Carter, the eventual winner in his Stanguellini.

The DKW-powered cars made a gallant bid to repeat the success of the Auto Union factory of Germany which produced the winning car in the last Vanderbilt Cup series here in 1937.

Carroll Shelby and Jim Rathman were in the middle of the pack, running smoothly and waiting for a break through the heavy traffic. Roger Ward, starting twenty-first in Marty Biener's Bandini, maintained that place in the early stages. Unfortunately, none of these star drivers lasted very long.

Shelby went out with transmission troubles. Ward, hit by a spinning competitor in the 9th lap, was butted into the base of the Chevron Bridge and retired. Rathmann, given the wave, started to pass a slower car. As he moved in the car swung back into his path and Rathmann shot right over the top of it in leap-frog fashion. Phil Forno, driving Briggs Cunningham's BMC, was pressing Kolb when an oil line broke and forced him out of the fight. George Constantine was moving up on the leaders in the twenty-fifth lap when his Volpini began to develop internal troubles, requiring several pit stops.

Hansgen, the initial leader, went out with a flat tire (the car was so new they had no spare), leaving Ricardo Rodriguez in front of the pack. He maintained this position for about twenty minutes, until his OSCA also failed. Brother Pedro led for a period, but spark plug trouble forced him to slow down and then pit near the end of the race long enough for Harry Carter, Charles Wallace, Jerry Truitt and Newton Davis to pass him and take the checkered flag in that order.

Carter, who is a past national cham-



Walt Hansgen registered an easy win with the Maser to take the Rickenbacker Trophy Race, run for C, D, E, F Modified, plus Unrestricted. Photo by Herb Barrows.

pion driver, averaged 68 mph for his win. Only fourteen cars were still running at the end of the 75 miles. Pedro's protest of Carter's win was turned down after a careful study of the tape and lap charts was made by the race officials.

This is a race which has caught the imagination of the racing fraternity, and perhaps next year will see the additional 50 cars, which had to be turned down this time, in there fighting it out for the coveted Rickenbacker and Vanderbilt Cups.