

sports

By Mark Patterson

A day at the races

For three hours Saturday I was a boy playing in a man's world. Being someone who likes to stay on the move, I didn't think I could sit through the entire Coors 200 out at Texas World Speedway in the stands. So I watched the race from the crew's point of view. I journeyed into the pits.

I got out to the track three hours before the scheduled start of the race in time for the qualification runs by the drivers. This was the time when the drivers can test their cars to see just how fast they really are. And the speeds recorded indicated it.

As I strolled onto pit row Danny Ongais was just rolling onto the track for his qualification run. As he leisurely circled the track, scuffing up his tires for better traction, I couldn't help but imagine his car as a jet on wheels. The sleek construction and aerodynamic design brought to mind the thought that if his car sprouted wings, he could end up airborne over Old Dime Box.

He somehow stayed on the ground and qualified at 211 mph, just three mph under the world record. I was in awe watching him travel around the two-mile oval at that speed knowing full well that I get queezy when I break 80.

But what amazed me more was the reaction of Ongais when he finished his three laps. He just rolled into pit row, leisurely got out of his missile, and strolled towards the garage area like he had just driven around the block to the 7-11 for some milk and bread. He showed absolutely no emotion after his run.

But none of the drivers did after their laps. That job was designated for the members of their pit crew. I could watch the faces of the crew and tell how the car was operating, how the driver was doing and, most importantly, how fast the two were going. As soon as the driver finished his laps and was back at the pits the crew was on top of the car like ants on sugar. The crew took apart,

checked and rechecked every part of the car with gages, needles and whatever else car people use to work on cars.

I couldn't help but wonder what a driver felt when he walked up to his car, three hours before he was going to risk his life in it and see it dismantled and lying in pieces on the ground.

So all I did all day was sit back and watch the men play with their cars. It was another world for me. I just learned how to pump my own gas at the self-serve islands at the local Shell.

But I got to meet some of my boyhood heroes from the racing scene while I was down among the men and machines. I shook hands with A.J., Mario, Tom Sneva and my local hero from back home, Johnny Rutherford. After meeting Rutherford for the first time and wishing him luck, I felt a little strange when he hit the wall and wrecked his car 18 laps into the race. Was it me?

I was like a little kid in a play ground among things I knew nothing about and loving every minute of it. But my gaiety was abruptly cut short as the starting time came around.

As Mario Andretti put on his crash helmet and started to climb into his car I noticed some writing on the back of his helmet. As I got closer, the letters became clearer and I couldn't believe what it said. "My blood type is AB Negative."

I knew then that in this dangerous business, there was no place for a boy like me.

Aggie golfers finish tenth

By KEVIN PYLE

Oklahoma State, which looked more like a team composed of professionals than one of collegiate golfers, ran away and hid from the field as they won their third straight All-America Intercollegiate Invitational golf tournament.

The tournament was played at Atascocita Country club in Houston on Wednesday through Saturday. The Cowboys of Oklahoma State, made the course look easy as they fired a 72-hole score of 1,134 — 18 under par — which broke a tournament record of 1,148 set in 1957.

The individual title was won by Brigham Young's Bob Clampett. The 17-year-old freshman who led after the first day with a tournament record tying 66, closed with a four under 68 to win by a shot over Georgia's Chip Beck. He also broke the tournament record by a stroke with his 277 total.

Texas A&M finished in tenth place in a field which boasted six of the top ten teams in the nation. The

Aggies, paced by junior Doug Ward who finished a very respectable 16th in the outstanding field, shot a score of 1,192.

Ward, from Little Rock, had rounds of 75-73-70-72 for a two over par 290.

Sophomore Dave Ogrin, an honorable mention All-America last year from Waukegan, Ill., was among the leaders after 36 holes, shooting rounds of 71 and 72. He filtered the third and fourth days however and finished with rounds of 77-75.

Jay Kent, a freshman from Jacksonville, Tx., finished third for the Ags with rounds of 78-72-74-76 for a 300 total.

Senior Tim Carlton, of Shreveport, La., got off to a bad start with an 80 and never really got it going, finishing with rounds of 76-77-74 for a 307. Junior Biff Alexander, from Seguin, didn't get his game untracked either shooting 76-74-80-79-309. Only the low four scores figured into the scoring.

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