



Robin McCall awaits the start of a race standing by her modified Firebird.

**Story and Photos  
By BRIAN TATE**

*Battalion Reporter*

The world of auto racing is a world of hot metal and burning rubber; a sport generally dominated by men. So it comes as a surprise to hear a driver say that the only bad thing about the sport "is getting dirty, breaking fingernails and messing up my hair."

But if her concerns are not necessarily the concerns of her fellow drivers, 16-year-old Robin McCall seems determined to make herself a place in the sport of auto racing.

Although younger than most competitors, she is no newcomer to the racing world. McCall credits her father, Bob, with first getting her interested in racing.

When she was only 8 years old, McCall said, her father bought a quarter-midget race car for her older sister, Suzanne. Suzanne soon lost interest in the car though, and Robin seized the opportunity and took over the wheel, much to her father's delight.

So McCall began her career in a car that weighed less than 150 pounds and averaged only 50 mph.

Later, McCall drove a Pinto in mini-stock car races. She then became interested in modified stock cars. Under her father's supervision, a Pontiac Firebird was converted to a \$20,000 race car for her.

McCall said that the Texas World Speedway in College Station has been her biggest disappointment as a driver.

In the Texas Race of Champions held there last fall, she was forced to drop out of the race because of transmission trouble. In the Texas 100 Stock Car Race last month, she was again plagued by mechanical problems. After earning the number two starting position in qualifying races against a field of 43 seasoned drivers, McCall said, her car suffered from transmission trouble on the first lap. It was repaired in time for her to start the second half of the race in last position, but the problem recurred before the race was over.

In addition to suffering from mechanical problems, McCall also has to deal with problems stemming from the fact that she is usually the only female driver competing.

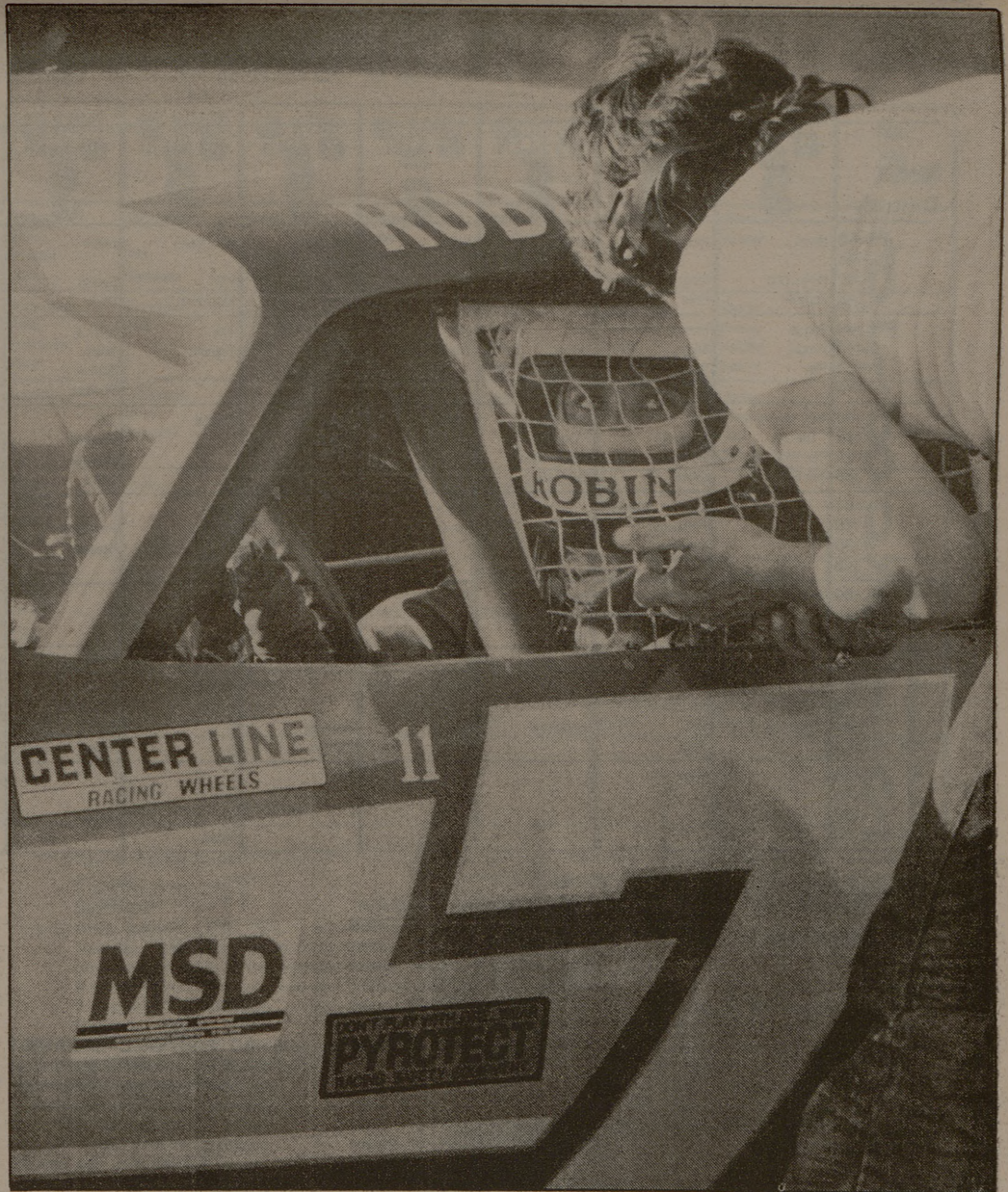
"Physical strength is probably the biggest disadvantage a girl has in stock car racing," Robin said. While her car was being built, Robin said she often wondered whether she would be able to handle it well enough to race.

The car is equipped with power steering and an automatic transmission, which the men's cars don't have. The car being built for her to race next year will not have these features, which she said is an adjustment she will have to make.

Out on the track, Robin said that some drivers will try to intimidate her by blocking her when she tries to pass, or by cutting her off at corners. She said that when this happens it is important to not back down, or else they will continue to challenge her.

McCall's career as a driver has not been free of accidents. Her worst wreck came when she hit an oil slick at Hi-Way 16 Speedway and crashed head-on into the wall. Her car bounced off the wall, she said, and was narrowly missed by oncoming cars. The fact that she might be killed in a car wreck does not deter her from racing, McCall said, because she feels the risk is an inescapable part of her life.

After she graduates from high school in two years, McCall said, she plans to enter the All-Pro racing circuit and drive in races as far away as California. But her greatest ambition is to race Indy cars in five or six years, she said.



In for a quick pit stop, McCall listens to advice from her father.

## DON'T BE IN A HURRY TO END THE HOLIDAYS



Driving at excessive speeds is one of the two largest causes of fatal accidents during the holidays. Keep your family safe in Christmas traffic. Don't be in a hurry to end the holidays on the highways.