

# 50 YEARS OF RACING AND A 50-YEAR REPEAT WINNER AT MAZDA RACEWAY LAGUNA SECA

Photos: Joe Sage

The Monterey Historic Races kicked off on Thursday, August 16, when Al Unser Sr., Bobby Rahal, Parnelli Jones, Emerson Fittipaldi and other drivers took a practice run for the Legends of Motorsport on Saturday, which honored Indy's Roadster Era, champion drivers and the host racetrack, established in 1957 and celebrating its 50th anniversary.

On Thursday, the media got a sneak preview of the Indy Roadsters during a feature photo line-up, as 33 Roadsters turned the track in preparation for the weekend races. Also on Thursday, Pete Lovely, winner of the first main event at Laguna Seca in November 1957, was honored as an inductee into the Legends of Laguna Seca, with a presentation by Monterey Mayor Chuck Della Sala.

The 400 cars participating in the Rolex Monterey Historic were divided into 14 groups based on age and engine size, selected for their history, interest and current state of presentation. The cars dated from 1914 (Mercer) to 1981 (Porsche 935K4). Porsche, Ferrari, Lotus, Corvette, McLaren and Shelby led with the number of entries. A team of nine pre-War Bentleys arrived from England for the event.

The 14 races were split with seven groups racing Saturday and seven on Sunday. Qualifying practice sessions were held on Friday.

Friday featured the Ferrari Historic Challenge races, with historically significant Ferraris, Maseratis and Alfa Romeos that have contributed to the racing heritage of Ferrari today. A display by Ferrari Classiche and a gathering of Ferrari F40s, celebrating its 20th anniversary, highlighted event activities. Pete Lovely was honored again, as his 1957 victory had been in a Ferrari 500TR.

Toyota hosted the inaugural Race of Legends on Saturday, in which drivers holding championships from nearly every level of racing, including Formula One, the Indy 500 and the 24 Hours of LeMans, competed in an eight-lap charity race, driving 215 hp Scion tC sport coupes. The field included Bobby Unser, Al Unser Sr., Johnny Rutherford, Bobby Rahal, Parnelli Jones, Vic Elford, Emerson Fittipaldi, Ove Andersson and Derek Bell.

History repeated itself on Saturday with a win by Pete Lovely, 50 years after taking the first-ever win at the track in 1957. Driving his 1959 Lotus 11 in the class of 1955-1960 sports racing cars under 2500cc, Lovely, of Tacoma, Washington, held off Jim Lawrence from Lafayette, California, in his 1958 Lotus 15.

The Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races is "an automotive museum brought to life," and is the largest event, with over 40,000 visitors, of the renowned classic car weekend each August in Monterey. For more information, visit [www.laguna-seca.com](http://www.laguna-seca.com). Speed TV will televise the Rolex Monterey Historic Races on September 30th at 6pm EDT. ■



Photo: Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

