

By Herb Dodge

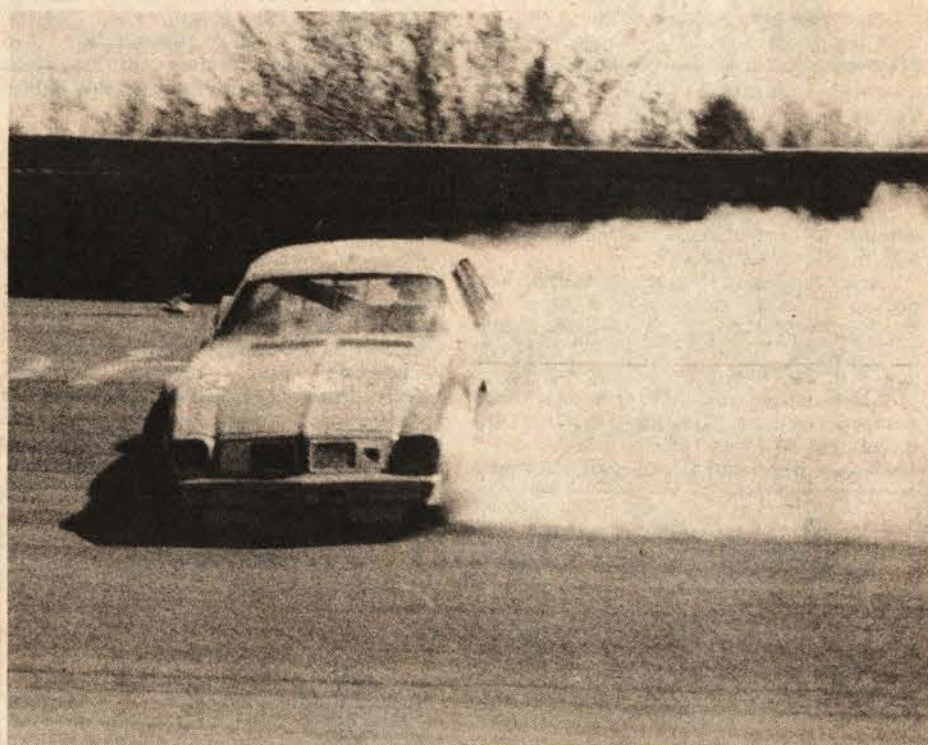
sophisticated Modified equipment in the United States.

Makara's \$7500 victory was all the more surprising since his '77 Camaro was built to run the 1/2 mile Sportsman tracks in the Midwest.

"We have two front fenders and a different hood all painted and hanging on the wall back at the shop," Makara



Jerry Makara came to Trenton to prove himself against the big names. As can be seen by the trophy, he did it.



Harry Gant, who won at Daytona, was not so lucky at Trenton.

Harry Moore Photos

commented. "That's all it needs to be a Sportsman." Many of the big-block Modifieds Jerry beat at Trenton were designed exclusively for superspeedway racing.

Since last May it has been apparent that the Midwest Sportsmen were competitive with the eastern Modifieds on the superspeedways. John Anderson, of Warren, Michigan, sat on the pole for the Patriot 300 at Charlotte. Anderson crashed while leading. Tom Maier of Midland, Michigan, almost won the prestigious Race of Champions here last October. A blown engine near the end of

the race destroyed his bid for victory.

This set the stage for Makara. He qualified his Thrush Muffler sponsored

**Continued On Next Page**

COLLEGE STATION, Tex.—New lap records were the order of the day at the "Rites of Spring" SCCA National races March 20 at Texas World Speedway. Nine new class marks were posted as near-perfect weather and a track surface seasoned by the previous day's Regionals set the stage for speed.

Race Group One signalled a first for the SCCA: the first time the fledgling Showroom Stock classes have been combined with other small-bore classes in a National points race. This caused no

RITES OF SPRING SCCA NATIONAL RACES, TEXAS WORLD SPEEDWAY,  
 COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS, MARCH 20, 1977.

### CLASS WINNERS

AS: Robert McMillan, Mustang; BS: A! Ballschmidt, Datsun 510; CS: Norman Dodson, Austin Cooper; AP: none; BP: no class; CP: Glenn Seureau, Lotus Europa; DP: Tom Mankin, Alfa; EP: Jack Foote, Porsche 356; FP: Jerry Hinkle, MG Midget; GP: E.L.F. Entriken, Spitfire; HP: Frank Hostetler, Sprite; AS: Emmet Draddy, Sidekick; BSR: none; CSR: none; DSR: Steve Woods, PBS GT; SSA: John Matthews, BMW; SSB: Joe Locario, Alfaetta G; SSC: Jim Gandy, Colt; FA: none; FB: Bobby Rahal, March 76B; FC: none; FSV: Scott Ovel, Lola T-324; FF: Bill Henderson, Crossle 32; FV: Bill Noble, Lynx B.

problems, and may have encouraged new lap records in SSB and SSA.

The track record for the TWS three-mile course fell in a big way in the second race as Bobby Rahal and his FB March 76B showed the way around to the "all Formulas except Vee" field. Only one other car stayed on the same lap with Rahal as he chopped nearly five seconds off the old record. New class records were also set by the FSV and FF class winners.

Race Four produced four more records, but only Tom Mankin could parlay a record into a win as he took DP in his Alfa Romeo Spider. "Slower but surer" should have been the motto for record setters Joe Flores (second, BS Datsun 710), Walt Mays (fourth, EP MGB), and Harry Sauce (fifth, FP Spitfire).

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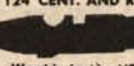
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# As Yen Goes Up, Japanese Auto Makers Raise Prices

The burgeoning strength of the yen against the U.S. dollar will result in considerable price advances on Japanese automobiles sold in the U.S., according to international market analysts. The only one of the Big Three Japanese exporters to this country which will admit to the inevitability of the price jumps is Honda, which is expected to announce an increase of about 5% within days.

More On:

## Dogleg

Continued From Preceding Page

car in ninth spot. Nu-Style Jewelry teammates Geoff Bodine and Ray Hendrick put their aerodynamic, GT style, big-block Pintos in the front row. Bodine set a new track record of 37.73 sec. (143.12mph) for the 1-1/2 mile kidney shaped course.

Makara hung back early in the race, letting the hot dogs of Modified racing set a blistering pace. Hendrick beat Bodine into the first turn on the start and led the first two laps. Bodine then went to the front for the next 20 circuits. Fred DeSarro took over the lead when Bodine made an early pit stop. DeSarro and Satch Worley proceeded to stage a torrid battle for the fans, swapping the lead often.

Makara entered the picture on lap 27. He had worked his way up to third, and when Worley pitted, it was Jerry's turn to dice with DeSarro. He took the lead in a classic slingshot down the 2200 foot front straight at 170mph on lap 32. DeSarro was not to be denied, however, as he regained the lead in the dogleg two laps later. Both cars pitted under the yellow on lap 39, and pole sitter Bodine regained his front spot.

On the green, Bodine pulled away from a pack of four cars dicing for second. For the next 33 laps, Richie Evans, Worley, DeSarro and Makara did some unreal racing. Bodine was obviously the fastest man on the track, as he easily regained the lead after his second pit stop. Makara had a close call on lap 112 while battling for second spot. He and Worley rubbed tires in turn one. Jerry later commented "It was God that saved us." On lap 119, the race for second became the duel for the top spot as Bodine's car slowed dramatically with engine trouble. Worley, DeSarro and Makara all managed to get by Geoff, dropping him to fourth. The distance separating the top three was sometimes a matter of inches as they ran the homestretch three abreast.

In a spectacular move on lap 125, Makara swung low and passed both Worley and DeSarro on the homestretch. He then opened up a slight lead in the last 10 laps, winning by a margin of 1.9 sec. Makara led five times for a total of 26 laps. The lead changed many more times than the official sixteen. The race was run in 1:50:00 for an average speed of 121.126mph.

The 33-year-old Makara was gracious in victory, praising everybody and everything. He apologized for hitting Worley and thanked Bodine for a two hour talk they had in the rain on Saturday. Bodine may regret that conversation now.

Jerry Makara came to Trenton with the idea of making a name for himself on the tough NASCAR Modified circuit. He hopes to gain a Grand National ride with Thrush Mufflers as his sponsor. He left Trenton with the respect and admiration of everyone who came into contact with him. Jerry was as successful off the track as he was on it.

Honda is third in volume imports into the U.S., preceded by Nissan Motor Co., second, and Toyota Motor Co., the import sales leader. While declining to predict their marketing plans for the immediate future, both the top two are reported to be on the verge of an increase. A Toyota spokesman has admitted that the company expects to bear an exchange loss of from \$12 to \$15 for every drop of one yen to the dollar. Prices for export to the U.S. are pegged at a rate of 290 yen to the dollar, while the dollar has weakened to the rate of one per 273 yen currently.

On such a product as the Celica OT, which retails for \$4599 in the United States, this means an unavoidable exchange loss of at least \$200 for every

unit sold. Last October, Toyota increased its U.S. retail prices an average of \$112 per car. The company's shipments to the U.S. in February were 42,400 units. Total 1976 shipments were up 53%, to 441,641 units.

Immediate repricing of Toyotas remains a likely possibility, and the company has said it would take into consideration its own higher costs for shipping, labor and materials, as well as

the currency change. The firm's spokesman has said he does not expect the increase, if it occurs, to have any "significant" effect on U.S. sales.

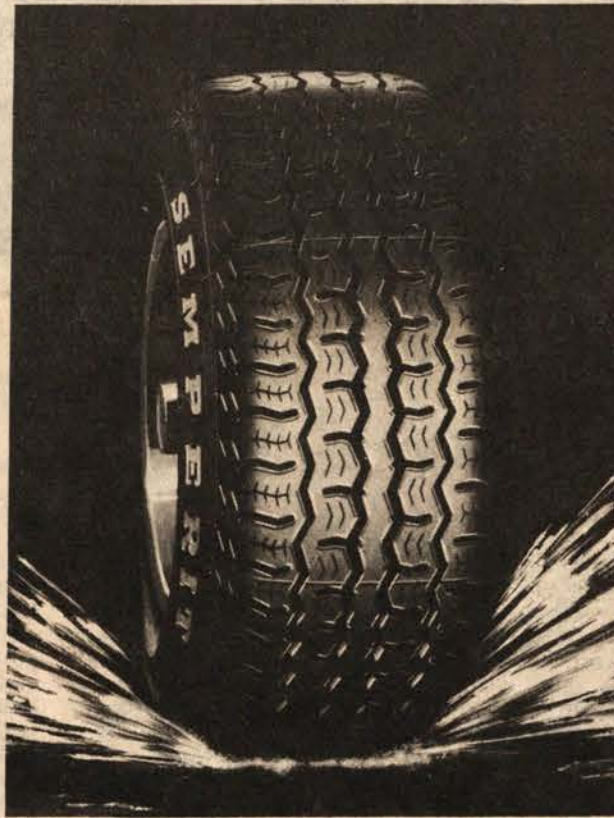
The rise of the three Japanese firms to the top ranks of U.S. auto suppliers commonly is attributed to Volkswagen's retreat from the low-priced end of the small-car market following the growing strength of the West German mark during the past five years.

## GM's Incredible Shrinking Car

There's an unconfirmed report out of GM that the company has taken a second look at plans to shrink its biggest cars in 1979-80 and has decided to make them even smaller. The cars are Cadillac, all models, Buick Riviera and Oldsmobile Toronado. They will be pulled down to a wheelbase of 108 to 110 inches. That would make them six to eight inches shorter than the original downsizing called for. Assuming the report is true, the move will set off a chain reaction. Not only at

GM, but at the other companies, too. If GM has had second thoughts about the size of its biggest cars, somewhere down the road the company will have to take a second whack at reducing the size of its other cars. As the company that practically invented the big car in this country, GM would be the last automaker to go small if there was a way of keeping the big cars big. Final if: If GM goes through another round, Ford and Chrysler probably will follow suit.

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