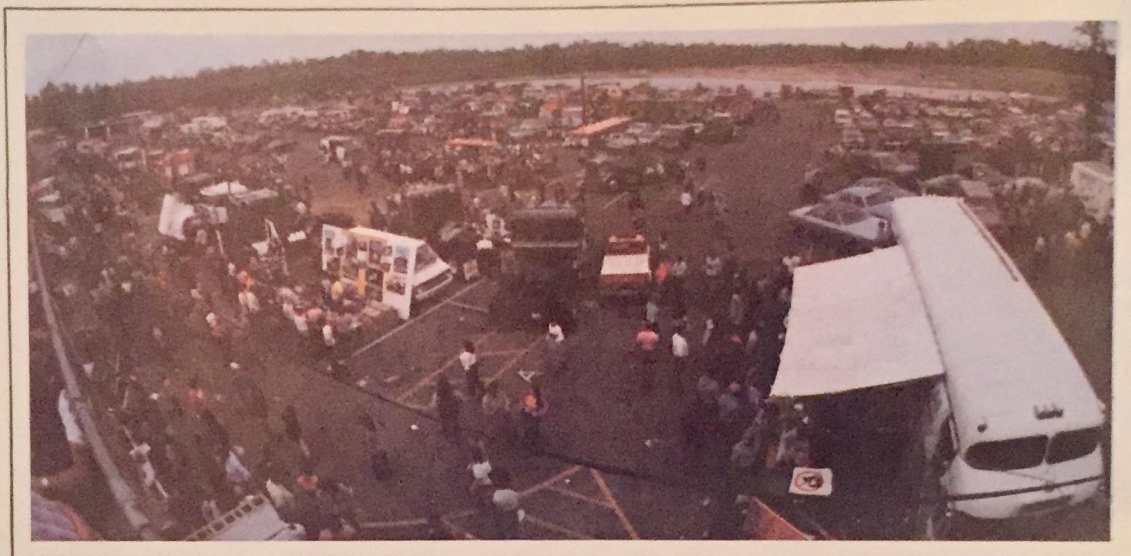




4th Annual OVERDRIVE TRUCKERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Witnessed By 17,000 Fans

by David Postal



No, this is not the parking lot at Englishtown, but approximately half of the display lot for trucks and booths. More than 400 trucks were on hand participating in the races or on display. The bus at the right is the Overdrive bus, a converted Trailways cruiser equipped with supplies, many kinds of police radar units for demonstration to the press, and even a few Ayatollah posters.

Even though this is a one-day affair, there are more trucks on display than at all the rest of the truck shows in the country combined, and the 17,000 paid attendance does not include approximately 2,000 kids under 12 who are admitted free, but restricted to the grandstand side of the race track.

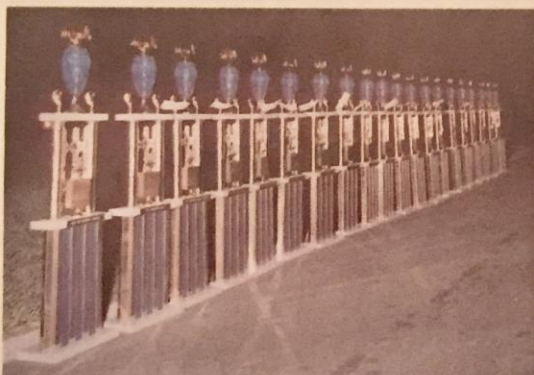


Those who don't want to watch from the stands create their own seating arrangements. Many truckers brought their campers and barbeques and made it a long, happy picnic.

Seventeen thousand spectators witnessed the largest diesel truck race in United States history on May 17 at Raceway Park in Englishtown, New Jersey. With close to four hundred trucks in attendance, *Overdrive* Magazine and Raceway Park teamed up for the fourth time on the first stop in 1980 diesel truck racing in the Northeast and really put together a show. One that was won after five hours of grueling eliminations by Iselin, New Jersey's Johnny Riporti and his 1972 three-axled Mack dumpster. Riporti first survived a ten-truck elimination to take the victory in the "S" Class (full trucks



Even though the event doesn't officially start until 7:00 p.m., there are thousands of people who arrive early to browse through the dozens of booths and displays, or take in the time trials which start at 1:00 in the afternoon. This photo shows just one small section of one aisle, shot from the Overdrive bus. Notice that the stands are already pretty full even though the races don't start for another four hours.



Thousands of dollars in cash prizes are flanked by impressive trophies for more than a dozen different categories. Here, just some of the prize-winning trophies are lined up before presentation time at the 4th Annual Overdrive Truckers Championships at Englishtown.

over 20,000 lbs. with horsepower of 301 to 380), and then returned to triumph over all twenty-six Class winners. The Runner-Up and recipient of the \$1,000 prize was Mike Holowka, who took his Twin County Grocers' Mack from Edison just as far as Riporti, only to be defeated by him in the final.

A beautiful racing day saw some of the most spectacular events to ever take place in a truck meet. The film crew from the TV series "That's Incredible" was on hand to watch Saturday's proceedings. Diesel trucks of every imaginable size



Best looking "pit crew" went to United Van Lines Agent McCollister's of Burlington, New Jersey, who also ran off with best fleet honors.



Joy Andrews, at left, Shauna Isgrigg, the nation's baton-twirling champion (in pink), joins Dallas Cowgirls Sheri O'Brien and, at the far right Kelly Williams in making this winner even happier at the 4th Annual Overdrive Championships at Englishtown.



Prize winner Mickey Riporti, stands with his son, and (mustached, long-haired) super-duper announcer, "Berserko Bob" who adds a lot of excitement to every drag race.

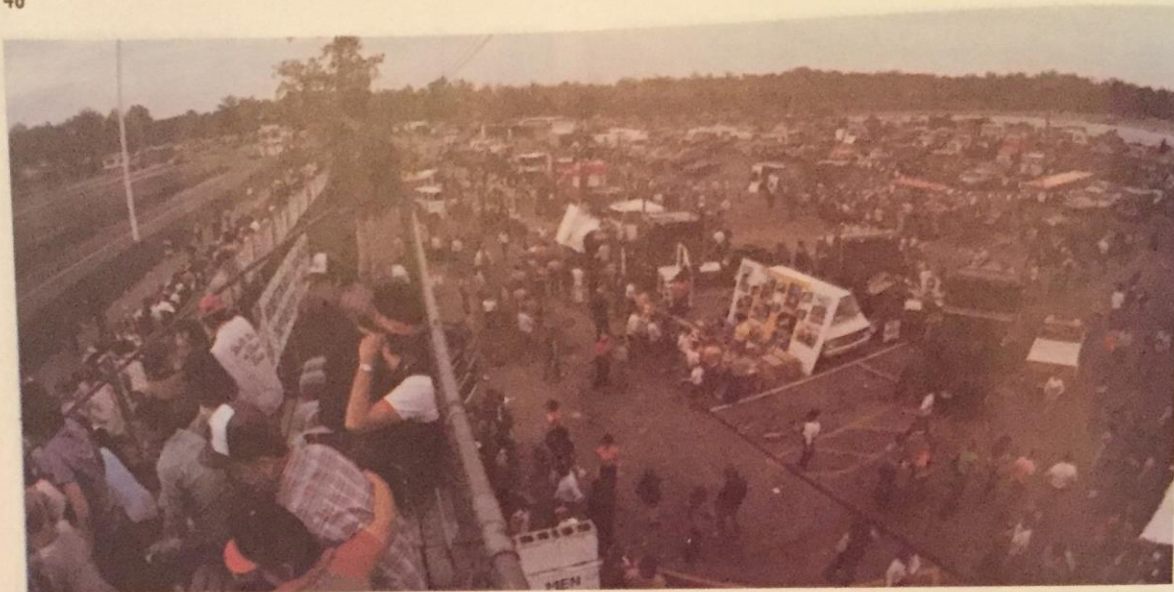


Ken Farmer of Pisgah, Alabama, waltzed off with "best of chrome" honors, though he disqualified in the race. Nevertheless, Ken looks happy surrounded by Dallas Cowgirls Sheri O'Brien and Kelly Williams and prize presenters Joy Andrews and Shauna Isgrigg.



Another view of Ken Farmer's Kenworth which grabbed first prize award for "Outstanding Chrome."

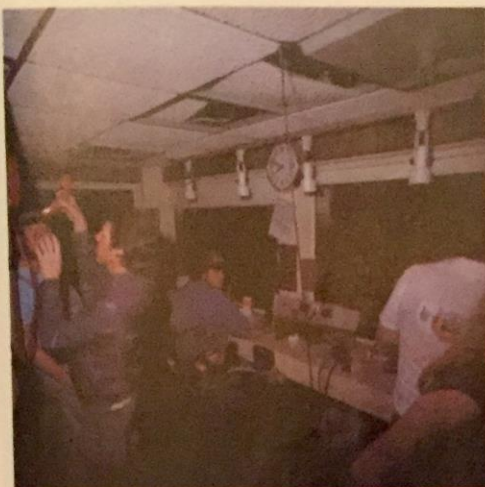




turned out that Johnny later won the race. However, at the time, the two racers squared off using a handicap system used in the truck finals, based on a time close to the vehicle's best elapsed run of the day. Each racer chooses a "dial in"; the two dial ins are then subtracted, and that handicap advantage is given to the slower vehicle, the only catch being that you may not run faster than the time you pick.

Johnny Riporti chose a dial in of 24 seconds for

his Mack, while Camaro driver Mickey Riporti chose 9.95, giving the diesel truck approximately a fourteen-second head start. With most of the crowd rooting for the trucker, Johnny's rig was three-quarters of the way there before Mickey even left the line, but by the finish line it was neck and neck. Finally, the win bulb was set off by the race car, but the elapsed time was 9.86, under the 9.95 dial in by nine-tenths of a second, giving the truck a victory. The crowd



went crazy, as they witnessed a "slow" truck defeat a bonafide every-weekend racer.

The eliminations were grueling, as trucks were paired off by class from A to Z, including an experimental category. Each class was called to the lanes separately, and all the truckers dueled with those entered in their respective class only, until there was just one remaining in each class. Then those truckers who had won each class met in a ladder-style elimination, with dial ins, until just one remained — The *Overdrive* Trucker of the Year at Raceway Park and recipient of an eight-foot trophy and \$2,000 (twice the purse awarded at any other truck race).

Out of the 284 truckers who entered, only 24 received fame as winners, and they are as follows:

In Class A, Jack Scheffler, Johanna Farms' Kenworth proved the fastest conventional diesel in attendance scoring E. T.'s of 18.28, 17.69 and 17.70 to scorch the open class. Class B was taken by Cornwall, New York's Joe Roscino who steered his Kenworth to a time of 24.02 at 51 miles per hour in the final heat. The third man from the same company to win the "C" Class in the last three truck races, scalped the field in his Self-Heat Oil International Truck as Henry Shaupp won the smallest field, with just three trucks entered.

Twenty-three trucks were entered in "D" Class. The ten-wheeled competition was taken by a Peterbilt from Stanford, Connecticut, driven by Carl Pugliese. Pugliese's times of 18.50, 18.56, 18.67 and 18.86 in competition not only proved to be second fastest of the day but most consistent also.

Many company drivers and owners were on hand in competition and N. E. Leasing owner Nelson Espailat drove to fame in the "E" Class drilling a



21.59-65 mph time in the final. The "F" Class victor was Jeff Harris whose Kenworth running out of New Market, Alabama, flew past eleven trucks to earn his way to the final.

In order to win the "G" Class trophy, you had to fight through six rounds of competition, just to get into the final eliminations, which themselves were only five rounds long. The man who did it was Ray "Hot Dog" Alpaugh, wheeling his '74 Diamond Reo past forty other trucks. In the final, Alpaugh notched an elapsed time of 19.81 seconds at 66 mph. The "H" Class was taken by the perennial winner Frank Hasmund and his Staten Island, New York, KW cabover, while the "I" Class was notched by the defending champion of this race, Rick Meyer and his Jamison, Pennsylvania, 1979 Mack. Although Meyer bowed out in the third round of the final eliminations, he survived long enough to defeat a veteran drag racer, Wayne Magers, who fouled to Meyers in the class final round.

Bill Vitkauskas took his eighth straight class victory in eight attempts in the "J" Class while Larry Poggi from Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey, notched a victory in the "K" Class with the only Brockway truck to reach the finals. Nick Holowka's

4th ANNUAL OVERDRIVE TRUCKERS CHAMPIONSHIP Raceway Park, Englishtown, N.J. CLASS WINNERS

CLASS	NAME	TYPE OF TRUCK	E. T.	M.P.H.
A	Jack Scheffler	'74 Kenworth	17.70	75.80
B	Joe Roscino	'77 Kenworth	24.02	51.36
C	Henry Shaupp	'78 International	23.16	57.17
D	Carl Pugliese	'78 Peterbilt Conv.	18.86	73.89
E	Nelson Espallat	'79 Freightliner	21.59	65.17
F	Jeff Harris	'79 Kenworth	21.08	67.41
G	Ray Alpaugh	'74 Diamond Reo	19.81	66.46
H	Frank Hasmund	'73 Kenworth	20.38	63.78
I	Rick Meyer	'79 Mack	20.06	65.31
J	Bill Vitkauskas	'52 Mack	21.86	61.89
K	Larry Poggi	'68 Brockway	24.71	51.34
L	Nick Holowka	'72 GMC	21.95	58.06
M	Mike Holowka	'72 Mack	20.36	64.14
N	Frank Katic	'78 Mack	21.75	57.43
O	John J. Johnson	'73 White Conv.	22.70	58.97
P	Kenneth Krosrow	'67 Chevy	22.10	60.16
R	Michael Bigg	'79 Peterbilt	22.66	60.68
S	John Riporti	'72 Mack	24.36	53.44
T	Louis Lombardi	'78 Autocar	25.16	52.63
U	John Meuser	'78 Wrecker GMC	27.77	52.50
V	Carlo Cici	'65 Mack	26.90	49.50
W	Ward Snyder	'70 Chevy	25.71	53.50
Y	Tim Pollock	'62 Studebaker	24.58	53.47
Z	Joseph Gutowsky	'80 Helfrich	30.44	45.15
EXP	Roger Dyne	'53 Ford 350	19.08	56.99

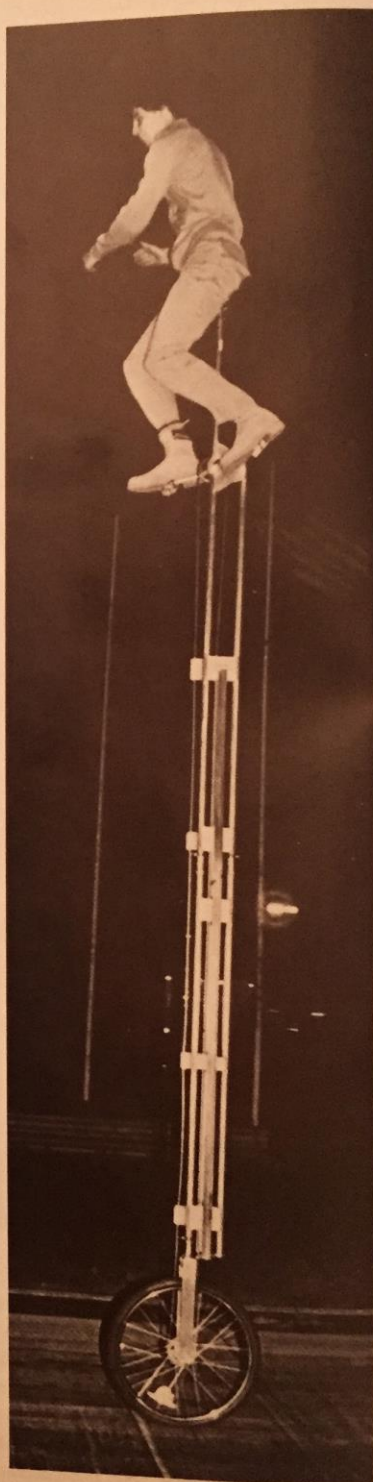
AWARD

Best Appearing Truck
Best Appearing Crew
Best Appearing Paint
Best Appearing Special Effect
Best Appearing Chrome Plating Treatment
Best Engineered Truck
Most Outstanding Wrecker
Most Outstanding Dump
Most Outstanding Roll-Off
Most Outstanding Garbage Truck
Most Outstanding Mixer
Most Outstanding Straight Truck
Most Outstanding 3-Axle Tractor
Most Outstanding 2-Axle Tractor
Long Distance Award

Most Outstanding Antique Truck
Most Outstanding Novelty
Most Outstanding Fleet

NAME

Skip Gee
United Van Lines
Brady Reed
T. J. Williams
Ken Farmer
Russ Palumbo
Calton Truck Service
John Riporti
Scerbo Trucking
Scerbo Trucking
Joe Scarmella
United Van Lines
T. J. Williams
Marshall Moving
Gate Way Trucking
Costa Mesa, California
Nappi Trucking
Joseph Georgiana
United Van Lines





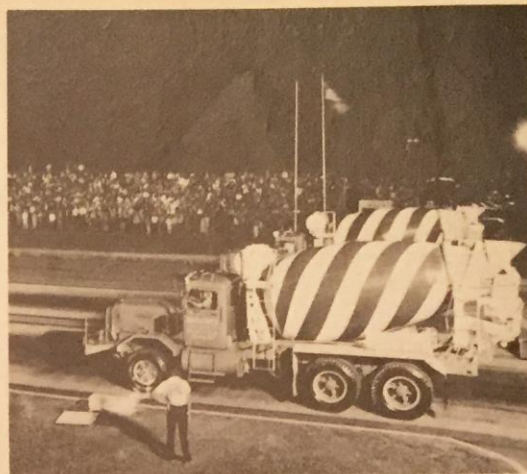
Proving that it isn't always the guy with the most horsepower, the highest tractor or the most gears, Mickey Riporti's Maxidyne powered Mack cleaned the clocks of a lot of good tractors, and he went home with a lot of lipstick on his collar, \$2,000 in cash, and a trophy taller than himself. Here's the grand prize winner during one of the trips down the dragstrip.

GMC Detroit-powered six-wheel tractor took home a trophy in "L", while brother Mike sailed his Mack to the gold in the "M" Class as well as the Runner-Up position of the race.

Frank Katic of Fort Lee, New Jersey, had reported-



As an extra crowd pleaser between the lumbering giants, the Overdrive Truckers Championship has offered several different high-speed events, such as 1978's rocket-powered car by Brad Proffit. This year, Richard Hutchins moves his dragster at speeds well over 100 mph, while Dennis Frisoli was on hand to demonstrate his homemade unicycle. (Needless to say, Hutchins did not race Frisoli!)

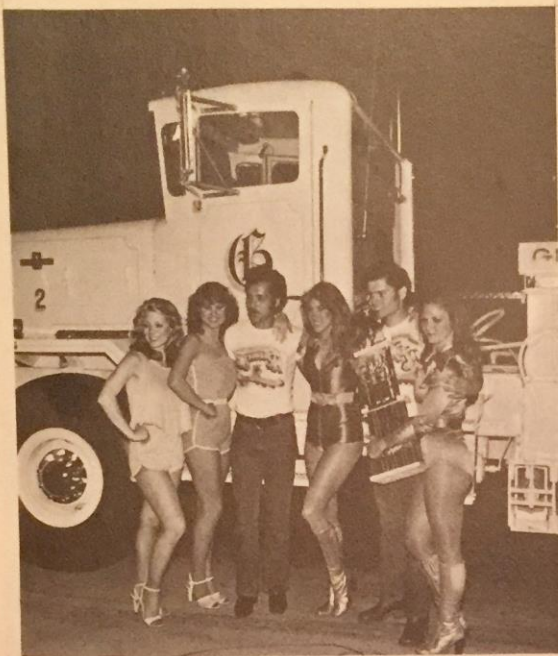


Twin Richcrete cement mixers mix it up down the famous track and had the crowd standing for their quarter-mile run.

The secret of success at a truck drag race is not necessarily having the hottest horses, but in maintaining the coolest shifting.

ly crashed into the Raceway Park Tower with a Corvette in the late sixties and though he did not cause any damages to buildings with his '78 Mack, he did do some damage to his competitors in the "N" Class, scoring a victory in three rounds with times of 22.11, 21.78, and 21.75. The Grand Union White of John Johnson cranked out ten gears each round to sweep the "O" Class while the 1967 Chevy tractor of Ken Krosrow defeated all comers in "P".

"R" Class was won by the perennial favorite Mike Bigg whose beautiful Peterbilt met with large crowd approval. Johnny Riporti won out in the ten truck "S" field before capturing the *Overdrive* crown and Lou Lombardi's Wayne-based roll-off defeated a similar but brand-new Autocar of Scott Sasso of Nutley (25.16-52 mph to 26.01-51 mph), making history in the "T" Class. John Meuser's GMC wrecker knocked off the only fire truck in competition in the "U" Class, running from the Jamesburg Fire Department. Two years ago, a fire truck from the town of Tinton Falls, New Jersey, won the overall competition. JRC Trucking's Carlo Cici gained notoriety in the "V" Class tripping the clocks at 26.90-49 mph. Ward Snyder's Old Bridge Chevy dumpster was the winner in "W" and a '62 Studebaker Utility truck driven by Tim "Dead Eye" Pollock won the "Y" Class. Two buses squared off in the "Z" Class and the competition was close with the 1980 Helfrich bus of



Although no winner is guaranteed anything but a trophy, this Guarantee Wrecker grabbed the top spot in "Best Appearing Wrecker" class, and we guarantee they were happy.



Almost a tradition at the Overdrive Truckers Championship race is Marshall's Moving and Storage of Hawthorne, New Jersey. Marshall's maintains a fleet of older but sharper tractors and here displays some of their trophies for a word this International has to borrow — but use well — from Peterbilt — "Class."

Joe Gutowsky just getting by the Felix Auto Supply MCI bus of Bill Buff 30.44-45 mph to 30.70-43 mph.

With those twenty-four winners, the competition really got heavy, as the midnight hour approached. Some truckers were disqualified for leaving the starting line early, while others ran under their dial ins to lose. John Riporti faced off against Frank Hasmund. Hasmund received a bye in the first round; was fouled against in the second round; and then reached the semis when Rick Meyer ran under his dial in, in the third round. Riporti was no match, running a cool 24.58-40 mph on a 24.41 dial in to Hasmund's 20.28-64 mph on a 20.08 dial in.

Riporti then faced off against Holowka who received a bye run in the semis because of an odd amount of racers. Riporti was spotted 4.3 seconds and managed to hold on all the way, recording a 24.54-46 mph to Holowka's faster, but losing, time of 20.10-64 mph.

This year, the first prize was raised to \$2,000 and the second prize to \$1,000, paid at time of the awarding of the numerous large trophies.

The Crazy Eddie's Diesel Race, scheduled for August 16, now also boasts a \$2,000 first prize and a \$1,000 second-place winning share. Even though there can only be one final winner, the dozens of handsome trophies, handshakes and recognition for so many outstanding trucks seems to be appreciated even by those who lost by a nose. After all, there's always "next time" and we're sure that many of the contestants will want to try their hand again at the Crazy Eddie's event in August.

Also on hand to give trophies and kisses (to the winners) were some of the Dallas Cowgirls — formerly the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders — who have appeared in *Playboy* magazine in a lot less than they were wearing at the *Overdrive* Truckers Championship race, though from the crowd's approval when they appeared at the *Overdrive* bus or the start line, it would seem that they were dressed quite appropriately.

Overdrive cannot send personal congratulations to all those truckers who came and participated at the 4th annual Championship race at Englishtown, so this report will have to serve as our handshake and salute. Besides, those many truckers who made a personal visit to the *Overdrive* bus, or with whom we had brief conversations, know who they are. Truckers like "Boots" Minor, Ralph Raymond, Nick Guyer, and many, many other regulars help make the *Overdrive* staff feel that our efforts are all worth it. Thanks, guys...