

# MID-AM REPORT

The smallest Mid-Am schedule ever -- only seven races when the final checker fell, has produced only 11 champions from a possible 44 classes. This is the sorry economic times in which we live now. Lack of entry compelled Nebraska Region to pull the plug on the annual Bonus Race which unfortunately left about a dozen drivers needing that last weekend to qualify for the series. Who knew that final checker would be at Heartland Park Topeka in July?

Not surprisingly, five of those 11 champions are in the Improved Touring classes. More of a surprise is both the new Super Touring classes have champions. The other four are in GT America, American Sedan, Spec Miata and Spec Racer Ford. No championships were achieved this year in any of the Formula, SportsRacing, Grand Touring, Touring, Production or Show-room Stock classes.

Driver of the year came down to two former winners, **Chris Albin** and **Ralph Woodard**, both of whom won all six of their starts. The tiebreaker was that Albin was the outright winner in all of his races while Woodard had just four outright wins.

One piece of good news is that the two classes on probation this year, GTA and ITE, both made the numbers to stay alive for the immediate future. And the immediate future looks a little more hopeful. MiDiv's racing regions are looking at a new paradigm for the division's racing program, along with the return of both the Memphis and Gateway tracks.

Following the lead of our neighbors west and south, expect MiDiv to begin doing double-sanction weekends -- Double Regionals (Mid-Am), Double Nationals, some of them simultaneously as Double Regionals where drivers racing for a Regional finish or for a National finish are on track together. It has been very successful in other areas. Some tracks, however, intend to remain with the familiar Regional/National weekend concept. A very preliminary MiDiv schedule for 2012 shows a total of 12 National races over eight weekends, and 13 Regional races over nine weekends (one a double school/double regional). Double Regionals means a total of ten weekends. Those numbers could easily, and probably will, change some before the schedule is firm but that seems to be the pattern shaping up.

**IMPROVED TOURING A** was one of only two classes this year in which awards will go three deep. With no Bonus Race, 72 points is the highest possible points total and **Scott Bettinger** (Wich) is one of just three drivers to score that high with a six-win season. **Vonn Brockman** (NeOk) won the only race Bettinger didn't to place 2nd, ahead of **Dave Gird** (Wich) in third place.

**SPEC RACER FORD** was the other class with three award winners. **Brian Schafer** (StL) topped the final tally, largely on the strength of being the only qualified driver to score a race victory, doing it twice, at MAM in April and at HPT in July. **Matt Strathman** (Kan) claimed the runner-up award, just seven points behind Schafer, while **Marc Wilson** (KC) takes third place.

**IMPROVED TOURING B** saw **Chris Albin** (Sill) post his six wins to claim his 19th consecutive ITB crown as well as his 12th Driver of the Year. **Gary Learned** (Wich) won the only race Albin skipped for second place.

In every other class, the champion was the only driver meeting the qualification minimums of four starts, three finishes, on at least two tracks.

A double championship, in **AMERICAN SEDAN** and in **IMPROVED TOURING E** was won by **Kim McDonald** (Neb) who scored a total of eight victories -- five in AS for his third straight championship in that class and three in ITE for his first crown there.

**IMPROVED TOURING R** has been around only five years and the only champion it has known is **Ralph Woodard** (Neb), this year the third to win six times.

**GT AMERICA** driver **Stephen Wiles** (KC) put up four wins in his NASCAR lookalike Chevy Impala, two each at Hallett and MAM.

**SUPER TOURING O** went to **Matthew Miller** (KC), who scored his four wins in a Dodge Viper, two each at MAM and HPT.

**SUPER TOURING U** fell to **Guy Watney** (KC), who won twice at MAM and once at HPT. It is his first after several seasons chasing the elusive goal.

**IMPROVED TOURING 7** went to **Lynn Lamb** (Okla), who won the season opener at Hallett. Lamb won the class in its first year, 2004, and seven years later finally won his second.

**SPEC MIATA** went to **Dillon Dexter** (Neb), who won twice at Mid-America.



## MID-AM STATISTICAL ANALYSIS ~ 2011

	2011	2010	Change
TOTAL RACES	7	14	-7
TOTAL RACE ENTRY	478	836	-358
AVERAGE ENTRY	68.29	59.71	+8.58
Registered for Mid-Am	113	147	-34
Withdrawn	11	13	-2
Did Not Qualify	86	107	-21
Eligible At End Of Season	16	27	-11
Total Points Finishes	173	288	-115
Average Finishes Per Driver	1.53	1.96	-0.43