



Larry Mason is Back on Track!

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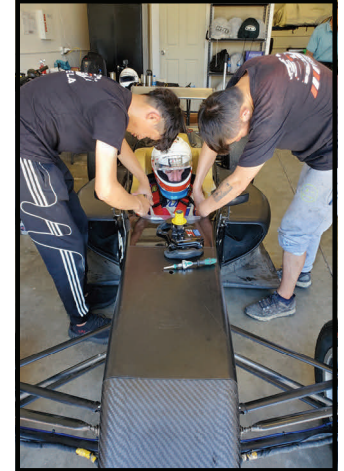
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Thanks to Fast Lane Racing School, Mason spent two days at Buttonwillow Raceway Park testing a “Radical” sports racer prototype race car and also a “Tatuus” Formula 4 race car. “This was my first time driving a race car with paddle shifters and I absolutely loved it! It’s so easy,” Mason exclaimed. It was also the first time for him driving a turbocharged race car (F4). “The simulator I’ve been using at home along with my fitness regimen prepared me well for the two days of testing. I was wondering how it would work out when I fi-

nally got back on track again and thankfully it was just what I needed to be able to go fast right away,” said Mason. The test took place on two different track configurations and the cars were shared amongst four Fast Lane instructors. The F4 is a bit smaller than an Indy Lights car but feels the same as far as stiffness in suspension and having to use a lot of pressure to activate the brakes. The Radical is similar to the Sports 2000 car Mason used to race and features advanced aerodynamic bodywork and diffuser.



Larry gets belted in to the F4 car above. The Radical & F4 below. Photos by Sonia & Larry Mason



Back on Track, Part 2

Thanks again to Fast Lane Racing School, both Larry & Sonia enjoyed a day at the “Fastest Road in the West” - Willow Springs International Raceway, for multiple lapping and learning sessions. Sonia stepped into Larry’s office (so-to-speak) by getting behind the wheel and driving laps around the famous 2.5 mile high-speed road course. Sonia was also treated to laps in the pace car by another Fast Lane instructor be-

sides Larry and enjoyed her time being “chauffeured” in front of a pack of high performance and exotic street cars. Larry also drove Sonia for some laps in one of the Scion FRS Pro/Celebrity cars from the Grand Prix of Long Beach. Larry also spent some time to coach some of the drivers there. He also shot some pictures of one of



Sonia & Larry at Willow Springs. Photo by Mark Mahle

his fellow instructors who took the school’s 93 Lola Indy Lights car onto the track for the first time in a shake-down run.

Tech Tidbits—Mirrors

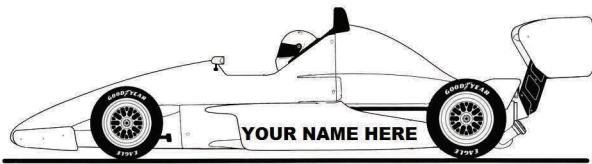
In the movie, *The Gumball Rally*, the Formula One driver who comes to America as a ringer in the illegal street race across the USA says to his co-driver/navigator in a heavy Italian accent, “Whatsa behind me is not important!” as he tears the rear view mirror off the windshield and throws it over his shoulder. On the racetrack, that would be true if you happen to be the fastest car on track by a long shot. However, this rarely happens, so rear view mirrors are su-

premely important! In an open cockpit car like the Formula Mazda, there is no traditional rear view mirror however there are two, side-mounted rear-view mirrors. These mirrors feature an aerodynamic housing mounted on a thin rod that bolts to the center cowl of the bodywork. The mirrors themselves are very small and convex in shape to help with a wide view behind as well as peripheral vision. Some people will look at those tiny mirrors and

ask, “Do they work?” and the answer is “Yes they do.” Although they are small, combined with the solid mounting and convex shape, they are actually quite good. Besides being able to see competitors behind you, the mirrors also allow you to keep track of your rear tires. It’s very rare these days to have it happen but if you were to “blister” a tire, it would be very easy to spot that tire degradation in the mirrors. One last thing. If by chance the driver makes



a mistake and spins or is spun out by a competitor, these mirrors allow you to back up relatively safely while having a wide field of vision. You don’t want to lose or break them as they are expensive too!



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“Unless you’re leading, the scenery never changes.” — Larry Mason

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