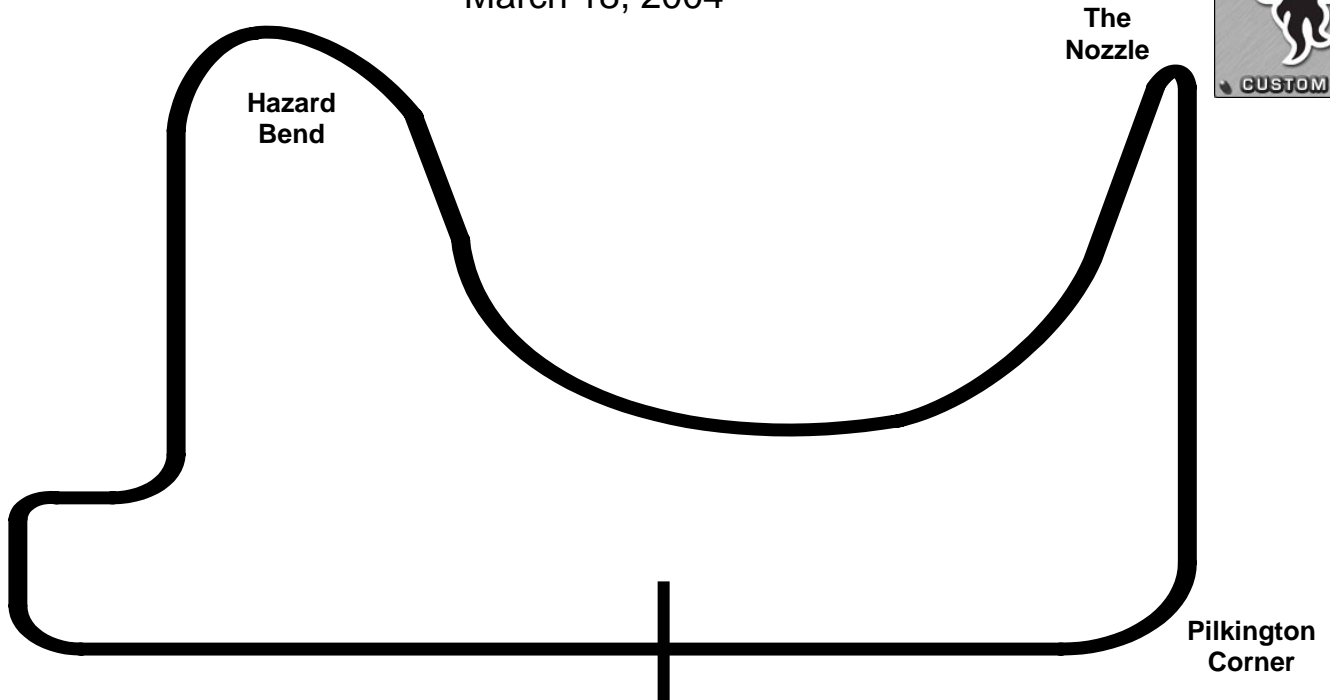




BFC XMODS Racing Series Coursa del Lombardo

March 18, 2004



Quick Sand

It's late in the season and both cars and drivers are dropping like flies. The "Daredevil from Donegal", Al Romack, was nowhere to be found, Keith Berning is in a contractual dispute with his new team Vision/RaceFace and the veteran privateer Gary Stephenson is taking a trip with his engineer and crew chief up North to meet with a potential corporate sponsor. Nevertheless the race must go on.

Today's time trial was something many were looking forward to. Toyota drivers Ken Morrison and Bill Lucas wanted to take advantage of the short field to gobble up points like a kid back from fat camp in the hopes of challenging Honda for the number two spot in the Manufacturers Cup. Both have always had strong time trial performances, so with Lucas' renewed spirit and Morrison's new tire compound the pair were hoping for podium finishes. Lucas missing the third spot by less than 8 seconds.

"The season is not over so everyone still has something to prove." Said Honda driver Keith Schloer. "Santamarina wants to show everyone he deserves to be King of the hill, while Hester still has an outside chance of dethroning him."

The technical course keeps everyone on their best behavior, but make no mistake; everyone was pushing their car to the limit. Case in point, Schloer took a header into a concrete barrier in the final turn during his warm-up lap. Luckily he only suffered body damage so a quick stop into the garage and he was ready to race.

Morrison and Santamarina suffered similar fates, but escaped with only the price of time after their excursions into the gravel. The crowd gasped as Santamarina slid off course. Another 8 seconds and he would be in points trouble given that his nemesis in the BP/Toxic Lemon sailed to an easy victory. With an unimpressive third place Santamarina has all but sealed the Championship. Winning the next race won't be enough; Hester needs a DNF from Santamarina in order to tie in points. Even then the Swiss will lose the tie break because his rival has one more race win than he does in this roller coaster season.

Schloer's strong season has given him a lock on third, and left the Toyota team with homework for the off season. Toyota driver Ken Morrison was toying with different tire compounds all week and was left with few words after a frustrating race. "We still have room to improve."

Results:

1 – Hester, 2 – Schloer, 3 – Santamarina, 4 – Lucas, 5 – Morrison

Organizer Notes:

Last race of the season is next Friday (3/26). **No** qualifying on Thursday. Tentatively set aside April 9th on your calendars for the drivers banquet (during lunch)