

VRG RACE SCHEDULE

2017

- March 11, 2017** **Winter Tech in Clifton, NJ**
- April 7-9, 2017** **VDCA Wild Hare Run – Virginia International Raceway, Alton, VA**
Event Chairman: Mike Jackson, Tel: 561-622-7554, Email: vdca@vintagedrive.com
- May 17-21, 2017** **Jefferson 500 – Summit Point, WV**
VRG Drivers School (May 17-18)
with FREE Open Test Day (May 18)
Co-Event Chairmen: Cal Trumbo & Jim Karamanis
Tel: 304-449-7050 Email: j500@vrgonline.org
- June 22-24, 2017** **The Vintage Motorsports Festival – Thompson Speedway, Thompson, CT**
Oldest Road Course in the USA, Co-Sanctioned with the VSCCA
Royale Formula Ford Feature Race
Event Chairmen: Paul King, Chairman, and Mark Gunsalus, Co-Chairman
Tel: 508-847-4809. Email: paulking@charter.net
- Sept. 15-17, 2017** **New Jersey Historics – Lightning Circuit, NJ Motorsports Park, Millville, NJ**
MG Vintage Racers Focus Event, Royale Formula Ford Feature Race
Event Chairman: Butch O'Connor, Tel: 973-295-3674, Email: bfo@spsk.com
- Oct. 6-8, 2017** **VRG at The Glen – Watkins Glen, NY**
Royale Formula Ford Feature Race
Event Chairman: Mike Lawton, Tel: 978-274-5935, Email: Lawton@vrgonline.org
- ✓ **Oct. 20-22, 2017** **The Vintage Pumpkin Run – Dominion Raceway, Thornburg, VA**
Royale Formula Ford Feature Race IMSA RS/Trans Am 2.5 Reunion
Event Chairmen: Cal Trumbo and Jim Karamanis, Tel: 304-449-7050
Email: jim@vrgonline.org.
- Nov. 24-26, 2017** **Annual Turkey Bowl XXI – Summit Point, WV**
Event Chairman: Michael Oritt, Tel: 305-420-4929, Email: Michael@vrgonline.org

2017 VRG EVENT AT DOMINION: THE VINTAGE PUMPKIN RUN

by *Bill Stoler* (This article also ran in the December 2017 issue of *VICTORY LANE* magazine)

The VRG “Vintage Pumpkin Run” was held Oct 20-21, 2017 at Dominion Raceway in Thornburg Virginia. The event was held under blue skies and temperatures that were more like mid-September than late October, but it was perfect weather for vintage racing. The colors of autumn seemed delayed this year but the paddock was filled with the colors of the VRG racers and were joined by the colors of the Royale Formula Ford Challenge Series and the small-bore sedans of the IMSA RS/SCCA 2.5 Challenge Reunion.

The drivers began arriving Thursday evening with Ralph and Lisa Pagington in registration before passing under the watchful eye of Tivvy Shenton, the chief VRG technical inspector. After morning practice, qualifying races were held for Group 1 Historic Big Bore over 2L and Group 4 Historic Production under 2L shared sessions. Group 2 was for the Pre-1960 and small bore under 1300cc. Group 3 was the Formula Cars and the Sports Racers. Group 3 qualifying sessions included the Formula Fords of the Royale Formula Ford Challenge Series. A special 30-minute feature for the RFFCS Fords would be held on Saturday afternoon. This race would be the finale for the six-round series that began at the Wild Hare Run with the VDCA back in April.

Group 1 and 4

The 1973 MGB GT V8 of Les Gonda was fast all weekend and he captured the win in 3 of the 4 races of the weekend. Bob Ball in his 1974 BMW 2002 took a Group 2 win. George Wright took the runner-up spot twice during the weekend in his 1972 Datsun 240Z. Gary Hagopian ran near the front in his beautiful 1963 Jaguar XKE Coupe. Group 4 saw Craig Siefert running well in his newly acquired 1966 MGB.

Fresh off his trip to the Monterey Motorsports Reunion, the recently bestowed “Spirit of Monterey” award winner, Dr. Lee Talbot ran well in his 1967 Ginetta G4. Talbot ran well on Saturday in Group 4, but unfortunately, a suspension failure ended his weekend early during the Sunday morning race. Talbot indicated that it was the first time he had been in an accident that required a ride back to the pits since the early 2000’s when he rolled a Formula Ford at Summit Point. The 87-year-old Talbot has been racing for 64 years (including some pro SCCA racing) and has never suffered major injury, quite an accomplishment and a testament to his driving ability.



Group 2

Group 2 saw some great racing between the 1963 Austin Healey Sprite of Pete Carroll and the 1962 MG Midget of Larry Smith. Carroll captured three wins during the weekend and Michael Oritt captured the remaining Group 2 win on Sunday in his 1961 Ginetta G-4. Paul Wilson ran well and took a runner-up finish in his 1959 Jabbro MK II. Group 2 included some very interesting cars including the 1959 Peerless GT1 of Mark Rosenberg and the 1958 VAY Special of David Gibson.

Group 3

Group 3 featured the Formula Fords of the Royal Formula Ford Challenge Series. The Pumpkin Run weekend was the 6th and final round of the series that began in April at the VDCA Wild Hare Run. After a Friday evening paddock party with cocktails and the ever-popular raffle prizes, it was time to start racing on Saturday. Dave Fairchild captured the first race on Saturday in his 1972 Zink Z-10 edging out Tomas LaCosta and his 1969 Titan Mk5. Saturday's race #2 saw Chris Cogswell take his first win in a 1978 Crossle 32F with Andrew Stein taking the runner-up spot in his 1970 Merlyn Mk11/17. The last race on Saturday was the final feature race for the RFFCS. This would be the best FF race of the weekend and it was no surprise that it would be battle between two very talented drivers. Leon Hodges Austin in the 1976 Zink C5-A battled

with Scott Fairchild in his 1978 Zink Z-10. The two drivers swapped the lead during the entire 16 lap race. It came down to the very last lap, with Scott Fairchild spinning on the final turn as tires gave up and Leon Hodges Austin blasted down the long front straight for a well-deserved RFFCS Feature win. The Fords raced again on Sunday, with Chris Cogswell taking the early lead in Race #1 before a broken header caused him to retire early in his Crossle. At the checkers, it was David Kinsey getting his first win in his 1980 Zink Z-16. Leon Hodges Austin rounded out the weekend by capturing the final Group 3 contest of the weekend in Race #2.

IMSA RS/SCCA 2.5 Challenge Reunion

The IMSA RS/SCCA 2.5 Challenge turned out to be more of a "Battle of the Bimmers" when Jim Karamanis' 1972 Ford Pinto experienced transmission trouble couldn't make the grid for the feature event on Saturday. Joe Liles in his 1970 BMW 2002 led lap #1 and battled early with Bob Ball in the 1974 BMW 2002. It was a good race for both, with Ball taking the win over Liles with Tim Cashman rounding out the Challenge Race podium in 3rd place.

Legends Group

There was a special group for the "Legends of the Virginias," a series that will conclude at Summit Point during the Turkey Bowl weekend. This race group features interesting retro style and very quick 5/8 scale



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replicas of the 30s and 40s coupes and sedans and powered by 1250cc motorcycle engines. The Legends had feature races on Saturday and Sunday and both races were contested fiercely between the 1937 Ford of Chris Lilly and the 1934 Ford Coupe of Carter Weedon. Lilly was the top qualifier each day, but it was Weedon taking the checkered flag in the feature events.

The VRG dinner party was held Saturday evening in the banquet facilities overlooking the 4/10-mile oval at Dominion Raceway. The view from the suites was incredible and the Saturday night short-track racing action was certainly a contrast from the “gentlemen

racing of the VRG” earlier in the day on the road course! Let’s just say the safety vehicles made a bunch of laps during the evening and it was a great time for the club members. As the VRG logo was displayed on the track “jumbotron” screen, VRG event chair Jim Karamanis and FF driver, David Kinsey were interviewed by the public-address announcer. They described what it’s like to go vintage racing on the road course and invited fans to come back and visit on Sunday. Congratulations to Jim Karamanis, the Vintage Racer Group, the corner workers and the track staff for a safe and entertaining vintage race weekend at Dominion!





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For the driver who enjoys racing with others who value driver attitude, skill and car preparation.

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