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Remember When: Bob Stanford

Bob got his start in racing in 1964 driving a Triumph TR3 sports car. He competed with the Sports Car Club of America. He won the first race he ever drove in, at the Connellsville Airport. Over the next few years, he continued to sports cars. In 1968, he raced at Riverside Raceway in California. Bob had a lot of success during those years, winning many races plus several regional and divisional championships. His most memorable moment in racing was winning his first race in 1964.

In 1969, he bought a CAN AM car, and converted it to an open wheel single seat sports car. He raced the car all over the country, at such places as Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, Road Atlanta in Georgia, Limerock Park in Connecticut, Indianapolis Raceway Park in Indiana and Sebring, Florida, among other places.

Stanford raced in two National Championship races at Road Atlanta in 1970 and 72. He also raced in a series on road courses against such drivers as AI. Foyt, Mario Andretti, and Dick Smothers.

Bob began helping Dr. Gil Roth, in 1975. Roth was a fellow sports car driver before switching the dirt late models. Stanford liked dirt racing and sold his sports car at the end of that year. He started to build dirt modified and made his debut on July 4, 1976.

He raced in the modified class for eight years at Mercer Raceway, Tri City, Latrobe, Expo, Lernerville, Pennsylvania Motor, Jennerstown, Speedway 7 and Crawford County Speedway. He won many races and Tri City Speedway was his favorite track.

Bob's racing career came to a halt in January 1984 when a fire destroyed his house, racecar and all his tools and equipment. He was out of racing completely for the next five years, trying to recoup all that he had lost.

After being out of racing for five years, Bob returned to run the PCTC Senior Series in 1989 and won the title three times before retiring from competition. He decided to try running a few races in the Senior Series in Bruce Milbert's enduro car. The Senior Series first started in 1987, giving retired drivers a chance to get back into racing at a low cost. The series started out using enduro cars. Drivers over 40 years old had to be retired from racing for five years to be eligible to compete in the series, while drivers over 50 years old had to be retired from racing for two years. The series ran exclusively at Lernerville Speedway for the first three years. As the series grew, pure stocks replaced the enduro cars as the cars used in the series.

In 1990, Pennsylvania Motor Speedway ran a Senior Series event, and in 1991, Motordrome Speedway hosted an event. There were 12 races in 1991. The number of races in 1992 will jump to 16 races, and Jennerstown, Sharon and Marion Center Speedways hosted events in 1992. Each year several speedways were added to include Thunder Valley, Tri-City and Challenger.

Bob retired from U.S. Air in 1992. He started with the airlines as a plane washer then moved to welder and finally spent the last twenty years with the airlines as a quality control inspector. From 1993 to 2001, he found time to serve on the school board at Seneca Valley School District. If you know Bob, you can imagine the initial reaction when the school board members realized that this unique individual had been elected in his district. It did not take long for the board to understand that he was a no nonsense hard worker that would get the job done.

Stanford came out of retirement in 1998 to win the Glade Neil Memorial race for the P.C.T.C. Senior Series at Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Motor Speedway in September when he used the chrome horn to move race leader Don Gamble out of the way on the final turn of the last lap. Stanford was driving the Jack Folkmire #05 for the Folkmire Family. The win for the team was a special tribute to Jack who passed away in July of 1998.

Bob has been very active in the PCTC and has served as the club's Financial Officer in recent years. In 2003, he was inducted into the Pittsburgh Circle Track Club Hall of Fame with Bob Unks and John Orbin.

Since his retirement, he has completed a frame off restoration of a 1960 Morris Minor 1000 two-door sedan. His current project is the restoration of a 1958 Morris Minor four-door sedan. The

car will be revamped as a roadster with suicide doors, a tubular frame, 427 Chevy engine and a quick-change rear end. This will be another of Bob's creations. He enjoys cars and was the type of driver the fans enjoyed watching. He helps us all to remember when.