

Not all racing cars are beasts

By Jim Williams

With the approach of summer, racing cars come out of the garage and onto the trailer for another season of competition.

For the spectator, here's a sampler to help sort out the diverse types of motorsport, in the Lincoln area and elsewhere.

Sprint cars: As the "big cars" of the Nebraska State Fair, these beasts form many fans' image of what a racing car should be—upright seat, front engine, awesome noise and rough-and-tumble.

Their venue in the Lincoln area is Eagle Raceway, a one-third mile dirt oval in Eagle, about 20 minutes east on Hwy. 34.

The wild, dusty, broadsliding, bumping action makes many think sprint-car racing is the most exciting of all oval-track competition. I think they may be right. Eagle's opener is May 2.

Stock cars: It happens at Midwest Speedway, 4600 N. 27 St., a dirt oval. The Super Stock and Hobby Stock cars run in tight packs, providing tense battling or plodding boredom, depending on the competitors' caliber. The cars have token mufflers so you won't go deaf, and the location and time (Sundays at 2 p.m.) are convenient. It's definitely worth a look.

Dragging: It's the 1960s retro-trip, man, turning the quarter with a low E.T. down the asphalt aisle, eat 'em up, shut 'em down, oooh! Drag racing is a funny sport, with its one-dimensional demand of maximum acceleration over 1,470 feet. Its appeal is that it's easy to understand and identify with—who hasn't put his foot down hard at the stoplight just to edge ahead of the guy in the next lane?

Big-time drag shows are rare in this area, but only a class elitist would shun the grassroots of the sport.

Kearney Dragway, with events almost every Sunday, is the nearest connection for Lincoln drag addicts. If you think it looks easy from the stands, you can even plunk down the entry fee for a "stock" class and find out.

If you're in Kearney to soak up history at Fort Kearney or the Stuhr Museum, put a Beach Boys tape in the player and relive a vanished era.

Motocross: A motorcycle is a curious artifact—fauvism applied to transportation, a minimal vehicle. Taking these

motorized bare necessities out and shoving them full-bore across the roughest terrain available is just crazy enough to attract hard-core enthusiasts, and that is what motocross fans are.

Big time

The Lincoln Motocross Club sponsors these necks-for-sale races at a course near Wilber, the next being May 9. Those wishing to watch can ask at Mototech Bultaco-Ossa, 6232 Platte St.

You'll have to travel, in person or by television, to see major league motorsports. Here are some capsule descriptions:

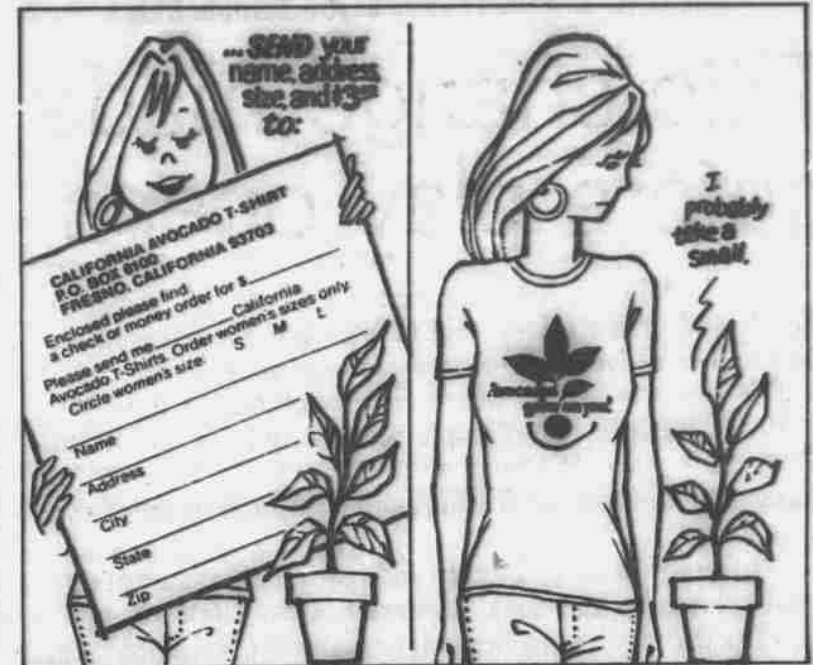
NASCAR: High-buck stock car racing, a popular TV item and Southern fertility rite. Speeds and purses high; excitement level about like good baseball—usually tranquil, occasionally thrilling.

Sports-prototype/GT: Ferraris, Porsches and such roar along road courses for hours on end. Best known event, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, is to France what Indianapolis 500 is to the United States; it's on June 13.

Formula I: A series appealing to those enamored of jet set glamor and technical hypersophistication. Most famous is the Grand Prix of Monaco, May 30; it may be televised by the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Indianapolis 500: "The world's richest auto race," United States Auto Club May 30 extravaganza, a subculture in itself—now can I praise it more?

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