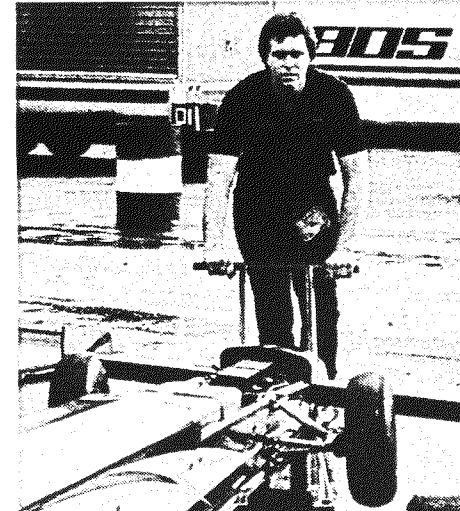
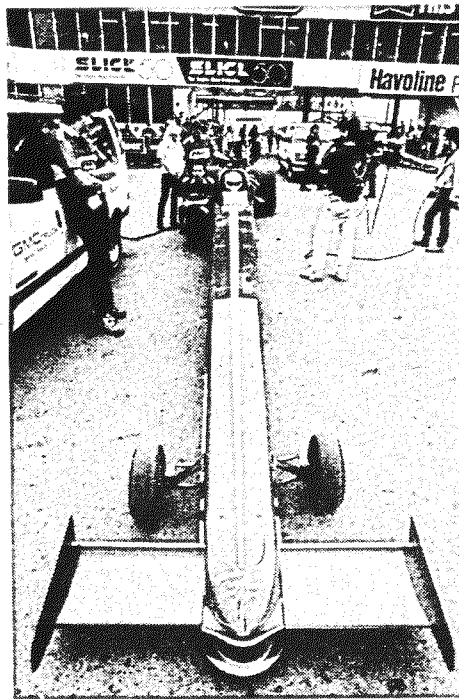


Teenager Dannielle DePorter (above left) showed real guts in keeping the Checker Auto Parts-backed Top Fuel dragster (left), owned by Paul Smith (above right), off the guardwall when a rear tire blew at 257 mph in the finish-line lights.



NHRA's Mitch Cooper, far left, and Slick 50's Ron Fash, far right, were given medallions by representatives of the Krewe of the Aquarius Mardi Gras Committee — from left, Ann Parker, Robert Roberts, and Johnny Lipstone — in appreciation of their sponsorship of the Galveston, Texas, Mardi Gras.

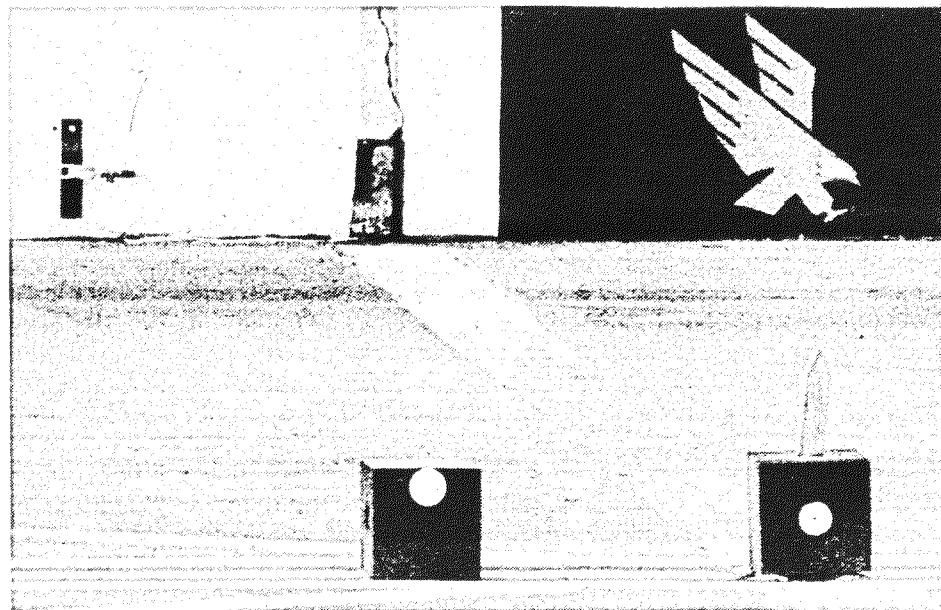


Like DePorter, Top Fuel sensation Doug Herbert (above), saved his car (left) when a slick blew in the lights. He lost in round one but remains fourth in the Winston points standings.

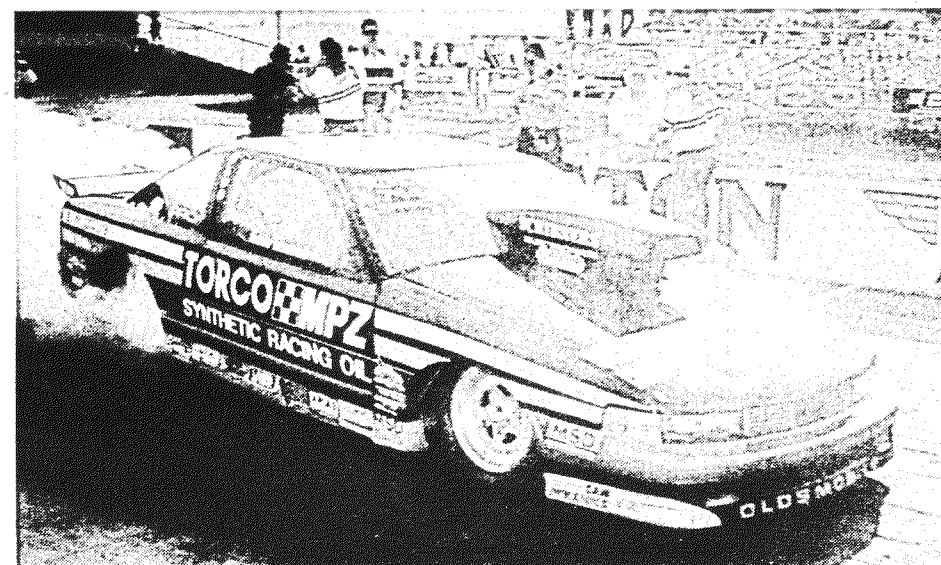
Larry Cupp, left, of the High Rollers, and John Deady, right, of the Robert E. Lee Marine Corps Junior ROTC, received congratulations from track co-owner Don Gay Sr. for their behind-the-scenes assistance at the Slick 50 Nationals.



Rickie Smith, left, who lost on a holeshot to many-time bridesmaid Mark Pawuk by .004-second in the Pro Stock final, now may be the most overdue driver in drag racing.



To keep the first 300-mph run from being lost to a timer malfunction, new backup clocks, operating independently from the existing timers, will be in place a few feet in front of each end of the speed trap at all remaining NHRA events.



Pro Stock driver Harry Scribner, like Torco teammate and Pro Stock Bike racer Tommy Bolton, qualified for a tough field but lost in round one to Mark Pawuk.