



photo by Bob Montoya

#6 Tom McIntyre, 1968 Camaro; #1 Mark Mountanos, 1967 Camaro; #2 Ken Epsman, 1971 AMC Javelin.

# HMSA Trans-Am Challenge

## Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach

April 15, 2018  
 – story by Mike Greene

For the second consecutive year, an HMSA (Historic Motor Sport Association) sanctioned event filled the noontime Saturday slot in the racing schedule at the 2018 Long Beach Grand Prix. This premiere race weekend, in which six race series took part, was as always a rich pageant, a really big show. Over 185,000 fans attended the event over the three-day run this year, which according to the event’s organizers is the largest crowd in at least 18 years.

Last year, the streets of Long Beach on Saturday were filled with the roar and thunder of historic Can-Am cars. This year, the Trans Am cars had the privilege - 29 of them, all very well-prepared and looking sharp, from an era before many (though certainly not all) of the spectators were born. The cars, built in the years from 1964 to 1971 (the “Golden

Era”), included iconic models such as the Pontiac GTO, the Ford Boss 302 Mustang, and Chevrolet Camaro. Of course, the fans loved seeing – and hearing - these things in action. The large-displacement engines (5-liters and up, for the most part) sounded nothing like the other cars on the 1.986-mile, 11-turn street course. And, surprisingly to some, the drivers really pushed their cars hard – it was a solid race and a great demonstration of what historic racing is all about. The eventual winner of the 20-minute event, Jimmy Hague in his yellow 1970 Boss

302 Mustang, had started in third position based on the Friday’s qualifying session. Bill Ockerlund (of Holland, Michigan) took a close second place in his 1968 Boss Mustang, and Chad Raynal drove his 1969 Chevrolet Camaro to third place, having started on-pole. Prize for traveling the furthest must go to Don Demetriadis of Burraneer, New South Wales, New Zealand. He finished solidly in the middle of the



photo by Bob Montoya

#92 Daniel Goldsmith, 1968 Camaro; #96 Rick Jeffery, 1967 Camaro.

The overall weekend was another smashing success – weather was mild to warm, with occasional cooling breezes from the adjacent Port of Long Beach. Local food trucks and food stands were abundant, and of course the fans had ready access to beer and other beverages. Music was everywhere, seemingly, when it wasn’t being drowned-out by the sound of racing. Aside from the Historic Trans Am Challenge, the racing included the IMSA Weather Tech Series featuring the Bubba Burger Sports Car Grand Prix at Long Beach, the Pirelli World Challenge, Motegi Super Drift Challenge, and the Speed Energy Super Trucks series. And oh yes, there was also the Verizon IndyCar Series. Of the latter, an elated Alexander Rossi (number 27 NAPA Auto



photo by Bob Montoya

#18 Terry Underwood, 1967 Dodge Dart.





photo by Mike Greene

**#16 Jimmy Hague, 1970 Ford Boss Mustang 302.**

Parts Honda) took the checkered flag after starting from pole and out front for most of the 85 laps. Rossi crossed the finish line 1.241 seconds ahead of Will Power (Team Penske Chevrolet), grabbing the championship lead in the process. "I can't really put into words how good the car was all weekend," Rossi said. "I think we proved that and I'm just so glad we were able to capitalize and nothing crazy happened." Third place went to Ed Jones (Chip Ganassi Racing Honda).

Tribute was also paid over the weekend to the late great Dan Gurney, who passed away early this year at age 86 in nearby Newport

Beach, and who had been a fixture and a fan-favorite at this event. He was one of the founders of the Grand Prix Association of Long Beach and had served on the Grand Prix Board of Directors for many years. He will be greatly missed.

Rumors were already circulating of the potential HMSA race class for Long Beach next year. Much too soon to spill

the beans (because it may have no basis in truth, for one thing) but if it turns out, it will be yet another great event to remember.

**TRANS-AM CHALLENGE**

**PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 J. Hague/1970 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 2 B. Ockerlund/1968 Ford Boss Mustang
- 3 C. Raynal/1969 Camaro
- 4 K. Cusak/1968 Ford Boss Mustang
- 5 C. Lienenberg/1970 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 6 K. Adams/1969 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 7 S. Link/1969 Camaro,
- 8 C. Conley/1970 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 9 D. Alcazar/1970 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 10 B. Godwin/1968 Camaro
- 11 L. Desimone/1970 Camaro



photo by Mike Greene

**#49 John Hildebrand, 1969 Pontiac GTO.**

- 12 D. Dimitriadis/1969 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 13 T. Brookerheimer/1967 Mercury Cougar
- 14 T. Underwood/1967 Dodge Dart
- 15 J. Fudge/1970 Camaro Camaro
- 16 D. Goldsmith/1968 Camaro
- 17 R. Goldsmith/1970 Dodge Challenger
- 18 R. Jeffery/1967 Camaro
- 19 L. Smith/1970 Camaro
- 20 G. Underwood/1967 Ford Shelby Mustang
- 21 M. Mountanos/1967 Camaro
- 22 L. Mountanos/1966 Chevy Nova
- 23 M. Martin/1970 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 24 R. Myers/1969 Ford Boss 302 Mustang
- 25 T. McIntyre/1968 Camaro
- 26 J. Clark/1968 Camaro 6
- 27 J. Hildebrand/1964 Pontiac GTO
- 28 K. Epsman/1971 AMC Javelin
- 29 J. Reed/1969 Camaro Z/28





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## USRRC Seniors Tour 2018





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**SPOKANE FESTIVAL OF SPEED**  
June 1 - 3, Spokane Co. Raceway

Manufacturers Championship  
Production Sports & GT  
Over/Under 2L

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST HISTORICS**  
June 29 - July 1, Pacific Raceways

Sports Racing Over/Under 2L  
Manufacturers Championship  
Production Sports & GT  
Over/Under 2L

**COLUMBIA RIVER CLASSIC**  
Sep. 8 - 9, Portland Int'l Raceway

Sports Racing Over/Under 2L  
Manufacturers Championship  
Production Sports & GT  
Over / Under 2L