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Track Time

TIM MILLER

Local auto racing news

Potter, Perno, and Straus go into Canadian Drag Racing Hall of Fame, and a sour shock absorber keeps Lichy from claiming ISMA Super Modified title

It was a call he never expected. The call came a few months ago.

"I am sitting here still in shock from a phone call from the Canadian Drag Racing Hall of Fame," said Dundas native Rob Potter. "It seems photographers are considered for this honor and for reasons I still can't understand, they are inducting me. This is almost surreal to me."

Well, Potter made the trip to Montreal last weekend to accept his honor as part of the second group inducted into the CDRHF. The non-profit organization was formed in 2014, headed up by Montreal businessman, auto dealer, and racing enthusiast John Scotti to rec-

ognize Canadians who have excelled in the sport.

An accomplished photographer and a self-proclaimed car guy, Potter has stood behind the wall shooting drag racing for years at many Canadian and US strips, but his home base has always been the Cayuga Dragway of Toronto Motorsports Park. While he does not run up and down the track with his cameras as much as in the past, he is still actively involved as TMP's track announcer.

And along with his announcing, he continues as the most prominent historian of the sport. His collection of historical photos and other drag race material is second to none in Canada. Potter is also the main

force behind the popular Drag Race Memories shows which have been held for several years at Hamilton's Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum.

Also included in the class of 2016 are Stoney Creek speed shop owner Venice Perno, who not only races in the Can-Am Stock/Super Stock Series, but has several IHRA (International Hot Rod Association) and NHRA (National Hot Rod Association) class titles to his credit.

Waterford's Charlie Havilland, who raced with his blown Chrysler-powered Altered both in Canada and the US in the 1960s was honored, as well as Bert Straus of Kitchener, well-known for his famous "Chilly Willy" gasser which took the B/Gas NHRA record in 1973 and won the D/Gas championship at the 1971 NHRA Nationals at Indianapolis. Another prominent inductee is Bob Elliott, who now hails from Wingham. Elliott boosted Canadian drag racing with his succession of "Northern Force" alcohol, nitromethane, and jet-powered Funny Cars.

A broken shock absorber kept Mike Lichy from winning this year's ISMA championship.

Going into the season final, the Inerkip racer had a points lead over Ohio's Dave Shullick Jr in the International Super Modified Association for 2016. But during this last race, the ISMA World Series at Thompson, Connecticut, he had to



CDRHF Photo

Noted track photographer Rob Potter was inducted into the Canadian Drag Racing Hall of Fame last weekend. He is shown with his daughter Yvonne, who crews for the Paton Racing Top Fuel Dragster.

park his Super on lap 33 of the 50-lap contest.

Lichy had a 39-point lead going into Thompson, but by not finishing the race, and Shullick winning, Lichy had to settle for second in championship points while Shullick went on to win his second consecutive championship. Taking third in the race was London's Mark Sammut.

The author of several books on auto racing, Tim Miller can be reached at timmillerthearguy@gmail.com.



Jim Feeney

ISMA racer Dave Shullick Jr is shown here winning the series final at Thompson, CT. A broken shock removed any chances for Mike Lichy taking the championship.

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