

Formula Continental Fracas Results in Win for Reichert

October 19, 2018 at 1:31 PM



SONOMA, Calif. (Oct. 19, 2018) -- The second race of the 55th SCCA® National Championship Runoffs® was an exciting, action-packed Formula Continental (FC) battle. Timothy de Silva led the field to the start at Sonoma Raceway with Robert Armington right next to him. But going into Turn 2, contact between cars took both Armington and de Silva out of the race, as well as a few other competitors.

A full-course yellow brought the field under control for track cleanup, with Mitch Egner at the front followed by Paul Marino and Peter West. But during the caution period, Egner pulled through pit lane and dropped all the way back to 11th place. So, when the restart came on lap four, it was Marino leading with West and Russ Werner chasing.

Marino was able to build a three-second lead, but back in the field it was Jason Reichert, of Henderson, Nevada, who was dialed in and making up time. Egner, too, started to claw his way back through the field. By lap six, Reichert had grabbed the second spot from Werner and had his sights set on Marino. Two laps later and it was Reichert, driving the No. 32 Lucas Oil/Layrite/Coast Fireplaces Van Diemen RF03, who had the lead.

Meanwhile, Egner was coming through the field like a man on a mission. One

after another, he was picking off competitors and closing in on Reichert. Working lap 13, after some close racing with Reichert, Egner made a move in Turn 6 and took the lead.

But the race wasn't over yet. With only three laps remaining, Egner pulled off the track with some damage to the front of his car. Reichert, who had a problem in qualifying and was running his backup engine in the race, inherited the lead. He fended off second-place runner Bob Negrón for a bit in the No. 9 Terri Negrón Web Design Van Diemen RF99, and kept the car together to bring home a National Championship in his first appearance at the Runoffs.

“I'm really surprised,” Reichert said before taking his victory lap around Sonoma Raceway's 12-turn, 2.52-mile circuit. “The car was handling great and I was trying to get to the front as quick as possible. But our backup engine started sputtering and we were losing speed on the straightaways. I knew the engine might not make it. So, when I saw Mitch pull off, I knew I was a little bit closer to being able to win it.”

Negrón, who was involved in the first-lap incident but emerged unscathed, brought the car home in second for his first Runoffs podium. And after 40 years of racing, Negrón has decided to wrap up his “career” with this year's Runoffs.

Scott Vreeland, in the No. 51 Redhorse Constructors/BV Training Van Diemen RF01, managed to claim the third and final podium spot after starting tenth. That effort also snagged him the Sunoco Hard Charger award.

“I feel very blessed and very lucky at this point,” Vreeland said. “It was a journeyman kind of race for me, just trying to click off the best times that I could as consistently as I could.”

Werner, in the No. 2 Slingshot Sports Van Diemen RF00, brought his car home in fourth position, and West, in the No. 99 DFR/Racing

Optics/Bulletproof Van Diemen RF05, grabbed fifth.

The 55th SCCA® National Championship Runoffs®, the Pinnacle of American Motorsports, crowns Sports Car Club of America's Road Racing National Champions this year at Sonoma Raceway in California Friday, Oct. 19 through Sunday, Oct 21.

Live, online video coverage of Runoffs races, presented by Mazda, is available throughout the three days of competition at SCCA.com/live. An audio race call, supplied by the Super Tour Radio broadcast team, is also available at www.SCCA.com/live, as well as live timing and scoring for each National Championship race.

SONOMA, Calif. -- Provisional results for Friday's Formula Continental race at the 55th SCCA National Championship Runoffs from Sonoma Raceway, with finish position, starting position in parentheses, driver, hometown, car and laps completed.

- 1, (5), Jason Reichert, Henderson, NV, Van Diemen RF03, 20.
- 2, (6), Robert Negron, Morgan Hill, CA, Van Diemen RF99, 20.
- 3, (10), G Scott Vreeland, Livermore, CA, Van Diemen RF01, 20.
- 4, (11), Russ Werner, White Salmon, WA, Van Diemen RF00, 20.
- 5, (9), Peter West, Malibu, CA, Van Diemen RF05, 20.
- 6, (13), Lyn Greenhill, Roseville, CA, Van Diemen RF02, 20.
- 7, (14), Robert Yallen, Woodland Hills, CA, Van Diemen RF00, 20.
- 8, (15), Kim Willcox, Stateline, NV, Van Diemen RF01, 19.
- 9, (7), Paul Marino, Chatsworth, CA, Van Diemen RF06, 19.
- 10, (16), Sterling Ellsworth, Santa Barbara, CA, Van Diemen RF01, 19.
- 11, (12), Chuck Moran, Oakton, VA, Van Diemen RF99, 17.
- 12, (3), Mitch Egner, West Kelowna, BC, Van Diemen RF02, 16.
- 13, (2), Robert Armington, El Dorado Hills, CA, Van Diemen RF00, 0.
- 14, (1), Timothy de Silva, Manhattan Beach, CA, Van Diemen RF01, 0.
- 15, (4), Tom Hope, Downey, CA, Van Diemen RF03, 0.
- 16, (8), Paul Rodler, San Rafael, CA, Van Diemen RF00, 0.

Length of Race: 50 miles

Overall Time of Race: 35:43.086 (avg. 84.663 mph)

Margin of Victory: 00.355 seconds

Fastest Race Lap: 1:34.053 (96.456 mph)

Lap Leaders: #4 laps 1,13-16; #14 laps 2-6; #32 laps 7-12, 17-20

Sunoco Hard Charger: #51 G Scott Vreeland

Image: Jason Reichert battled hard for the Formula Continental Runoffs win.

Credit: Jay Bonvouloir