

CANADIAN GRAND PRIX
50th Anniversary Event
 August 11-12-13 2017
 at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park

67 17

- Celebrate with many local and international racing legends
- Saturday evening rock show
- CVMG Concours d'elegance
- Swap Meet and vendors
- VIP dinner

TICKETS 10\$ A DAY

1967-2017
 Canadian Grand Prix

VRRRA.CA



50 years ago in Canada

On September 30, 1967, the one and only Canadian road racing GP ever staged took place on the 2.459-mile/3.957km Mosport circuit 60 miles/100km northeast of Toronto.

Story Alan Cathcart.

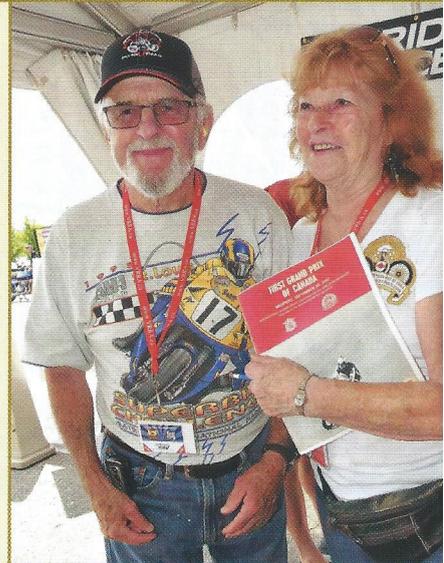
Photos Bill Petro, Colin Fraser and Alex Bilo

Opened in 1961 and still in use today. Fifty years later, on August 10th-12th this year, Canada's VRRRA/Vintage Road Racing Association staged a commemorative event as part of their annual Mosport Vintage Festival. Alongside a full race programme this included a series of parades

ABOVE Michelle Duff on the Surtees 7R Special.

RIGHT Former ace Yvon DuHamel with Ms. Vada Seeds, director of the Canadian Motorcycle Hall of Fame.

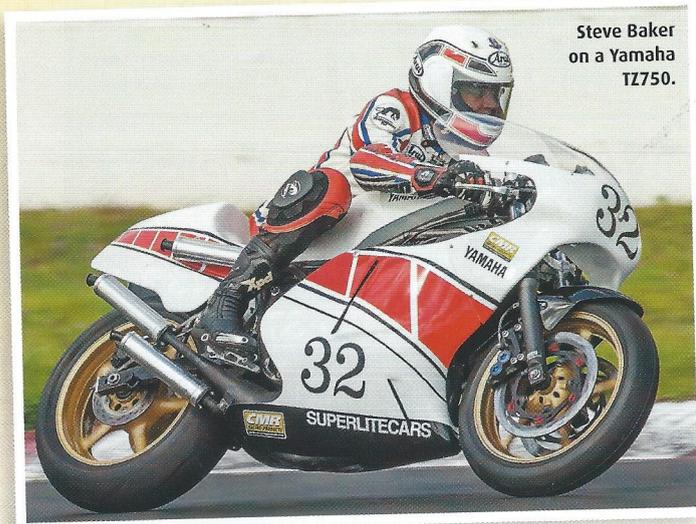
featuring some of the bikes and riders which took part in the Canadian GP meeting, as well as more modern road racing stars like ex-250cc World champion, Rod Gould, and Steve Baker, whose career was sadly ended in 1988 after a serious crash at Mosport. 1967 was Canada's 100th birthday as a nation, and to mark this the Federal Centennial Commission underwrote the costs of bringing the world's top riders and their machines to compete in the season-ending Canadian GP race, the final round in the 500cc World Championship so closely contested by Honda-mounted Mike Hailwood and Giacomo Agostini on the MV Agusta triple. 125cc and 250cc races were also held. Yamaha's Bill Ivy was cake-walking his way to the 125cc World title on his factory V4 with teammate Phil Read focusing on regaining the 250cc World crown from reigning champion Hailwood and his six-cylinder Honda. All three races attracted many American entries from across the nearby border, who actually outnumbered the local Canadian riders in the 125/250cc grids. Canadian Mike Duff was the country's first star road racer – a GP race-winner and championship runner-up to his teammate in the factory Yamaha squad, Phil Read. Mike has now become Michelle, and was present at Mosport to ride the very same Arter-Matchless G50 she took to the rostrum there 50 years ago. She was visibly moved to be reacquainted with the bike for the first time in five decades, as well as with the 350cc Surtees 7R which provided the chassis template for the later Arter G50, and which she



describes as 'my favourite ever bike to ride'. Both now belong to New York-based Team Obso whose patron Rob Iannucci was present to see history live again.

The 500cc Canadian GP was also notable for being the last time a Velocette scored World Championship points, with Andreas Georgades finishing on his modified Thruxton, while down in 11th place on his Manx Norton was American Bob MacLean, future team owner in AMA and GP racing, whose privateer WCM race team scored 500GP victories. Kiwi Simon Crafar, Frenchman Regis Laconi and Aussie Garry McCoy.

After such a successful 50th commemoration, including a gala banquet on the Saturday evening at which many of the contestants regaled those present with memories of 1967, many will be hoping the VRRRA is already looking forward to repeating the commemoration ten years from now on the 60th anniversary of the day the Grand Prix circus came to Canada. ■



Steve Baker on a Yamaha TZ750.