

DAYTONA WAS CHOCK FULL of prophets on the eve of the second annual 3-hr Continental and its new little cousin, the 250-mi Challenge Cup Race. It was a weekend for soothsayers, what with the rules changed for the Continental to include only Grand Touring cars instead of GTs and sports/racing cars (as it was last year when Dan Gurney won in a Lotus 19). Also there was to be the new Challenge Cup race for closed 2-seaters, run on the lickety-split 2.5-mi banked stock car tri-oval.

The know-it-alls in the stock car pits had it down pat. The winner would have to be Paul Goldsmith in a Tempest, A. J. Foyt in a Sting Ray or Fireball Roberts in a Ferrari. Everyone was sure a Ferrari couldn't make it against the big bores on the banking. Nevertheless, they said, Ol' Fireball couldn't be counted out.

Stirling Moss, replete with a new-grown beard, had it touted as probably Dan Gurney in a Ford-powered AC Cobra because, "Dan's the best driver in this country; best in the world, probably, after Jimmy Clark."

The Mecom Racing Team figured it to be their own Roger Penske. His Ferrari GTO would last, and the stock-car drivers would dnf in those lumbering Sting Rays. Rosebud had it somewhat the same, only it was Penske who might lag behind, because he was having trouble picking tires. Their Innes Ireland, also in a GTO, would set rapid and even lap times to emerge the victor.

One thing most were sure of was that Pedro Rodriguez, in a brand new North American Racing Team 3-liter GTO, would be a very outside choice. "He won't be driving hard after his brother's accident," said the cafeteria pundits.

Almost everybody was right, except about Pedro. He won, driving very hard.

On Saturday, in a cold rain which whittled the field to 14 determined competitors, Goldsmith took the Challenge Cup Race on the tri-oval driving a Pontiac Tempest with a crammed-in 421-cu-in. engine and a new semi-auto transmission. As the stock car brethren had predicted, neither Ferraris nor (and this surprised them) Sting Rays could stay near him; he lapped the rest of the field almost at will, averaging a brave 145.16 mph for the distance on the wet



Rodriguez' Ferrari triumphant at the **2nd Daytona Continental**

With the front taped and the side decaled, Rodriguez' Ferrari streaks past the stands at Daytona.

**BY DENNIS CIPNIC
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