

\$42,000 heist in Marietta—see back page

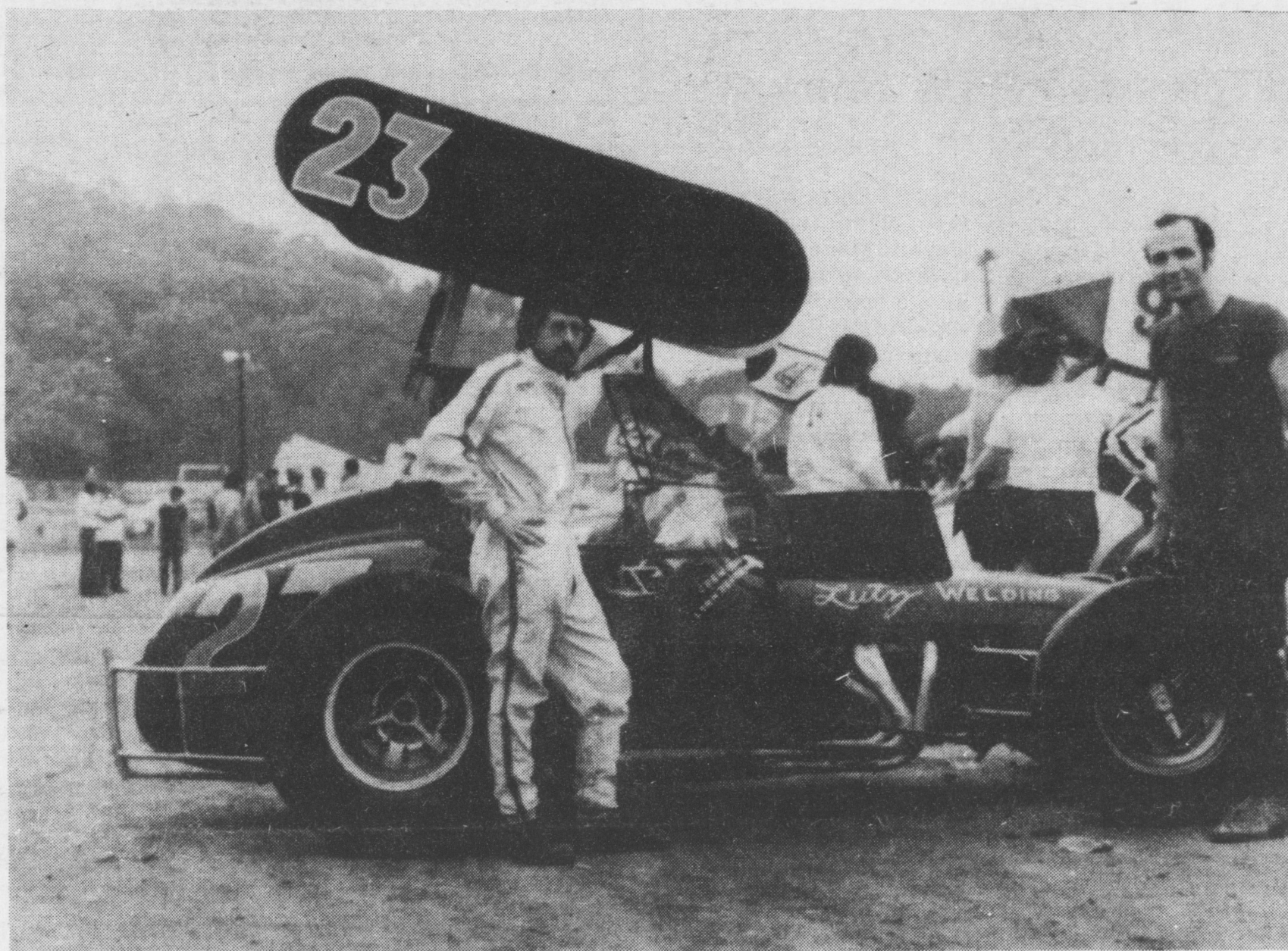
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FIFTEEN CENTS



Dennis Gross, of 45 N. Chestnut Street in Marietta, is shown with one of his sprint cars. On the right is racing team member Lynn Berkheimer. The large structure above the car body is an airfoil which acts like an

inverted airplane wing to force the car downward at high speed and thus improve traction. The space on the sides of the airfoil is available for advertising. Dennis is asking \$2000 for both sides for an entire season.

Dennis Gross, sprint car racer

"It's like being a drug addict," says Dennis Gross of Marietta. "Everything else is just passing time until you get to do what you want to do."

What Dennis has always wanted to do is race sprint cars. Virtually all of his spare time—and money—is spent building up to the magic moment when he climbs into the single seat of a custom racer and zooms around an oval dirt track.

"I've wanted to race sprint cars since I was about nine," he says. Until he was about 13, his family would spend two days each weekend watching races. When Dennis graduated from high school in York County, his guidance counselor advised him to go to college. He didn't want to go to college—he wanted to race cars—but he did to be on the safe side, and got a degree in industrial engineering from Penn State. (He works in that capacity at the Armstrong plant.)

As soon as he graduated from college, he bought his first racing car. He's had several since: some were destroyed in crashes, and one burned up in a garage fire.

A sprint car costs about \$18,000 and takes several months of full-time work to construct. The frame is built up first from heli-arc welded chrome-moly steel tubing; an engine is totally rebuilt and fitted in; fiberglass and aluminum panels and cowlings are wrapped around the frame; and a torsion-bar suspension system is designed, built, and tuned. It's a lot of work.

All this work can be wrecked in a second by the wrong move in a race. The tracks are about 3/8's of a mile long, and up to 24 cars are on it at any one time, all traveling at high speed. Dennis showed the *Times* reporter a series of snapshots of his car, with him in it, flying up in the air and doing a series of flips. Another driver named Kenny Weld, from Kansas

City, drifted into Dennis's car, or the other way around—Dennis isn't sure exactly what happened. In any case, his car was totaled. Mr. Weld, perhaps feeling a bit guilty, helped him build another one from the remains of the wreck.

"I hadn't been racing too long when that happened," Dennis says. "and while I was rebuilding I wondered if I'd be afraid to race again. But I found out that what I was afraid of was the fear itself—I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to race. Once I got back on the track, it was like coming home."

After several hair-raising mishaps in the last four years, Dennis now feels safer on a track than on the highway, and gives solid reasons to back up his feeling. In the first place, the drivers on a track are much more skilled than the average driver on a public road. None of them are drunk, and they're all paying attention—and all

going the same direction. Secondly, a sprint car is a much safer vehicle to crash in than the average car. Each sprint car has a welded roll cage surrounding the driver, four different seat belts, and (often) automatic fire extinguishers that spray the driver in an accident. Drivers wear two layers of flame-proof clothing and crash helmets.

While Dennis is the one who actually drives the car, he isn't the only one who works on it. The team consists of Mike McConell of Maytown, Brett Gusler of Rowenna, Phil Uris of Marietta, and Lynn Berkheimer. He gets occasional help from Marlin Miller (of Miller's Mobil), John Lutz (of Lutz' welding shop), Ed Grimsey, Sr., of Mount Joy, and Bob Flanagan of Bob's Barber Shop in Marietta. In addition to the work of making a sprint car, there is a great deal of maintenance at the track and elsewhere during the season.

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Who do you know who's GREAT?? The Lions want to hear from you

Candidates are being sought in Marietta and Maytown area for the East Donegal Area Citizen Award. The winner of the new award, established only this year by the Marietta Lion's Club, will be announced in June.

If you live in the area, you are invited to send in your nomination. Forms are at the Post Offices. Send the completed form to Pat Kenney, Jr., 532 Essex St., Marietta 17547, by May 1st.

All nominees must live in the township. Entrants will be judged on how much

they have done for the community. When you send in your nominee's name, list the organizations that he or she is associated with, and what they have contributed.

A committee of the Marietta Lions will choose the first award recipient. The committee is composed of Dottie Linard (chairwoman), Robert V. Cresswell, Hazel Baker, Doris White, and the Rev. John S. Hiestand.

Remember to pick up the form at your Post Office. It is a white 8½" by 11" piece of paper.

No No Nanette

Donegal High School will present the nostalgic Roaring Twenties musicale, *No, No, Nanette*, on April 6, 7, and 8 in the DHS auditorium, at 8:00 each night. Returning to the footlights after such smash hits as *Brigadoon* and *Camelot*, the performing arts department has mounted a show of superb music, comedy, and dancing—all to the catchy tunes of Vincent Youmans.

The title role will be played by Becky Zimmerman, aided and abetted by Mark Wagner as Tom Trainor, her boyfriend. Jim Johnson, a veteran of Donegal shows, plays Billy Early, an adroit lawyer who also manages to be the scapegoat. Floyd Runkle has been cast as Jimmy Smith, Nanette's adopted father, and a millionaire Bible publisher who works his way into ridiculous situations only to be rescued by his lawyer.

Pauline, the family maid,

is played by Allison Hawthorne, another Donegal stage regular. Joi Shearer takes the part of Flora Latham, a former Follies girl who Jimmy Smith befriends. Other roles are played by Deb Torres, Jolene Lindemuth, Joyce Darkey, and Tammy Duke. The entire production is under the direction of Mrs. RoAnn Lau, Donegal musical director. Mrs. Mary-Margaret Peraro is the dramatic coach. Choreography and set design is by Mrs. Linda Ross, while Mr. Glenn Hess is the stage manager. Costumes were designed and made by Miss Kathi Wiler and Mrs. Betty Narkiewicz.

Other cast members, in the chorus, are Wayne Mylin, Bruce Wagner, Patrick Kenney III, Fred Bigler, Kathi Shelly, Linda Pennell, Lisa Mummaw, Margie Endslo, Margaret Wood, Dorothy Coddington and Maxine Maxwell.

Mini Sports Show at DHS

Don't forget the Mini Sports Show and Spaghetti Dinner (all you can eat!) at Donegal High School on April 1st starting at 4:30. There will be a film, food, demonstrations, and exhibitions. Admission will be

by free-will donation.

The program is sponsored by the Donegal Fly-Tying Club and the Student Council.

Everyone is invited. Remember, that's this Saturday night.