

After a poor start, Jo Siffert soon worked his way to the front of the field in his works 908 Porsche—and stayed there.

## 3-litre Porsche procession

**Jo Siffert heads Porsche 1-2 in Austrian GP — Paul Hawkins third overall and G4 victor — Teddy Pilette drives superb race for Alfa Romeo — Lolas and Alpine retire**

By **PATRICK McNALLY**

**J**O SIFFERT continued his winning streak by taking the Austrian Grand Prix in a 3-litre Porsche 908 at a new record average speed of 171.99 kph, setting fastest lap at another new record of 1 m 4.82 s in the process. Second were team-mates Hans Herrmann and Kurt Ahrens, and third, although five laps behind, came Paul Hawkins, the Australian also winning the Group 4 category in his Ford GT40. Teddy Pilette drove an excellent race in the 2½-litre Alfa Romeo Tipo 33 and was rewarded with fourth place overall less than 20 secs behind Hawkins.

The 2-litre category went to Willie Kauhsen/Karl von Wendt (Porsche 910), while the small G4 class was won by Formula Vee champions Pankl and Marko in a Carrera 6.

This was probably the last race meeting to be held on the Zeltweg airfield circuit, for a new track is in the process of being built less than a mile away. Although a round in the Sports Car Manufacturers Trophy, the 500 Kms of Zeltweg only counted for half points and neither the Alan Mann F3Ls nor the JW GT40s bothered to come.

### ENTRY

**T**HE last-minute withdrawal of the Alan Mann 3-litre Ford prototypes, coupled with the absence of the JW GT40s, made the entry for the Austrian GP a trifle sketchy, to say the least. The Alan Mann cars didn't materialise due to political strife within the house of Ford—a great shame as these cars have tremendous potential and would have been virtually certain of victory on this fast circuit; while the JW Fords could gain nothing as far as the championship went, as this meeting only counted for half points and as only the best five results can be counted—they would have had to drop points.

Although Porsche were in a similar position to the Wyer Fords, they decided to come along in force, for two main reasons. Their Achilles Heel wheel bearings, cause of their failure at Watkins Glen, the Targa Florio, and the 'Ring, had been modified by machining new hubs to take bearings 20 per cent larger, and as an added precaution a new type of grease was being used. Thus the Stuttgart concern had the opportunity of a long-distance trial run prior to the deciding round at Le Mans, which after all is only a month away. The other reason, of lesser importance perhaps, was that the entire race was being televised, which would give them some excellent free publicity. Porsche System Engineering arrived with four 3-litre 908s, all identical in specification with short tails and their rather peculiar rear-mounted flaps. These flaps, which first appeared at Watkins Glen,

seem to have involved rather wishful thinking: their position is controlled directly by the movement of the wheel, as the controlling arm is connected directly to the bottom wishbone. Under braking, the flaps come up but the movement would appear to be only about 3 deg; under cornering with body roll, one flap comes up and the other down. Mind you, it all looks very impressive. Porsche drivers on this occasion were Jo Siffert and Vic Elford, who had cars to themselves, while the other two 908s were shared by Hans Herrmann/Kurt Ahrens and Jochen Neerpasch/Rudi Lins. Neerpasch was having his first drive since his nasty accident at Spa, which up to this time had affected his eyesight and given him periods of dizziness.

The only other 3-litre prototypes came from Alpine Renault and Racing Team VDS. The 3-litre V8 Alpine was a brand new A220 (chassis number 1731) with the low-line nose and rear-mounted radiators. Gordini was personally supervising, and the drivers were Mauro Bianchi and André de Cortanze. The VDS entry was one of their two T33 Alfas fitted with a 2½-litre engine specially for the occasion, to be driven by the fastest driver in the team, Teddy Pilette.

The other VDS Alfa was in the 2-litre category as it was running the more conventional V8 engine, and this was in Serge Trosch's capable hands. Ranged against this solitary Alfa were four 6-cylinder Porsche 910s. Bill Bradley was sharing his 910 with Tony Dean, the car looking immaculate since its rebuild after Vic Elford's practice shunt at Mugello—a great credit to Bill's mechanics Chris Maltin and Paddy

O'Grady, who had built the car up from a bare chassis in less than four days in time to get it to Wunstorf the previous weekend. Rico Steine-mann and Dieter Spoerry had brought along the Hart-Ski car with which Siffert walked away with the Enna race, while Gerhard Koch had his well-campaigned but nevertheless well-turned out 910. IGFA Racing also arrived with a similar Porsche for Willie Kauhsen and the affluent Karl von Wendt.

The big G4 class was contested by Oulton Park protagonists Jo Bonnier and Michael de Udy and their Lola T70 coupés. Bonnier's has already been sold to David Prophet on the understanding that the Swede could finish his 1968 programme; however, Prophet was there to drive if the opportunity arose. Bonnier's, or should we say Prophet's, Lola has a Bartz-prepared Chevrolet motor with Lucas fuel injection, the chassis being one of the original Team Surtees Lola-Aston jobs; it has many detailed suspension modifications as it was the car with which Big John did most of his testing. De Udy's Lola continues to run a Traco motor with Weber carburettors.

Also in this category were the Ford GT40s of Paul Hawkins and Edward Nelson. The Hawkins car is of course one of the ex-Alan Mann lightweight cars built originally in 1966, since converted back to G4 and extensively modified by the Australian. The engine now sports Gurney Weslake heads on a 302 cu. ins block with Weber induction; recent modifications include mammoth 14 ins width rear wheels. Nelson's car has also been extensively modified since the start of the season and is now fitted with a very special Holman and Moody 4.7 four-bolt main bearing, dry deck engine which apparently cost a small fortune, but produces over 450 bhp on a low 10.5 compression ratio. There are no gaskets between the block and heads, and the water and oil passages are blocked off (hence dry deck) save for a couple for coolant, and lubricant is now carried via pipes on the outside of the engine.

The 2-litre G4 category consisted of three Carrera 6s and a Lotus 47. Hans Dieter Dechent

and Richard Jöst were driving the veteran Scuderia Lufthansa car, the Austrian Peter Peter, recently nick-named Double Peter by Jochen Rindt's mechanic, brought along his machine, while Formula Vee champions Pankl and Doctor Marko had borrowed a very tatty Carrera entered by the Bosch Racing Team. The Lotus 47 was entered by the Valvoline Racing Team, although owned and driven by the Austrian Horst Mundschutz.

## PRACTICE

THERE was more than enough time for practice, three hours on the Friday afternoon and a couple of hours on the Saturday. For both sessions the track was dry, although on Saturday a strong wind had everybody scratching their heads regarding gear ratios and times were generally down.

Siffert, who seems really on form these days, quickly worked his times down, eventually recording a 1 m 4.86 s in the 3-litre Porsche, nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  sec faster than Elford's best in the sister car. Third fastest was another 908 driven by Herrmann and Ahrens, which was only a tenth slower than Elford with a time of 1 m 5.73 s before dropping a valve and holing a piston. Despite ignition problems the 3-litre Alpine, after a poor initial showing with de Cortanze, really got going towards the end of practice and Bianchi succeeded in recording a very creditable 1 m 6.6 s—fourth fastest overall. Pilette went surprisingly well, too, and throwing the 2½-litre Alfa around with a will showed it to be predictable and fast with a time of 1 m 7.38 s.

Continual electrical trouble made the fourth 3-litre Porsche misfire badly at the top end, and although Neerpasch was very fast round the corners his best time of 1 m 8.6 s was nearly 3 secs slower than the other team cars. The Porsche mechanics changed various electrics including the alternator and the metering unit without any noticeable improvement.

Fastest of the 2-litre class was Steinemann, who got the Hart-Ski 910 round in 1 m 9.52 s, 0.1 sec faster than von Wendt's similar car. Surprise of practice was the speed with which Pankl drove the tatty Bosch Carrera—despite dreadful understeer he achieved 1 m 10.31 s, easily fastest of the 2-litre Group 4 cars; Serge Trosch in the 2-litre Alfa was 0.5 sec slower. By far the hairiest was Double Peter, who spun many times at the hairpin yet still recorded 1 m 11.7 s.

Although both Hawkins and Prophet arrived in time to warm up their cars, neither made any attempt at fast times, although Hawkins found time to take the TV man round, which probably provided some good footage (pity they didn't let Paul do the commentary).

Everybody arrived in time for Saturday's practice, but the strong wind up the straight kept times down. Siffert only did enough laps to bed in brakes and tyres and his best was 1 m 7.4 s, his previous day's time assuring him of pole position. Elford, too, had a very limited practice as he was called in almost immediately to have his oil cooler changed after a stone had caused a slight fracture; however, Vic's Friday's time put him on the front row. Ahrens and Herrmann, whose car had been fitted with a new engine overnight, did more than a few laps, Ahrens having a very hairy moment at the hairpin, locking up all the brakes and sliding for 75 yds in an enormous cloud of rubber smoke. This pair recorded the best time of the day, but it was slower than their Friday time. Although the Alpine didn't get going properly at all due to a recurrence of distributor trouble, Mauro's previous time earned him the last place on the front row.

Bonnier found the Lola to be hopelessly undergeared and was lifting off half-way down the straight; nevertheless he managed 1 m 6.7 s, the same as Ahrens had recorded that afternoon, which gave him an inside place on the second row along with Hawkins, who managed 1 m 7 s without exerting himself or the car too much. Pilette changed the springs and shock absorbers

on the big-engined Alfa but went no faster, instead spinning off into the bales on the fast right-hander after the pits—fortunately damage was confined to rear end fibreglass bodywork.

De Udy's practice as cut short when his oil pressure dropped to nought, and he parked the green Lola out on the circuit having already earned a place on the third row of the grid. The Neerpasch/Lins 908 was still having ignition trouble and they changed the alternator again before it sounded right, but neither driver had a real opportunity to see how it went. Nelson looked very neat and tidy and his time of 1 m 8.6 s put him on the same row as de Udy and Neerpasch, the remaining place being filled by Rico Steinemann in the 910—the fastest 2-litre car.

On the fourth row were the Kauhsen/von Wendt 910, the Pankl/Marko Carrera 6, and Trosch's Alfa, none of whom had improved their times, while Bill Bradley found himself near the back of the grid—a position which didn't reflect the capabilities of either car or driver.

Siffert Porsche 1 m 4.86 s	Elford Porsche 1 m 5.62 s	Herrmann Porsche 1 m 5.73 s	Bianchi Alpine 1 m 6.6 s
Bonnier Lola 1 m 6.7 s	Hawkins GT40 1 m 7.0 s	Pilette Alfa 1 m 7.38 s	
de Udy Lola 1 m 8.2 s	Neerpasch Porsche 1 m 8.22 s	Nelson GT40 1 m 8.68 s	Steinemann Porsche 1 m 9.52 s
Kauhsen Porsche 1 m 9.64 s	Pankl Porsche 1 m 10.31 s	Trosch Alfa 1 m 10.82 s	
Dechent Porsche 1 m 10.94 s	Bradley Porsche 1 m 11.54 s	Peter Porsche 1 m 11.72 s	Koch Porsche 1 m 11.74 s
Mundschutz Lotus 1 m 16.6 s			

## RACE

RACE day dawned overcast, but clear skies could be seen in the distance high over the Austrian Alps and, sure enough, by the afternoon conditions were near-perfect. No-one was missing from the grid, for Mike de Udy's problem had been traced directly to a sheared oil pump drive and the bottom end of his Chevrolet motor still seemed OK. With remarkably little fuss the grid assembled, up went the Austrian flag, down it swept and the race was on.

Surprisingly it was Bianchi in the 3-litre Alpine who made the best start from the works Porsches of Elford and Herrmann, but before they completed even half a lap the Porsches were by

Siffert hadn't got away as cleanly as the others, but nevertheless was up in third place before the back straight, leading team-mate Neerpasch, who was being hard pressed by Bonnier's big Lola. At the end of the first lap the Porsches of Elford and Herrmann were running nose-to-tail, with Siffert right behind them; Bonnier now lay fourth having passed Neerpasch as they went into the hairpin.

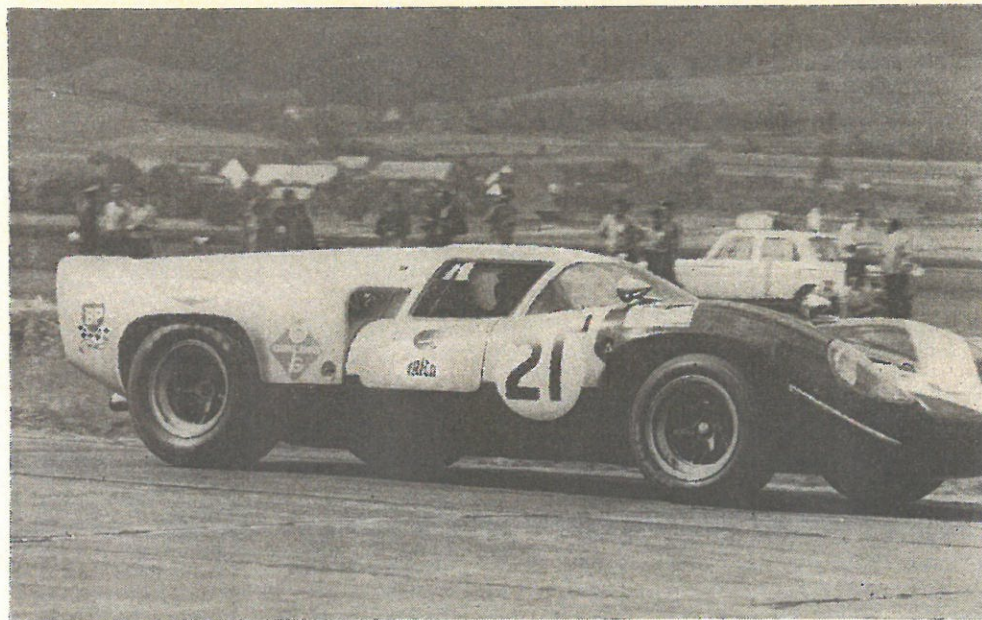
Bianchi was right up there with them in the Alpine, closely pursued by Pilette in the 2.5 Alfa and Hawkins in his red GT40, and the 910s of Kauhsen and Steinemann. Poor de Udy didn't complete a single lap before being struck by the same trouble he had had in practice, the shaft of the oil pump failing once again.

By the third lap Siffert, going like the wind, had moved ahead of Herrmann into second place—the three white Porsches leading the field in line astern. Bonnier had fallen back a little in the Lola but was staying clear of Neerpasch. Behind them a battle royal had started between Bianchi's Alpine, Pilette's Alfa and Hawkins' Ford. Nelson had passed the two 910s, and his green Ford now lay ninth overall, going like a bird.

The following lap the leading places remained unchanged, with the exception of Pilette, who gunned passed the Alpine to claim sixth place. Hawkins had tried to get by at the same time, without success, but the Australian managed it too on lap 5. The Kauhsen/von Wendt Porsche still led the 2-litre category but was being pressed hard by Steinemann and Bradley in similar cars, both having passed Gerhard Koch. Trosch, who had been lying in 13th place behind all these 910s, suddenly fell back, the 2-litre Alfa going onto seven cylinders after a plug had disintegrated.

After only six laps Siffert swept by team-mate Elford to take up station at the head of what was rapidly becoming a Porsche procession. Bonnier still lay fourth, for he was making no impression at all on the Porsches, who seemed to have the same maximum speed and far superior braking. Hawkins, using every inch of the road and some of the grass in places, had now passed both the Neerpasch Porsche and the Pilette Alfa, but there was now a goodly gap between these four and next man up Nelson, whose Ford was getting comfortably clear of the four 910s which had been snapping at his heels.

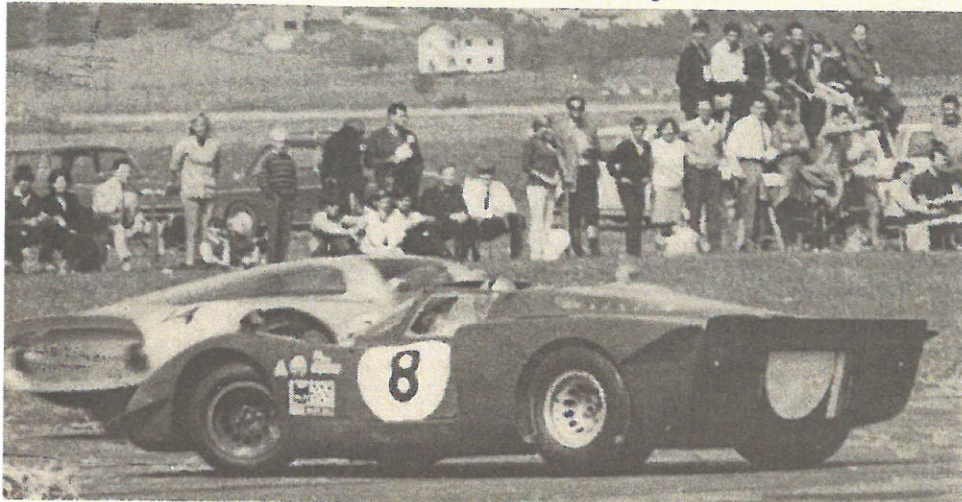
Suddenly Elford's Porsche failed to appear: the rod which operates the fuel metering unit and throttles had broken and he came slowly round and back to the pits on the engine's tick-over. The mechanics quickly changed the offending item, but by the time Quick Vic was back in the strug-



Jo Bonnier at speed in the Ecurie Bonnier Lola T70, in which he pursued the three leading Porsches until his retirement.



Bill Bradley, who was going well in his 910 until slowed by a stop with a misfire, leads the GT40s of Edward Nelson and Paul Hawkins round a right-hander.



The Hans-Dieter Dechent Porsche Carrera 6 squeezes past Serge Trosch's spinning Alfa T33.

gle he had lost over five laps. This unexpected turn of events saw Herrmann move up into second place behind Siffert, with the 5-litre G4 cars of Bonnier and Hawkins now in third and fourth places. The battle for fifth place was a real no-quarter affair and had taken both Bianchi and Pilette past the Neerpasch 908, which still seemed a trifle off-song. The following lap Bianchi clipped a straw bale, sending it spinning into Pilette's path; the Belgian Alfa driver was unable to avoid it and damaged the side of the Tipo 33 slightly as well as filling the air intakes with straw.

After 15 laps Siffert and Herrmann had already established a good lead and it didn't look for one moment as if Bonnier could do a thing about it—in fact Jo was having his work cut out to maintain his advantage over Hawkins. The dice for fifth place still waxed furious, although there were tell-tale wisps of smoke coming from the Bianchi Alpine as he strove to keep his fellow countrymen in the VDS Alfa at bay. These two found themselves on their own on the following lap when Neerpasch stopped out on the circuit with a broken throttle rod. Unlike Vic, Jochen was unable to come back on tick-over and lost time finding a piece of wire so he could operate the throttle by hand. By the time the Porsche rejoined the fray it had lost even more laps than the Elford car.

The order at 20 laps was Siffert, Herrmann, Bonnier, Hawkins, Bianchi, and Pilette with Nelson, Kauhsen, Steinemann, Bradley, Marko, Dechent, all one lap behind.

The smoke signal that had come from the Alpine proved to be ominous and seven laps later Bianchi came into the pits with oil all over the engine from a leaky union between the engine and the dry sump tank; the French mechanics worked feverishly on the boiling hot car but *hélas* the leak could not be stemmed, and the car was wheeled away to the dead car park.

Siffert had not eased up one bit and after 31 laps had lapped the entire field save three, for even Pilette had been passed by the leading Porsche. Nelson was still all on his own in seventh place, for the 2-litre class leader Kauhsen had fallen back.

At quarter distance the two Porsches were starting to look inpregnable. Both were running as fast as ever and were now nearly 1 min ahead of Bonnier and Hawkins. Both Pilette and Nelson were one lap behind, with the 2-litre leader three laps in arrears and the rest of the field strung out in greater degrees of disadvantage, although the battle between the Porsche 910s were still on in all earnest, with Bradley now second ahead of Koch. Five laps later Bradley came rushing into the pits complaining that the engine was misfiring; by the time he was on his way again the car had dropped from eighth place to the back of the field.

Nelson, who was lying a very comfortable sixth, suddenly felt his engine go onto seven, tried to go into the pits that lap, then realised he was going too fast and continued round for another lap before he came in. George, his mechanic, quickly discovered a broken pushrod but with bits floating around within the engine; they wisely decided against repairing it and retired the GT40.

By now pitstops were coming thick and fast and on lap 73 Bonnier arrived in the pits at a great rate, where the Lola was refuelled amid a good deal of panic as BP weren't really expecting him—this stop cost Jo two places, for both Hawkins and Pilette went by. However, on lap 76 the Lola moved up into fourth place when the Alfa came in for its routine stop.

With half the race behind him Siffert came into the pits, letting Herrmann take the lead; the German's lead lasted for a mere five laps until he too came in for fuel and to hand over to Kurt Ahrens. Once again the order was Siffert

leading from Ahrens, with Hawkins still third. Paul would have almost certainly lost this place to Bonnier when he brought the Ford in for petrol had not the Swedish driver been forced in on the same lap—he was sitting in a pool of fuel, the result of a split fuel bag. Jo's mechanics replaced the fuel cell, but this took a good deal of time, and after a quick check at what prize money they might earn from a second place in the class, Ecurie Bonnier decided to call it a day. Hawkins' Ford was now the only surviving over 2-litre G4 car.

The 2-litre category continued to be led by Kauhsen/von Wendt, who only lost the lead for a moment when they came in for their scheduled stop; the Hart-Ski car had gone into the lead but then lost the race in the pits when they discovered that someone had pinched their refuelling equipment—instead of losing 30 secs they lost nearer two laps.

With 100 laps completed and 57 more to go, Siffert and Ahrens were about to lap third place man Hawkins for the third time. Pilette, whose refuelling stop hadn't been that quick, was two laps behind Hawkins but well ahead of the 2-litre class leaders Kauhsen/von Wendt, who were virtually unchallenged after the Hart-Ski car had lost so much time—Gerhard Koch now lay second in the class. Bradley, whose earlier misfire was blamed on a vapour lock in the fuel system, had come in earlier to hand over to Tony Dean, but Tony managed only a lap before the bottom ball joint on the front suspension broke, putting them out of the race.

Elford, who had been climbing gamely up the field, had had the throttle rod break again, which wasted him further time and put him well out of the running once again. The other 908, the Neerpasch car, was now being driven by Rudi Lins, who was lapping much slower than any of the other 908 drivers; a spin at the hairpin, yet another broken throttle rod and an inoperative starter soon forced Porsche to retire the car.

The last 40 or so laps saw very few changes in position. Both the Porsches continued at unabated speed—perhaps too quickly, for each spun. Siffert's fastest lap was well under the record with a time of 1 m 4.82 s, 177.76 kph. By the finish Ahrens, who had been signalled to close up on Siffert, was within 13 secs of the winner, both of them five laps ahead of Hawkins.

In these closing stages there had been speculation as to whether Pilette could catch Hawkins, for the latter was being slowed by oil surge and the Alfa driver was driving like a demon; at the finish only 19 secs separated the cars.

The Kauhsen/von Wendt car took fifth place overall as well as winning the 2-litre category, a lap ahead of Steinemann/Spoerry, the latter pair having done well to get back so much lost time. Elford, despite his long stops, finished eighth, failing by less than 0.5 sec to beat Koch to the line.

Porsche were delighted with their success, with both Bott and Piëch all smiles for the Austrian television cameras. It was interesting to note that the tell-tale rev counters on both Siffert's and Elford's cars were on 9,100, while the Herrmann/Ahrens car had been revved to 10,500 although the 908 is red-lined at 8,500 rpm.

Grosser Preis von Österreich  
FIA Groups 4 & 6 Championship, round 9  
Zeltweg, Austria, September 15  
157 Laps, 502.40 kms

- 1, Jo Siffert (3.0 Porsche 908 F8),\* 2 h 55 m 17.74 s, 171.997 kph;
  - 2, Hans Herrmann/Kurt Ahrens (3.0 Porsche 908 F8), 2 h 55 m 30.23 s;
  - 3, Paul Hawkins (5.0 Ford GT40 V8),\* 152 laps;
  - 4, Teddy Pilette (2.5 Alfa Romeo T33 V8);
  - 5, Kauhsen/von Wendt (2.0 Porsche 910 F6),\* 147 laps;
  - 6, Rico Steinemann/Dieter Spoerry (2.0 Porsche 910 F6), 146 laps;
  - 7, Gerhard Koch (2.0 Porsche 910 F6);
  - 8, Vic Elford (3.0 Porsche 908 F8);
  - 9, Dr. Helmut Marko/Gerold Pankl (2.0 Porsche 906 F6),\* 145 laps;
  - 10, Peter Peter (2.0 Porsche 906 F6), 143 laps.
- Fastest lap: Siffert, 1 m 4.82 s, 177.76 kph (record).

\* Class winners.