



NEWS ECHLIN TUNED LIGHTNING RELEASE

A graphic illustration of a spark plug with a lightning bolt striking it, set against a black background with a white lightning bolt.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ECHLIN SPECIALS - THE TEAM

George Wintersteen, 28, lives in Villanova, Pennsylvania (a suburb of Philadelphia), with his wife Gretchen, their 3 year-old daughter Laura, and a large Golden Retriever called Joskin - old english for "country man." George is President of Wintersteen Racing, Inc. which is situated in another Philadelphia suburb - Newtown Square.

Bill Mayberry - better known as "Murph" - is the chief mechanic for Smothers-Wintersteen Racing. He has been working for Wintersteen Racing since 1965. Prior to his joining the company, he worked for Bob Holbert of Porsche racing fame. Bill has had considerable racing experience himself. Since coming to Wintersteen Racing, he has, on "off weekends", worked for George Bignotti at Indianapolis, and for Roger Penske Racing at Can-Am and Trans-Am races. Assisting Chief Mechanic Bill Mayberry in the preparation of the two Smothers-Wintersteen Racing Team Echlin Specials, are two gentlemen who, besides being top-flight mechanics, are experienced race drivers in their own right. Howard Brown's responsibility is the general preparation of the second car. Nick Davidson assists Mr. Mayberry and Mr. Brown on both cars, and is in charge of metal fabrication for the team.

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George Wintersteen has been racing since 1960 when he entered a Porsche Coupe at an Eastern Pennsylvania hill-climb. He earned his Sports Car Club of America driver's license in 1963 in a Porsche RSK Spyder. George continued with the RSK through 1963 and won the SCCA Northeast Division championship in his class. In 1964, George raced an Elva-Porsche and a Cooper-Chevrolet in professional races. At the end of the year, he was awarded the coveted Kimberly Cup by the SCCA National organization as "the most improved driver of the year". In 1965, George continued with the Cooper-Chev in professional racing until fall when he took delivery of an Elva-McLaren in England where he was invited by the Guards Trophy Race organizers to run as one of the top driver representatives from the U. S. George concentrated on racing a production car during 1966. Included in this year were class wins at both the Daytona 24-hour and the Sebring 12-hour endurance races driving a Chevrolet Corvette in Grand Touring class.

A Brabham-Ford Formula-B single seater racer and the 1967 SCCA Northeast Division class championship were the order of business for Wintersteen Racing the next year.

In 1968, George and Wintersteen Racing entered into the new SCCA Professional Formula Series with a new Dan Gurney-designed All American Racers Eagle-Chevrolet. This car was a virtual duplicate of the machines that took three of the first four places at the Indianapolis 500 that year. The only difference was that the car as raced in the SCCA series was powered by a production-derived Chevrolet engine modified for racing by Traco Engineering. Wintersteen Racing was forced to miss two of

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the eight races in the series - the first miss was caused by late delivery of some critical engine parts to Traco Engineering, and the third race in the series had to be by-passed because of a badly burned foot suffered during the running of the second race at War Bonnet Park in Oklahoma. The last five races of the series changed an apparent runaway for the series leader, Lou Sell, to a closely-fought contest that was not decided until the next to last lap of the final race of the series - at Laguna Seca in California. While in the lead, George had a brake lock on the Wintersteen-Eagle sending him off-course and into second place for the race and for the series.

For 1969, Wintersteen Racing Inc. went after the expanded Formula-A series, now called the Continental Championship Series. Although the car, a Lola T-142 was conservatively designed, the fantastic reliability achieved by Mayberry and Co. had the Wintersteen-Lola always among the leaders in the Series. Running with a reliability described by one of Wintersteen Racing's competitors in the terms ". . . they break down as often as the appearance of Halley's comet . . .", the effort was terminated in the eleventh race of the series by a crash. As it was, the team finished tied for fourth place.

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