



HONOURING THOSE WHO BUILT THE SPORT

September 2013

## NEW FORMAT FOR BDRHOF AWARDS EVENT VOTED A BIG SUCCESS

Saturday evening on September 7<sup>th</sup> at Santa Pod Raceway, during the FIA European Drag Racing Championship Finals, marked an important change for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame (BDRHoF) Annual Awards Event. Since its launch in 2006 the awards have been part of the joint club Championship Trophy presentations held during the winter. But the BDRHoF Board felt that their event needed to be a stand-alone occasion during which more time could be given to celebrating the achievements of those who have played such crucial roles in the development of drag racing in the UK. They also wanted an event to which existing members could be invited along as important guests.

That's why in 2013 seventy-six invited guests assembled in the Santa Pod VIP Marquee for a sit down dinner. These included existing BDRHoF members, sponsors and supporters along with the new inductees being celebrated this year. There was plenty of time for old friends to catch up with the gossip; many having not seen each other for over 20 years or more. A bonus was that, thanks to Santa Pod Raceway, they could also experience a modern day drag race meeting.



*Photos Stu Bradbury*

Drag racing commentators from the past were well represented. Brian Taylor compered the evening. He invited John Price to introduce some of the BDRHoF members attending and relay stories of times gone by.

And Keith Bartlett, CEO of Santa Pod Raceway, presented existing BDRHoF member Roy Phelps with the 'Keys to Santa Pod' giving him lifetime access to all areas. This was well received by all.



*L-R Roy Phelps and Keith Bartlett.  
Photo Andy Willsheer*

To present the BDRHoF Awards, BDRHoF Chairman Stu Bradbury was joined by Steve Trice of BDRHoF Primary sponsor US Automotive. Keith Lee read the citation for new inductee Brian Chapman and added some more stories about Brian and his amazing 500cc Vincent before the man himself came up for his award. Brian's acceptance speech recalled how simple it was to go racing back in the 1960s and '70s and how much fun everyone had.

Phil Evans read the citation for National Drag Racing Club stalwarts Keith and Frances Parker and Keith's acceptance gave us a vivid insight into what it was like organising on-tour events. Stories about BDRHoF member the late Alan Wigmore ('Wiggy') were also in abundance. Full details about all BDRHoF members – including the 2013 inductees – can be found on [www.britishdragracinghof.co.uk](http://www.britishdragracinghof.co.uk)



*L-R Keith Parker, Frances Parker, Stu Bradbury, Brian Chapman, Renee Chapman. Photo Keith Lee*

Then before we knew it BDRHoF Chairman Stu Bradbury was thanking everyone at the end of the ceremony. Where did that time go? Guests stayed on chatting whilst the winners were interviewed for Nitro FM. It was very late when the last stragglers left the marquee.

Clearly the new format worked. Here are a few comments received after the event.

*'Thanks again for arranging this most important event. I enjoyed myself very much and managed to talk with many I hadn't seen or talked to for years. Thanks for your vision and efforts to get recognition for these important people who have contributed to make our sport what it is today.'*

*'Just wanted to say a big thank you for getting this event organized! I really enjoyed the new format and in my opinion, this is the way to go'.*

*'Thank you for the invite to the new format Hall of Fame awards dinner. I thought that it worked a lot better and had more meaning than being " Lost " in the annual Trophy award evening. It was great to see some friends I hadn't spoken to for years'.*

*'Thank you very much for a lovely evening. The new format for the presentation went really well and was a great move to give the inductees the recognition they deserve. Thanks to all the hard work you put in'.*

*'Thank you so much for a very enjoyable evening. We felt very honoured to be in such illustrious company'.*

After the event Stu Bradbury said

*"Thanks to all those who have e-mailed me about the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame induction dinner on Saturday evening. But credit is really due to many people who have worked hard to put this event together; it's not just me. Firstly, Keith Bartlett, for allowing the BDRHoF to disrupt his VIP marquee, along with Caroline and Nicky of Santa Pod Raceway who just had everything organised and kept me calm. The catering staff provided excellent food that wouldn't have been out of place in any top class restaurant. And thanks to Brian Taylor who gives his invaluable advice and guidance of how it should be done".*

*"I've been thinking about what special ingredients made the evening event so satisfying, so friendly and so right for all those attending. I think it was because it was a genuine celebration of achievements by ordinary people with extraordinary dedication to drag racing – achievements recognised by a knowledgeable and admiring audience as making a significant difference to the growth of drag racing. You could feel the huge respect that was liberally laced with gratitude – yes and even affection - for laying down strong foundations".*

*"I would like to give our main sponsor, US Automotive, a special mention. Without their belief in me and what I was trying to do, without their injection sponsorship in 2006 and continued support (along with allowing me to use the company facilities and staff), we certainly would not have a British Drag Racing Hall of Fame".*

*"The BDRHoF was created so we can honour those who have given so much over the years and driven Drag Racing to where it is today. Some are no longer with us, but we are now assured that their contributions will never be forgotten and are documented for future generations to look back on. In this respect I think the BDRHoF is doing a good job. We will shortly be announcing*

*some fantastic news about future support that will enable us to take things to an even higher plain. Watch this space".*

Primary sponsor - US Automotive

Associate sponsors - Santa Pod Racers Club, York Raceway, Pennine Drag Racing Club, Shakespeare County Raceway, Avon Park International Racers Association, Power Race Graphics, Eurodragster.com and Santa Pod Raceway.

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More details and photos are available on request.

Contact

Brian Taylor – Acting Press Officer

[brian@petrolhead.vianw.co.uk](mailto:brian@petrolhead.vianw.co.uk)

Tel 01395 579733

Mobile 07702 043411