

Georgia's Buck Simmons

Wins Alabama 200

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Buck Simmons was the only one conductable at Montgomery International Speedway on the Sunday before Thanksgiving as the Georgia speedster easily captured the Alabama 200 stock car race before a near frozen crowd of only 1,900.

Simmons, who drives the Banjo Matthews high-dollar Camaro, was challenged only Jerry Lawley and Freddy Fryar but both could only get close enough during caution laps to see the sign on the rear of the Camaro "Speed costs money — how fast do you want to go." But Fryar lost an engine coming down for the final white flag and had to be pushed across the finish line

with Lawley getting the second spot and Neil Bentz third. Fryar ended up fourth.

Temperatures during the entire two days of the \$11,000 event never climbed above the low 40s with strong winds pushing the chill factor down to around zero degrees. But still the 1,900 fans who braved the cold and damp weather Sunday saw a heated race marred by several yellow flags caused mostly because of spin-outs due to track conditions. The yellow flags were the only thing that kept the rest of the field in the same lap with Simmons. Just as he would be ready to lap his closest pursuers another yellow would come out and close the gap.

The closest anyone got to get

a shot at Simmons was when the yellow flag came out on the 197th lap. Only a lapped car separated Fryar from the leader. When the green fell on the 198th lap Fryar drove past the lapped car and tried to challenge Simmons. But coming out of the fourth turn to take the white flag all hope was lost when the engine gave way. Fryar coasted almost the entire next lap and was pushed across the finish line by Donnie Allison.

Simmons started the 200-lap race around the half-mile paved track on the outside pole across from pole sitter Red Farmer. Farmer led the first 32 laps and appeared on his way to an easy win when his car quit and was forced out of

the race. From that point on it was just a question as if Simmons could keep up the blistering pace for the remaining of the race.

Only three drivers held the lead during the race. Fryar, who made his first pit stop early in the race, took over the lead from Simmons on the 68th lap when Simmons pitted and held that lead for 27 laps before Simmons regained the first spot 85th lap.

Thirty-six cars started the race with only 16 finishing.

Robert "Paddiefoot" Wales of Pleasant Grove, Ala., finished fifth; Mike Bagwell of Atlanta, Ga., sixth; Bob Burdman of Chattanooga seventh; Donnie Allison eighth; David Chancey of Unadilla, Ga., ninth and Larry Lester of Decatur, Ga., tenth.

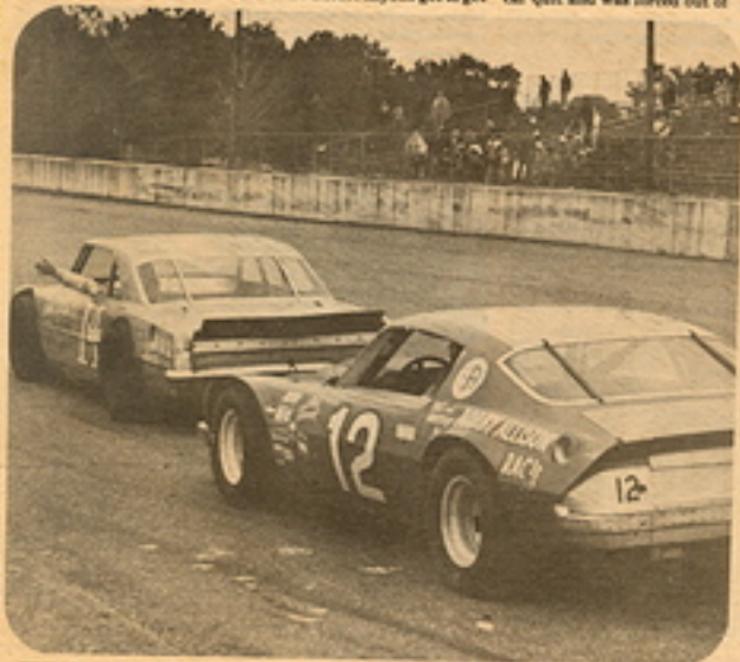
Several other short track champions around the country were entered in the race. Ed Howe, winner of practically every major short track event in the country, left the race early with mechanical problems after qualifying sixth. He was driving the Camaro driven by Bob Sonnecker during the season.

Joe Ruttman of Dearborn, Mich., also vacated the race early with mechanical problems in the Dodge kit car. Ronnie Sanders of Fayetteville, Ga., the 1975 Montgomery point champion left early with more mechanical problems. Mike Alexander, the sensational rookie from Franklin, Tenn., puffed an engine mid-way in the race. Judy Ridley of Chattoworth, Ga., finished 11th with a sour engine.

Terry Bovis of Shawnee, Kans., never got his 1975 Camaro untracked, qualifying far back in the field and forced from the race after a week in the early going of the feature.

Dickie Davis, the winner of many major events in the Florida-Alabama area wrecked when his accelerator hung open on his qualifying run and hit the wall between turns three and four. His car was completely demolished.

Simmons won \$2,167 including lap money from the \$11,000 purse.



FRYAR GETS A PUSH ACROSS FINISH LINE — Donnie Allison in brother Bobby's Camaro give a push to Freddy Fryar across the finish line. Fryar blew an engine coming down for the white flag and coasted around to the fourth turn where Donnie gave him a shove for the last few yards. (Tony Martin Photo)