

National Sprint Car Hall of Fame & Museum

EMIL ANDRES

Emil Andres was born on February 22, 1911, to parents William and Eva Andres. He had four brothers (Hank, Chuck, George, Bill) and three sisters (Bertha, Amanda, Florence). Emil started racing when he was twenty years old at the Evanston (IL) Motor Speedway, which was just north of his native Chicago. He started out driving local stock cars and made friends with a fellow racer named Jimmy Snyder. Both racers graduated to the 'big cars' in 1932, and added midget rides to their resumes the following year.

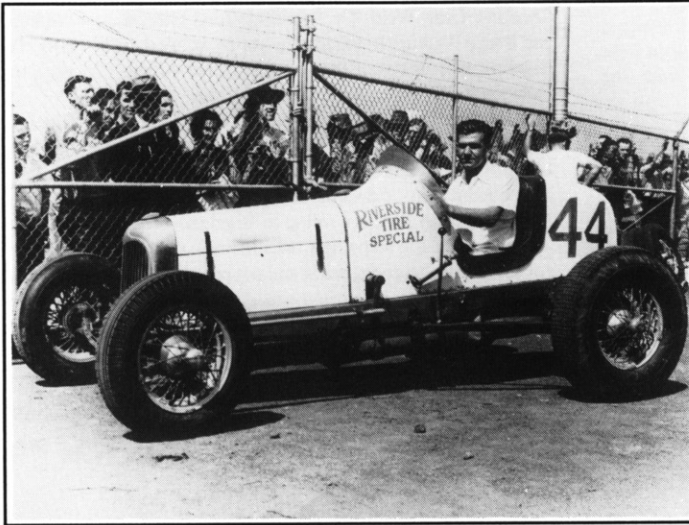
In the mid-1930s, Emil was racing the R.G. Lundgreen Special white R-3 'big car' regularly across the East and Mid-East, including at the Roby (IN) and Cook County race tracks around home. His competition included such drivers on occasion as Frank Brisko, Kelly Petillo, Tony Willman, Snyder, Ted Horn, Maynard "Hungry" Clark, Myron Fohr, Pete Romcevich, Floyd Davis and Fritz Tegtmier. Andres was a consistent 'top five' racer on Fran Funk's tough circuit in 1934-35.

Both Andres and Snyder were active in midgets, too competing across the same region at tracks in Chicago, St. Louis (MO), Indianapolis (IN), Milwaukee (WI), and Detroit (MI). When the midgets ran the inaugural 200-lap, 100-mile Detroit Classic at the Zuiker Brothers V.F.W. Motor Speedway in 1935, it was Andres who was on the pole. He was competing against the likes of Willman, Paul Russo, Dennis "Duke" Nalon, Johnny Wohlfeil, Harry McQuinn, Henry Banks, Wally Zale, Ronney Householder and Snyder. Like all American Automobile Association (AAA) drivers of that time, Andres' goal was national championship racing and the Indianapolis 500. In 1935, Emil ran laps at Indianapolis and in August, he had finished third in the 100-lap championship car race at Springfield (IL) behind winner Billy Winn and runner-up George Barringer. It was the same year that Emil Andres, delivery truck driver, befriended a young Tony Bettenhausen and became his first mentor in midget racing.

In 1936, Emil started dead-last at the Brickyard aboard the J. Stewart Carew Whippet and finished 18th. Two years later, Emil unfortunately lost control on lap 45 and rolled over three times into the infield aboard the Elgin Piston Pin single-seater, which was the old Art Sparks/Paul Weirick "Catfish". In '39, he drove for his long-time friend Jimmy Snyder in an older Myron Stevens-built "Chicago Flash" car. He lasted only 22 laps, and three weeks later, Snyder was fatally injured at Cahokia (IL) racing an unfamiliar midget.

By the end of the Thirties, Emil Andres was doing very well in sprint and championship car races. Following the 1937 season, he had moved from

the Lundgreen machines to the Riverside Tire Special, a former Art Sparks/Paul Weirick sprint car that was raced at Legion Ascot. With it, Andres was a regular on Ralph "Pappy" Hankinson's fair circuit along with such drivers as Horn, Rex Mays, Elbert "Babe" Stapp, "Shorty" Cantlon, Willman,



Emil Andres

(Bruce Craig Collection)

Davis, Mauri Rose, Bill Holland, Lee Wallard, Joei Chitwood (Sr.), Bob Sall, and George "Doc" MacKenzie.

However, it was in 1940 that Emil Andres earned the recognition that he deserved by winning the AAA Midwest sprint car title. The 'top five' read like a 'Who's Who' that year as Emil was followed by Mays, Horn, Nalon and Willman.

1940 was also the year that Andres finished twelfth in the Indy 500 aboard the Belanger-Folz Stevens-built Offy. That year he and racer/friends Horn, Nalon, Chitwood and Cletus "Cowboy" O'Rourke all stayed at the Riley Hotel during the month of May..."bunching it". That meant that they each kicked-in \$125 and bought lunch meat and chips for the month and lived 'high on the hog'. It was truly the good old days of racing.

In '41 Andres finished 30th at Indy in the Joe Lencki-owned Kennedy Tank Special, as a teammate to Chitwood. He also piloted the Al Singer-owned, Roy Richter-built 'big car', which was first HAL-powered and later converted to a Voelker '6'.

Emil's younger brother Chuck, himself a successful racer, lost his life shortly before the start of World War II racing midgets in Houston (TX). During the war Emil went into the Air Force.

Indianapolis opened back up in 1946 following the war and Emil Andres scored his career-best finish that year, a fourth place behind winner George Robson, Jimmy Jackson and Horn. Andres was again driving the Frank Brisko-owned Elgin Piston Pin Special. 1946 was a great year for Andres on the AAA National Championship circuit, as he finished the season ranked third in

points behind champion Ted Horn and the late George Robson, who was killed at Atlanta (GA). Following the top three in points were stars Holland, Jackson, Tommy Hinnershitz, Walt Ader, Chitwood, Mays and Jackie "Duke" Dinsmore.

In 1947, Andres placed 13th at Indy. In '48, he was 31st at Indy, yet he won the AAA National Championship 100-miler at Milwaukee (WI) the very next weekend in Tuffy's Offy. In fact, he placed ninth that year in championship points behind Horn, Myron Fohr, Rose, Bill Sheffler, Nalon, Wallard, Holland and Mack Helligs.

One year later at Indy, he came back with a 9th place finish, just one position behind Tuffy's Offy teammate Paul Russo.

In 1950, Emil Andres retired from active competition, although he stayed active as a Triple-A, then, United States Auto Club (USAC) official. In fact, Emil served as chief steward/supervisor for USAC's Stock Car Division from 1959 until 1968. Over the years Emil Andres has also

worked hard for oldtimers charities, especially through the Indianapolis 500 club and his own Chicago-based group.

Since retiring as an official, Emil has lived with his wife Charlotte on their farm in the Chicago area. They have three children, Lauren, John and Alice. Emil's only surviving sibling is his sister Florence in Holland (MI).