

Blue Flame

People

Randy races for experience

"Technically," says Randy Packham, "I won my first Formula Ford race since mine was the first car over the finish line." The only problem for Randy was that his debut on the track ended with his car crossing the finish line a little too high: about fifteen feet in the air to be exact.

"I landed on the starters' flags," he quips, "so I guess that proves I crossed the finish line! It wasn't until I was pulled from the wreckage that I realized the car was on fire."

At this point you might think that the novel part of Randy's hobby (and possible future career) isn't that he races cars, but that he *still* races them.

Randy's face should be familiar to most Western Region people; he was a daily visitor to most of the offices there (in Mississauga) where he worked delivering the mail. Those who miss him now though, should know that he has returned to his studies at the University of Toronto in Computer Sciences. (He hopes to be able to return to Consumers' on a part-

time or summer basis while studying.)

"I'd like to look at racing as a career, but it's costly". The Formula Ford cars he races (top of the amateur class of racing cars) cost about \$20,000 to build and \$500 a race to transport and maintain.

"Besides, if I get hurt, I'll have an alternate career to return to," he says, justifying his studies.

Randy has been racing since his early teens, getting his first experience in go-karts (better known simply as "karts" to those in the know). After getting his national licence he and a friend began building their cars. (The friend is the financial backer, too).

Don't let the amateur title in Formula Ford racing fool you though, the speeds certainly sound professional since the cars can hit between 120 to 130 mph (210 kph). As for making a career of racing, well, Randy sees that as possible.

"After all," he says, "six years ago Gilles Villeneuve was doing the same thing I'm doing now."



Randy Packham.