

## Alex Purdy, Driver/Designer

By CHRIS WADDELL

You've all heard stories about racing car designers.

They seem to fall into two categories. Either they are strange little men who hide in a dark room poring over drawings and every once in a while emerge with a concept or a car they think will revolutionize the motor racing world. Or they are constantly at the racing driver's side, talking to him the minute he steps out of the car and transposing the unintelligible muttering of the driver into something that can be used to make long term improvements in the performance of the car and also help the mechanics in the more immediate task of making the car go faster on that circuit on that day.

Then there's Alec Purdy. He combines a little of both of the above groups. Sometimes he's hiding in the back of the Ferret workshops in Hanover, Ontario planning new tweaks for his two Ferret Formula 100 cars. Other times he's found in discussion with John Scratch about the way the cars are running and what can be done to make the only Canadian-designed and built machines in the Bulova Formula 100 series, even quicker than they are now.

But most of the time these days, Alec Purdy is driving a Ferret and leading the Bulova series. It's kind of a strange position for Purdy to find himself in, for he did little racing last year, spending most of his time working on Scratch's car. It's all different now, and with his victory in the Bulova race at the Labatt's Blue 5000 weekend, he now has an 11 point lead in the championship.

As Purdy says, "To win this championship you have

to finish all the races well up in the points. That's what I plan to do this year."

While he is right on target in following his plans, some of the other series front runners found that their dreams of seven starts and seven finishes in the 1976 series have been ruined. If they were lucky, they escaped with nothing more than a did not finish (DNF) beside their name in the results. Some had a long tow home and then a couple weeks of work to straighten out bent chassis or replace damaged corners of their Formula 100s.

The Ferret team had little time to celebrate Purdy's victory, their second in three races (Scratch won the season opener in May.) Scratch's car had to be repaired following his 19th lap White's Corner tangle with Doug Titus. Even though he didn't finish, the Goderich school teacher is still tied with Danny Burrirt for second in the point standings, entering this weekend's fourth round in the series.

Burrirt was another to trailer a damaged car following the Labatt's weekend. His Fuzzbuster Crossle 30F was touched by a slower car on the last lap of the race at Moss Corner. One minute Burrirt was contemplating how to pass Purdy for the race victory and the next he was exiting from a damaged car parked up against the Mosport guard rail. That can't happen any more times this year or Burrirt's championship hopes, and the opportunity to race in England in 1977 where he raced in 1974 after winning the 1973 Bulova series, will go out the window.

Don McKnight from Scarborough was another to have a perfect 1976 finishing record ruined on the



Purdy leads Burrirt, Titus and Scratch in the closing laps of the June 20 BULOVA race. photo by K.S.