

Auto racing just one aspect of McLaren empire

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

You can't judge a book by its cover.

And the same holds true for McLaren Engines, Inc. on Eight Mile Road in Livonia. You'd be surprised to find what goes on inside from what appears on the outer decor.

Let's examine the particulars.

McLaren Engines of Livonia is a subsidiary

company of the English firm McLaren International of London. It is an engineering firm with 30 employees which does high-performance engine testing. Employees test the engines of race cars, diesel trucks, American passenger cars and even helicopters.

Last week, McLaren International's race team was in Detroit for the Grand Prix. Austrian Nikki Lauda, a Formula 1 champ in 1975 and 1977, drives for

the McLaren team. John Watson of England is the team's other driver. The Livonia company is involved in Indy-car-type racing, the rival of the Grand Prix circuit. It receives Cosworth engines and rebuilds them here.

McLaren of Livonia had only a week to rebuild Bill Whittington's car, which crashed during a practice lap a day after qualifying for the Indianapolis 500 (May 31). The Livonia crew had Whittington back on the track in 2 1/2 days.

McLaren now services the engines of several Indy teams including the Whittington brothers, Pancho Carter, Howdy Holmes, Chip Ganassi and Josele Garza.

THREE YEARS AGO, McLaren of Livonia removed itself from Indianapolis racing. Driver Johnny Rutherford headed the last McLaren team to be

based in Livonia.

It was then that team manager Tyler Alexander went to England to work on the Formula 1 project for McLaren. Haslett with the United States Auto Club (USAC), the governing body for Indianapolis, made the decision to switch to Grand Prix racing an easy one.

"We'll help them (McLaren International) during the Grand Prix with local logistics if they need it because they all used to work here," said Wiley McCoy, general manager of the Livonia operation. "We've been growing since the race teams left."

"What goes on here changes daily, but we'll always keep involved in racing."

McLaren, who lives in Livonia, also has done some groundwork in the development of Grand Prix racing for BMW.

"We located here by accident," said

McCoy. "Back in 1969 we used to run in the Can-Am Series. We worked closely with Chevrolet, and we tried California, but Detroit was the place to come. This building was brand new, and we were the first tenant. We've been here ever since."

THE INTERIOR makeup of the Livonia building has undergone numerous changes. McLaren has branched out from modifying Cosworth engines to turbo development, fuel-injection testing and high-performance diesel development.

"Business is pretty good," McCoy said. "We find a reasonable amount of work to do. Some test work here is cheaper than in-house."

The dynamometers at McLaren get little rest. The sound of so much power inside is rarely heard by any of the neighbors.

Southfield girls sting Mercy, 11-6

Southfield's softball Blue Jays seem to be peaking at just the right time. Just a few weeks ago, Southfield was going nowhere with a 3-13 record.

Franklin ends Jays' season

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Newman said. "We'd been averaging 4.8 errors per game."

FOR SOUTHFIELD's baseball team, it was too much Richard Wood in a 4-2 loss to Livonia Franklin in Class A pre-district play last week.

Wood, the winning pitcher, shut down Southfield with a three-hitter and five strikeouts. He had a no-hitter going five innings.

Losing pitcher Craig Matthews, who had posted six straight victories, went the distance, allowing seven hits and striking out 10.

But then the Jays turned things around with five straight wins, the latest a 11-6 pre-district triumph over Farmington Our Lady of Mercy.

"We're really rolling," said Jay coach Jerry Dolan, reflecting on his team's late-season surge.

Linda Mitchell was the winning pitcher and the game's leading hitter with three hits in three trips to the plate.

Recently named the Jay's most valuable player for the season, Mitchell showed she deserved the honor by slugging three doubles and driving in six runs.

"She's probably our best athlete, so that's why she pitches," Dolan said. "But she can play anywhere. She plays in the infield and outfield when she's not pitching."

The Jays benefited from two big innings, scoring four times in both; the third and the fifth. Mitchell delivered the big hit in both rallies.

Southfield also got some top-notch performances at the plate from Patty Proctor and Maria Rabara. Proctor went 2-for-4 with two runs batted in, while Rabara went had two RBI on two hits in three trips.

Southfield was to have played Redford Union in the Class A district at the Southfield Civic Center last Saturday morning.

SOUTHFIELD-LATHRUP softball coach Don Perry couldn't be too disappointed — even though his Chargers dropped a 6-2 decision to Royal Oak Kimball in a Class A pre-district last week.

"Kimball is ranked No. 3 in the state in one poll, so we lost to a darn good team," said Perry, whose team finished with a 17-12 record.

The Chargers came close. Only three Kimball runs were earned as Lathrup made two costly errors. The losers were trailing by just a run going into the seventh when ROK erupted for three runs.

"We had our chances, but we left seven on base," Perry said.

Both pitchers in the contest went the distance, each allowing five hits. Julie Bishop was the winning pitcher. Kim Kersten suffered the loss.

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by Charles H. Williams, C.F.A.
HANDLING DEBT
Credit cards are convenient. They enable you to shop without carrying a lot of cash, order airline tickets over the phone, buy gasoline on the road. Charge cards let you take advantage of important sales even if you don't have the cash on hand.
Trouble is, credit and charge cards are sometimes TOO easy to use, and some people are tempted to charge things they can't afford. It's been estimated that four to six percent of households are in trouble because they owe more than they can pay.
Help is available from credit counseling services to help over their heads in debt. The organizations help arrange voluntary debt—liquidation plans and counsel family members on future money management. Often the counseling service can arrange a more manageable reduced-payment schedule with creditors. Sometimes even interest charges and late penalties may be reduced. It may take as long as four years of tight budgeting, regular repayment—and no use of credit—to get out of debt.
Best are the nonprofit consumer credit counseling services: free charge for counseling, and only a small, one-time fee for handling the paperwork of a debt-liquidation program. (Business organizations often support these services, for they offer a low-cost alternative to debt collection fees and bankruptcy losses.) Some credit counseling services are listed in the phone books; some can be found through local family counseling organizations. The National Foundation for Consumer Credit, 1819 H. St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20006, will help you locate a counselor. Commercial credit counselors usually charge more to arrange debt repayment or consolidation plans. Avoid especially those that offer mail-order help with your debts.
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