NPS Form 10-900
(January 1992)
Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED 2280

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name   Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits

other names/site number   N/A

2. Location

street & number	County Highways J, P, JP, A, and Lake Street	N/A	**not for publication**
city or town	Village of Elkhart Lake and Town of Rhine	N/A	**vicinity**
state Wisconsin	**code** WI **county** Sheboygan	**code** 117	**zip code** 53020

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant X_ nationally __ statewide _ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____   Jan 3, 2006
Signature of certifying official/Title   Date
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

_____
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____
Signature of commenting official/Title   Date

_____
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☑ entered in the National Register.
____ See continuation sheet.
__ determined eligible for the
National Register.
____ See continuation sheet.
__ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
____ See continuation sheet.
__ removed from the National
Register.
__ other, (explain:)

Beth L. Savage   2-17-06

Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

_____ private
x   public-local
_____ public-State
_____ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

_____ building(s)
_____ district
x   structure
_____ site
_____ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

contributing	noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property
listing.
          N/A

**Number of contributing resources
is previously listed in the National Register**

          0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
Foundation N/A

walls	N/A
	N/A
roof	N/A
other	N/A

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria
qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

_x_ A   Property is associated with events that have
       made a significant contribution to the broad
       patterns of our history.

_ B   Property is associated with the lives
       of persons significant in our past.

_ C   Property embodies the distinctive characteristics
       of a type, period, or method of construction
       or represents the work of a master, or possesses
       high artistic values, or represents a significant
       and distinguishable entity whose components
       lack individual distinction.

_ D   Property has yielded, or is likely to yield,
       information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

_ A   owned by a religious institution or
       used for religious purposes.

_ B   removed from its original location.

_ C   a birthplace or grave.

_ D   a cemetery.

_ E   a reconstructed building, object, or
       structure.

_ F   a commemorative property.

_ G   less than 50 years of age or achieved
       significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1950-52

Significant Dates

1950

1951

1952

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):
_   preliminary determination of individual
    listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
_   previously listed in the National
    Register
_   previously determined eligible by
    the National Register
_   designated a National Historic
    Landmark
_   recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
_   recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
X State Historic Preservation Office
_ Other State Agency
_ Federal Agency
_ Local government
_ University
   Other
      Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 56.7 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	418010	4854000		3	16	418150	4853510
	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing
2	16	418140	4853850		4	16	418550	4853040
	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing

☒ See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Elizabeth L. Miller, revising state DOE prepared by Susan G. Mikos, AVD Archaeological Services
organization	**date** 1 August 2005
street & number	4033 Tokay Blvd **telephone** 608-233-5942
city or town	Madison **state** WI **zip code** 53711

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps   A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
                  A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs   Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owners

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	County Clerk					
organization	Sheboygan County			**date**	1 August 2005	
street&number	615 North Sixth Street			**telephone**	920-459-3003	
city or town	Sheboygan	state	WI	**zip code**	53081	

name/title	Village Clerk					
organization	Village of Elkhart Lake			**date**	1 August 2005	
street&number	40 Pine Street			**telephone**	920-876-2122	
city or town	Elkhart Lake	state	WI	**zip code**	53020	

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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INTRODUCTION[1]

The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits are composed of two resources: the 3.35-mile course used in 1950, and the 6.5-mile course used in 1951 and 1952. Both courses followed public roads that pass through the rolling terrain of Rhine Township and the Village of Elkhart Lake in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. The 1950 route was confined to rural highways north of the village and east of the Sheboygan Marsh. The 1951-52 circuit ran over most of the 1950 route, but added a link through the village and around Elkhart Lake. One small segment of the 1951-52 circuit has been closed to automobile traffic since 1994.[2]

PRESENT APPEARANCE

The 1950 Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit
The first Elkhart Road Race meet was held on Sunday, 23 July 1950.[3] The 1950 circuit is generally triangular (see Maps 1 and 1B) and was run in a clockwise direction. The roadway was, and is, composed of two, 11-foot lanes with one to two-foot gravel shoulders and steep ditches for most of the length of the course.

The start/finish line for the 1950 street race was set on County Highway P. The exact location is uncertain, but it was "midway" between CTH JP and CTH J (see photo 1 of the approximate location).[4] The pits were located on the east side of CTH P, north and south of the start/finish line. From the starting line, racers headed northwest on CTH P to the intersection of CTH J. This stretch is fairly level, skirting the Sheboygan Marsh (west) and farm fields (east). As CTH P approaches the intersection with CTH J, CTH P bends to the north. At this intersection, the racecourse took a sharp right onto CTH J (see photo 2). This was called the "Marsh Turn," as the entrance to the Sheboygan Marsh County Park stands on the northwest corner of the intersection. From CTH P, the course followed CTH J, which is a part of the Kettle Moraine Scenic Drive, and traversed the glacial drift as it ran east-southeast past farm fields and woods toward the Village of Elkhart Lake. At the outskirts of the village, the race route made a tight right turn onto CTH JP (see photo 3). CTH JP rises and banks sharply to the left, follows a tight curve to the right, and then drops through a wooded area as it runs westward. CTH JP then follows undulating terrain past farm fields and woods, with a view of Elkhart

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[1] This nomination is a revision of the Determination of Eligibility prepared by Susan G. Mikos, AVD Archaeological Services, 23 May 2004, for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. It is on file in the Office of Historic Buildings, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.
[2] Closure authorized by Village of Elkhart Lake Ordinance #431, 6 June 1994.
[3] Peter Laun, *The History of the Elkhart Lake Road Races 1950-52*, (Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin: Peter Laun, 2000), p. 8.
[4] Ibid.

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Lake (south), before descending to CTH P. There the course turned right onto CTH P (see photo 4), emerging onto the straightaway and running north to the finish line.[5]

The 1951-52 Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit
The second and third Elkhart Lake Road Race meets took place on 26 August 1951, and on 6 and 7 September 1952.[6] Both races followed the same, clockwise circuit, which was an extension of the 1950 circuit winding through the Village of Elkhart Lake and around the lake itself (see Map 2). The roadway that the circuit followed in the village was, and is, two lanes, with curb and gutter and sidewalk on both sides, while the rural segments of the racecourse mostly remain two, 11-foot lanes with gravel shoulders.

The start/finish line for the 1951 and 1952 races was located in the village, on Gottfried Street (also known as CTH J), at Spring Street just northwest of the intersection with Rhine Street (see photo 5). Timing and scoring were set up north of the start/finish line, while the pits were located south of the line. Spectators lined the route within the village and additional areas for spectators were fenced off at the major turning points.

At the start of the race, drivers headed southeast on Gottfried Street/CTH J, past a feedmill complex (north) and a late nineteenth century commercial block, and then crossed Rhine Street and turned right onto Lake Street/CTH J (see photo 6). The course then proceeded south on Lake Street through part of the village's traditional commercial district, passing the village square and the railroad depot (east) and one long block of contiguous, one- and two-story commercial buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (west, see photo 7). Single-family homes of the same vintage appear in the block between Square and Elm streets, which drivers passed as the circuit continued south on Lake Street/CTH J. South of Elm Street, the course followed Lake Street past the Siebken's Resort (east) and the Victorian Village Resort (west, formerly Schwartz's Hotel), before entering the "Hard Left" turn (see photo 8). This turn was judged the most difficult in the course, because it was banked the wrong way following a downhill run. The circuit ran one block along Lake Street/CTH J to East Street. Originally, Lake Street/CTH J continued southeast from this point, skirting the north shore of Elkhart Lake in front of the Osthoff Resort. However, in 1994, a 750-foot long section of the street was converted into a pedestrian mall, with a 17.5-foot wide brick walkway (see photo 9). The old Osthoff Hotel, which stood north of the walkway, was demolished and replaced with condominiums c. 1995, further altering the appearance of this segment of the circuit and diminishing its historic integrity. At the south end of the pedestrian mall, the course picks up again (see photo 10) on South Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A. The road race followed this street southeast through a residential area of

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[5] Course route description and map appear in Laun, pp. 7-8.
[6] Laun, pp. 12 and 19.

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single-family homes dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, past the lakeside picnic area at Firemen's Park and out of the village. This section was a two-lane road with gravel shoulders in 1951-52; curb and gutter were added c. 1995.

Southeast of the village, Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A meets Golf Course Road and Hickory Lane (dubbed the "Wacker Wend" for the race) at the Quit Qui Oc Golf Course. From this point, Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A curves southwest and travels rolling countryside through an area of modest ranch houses and farmhouses interspersed with woods. The racecourse then followed CTH A where it diverges from Lake Street/CTH J with a sharp right turn (see photo 11), to run westward. CTH A then makes a dramatic "S" curve (called "Hamill's Hollow") over undulating, wooded glacial drift, descends into marshland, twists over a moraine, and emerges onto the "Schoolhouse Straightaway" (see photo 12). This segment was named for the former Town of Rhine Joint District No. 11/Joliet School, a stuccoed, hip-roofed, Craftsman-influenced structure built in 1927 (see photo 13). When drivers raced past this building, it was in use as a school. It closed in 1958, became a residence and is currently being converted into a bed and breakfast. The circuit followed CTH A westward as it continued through gently rolling farmland, and then made a sharp right turn onto CTH P (named "Kimberly's Korner," see photo 14). The racecourse then ran northward on CTH P, moving through a straight stretch of farmland before curving northeast at "Dicken's Ditch" (see photo 15) and crossing the narrow spit of land between the Sheboygan Marsh (west) and Elkhart Lake. The All Saints Chapel of Elkhart Lake, a small, fieldstone Front Gable building erected in 1951 (see photo 16), provides a visual landmark near Dicken's Ditch. The course continued north on CTH P past CTH JP (see photo 4), following the 1950 race route along CTH P and turning right on CTH J (the "Marsh Turn," see photo 2) and running southeast back to the start/finish line in the village of Elkhart Lake (see photo 5).[7]

ALTERATIONS

The 1950 Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit is intact. The CTH P, CTH J, and CTH JP segments of the 1950 route were resurfaced in the 1990s. In 1994, CTH P underwent "roadside betterment," which involved re-ditching and the removal of ground banks and stone fences. CTH JP received the same treatment in 1996.[8] These alterations are minimal and do not compromise the integrity of this route.

The 1951-52 Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit has been altered with the closure of a 750-foot long segment of Lake Street that ran along the shore of Elkhart Lake in the Village of Elkhart Lake. This segment was converted into a brick, pedestrian walkway in 1994. However, the village of Elkhart

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[7] Course route description and map appear in Laun, pp. 11-12.
[8] Roger Laning and Edgar Harvey to Susan Mikos, cited in Mikos, no page numbers

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Lake has retained the right to return the walkway to street use in the future. The loss of the Osthoff Hotel, a visual landmark on this segment of the racecourse further degrades this section of the route, such that it no longer contributes to the significance of the 1951-52 Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit. This does not compromise the integrity of the 1951-52 circuit as a whole, as 750 feet represents only about 1/8 of a mile out of the 6.5-mile course, or 2 percent of the total circuit. Other alterations to the 1951-52 race route are minimal and include: the installation of curb and gutter to South Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A from the Osthoff property to the intersection with Golf Course Road (c. 1995); the construction of curb and gutter in front of the former Joliet School on CTH A (2005); the resurfacing of CTH A (1963 and 1986); the resurfacing of CTH P between CTH A and CTH JP (1988); and a slight reduction in the turning radius at the corner of CTH A and CTH P ("Kimberly's Korner").[9] Despite these changes, the 1951-52 circuit retains a high degree of integrity. All but 1/8 of a mile of the route can be driven and the roads the route followed have not been relocated. The roadways retain most of the profiles and configurations they had during the period of significance: except for a short section of Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A, the rural highways are narrow, two-lane thoroughfares with gravel shoulders; while the village streets exhibit curb and gutter, and sidewalks. The setting is also intact, except in the altered segment. Principal visual landmarks such as the feedmill, the village square, the railroad depot, the commercial district, and the Siebken's and Victorian Village resorts in the village of Elkhart Lake, and the Quit Qui Oc Golf Course, Joliet School, and All Saints Chapel in the rural areas remain. There are few intrusions into the setting, apart from the altered segment. Both the 1950 and the 1951-52 Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits retain a high degree of integrity and clearly convey their historic use as street race routes.

ROUTES THAT MAKE UP THE ELKHART LAKE ROAD RACE CIRCUITS

CTH P, from CTH A to CTH J (1950, 1951, 1952)	Intact
CTH J, from CTH P to Lake Street (1950, 1951, 1952)	Intact
Lake Street, from CTH J to pedestrian mall (1951, 1952)	Intact
Pedestrian mall (1994), from Lake Street to South Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A (1951, 1952)	Altered
South Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A, from pedestrian mall to where CTH A diverges (1951, 1952)	Intact
CTH JP, from CTH J to CTH P (1950)	Intact
CTH A, from CTH J to CTH P (1951, 1952)	Intact

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[9] Ibid.

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Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits

Section __8__ Page _1_   Village of Elkhart Lake and Rhine Township, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: SUMMARY[10]

The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits are significant at the national level under *Criterion A*, in Entertainment and Recreation, as the major road racing venue in the Midwest and one of the premier road racing venues in the country during the brief era of sports car road racing on public streets in the United States. The three races held during the period of significance, 1950-1952, quickly established Elkhart Lake as a road racing area rivaling Watkins Glen, New York (Watkins Glen Grand Prix Course, NRHP 2002). The Elkhart Lake races drew tens of thousands of spectators and the participation of nationally famous drivers. While components of the course have changed over time as part of routine road maintenance and a small section is now closed to vehicular traffic, the character and corridor of the racing route is largely intact.

The events run on the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits brought European-style road racing to Sheboygan County, Wisconsin from 1950-1952. Following the success of the shorter trial race held in 1950, the 1951 and 1952 meets featured some of the most important names in American automobile racing, attracted large crowds of spectators, and were a major factor in reviving Elkhart Lake's languishing resort industry. The success of the Elkhart Lake Road Races demonstrated the viability of road racing as a spectator sport, such that when racing on public roads was discontinued following the 1952 race, local business leaders were inspired to construct a purpose-built track simulating country road conditions in 1954-55. This facility, named Road America and located just south of Elkhart Lake, was one of the first specially constructed road courses in the country, and remains one of the premier road racing tracks in the world.

The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits represent a brief period in American automobile racing history, when wealthy amateur sportsmen raced cars on public roads that had been temporarily closed to traffic. Originating in Europe at the turn of the twentieth century, road racing had enjoyed a brief period of popularity in America before being supplanted by oval track racing. After World War II, the availability of imported European sports cars led to a resurgence in American road racing. The sport was conducted on public thoroughfares until it was deemed too dangerous. It was moved, first to artificial tracks laid out at airports, and ultimately to purpose-built tracks that simulated country road conditions, where it continues to be a popular sport today.

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[10] Much of this section is quoted from Mikos.

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BRIEF HISTORY OF RHINE TOWNSHIP AND THE VILLAGE OF ELKHART LAKE

European-American settlement of Rhine Township began with the arrival of several German
immigrants in 1847. By 1852, the township was well settled, except for the kettle moraine region and
the Sheboygan Marsh. The predominance of immigrants from the Rhine region of Germany gave the
township its name when it was organized in 1852. The economy of Rhine Township was based on
agriculture, as remains the case today. Prior to the Civil War, Rhine Township farmers raised wheat, a
very valuable cash crop. However, wheat cultivation rapidly depleted the nutrients in the soil,
resulting in a precipitous drop in production after the Civil War. During the 1870s, farmers began
transitioning to dairying. The first cheese factory in Rhine Township was erected in 1879. By 1912,
there were eight cheese factories in Rhine Township. Since that time, cheese has been the principal
dairy product manufactured in Sheboygan County. Dairying continues to lead Sheboygan County's
agricultural sector, and remains an important facet of the economy.[11]

Elkhart Lake lies in the heart of the kettle moraine. Fed by spring water, the lake has a maximum
depth of 117 feet, and flows into the Sheboygan Marsh. The picturesque beauty of the lake drew
European-American visitors as early as the 1850s, to camp on the shores and enjoy bathing, fishing
and boating. Elkhart Lake became more accessible in 1860, when the Sheboygan & Mississippi
Railroad was completed to Glenbeulah (about two miles to the southwest). Simple vacation cottages
began to appear on the lakeshore. The first hotel on Elkhart Lake was constructed in 1867 for Terret
C. Sharpe. A tiny summer resort community soon developed and when the Milwaukee & Northern
Railroad (later a part of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway line) extended it line northward in
1872, Elkhart Lake was a designated stop. The railroad brought hundreds of tourists, especially from
Milwaukee, Chicago and St. Louis. The second hotel at Elkhart Lake was built for William Schwartz
in 1872 (extant, now the Victorian Village Resort). Schwartz had the village of Elkhart Lake platted in
1875. Pine Point Resort was the third major establishment for summer guests. Erected for Chauncey
V. Pettibone in the mid-to-late 1870s, it began as cabin for his family, but soon grew to be a complex
of cottages that could accommodate up to 250 persons. Otto Osthoff had the fourth hotel (demolished)
built in 1885. From the late nineteenth century through the 1920s, Elkhart Lake was a very popular
summer resort, especially for those of German heritage.[12]

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[11] Carl Zillier, editor, *History of Sheboygan County, Wisconsin: Past and Present*, (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing
Company, 1912), I:262-264; Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, *A Century of Wisconsin Agriculture: 1848-
1948*, (Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, 1948), pp. 90, and 110-11; and University of
Wisconsin-Extension, *Sheboygan County Agriculture: Value and Economic Impact*, (Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin:
University of Wisconsin-Extension, 2004), pp. 1-3.
[12] Ibid.; and Gustave William Buchen, *Historic Sheboygan County*, (Sheboygan, Wisconsin: N.p., 1944), pp. 260-263.

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The village of Elkhart Lake was incorporated in 1905. In 1910, the community had 499 year-round residents, while the village's five hotels housed some four thousand tourists during the three-month season (which extended from the first of June to the first of September). Despite its small size, the village had a water works, electricity, a graded elementary school and a high school, and a public library, as well as a bank. Although summer tourism drove Elkhart Lake's economy, it did also serve as an agricultural support community, with three blacksmiths and two grain elevators in 1912.[13] The population of the village reached 571 in 1930, but a severe slump in the local resort industry during the Depression brought hard times to Elkhart Lake. The village would not recover until the 1950s, when the Elkhart Lake Road Race meets brought widespread attention to Elkhart Lake, sparking the revival of the resort industry. After road racing on public streets came to an end following the 1952 race, the popularity of the racetrack at Road America (which opened in 1955) supported Elkhart Lake's resort industry. The village began to grow again, reaching 651 in 1960, and growing steadily through the 1980s. The population in 2000 was 1,021. Today, Elkhart Lake continues as a lively summer resort community and the home of Road America, which continues to draw many visitors to the village.

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ELKHART LAKE ROAD RACES

History of Road Racing
The sport of automobile racing originated in Europe in the early days of automotive history. The first major race took place in June 1895, over a 732-mile course from Paris to Bordeaux and back. Following races in France (1897 and 1898), international races were staged from Paris to Berlin (1901), and from Paris to Vienna (1902). A 1903 race from Paris to Madrid was cut short in the wake of eight fatalities and numerous injuries to competitors and spectators. As a result, the governments of France and Spain banned road racing. Racing ended on open roads in Europe, but was succeeded by racing on closed circuits, which continues today. The best-known European automobile road race is the 24-hour endurance race that has taken place since 1923 in the French town of LeMans.[14]

In the United States, William K. Vanderbilt initiated a prestigious road race called the "Vanderbilt Cup" on Long Island in 1904. The Vanderbilt Cup race was held on public roads until 1906, when mounting casualties led Vanderbilt to construct a private motorway on Long Island for the contest. The race was run from 1908 through 1910, after which New York State banned road racing. For another six years, Vanderbilt Cup races were held on a more limited scale and in other parts of the country. By

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[13] Zillier, I:264.
[14] Hal Butler, *Roar of the Road: The Story of Auto Racing*, (New York: Julian Messner, 1969), pp. 11-23, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

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1918, however, road racing in the United States had been supplanted by automobile races held on oval tracks. These banked, board courses would dominate through the 1930s.[15]

After World War II, the American automotive industry concentrated on producing inexpensive, comfortable passenger cars. These cars did not lend themselves to racing. At the same time, however, it became possible to import European "sports cars," which were designed for racing as well as transportation. Because of their quick acceleration, responsive braking and nimble handling, sports cars were ideally suited for road racing, leading to a renewed interest in the sport on this side of the Atlantic. Many wealthy sports car drivers became road racers, or at least followers of road racing. In 1944, the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) was founded for the preservation of sports cars and to organize road races, rallies and other events for amateur enthusiasts.[16]

The SCCA organized the first American sports car road race at Watkins Glen, New York in October 1948. This 6.6-mile course traversed state highways and village streets. Although it involved only fifteen automobiles, the success of this race sparked an interest in sports car racing across the United States. The "Watkins Glen Grand Prix," as it was called, ran again in 1949, and the SCCA sponsored several other, smaller road races. In 1950, six major road races were held: at Watkins Glen; Palm Beach and Sebring in Florida; Palm Springs and Pebble Beach in California; and Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin.[17]

History of the Elkhart Lake Road Races
Jim Kimberly, a wealthy industrialist and SCCA member who lived in Chicago, conceived the idea to hold a road race in Wisconsin. There had been no road races in the Midwest since 1933, when a competition had been staged at Elgin, Illinois. Kimberly had been born and raised in Neenah, Wisconsin and may have been familiar with the rolling hills around Elkhart Lake. He arranged an airplane tour of the area for three SCCA members from the Chicago region: Fred Wacker, Karl Brocken and C. Bayard Sheldon. The SCCA group was enthusiastic about the site. Immediately after landing in nearby Plymouth, they drove to Elkhart Lake and met with James Johnson, president of the Elkhart Lake Bank. Johnson convinced the Elkhart Lake Businessmen's Association that a road race would boost Elkhart Lake's resort business and help revive the town's flagging economy. A local organizing committee was to plan for and conduct the race. This committee included Everett Nametz, owner of the hardware store; Paul Just and Floyd Dixon of the Osthoff Hotel; Ollie Siebkens Moeller,

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[15] Butler, pp. 53-65, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[16] "The Roots of Pro-Racing," www.sccapro.com/history.html, 29 June 2005; and cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[17] Philippe Defechereux, *Watkins Glen 1948-1952: The Definitive Illustrated History*, (Indianapolis: Beeman Jorgenson, Inc., 1998), p. 28, cited in Mikos, no page numbers; and "The Roots of Pro-Racing."

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owner of the Siebkens Resort hotel; Clif Tufte, President of the Elkhart Sand and Gravel Company; the Fire Chief, Ray Kramer; Ed Leverenz of the Quit Qui Oc Golf Course; and dentist William A. Loos. [18]

The first Elkhart Lake road race was scheduled for Sunday, 23 July 1950. The organizers began cautiously, and planned the meet as a trial run of modest scope. The triangular course located just north of the Village was only 3.35 miles long (see Maps 1 and 1B), making it one-half the length of the Watkins Glen circuit. The main event was similarly just over half as long as the Watkins Grand Prix. Nevertheless, the course featured a challenging combination of vertical and horizontal curves, and a straightaway for speed.[19]

Local support was evident through community involvement. Volunteers were solicited to help on race day, while the Sheboygan County Highway Department agreed to close the roads (all county trunk highways) for the duration of the race, and provided pre-race parking for some of the racers. The first newspaper coverage appeared only four days before the event, when an article in the *Sheboygan Press* featured a photo of SCCA Regional Director Fred Wacker behind the wheel of his MG-TC. The enthusiasm and friendliness of racers and the other sports car drivers (many of whom gave Elkhart Lake residents rides in their cars), and the novelty of so many exotic cars parked in the village created a useful pre-race buzz, and probably brought out a number of last minute volunteers.[20]

Six events were scheduled for race day. The first competition was a 30-mile race for novice drivers in cars with engines under 1500cc (cubic centimeters). It was followed by a 30-mile race for novice drivers in cars with engines over 1500cc. The third contest was a 15-mile race for ladies. A "Concourse D'Elegance," an exhibition for vintage cars, followed. The fifth event was a race for vintage cars. The main event came last and was a 60-mile race for experienced drivers. Jim Kimberly's Ferrari 166 took first place with a time of just over 56 minutes. Fred Wacker, driving Kimberly's Healy Silverstone, came in second. Jim Feld of Milwaukee was third in a Jaguar XK-120. Safety measures were minimal and consisted of guards stationed at driveways and intersections to prevent non-race traffic from entering the course, some snow fencing to hold back the crowd, and hay bales piled at strategic points along the course.[21]

The number of spectators was modest in comparison to Watkins Glen, with estimates ranging from 1,500 to 5,000. However, the event filled the hotel rooms and the quiet resort town of Elkhart Lake

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[18] Laun, pp. 5-6, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[19] Laun, p. 8, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[20] Laun, p. 8, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[21] Laun, pp. 8-10, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

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received widespread recognition. Although it had been conducted on a small scale, the first Elkhart Lake Road Race was deemed a success. Planning started immediately for a second event on an expanded course.[22]

While the first race had been merely regional in scope, the second was billed as an "international" event. The date for the first International Elkhart Lake Road Race meet was set for Saturday and Sunday, 25 and 26 August 1951, with the SCCA and the Elkhart Lake Chamber of Commerce as joint sponsors. A new feature was to be a Monte Carlo type road rally, with cars driving in via specified routes all over North America to Elkhart Lake, concluding with their arrival on Saturday. Entry forms for the race and rally were sent to SCCA members throughout the country, and those not racing were urged to join the rally.[23]

The expanded race circuit around Elkhart Lake was extended further at the last minute; on race-day it covered a distance of six and a half miles (see Map 2). Although the new course bypassed the most challenging set of curves (on CTH JP), drivers found their skill tested by "Hamill's Hollow," a shorter but nevertheless dramatic S-curve combined with rolling topography.[24]

The races were scheduled to take place on Sunday. Saturday was reserved for the conclusion of the Monte Carlo road rally, with a Concourse D'Elegance in the evening, followed by a street dance. Ninety-eight cars were entered in the various races held on Sunday. The first race on Sunday was a five-lap novice event. The second event, a four-lap ladies' race, was cancelled due to threatening skies. The feature event was a 30-lap race of 203 miles, and was the first SCCA event that drew direct competition between drivers from the east and west coasts. John Fitch of Stamford, Connecticut won the race in a Cunningham, with a time of just over 150 minutes (an average speed of about 81 miles an hour). Other legendary drivers included future world champion Phil Hill, and Florida car builder Briggs Cunningham. Dave Garroway, popular host of the "Today" television show, entered his SS-100 Jaguar.[25]

The 1951 race generated greater publicity with newspapers across the Midwest featuring positive and enthusiastic coverage. Headlines such as, "Elite of Auto World Gathers in Wisconsin," and "Auto Race at Elkhart Lake Gets Entries From 24 States," appeared. The *Milwaukee Journal* estimated an attendance of 50,000 people, which may have been generous, as there was no serious attempt at

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[22] Laun, p. 10, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[23] Laun, p. 12, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Laun, pp. 14-15, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

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counting. Irv Kupcinet of the *Chicago Sun Times* predicted that the races "…may establish the summer town of Elkhart Lake as the Road Race Capital of America." [26]

Once again, the race was judged a success. By and large, the citizens of Elkhart Lake welcomed the attention, but at least one local resident was angry about being confined to his property during the races. Werner Markwitz had filed a protest against the Sheboygan County Highway Department demanding the invocation of a little known state statute that guaranteed public access along any public highway. This statute gave any citizen the right to appeal to the Governor to maintain access to his or her property along any public highway. In 1951, Wisconsin's governor was Walter J. Kohler, Jr, of the Kohler Company plumbing fixture fortune, a Sheboygan County native who owned a cottage on Elkhart Lake and was sympathetic to the race organizers. Privately, Governor Kohler allegedly agreed to be absent from his office for the two weeks prior to the race, forestalling phone calls from disgruntled citizens; and the Highway Department took no action on Markwitz's protest.[27]

The following year, plans were laid for an even bigger event. Pre-race publicity boasted that, with 238 cars entered in the various races, including most of the fastest cars and top American sports car drivers of the day, Elkhart Lake would be hosting the largest such event ever staged in the United States. SCCA President Fred Wacker told *The Sheboygan Press*,

> This Elkhart Lake course is the fastest and safest in the country, and this International Race is fast competing with Watkins Glen, New York as the premier event in road racing in the United States.[28]

The Milwaukee Journal called Elkhart Lake "one of the two most important sports car races in the country."[29] The date for the second Elkhart Lake International Road Race meet was set for 6 and 7 September 1952, with races planned for both Saturday and Sunday. The course was to be the same as the one used in 1951.[30]

On 4 September 1952, Werner Markwitz filed a protest with the Wisconsin State Highway Commission and the Sheboygan County Board, charging that closing the highways for the Elkhart Lake Road Races violated his constitutional right of unhampered access to his property, that the employment of state and county officers at taxpayers' expense to prevent use of highways by race non-participants

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[26] Quotes from Laun, pp. 12-13; and Defechereux, p. 115; both cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[27] Laun, pp. 17-18, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[28] Quoted in Mikos, no page numbers.
[29] "Flight Put Elkhart Lake Into Sports Car Picture," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 8 February 1953, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[30] Laun, p. 19, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

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was unlawful, and that the races violated state law by permitting speeds in excess of state regulations. The Wisconsin State Highway Commission declared that it had no jurisdiction over the roads to be used in the races, since none of them were state-owned roads. The county did not respond to Markwitz, and the races proceeded.[31]

The Monte Carlo rally concluded on Friday, 5 September. The races began on Saturday afternoon with the Sheldon Cup, a 15-lap event for cars with engines greater than 1950cc. Phil Hill won the race in a Jaguar with an average speed of 89.5 mph. The Concourse D'Elegance followed that evening. On Sunday, the Kimberly Cup took place. This 15-lap event for cars with engines smaller than 1950cc included one woman competitor, but was won by Bill Spear in an O.S.C.A. at an average speed of 66 miles per hour. John Fitch won the final event of the weekend, the Elkhart Lake Cup, a 201-.5-mile race for cars with engines larger than 1950cc, in a Cunningham roadster.[32]

While actual attendance may not have reached the *Sheboygan Press'* prediction of 125,000, the 1952 race justified the conclusion that it was clearly a major spectator event with benefits beyond just a few hotel rooms. Elkhart Lake's 700-plus hotel rooms were filled to capacity, and the entire village benefited from ancillary activities like parking and refreshments on race day. TV coverage provided by WTMJ of Milwaukee, and articles appearing in national magazines such as *Road and Track* and *Motorsport* exposed Elkhart Lake to an even wider audience.[33]

The SCCA's C. Bayard Sheldon, who led the organizing committee for the 1952 Elkhart Lake Road Races, had been concerned about the danger presented by high-powered sports cars racing on public roads in front of the huge crowds expected at the Elkhart Lake. Sheldon increased safety measures, lining the entire course with snow fencing, and adding 50 special deputies and 105 military police to the state and county police previously deployed. Three doctors and four ambulances were also on hand. Despite these precautions, a car spun out at the "Hard Left" during the Kimberly Cup race, plowing into the snow fencing and hitting the people behind it. Eight people were injured, none seriously.[34]

Just two weeks after the 1952 Elkhart Lake meet, an accident at the Watkins Glen Grand Prix killed a small boy. This fatality effectively brought sports car racing on public streets in the United States to an end. Fearing a similar tragedy in Elkhart Lake, organizers turned their attention to building a special

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[31] Laun, pp. 20 and 21, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[32] Laun, pp. 21-22, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[33] Laun, pp. 19 and 23, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.
[34] Ibid.

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closed course that would allow Elkhart Lake to continue its newfound tradition of road racing in a safe manner. Clif Tufte, president of the Elkhart Sand and Gravel Company, proposed building a course on land belonging to and abutting his company, just south of the Village. With the blessing of the SCCA and the participation of local residents, Tufte incorporated Road America in 1954. Laid out over the same kind of farm fields and glacial features as the original road course, the 4-mile long track imitated the turns found in nearby country roads and incorporated the natural landscape features that had made the original street races so exciting. The pioneering purpose-built road course opened in 1955, and has secured Elkhart Lake's continued prominence in the sport of road racing.[35]

Evaluation of Integrity and Significance of the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits
The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits are significant at the national level under *Criterion A*, in Entertainment and Recreation, as the major road racing venue in the Midwest during the brief period of sports car road racing on public streets in the United States, 1948-1952. The three races held at Elkhart Lake during the period of significance, 1950-1952, quickly established the community as a road racing area rivaling Watkins Glen, New York (Watkins Glen Grand Prix Course, NRHP 2002). The distinctive characteristics of the road race circuit of this era are the constellation of elements that defined the driving experience during the period of significance: the route and contours of the roads comprising the circuit, including the sequence and configuration of corners, curves, inclines and straightaways (the most important of which were given picturesque nicknames); and the setting, including land use, visual landmarks and topography.

The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits represent an outstanding examples of mid-twentieth century road race circuits with a challenging sequence of curves, corner, inclines and straightaways, most of which had alliterative nicknames, such as the Wacker Wend, Hamill's Hollow, the Schoolhouse Straightaway, Kimberly's Korner, and Dicken's Ditch. The routes rise over glacial terrain, passing farm fields, dipping into wetlands, and traveling through rural and urban landscapes. Visual landmarks that distinguished the Elkhart Lake course include the large feedmill complex, the village square, a block of commercial buildings, Siebkens Resort, the Victorian Village Resort (formerly Schwartz's Hotel), and the Osthoff Resort in the village of Elkhart Lake, as well as Elkhart Lake itself, the Quit Qui Oc Golf Course, Joliet School, and the All Saints Chapel.

The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits are comparable to the course at the Watkins Glen. Both the Elkhart Lake and Watkins Glen courses are set in resort communities that developed in the latter part of the nineteenth century. At 6.5 miles, the 1951-52 Elkhart Lake Road Race circuit is similar to Watkins Glen in length. Like the Watkins Glen course, the Elkhart Lake circuit combines village

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[35] Laun, pp. 25-28; and Schultz, pp. 1-3; both cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

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streets and rural highways that pass through a varied landscape. The Watkins Glen Grand Prix Course is more important nationally, since it was the first major postwar American road race course, was used for a longer time (five years), and attracted larger crowds (estimated at over 100,000 in 1951 and 150,000 in 1952). Nevertheless, Elkhart Lake was one of the premier road racing venues of the period, ranking with Watkins Glen; Bridgehampton, New York (on Long Island); and Pebble Beach, California in standard histories of American sports car racing.[36] Elkhart Lake was the only major road race in the Midwest, and along with Watkins Glen, was one of the two biggest events on the 1952 national road racing calendar.[37]

The Watkins Glen Grand Prix Course retains very good integrity, although it has been altered. The dramatic "White House S" has been realigned to ease the curves; the steep descent at "Big Bend" has been reduced through re-grading; dirt roads have been paved; a bridge has been widened and replaced; and paved shoulder and turning lanes have been added in some sections.[38]

In comparison, the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits retain a high degree of integrity. The roads themselves are intact and have received little more than routine maintenance, except for the conversion of the 750-foot long segment of Lake Street along the shore of Elkhart Lake in the Village of Elkhart Lake into a brick, pedestrian walkway (1994). The loss of the Osthoff Hotel, a visual landmark on this segment of the course, further degrades this section of the circuit, such that it no longer contributes to the overall significance of the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits. This does not compromise the integrity of the circuit as a whole, as 750 feet represents only about two percent of the total circuit. Further, it is still a public right of way and the village has retained the right to return it to street use in the future. Other alterations to the race routes are minimal and include: the installation of curb and gutter to South Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A from the Osthoff property to the intersection with Golf Course Road (c. 1995); the construction of curb and gutter in front of the former Joliet School on CTH A (2005); a slight reduction in the turning radius of the corner at "Kimberly's Korner" (at CTH A and CTH P); and a reduction in the steepness of the ditches along parts of CTH P and CTH JP (1990s). Despite these changes, the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits are very intact. All but two percent of the route can be driven and none of the roads the route followed have been relocated or re-graded. The roadways exhibit most of the profiles and configurations they had during the period of significance:

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[36] Defechereux; Michael T. Lynch, *American Sports Car Racing in the 1950s,* (Osceola, Wisconsin: MBI Publishing Co., 1998); Lyle Kenyon Engel, *Road Racing in America,* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1971); and Albert R. Bockroch, *American Automobile Racing: An Illustrated History,* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974); all cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

[37] Defechereux, p. 159, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

[38] James Warren, "Watkins Glen Grand Prix Course," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 2002, cited in Mikos, no page numbers.

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except for the non-contributing segment and a short section of Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A, the rural highways are narrow, two-lane thoroughfares with gravel shoulders; while the village streets exhibit curb and gutter, and sidewalks. The setting is also intact, except in the altered segment. With the exception of the Osthoff Hotel, all the principal visual landmarks survive. There are few intrusions into the setting, and the land use of the period of significance is unchanged.

In summary, the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits, hosting races on public roads from 1950-52, are significant in the history of American sports car racing and in the economic development of Elkhart Lake. With the participation of the top American sports car drivers of the day, the Elkhart Lake Road Races attracted national attention in the racing world. The events drew tens of thousands of spectators and helped to revive the village's languishing resort industry. The road races were also the inspiration that led to the building of Road America, one of the earliest purpose-built road courses and one of the leading road racing tracks in the country.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
The Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits are composed of the assembled public rights-of-way of the following roads and highways in the Village of Elkhart Lake and the Town of Rhine in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, as indicated on the attached maps and described as follows:

1950 circuit: Begin at the intersection of CTH P and CTH JP; proceed north on CTH P to junction with CTH J; turn right and proceed southeast on CTH J to junction with CTH JP; turn right and proceed west on CTH JP to point of beginning.

1951 and 1952 Circuit: Begin at the intersection of CTH J and CTH JP; proceed southeast on Gottfried Street, crossing Rhine Street; turn right onto Lake Street; proceed south and southeast on Lake Street to the Osthoff Resort grounds; continue along the brick walkway across the Osthoff Resort grounds; turn right onto South Lake Street/CTH A/CTH J; proceed in a southerly direction on South Lake Street/CTH A/CTH J to junction where CTH A diverges from South Lake Street/CTH J; follow CTH A to right and proceed west to junction with CTH P; turn right onto CTH P and proceed north to the junction with CTH J; turn right and proceed southeast to point of beginning.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property includes those public rights-of-way along the roadways that constituted the routes of the Elkhart Lake Road Races in 1950, 1951 and 1952. The present rights-of-way correspond to the roads as they were during the period of significance, with the exception of a 750-long section of pedestrian walkway closed to vehicular traffic but still a public route. These boundaries encompass all the resources that are historically associated with the Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits.

UTM References (continued):
5. 16/418270/4852050
6. 16/416270/4851900
7. 16/416660/4853910
8. 16/416500/4854470
9. 16/416300/4855550
10. 16/417910/4854120

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Photo 1 of 16
Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuits
Rhine Township and the Village of Elkhart Lake, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin
Photo by Elizabeth L. Miller, May 2005
Negatives on file, Wisconsin Historical Society
View of the approximate location of the start/finish line of the 1950 race route, CTH P, looking north.

The information for the following photographs is the same as the one above, except as noted:

Photo 2 of 16
View of the "Marsh Turn," CTH P and CTH J, looking southeast.

Photo 3 of 16
View of the turn at CTH J and CTH JP, looking northwest.

Photo 4 of 16
View of the turn at CTH JP and CTH P, looking northeast.

Photo 5 of 16
View of start/finish line for 1951 and 1952 races, Gottfried Street/CTH J at Spring Street, looking northwest.

Photo 6 of 16
View of Gottfried Street/CTH J at Lake and Rhine streets, looking northwest. Note feed mill at right, commercial block at left.

Photo 7 of 16
View of Lake Street from Rhine Street, looking south. Note commercial district to right; Village Square is to left outside of photo.

Photo 8 of 16
View of the "Hard Left Turn" on Lake Street, looking southeast.

Photo 9 of 16
View of Lake Street at East Street, looking southeast toward pedestrian mall.

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Photo 10 of 16
View of 1994 pedestrian mall at South Lake Street/CTH J/CTH A, looking southeast.

Photo 11 of 16
View of point where CTH A separates from Lake Street/CTH J and runs west, looking northwest.

Photo 12 of 16
View of the "Schoolhouse Straightaway," CTH A, looking west.

Photo 13 of 16
View of the former Joliet School, looking southwest.

Photo 14 of 16
View of "Kimberly's Korner," intersection of CTH A and CTH P, looking northeast.
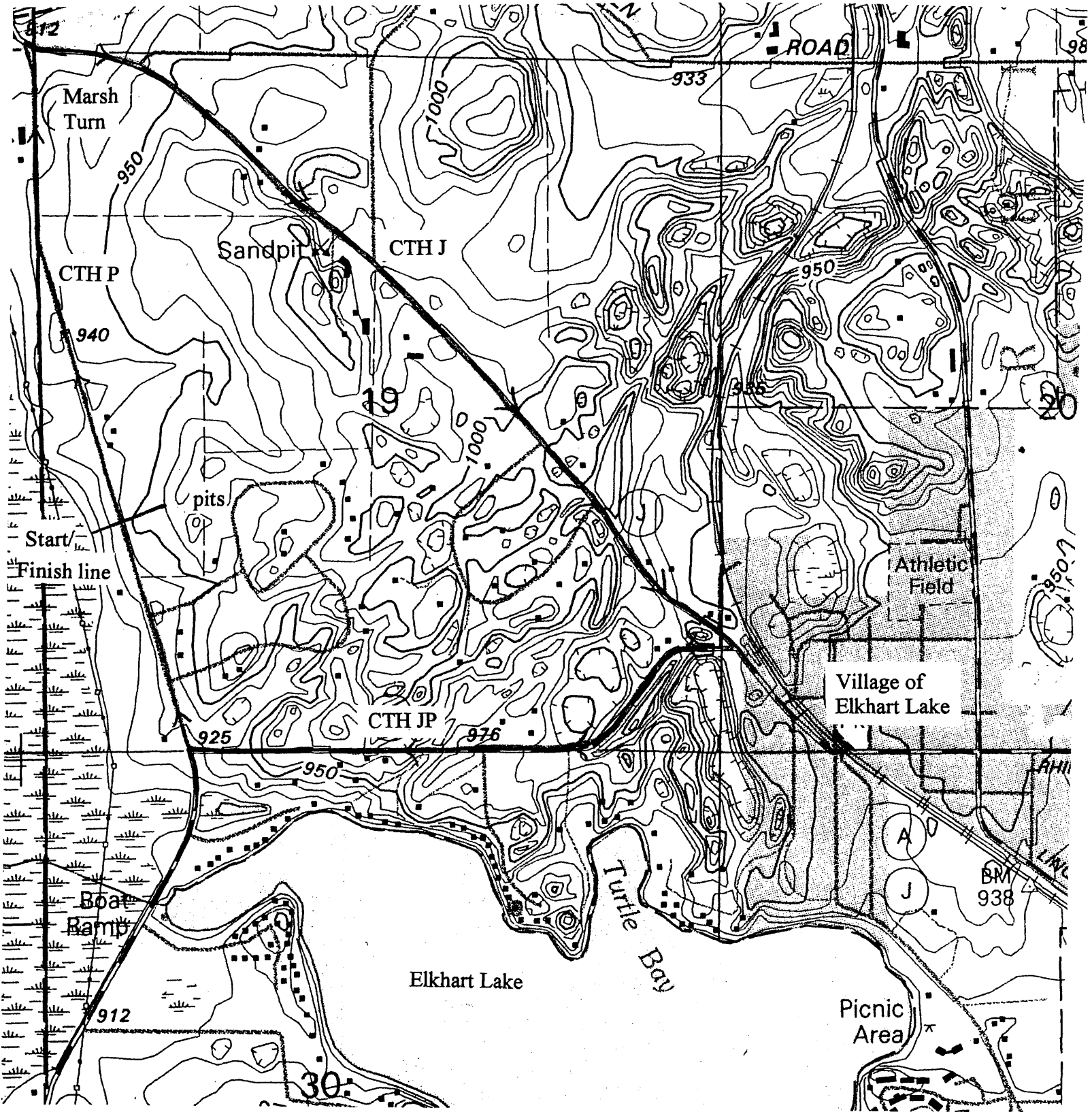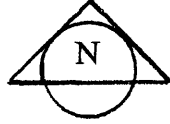
Photo 15 of 16
View of "Dicken's Ditch," CTH P, looking northwest.

Photo 16 of 16
View of All Saints Chapel, CTH P at "Dicken's Ditch," looking west.

MAP 1
Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit: 1950
Rhine Township, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

No scale   N

912

Marsh
Turn

950

CTH P

940

Sandpit

CTH J

1000

933

ROAD

98

950

19

20

935

pits

Start/
Finish line

925

CTH JP

976

950

Athletic
Field

Village of
Elkhart Lake

950

A

J

BM
938

Boat
Ramp

Turtle Bay

912

Elkhart Lake

Picnic
Area

30

Map 1B
Elkhart Lake Road Race Circuit: 1950
Rhine Township, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

No scale
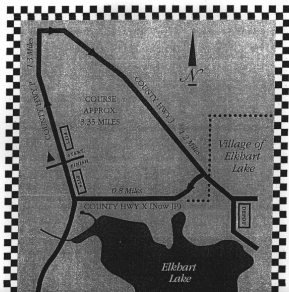
ELKHART LAKE
FIRST ROAD COURSE

J U L Y   2 3 ,   1 9 5 0

Source: Peter Laun, *The History of the Elkhart Lake Road Races 1950-52*, (Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin: Peter Laun, 2000).

N

Marsh
Turn

Sandpi

CTH J

Athletic
Field

Village of
Elkhart Lake

Elkh
La

Start/Finish line

A

J

BM
938

Hard Left

CTH A/CTH J

Road
Ramp

Camp
Brosius

Turtle Bay

Non-contributing
pedestrian
walkway

Picnic
Area

All Saints
Chapel

Elkhart

Wacker
Wend

Substation

Lake

CTH P

Sheboygan Bay

Quit Qui
Oc Golf Course

A

J

Hamill's
Hollow

Kimberly's
Korner

Schoolhouse
Straightaway

CTH A

Joliet
School