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THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

January 2017

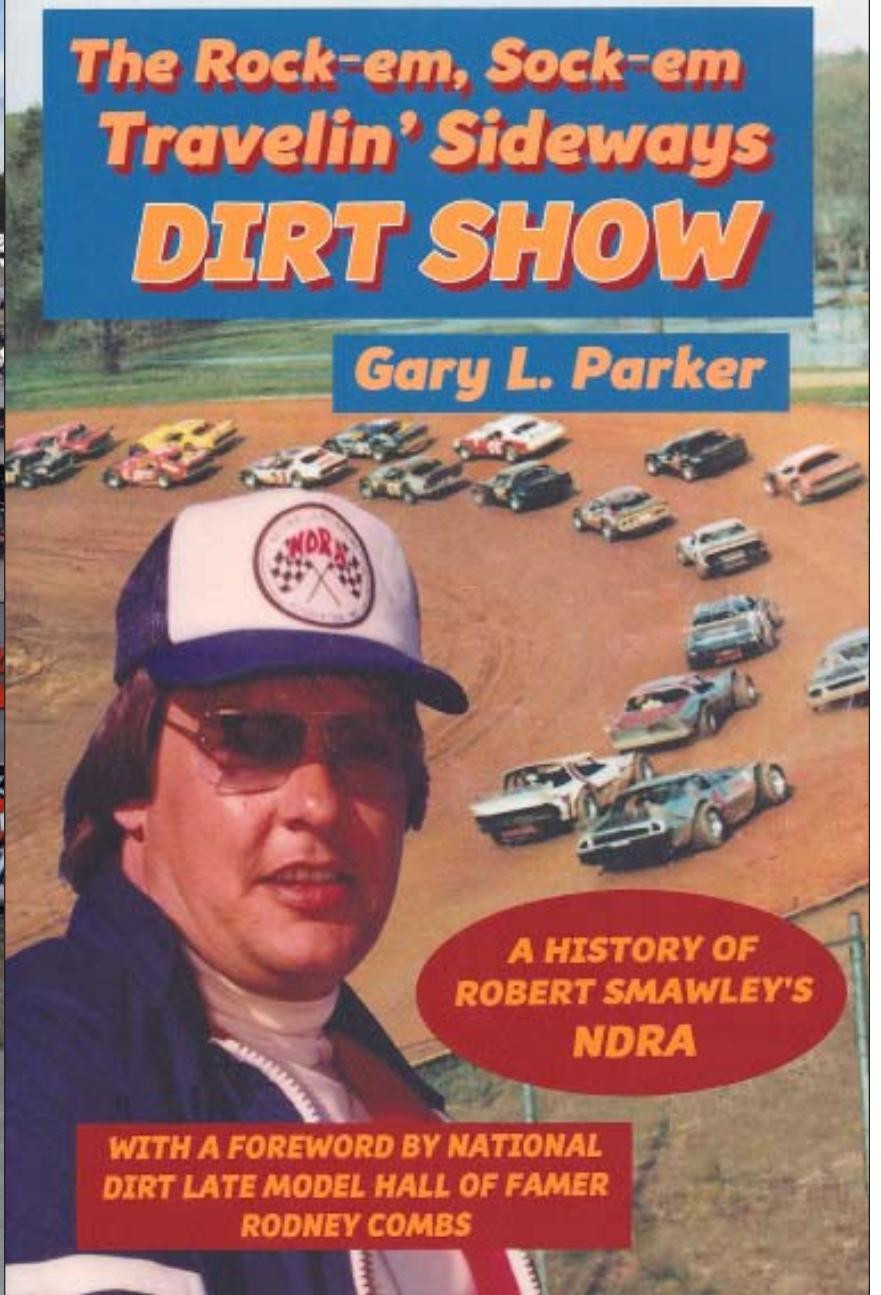
Snowball Derby



Minnesota Driver of the Year

The Rock-em, Sock-em Travelin' Sideways DIRT SHOW

Gary L. Parker



A HISTORY OF
ROBERT SMAWLEY'S
NDRA

WITH A FOREWORD BY NATIONAL
DIRT LATE MODEL HALL OF FAME
RODNEY COMBS

Inside...



72 Year Old Rookie



Modified Touring History



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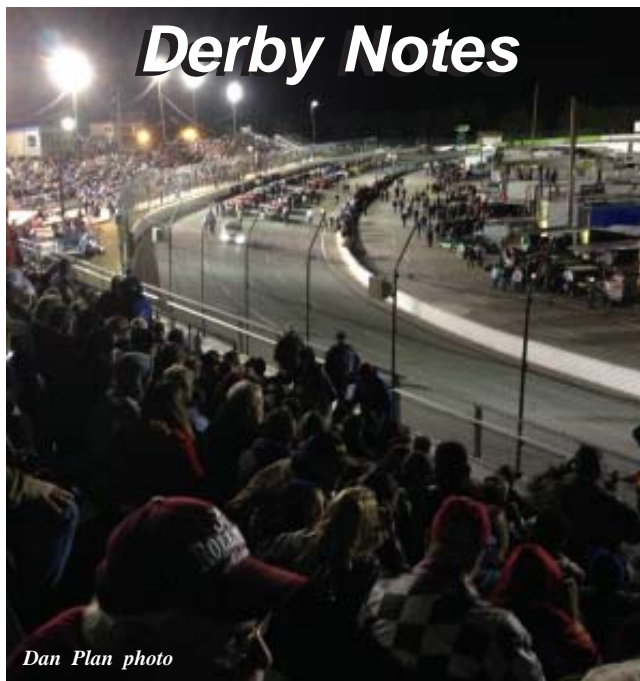
Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan

This past December, I made my first trip to the Snowball Derby in Pensacola, Florida. I've been reading about the race for many years and always thought it would be a pretty cool race to attend. One of the great supporters of this publication, and somebody I can call a friend twisted my arm to make the trip in 2016. I'll just call him Byron Rabbit, so he's not held accountable for my actions in Florida. Honestly, he didn't have to twist very hard. It's not often a guy gets the opportunity to see short track racing in December. Below are my top-ten moments of the 2016 Snowball Derby, in no particular order.

1. This trip, I had the opportunity to attend simply as a race fan. No media credentials meant there were no requirements to "act" professional at the track. I simply sat in the bleachers while watching the races. OK, I did use my video camera one night. I had almost forgotten how much fun it is to be a fan.



Dan Plan photo

2. One of the aspects of racing I've always enjoyed was the chatter heard on the scanners. I have my own scanner, but my friend Byron twisted my arm again and suggested using the pre-programmed scanners available at the track. Again, he didn't have to twist too hard. The insight you get from listening to the crews, drivers and officials is worth the price of admission itself. At one point I thought Bubba Pollard was on every channel, but then we realized most crew chiefs in the South refer to their driver as Bubba.

3. During the last chance qualifier for the Snowball Derby, we had a front row seat for the mad skills of young Derek Kraus. Cars were piling up in front, and in back of him. Derek simply slowed down, and drove away from the carnage. His maneuvers allowed him to make his way into the big show. It's amazing how many drivers forget about the brake pedal.

4. I was astonished at how many people attended Friday night's Super Late Model qualifying

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Derek Kraus in action at the Snowball Derby
(Bruce Nuttleman photo)



Stop and Go Fred at the Derby
(Bruce Nuttleman photo)

Racing According to Plan from page 3

session. The place was about three-quarters full with people watching single car time trials. Prior to qualifying, most of the teams spent all day making mock qualifying runs. I couldn't help but chuckle after the team of Ty Majeski made just a couple of runs and stayed near the top of the charts throughout practice. Meanwhile, the other teams were going through sets of tires like they were free. The KBM team of William Byron spent a lot of time and money to gain .040 on Majeski to get the pole. I guess it was worth it for them?

5. Oh, how I wish for simpler times. The haulers and the technology present today at the Derby blew me away. The vast majority of teams had stacker trailers and the entire shop with them in the pits. I heard teams talking of data acquisition readings and Dartfish videos from prior test sessions. Good lord, do we really need this stuff at the short track level?



Dan Plan photo

6. Saturday night's 100-lap event for the Pro Late Models saw Augie Grill and John Hunter Nemecheck race for the win. The crowd in our section went absolutely crazy when Augie took the

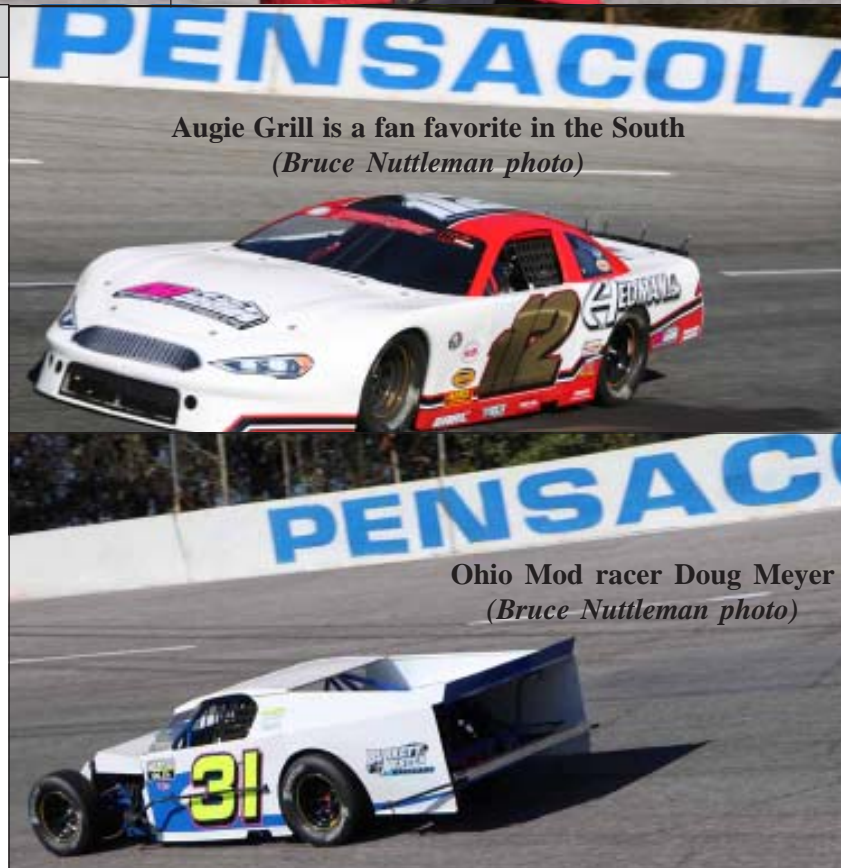
lead. They sure love their Augie in the South.

7. Prior to the races on Thursday night, we stopped in at the local watering hole across the street from the track. It always nice to meet new people and we ran into a group from Ohio. The driver was Doug Meyer, and they were an entertaining group and gave us someone to cheer for in the Modified main event on Friday.

8. Although I didn't get a chance to talk to him, I saw Stop and Go Fred (Mahlum) at work for 3 straight days. I wonder how many big shows this guy has been to. I'm thinking he will be a good candidate for an interview in a print issue of *The Midwest Racing Connection* during the 2017 season.

9. We were hoping to see Dan Fredrickson race once again in the Snowball Derby. Unfortunately things didn't work out for Danny to race. The wrap on the car from Cole Anderson came from Dan Fredrickson Signs and Graphics, and did win the best appearing car award. I think that can be counted as a Snowball Derby win.

10. Rain. That's all we saw on Sunday and Monday. Unfortunately, we couldn't stay for the



Augie Grill is a fan favorite in the South
(Bruce Nuttleman photo)



Ohio Mod racer Doug Meyer
(Bruce Nuttleman photo)



Cole Anderson won the best appearing car award
(Bruce Nuttleman photo)

Tuesday makeup date, but I was able to watch video of the race. The race to the finish was a barn burner, and I'm guessing Stephen Nasse didn't send William Byron a Christmas card this year.

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The "Chop" Heard 'Round The World



Dr. Troy Powers photo

There is no question that Scott Bloomquist has a polarizing affect on the world of dirt Late Model, short track racing. Fans either love him, or hate him. During the inaugural Gateway Nationals held in the dome in St. Louis, promoters added a little bit of flair to their out of car driver introductions. Bloomquist took full advantage of this out of car driver intro opportunity. The "Chop" he performed just as the smoke and cannons went off drew a huge response from the crowd and on social media. Like him or not, he had people talking about the event. Black Sunshine would go on to win the \$20,000.00 main event as well.

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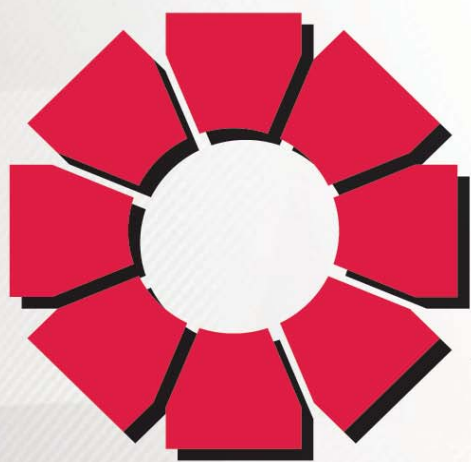
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Dean & Jason Talkin' Racin'



Jason Searcy

Tim Brockhouse from Webster has been awarded the 2016 Minnesota Asphalt Driver of the year.

Brockhouse was the INEX Legends car Masters division (over age 40) regular season point Champion

Brockhouse in 2008 when he took "burning it down" to all new level at Elko



Scott Swensen photo

Brockhouse Awarded 2016 Minnesota Asphalt Driver of the Year

for both the Asphalt and Dirt categories. He earned the maximum points possible and won an impressive 25 feature events in 56 race nights in 2016. Brockhouse now has an incredible 160 feature wins in his career.

"It means a lot (to get this award), you have small accomplishments and the big ones and this is definitely one of the big ones," said Brockhouse. "We had great success everywhere we went this year."

Brockhouse also won three races at Elko Speedway, his home track, even though he raced a very limited schedule. "Elko is easily one of my favorite race tracks ever but, it's hard to race against my friends, family and customers."

The one disappointment was not winning one of the year-end specials. At the Dirt Nationals in Beaver Dam (WI) Brockhouse had a mechanical failure and the Asphalt Nationals in Waterford (CT) the event was rained out and the feature races were not run.

Tim is the owner of the Great North Legends, where he sells and services Legends cars and Bandolero's. He and he is very optimistic about the upcoming 2017



Martin DeFries photo



Bruce Nuttleman photo

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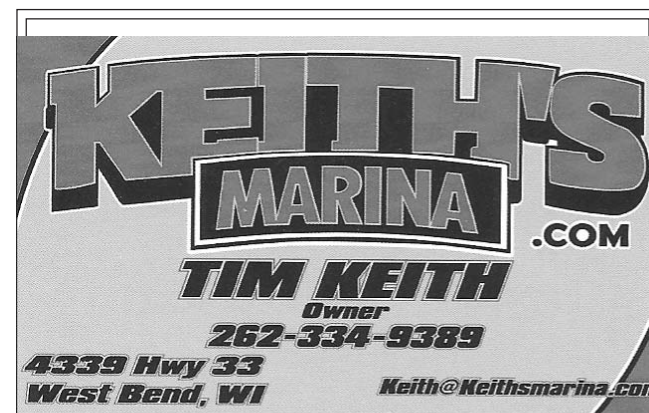
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race season. "We already have seventeen Bando's and thirty-two Legends cars preregistered" said Brockhouse.

Brockhouse is already making plans for his road trips in 2017 including the Asphalt Nationals in the Bullring at Las Vegas Motor Speedway (NV), the Dirt Nationals at Red River Speedway in Fargo (ND) and even the Road Course World finals in Finland.

Here are the previous winners of the Speed Talk on 1360 MN Asphalt Driver of the year:

2004 - Dan Fredrickson
2009 - Adam Royle
2010 - Brent Kane
2011 - Chad Walen
2012 - Jonathan Eilen
2013 - Ricky Martin
2014 - Jacob Goede
2015 - Jacob Goede
2016 - Tim Brockhouse



Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

Charlie Spry is taking a break from his Going in Circles column, but will return in future issues of
The Midwest Racing Connection

Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

Was sorry to hear of the passing of racing promoter Lanny Edwards. Unbeknownst to most, much of what this scribe has been involved in has been with the asphalt group of racing, but there was a time frame of 6 years or so when dirt was the deal and Mr. Edwards played a big role in that.

The open wheel modified class of car was going berserk across the nation as cars numbering in the thousands were being built and raced everywhere. There really wasn't any one group running a national series to reward the top shoes of the division and two guys with a plan, myself and Doug Sheckler decided to change that.

Consequently the United States Modified Series was born to allow the best of the best to compete against each other in head to head competition throughout the land. The beauty of the series however was that the hometown hero could also compete against the

traveling pros as rules were the same wherever the cars were raced making for a level playing field.

Every series needs a race and races have to be contested at a track so who is going to help launch the fledgling series? Enter one Lanny Edwards promoter of Devils Bowl Speedway of Mesquite, TX.

Actually, it took some time discussing the series plan with numerous individuals before the race could be scheduled and the time of year, fall of 1994, made for limited options. Successful race promoter Emmett Hahn (who worked closely with Edwards) thought Lanny might just be the one to kick off such an endeavor as he had done just that with the first ever World Of Outlaws Sprint car race. Favoring the open wheel set in most of his promotions anyway, Edwards would be the logical choice promoting the inaugural USMS open wheel modified event, right? As it turned out, yes, as Hahn who was more familiar with the modified type car gently coaxed Edwards into having the show, a two day event, October, 14-15, 1994.

A normal purse pay-out for a USMS event was set at \$2,000 to win with \$200 to start the main event. But Edwards wanted to go much bigger than that so a \$7,000 to win Feature event was chosen. Before two rookie promoters could say OH **** the event was on.

Race day dawned October 14th and everyone was optimistic there would be a good turnout of cars. But when the 115th car checked in and there was nowhere to put everybody optimism turned to elation. The biggest problem at that point was finding something large enough to put all the entry fee (The USMS take of the promotion) and pit pass (Devil's Bowl take for purse pay-off) money into.

Day one race action was fantastic with David James winning the 15 lap preliminary main event, but a terrible forecast for wet weather turned into reality and day two's \$7,000 to win main event was postponed until the Spring of 1995 as no suitable date was available to get the show in that year. Rescheduling postponed races is almost never successful and unfortunately with the spring race set for March 26th, 1995, that was the case as the car count was way down and a poor crowd attended. Van Gemmill was still pleased with the final result as he won the 40 lap main event make up race and took the \$7,000 home that went with it. The less than expected outcome however proved to be the end of the Lanny Edwards/USMS

Modified Touring Series History



**Van Gemmill \$7,000 winner of USMS Outlaw Modified Nationals, Devils Bowl Speedway, Mesquite, TX., 3/26/95
(Owen Richards photo)**

collaborating on race events as no such shows were ever scheduled again. But, I can only look back with fond memories and a great appreciation for Lanny, as he stuck his neck out to promote a grand show for a couple new promoters in the business with a new vision for racing. Although the inaugural event didn't go as planned the series proved very popular for fans and drivers alike for the next five years and is still talked about to this day. If not for Lanny Edwards taking on that first USMS event the series may never have gotten off the ground.

Here and there...How many 72 year old rookie of the year candidates do you know of? Well I know exactly one and he happens to be local racer Don "Thunder" Turner. Turner decided to race at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI., full time in 2016 and after placing 6th in final NASCAR Late Model points was declared the NASCAR Whelen All-American series "Rookie of the Year" for Wisconsin. As Thunder himself stated after receiving the award, "Go Figure."...The Central Wisconsin Racing Association has 8 firm dates thus far for its series of racing in 2017. Finally seeing some light at the end of

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**Kelly Shryock never lost a USMS Championship, five for five.
(Owen Richards photo)**



Racing Observations from page 13

the tunnel the group will hold events at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI., Marshfield Motor Speedway, Marshfield, WI., State Park Speedway, Wausau, WI., and Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. The latter two tracks are new additions to this year's slate and additional dates may be added....Speaking of Golden Sands, it has been purchased by Mark Smiley from the Basseuner family who after many improvements and a long run promoting it have decided to get out of the racing business. Smiley plans a full schedule of racing to include at least 15 events which is a big departure from the half dozen or so held the last several years...So it's now the NASCAR Monster Energy Cup Series. I don't think even Monster can muster up enough energy to wake those dosing during Cup events. It will take a BIG dose for sure...In the quote of the column department, it's many time Champion Kevin Nuttleman who hasn't raced in some time attending Champions Reunion VIII this past year as part of 'Fest racing. "I'm not sure I'm ready to be attending an event like this with all these "retired" racers...And in the other quote of the column, making up for some we missed it's Ken Schrader who we at USMS had conversations with pertaining to modified racing and who did participate in some series events, "How in the hell did you ever talk Lanny Edwards into paying that purse?" \$7,000 was a lot for that inaugural event but the show did go on.

And in our looking back in the past feature for the column, on September 16th, 1967 it was Dick Trickle



Don "Thunder" Turner # 7 2016 Rookie?

winning the 100 lap State Championship feature at Golden Sands Speedway. Trickle took home \$1,195.00 for the win. Dave Field followed in 2nd with 3rd going to Jim Back. The 50 lap semi-feature went to Nelson Drinkwine followed by Everett Fox and Larry Baumel. 25 lap consolation race honors went to Wayne Kittleson followed by Jerry Stephen and John Brevik. The non-qualifiers race was won by Tom Schaller

with Hilarian Michlig and Ed Walkush in 2nd and 3rd. In the season finale, August 31st, 1967 it was Marlin Walbeck winning the feature event at State Park Speedway. Following Walbeck were Lyle Nabbefeldt, Tom Reffner and Dave Field. The semi-feature went to Neil Callahan with Larry Baumel and Orv Buelow next. Heat race winners were Dennis Trickle, Bob Hofschild, Callahan and Walbeck. Consolation race winner was Vern Losser. Dick Trickle had fast time at 15:38 seconds. On September 2nd 1967 it was Dick Trickle winning the Season Championship 50 lap feature at Dells Motor Speedway. Marlin Walbeck finished 2nd. The 30 lap semi-feature went to Orv Buelow. The first consolation race went to Willie Hammond with the 2nd consy going to Lou Kander. Heat race winners were Art Link, Dennis Rank, Mel Richolson and Bud Schroeder. Fast time went to Trickle at 13:68 seconds. And on July 3rd, 2001 it was the MARS sanctioned race at Marshfield Super Speedway. Finishing first in the 100 lap feature was Todd Kleuver followed by Mark Eswein, Rory Melbinger, Chris Weinkauff and Judd Brandl. Heat race winners were Dean La Pointe, Rod Wheeler, and Dan Mills. Pete Kempf won the last chance race. Eric Franzen had fast time.

Questions, comments, opinions and other information welcome at Starmaker Multimedia 967 10th Ave N Ste A, Onalaska, WI 54650 608-783-5827 or at dale@starmakermultimedia.com



*Don "Thunder" Turner posing back in the '70s
before becoming a Rookie contender.
(Mussoni photo collection)*

Dale's Pictures from the Past

(Left photo) Marlin Walbeck winning the National Short Track 200 in 1967 at Rockford, IL., Speedway. Checkered flag presenter is promoter Hugh Deery.

(Right photo) The Dick Trickle Granada #99 1976, a car you didn't get to see race much as it was always in the shop getting wreck repair.



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In Memory of Darren Groff 1967 - 2016

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Darren Groff. Darren was a race fan from the state of Minnesota, but had also visited most tracks in the upper-Midwest at one point or another. While Darren did not attend many weekly shows in recent years, he was a fixture for the last 20+ years at Rockford Speedway for The National Short Track Championships and at Lacrosse Speedway for Oktoberfest. Unfortunately, Darren passed away at the end of November. God Speed Darren.



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman photo

Racing Nuggets



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman

It is doubtful that I will ever experience anything like the epic adventure I had in 2013, trying to get to the Snowball Derby in Pensacola on a flight out of Dallas, which was engulfed in a monstrous ice-storm. (If you've never heard that story—look up the November 2014 issue of Midwest Racing Connection, as I recounted it there.)

To say the least, that trip set the bar sky-high for unbelievable insanity. Since then nothing fazes me when traveling after enduring that harrowing experience and I'm more than OK with that.

This year's Snowball Derby for me was completely free of travel troubles to Pensacola. As usual, I thoroughly enjoyed every take off on the flights there. That feeling of the G-forces pushing you back into the seat always makes me feel thinner than I am.

However, Mother Nature still wanted to meddle with this year's festivities. We all knew the forecast wasn't looking very promising for getting the main event in that Sunday—or even that following Monday. For once, unfortunately the forecast was correct. The racing was washed out both of those days, postponing the main event 48 hours.

It was still a phenomenal event, despite the delay. Even qualifying and the Last Chance race were high-anxiety-edge-of-your-seat entertainment. Car counts at the Snowball Derby are much like what we see at Oktoberfest Race Weekend at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway.

In Florida, there were 55 drivers all vying for a top 30 qualifying effort in order to make the field for the Snowball Derby. Seymour, Wisconsin's Ty Majeski still holds the track record for the Snowball Derby

from his effort last year. He missed setting fast time this year by a mere .04-seconds. One of Kyle Busch's drivers, William Byron would claim the pole instead.

The remaining drivers put on a heck of a battle in the Last Chance race to get into the main event, with Stratford, Wisconsin's Derek Kraus securing his place in the field through a very determined effort, which included avoiding some nut-cracking squirrels.

Because of the rain delay, the decision was made to go to controlled cautions; something we're all very familiar with here in the Midwest. Gregg McKarns has been the innovator and driving force behind this cost-saving measure for series and teams. Even the notorious technical director, Ricky Brooks has successfully implemented controlled cautions at events he's been involved in, like the All-American 400, with help from McKarns.

This move to controlled cautions obviously had the potential to play well into the hands of our Midwest competitors—Majeski and Kraus, as they have had extensive experience with them, and would no longer have to run the risk of getting beat on pit road during live stops by hired NASCAR pit crews, who do it for a living.

However, it was a painful experience watching the controlled cautions not be executed to the precision that we were used to up north. Red flags were needed each time, but it wasn't because the drivers and teams were having issues with it. The problem seemingly lied with the execution in the tower at Five Flags Speedway. For whatever reason, they had to manually input the corrected lap counts for everyone after they came back onto the racing surface, in order to have it score correctly when racing resumed.

I spent a great deal of time trying to explain to the southern fans around me in the stands what we do different up north—like freezing the field—and other integral parts of the execution that make it seamless for both drivers and track officials. However, I'm quite certain there were a plethora of uninformed fans in the stands who feel the controlled cautions are utter nonsense.

These same fans either don't care about the disparity in live pit stops with average Joe pit crews vs. professional NASCAR pit crews that many teams hire—or they just don't agree that at this level, races should NOT be won or lost on pit road.

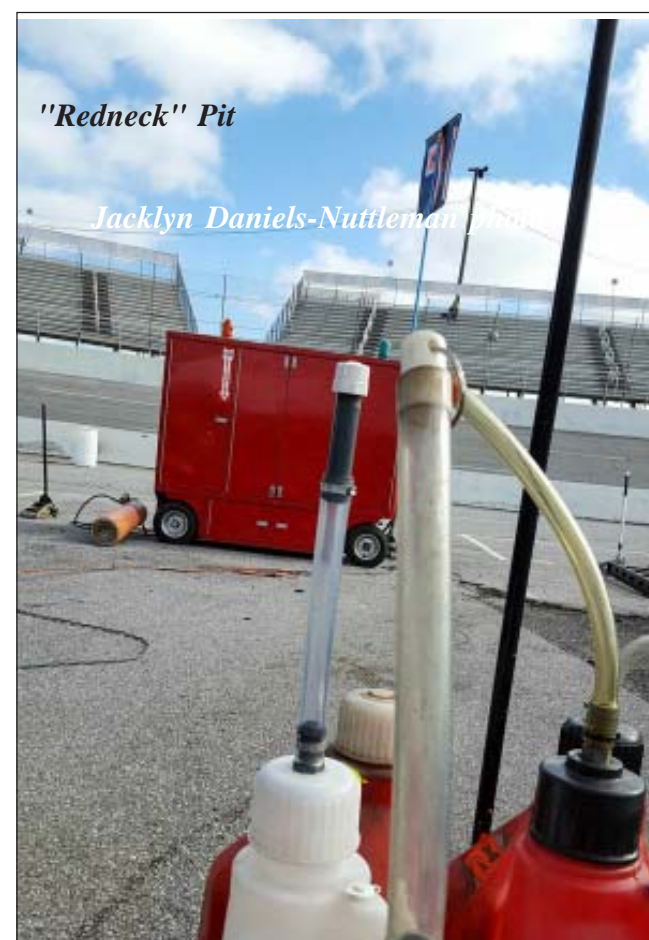
Rainball Derby

Look, I get it. There will always be "Haves" and "Have Nots" in racing. Some can afford to spend \$5,000 to have a professional pit crew; others like Majeski and Kraus have a beer-drinking-cheese-curd-eating bunch of passionate race guys who have incredible heart and are often volunteers on the team.

It's actually kind of interesting because up here in the Midwest, there are people who think that Majeski is a rich-kid race team. Perception is reality for many. Wins must mean money, right?

However, looking at the difference in the level of pit equipment between the fast qualifier—a KBM team—and Ty Majeski for the rain-delayed Snowball Derby illustrates that there will always be a perception of the "Haves" and "Have Nots." It's actually kind of

Racing Nuggets continued on page 16



"Redneck" Pit

Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman photo



"Mega" Pit

Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman photo

Racing Nuggets from page 15

amusing in an endearing redneck way. What can I say? I love our teams from the Midwest more than any others. I'm biased, I admit it.

At any rate, Majeski would lead a good portion of the 300-lap event, but struggle with some handling issues throughout, and end up having to settle for a third place finish.

Not bad, but I had to remind my husband Toby (Majeski's crew chief) when he was still lamenting about not winning, that at least the car was able to roll into the hauler in one piece. Kraus didn't have that luxury, as he ended up getting collected in a cluster during the race and finished 25th.

It's always a risk racing in the south, but for whatever reason that's where one needs to run in order to garner attention in the racing world. Regardless, I still think we have the most talented field of competitors here in the Midwest.

We've had some southern drivers make the trek up here to run some specials in the past, and hopefully, the trend for them to run at specials like the Slinger Nationals, the Dixieland 250, and Oktoberfest Race Weekend will continue. It will do them good to have a taste of our talent on our home tracks and hopefully they will realize that we have some mighty drivers in the Midwest.



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman photo

NASCAR Insight



Shane Carlson

1. NASCAR's premier series gets a new sponsor: Now the NASCAR Monster Energy Cup Series, the affiliation with Monster Energy is a direct attempt to attract a younger fan base and expand the sport's demographics. The brand prides itself on being edgy and raw, two characteristics NASCAR lacked under the 12-year Sprint (Nextel) suit-and-tie atmosphere.
2. Jimmie Johnson is the GOAT: Seven-time is the greatest this sport has ever seen. He faces stiffer

5 NASCAR Offseason Stories to Follow

competition than Petty or Earnhardt ever did, and with less races to run. He's not flashy, but he is absolutely the measuring stick when it comes to winning. Other drivers and teams compare themselves to how the No. 48 is running week after week. I still feel like he hasn't gotten the respect he deserves nationally across sports media outlets. The man is doing something no one in the modern era of NASCAR has ever done. And don't for a minute believe he's done battling for titles. He's got another title or two in him.

3. Stewart-Haas Racing in transition mode: When SHR announced it would move from Chevrolet over to Ford in 2017, it caught the race fans and media by surprise. Stewart had always considered himself a GM man and enjoyed much success in Pontiacs and Chevrolets. But business is business and SHR will field a fleet of Fords in both the Monster Energy Cup Series and the XFINITY Series. They also added Clint Bowyer to their lineup, who is in desperate need of a win and career stability.

4. Dodge looking to return: It has been confirmed Dodge is actively looking to rejoin the NASCAR circus after departing at the end of the 2012 season. This is a move I would love to see personally and fully support welcoming one of the Big Three manufacturers back into the fold. Dodge was born and bred in America, and since regaining financial stability as a company, it's time to get

back to the playground. It won't happen in 2017, though, but look for them to be back as early as 2018.

5. William Byron is Chevrolet's answer to Toyota's youth: Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Rick Hendrick signed NASCAR Camping World Truck Series driver, William Byron, to drive for JR Motorsports in the XFINITY Series beginning in 2017. Byron drove for Kyle Busch Motorsports in the Truck Series, but all of the young talent Toyota has been pooling for the last few years is beginning to show. But they can't keep everyone. Chevrolet will be banking on the success of its young stars in Chase Elliott, Kyle Larson, and now William Byron to usher in a new era for the Bowties.



Getty Images photo

Dirty Talkin'

Kris Peterson

Be a champion, I tell this to my daughter pretty consistently. When I tell her this I do not necessarily mean WIN, while I of course always want to see her win races and even championships, what I really mean is champion in one of its other true definitions. I want her to support and defend her cause which in this case is racing on local dirt tracks.

Being a champion is many things and it can include besting all of your rivals and competition in order to win a championship. It can also mean being a champion for your sport both on and off the track.

Be fan friendly, take the time to talk to and mentor young fans as they are the future of the sport. They pay admission to tracks in order to see their favorite drivers race. The fans are essential to dirt track racing, without the fans we have no race track to race at. When a young fan excitedly comes to you after a race for an autograph take the time to say hello, take a selfie with them, let them see you autograph a hand out card, this will create a fan for life and takes so little time. Take pride in your fans and loose some of the attitude, because those young fans are the reason you can race.

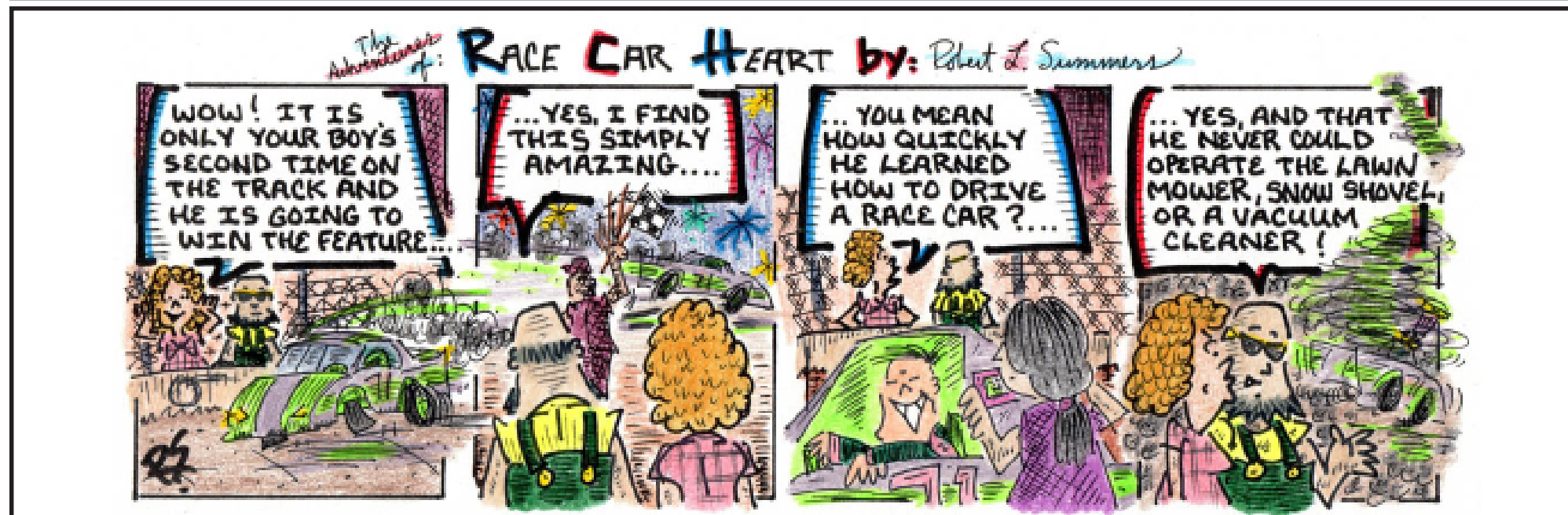
Be a Champion

When on the track be a champion, race to the best of your ability and the capability of your equipment. Go for the win but not at the expense of a nasty and possibly dangerous wreck. Be smart, learn from, watch and follow those in your class that are better than you. Up and coming drivers look up to those who are good and win, those drivers need to be a champion and take the time to mentor young drivers showing talent even if they are not always using their brains. No one out on a dirt track is going to get rich racing. There are some drivers that are at the track on their own, have every extra dime they have in their equipment, rally for those drivers, give them a helping hand or a piece of advice when they need it. A good deed never goes unnoticed.

Be a champion when it comes to your sponsors. Make your sponsors proud that their name is on your car. Support the businesses that have helped you to become the racer that you are, driving the equipment that you do. Know what your sponsors business is, what services they provide and talk about them when someone asks about them.

Being a champion means more than just winning, it means championing your passion both on and off the track. Be known as an ambassador to your sport, someone to be looked up to and regarded with respect. This will help to insure the future of our sport. At the end of the day be a champion.

David Mastell signs an autograph for a young race fan at St. Croix Speedway
(Vince Peterson photo)



The Rock-em , Sock-em Travelin' Sideways Dirt Show

By Dan Plan

Once again, our good friends at Coastal 181 Publishing sent us another great book for the holidays. This year's addition to our racing book collection Gary L. Parker's book on the history of Robert Smawley's NDRA series.

Known during its era as "The Rock-em , Sock-em Travelin' Sideways Dirt Show", Smawley assembled some of the top drivers of the late 1970's and early 1980's.

During this era, we had ASA (the American Speed Association) growing nationally with drivers such as Mike Eddy, Mark Martin, Dick Trickle, Bob Senneker and the likes on the pavement side. The dirt fans were treated to a series that featured guys like Leon Archer, Rodney Combs, Larry Moore, Jeff Purvis,

Buck Simmons and others. It was a great time to be a fan of short track racing, and this book brought back a lot of those memories.

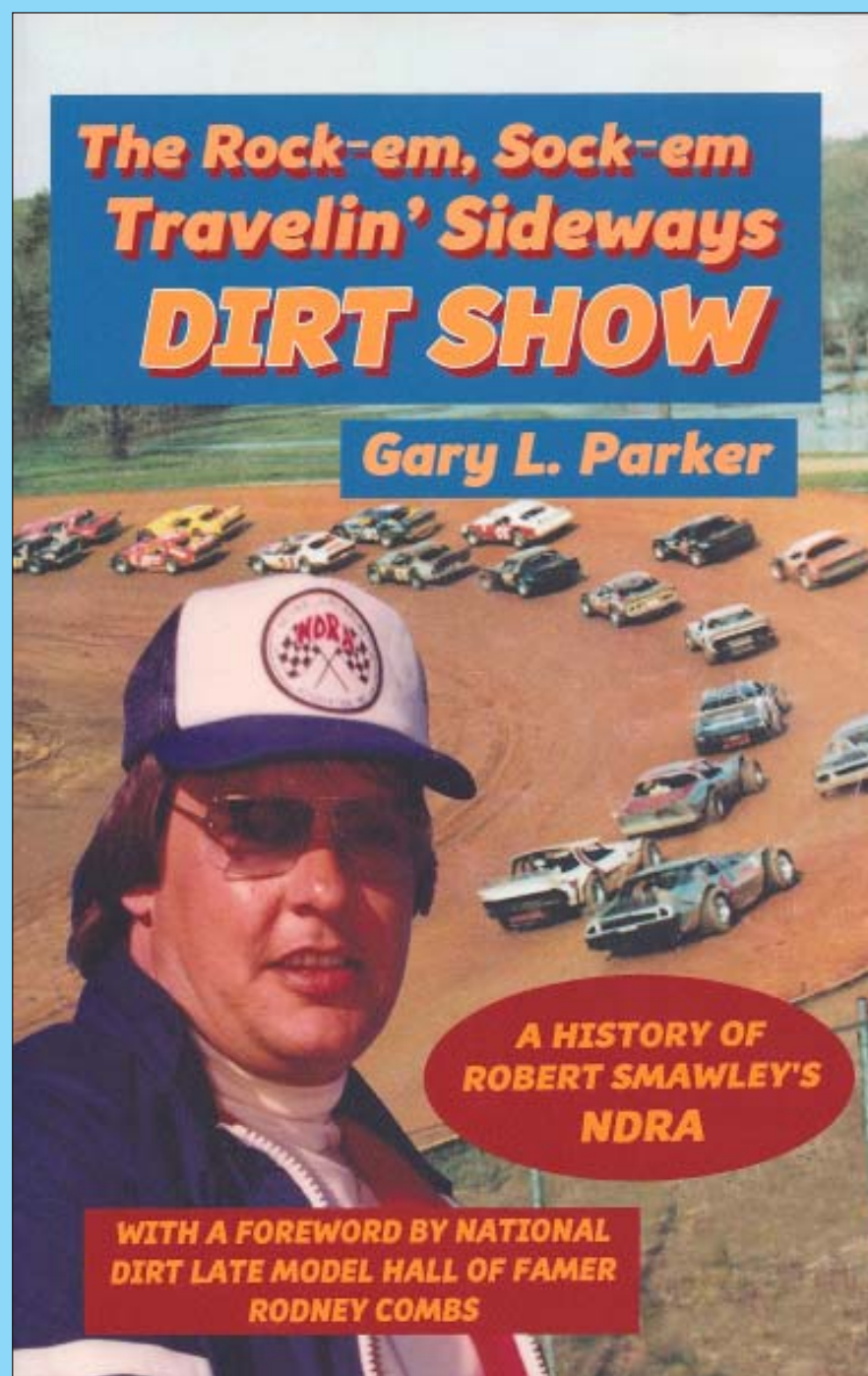
I was lucky enough to see the ASA stars race several times at the Minnesota State Fair, but never had a chance to see the stars of the NDRA make a visit this far North. The NDRA did some co-sanctioning with WISSOTA in the early 1980's but mainly the local area racers ran these shows. My only personal recollection of the NDRA was from the stories in the trade papers of the day.

Gary Parker does a great job of documenting the history of the NDRA in his book.

Parker gives insight into the steps Smawley took to bring the drivers together, working with the various tracks and gathering big time sponsors of the era such as Schlitz and Stroh's beer. I

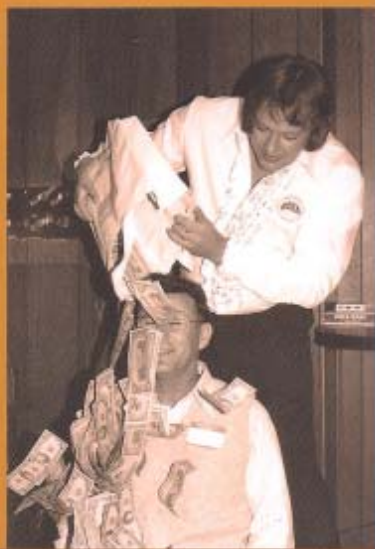
was always unsure why the series disappeared, but it sounds like Smawley just got tired of dealing with many of the politics that can go along with promoting race events. Sounds like a familiar story.

While the NDRA didn't last long, it was the series that lead the way for national series on the dirt side of things. Dirt fans



The NDRA brought money, fame, and national recognition to late model dirt racing. This is a must read for any fan of today's dirt late model national touring series. See how it was all started by a visionary showman and promoter by the name of Robert Smawley in the late 1970s.

Robert Smawley with 1979 NDRA champion Leon Archer



Parker has been involved with late model dirt racing for fifty years. He has worked in the pits with such racing icons as Jody Ridley and H. E. Vineyard. He is now writing about his favorite subject, late model dirt racing. Parker's first book, RED CLAY AND DUST, was released in 2015. Look for more of his books on dirt racing soon.

Author photo by Gary L. Parker

COVER PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ROBERT SMAWLEY COLLECTION

"Thoughts on the NDRA" section by national racing historian/writer **Bob Markos**

still have the opportunity to follow 2 national series (Lucas & WoO) while pavement fans no longer have a national tour for short track Late Models.

It's a great read, along with tons of pictures from the Smawley collection. To pick up your copy, contact Coastal 181 via their website at www.coastal181.com.

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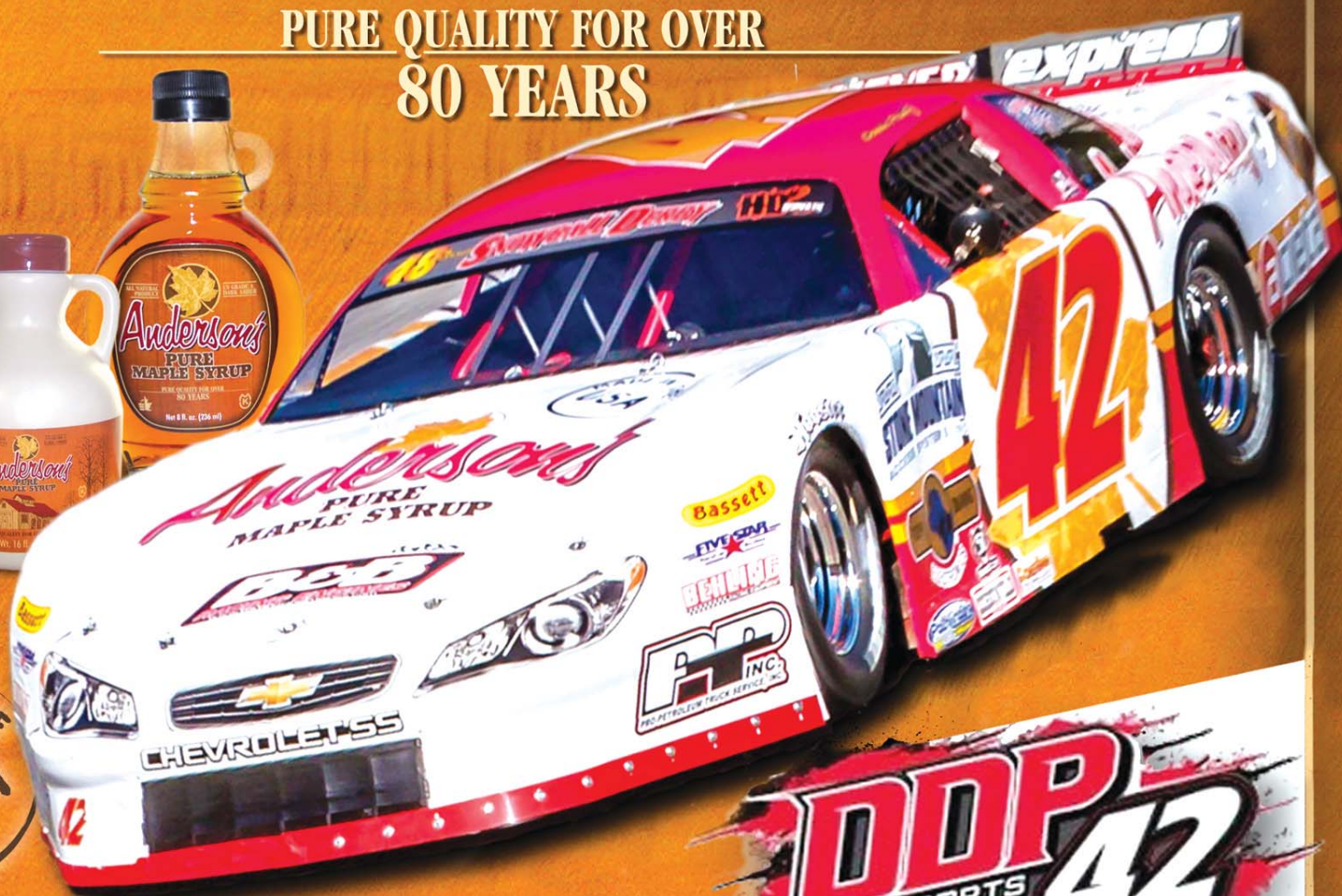
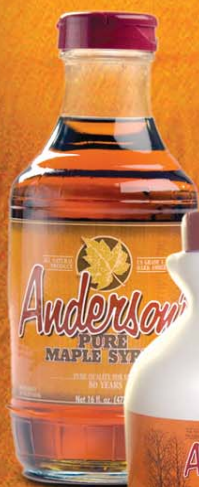
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