

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

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THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

March 2017

Speedweeks 2017 Inside & Out



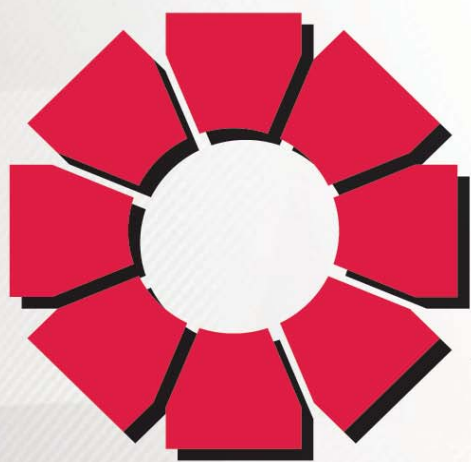
Inside...



Pictures from the Past



Talkin' Racin'



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Publisher's Note

Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan

One of the off-season discussion items that made me laugh was a few asphalt racers stating how the rules on dirt are so much better than asphalt. I hate to crush your dreams, but it really isn't all sunshine and unicorns on the dirt side of the world.

Sure, there are "pockets of perfection" when it comes to the dirt world. One of the first things people seem to mention is IMCA sanctioning. They (IMCA) have been around for a long time, and have a large number of tracks. The number of tracks running under IMCA sanctioning leads people to believe every track in the dirt world is the same. That simply isn't the case.

As an example, within 100 miles of my house, there are 4 different sanctioning bodies on dirt; WISSOTA, IMCA, NASCAR & USRA. All four sanctioning bodies have different variations in one form or another (motors, transmissions, tires, etc.). All 4 of these



sanctioning bodies have areas of tracks running under the same rules. But, if you venture too far away from any track running under a specific sanction, you'll need to make changes to run, or simply won't have a class available. The only exception around here is the dirt tracks sanctioned by NASCAR. They have provisions that allow for various sanctioning bodies in the area to all run together on the same track.

Another reason that leads people to think the rules are more consistent on dirt is due to the sheer number of tracks. Minnesota now has 1 asphalt track, but nearly 20 dirt tracks. Wisconsin asphalt fans have a little better numbers with 10 paved tracks compared to about 20 dirt tracks.

It wasn't all that long ago that race fans in the Western portion of Wisconsin could look forward to drivers from the Eastern side of the state showing up for events like the Punky Manor Challenge of Champions at Red Cedar Speedway. Drivers from Antigo, Seymour and Shawano would haul across the state to gain valuable WISSOTA points at the end of the year. Now the tracks in the East have changed

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Racing According to Plan from page 3

their rules away from WISSOTA, and few (if any) venture across the state at the end of the year.

Personally, I wish we could go back to the days of drivers running the same car on both dirt and asphalt. How cool would that be? I remember Pete Parker was quite successful running his dirt car weekly at Kaukauna on Thursdays, and then on using the same car on the dirt for the weekends in the late 1970's. I've heard stories of guys like Leon Plank or Kenny Mann running their dirt cars at LaCrosse in the mid-1970's. On the reverse side, guys like Dick Trickle or Bob Jusola (that were mainly known for their asphalt racing) were also capable of taking the same car, and winning a dirt race. That my friends would be the perfect situation in my world.

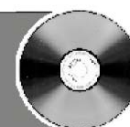
Unfortunately, times have changed, and the cars have changed so dramatically, this type of scenario is very unlikely to ever happen again. All that is hope for the best and enjoy what we have.

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Dean & Jason Talkin' Racin'



Jason Searcy

Things were going great for #28 Matt Goede in 2016, he just bought a house in Carver (MN) and at the age of 28 he was ascending to the peak of his racing career. In auto racing he finished second place to his brother #72 Jacob Goede in the Premiere division at Elko Speedway for the second consecutive year. In snowmobile racing he had just won his third Vintage World Championship in Eagle River (WI) and moved up to the Elite TLR Cup Tour Championship Ice Oval racing circuit. The first week out he shocked many people by finishing second place to Cardell Potter in Fargo (ND), confidence was at an all-time high. Then the calendar turned to 2017 and Matt's life changed forever.

On January 8th while racing in Ironwood (MI) Matt's sled had mechanical problems causing him to slow dramatically coming out of turn number four, with the whole field bearing down on him. His sled was hit, he slid off and then he was struck by another sled going

80+ mph. He sustained catastrophic injuries including: Shattered Kneecap, broken pelvis in three places, dislocated elbow, three broken toes, broken foot and if that is not enough he had compound fractures (that means bones poking through the skin) in his lower leg, upper leg and arm.

"I was awake the whole time," said Goede "I was aware of what was going on but I was in a lot of pain." He was transferred to a hospital in Wausau (WI) and then the news started to get out to the racing community. Prayers were sent over social media and Adam Brachle, the track chaplain at Elko Speedway, rushed to the hospital. "It was great to see Adam, nice to see a familiar face, I'm glad he was there for my dad and everybody," said Goede.

Shortly thereafter a GoFundMe page was set up to help Matt with his medical expenses, the goal was to raise \$15,000. The response on Facebook was immediate and impressive, that page has been shared 3,100 times and 282 people donated a total of \$32,885... so far. "I can't thank everyone enough for the support and donations, when things go bad, I guess that is when you find out who your friends really are" said Goede. "I'm not really an outgoing person, so for all those people to show their support is really cool."

Matt's father John Goede also raised \$10,000 by donating the sled that Jacob rode to a Vintage World Championship in 2006 and 2011 to a Charity auction.



Joey Prusak photo

That \$10,000 was donated to Blaine Stephenson, who was also injured in the Ironwood race, and Gavin Bihner, who was injured in a race on New Year's Eve.

Matt is back home and on his way to recovery now, but there is a long way to go. He is still in a wheelchair and can't put any weight on his right side. "Pretty much all I can do is sit in my wheelchair and watch TV all day long," said Matt "This injury sucks but I'm glad to be here, it could've been much worse." Matt is hoping to be able to walk by May so he can get back to the racetrack, "I want to be at the track every week, my brother (Jacob) plans on racing Elko Speedway and I'm looking forward to watching" said Goede.

Matt is not giving up on racing himself on asphalt or ice, but that is quite a ways off, right now he is just thankful to be alive and looking forward to flipping the calendar to 2018.



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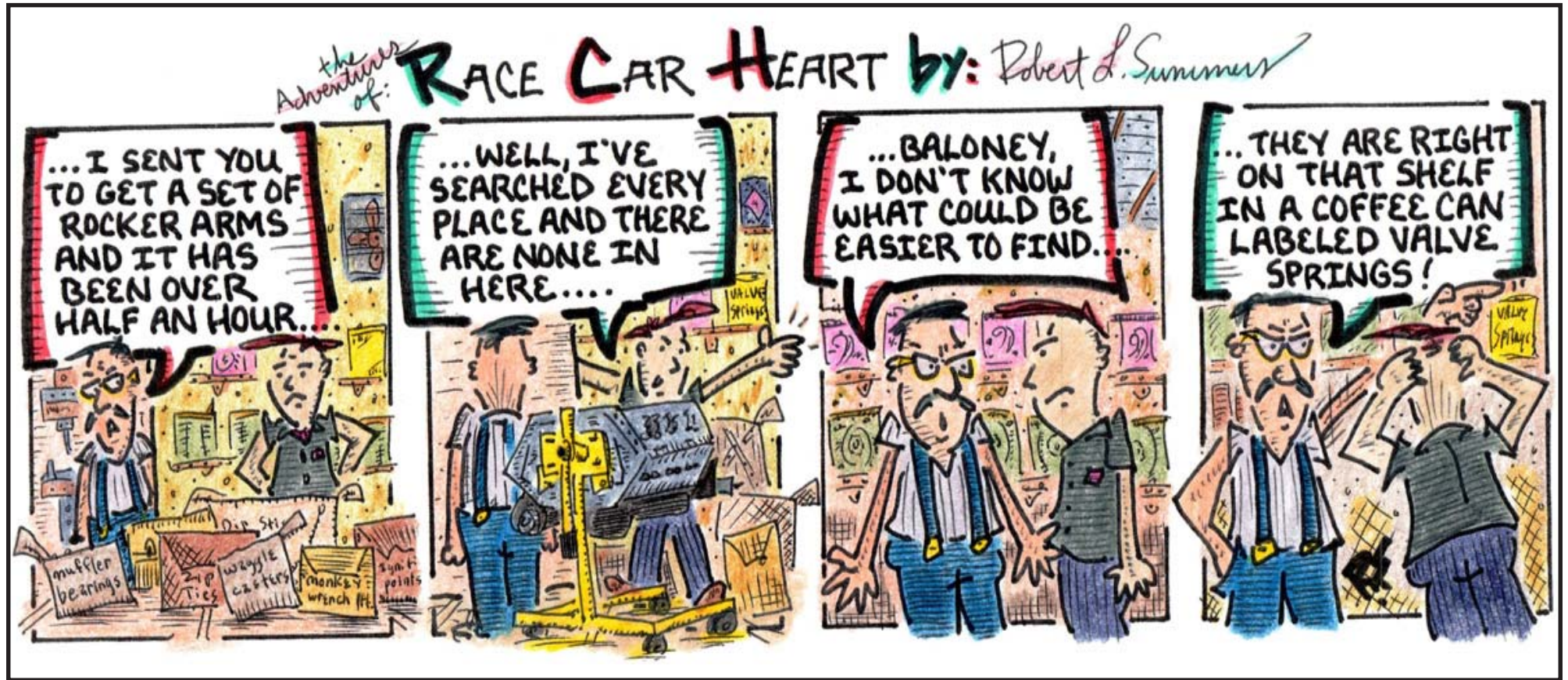
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Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

Most of us in the Midwest have had a relatively decent winter season, so it seems that many racers have gotten a jump on things and have their racing machines completed or close to it. I've been able to get some information on who is planning on doing what for the 2017 season, so here we go.

After a couple of years of racing a super late model part-time, three-time Rockford Speedway late model champion Jerry Gille is planning a return to full time racing at Rockford in the NASCAR Late Models. Jerry said that they are busy building a brand-new Lefthander, and have another completed car as well. The super late was parted out. "We just didn't have the money or time to compete with the super" said Jerry.

2016 Rockford figure-eight track champion Curt Nighswonger will once again race his car in the Roadrunner class, and probably the figure-eight as well, but he also has acquired a car for the AST (American Short Tracker) division. The car formerly belonged to David Russell, and Curt will race it if he gets the financing to get it together.

2016 Winged Women On Wheels champion Cassidy Frisch will be racing a Bandit car at Rockford, with some shows at Jefferson likely. They are also putting together a car for the V6 classes that are becoming very popular at Rockford, MIS, and LaCrosse.

Sponsors of Cassidy's racing efforts include Ultimate Graphix and Chevelle Motorsports.

In Central Wisconsin, street stock/pure stock frontrunner Karl Genett will be a busy guy this Summer, as per usual. He will be racing the same car he has been for the past four years, racing on the asphalt in the new steel frame challenge series in memory of Dave Lashua. This is a six race deal with two shows at Marshfield, two at Golden Sands, and two at State Park Speedway. He will also race in the NASCAR/Wissota dirt street stocks at many tracks, including Spring Lake Speedway, Tomahawk Speedway, Rice Lake, Red Cedar, Eagle Valley and more. He also plans on trying the cowbell street stock series. This monumental effort is helped along with many sponsors, including Country Wireless, TLC Transport, A&A Lock Service, Weis Electric, Burns Insurance, Edwin Memorial Lanes, TLA Therapy, Hilltop Auto, Helms Motorsports, OneSixX Motorsports, Total Body Fitness, Nekoosa Car Care, and everyone else who helps.

With racing on both dirt and pavement, I asked which he prefers, and he said he was leaning towards the dirt, as he noted, "It puts more control in the drivers' hands, and it is fun to race three-wide sideways."

Karl's Brother, Kyle was in a serious highway crash last fall, but has fully recovered and will be back racing full force once again in 2017 in the NASCAR/WISSOTA street stocks.

Marshfield Motor Speedway Super Late Model racer Jack Greenwood will be back racing once again in 2017 with the same car. Jack is a true veteran of racing, and it just wouldn't be the same without seeing him racing there.

On racing news from other locales, Sycamore Speedway Super Late Model racer Danny Deutsch will have a new car for 2017. It is a 2010 Rayburn with 2015 updates. He plans on keeping his two stock stub cars and is thinking that one of these times he will have two cars to bring to the Bahama Brackets at Rockford at the end of the season.

Lafayette County speedway Sportmod racer Travis Fecht will keep wheeling the same car, racing at Darlington, Dubuque, and Farley amongst others. His

car will have a much different look to it as far as color goes. I won't spoil the surprise, but I will say it is one of the colors that he had on his race truck in the past. He is thinking of starting off the season by racing at LaSalle (Illinois) for the Thaw Brawl, and at Tipton, Iowa for the Spring Fling.

Hawkeye Downs racers Jeremy and Malena Clement will race at their home track. Jeremy will run the 17 races at the 'Downs in his sportsman, and wife Malena will race in her Chevelle hobby stock. The pair will once again make the trip to Rockford to run the Bahama Brackets.

Verona, Wisconsin driver John Beale has lots of updates. He will be racing strictly super late models in 2017, racing the TUNDRA series, the Triple Crown Challenge at MIS, a couple of ARCAMWT events, and some others, including stops at Bristol and Gateway Motorsports Park. Their first car is finished, and as of this writing are building a second car, a Pathfinder chassied car nicknamed "Johnny." He will have top driver Casey Johnson as his crew chief this season, with Casey's Dad Jeff also helping out. Casey's tire specialist Craig Phillips will also be on board on this "super team." Several of his regular crew from last year will return. Conversely, John will also help out Casey in his own racing ventures.

Johns' brother, Brian will race a partial season at MIS in the NASCAR Late Models, something he did a couple of times late last year to get a feel for it, which he did quite well. Brian is expecting a baby due this year, so that may curtail the racing a bit.

One of John's crew members, Dan Silberhorn, will also be racing a sportsman at Jefferson in 2017. Everyone is going to be mighty busy.

Iron River Michigan driver Putch Bentley will be racing in the Badger state quite a bit. He plans on racing the full CWRA schedule and perhaps a couple of Big 8 shows behind the wheel of his new Senneker car. He also may race his dirt grand national a couple of times at Oshkosh.

Next issue I will hope to have a few more updates from various places as we approach an exciting new season.

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Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

It appears that an attempt is at least being made to get Super Late Model rules back to being uniform at Central Wisconsin paved tracks. The United Motorsports Association (UMA) has been formed with the intent of getting race tracks all under one rules umbrella once again.

The group consists of the tracks Dells Raceway Park, Wis. Dells, WI., Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., Marshfield Motor Speedway, Marshfield, WI., State Park Speedway of Wausau, WI., as well as the Tundra Series. The group is not only trying to get a handle on the fractured Super Late Model Division but

also to get rules and procedures in place for Late Model, Sportsman, Modified, Hobbystock and 4 cylinder divisions of racing.

It just amazes this scribe how far from the formula that worked in the past through sanctioning groups things have gotten, especially for the Super Late Model class. First of all where did the moniker Super Late Model come from? For years we had Late Model, Sportsman and Hobbystock or Street stock divisions which were very identifiable by name alone and simplified matters for potential new drivers and fans to become interested in. Simple is good but somehow this deal got way out of hand. Most of the problem occurred when tracks decided to take on all responsibility for rules and procedures which included having to race on the tracks specified tire. Taking this away from sanction groups which were better equipped to handle these things resulted in the beginning of the end for racing as we were accustomed to seeing.

We hate to use the word end here and maybe if order can be restored starting out with the Super Late Model Division we have a fighting chance to renew interest in the sport at the short track level. The UMA group is initially attempting to equalize competition by car weight requirements, carburetion and to some extent the RPM chip usage that can be used at each track which will hopefully create a level playing field for the 18 different engine packages that currently exist. Yes, you read that right, that's how far out of control things have gotten. Years ago we laughed at the SCCA sanctioning body with their too many to count classes of racing. Little did we know our favorite sports pastime of short track racing would fall prey to the same situation!

I don't know that these three requirements are the total answer here but it is definitely a good starting point. Somewhere down the road it is this writer's opinion that only certain engines should be allowed and that more restriction will have to take place as far as shocks, springs and race car bodies go. Some shock and body usage restriction is in place with UMA but it doesn't go far enough as far as cutting needless costs.

The group has also come up with a tire rule as the Hoosier 3035 can be used on the left side with the Hoosier F-80 allowed for the right side of the race car. In the past each track was independent with their tire choice but maybe something more uniform and that is handled by a "Group" or sanctioning body will eventually provide stronger implementation to put total uniformity back into that equation. The same compound tire being impounded at each racetrack only to be used at said track which was normal protocol was (is) just plain a bad idea. That scenario puts additional burden on tracks and promoters who should be dealing with marketing their product to fans instead of messing with tires. The tire deal all started with issues as far as detecting the softening of the tires. Well, everyone decided, we'll show you, racer, we'll make you give us your tires after each race event so you can't treat them away from the track. That really didn't work as well as tracks thought it would so here we are.

The UMA group is not a sanctioning body per se as the tracks will still be holding events on their normal nights for racing which means some conflict as far as racing on the same night against each other will take

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Dale's Pictures from the Past



#67 Ed Howe #70 Tom Maier in town for The Midwest Championships at The Dells in 1972

Racing Observations from page 9

place. The group however has scheduled Tundra Series events and is also bringing back the successful from years past Wisconsin Challenge Series. These two Series will each have events at all the aforementioned tracks this year.

As we’ve said all the answers to the short track paved speedway problems probably aren’t going to occur with this initial offering of rules, regulations and procedures but again, it is at least a starting point.

Here and there...We thinks the tire rule that the Central Wisconsin Racing Association has come up with for their series of races this year may just be the equalizer that UMA is trying to come up with for short track racing. The Towel City racing tire of choice has proven to have great wear characteristics and has been immune to softening agents, as no distinct advantage in competition has been found at this point. In addition, the tire is substantially cheaper than anything currently being used in the Super Late Model Division which should provide a huge plus in getting

racers to get their cars out of the weeds and back on the race track! I’m not privy to what is going on in the majority of support divisions UMA is planning to set up uniform rules and procedures for, but I do know there are a lot of those divisions out there. A LOT of them out there, with little or no identity to differentiate one from the other. Not sure if a group of promoters will have the time for all these “sanctioning” type plans but again at least taking a step is more than has been done in the recent past... The new moniker for the CWRA series this year is “The Stars to Legends Tour.” Where today’s stars become tomorrow’s legends. Very appropo as the group has certainly produced many Star racers who went on to become legends of the sport. It is the intent once again of CWRA to promote its drivers as such which can only help to create more involvement from racers and extra excitement for fans...

Looking back in time it was Nate Haseleu winning the 75 lap Wisconsin Challenge Series Feature at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., on May 19, 2002. Following Haseleu were Chris Weinkauff, Jeff Weinfurter, Jeremy Lepak and Mark Eswein. Looking further back in time it was Jim Back winning the

season finale 30 lap Feature at Black River Falls Speedway, Black River Falls, WI., on September 5th, 1966. Back was followed by Dick Trickle and Marv Marzofka. The semi-feature went to Orv Buelow. Marzofka was crowned 1966 season champion at the track. Michigan drivers Ed Howe and Tom Maier were publicity hyped to come to the Midwest Championship September 9-10, 1972 at Dells Motor Speedway and “Blow the doors off” the Wisconsin drivers. They fared quite well with Maier placing 3rd in the 200 lapper and Howe 4th. A couple of Wisconsin drivers with their doors very much intact, Dick Trickle and Marv Marzofka, finished 1st and 2nd. Interesting to note that both Howe and Maier raced together on the track as teammates for the entirety of the 200 lap race. Neither was ever more than a car length away from the other, even swapping positions now and then.

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

Dale's Pictures from the Past

#61 Jimbo Back in the Jim’s Custom Shop Ford (below), #91 Marv Marzofka won 32 features with this car in 1972 (right) and #87 Nate Haseleu in the Golden Sands Speedway pit area prior to winning the 75 lap WCS race there in 2002 (bottom right)



Racing Nuggets



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttelman

It seems every time I travel a great distance for racing, there's always a few good stories and great memories that come out of it. Speedweeks is always so special; not just because it marks the beginning of the race season for NASCAR, but also because the World Series of Asphalt happens in tandem with that down at New Smyrna Speedway.

This trip, there were five things that I learned:

1. A Ford Fiesta can easily do 90 MPH and is mighty nimble.
2. If you have an actual working Oberg Fuel Safety Valve on your race car, you CAN still kick the competition's ass.
3. Tempers are not the only thing short on short tracks—driver's memory can be too.
4. Carl Edwards has been talking to Jack Roush.
5. Watching the Daytona 500 in a luxury suite has ruined going to any NASCAR race for me ever again.

We'll start with that Ford Fiesta. When I got to the rental car parking lot, there were three cars to choose from; so being my husband Toby's a Ford guy, and his driver Ty Majeski has inked a contract with Roush-Fenway Racing as a development driver, I figured I best plunk my butt behind the wheel of a ride bearing the Blue Oval.

I selected the Ford Fiesta, and found it to be a real joy to drive once I got past not sitting up as high in the seat as I am in my own Explorer. I got into Orlando quite late, so I had the Florida expressways nearly to myself, which made it difficult to not realize just how fast I was pedaling that little Fiesta.

When I realized I was doing 90 MPH, I had to completely lift off of the throttle. It was then that I noticed the speedometer goes up to 130. It was tempting to give it the full test, but I thought better of it

Five things I Learned During Speedweeks

when I spotted an officer of the law parked in the median with his headlights off. Crisis averted.

Toby, Ty and the team had an excellent shot at winning the World Series of Asphalt again this year, despite getting off to a slow start with some handling issues and testing under race conditions. They finished third the first night, got rained out the second night, and posted a second place finish the third night on the track.

By the fourth night—they were pretty much loaded for bear and feeling pretty sporty. It ended up being an epic battle between Majeski and Stephen Nasse to cross the finish line first. The pair swapped paint a few times, rallied side-by-side, lap after lap, until finally Majeski came out on top, grabbing the checkered flag. It was the kind of battle that made your pulse race. Toby's youngest daughter even sent me a photo of her FitBit that showed her pulse was 136—and all she was doing was watching the free stream of the race on FansChoice.tv.

Of course if you've been following along with the World Series of Asphalt this year, you would know that both Majeski and Nasse were disqualified in the post race inspection for having disemboweled fuel safety valves on their cars.

You see, apparently, the Oberg fuel safety valves, while good intentioned to stop the flow of fuel in case the line gets knocked off in an accident and prevent fire injuries, they don't always work as they should and can often times starve the engine of fuel during race conditions. This could lead to vapor lock during a race, or even damage to the engine because it

inadvertently starves it of fuel.

Modified drivers in a subsequent race were also DQ'd for the same infraction in their post race inspection.

It should be noted that not all Oberg fuel safety valves present challenges and gutting them does not provide a competitive advantage. I know this because Toby put a brand new one on Ty's car the next night they raced and by God, they won the event by almost an entire straightaway.

It should also be noted that the SRI parts truck on site at New Smyrna Speedway sold 30 of those valves within 24 hours after those disqualifications. I guess I learned more than five things during Speedweeks.

That battle with Stephen Nasse was truly one of legendary proportions. What was unfortunate was that at the end of the race, Nasse and his crew were overcome by their passion for winning that they stormed Victory Lane and tried to take a swipe at Majeski, who was still seated in his car. Losing can be hard sometimes. However, while tempers are short at short tracks, it would seem memories are too.

Just this past December, Stephen Nasse gave a quote to Race22 that he must have forgotten after that intense on-track battle with Majeski. He had said, "We're race car drivers, you know, not steering wheel holders. We're supposed to get up on the wheel and drive. I came to win the races just like everybody else. If I have to move somebody to win a race, so be it, I'll

Racing Nuggets continued on page 12



Dan Plan photo

Racing Nuggets from page 11

move them. I don't care if it's the Lord himself out there. I will do what I have to do to win a race and I don't want anyone to forget that and I expect the same thing from my competitors. Nobody comes to finish second."

In the end, Nasse never was able to bounce back to be competitive after the DQ. Majeski rallied, but was unable to make up the points deficit from the disqualification and ultimately finished third in the series—16 markers behind the championship winner, Harrison Burton, and just six points behind second place—Spencer Davis. Numbers that left the team wishing there hadn't been two rainouts during the series, but enough on the hindsight hoping.

Over at Daytona International Speedway, on #DaytonaDay we were treated to an incredible time. My very good friend, Shari had two extra tickets for a posh suite at the track. Toby and I pounced at the opportunity and enjoyed every memorable moment of it, especially those that actually found us crossing paths with Majeski.

We had tickets for a suite—complete with a full spread, including a nifty little open bar. There were options for every level of fan—you could sit inside and watch the broadcast by the food and beverages, or you could sit out on the patio and view the race in person, or even go down a couple of steps and sit in regular seats that were blocked off for our suite.



The suite was the Fifth/Third Bank Suite—sponsor of Roush-Fenway driver, Ricky Stenhouse Jr. We got to meet him, and listen to him talk about running at Daytona and what his expectations were for the day. He counted Denny Hamlin as a close friend off the track, whom he would draft with in a heartbeat, despite them not being with the same manufacturer. Stenhouse didn't stay long, as he had many other obligations before the green flag would drop, so he was gone fairly quickly. We were too for that matter, on our way for a tour down in the pits.

As we made our way to the elevators to get to a golf cart, who should we see boarding the elevator across from us? Dale Earnhart Jr. Had I been quicker with my cellphone, I would've had an excellent photo of his backside, but alas—I was not quick and as the elevator doors closed, I lamented how I lost the opportunity to get a stellar Junior Buttshot.

It didn't take long and our golf cart was rolling up to the Driver's Meeting. The guest list for dignitaries on the stage for this was enormous. Among them—Mario Andretti, Rob Gronkowski of the New England Patriots, and Green Bay Packers General Manager, Ron Wolf. There were at least 60 celebrity guests on the stage—some



more "celebrity" than others, depending on whether or not your taste went further than just in your mouth.

We got to hear Brian France tell the drivers and crew chiefs that "blocking is part of racing. Don't look for NASCAR when you block somebody, you better hope there is a good Samaritan behind you."

That must be code for "Boys Have At It 2.0?"

We were also treated to VIP status for the pre-race concert on the frontstretch. Country group, Lady Antebellum was performing and we were taken on stage. Yes, on stage—off to the right. I got a few sweet photos and my friend Shari and I were dancing away up there. As a fan of country music, this was completely in my wheelhouse and I loved every minute of it!

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Racing Nuggets from page 12

But probably one of the most awesome things we got to do at Daytona was have lunch with Jack Roush. Ty Majeski was there with us too. Jack is a huge fan of Ty—he keeps tabs on everything he’s been doing in the short track world and he’s excited for the future together in NASCAR. It was a surreal moment to be standing there hearing him say that, knowing their organization needs a shot in the arm and that Ty could be the one to do it. That was made even more special because Toby was also standing right there listening to it all—and obviously he knows he played a decent role along with the entire team to help build the steps to this point.

Jack was sharing all kinds of stories with us. Probably the biggest nugget was that Carl Edwards had reached out to him—letting him know that if he needed a backup driver for any division, he was ready to help out at a moment’s notice. Interesting words, to say the least.

Eventually, we were whisked away again on the golf cart to get back up to the suite to watch the race. Another full spread, with that sweet little open bar was once again at our disposal. Thanks to attentive servers, one only really had to get up to drain one’s bladder. We were spoiled rotten. I’m not sure I could ever go to another NASCAR race as a “commoner” and enjoy it as much ever again.

Kurt Busch won the Daytona 500, and while that made the swarm of Ford fans and supporters in our suite elated, it was his crew chief, Tony Gibson’s

unadulterated joy over the win that made everyone smile. THAT was a real moment for the memory books.

And now as I write this, bouncing down the road on our way back to Wisconsin in the race car hauler—I realize how glorious it was to have the whole experience—and I’m grateful—but I still think it’s pretty sweet to be our redneck selves back home. We may never get to enjoy an open bar again at a race,

but we will relish the Buck Nights at our local short tracks, cheering for our local drivers. We may never see another battle the likes of that between Stephen Nasse and Ty Majeski again, but I’m going to hold out hope that we will many times more. And I will always remember not to judge a car by its silly name; because that Ford Fiesta is just that—quite a fiesta on wheels. Zero to Ninety in mere seconds. If only we could get the hauler home that quickly.

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Speedweeks 2017 Inside & Out



Dan Plan photos



My abbreviated trip to Speedweeks was interrupted a few times this year due to rain. Although nobody looks forward to rain outs, the rain did give me the opportunity to see a few things I normally wouldn't have seen.

Friday typically makes for a long day. After getting up early to catch a flight, waiting on luggage, getting a rental car, driving to Daytona and checking into the hotel, it was finally time to see some racing. Spencer Davis picked up the Super Late win on the first night, with Harrison Burton and Ty Majeski in tow.

Saturday Morning started out with a trip to Historic Legends Beach Road Course parade. It was pretty cool to see two guys from my home state (Blackie Wangerin and Skip Pollak) on hand. After attending

the ARCA race at Daytona, the plan was to head back over to New Smyrna to see some real racing. Unfortunately, after the first caution during the Pro Late Model race, the rains came and the night was over.

The Saturday night rain out gave me the opportunity to see the rescheduled Clash at Daytona on Sunday morning. I'm a much bigger fan of running the races at Daytona during the day, because I can still go to the short tracks at night. This year's Clash had another exciting finish to a race at Daytona, but hardly anybody was on hand to see it.

After spending some time enjoying the beach after The Clash, it was off to Volusia County Speedway for the World of Outlaws Sprint Cars final appearance of Speedweeks. Unfortunately, Rico Abru and Dale Blaney got together on the second lap of the main event, with Blaney's car tumbling over the fence and into the crowd. It was a scary situation, and even more so knowing I was standing in the same place less than an hour ago. After the show was over at Volusia, I did see that young Derek Kraus turned some heads in the K&N race at New Smyrna by picking up a third place finish.

On Monday night, it was back to New Smyrna. For the past 4 years I've been at Speedweeks, the Late Model car counts were impressive, but the East Coast Mod numbers have been less than spectacular. That changed dramatically this year, with 26 cars on hand and 24 starting the feature for the Mod Squad. These guys put on a heck of a show, and I just love listening to all of the names. Bertuchio, Catalano, Solomito, Balluzzo, etc. Nice group of guys, but you almost get the feeling if you did something wrong, you might end up at the bottom of a river wearing concrete shoes the way some of these guys talk on the radio.



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Tuesday was yet another trip to New Smyrna. Weird things happened this night. All I can say is I've never seen a race winner DQ'd for a safety violation, and I've never seen anyone have the qualifying time taken away because something "smelled funny". But, rules are rules and you best abide by them when dealing with the "Room of Doom".

My final night in Florida was scheduled to be a return to Volusia for the Dirt Car Late Models. The rain returned again, and everything was washed out by noon. I was planning on just calling it a trip and resting up before my return home the next morning. Luckily for me, Bob Fredrickson had an extra ticket to the Living Legends of Auto Racing Awards Banquet. I truly can't thank Bob enough for inviting me along.

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Dan Plan photo

26 East Coast Mods were on hand this year at New Smyrna and Ryan Preece never had to use the sharp looking back up car

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While most of the people that go to Speedweeks are there to see all of the top stars of today at the big track, I'm typically more interested in the history of the sport and the short track events. This awards banquet was definitely something I truly enjoyed. Guys like the entire Alabama Gang, Linda Vaughn, Bently Warren and Will Cagle (just to name a few) were on hand. Award presenters were people such as Dr. Dick Bergeren, Tony Glover, Ken Squier and Lew Boyd. To top it off, I ended up sitting at a table with Les Ferris and Ronnie Sanders. I mean, how cool is that? As somebody that is interested in the history of the sport, this was the opportunity of a lifetime and definitely an awesome way to cap off my visit.





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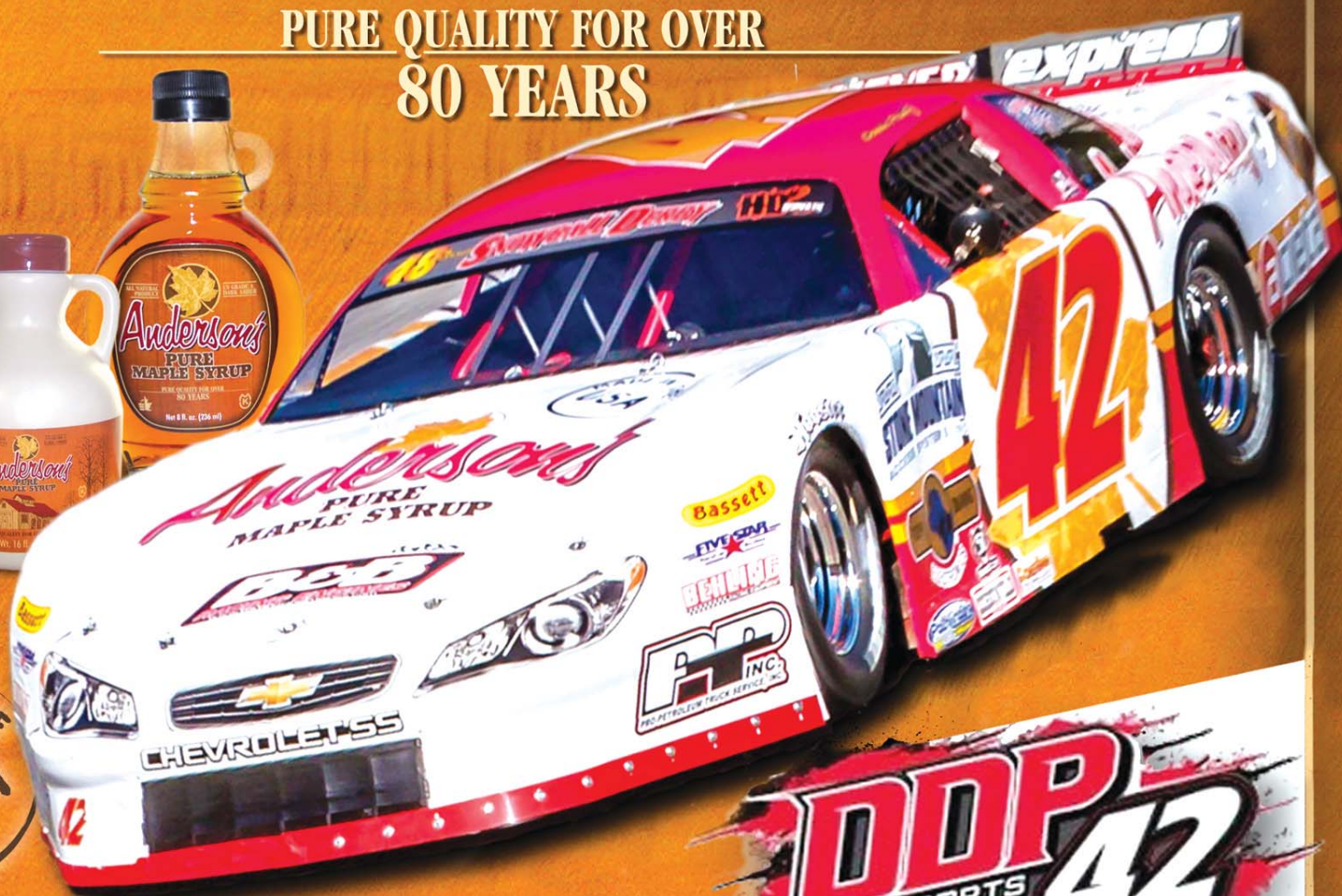
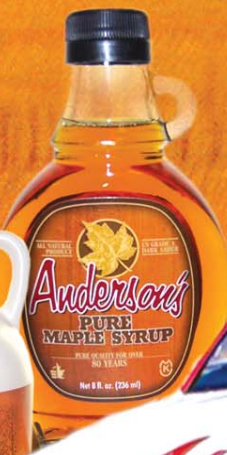
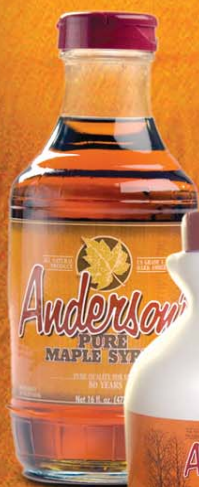
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