

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

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THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

April 2016

Saying Goodbye To An Old Friend



Inside...



NASCAR Insight



Short Track History Part II

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Publisher's Note

Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan

I touched on the topic in the headline of this column a bit in my March column, following my trip to the 2016 version of Speedweeks. I figured this would be another opportunity to explain why short track racing has been one of my favorite activities for most of my life.

In my opinion, you simply can't top the action on a track one-half mile in length or less. One can only imagine how popular NASCAR would still be if they added a bunch of Bristol/Martinsville/Richmond type tracks instead of all of the 1.5 mile tracks. I know I wouldn't fall asleep every Sunday afternoon.

The concessions at most short tracks are fairly priced in my mind. Believe it or not, I actually like race track food. I miss the roast beef sandwiches at Cedar Lake, but the Sloppy Joes are pretty tasty. Lacrosse Speedway doesn't offer just regular popcorn; they have Gourmet popcorn and homemade caramel corn at their concession stand.

What I like about short track racing

The sights and sounds on the track and in the stands can't be beat a short track. One of my favorite sayings is you can't make this stuff up. You can look at the line up of a race before it starts, and try to predict what's going to happen. Sometimes your predictions are right, but most times one little bobble causes the outcome to be entirely different than predicted. The same goes with the fans. Listening to the reaction of the fans is also entirely unpredictable. What you might think is just a racing incident might cause a totally different reaction depending on where you sit in the stands. I've even seen a husband and wife have totally different views of the same incident.

The drivers at a short track are generally very approachable. Unlike the "Big Leagues" all you have to do is walk up to somebody and ask them a question. No media center requirements or fines for saying something that's on your mind is a good thing. Sometimes, it's best to leave somebody alone on a bad night. Trying to get a quote from somebody that's doing this as a hobby isn't going to gain me a Pulitzer prize. If somebody looks pissed, and doesn't want to talk, that's fine by me.

Heck, even most track owners and officials too. I'm pretty sure most mainstream "journalist" couldn't call a top NASCAR driver or BZF on a Wednesday night to chat. On the other hand, I've been lucky enough to have a few people in the sport that are nice enough to take my call and always take the time to talk with me.

The show at a short track typically isn't too long. I say typically, because I've been to a few that had way too many divisions and went on way too long. I've always liked when a show wraps up and your thoughts are

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RACING CONNECTION**
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www.theracingconnection.com

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“wow, I can’t wait to come back next week,” versus thinking “is this show ever going to end.”

I grew up reading the racing papers and magazines that were available when I was a kid (Checkered Flag Racing News and Stock Car Racing Magazine.) It seemed that every year there was always a columnist in either publication that would mention the after race activities of legendary drivers like Dick Trickle or Richie Evans. I wasn’t old enough to hang out with these drivers in their prime, but the stories always left me with a smile. I can’t thank the people enough that have let me be part of their inner circle during the after race activities. It makes me feel like I’m re-living the Trickle and Evans activities first hand, and that my friend is pretty damn cool.

With all this in mind, I’m ready for the season to kick off here in the upper-Midwest early in the month of April. Make sure to get a copy of our first print issue in May as we celebrate the 20th year of *The Midwest Racing Connection*

Miscellaneous news & Notes:

While I’m on the topic of good things, the following item was one of the best uses of social media I’ve seen in some time. During the early part of 2016, many people were posting 10 photos in 10 days on Facebook. I have to tell you, this idea made my newsfeed on Facebook the most enjoyable it has ever been since I joined Facebook. A ton of great old photos and stories were shared. This idea also brought out many people that rarely post on Facebook to share some of their racing history. Whoever came up with this idea should receive an award of some sort.

And finally, the quote of the month goes back to February in Florida. A promoter (that shall remain nameless) was asked if it’s difficult to address drivers that are upset. The promoter stated; “The drivers aren’t the problem. It’s usually their wives or crew members that start the trouble.” There you go drivers, just another example that the promoters are on your side.

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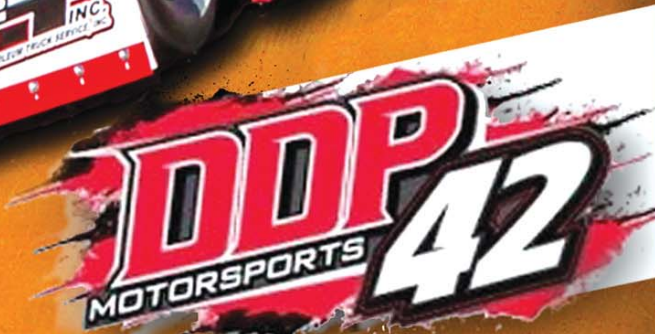
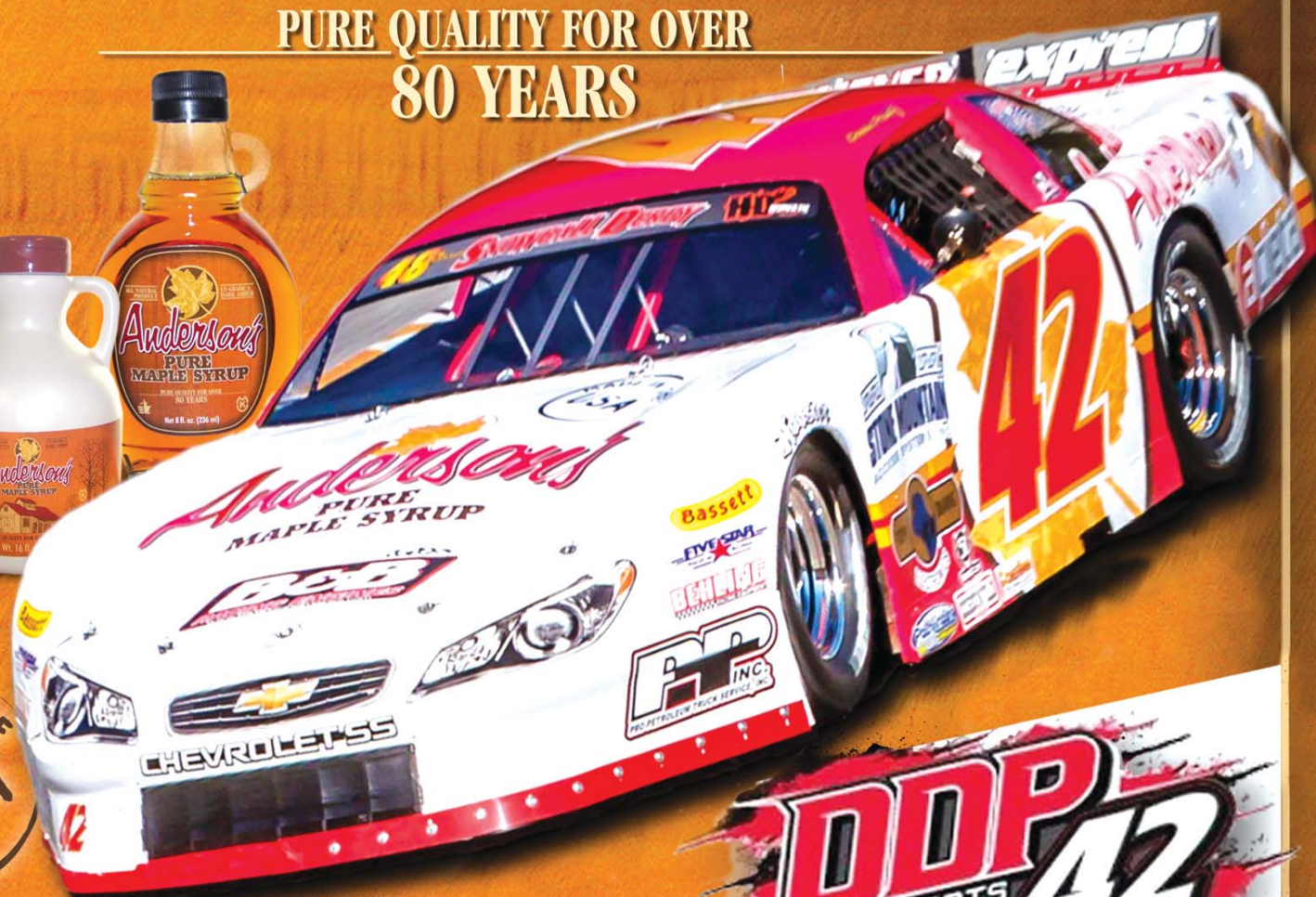
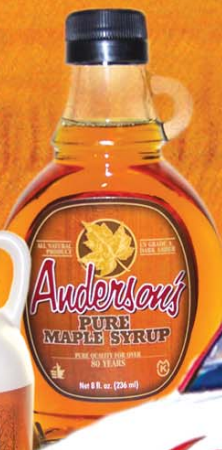
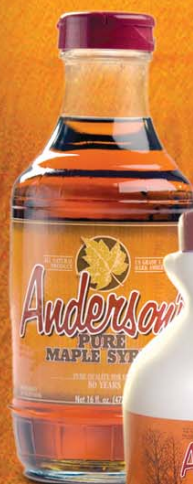
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Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

As I write this column, I think about the loss of another great short track venue in the Midwest, Wisconsin's Columbus 151 Speedway. The track property was recently sold to a Madison college to be used for police training.

The track was first opened in 1955. Playing host to the ever popular Milwaukee area modified stock cars, but joined in with the trend of pavement racing in the mid-1960's, becoming a paved quarter mile track with late model stock cars soon headlining.

The track had some good years and some bad ones all throughout its existence. Even closing a couple of different times, but never for very long. In 1976 the

track was briefly named "Red Bud Speedway," which didn't last long, as it soon went back to being Columbus 151 Speedway.

My first time ever there as a spectator was back in about 1969 or 1970 as a child, then not again until the early 1980's. It soon became a regular attraction for me, with the limited late models headlining. This was also where I did most of my racing, as I really enjoyed the tight quarter-mile track. Get right up against the wall on the straights and dive down low in the corners were the way to turn good laps. If you dusted off the marbles on the back straight, you were making the most of the track. This is also where I won my very

first race in a four cylinder stock car. This is something that you never forget.

I forged many great friendships with fellow racers there, and as a "writer" I made many more. I can't think of anyone who ever refused to take the time to chat with me in this capacity there. I will always remember the Weishoff Racing Team giving me the traditional can of soda every Friday night that I cruised the pits.

The Moore family always treated me with respect and kindness. I also brought several different friends with me to the track, and all had good things to say about it.

Wayne Hook operated the pit gate, and he was one of the most personable people you could ever meet. The perfect person for the job. Wayne also raced backup cars at the end of the night, even as he was approaching seventy years of age.

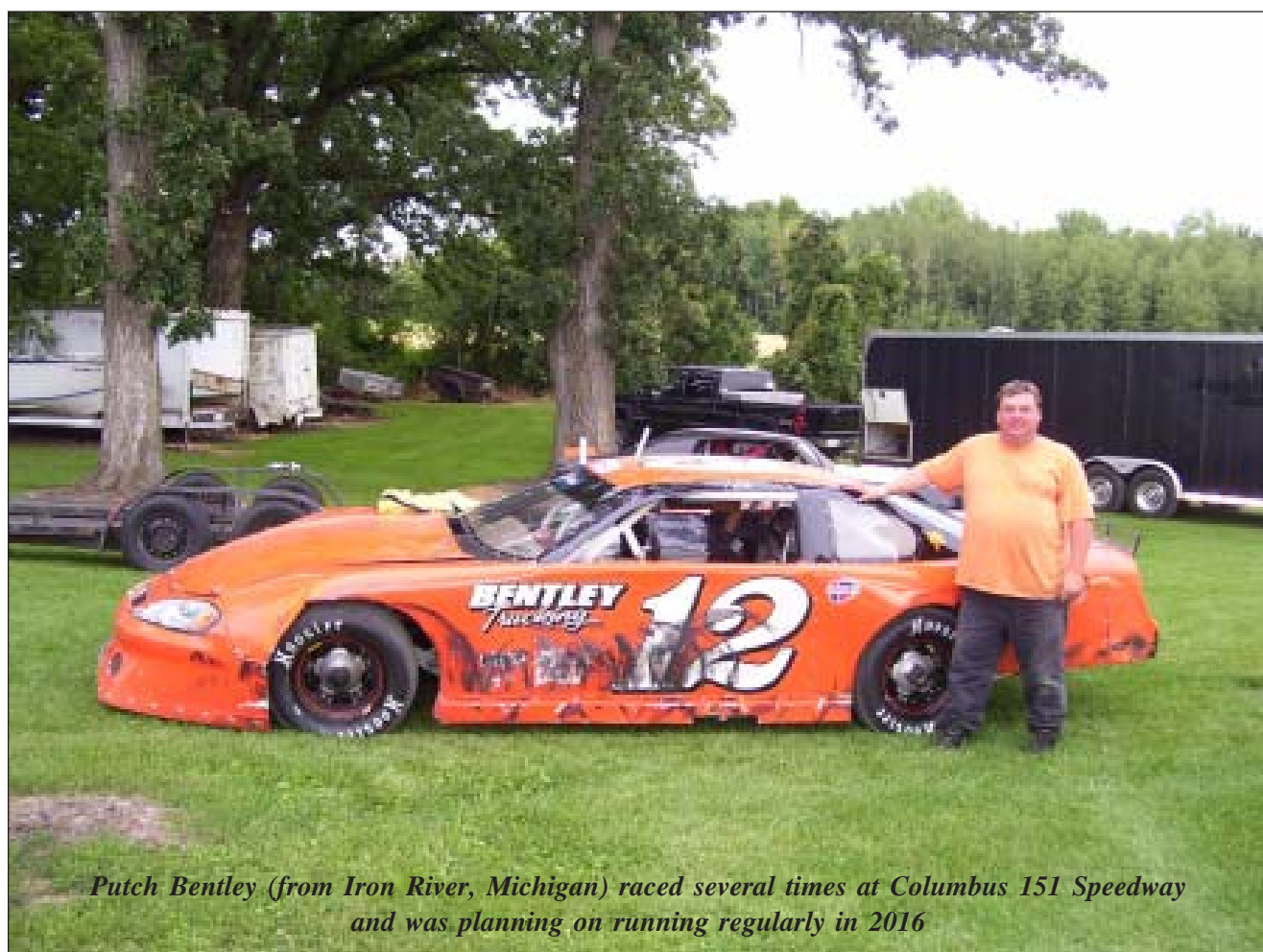
That was another thing unique about the track. The backup racers raced completely in reverse. And they were fast about it, too. Their times were not much off the hobby stock times, which drove forwards. Don't know if we will ever see this kind of thing again. I saw where all of these cars were being sold, mostly for parts.

The track was already in jeopardy during the 2015 season, but one final race was run, with an outstanding field of cars and a packed house. It is too bad that it comes down to a tracks closing that brings out the people in attendance.

Whenever a track closes, some racers use this as a time to retire or quit the sport, and that is too bad. I remember when Lake Geneva closed, many racers were never heard from again as far as racing at any other tracks. Some move on to different venues, but



Dan Plan photo



Putch Bentley (from Iron River, Michigan) raced several times at Columbus 151 Speedway and was planning on running regularly in 2016

Going In Circles continued on page 8

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many, unfortunately, do not.

Columbus 151 was a track where many famous people raced. Many do not realize that in the 1970's, drivers such as Dick Trickle, Tom Reffner, Jim Back, Mike Miller, Joe Shear, Dave Watson, and Johnny Ziegler would race on occasion. Ziegler did it quite often and was a pretty constant racer there. Later on when they went to the limited lates, drivers from the central part of the state such as Scott Wimmer, the Weinkauf brothers, Jesse Haase, Justin Woller, and the Switlick brothers were among those that would make the trip down on occasion. Many also don't realize that this is one of the tracks where Matt Kenseth started his career.

Columbus had some of the most seniority drivers of any track in recent years. Jerry Eckhardt, Russ Grossen, Butch Mierendorf and Bill Retallick all were common sights racing here. While I don't want to give away ages, let's just say that all were racing in the 1960's. It was a pleasure to be able to see these guys race here.

Putch Bentley was one of our farthest travelers in recent years, as he would make the trip down from Iron River, Michigan a couple of times and year, and was planning on running regularly in 2016. Putch remembered the track and the people fondly, saying, "That place just felt like home, had a nostalgic atmosphere. Most welcomed I have ever been at any track. Just a fun, fun place." I think Putch pretty much sums up my feelings of the track and the people there.

I can't help but feel that much negativity about the track ultimately helped with its demise. Social media can sometimes have a very detrimental effect on a track. We should all do our best to not let any more tracks fall victim of closures or sales. It isn't very often that new race tracks get built, so please help keep the ones going that we have now.



*Top photo - Big 8 Late Model Series action at Columbus 151 on Memorial Day in 2014.
Bottom photo - A young Scott Wimmer with Don "Thunder" Turner.*



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THU, APRIL 7

OPEN PRACTICE
(6-9PM) \$30 PER CAR & DRIVER
Adult NA Stndt NA Pits \$5

FRI, APR 8

59th ANNUAL SEASON OPENER
DAY 1-LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$15⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

SAT, APR 9

59th ANNUAL SEASON OPENER
DAY 2-LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$15⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

THU, APR 14

OPEN PRACTICE
(6-9PM) \$30 PER CAR & DRIVER
Adult NA Stndt NA Pits \$5

FRI, APR 15

SEASON OPENER MAKE UP (IF NECESSARY)
FEATURING LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$15⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

SAT, APR 16

COMPLETE RACE PROGRAM
FEATURING LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

SAT, APR 23

COMPLETE RACE PROGRAM
FEATURING LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

THU, APR 28

OPEN PRACTICE
(6-9PM) \$30 PER CAR & DRIVER
Adult NA Stndt NA Pits \$5

SAT, APR 30

COMPLETE RACE PROGRAM
FEATURING LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

SAT, MAY 7

SPRING SPRINT CAR SPECIAL
FEATURING UMSS 360 SPRINT CARS, LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, & PRO STOCKS
Adult \$20⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$10⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

THU, MAY 12

OPEN PRACTICE
(6-9PM) \$30 PER CAR & DRIVER
Adult NA Stndt NA Pits \$5

SAT, MAY 14

SCHOOL BUS SPECIAL
MW MODIFIEDS, UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS, NORTHERN VINTAGE CARS, AND SCHOOL BUS RACES!
(5/21 RAIN DATE)
Adult \$12⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$6⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

SAT, MAY 21

COMPLETE PROGRAM
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS (RAIN DATE FOR BUSES)
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$25

SAT, MAY 28

PACK THE TRACK NIGHT! - FREE GRANDSTAND ADMISSION!
FULL PROGRAM OF MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MW MODIFIEDS
Adult FREE Stndt FREE Pits \$30

SAT, JUNE 4

THE TRIPLE CROWN!
\$3,000/WIN IRA OUTLAW SPRINT CARS, \$3,000/WIN LATE MODELS, AND \$3,000/WIN MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$25⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$12⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

THU, JUNE 9

OPEN PRACTICE
(6-9PM) \$30 PER CAR & DRIVER
Adult NA Stndt NA Pits \$5

SAT, JUNE 11

THE CLS NASCAR DASH EVENT 1
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

18th ANNUAL MASTERS EVENT
JUNE 16th-18th
7PM START TIME AND COMPLETE SHOWS EACH NIGHT!

THU, JUNE 16

ERIC HERBISON MEMORIAL
FEATURING \$2,000 TO WIN MIDWEST MODIFIEDS & \$2,000 TO WIN PRO STOCKS!
Adult \$15⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

FRI, JUNE 17

MASTERS DAY 1
UMP DIRT CAR SUMMER NATIONALS TOURING LATE MODELS AND USMTS MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$25⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$12⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

SAT, JUNE 18

MASTERS DAY 2
UMP DIRT CAR SUMMER NATIONALS TOURING LATE MODELS AND USMTS MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$30⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$15⁽²⁾ Pits \$40

SAT, JUNE 25

THE CLS NASCAR DASH EVENT 2
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$15⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$30

SAT, JULY 2

FIRECRACKER SPECIAL! HUGE FIREWORKS DISPLAY
MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MW MODIFIEDS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$20⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$30



2ND ANNUAL WORLD OF OUTLAW SPRINT CAR SHOWDOWN
JULY 8th & 9th
7PM START TIME AND COMPLETE SHOWS EACH NIGHT!

DAY 1: FRI, JULY 8
COMPLETE WORLD OF OUTLAW 410 SPRINT CAR SHOW AND A FULL PROGRAM OF UMSS 360 SPRINT CARS AND UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$30⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$15⁽²⁾ Pits \$40

DAY 2: SAT, JULY 9
COMPLETE WORLD OF OUTLAW 410 SPRINT CAR SHOW AND A FULL PROGRAM OF UMSS 360 SPRINT CARS AND UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS
Adult \$40⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$20⁽²⁾ Pits \$45

SAT, JULY 16
THE CLS NASCAR DASH EVENT 3
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

SAT, JULY 23
THE CLS NASCAR DASH EVENT 4
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

SAT, JULY 30
EVE OF DESTRUCTION AND T-SHIRT NIGHT!
FIRST 1,000 FANS GET A FREE CEDAR LAKE T-SHIRT AND IT'S A NIGHT OF STUNTS AND DESTRUCTION YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS! RACING INCLUDES IMCA OLD TIMERS, PRO STOCKS, & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS!
Adult \$12⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$6⁽²⁾ Pits \$30



29th ANNUAL USA NATIONALS!
AUG 4th-6th
7:30 START TIME EACH NIGHT

THU, AUG 4
WORLD OF OUTLAW LATE MODELS
\$8K TO WIN! ALSO RUNNING MIDWEST MODIFIEDS.
Adult \$25⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$12⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

FRI, AUG 5
NATIONALS DAY 1
WORLD OF OUTLAW LATE MODEL QUALIFYING, HEATS, & DASH FOR \$50K. TO WIN EVENT & COMPLETE SHOW OF NASCAR LATE MODELS
Adult \$30⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$15⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

SAT, AUG 6
NATIONALS DAY 2
WORLD OF OUTLAW LATE MODEL SEMIS, LCQ & 100 LAP \$50K TO WIN EVENT & COMPLETE SHOW OF NASCAR LATE MODELS
Adult \$35⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$17⁽²⁾ Pits \$40

SAT, AUG 13
THE CLS NASCAR DASH EVENT 5
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

SAT, AUG 20
THE CLS NASCAR DASH EVENT 6
LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30

SAT, AUG 27
FAN APPRECIATION DAY AND ELMER & LORAINNE COOK MEMORIAL!
FULL RACE PROGRAM OF LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS (RAIN DATE FOR CLS NASCAR DASH)
Adult \$15 Stndt \$7 Pits \$30



SAT, SEPT 10
16th ANNUAL JERRY RICHERT MEMORIAL
FEATURING IRA 410 OUTLAW SPRINT CARS, UMSS 360 SPRINT CARS & UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS!
Adult \$25⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$12⁽²⁾ Pits \$40

11th ANNUAL LEGENDARY 100!
SEPT 14th-17th

WED, SEPT 14
OPEN PRACTICE
(6-9PM) \$30 PER CAR & DRIVER. ALL CARS ARE WELCOME.
Adult NA Stndt NA Pits \$5

THU, SEPT 15
COMPLETE SHOW
FOR UMSS TRADITIONAL SPRINT CARS, PURE STOCKS, STREET STOCKS, & HORNETS!
Adult \$15⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$7⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

FRI, SEPT 16
COMPLETE QUALIFYING SHOW
FOR MW MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS, MODIFIEDS, & LATE MODELS! TOP 12 LOCKED INTO SATURDAY'S A-MAIN
Adult \$20⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$10⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

SAT, SEPT 17
B-MAINS
LINED UP BASED ON FRIDAY'S FINISH, LAST CHANCE RACES
A-MAINS
FOR LATE MODELS, MODIFIEDS, PRO STOCKS & MIDWEST MODIFIEDS!
Adult \$25⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$12⁽²⁾ Pits \$35

SAT, SEPT 24
10th ANNUAL \$10,000 TO-WIN ENDURO!
Adult \$12⁽¹⁾ Stndt \$6⁽²⁾ Pits \$25

SAT, OCT 1
UMSS ARRIVE AND DRIVE
TEST AND TUNE (\$30 PER CAR)
Adult \$10 Stndt \$10 Pits \$10

SAT, OCT 8
RAIN DATE FOR UMSS ARRIVE AND DRIVE/TEST AND TUNE (\$30 PER CAR)
Adult \$10 Stndt \$10 Pits \$10

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The Masters - June 16-18th
UMP DIRT Car Summer Nationals Touring Late Models and USMTS Modifieds!

World of Outlaws Sprint Car Showdown - July 8-9th
Complete program of World of Outlaws Sprint Cars & UMSS 360 Sprints Cars each night!

USA Nationals - Aug. 4-6th
A ton of cars and the best local racers in the area!

The Legendary 100 - Sept. 14-17th
MW Modifieds, Pro Stocks, Modifieds & Late Models

Spring Sprint Special - May 7th
UMSS 360 Sprint Cars

The Triple Crown - June 4th
\$3,000 to win IRA OUTLAW SPRINT CARS

World of Outlaws Sprint Car Showdown - July 8 & 9th
Complete program of 410 World of Outlaws Sprint Cars & UMSS 360 Sprints Cars each night!

16th Annual Jerry Richert Memorial - Sept 10th
IRA 410 OUTLAW SPRINT CARS & UMSS Sprints

School Bus Races - May 14th

Pack The Track Night - May 28th
FREE GRANDSTAND ADMISSION

Firecracker Special - July 2nd
Our Annual HUGE Fireworks Display

Eve of Destruction / FREE T-shirt Night! - July 30th
A night of stunts and destruction

10th Annual \$10,000 TO-WIN ENDURO! - Sept 24th

ALL RACES START AT 6PM
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NASCAR Insight

5 Early Takeaways from
the 2016 NASCAR Season



Shane Carlson

With NASCAR off for Easter weekend, here are five takeaways from the season’s first five weeks.

1. Wood Brothers Racing is back full-time and competitive with Ryan Blaney behind the wheel. Since the charter system was implemented and Wood Brothers Racing became a satellite operation of Team Penske, the No. 21 Ford has been fast. In five starts, Blaney has scored two top-5s. By working with 2013

Cup champ, Brad Keselowski, and 2015 Daytona 500 winner, Joey Logano from Team Penske, he has developed a lot, even this early in his career. Another key of his development can be attributed to consistent seat time. He is in a now-competitive Cup car, and seat time for young drivers has a way of paying dividends.

2. Late-race dramatics have proven for an explosive start to 2016. It all started in Daytona with Johnny Sauter winning after nearly wrecking, then Chase Elliott winning the XFINITY race on Saturday by a couple feet, and Denny Hamlin inching out Martin Truex Jr. for the win in the 500. Not to mention John Hunter Nemechek’s win at Atlanta in the Truck Series, Kevin Harvick edging Carl Edwards at Phoenix in the Cup Series and Austin Dillon stealing a win at Auto Club in the XFINITY Series. Needless to say, it has kept the fans on their feet, and has provided for a lot of hard racing.

3. The conversation is getting louder with Cup drivers double-dipping in the XFINITY Series. Unless you cheer for Kyle Busch, you’re probably a little fed up with seeing the same guy go out and dominate a series week after week. The tricky thing about this situation is that a lot of what determines where and which Cup drivers race, comes down to money. Teams, drivers, and track promoters have their hands

tied together, and they all seemingly have contracts to honor and sponsors to please. It’s the business side of NASCAR, but maybe if all of the parties involved can get together and come up with a plan limiting the number of appearances a Cup driver can make in the XFINITY Series, it can be implemented a year or two down the road.

4. The low downforce package is a good thing. The cars are more loose and harder to drive, which places a higher emphasis on the driver’s skillset. Places like Auto Club Speedway, where the surface is weathered and lacks grip is where the racing seems to be at its best. Fans want to see drivers working hard to go fast, not acting like it’s a Sunday drive.

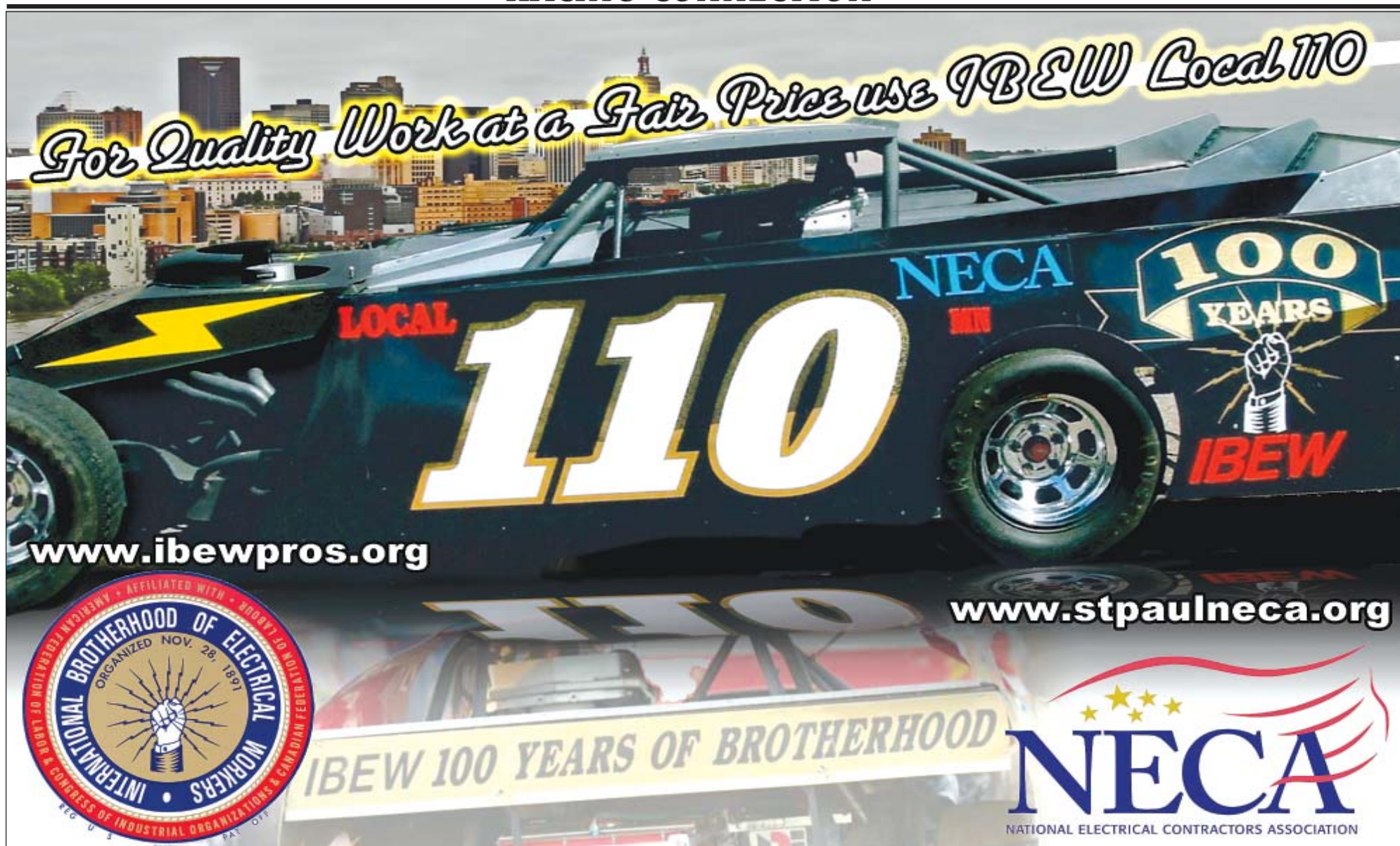
5. Where is Clint Bowyer? He has shown absolutely no speed this season. His best starting position is 28th, and his best finish is 18th, and he is yet to lead a lap. I can’t think of anyone at the Cup level who is more desperate for a win than Bowyer is right now. Maybe it’s the new team at HScott Motorsports, or maybe it’s the manufacturer change, but the No. 15 team has a lot of work to do.



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Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

We'll do our final segment of discussion on defunct race tracks with this being the final online edition of MRC. Heading into the "Print" season however, we'll sneak some more features of this sort in columns as we've received a lot of favorable feedback on the topic. Plus it's been fun going back in time in racing.

The Central State Speedway of Colby, Wisconsin held racing on Friday nights for many years before Highway 29 made a path right through it. No semblance of a track there now although if you were there for racing you can pick out where the pit area was. With the closing of this track a new one nearby in Unity, WI., was built at the Monster Hall Campground. That track is still active today. In one of our visits to the Colby track back in 1985 we witnessed Dave Adams win the 25 lap Late Model Feature event on the 1/3 mile clay oval. Adams was followed by Mike Lang, M.J. Mc Bride, Mike Hansen, Ray Tenetz and Bill Lindner. It was interesting and almost uncanny that every week we attended a race

***Central State Speedway near Colby, WI
before Highway 29 plowed right through***



there that year and we went to most of them, they'd have 21 Late Models on hand. The field would feature numerous different drivers each race but always a total of 21 cars! How strange. Really enjoyed the racing there and promoter at the time Darrell Paasch and his wife always treated us really well.

Of course we definitely know who won the last event ever held at the Olmsted County Fairgrounds Speedway of Rochester, MN as our USMS group held the event there. Tim Donlinger was victorious in the Modified main event taking the checkered flag ahead of Mike Sorenson, Ron Jones, Mark Noble, Kelly Shryock and the racing mailman Tommy Myer. The event was held on August 2nd of 1996. USMS worked with Clayton Dornack on the promotion and he was going to hold a Sprint car race later in the year at the track but it never happened. Not exactly how you want to be noted in history as the last people to have an event at a track but a lasting memory exists nonetheless. Looking at the facility in 2016 you can certainly tell where the track was layed out and a typical covered grandstand for a Fairgrounds is still in place, but no plans are in the works to ever have auto racing at the facility again.

Racers Raceway of Bruce, WI., was again one of those speedways we never witnessed action at but back in the late '90s we decided to stop by and check out the site of the track. Located right off highway 8 just outside of town, sure enough you could definitely make out the contour of a race track. It obviously hadn't operated in many years as 10 foot tall trees were growing out of the straight a ways. Really interesting with this track was the gigantic front stretch concrete wall. It was still standing in it's over 8 foot tall glory when we were there probably because it would have cost a fortune to tear it down! We can remember Kevin Cywinski racing and winning here and as many of you know Kevin went on to a very successful career of Midwestern short track racing including winning on the very prestigious ASA Tour.

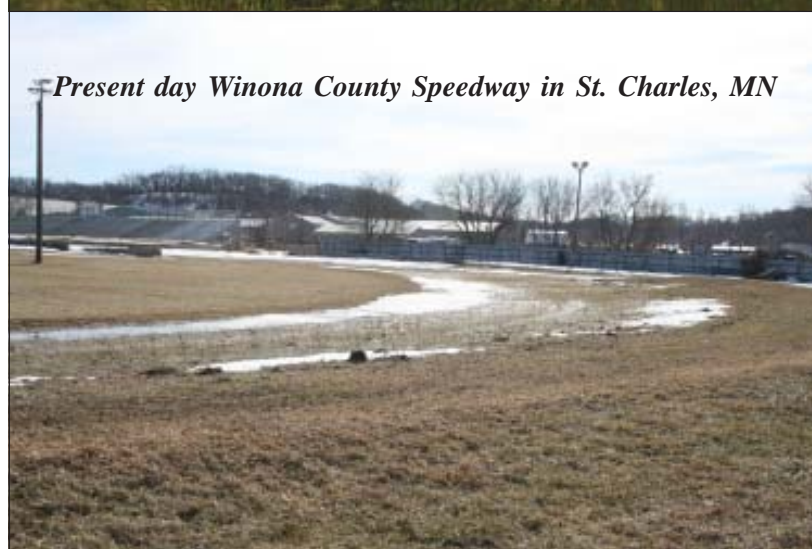
Winona County Speedway of St. Charles, MN is a track we've seen racing at. Checking the Fairgrounds track out in 2016 it doesn't appear that it would take that much to get it up and running. Unfortunately with so many of

Grandstands and front stretch of Olmsted County Fairgrounds Speedway in Rochester, MN as seen in 2016



The Big Wall at Racers Raceway, Bruce, WI in this late 1990's photo

Present day Winona County Speedway in St. Charles, MN



today's cookie cutter sized 3/8 mile banked oval tracks the preference, most drivers probably wouldn't want to race here, as this track is barely a 1/4 mile around and nearly completely flat. Just how I like them for close, competitive racing. Looking back on June 27th, 1992 we see where Darrell Zweifel won the Modified Feature event at the track. Zweifel was followed in the main by Dan Mattick, Paul Hamernik, Lanny Haukom and Bill Nessler.

The Hales Corners Speedway of Hales Corners, WI., has an over 50 year history of racing. Some of the best times for the track were when it held Modified

continued on page 13

Racing Observations from page 12



The famous tree in the pit area of Hales Corners Speedway as it stood in 2004

racing as its featured attraction. Car counts were large and crowds were huge through the years. The track held many special events as well including World of Outlaw Sprint car racing. Late Models eventually became the top billed division along with the ever popular Sportsman class. Looking back at June 28th, 1986 it was Ed Kulka winning the 25 lap Late Model feature over Mike Melius, Bill Prietzel, George

Scheffler and Gordie Seegert Jr. Sportsman main winner was Dick Protasiewicz. But of course urban sprawl did this track in as well with of all things a Menards (In to racing like he is you'd think John Menard could have kept the place open) store being constructed where the track used to be. All that remained for many years reminding that the track was here was a huge tree which was in the pit area while the track was open. Pit meetings were held under the tree and of course if it could talk what tales would be told. As of 2004 the tree was still standing but that's a long time ago and we have our doubts it remains.

We get the quote of the column from long time racer Mert Williams who I had the pleasure to meet here recently at a Racer Reunion. "He didn't really gain on the straight and he didn't really gain in the corners, but all of a sudden he was just gone!" That was Williams description of following Dick Trickle at the then La Crosse Interstate Speedway, West Salem, WI. Mert definitely did his share of winning features on dirt and was one of the few racers that also won on asphalt, including at the West Salem oval in the '70s.

Here and there... Ty Majeski did it again, this time taking top honors here recently in a 250 lap event at

the South Alabama Speedway of Opp, AL. It will be hard for Majeski to top last season's performance but he's off to a great start trying. Seeing where the Illiana Motor Speedway, Schererville, IN at last word was not going to open in 2016. With this news we wonder about the ARCA Midwest Tour event that was scheduled to be held there...

And going back in time, looking back to the year 1992, On May 9th, it was Wayne Para taking the 25 lap Feature win at the Illiana Motor Speedway, Schererville, IN. Following Para were Scott Fisher, Mike White, Mike Martin and Robert Hixon... Looking back to the year 1982 on July 16th it was Tom Nesbitt winning the Late Model feature at Red Cedar Speedway of Menomonie, WI. Nesbitt was followed by Ron Schreiner, Red Steffen, Dave Hesch and Ron Goss.

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



A couple additional photos that didn't appear in last MRC due to space restrictions due to space restrictions, Marlin Walbeck #30 a prolific winner on both dirt and pavement. Here he is driving his 1965 Chevelle at Marathon Park in 1966. (Gary Hall photo) The Tunis Speedway, Waterloo, Iowa as it looked in 1998.

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Racing Nuggets



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman

Remember when you were a kid, and your parents would tell you to “just try it, you might like it,” as they attempted to cajole you into eating spinach, or Brussels sprouts? If you were brave enough to put the slimy green vegetables on your tongue, you likely spat them out immediately thereafter, but hey—at least you tried them, right?

There’s something to be said about venturing out of your comfort zone to experience and see the world beyond what you already know. This applies to racing too. Traveling outside of your “home area” gives you the chance to gauge your skill set and abilities against others in an entirely different realm.

Sometimes, you may come to the realization that you have it pretty good in your little fishbowl and any whining or complaining you had about it seems unfounded after getting a taste of another fishbowl. I’ve seen this when traveling to other tracks even here in the Midwest, particularly with regard to concession stand prices. I highly recommend doing some traveling around for races to get a taste (both literally and figuratively) of other tracks. Obviously, as a racer that can be one of the best things you can do to appreciate what you currently have, or learn something about yourself or your car, like if you have a knack for adaptability to a new track.

Success at a place you don’t normally run can do amazing things for confidence over the long haul in your racing career. Success doesn’t have to be defined as scoring the win on the “road,” so to speak either. Don’t get me wrong, winning at a “new” track would do dramatic things for a driver’s confidence level, but even if one qualified or finished better than anticipated—that’s a pretty big deal, and can go miles in helping to create a foundation that builds greater confidence, and ultimately leads to consistent success.

That’s a big part, in my opinion, of what a touring series, like the ARCA Midwest Tour delivers for drivers. It’s more cost-effective than traveling around the ENTIRE country, and provides a solid schedule of different tracks to challenge oneself as a driver.

Let’s talk about the Midwest for a minute. I will admit that I am biased in favor of racers, and racing in general, in the Midwest. Living here obviously plays a role in that, yet having traveled a lot with my husband and the race team lately; I can’t help but notice that there is a distinct difference in racing style from here, versus say, the South.

And yet, if one were to ask any “expert” on what it takes to get a shot at moving up through the ranks of auto racing, they will tell you that you must score wins at some of the “crown jewels” of racing in the South.

This puzzles me, because I lost count of the caution flags at South Alabama Speedway during the Rattler 250, in March. It was just ridiculous. Drivers were running over each other, rather than racing. I don’t like to stereotype, but this truly seems to be a recurrent theme for racing in the South. The Rattler is just one example, because it was the most recent race. Drivers down South are not afraid to dial someone out, if they are unable to pass them. They’re hard-knuckled and bold with their words. Many of them wear those qualities like a badge.

I’m Midwest proud. Perhaps you are too. Of course, I realize that we do have some drivers in our geographical area who also subscribe to the ruffian mentality, but by and large, there are many more races that finish with just a couple of cautions, unlike the races that I’ve attended in the south which were downright riddled with caution flags.

Honestly, my intent here is not to rip on Southern drivers. Instead, I’m seriously just flat out questioning why that region is the perceived path to move up through the ranks in auto racing. Because it’s generally winter when teams run down there, and there’s snow on the ground up here? (That’s a logical one, for sure.) Because it’s closer to the Charlotte, NC area, which is home to so many NASCAR teams? Maybe it’s because one must survive a war zone with many drivers maneuvering their cars, like teenage boys having sex for the first time: fast, loose, and sloppy.

I would LOVE to see some of the Southern standouts venture to the Midwest and test their skills against our cream of the crop at such facilities like Slinger Speedway—our own little Bristol-style bullring, or Wisconsin International Raceway, where both ends of the track are vastly different with a very rough racing surface, or even my own “home track” of La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway. Dick Trickle used to say that

if you could get around La Crosse Speedway, you could get around any track.

Last year, Georgia’s Bubba Pollard was supposed to come to run in the Dixieland 250 at Wisconsin International Raceway, but he didn’t end up making the jaunt up here. Things happen; I get it. But still—the Midwest has quite a storied history of many of the NASCAR greats from the south making a bid for victory lane in our neck of the woods: Mark Martin, Darrell Waltrip, and Dale Earnhardt Sr., just to name a few. And every one of those guys has gone on record at some point during their career (even Darrell in some of his musings in the booth, during a race broadcast) about the level of competition in the Midwest.

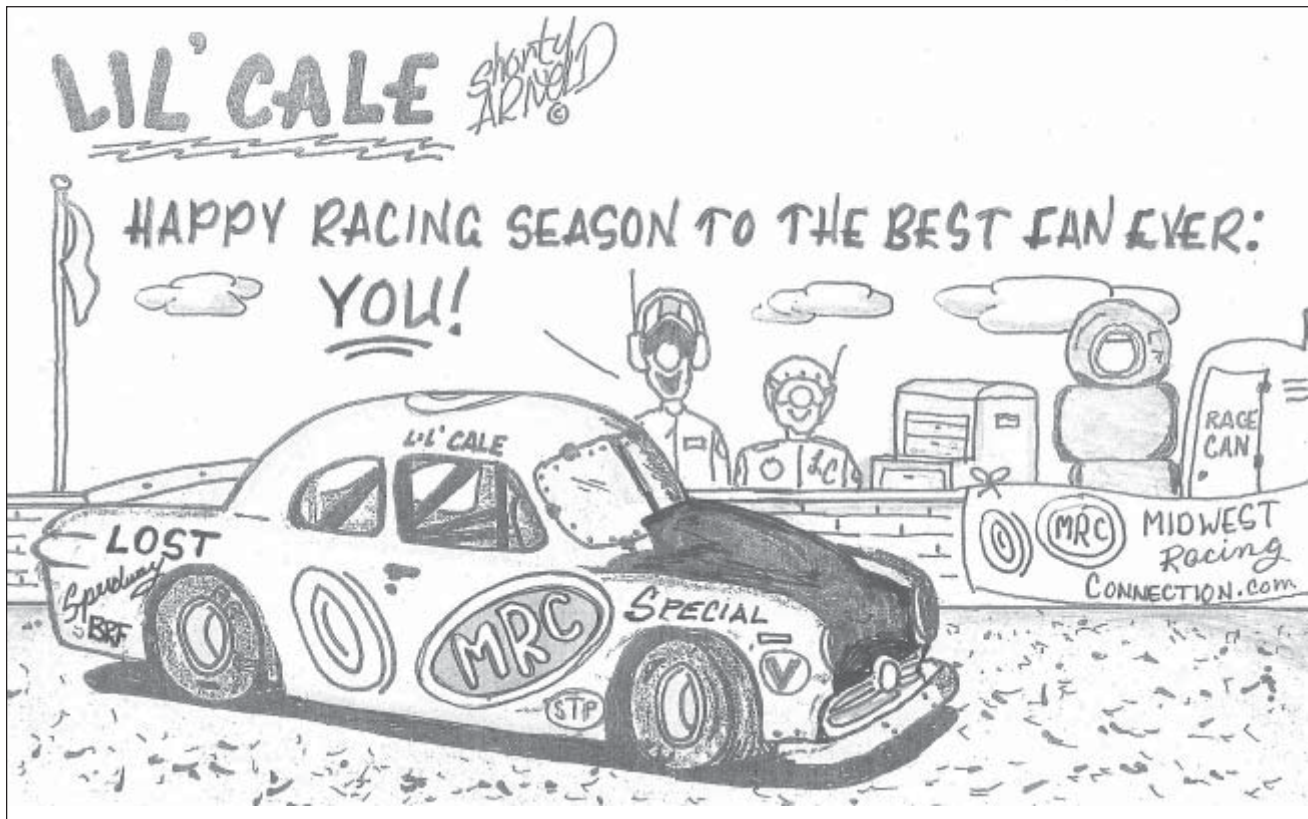
My sources indicate that Harrison Burton, son of former NASCAR Cup driver, Jeff Burton—is considering competing at the Slinger Nationals this July. That would make one southern driver who might finally venture to the Midwest in this modern era... but we should really wait to see if that actually comes to fruition, as it’s not in stone at this point. I’ll be among those applauding the loudest if he does come to Slinger. He’s quite a racer, lots of fun to watch, plus he’s genuine off the track. And who knows? Maybe he’ll pave the way for others in the South to make a bid in the Midwest.

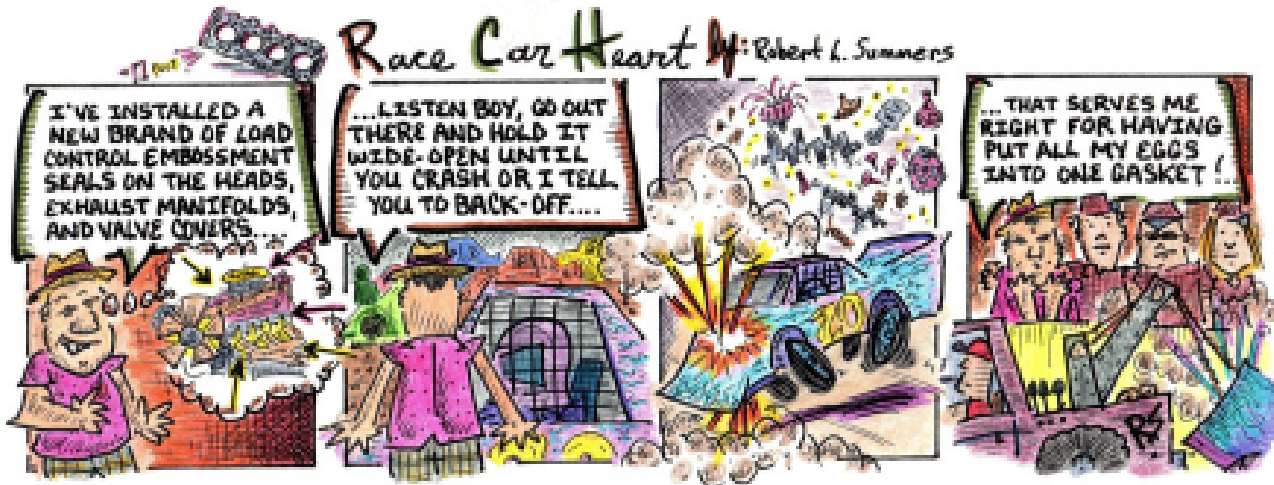
Until then, I will likely continue to lament about how I long to see the Southern powerhouses try their talents against the best of the best here in the Midwest. Is it a pipedream? Perhaps. I shouldn’t let it bother me. Maybe I’ve been watching too much of the TV series “Street Outlaws,” where the boys on that show strut around like peacocks claiming to be the fastest in the country, knowing full well that they’ve never raced even a fraction of the population of this country.

That show is yet another illusion of a supreme talent pool, oddly enough, also located in the South. I’m not--- saying that drivers and race tracks in the Midwest are better than those in the South, although a case could be made for a few of them. I’m just saying it seems a bit short-sighted to buy into the myth that drivers and tracks in the South are the epitome of short track racing.

And suddenly, I sound like the jocks at work who grumble about college teams in the SEC or PAC 12, who are perceived to be overrated against the likes of the teams in the Big 10.




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It won't be just another season of racing at the Princeton Speedway in 2016, it will be a season full of celebrations as the ¼ mile dirt track marks 60 years of

Princeton Speedway Set To Celebrate 60 Years of Racing

racing action. A mild winter will allow the season to start a little earlier than normal as opening night is slated for Friday April 22nd. This will mark the second year of IMCA sanctioned races and the weekly lineup will include: IMCA Modifieds, IMCA Northern Sport Mods, IMCA Stock Cars, IMCA Sport Compacts and Mod Fours. New this year, the UMSS Micro Sprints will be running every week starting April 29th.

Each month will feature different special events. The first is April 29th when the wingless UMSS Traditional Sprints stop for the first of their four appearances this year. On May 13th the Mod Fours will hold their 60th anniversary special. The ever popular Bike Giveaway Night is slated for May 20th. June 3rd kicks off summer in a big way with the 15th Annual Billy Anderson Memorial featuring the UMSS Winged Sprints along with the UMSS Traditional Sprints and the Super Stocks will be running as well that night. The IMCA Sport Mods will be the stars of the show on June 10th for their 60th anniversary special. The small, but speedy Outlaw Mini Mods will pay a visit on

June 17th and the month of June closes out with the 60th anniversary special for the IMCA Stock Cars.

The schedule heats up even more in July as the Super Stocks return again for their 60th anniversary special on July 8th. The IMCA Sport Compacts get their chance to be in the spotlight on July 22nd for their 60th anniversary special. August starts with the Back to School backpack giveaway on August 5th. Racing returns this year during the Mille Lacs County Fair on August 12th along with Vintage Cars added to the racing program. The UMSS Winged Sprints and Traditional Sprints join the racing ranks again on August 19th.

Things wind down, but definitely don't slow down in September. The IMCA Modifieds will have their 60th anniversary special along with the UMSS Micro Sprint Championship on September 2nd. The Davey Tabor Sprintacular Showdown will be on September 9th featuring the UMSS Winged and Traditional Sprints, plus the IMCA Sprints will be running that night as well. Season Championship night will be on September 16th with the IMCA Sprint Cars also running that night. The year comes to a close Friday September 23rd and Saturday September 24th with the 4th Annual P-Town Western Showdown, with complete shows both nights.

The 2016 season features a little bit of everything and will showcase today's racing classes, while honoring the tradition of 60 years worth of racing history. It definitely will be a season of celebration at the Princeton Speedway.



Vince Corbin in action during the P-Town Showdown. The 4th-Annual P-Town Western Showdown is scheduled to wrap up the 2016 racing season at Princeton Speedway.
(Scott Searcy/Cricket Prints photo)



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