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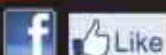
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## Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



**Dale P. Danielski**

Since by far the biggest news this past year in racing for those of us in this part of the country was the passing of Dick Trickle, we'll use this end of the year column to one last time bring up some favorite Trickle memories. The fact Dick accomplished so many things through the years, winning literally every major short track race in the Midwest, we'll try to focus on the ones we found to be particularly significant.

Most of the racers in Central Wisconsin where we grew up didn't travel much having plenty of racing opportunities near home. But when Rockford Illinois Speedway decided to hold its National Short Track Championship event in 1966 that changed. The event offering over \$1,000 to win and 200 laps of main event racing, which was unheard of at the time was a huge lure. Dick Trickle with barely enough money to get there and a very meager racing operation to work with once he did decided to go anyway. It was really the beginning of what would become one of the most successful short track careers in the United States, as

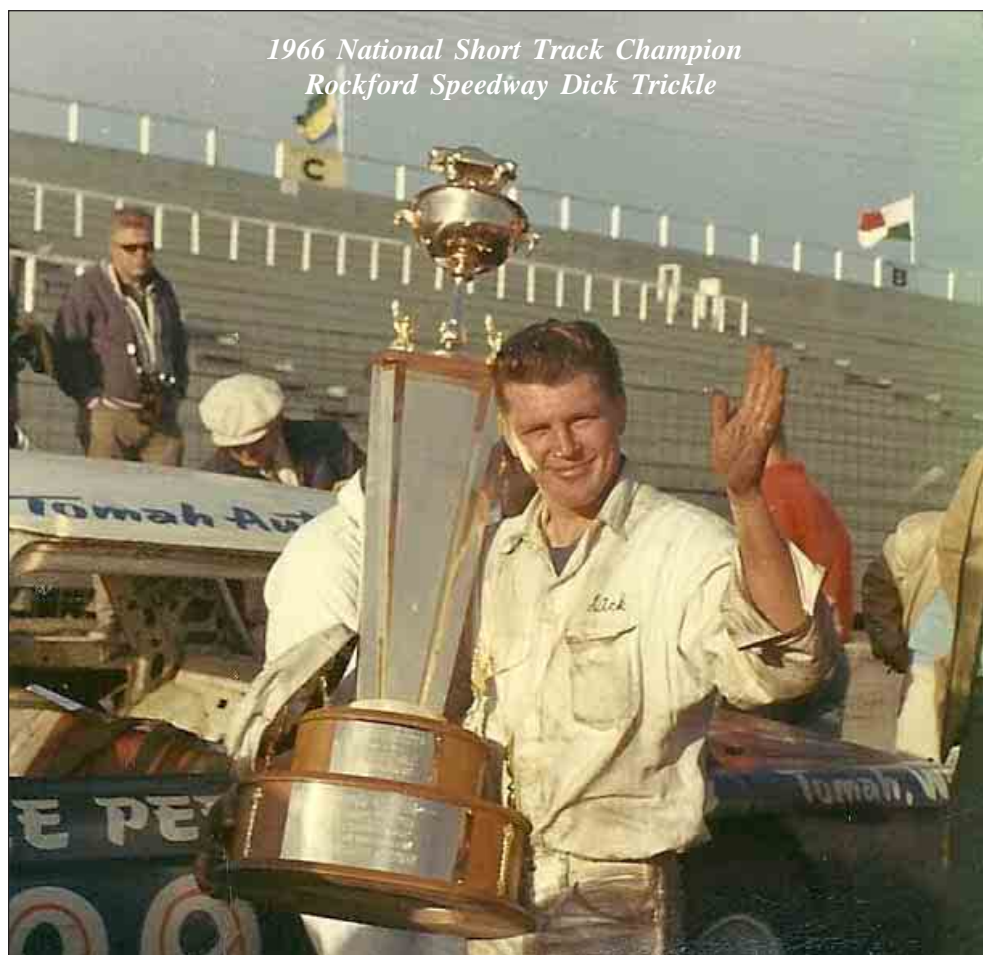
Dick won the event over a huge field of racers from all over the Midwest. The fete really was the turning point for Trickle to race for a living as it paid better than anything he could compete in back home.

Things really started rolling in 1967 when the super high banked Golden Sands Speedway of Plover, WI., opened. Speeds increased three fold compared to the "Flat track" racing done previously and fans began coming out in droves to see the new stars of the high banks. Trickle mastered the high speeds quickly and won the first ever feature and the track, and the season championship at the 3/10ths mile paved oval.

With each year he won more and more and when 1971 rolled around Trickle was at his best up to that point. With a 1969 Ford Torino at his disposal Trickle went on to win 56 Feature events during the year. So prolific was Trickle's winning at area tracks that promoters put cash bounties on his head for any driver that could beat him. One of the win streaks reached 6 as Trickle won the first 1/2 dozen races at Golden Sands Speedway before being defeated in his attempt to win a 7<sup>th</sup>. In July Trickle capped off a great 7 nights of racing by winning the Uncola 100 at the Elko, MN., Speedway. Seven great nights for Trickle was unbelievably winning every night at 7 consecutive race events at numerous tracks. Also significant during the year was Trickle racing in an IMCA event at the I-70 Speedway of Odessa, MO. The field was no match for Trickle as he won the 150 lap event. With his appearance there Trickle was recognized as having raced in all four of the major stock car racing organizations at the time, NASCAR, USAC, ARCA and IMCA.

As amazing as winning 56 Features in 1971 was the fete was not considered the best for a season by any driver. Ramo Stott held that honor having reportedly won 58 main events one season. Undaunted, Trickle set out in 1972 to break the mark. With shorter wheel based cars now allowed in competition Trickle built a Ford Mustang for the season. While most were looking at springs, shocks, spindles and such Dick concentrated on the weight of

*1966 National Short Track Champion  
Rockford Speedway Dick Trickle*



his car. According to some the car was at least several hundred pounds lighter than what anybody else had and Trickle set the short track racing World on its proverbial ear in 1972 winning 67 Feature events. Winning with ease in Wisconsin Trickle took his show on the road, show as in the "Show Me" State of Missouri. Trickle already had made a name for himself there winning the previous year and consequently got the name "Mister Dick Trickle from Wisconsin Rapids, WI." as his winning came at the expense of the stars of the day Larry Phillips, Dave Wall and David Goldsberry. He did it again at the Rolla Speedway of Rolla, MI., in the 100 lap "MASCAR" Feature event there and again it was in front of Larry Phillips and David Goldsberry. The win was huge for Trickle as he was reportedly paid \$1,500 just to show up in addition to the \$2,500 he earned for winning.

By June 10<sup>th</sup> Trickle had already racked up 20 Feature wins and was well on the way to the season win record. Two more short track racing milestone wins for Trickle occurred while racing in the IMCA sanctioned events as part of the Minnesota State Fair. Trickle took both the Northland 300 and Northland 500 race victories much to the chagrin of the IMCA regulars. Trickle also won two of the three events in the Red, White and Blue State Championship Series held at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna, WI., and as a result was crowned the first ever Champion of the event. Unprecedented in Wisconsin was the First Annual Midwest Championships held at the Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI., late in the season as 200 laps of

*1974 Trickle Mustang*



*continued on page 4*



*continued from page 3*

racing were scheduled with \$2,000 going to the winner. Trickle mastered a stout field of 116 late Model race cars and drivers to win the event and \$2,655 in total purse pay-out. Another MASCAR win, a 300 lap event at Odessa, MO's I-70 Speedway brought Trickle more than \$5,000 in winnings. More "Show Me State" of Missouri success came in the way of Dick winning the very prestigious World Cup 400 event at I-70 Speedway in 1978. A cool \$8,000 grand awaited Trickle at the pay booth after that victory.

As far as career highlights it's hard to top 67 Feature wins in a season of racing. Trickle set a standard that hasn't and more than likely never will be broken in racing. It's amazing looking at his main event wins during the years. Starting in 1970 with 22, as previously mentioned 56 in '71, and in 1972, 67. 1973 through 1980 found Trickle winning 47, 21, 12, 8, 54, 47, 39 and 33 Feature events respectively. How do you pick out just a few career highlights out of that list? Another occurred in 1979 when Trickle sponsored by Super America convenience stores won that company's signature event the 150 lap ASA race at the Milwaukee Mile, West Allis, WI. The event ended a 26 race drought for Trickle there. ASA was becoming the Series of choice for short track competitors offering more in the way of money and publicity. Trickle meanwhile who was never one to shy away from the limelight was eating it up and getting more and more exposure in the process. And speaking of limelight with the success Trickle was enjoying the Wisconsin Rapids, WI., area Chamber of Commerce honored Trickle with a special night commemorating his racing accomplishments. A billboard was put up as well which you could see as you headed into the city recognizing Trickle as America's winningest short track driver. How many racers can boast of this type of honor!

The John McKarns ARTGO circuit was generating a lot of interest as well and it received bonus coverage when Dick Trickle pulled off an

unbelievable fete in racing. The Series Summer Nationals were scheduled for late August at Dells Motor Speedway and the Capital Super Speedway, Oregon, WI., with five Feature events to be contested between the two tracks. A competitor would look at an event like this and hope to win one, maybe two of the mains. Trickle took both 75 lap mains at the Dells track on a Saturday night which already was a good racing weekend. He then proceeded to win all three 50 lap events the next afternoon which added up to 5 wins in less than 24 hours! Again, it's probably one of those fetes in racing that will never be repeated.

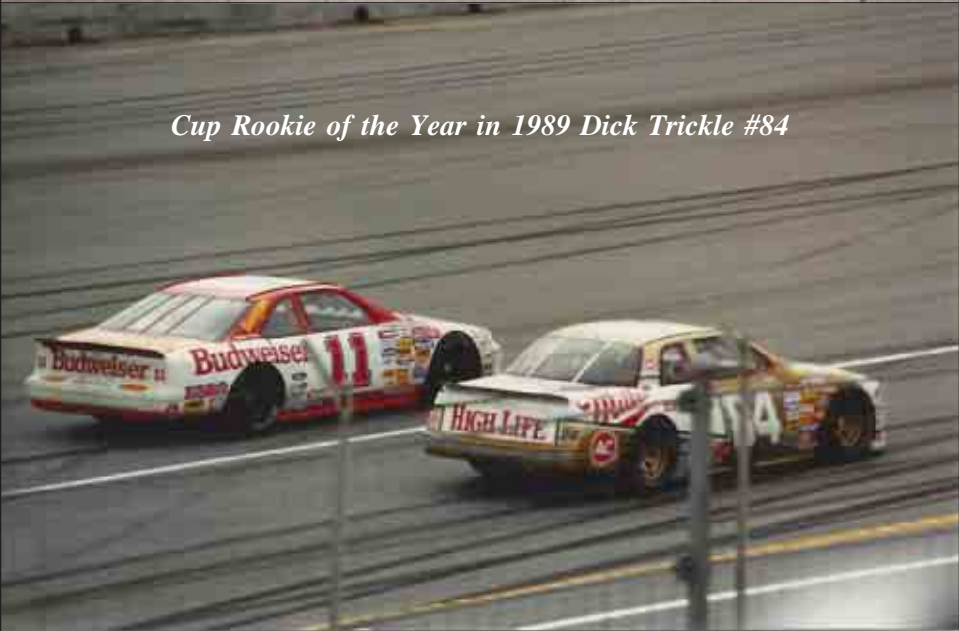
With short track outlaw type racing seeing some change and Trickle looking to race only in the higher profile, better paying events his schedule consisted mostly of ASA, ARTGO and some special events. One such special event was in 1983 on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, which saw Trickle taking the short track World in Georgia by storm winning the first ever World Crown 300 at Georgia International Speedway of Jefferson, GA. That win was worth an unheard for

short track racing \$50,000 to Trickle. Of course the call from NASCAR land finally did come for Trickle as he found himself in relief of Bobby Allison and Mike Alexander in the Miller beer sponsored Cup car. Proving he could get it done at that level Trickle in 1989 went on to win "Rookie of the Year honors at the ripe old age of 48, certainly another Trickle racing highlight.

Although racing and winning in ARCA and NASCAR Busch Grand National,



*A new beer to drink for Trickle in 1986*



*Cup Rookie of the Year in 1989 Dick Trickle #84*



*2005 Dick Trickle at Oktoberfest*



*Dick Trickle Torino 1971*

the true Trickle legacy and highlight film is his short tracking escapades. Yes, he made more money in the upper divisions of racing and the prestige was certainly there, but Dick Trickle's claim to fame to those of us who followed him was on the short tracks

*continued on page 5*





*More Cup racing for Dick this in 1983*

*continued from page 4*

of America. It was the Championships in ASA, ARTGO and at the many Wisconsin short tracks he conquered. That is what defined the driver and career of Dick Trickle. He was racing, winning and a super star of the sport long before NASCAR was cool!

And that is what we will all here remember most. Fetes in racing by one man that will never be duplicated during a time in racing that will never be repeated. Life goes on but certainly everyone that was entertained by the Legend Dick Trickle will never forget.

Looking back in time... on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1971 it was Dick Trickle racing to his 42<sup>nd</sup> Feature win of the season at the Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. Following Trickle in the 40 lap event was Marv Marzofka, Tom Reffner, Jim Back and Steve Manke. Semi-Feature honors went to Buck Linhart. The Trophy Dash went to Trickle with heat race winners, Dick Joss, Dick Bentley, and Reffner. Trickle posted fast time at 12:63 seconds which was a new track record around the 3/10ths mile paved oval Sands track. On August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1972 Dick Trickle won the Northland 300 IMCA stock car race at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, Falcon Heights, MN. Following Trickle after 300 laps were Marv Marzofka, Tom Reffner, Bill Oas and Mert Williams. On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 1972 Dick Trickle was victorious in the Northland 500 at Minnesota State Fair Speedway, Falcon Heights, MN. Following Trickle after 500 laps were Dick Stang, Dave Chase, Rich Somers and Les Anderson. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1979 Dick Trickle captured both ARTGO 75 lap Features at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI. Following Trickle in the first was Bob Senneker, John Ziegler, Tom Reffner, Randy Sweet and Butch Miller. The 2<sup>nd</sup> 75 had Mike Miller, Jim Sauter, Mark Martin, Reffner and Ted Musgrave trailing Trickle. On August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1979 it was Dick Trickle winning all three ARTGO 50 lap Features at the Capital Super Speedway, Oregon,

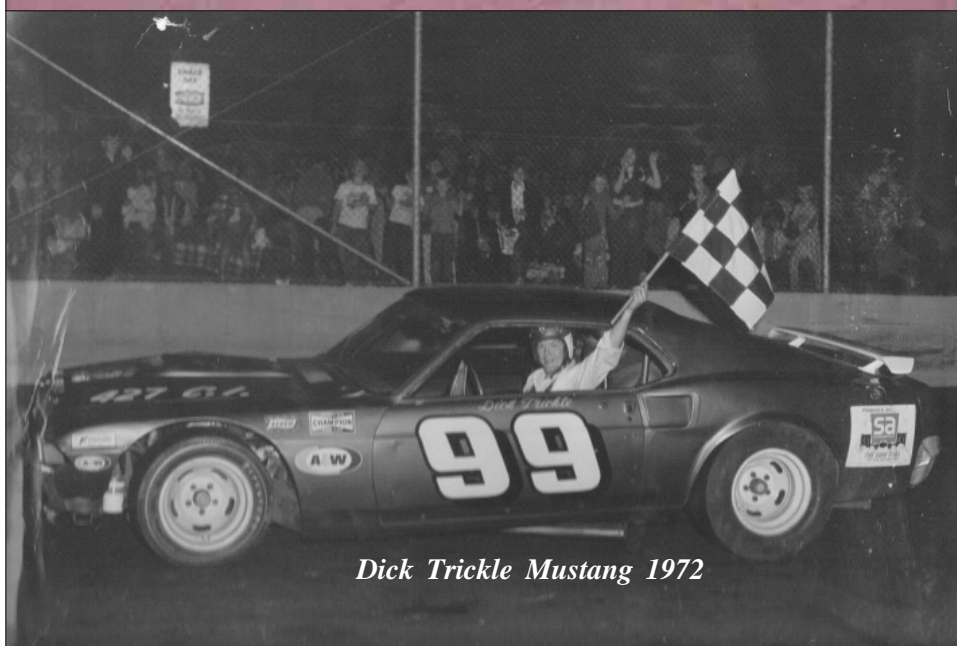
WI. Behind Trickle in the first were Butch Miller, Randy Sweet, Bob Senneker, Joe Shear and Tom Reffner. The 2<sup>nd</sup> 50 finish was Trickle, Shear, Sweet, Senneker and Reffner. 50 lapper number three found Trickle first followed by Dave Watson, Larry Detjens, Sweet, Senneker and Shear.

News, notes and comments welcome to Dale P. Danielski at Starmaker Multimedia 967 10<sup>th</sup> Ave N Ste A, Onalaska, WI 54650, at 608-783-5827 or at [dale@starmakermultimedia.com](mailto:dale@starmakermultimedia.com), [www.starmakermultimedia.com](http://www.starmakermultimedia.com)

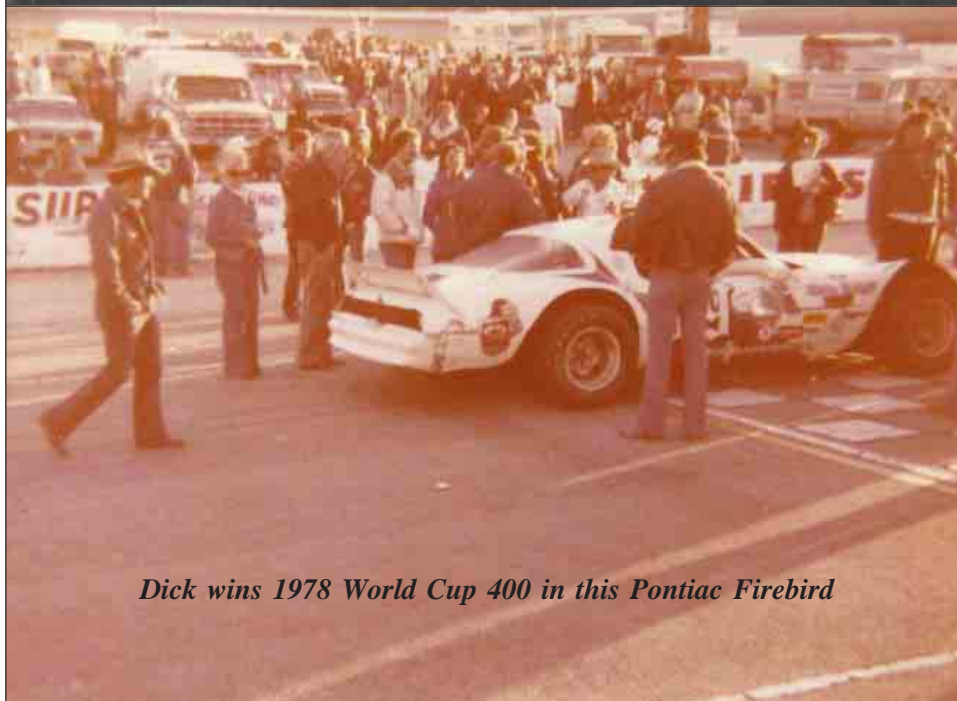
*Check out page 16 of this issue of The Midwest Racing Connection to see more pictures of Trickle's rides through the years*



*Trickle USAC racing in #44 Chevelle*



*Dick Trickle Mustang 1972*



*Dick wins 1978 World Cup 400 in this Pontiac Firebird*



## Publisher's Note

### *Racing According to Plan*



**Dan Plan**

Welcome to our final issue of *The Midwest Racing Connection* for the 2013 season. You'll see a new addition to this issue, as the world renowned Eric Huenefeld has contributed a column to this issue. We are looking forward to Eric contributing additional material during the next year as well as our other regular contributors to *MRC*; Charlie, Dale, Dean, Jason and Kris.

With this being our final issue of for the year, I thought I would utilize my space to recap a trip we made to another Sunday night facility late in the year. Years ago, Oktoberfest was our last chance to catch any short track racing close to home at the end of the



year. The last few years, Ogilvie has run their annual topless show (cars, not the drivers) late in October. Unfortunately, this year's version was cancelled due to the weather. We were able to make one other show following Oktoberfest, and may make a few more trips on Sunday nights in 2014, now that we have some free time on our hands with the closing of Raceway Park.

Granite City Speedway in Sauk Rapids reopened a few years ago. These days, there is more and more news about race tracks shutting down, so it's refreshing to see a track that sat dormant for a number of years come back to life. Chris Stepan is the General Manager and Promoter of the facility and Leighton Broadcasting Incorporated is the owner of the track. While the track formerly known as Golden Spike Speedway had fallen on hard times and shut down, we never had a chance to visit the facility in its first stage. The resurrected facility is truly an example

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*The Midwest*

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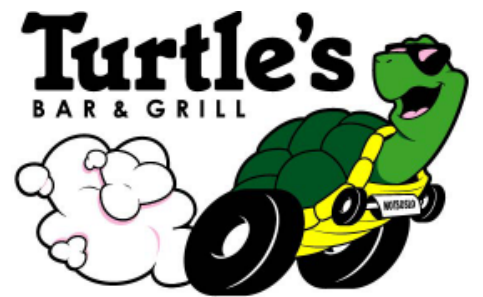
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of paying attention to the little things to make a place look great. Little things like freshly cut grass, no weeds around fence posts, bright white paint, and clean-modern restrooms are things that will catch the eye of the "non-racefan" types and keep them coming back. To top it off, the racing was top-notch as well with five of the six WISSOTA sanctioned divisions on hand for the season ending special.

Much of the grounds, track, buildings etc. have been renovated. The building at the entrance of the track has the eating area, concessions and restrooms. This setup was pretty darn cool; nothing extravagant, but modern and functional. During breaks in the racing action, you could see folks hanging out watching Sunday afternoon football.

In exchanging emails with Chris about some of the details surrounding the re-birth of racing in Sauk

Rapids, he was quick to point out others in the group that helped bring things back to life. Those folks included; Bob Leighton, John Sowada, Denny Niess, Ernie Wollak Joyce Zimmerman, Pat Dotzler, Rita Imholte, Kelly Vouk and Bobbi Jo Mueller.

Now we can't promise we're going to be at Granite City every Sunday night, but a few trips might be on the horizon for next year.



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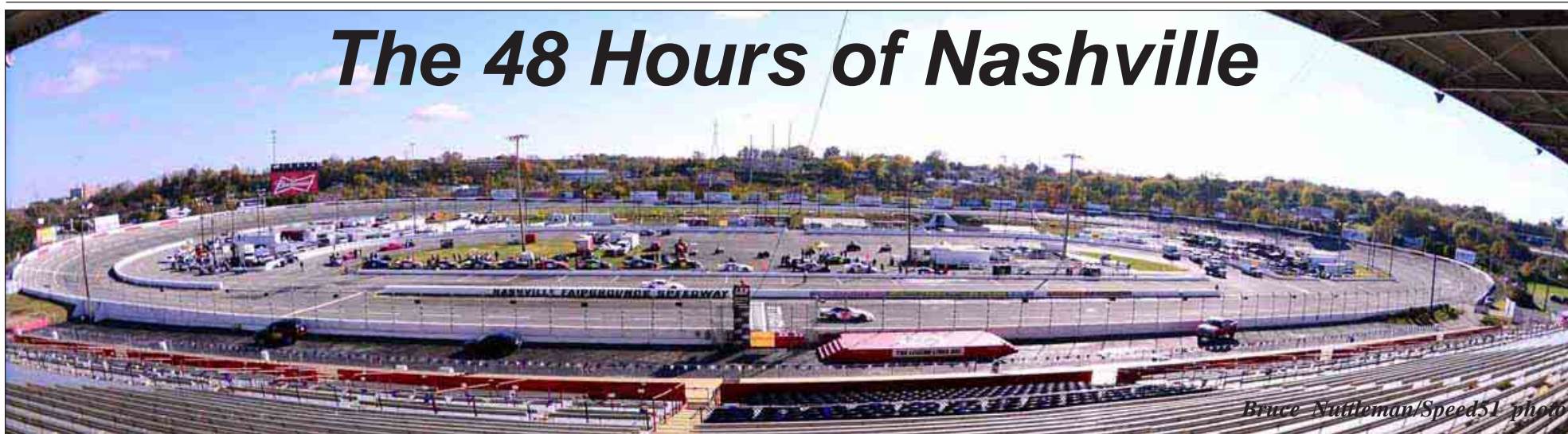
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# The 48 Hours of Nashville



*Bruce Nuttleman/Speed51 photo*

By Eric J “Hammer” Huenefeld

A few months ago, I had a crazy idea. Well, really, if you know me good enough, most of my ideas are crazy. Just ask my girlfriend.

I, Eric Huenefeld, am a long-time racing fan. In fact, I will tell anyone that will listen (or read it in this case) that I am the “World’s Luckiest Race Fan.” I get to travel across our great land, announce races and get into racetracks free. Seriously, show me a better life!

Well, the race fan inside of me has always had one major desire. That desire is to witness one of the “crown jewels” of Late Model racing in person. I do not limit this to track surface either. I would be just as happy taking in a World 100 at Eldora as I would be taking in a Snowball Derby in Pensacola.

However, my schedule allows me only so much during the year. In announcing nearly 60 events each year (From Cedar Rapids to Elko to Rockford and so on), my schedule is largely limited to where I work. Travel to Eldora is impossible, with its Saturday night shows. Snowball Derby...well...that’s way down there. I mean, who doesn’t want to travel to Florida in December and see sand and waves and palm trees? But have you looked at flights to Pensacola?! I may as well ride in on a goose!

For whatever reason, the “powers that be” at Nashville Fairgrounds, or Fairgrounds Speedway Nashville (or whatever they call it nowadays) decided to schedule this year’s All American 400 on a terrific weekend, the first weekend in November. Perfect for me! Hooray me!

Nashville...the Music City. A terrific little day trip to a fun town that also boasts one of the most historic Speedways in America. Tell me you don’t get goose bumps thinking of Fairgrounds Speedway in Nashville and all the names that have raced there. Think of names like Waltrip, Marlin & Alexander, all Nashville track champions. Then think of the names like Butch Lindley, Bob Senneker, Jim Sauter, “Hot Shoe” Gary Balough, Rusty Wallace, Butch Miller & Jeff

Purvis...drivers who have conquered Nashville’s 400 lap rodeo. Goosebumps.

Throw all these factors together and this crazy race fan was sold. As long as I have a travel partner, which shouldn’t be a problem right? Guess again. The girlfriend? She’s working hard at her new job (and doing quite well in case you wondered). Friends? Family? All suddenly busy. Folks, I just can’t stay home, go ask someone, they’ll tell you! So on a chilly Illinois Friday morning, I set sail for the Mid South. Meeting some folks in Nashville, yet riding for nearly eight hours solo. Giddy up!

When driving eight hours alone, a man needs something to occupy his mind (please get your mind outta the gutter, fella). Luckily for me, the diehard racing fan, there was several things to keep my mind occupied along the way. About 2.5 hours into the trip, I rolled past Farmer City Speedway in central Illinois, a tremendously racy quarter-mile that hosts the World of Outlaw Late Model ‘Illini 100’ every April. I advise you to head to Farmer City if you can, or any central Illinois dirt track for that matter, as the atmosphere is one-of-a-kind and the racing is pretty damn good too.

After a stop at Steak N Shake in Effingham Illinois (an old family stop on our trips to Florida), I continued south, and found construction (in November? C’mon Man!). I also found a “Speedway Ghost”, Mt Vernon

Raceway, which I believe was once I-57 Speedway, located literally right next to Interstate 57 in the aforementioned Southern Illinois town of Mt Vernon. A rugged looking track located fairly close to the town of 15,000 which currently sits silent, thanks in part to an awful incident in the summer of 2005, when a Late Model stuck its throttle and went into the stands. Two fans were killed, while seven were injured. The speedway struggled to recover.

Onward into Kentucky, and merely minutes over the Ohio River sits Paducah International Raceway, owned in part by promoter Bob Sargent, who is one of the best at running dirt tracks. “PIR” is alive and well, hosting \$10,000 to win Late Model races while also hosting the World of Outlaws Sprint Car Series. I’ve heard good things about the place and hope to get there someday.

Only 20 minutes down the road sits an absolute palace of a facility, Kentucky Lake Motor Speedway near Calvert City. The nearly 4/10 mile track includes a wide racing surface along with top notch amenities. Yet KLMS also lies in an odd part of the country and has suffered with track surface issues and the like. Deemed by some the “Mistake by the Lake,” the track also referred to as the “Taj Mahal of Dirt Tracks” was auctioned off this past summer & sold to racing people who look to reopen the Speedway in 2014. Cheers to that!

By the time I hit Calvert City, I was enjoying my sight-seeing while also wanting to just get to Nashville already! With a little help from the accelerator and with the lack of State Patrolmen along the road, I made good time in getting to Nashville before “rush hour.”

Friday night at Fairgrounds Speedway was a support class smorgasbord, featuring I think seven classes I don’t totally remember because of the following factors: there were too many classes to keep track of, car counts were low and therefore racing was

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*Bruce Nuttleman/Speed51 photo*



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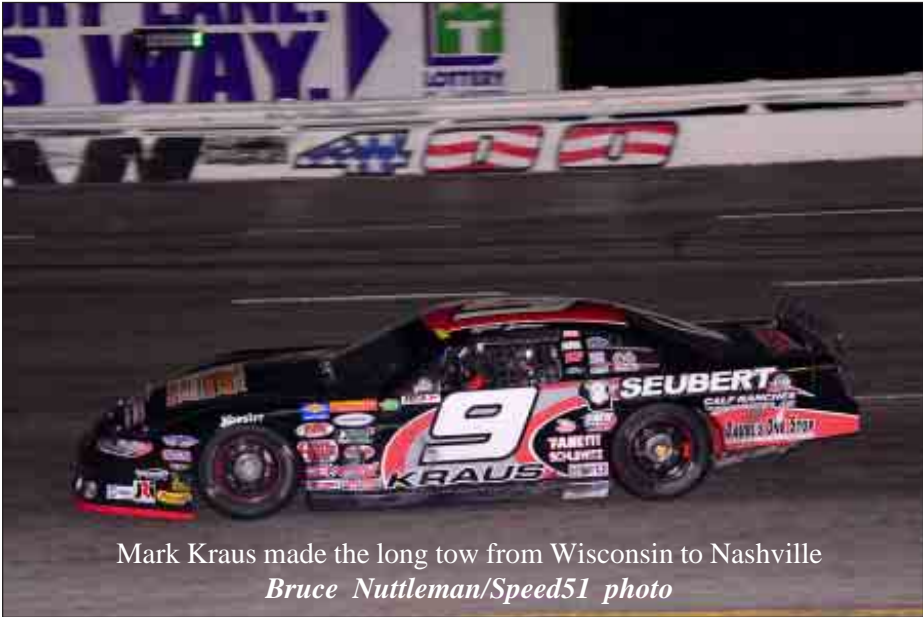
subpar AND Fairgrounds Speedway serves NATURAL LIGHT beer! Good times! After a pile up in the “Limited” feature, my party and I decided to leave the track and hit downtown Nashville. This is something I advise you all to do. Go see Broadway at night, go back to Broadway during the day, check out the shops and the Ryman Auditorium and buy a Jerry Reed record from Ernest Tubbs’ Record Store, son.

I stepped back into those sexy covered grandstands at Fairgrounds Speedway Saturday afternoon for the main event, the All American 400, which was to be contested with a 100 lap Crate Late Model race and a 300 lap Super Late Model main event. Qualifying began at 2:30 and I wish I could tell you more about it, but the “Public Address Announcers” at Fairgrounds Speedway were GOD AWFUL. Sorry, I’m a tough critic, but if I wouldn’t have known in advance that



The last chance race for the All American 400 had several caution laps  
Bruce Nuttleman/Speed51 photo

Ross Kenseth, Mark Kraus, Eddie Hoffman and Chase Elliott were in attendance, I would have had no idea! Wanna hear who the driver is? Wanna hear the time they turned? Too bad! These dudes either did most of their talking when the cars were in front of the grandstands or they just didn’t say it! Thanks for nothing! Later in the night, the “Driver Introductions” may have been done at gun point, as the man presenting them to us hurried through intros OR quite



Mark Kraus made the long tow from Wisconsin to Nashville  
Bruce Nuttleman/Speed51 photo

possibly performed in another language, I’m not sure. The one “on mic” highlight of the weekend was Pastor Joe Nelms, who delivered the Invocation both nights, in bib overalls, with his signature “Boogity Boogity Boogity, Amen” that became famous during the Nashville Superspeedway Nationwide Series race a few years ago. “YouTube it”, it’s like watching a fishing show, you can’t turn away!

Onto the racing: A 20 lap, 12 car Super Late Model Last Chance Race took one hour. ONE HOUR! Sheet metal was bent, egos were bruised, expletives were used by the nice lady from Alabama behind me every time a yellow flew. I reckon she went to see Pastor Joe twice the next day after that exhibition! With that hour-long fiasco, the whole night was now behind schedule and as you may or may not know, the only time southern folk like to go fast is in a racecar. The 100 lap Crate race was enjoyable, with track points drama featuring Sterling Marlin (yes him) and young hot shot Tucker Wingo. Wingo won the Track Championship after Marlin was taken around in an incident with 25 laps to go as he held the points lead. Southern Late Model veteran Mark Day won the 100 lapper, running a good race and leading flag-to-flag.

The 300 lapper took the green around 9 pm. On a Saturday night. In November. Why wasn’t this race on a Sunday?! Brrrrrr! Anyways, the 300 laps were as good as they could be, with favorite Chase Elliott giving up his pole position before the start of the race and heading to pit road for fuel after one of possibly 40 laps of low-speed warm-ups before the race. Elliott would battle through the field and play the game that one must play in a long-distance race, finally completing the climb from deep in the field to the front of the pack with 30 laps to go. Elliott’s win was popular with the Tennessee crowd, as you can imagine.

As for the “Yankee racers” of interest, Ross Kenseth ran a great race with a sub-par car, finishing in the top ten and looking like his daddy in doing so. Mark Kraus made the long trip from central Wisconsin and stayed in touch with the lead group throughout the night, finishing in the upper half of the field. Illinois’ “Fast Eddie” Hoffman was among the top ten most of the night,



Daniel Hemric and Ross Kenseth battle for position in Nashville  
Bruce Nuttleman/Speed51 photo

but was involved in an incident with 100 laps to go, ending his chances for victory.

Between the late start and the tremendously long-yellow flags periods (no urgency...at all!), Chase Elliott accepted the checkered flag at 11:30 PM. With that in mind, my crazy self hit the road as soon as I could. The trip north from Nashville to Belvidere Illinois is rather boring in the middle of the night, thank goodness I bought that Jerry Reed record earlier in the day! Ol’ Jerry got me through a few hours of that long trip and for that I will be forever thankful.

I pulled into my driveway at 7:15 AM Sunday morning, nearly 48 hours after I had departed. Wide awake, yet ready for the pillow. What a weekend. Lots of sights seen, lots of fun had, good racing and bad track management.

And the best part of it all? My girlfriend didn’t break up with me! I tell you, she’s a keeper!



2013 All American 400 winner Chase Elliott  
Bruce Nuttleman/Speed51 photo





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Circles



Charlie Spry

It's no secret that it is more and more expensive to field a race car on the local level, no matter what division you are participating in. It's just simple economics. However, some things have changed in our sport to make it more expensive, and sometimes it is self inflicted. Perhaps we have become more expectant of our luxuries as time goes by.

One example is the use of enclosed trailers on the local level. As a child growing up in the sixties, I remember seeing race cars being hauled to the track, oftentimes on old ramp trucks or flatbed haulers. These were the "big" boys! Most made do with a simple makeshift trailer, and in some cases a simple tow bar.

Now, it seems that nearly everyone utilizes an enclosed trailer to haul their race car and equipment to the tracks, which sometimes are only a few miles away from home. Even many four cylinder racers use enclosed haulers. I will be the first to admit, that it is a very nice thing to have in inclement weather, as your car and tools, etc. are out of the elements, as well as yourself and crew. I have attempted to load a race car in a driving rainstorm, and have waited out

the weather in the cab of a pickup truck while the car and everything else gets drenched, and it is not fun. An enclosed trailer also gives you the opportunity to leave everything in the trailer and ready to race the following race meet, except for the car, likely.

On the downside, these rigs cost money and are more expensive to tow, license, etc, and in some cases more difficult to tow in windy weather. They also keep the race car out of sight, which also has the downside of potential fans, sponsors, etc. not having a clue as to what is inside your hauler as you travel down the road. I can't begin to count the number of times I have stopped for gas or food on the road with my car loaded on an open trailer, only to invariably have someone approach me to ask about the car, where you race, etc. This is a great marketing opportunity in itself. Children, especially, are naturally curious, and want to look at and/or sit in the car, while usually a parent enjoys conversing with you. Your sponsors on the car are available for all to see, whereas some people simply ignore the writing on an enclosed trailer. The SIGHT of a race car still draws people's attention, just as it did in the 1960's. Some notables who still use the old fashioned method of transportation include five-time Columbus 151 Speedway late model track champion Ron Bishofberger, whose car is brought to the track on an open trailer, towed by an older Chevy Suburban. Jerry Eckhardt still hauls his car to Columbus and Jefferson with his 1962 Chevrolet flatbed hauler, which is a legend in itself just as Jerry is as a driver.



This kind of thing brings back a flood of memories, as this is the way everyone did it years ago. I even remember USAC stock car champion Butch Hartman hauling two cars on a flatbed truck in the late 1960's, and this was considered an absolutely top notch outfit in the day.

I guess I'm just sitting here getting nostalgic, as I want to do on occasion, but it is no secret that local short track racing is having a hard time getting new fans to attend the shows, and "out of sight, out of mind" sometimes applies. I have enjoyed sitting in someone's enclosed hauler in the cold/rain, but I have also enjoyed the waves from kids as I tow my car to a track on an open trailer. Priceless!



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Justin Schelitzche is our kind of racer. If it had a motor and wheels on it, he was going to race it. We here at MRC personally witnessed Justin race at five different tracks, both dirt and asphalt. We recently caught up with Justin to discuss his racing past, and plans for 2014. What was refreshing to us during the entire interview, was Justin at times seemed more proud of the accomplishments of others he has helped along the way (like his fiancé), more than his own championship.

***How did you get started in racing?***

My brother used to race back in the day with Jeremy Wolff. My uncle does the truck and tractor pulls on the state and regional level. We used to help my uncle quite a bit. The more I got into racing, the less time we had for the truck pulls because they're gone every weekend, just like we are. This is our fifth season of racing. I actually started racing when I had to get our friends car towed to the track and then he didn't have anywhere to store it. I ended up buying it and got into racing for fun. The second year we got 11 wins and I've been hooked ever since.

***How many shows did you race in 2013?***

Between me and Ashley, we ran 206 races (heats and features). That total doesn't include the other things we did like demo derbies, the Dukes jump, trailer races, or any of the other extra stuff we did. It was a lot more than I thought it was when I added it all up. I figured we raced over 7500 laps this summer or over 2500 miles. I don't know how many miles we put on the truck and trailer.

## Six Minutes with Schelitzche



Martin DeFries photo

That wasn't a Sunday night event, but we ran for points. We had four races per show; flag pole race, kidney bean race along with the heat and feature. In the Short Tracker, we picked up rookie of the year last year. Over the winter we went through the whole car and made sure I dotted my i's and crossed my t's. That (winning the Short Tracker championship) was my main goal this year. It was huge. I had so much support from my family and friends that helped out. We started out for fun, but it got way serious, way fast.

***Did you go into the season planning on running that many events?***

We were planning on running dirt full-time this year. With Ashley being a rookie this year, I wanted to concentrate more on her and Brandon Plekkenpol in the Mini Stocks at Raceway. We were planning running Raceway Park, Elko and KRA for the full year. We ended up also making a trip to Princeton twice, and ended up winning up there. We did some testing at Cedar Lake in the winter during their indoor racing, and did well there too.

***How special was it to win a championship at Raceway Park during their final season?***

I would say it was huge and I couldn't be happier. Not only was it Raceway Park's last season, it was my second championship at the track. The first championship was the Thunder & Lightning series back when Donny Reuvers was running the track.

We're still having a blast doing it, but we are a lot more concentrated these days.

***How's your knee holding up following the wreck in the Double O race at Oktoberfest?***

Still trying to recuperate. It was a pretty hard wreck. I got rear ended and turned head-on into the wall. The car gave quite a bit. We figured it is about 3 feet shorter after the wreck. I ended up breaking my knee cap in half. I just started doing physical therapy and finally got off the crutches. The physical therapy has been 3 days a week, and I've been pretty much pouring the coals to it for as much as I can physically take. I'm still getting around and still working on stuff.

*continued on page 14*



Martin DeFries photo



Martin DeFries photo



*Schelitzche from page 13*

*In addition to your season, your fiancé (Ashley Bell) also picked up rookie of the year and the Hornet track championship at KRA Speedway, correct?*

Yep, she won the championship and rookie of the year this year at KRA in Wilmar. I was second in points, right behind her. With two weeks to go, I got claimed and turned it down. I kept my car and lost my points. We would have ended up 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in points if I wouldn't have been claimed. It is what it is (getting claimed.) The car wasn't anything special, but it was a good car and I didn't want to give it up.

*What are your plans for 2014?*

Our plans are kind of up in the air right now. We ran Elko this year, and I was third in

points and Ashley was 5<sup>th</sup> and she picked up rookie of the year. If we can run the Short Trackers at Elko, hands down that's where I'm going to be. Ashley will most likely run the Mini Stocks again. We were heading towards building a second Short Tracker for Ashley, but with Raceway closing and not being sure about the Short Trackers at Elko, are whole programs is kind of on hold. We've talked about slowing down some, and not running quite as many events next year. Running points three nights a week, you're fixing stuff the other four. It doesn't leave time anything else and it becomes more of a job than a hobby. We're definitely going to be racing, just not sure what yet.



*Vince Peterson photo*



*Martin DeFries photo*



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**We'll take a break for the month of January. The next Issue of**

**THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION**

**THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY**

**will be available February 2014. Make sure to check our Facebook page each week for our Flashback Friday and a new photo of the week. Enjoy the Holiday Season!**



### Dirty Talkin'



## Kris McMartin Race4Life a Success

While the wind whipped and the snow flakes fell this past weekend I was able to enjoy going to the races. As I mentioned in my last article I planned to attend the big Race 4 Life two day show out at the Cedar Lake Arena and I was not to be disappointed.

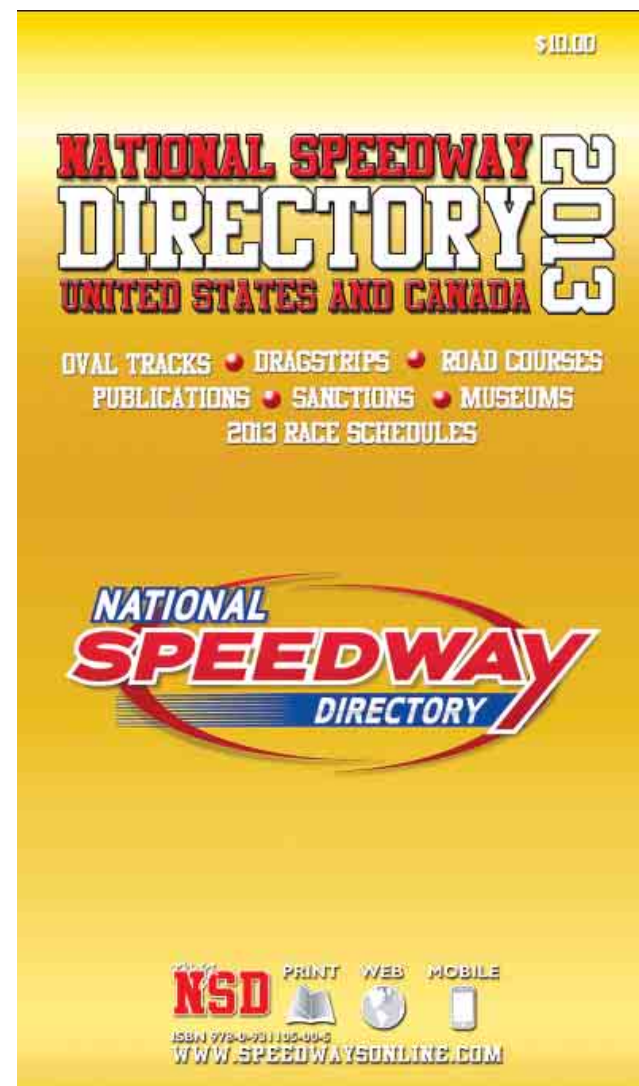
The show featuring both winged and non-winged Micro Sprints and the Outlaw Mini Mod series was well run and provided some great racing. The two day event was two full shows allowing racers ample opportunity to lock them into the Main Event Saturday night which was a \$2000 to win race. There were several heats and a couple of B main races of each of the sprint car classes

and two heats of the mini mods each night so plenty of racing for the fans who attended. The car count was quite impressive considering the time of year and that the race was held in the middle of the hunting season.

I spent a fair amount of time in the pits talking to drivers and families of drivers and was excited to meet so many from so far away. There were cars from many states including Indiana, Iowa, Oklahoma, Missouri and even as far away as California. Both the drivers and the fans were excited to be able to attend the event and the comments I heard around the pits and stands were very positive. I hope this means that first ever Race 4 Life will become an annual event.

Oval track racing is now finished at the arena as the facility will be turned into an open motocross track beginning December 7. I believe the conversion back to an oval track will come sometime in March and I look forward to being able to get back out for the Kart and Quarter Midget racing until the larger outdoor tracks are able to run again.

Wishing everyone very safe and happy Holidays!!!! Thank you for reading my column and I will look forward to getting back out to the races in 2014.



## Gregory Dean Peterson 1960 - 2013

*Memorial services were recently held for Greg Peterson of Exteme Powder Coating. Greg was one of the first to come on board as an advertiser with MRC when the ownership changed hands. In addition to seeing Greg at the local short tracks during the summer months, we would always see him*



*at the car shows in the off-season. All of us here at MRC truly appreciate everything Greg has done for all of the "car guys" throughout the years. God Speed Wally.*





***The Many Rides of the Winningest Driver in America***



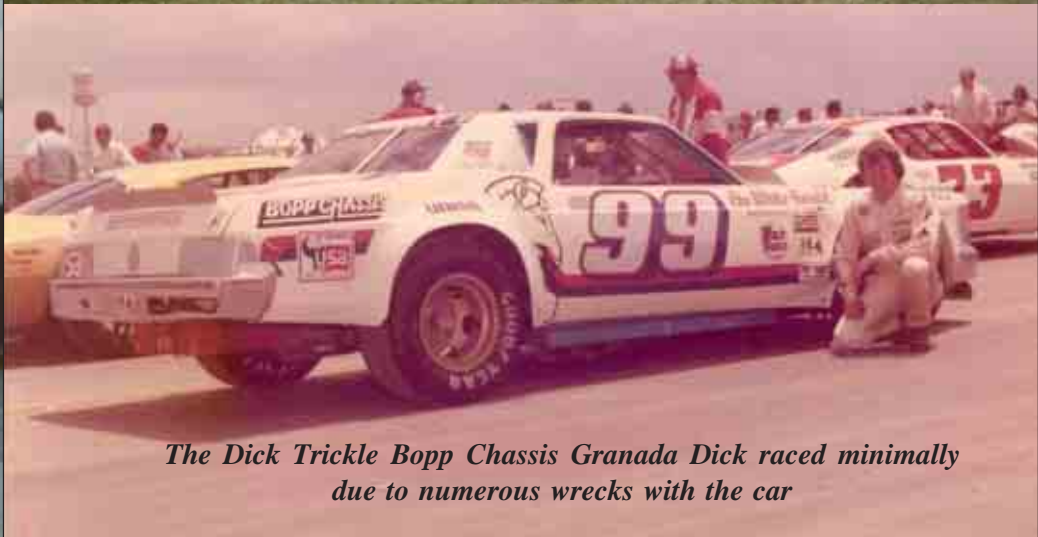
*Trickle circa 1982*



*Cale Yarborough owned Dick Trickle driven Cup car 1990*



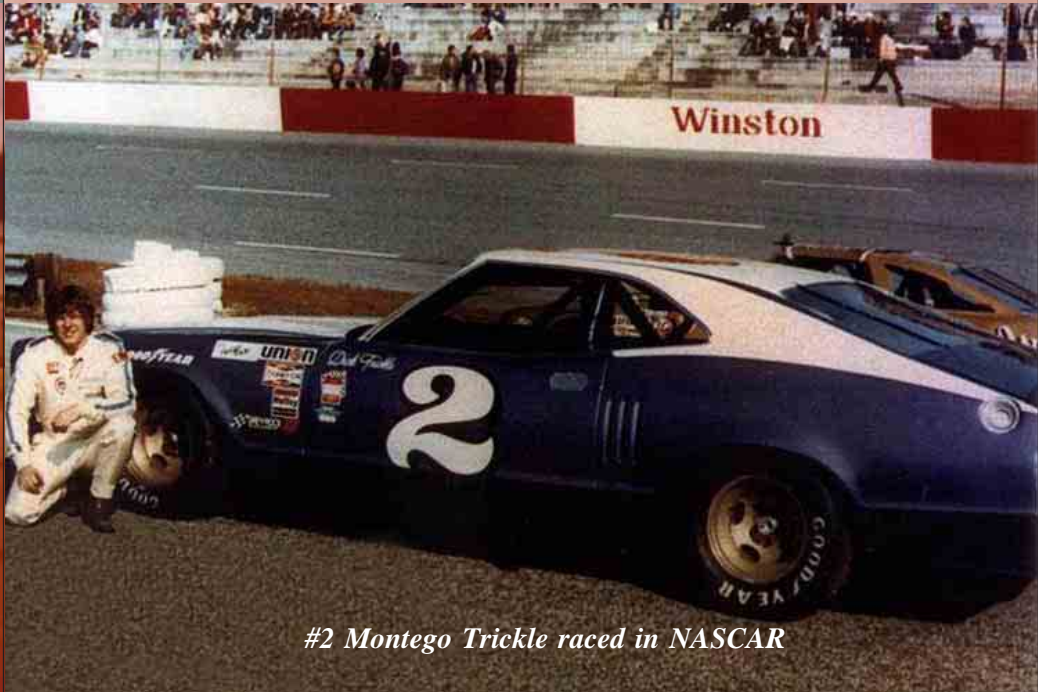
*Racing in St. Petersburg Florida with a winged thing in 1985*



*The Dick Trickle Bopp Chassis Granada Dick raced minimally due to numerous wrecks with the car*



*The record breaking Gray Ghost Firebird of Dick Trickle 1979*



*#2 Montego Trickle raced in NASCAR*



# DID YOU **SEE** THAT?

Unforgettable Moments in Midwest Open-Wheel Racing

DESIGNED AND WRITTEN BY

Joyce  
Standridge

FEATURING THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF

Allen Horcher

Kevin Horcher

B&B Racing Promotions

David Hill

Gene Marderness

Mike Campbell

COASTAL 181



*Each year, our good friends at Coastal 181 Publishing ([www.coastal181.com](http://www.coastal181.com)) send us a book to add to our collection. This year, we received a new book titled *Did You See That?**

*Long-time racing journalist, Joyce Standridge designed and wrote this fine piece. Joyce has penned a few other books in the Coastal 181 library as well as her contributions to Dick Berggren's *Speedway Illustrated*.*

*The main focus on this book is short track, open wheel racing. What we enjoyed most about the book was the large number of photos. The book contains nearly 500 photos taken by some of the best photographers in the Midwest. In addition to a large number of spectacular open wheel wrecks, the book also features many of the behind the scenes photos from a typical race weekend. Each photo has comments from Joyce in a factual, and often times funny manner. If you're looking for something to occupy your time during the upcoming winter months, this is another must read from Joyce.*

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DID YOU **SEE** THAT? covers all kinds of open-wheel, race-track experiences, but especially those that boggle the mind in some unexpected way. There are scores of crash photos in the book—not snapshots, but sharp, caught-in-mid-action images that leave one wondering how it's possible to repeatedly capture such moments. But there's far more than that to what happens during racing events. That's why you'll find action photos, people shots and other fascinating sights that can be captured *only at a race!*

