

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

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THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

June 2019 Vol. 23, No. 2

Midwest Tour



Dirt Kings



Inside...



Red Hot
Rivalry



Glenn Gillund
Tribute

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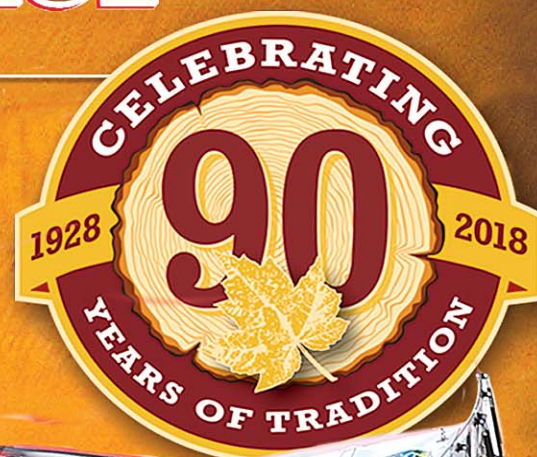
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Publisher's Note *Racing According to Plan*



Dan Plan

It had been several years since I had been on a multi-day, multi-track racing road trip. This year, I made the decision to make a few trips this year, and the first one went exceptionally well. A special shout out goes to Bryan Turtle for being the chauffer during the trip.

The weekend started out with my first ever visit to Tomah Sparta Speedway. There's something special to me about visiting a race track for the first time. In my younger years, I remember a period of time where the race results for Tomah Sparta Speedway were listed as Wild Bill's Track and Trail. It seemed like an odd name for a race track, but during our visit Drew Kreibich informed me

there used to be ATV trails around the track, hence the name Track and Trail. The things you learn at the race track.

The track has been around since 1964 and used to host the heavy-hitters of the Central Wisconsin circuit in the early days. These days, Greg Oliver is running the show and is now in his second year of running the facility. Although the track has been around for over 50 years, everything was clean and well maintained. The grass was freshly cut, the scoreboard worked, they had running water and the concession stands had warm food. There's not much more you need to make a night enjoyable at the track.

The item I enjoyed most about visiting a place like Tomah Sparta Speedway was it reminded me of my childhood days at the race track. For a few moments, I really felt like a kid again. The number of open trailers far outnumbered the number of enclosed trailers, and not a single stacker trailer and toterhome to be seen.

Publisher's Note continued on page 4



The Racing Road Trip

The Midwest

RACING

Connection

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Publishers note from page 3

Next up was practice day for the Joe Shear Classic at Madison International Speedway. The highlight of practice for me was getting introduced to Dave Watson. If you haven't heard Dave's interview on Mark Martin's podcast, you really need to. Dave was one of the top drivers when I was a kid, and a teammate to Joe Shear at times.

Next up was Jefferson Speedway. It was almost 25 years since my last visit to Jefferson. The action was just as good as I remembered from my first visit, and I got to see Jerry Eckhardt win the semi-feature. The place went nuts. All divisions put on a great show, and they had 3 heats of Bandolero's. That leads me to believe there's a strong future for Jefferson.

After Jefferson, it was season opening Joe Shear Classic at Madison. It was a few years since my last trip to Madison, but I never leave disappointed. The show also had the Mid Am racers running the first "combined" event with the old GNSS cars. Everything seemed to be equal footing to run the cars together on a big track. The Midwest Trucks had their largest field in the history of the series and the Vintage Cars had a fantastic finish to their main event.

One item from the trip I can't leave out is the Wedding Crashers scenario that took place on Saturday night. Following the races at Jefferson, was one of those nights you just can't make up. We ran into fellow Minnesotan's Jeff McClintock and Steve Schultz. They were in the area as Jeff was racing with the Mid Am group at Madison. We hitched a ride with them to their motel and drank adult beverages from a cooler in the motel parking lot. Telling tall stories and drinking in a parking lot seems to be a racing tradition. I'm not sure where the tradition started, but it is a good time. Once the cooler was emptied, we walked into town. The only watering hole in Cambridge was closed for a wedding party. Somehow Jeff and Steve convinced the wedding party to let us in. We ended up spending the rest of the night with family and friends of a wedding party from Fort Atkinson, WI. All my best to the bride and groom that I do not know.

Jess Riedner photo



Jeff McClintock "The Wedding Crasher" in action at Madison International Speedway

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Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

Finally, we got at least some decent weather here in the Midwest. Good enough to get our regular season started off at our local short tracks.

Rockford Speedway has some interesting new drivers, returning drivers, and some who have changed divisions. One of the late model rookies is Dave Thomason. Dave said that he raced back in the early 1990's in the Roadrunner division here, as well as in the hobby stocks at Jefferson. He then got away from the sport a bit, saying that he would return only when he could do it right, and with a late model. Well, that time is now for Dave. He purchased a car that had been raced by Jeremy Miller, getting the car from Joe Hunter of Colony Brands, who sponsored Miller. Like most rookies, he had some things good and some things to improve on but was overall quite happy with his first night out, saying, "I was fast at times, and avoided a wreck by spinning on purpose. There are things I need to work on, but the car is intact, and we will work on getting that better, too. Overall, I thought it was a pretty good night, for my first time in a late model." His second night was similar, with some good, some bad. "I just need some time to get used to it, the crew is giving me a good car and I just need more time with it."

"Fearless Franc" Beldowski moved up from the American Short Tracker division to a late model, and also had his highs and lows. He was at times running well, and other times made a few mistakes, but overall, learned a bunch. He was the AST champ in 2018 and looks to have made the transition quite well. "There is a huge difference between these and the short trackers. The other car I could throw into the turns, but there is a big learning curve here, especially in the throttle points and such. BIG difference!" It will be fun to watch these drivers learn and progress.

Michael Bilderback has been a force in the late models here so far in 2019, winning both weekly features. His car features a "throwback" paint scheme reminiscent of his Grandfather Rogers' car from the early 1980s, a cool looking silver and blue.

Ryan Ostenson returns to the Roadrunner division, racing Kevin Memoli's championship car from last year. "He gave me a price that was too good to turn down, said Ryan. It was a turnkey championship winning car for a very low price." Ryan raced a few years ago in the Roadrunners, then switched to

four cylinder Bandits, and now returns to the Roadrunners, and is looking good out there.

the Bandit division here seems to have taken off, big time. Twenty-seven cars were present on opening night and put on a super show for the fans. 2018 Sixer champion Thomas Andrus has moved on to the Bandits and did his usual style of driving that was so successful in the Sixers, that being slowly move into the lead running the low groove where others aren't. Roger Thigpen has also moved from the Sixers to the Bandits.

The sportsman division looks strong this season. Kevin Memoli moves up from the Roadrunners, Trevor Robinson joins the fray, Chad Lounsbury moves from the Roadrunners, and former late model racer Justin Sellers is back.

Chris Page joins in the fun in the Roadrunner division, and Duane Lounsbury now has his brothers fast Roadrunner car. Along with the aforementioned Ryan Ostenson this makes for an interesting group.

Steven Erickson Jr. has raced in the American Short Tracker division before, but he has a really fast car this season and is definitely going to be a factor. Just has some bugs to work out in the car and to have a little good luck.

Took in the annual Joe Shear Classic at the Madison International Speedway. With rain on the way, a huge crowd still flocked into the facility to see a truly star-studded field of super lates and their drivers do battle. Bubba Pollard has raced here a few times before but looks like he has figured out this track quickly. He laid back a little and waited for things to sort out, then made his move to the front. Once there, Rich Bickle got into second but couldn't catch Pollard. Pollard gave a lot of credit to the racers in the Midwest, and also to the loyal fans. As for Bickle, he would love to win this race, as he raced with Joe back in the day quite a bit. "I led a 100-lap race once with him behind me the whole way, and he never touched me," Said Bickle. that is quite a testament and shows a high level of respect.

Ty Majeski looked to be heading to the front and possibly winning the event, but axle issues ended his day along with several others who were caught up in the melee, including Carson Kvapil, Gabe Sommers, Dan Fredrickson, and others. Bickle stopped for the most part and suffered slight damage, while John Beale returned, but with a beat-up race car.

I kind of kept an eye on Dean Lapointe on and off during the day. He was steady and consistent and stayed out of trouble, and finished the event in eighth place, not a bad run at all for this team. Nice run!

It might have been a bit of a surprise to some fans in the area that Jerry Brickner won the truck feature in his first outing in the division, but fans from central Wisconsin already know that he is a highly capable driver. He has won in every division that he has raced in, starting with four cylinders, then limited late models, and then super lates.

Madison's weekly divisions had to put up

with a very rainy opening night, but still raced and got most of the opener in the books. The talk around the track is the new MISfitz division, which allows many varied racing vehicles to compete against one another in the same class, with a breakout time imposed. Bobby Frisch will go into the books as the first winner in the division, as he won the heat, then was leading the feature when he broke out of the time limit twice, earning him a trip to the pits and an early end to his night. "I forgot to turn my radio on, so I didn't hear the warning about breaking out. It was my own fault, but we will learn from this," Stated Bobby. Second running Scott Riedner also had the same fate await him, and it was one of the drivers who competed in the sportsman division here to win, that being Gary Hellenbrand. Dave Edwards took second in an open wheeled modified. Nearly everyone that I talked to raved about the racing and the varied cars competing. Nine cars were present on opening night and I think many more will be coming.

The NASCAR late models put on a very good show as well, with lots of action throughout the pack, especially up front. When lightning in the sky became a threat, the action was halted just short of the scheduled amount, giving fans time to get to their cars before the rain hit. John Baumeister Jr. took the win. It appeared that Rusty Hansen may have been headed to victory, as he had a huge lead, however, a late caution kind of did him in as this allowed some very significant company to join him at the front.

Nice to see some new drivers here in the late models, as Colton Morgan, Joe Wendorf, Jerry Mueller and Nick Egan joined in on the fun on opening night.


The Six Shooters also had a great feature, with about six cars vying for the lead most of the race. It was Randy Grancorvitz taking the win. Randy formerly raced in the backup division at Columbus 151, so this proved he knows how to go fast in forward motion in addition to in reverse gear.

Overall, it was just good to get into the weekly battles at the various tracks. Now we just have to hope for better weather.

John Baumeister Jr. picked up the opening night Late Model win at MIS



Jess Riedner photo



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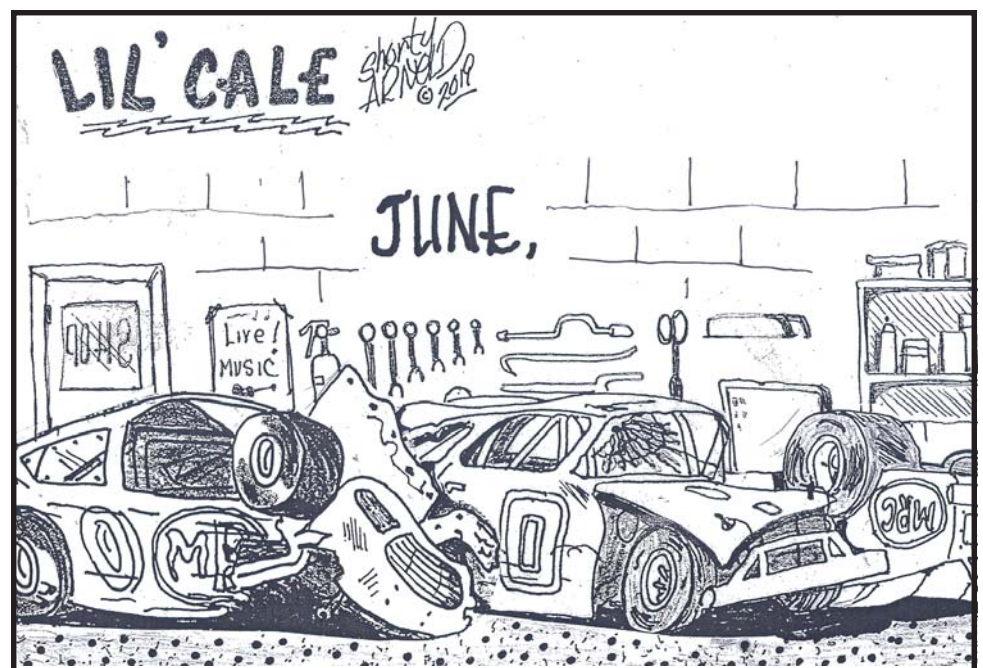
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Racing Nuggets



PJ "Jacklyn" Nuttleman

Practically on a weekly basis, you'll read someone's comment somewhere on social media that they don't care much about NASCAR since Dale Earnhardt died. It's difficult when a hard-knuckled competitor and icon, such as Earnhardt is no longer around to energize the fan base. I get it. But that's not what I'm writing about today.

Nope. I'm writing about rivalries, because let's face it—it wasn't just love and cheers for Earnhardt from enthralled fans. He had a whole faction of haters too.

I actually had a guy once tell me that "nobody hated Earnhardt."

Except they did.

He obviously forgot the incredible rivalry between Earnhardt and that former young-gun, Jeff Gordon. Perhaps that guy needs to catch the rebroadcast of the awesome documentary "Unrivaled: Earnhardt vs. Gordon."

But I digress. I'm not writing about Earnhardt and Gordon. Not directly anyway, but the dynamics of that whole relationship and how it marked the real climb in popularity of NASCAR and auto racing in general.

Face it—controversy builds fan bases. We just witnessed the scrappy Clint Bowyer throwing rapid-fire punches at Ryan "No-Neck" Newman in his race

car after the All-Star Race this past weekend. Was it wise? Probably not, with Newman being build like a brick house—and if Bowyer thought Newman was hard to pass before; wait until next time.

You had to be living under a rock to miss that footage—even if you didn't watch the race, because NASCAR kept replaying that money shot, stoking the fire of controversy again and again.

People were talking about it. They're still talking about it. And whenever Bowyer and Newman are close to each other on the track, I bet you'll hear plenty of references to it the rest of this season too.

It feeds the popularity of the sport. People like to take a side; pull for "their" driver.

Legends can be born from rivalries like these. Even at the local level.

Anyone who attended the first two nights of racing at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway witnessed the phenomenon of a red-hot rivalry between Steve Carlson and Nick Panitzke.

It's the classic match-up of veteran vs. young gun—both with championships under their belts, both with incredible fan bases.

There has been contact both ways on the track, wild cheers from adoring and supportive fans, and a growing contingent of interest from casual fans.

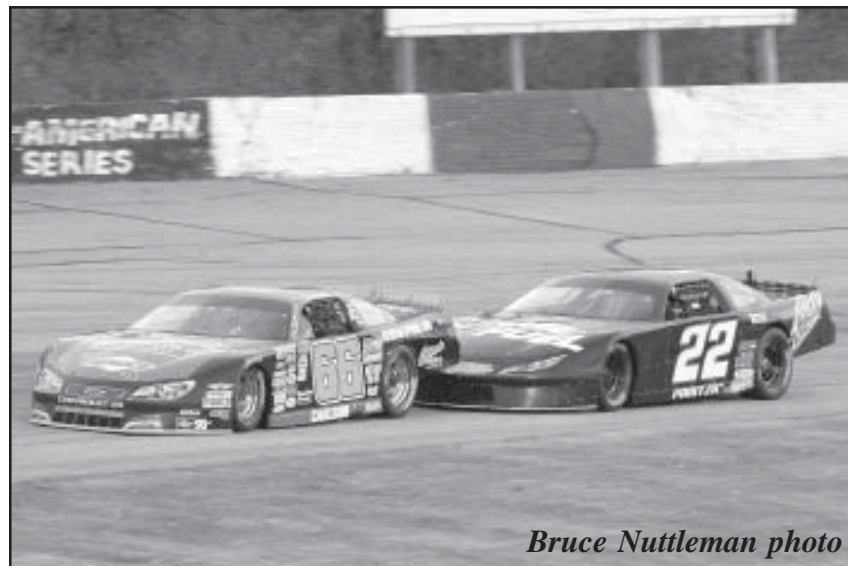
And I haven't even touched on the rest of the field battling in the NASCAR Late Model division at La Crosse. There are easily 10 or more drivers who could win on any given night at the track!

I've been blessed to be able to travel with my husband to many tracks across the country, and I can tell you with confidence—despite many naysayers who are all doom-and-gloom about our sport—auto racing is NOT dying. It just needs a shot of personality, talent, and yes—rivalries.

We have that at La Crosse, as well as a very healthy field of competition in the NASCAR Late Models—it's stacked wide and high.

Admittedly, from my perch high above the stands where I am often videotaping, it would sound as if there is a larger contingent supporting Panitzke. But if full disclosure is to be given—I videotape almost directly above the beer stand, and that's where a very

Red-Hot Rivalry



Bruce Nuttleman photo

vocal group of Carlson "haters" congregate every week.

Love him, or hate him—when it comes to Carlson, it's all very reminiscent of Dale Earnhardt: He is a grizzled, veteran driver who has won A LOT and continues to do so. It's that kind of career performance that grows a fan base, and ultimately generates a group of opposition, who are "sick of seeing him win."

But Panitzke has defied the odds: An "outsider" coming to town each week from Minnesota, collecting fans, and running strong or winning each week. But more importantly, Panitzke has done what no one else had been able to do for a long time—give Carlson a run for his money as a legitimate and viable threat to the championship crown.

In his own words, Panitzke calls this season, "The Rubber Match." He won the title at La Crosse in 2017; Carlson took the honors in 2018. Who will capture it this season? Will it even be one of those two?

These are exciting times to be a fan at La Crosse. Add the massive invert for the NASCAR Late Models—on average, a 12-to-14 car invert for the fastest of the field in a 25-lap feature—and you've got yourself some bona fide racing entertainment right there.

Tracks in the south would make a deal with the devil to be able to have the stout competition that rolls through the gates at La Crosse to put on a show each week. And we get to be a part of it every Saturday night. #MidwestProud

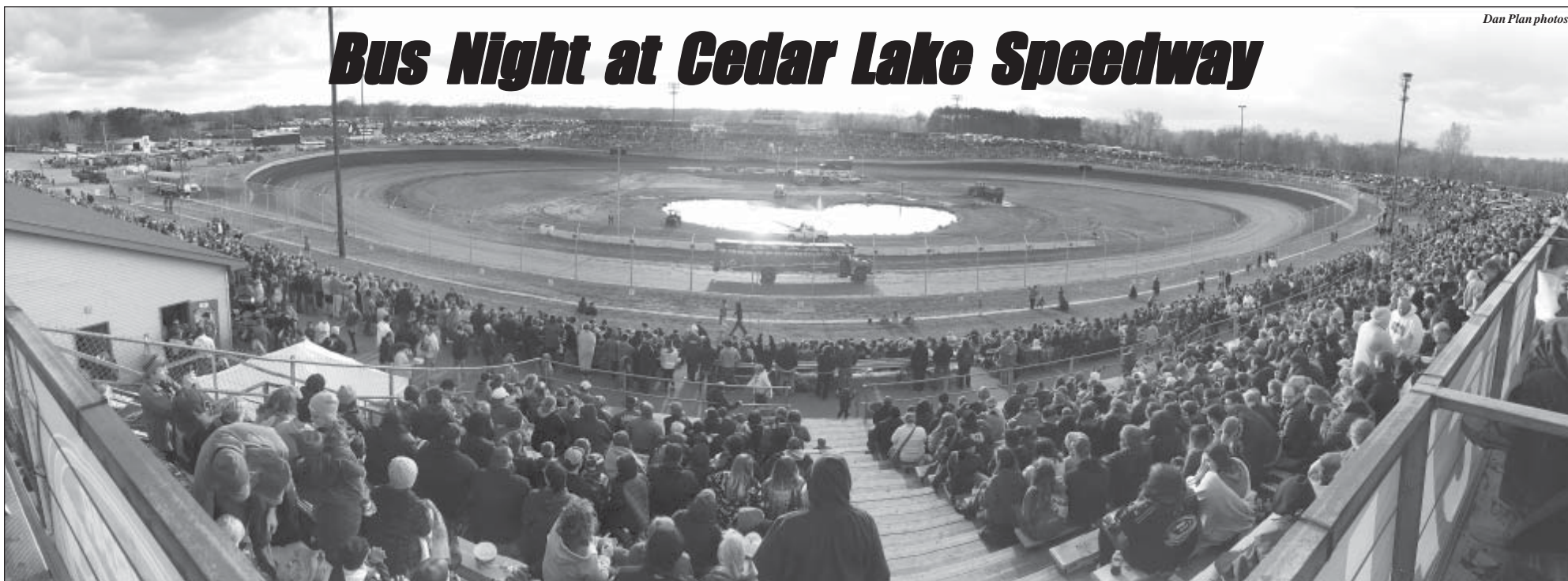


Bruce Nuttleman photo



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Bus Night at Cedar Lake Speedway

Dan Plan photos


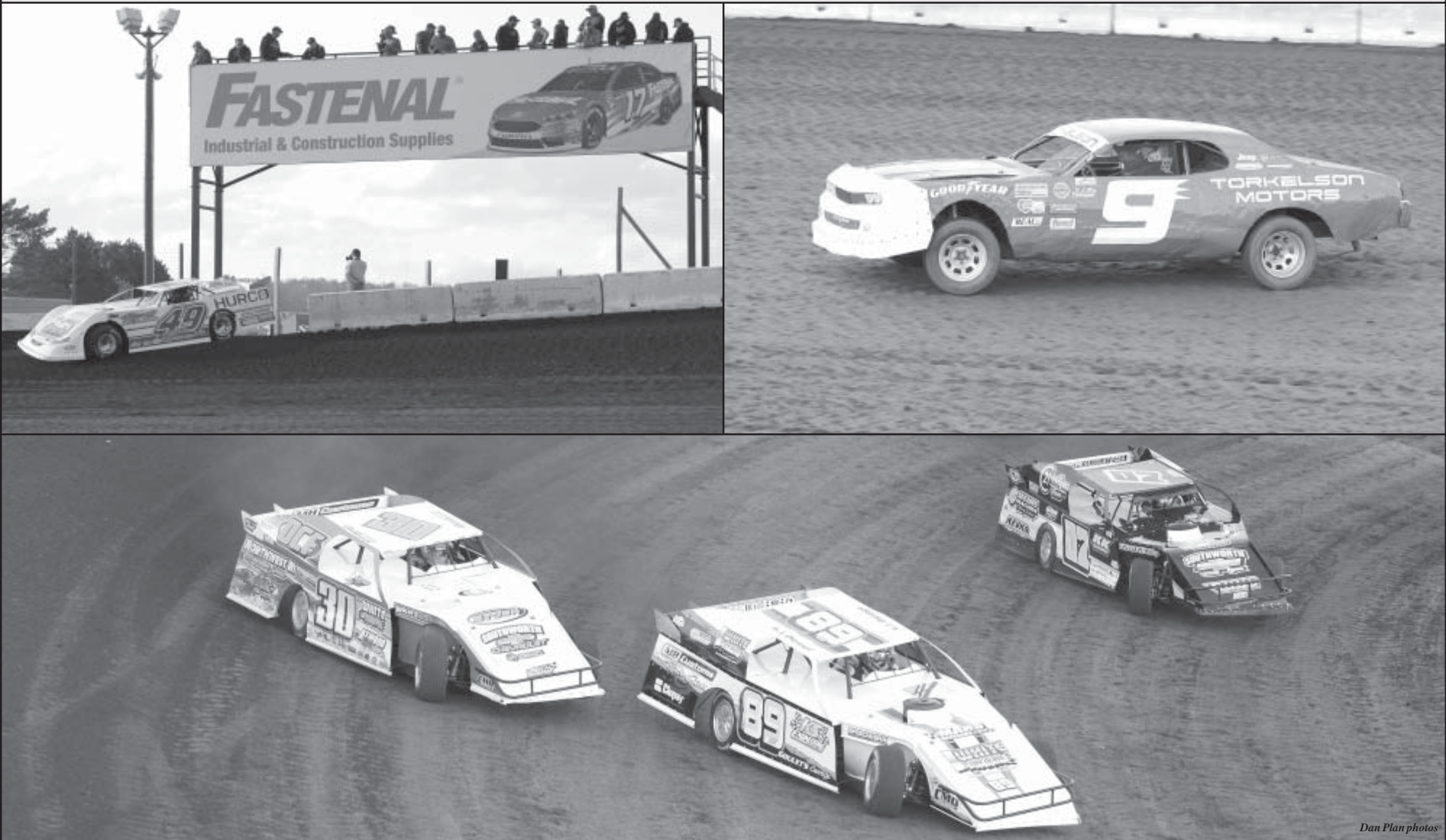
Cedar Lake Speedway hosted their annual School Bus event featuring local area high schools. The event this year also included the UMSS Traditional Sprints and USRA Late Models.

The crowd on hand for this year's Bus Race was the largest crowd ever recorded in the history of Cedar Lake Speedway. The group from Unity High School picked up this year's coveted prize.

Brad Peterson (right photo) picked up the Traditional Sprint win over Cam Schafer and Rob Caho Jr. Justin Sass (below) topped the Late Model main event over Michael Bruggeman and Gavin Tarras in front of the standing room only crowd.



Mississippi Thunder Speedway



Dan Plan photos

Early in the month of May, the Dirt Kings Late Model tour made a visit to Mississippi Thunder Speedway in Fountain City, WI. Joining the Late Models for the show were USRA Modifieds, USRA B-Mods and USRA Hobby Stocks. Hometown favorite, Jake Timm (top left), picked up the win in the inaugural Dirt Kings visit to the track. Hobby Stock racer Cody Torkelson gets the award for coolest Hobby Stock with his Mopar ride (top right). AJ Diemel and Matt Leer battle for the lead in USRA Modified heat race action.



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Jess Riedner photo

Joe Shear Classic at Madison International Speedway

The ARCA Midwest Tour and Madison International Speedway kicked off their 2019 racing season's once again by hosting the Joe Shear Classic. Bubba Pollard made the 900-mile trek from Senoia, GA and picked up the \$10,000.00 payday. The race featured many twists and turns, with long green flag runs, varying pit strategies, and huge pile-up in turn 3 about a quarter of the way into the event. The lap 64 melee took out several strong contenders including Rich Bickle. Bickle was able to make repairs and finish second behind Pollard. Rounding out the podium was Austin Nason. Other winners on the day included; Jerry Brickner (Midwest Trucks), Jason Thoma (Mid American) and Jim Kulseth (Vintage).



Jess Riedner photo

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Glenn Gillund Tribute

By Dan Plan

Just prior to the publication of our first print issue of the 2019 racing season, Glenn Gillund passed away. The Gillund family name and Justice Brothers products have been synonymous with short track racing in the upper-Midwest for decades.

I never had a chance to personally meet Glenn, but I'm certain we were both at the same races several times through the years. I'm pretty sure he was the first guy I saw with the Justice Brothers display showing how JB-80 is twice as good. I still have a can of JB-80 in my garage today.

As a kid growing up and catching a few shows at North Star Speedway, one of the most memorable Sprint Cars for me was the Gillund Enterprises/Justice Brothers sponsored ride of Bob Hop. This car is still around today, as Rob Caho has restored it.

The other Gillund sponsored car that stands out for me was the car driven to victory at the Minnesota State Fair by Bobby Gill.

Bobby Gill was a short track ace from the South and hired to drive the Gillund sponsored car in select ASA events in the mid-1990's. Through some good friends in the short track industry, I was able to reach out to Bobby and talk about the win at the Minnesota State Fair in 1995. Given the event took place nearly 25 years ago, Gill had a hard time remembering how the ride came about; "Honestly, I'm not sure if I remember. That was a long time ago. Me and Jim Daly got together. I flew up there and met him in the parking lot at the Fair. We put the seat in the car and went to the race track the next day. It was a one-day deal, and



Martin DeFries photo

we didn't get much practice."

Regarding the race itself, Gill had pretty fond memories of the event; "That was a pretty good deal there for me. I think we were the only ones that won that much money in ASA that year. We led the most laps, and Pontiac had a bunch of money. I think we won almost \$27,000.00 in that race."

An iconic Sprint Car, a win in the biggest race in your home town and a great family is what will come to mind every time I hear the name Glenn Gillund.



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Dirt Kings

One of the best things going these days for Dirt Late Models in the upper-Midwest is the Dirt Kings Tour. When the Eastern part of Wisconsin was part of WISSOTA, there was an incentive for Late Model drivers to travel West. Since they are no longer part of WISSOTA, there's been little incentive to travel to the other side of the state. The Dirt Kings

Tour has brought a reason for the drivers to travel West, along with giving drivers from other sanctioning bodies the opportunity to travel. Last year, the Dirt Kings ventured as far West as Eagle Valley Speedway. This year, they made it all of the way to the state line at Mississippi Thunder Speedway. Both events were a true East versus West

battles, with drivers from both sides of the state on hand. Along with a strong contingent of Minnesota and Wisconsin drivers on hand, the state of Illinois also had two drivers in attendance. Local favorite, Jake Timm, picked up the home track win this year at the Fountain City event.



Dan Plan photo



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New Dirt



Jacy Norgaard

If I were given the choice to own a race track, I would easily choose a dirt facility. I grew up on asphalt and made my name on dirt. But without a doubt, if the skies are gray or the forecast calls for rain, I would want an asphalt track. I mean no disrespect to owners or promoters of asphalt facilities, managing any race track is not for the faint hearted. But the added element of a surface that can change rapidly with the presence of water makes dirt tracks that much harder when the weather isn't favorable. This spring, twentieth winter or whatever you want to call it has not been favorable to many dirt tracks. When it hasn't rained or snowed, the sun has not shined quite enough to make tracks workable and raceable. My friends at Proctor Speedway just south of Duluth were planning on a May 5 opener. Mother nature had other plans and has delivered them everything from rain to snow! Scanning the comment section of their Facebook post announcing a recent cancellation, I was baffled by the ignorance many have about just what it takes to run a dirt race. Proctor had opted to cancel their opener yet conduct a prac-

tice session to give drivers a chance to flex their car's muscles. Quite a few people questioned how a track could host a practice session but not a race? If the track is good enough to practice on, we should be racing! I will admit if I didn't observe the work effort that goes into a race track or have the friendships I do with many promoters and owners; I would feel the same way. The character of a race track will not be as adversely affected from a few cars running a few laps as it would from a full-blown show. Soft clay and cool weather are a recipe for disaster if you race too early. No one wants to have their opening night be ruined by a torn up race track or torn up race cars. This leads to resentment and leaves a bad taste in competitor's mouths.

On a recent Saturday, Ogilvie Raceway experienced a bout of rain that seemingly appeared out of nowhere. The forecast for the day only called for a twenty to thirty percent chance of scattered showers. Nate and the crew prepared the track like they regularly would by tilling, watering and packing. But mother nature had other plans and came sweeping in. It rained lightly for almost a half hour and the skies seemed to clear and the sun peaked a little bit. This brush with mother nature left the race surface in disarray. Nate

Tough Calls



Jacy Norgaard photo

and the Wagamon family were faced with a race track management's worse nightmare, do we cancel the show? I was up in the announcer's booth chit chatting with Randy "RJ at The Speedway" Sahlstrom the track announcer and Ben Kruchten from Dirt Race Central while all of this was occurring. The announcer's booth is sort of like media central and I got to witness firsthand just how difficult it can be to make that tough decision. Members of the Wagamon family were checking the radar to see how the weather was playing out and radioing back and forth to the crew out on the track to get their thoughts. It was around 6:15 or so when Nate indicated it would take at least 2-3 hours to bring the track back. Nate pours his heart and soul into preparing a race track and he's one of the best at it. So when he says 2-3 hours to make it raceable, he knows what he is talking about. The event for the night was a Mother's Day special complete with complimentary roses for all mothers, a spotlight on the Mod Four division and a full slate of WISSOTA racing. Quite a bit of preparation had already gone into making the night special and now they had to make an all too difficult call, cancel or try and race. They made the right call and decided to cancel the festivities for the night. Many were quick to take to social media or express their outrage in person or over the phone to the race track.

No race track ever wants to cancel a show. There are only so many race nights each season which means only so many opportunities for them to make money. Weighing the option of whether to pull

Jacy Norgaard photo



New Dirt continued on page 16

New Dirt continued from page 15

the plug or try and race is a daunting task. What do you do if more rain comes? What happens if the track is rough? Will that cause people to not want to race at your facility? If we can get the track back to racing condition, will we get the show done before our curfew. These are just a sampling of the many questions a race track must weigh and answer before deciding. And then comes the financial end of things. What about all the food that was cooked? What about the staff that you have at your event? What about pit passes and tickets you have already sold? Sure, the easy answer is you just give folks free admittance to the next event, but this only takes away from your profit for that future event. So many difficult decisions to make when it comes to dealing with weather, that so many people never take into consideration before announcing their displeasure on social media feeds and in person. It's not as simple as if the sun is shining, we can go and race. We all wish that were the case, but the reality of the situation is that running a race track is comprised of thousands of moving pieces all of which can be thrown into the air and tossed around like the dirt coming off the cars when mother nature shows up.



Jacy Norgaard photo



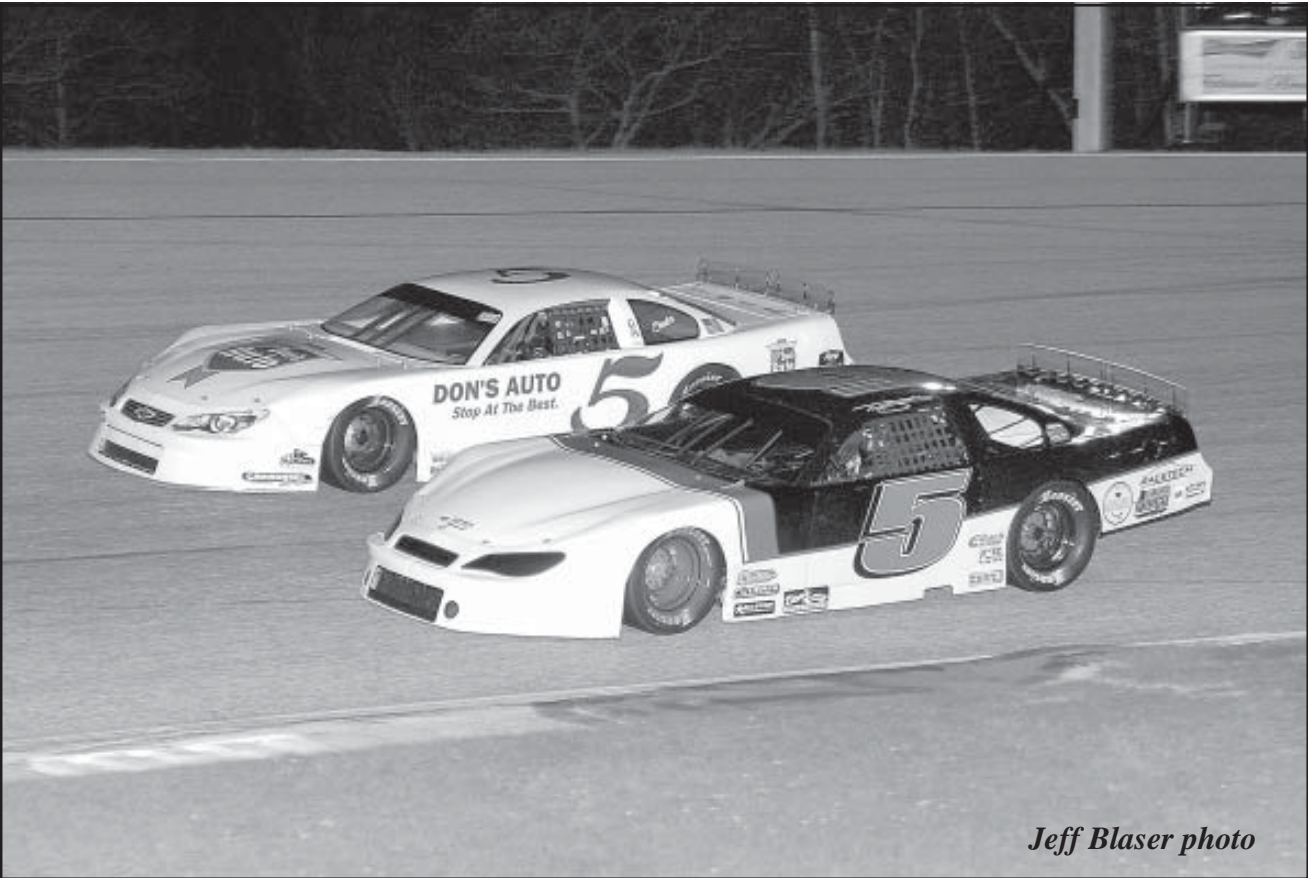
Jacy Norgaard photo

Despite the cancellation of racing at Ogilvie, I made the quick decision to follow the Pogones Motorsports Mod Four team up to North Central Speedway in Brainerd. We missed the heat races by a couple minutes but Justin and his rookie driving son Tommy were able to tag the back of the feature. North Central was fortunate enough not to have been affected by the weather and I am grateful that I got to see some racing. The next night I made the trip to Granite City Speedway in Sauk Rapids to shoot photos of their season opener. I was greeted by

a good crowd, a good car count and some good racing. Some nights you have the weather on your side and other nights you do not. That's just how it is and since we can't control the weather and retractable roof race tracks aren't a thing, we must all just deal with cancellations and postponements when they arise. Next time your track must cancel, thank them for their effort or better yet go out and support one of their sponsors and let them know how much you appreciate their support for our sport!

**Sauter and Sauter
at Golden Sands**

Jim Sauter Jr. (outside) and Travis Sauter (inside) battle for position at Golden Sands Speedway. Jim Jr.'s ride features a throwback scheme similar to the Old Style beer sponsorship of days gone by. Travis Sauter captured the main event win.



Jeff Blaser photo

Dean & Jason Talkin' Racin'



Jason D. Searcy

Elko Speedway is now beginning its 54th season of racing and #72 Jacob Goede from Carver (MN) is the current King of the North, Goede is looking to win his 6th consecutive Premier Division title at ELKO. In 2018 he had 9 wins, finished in the TOP 5 in 25 of the 27 races and won the Championship Crown by an impressive 324 points. Goede has no plans to slow down in 2019. After spending years of traveling to far-away tracks earlier in his career he now enjoys the thought of continuing to race close to home and is aiming towards a lofty goal, to win the most total Premier division Championships at Elko Speedway. Jeff Martin won it an incredible 10 times between 1983 and 2001 and Donny Reuvers won a total of 9 Premier division Championships at Elko Speedway between 2000 and 2012. Both of those drivers are true Legends here in Minnesota and dominated during their era of racing at ELKO, it's looking like we are now living in the Goede era.

Goede will be facing some stiff competition in 2019 including 4 time ELKO Champ #3 Chris Marek who had 4 wins last year. 2015 Bando Champ #6 Owin Giles is on a roll, he finished second in points and won 3 races last year including the prestigious Thunderstruck93 Big 8 series event. Elko veteran and former Raceway Park Champion #52 Chad Walen has looked fast lately, he will be looking to improve on his 2 wins from last year. Bryan Wrolstad #13 won 3 races last year and Adam Bendzick #21 won two, they both will be challenging for wins. Michael Hagggar #19 and #26 Lawrence Berthiaume impressed many late in the season by both winning a feature event.

Two young guns battled for the Rookie of the year title last year. Devyn Stocker #14 won the ELKO rookie battle and #3 Ryan Varner was awarded the NASCAR rookie title. Elko Speedway counts all points earned on a race night where as NASCAR only counts points earned in Feature events. Both drivers narrowly missed their first career Late Model feature win in 2018 and are even more determined this year.

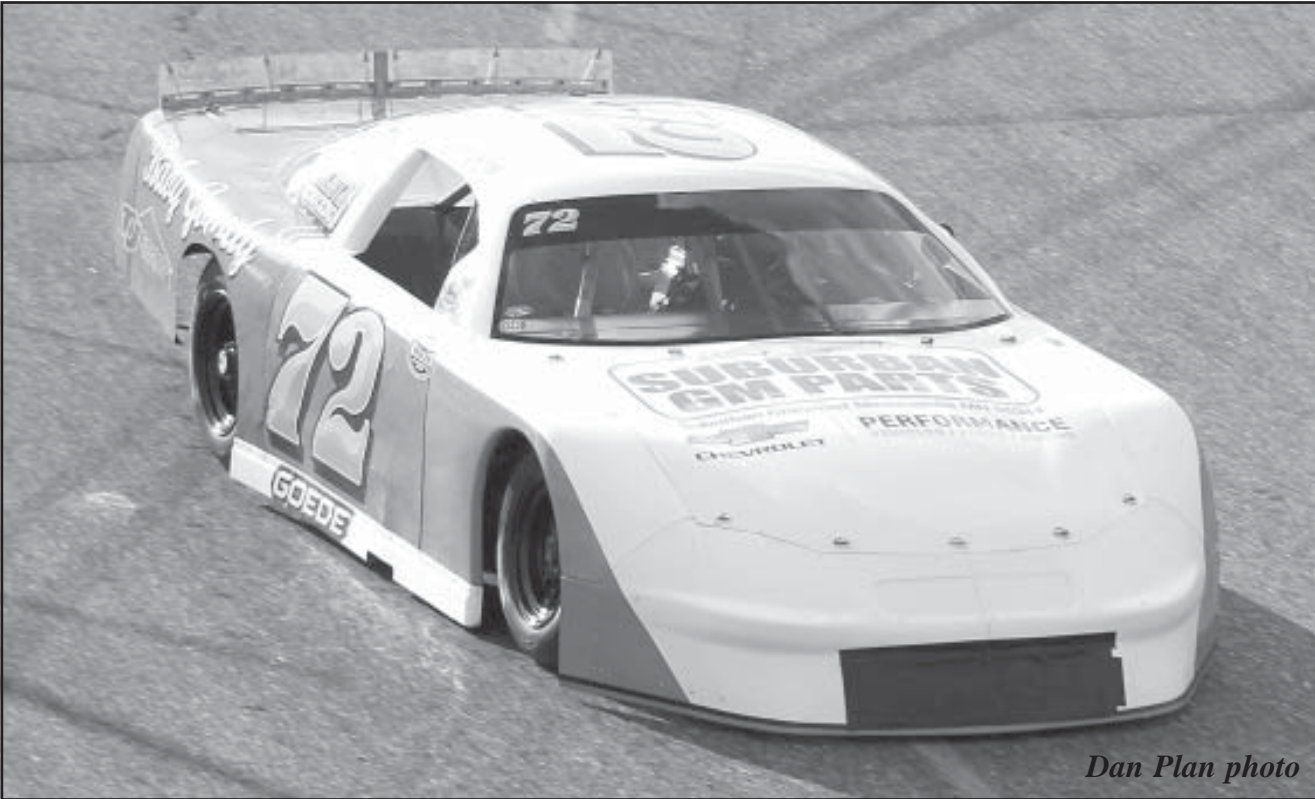
The Late Model division at Elko Speedway is also known for having drivers who don't run for points show up and put on a show. Former 2-time Elko Champion Jon Lemke #17 won two features in only 10 events last year, Michael Ostdiek #18 raced 6 times and had a win. Any time #75 Joe Neisius or #7 Paul Paine show up they are contenders to win. Sounds like we will see #12 Nick Murgic and even #9 Dean Cornelius return to the track this year and we are all hoping that #50 Steve Anderson will continue his long and successful racing career.

The 2019 Late Model field at Elko Speedway is as strong as ever and they don't get much time off this year. The only nights they are not on the schedule are

Fireworks night July 6th, the Bandit Big Rig series night July 27th and the traditional last Eve of Destruction of the year on September 28th.

All the ELKO NASCAR divisions will be racing again during the ARCA Menards National TV show on Saturday July 13th, that was a big success last year and ARCA took notice, they added local racing at some of their other events for 2019. The annual Tribute night will be on Saturday August 10th and the 11th annual Thunderstruck93 event featuring the Big 8 series and our local divisions will be September 21st.

It will be interesting to see if the Goede era at Elko Speedway will continue or if someone is stout enough to knock the 5 time Champ off the throne.



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Auto Racing Facts,
Observances and
Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

As seems too normal these days we are discussing rain instead of racing as the monsoon has set in once again. Add to that wind and cold and you do not have weather that is conducive to short track racing outside! Who will build a dome and put us out of our misery?

We did take in the Central Wisconsin Racing Association Stars to Legends Tour opening race at Marshfield Motor Speedway, Marshfield, WI., Saturday afternoon, May 4th however. A great field of 25 Late Model machines were on hand, and as usual the group put on some extremely competitive racing. Although veteran Mark Mackesy won both 30 lap

Feature events, it wasn't easy, as he waited to the very end of both races to make passes for the lead and ultimate win.

The field on the day consisted of numerous wiley veteran drivers, but it also included a number of up and coming racers, which certainly will make things interesting in 2019. One of those younger drivers, Chad Butz wound up 2nd and 5th in the two mains, and that would make one think he will be a contending driver throughout the season. A newcomer to CWRA, Jason Stark earned a well deserved 3rd place finish in the 1st 30-lapper, and he plans to contend for Rookie of the Year honors. Stark had a good run going in the

2nd feature but got caught up in a wreck after sliding in oil. Stark says, have no fear however, as he will be back to contend on the Tour as things get rolling into summer. And even more noteworthy, he will be racing what is classified as a Limited Late Model race car!

Long time Fox Valley driver, Mike Reichenberger will also be racing on Tour all year, and he proved he will have to be reckoned with as he placed 4th and 7th in the two mains. Mike has won Championships at Norway Speedway, Norway, MI., so it wouldn't be much of a surprise to see him up

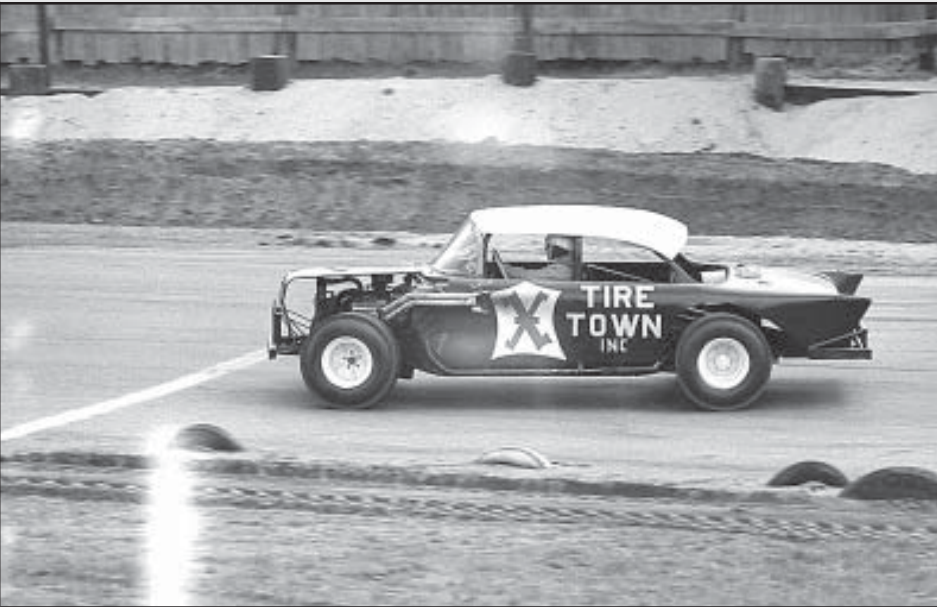
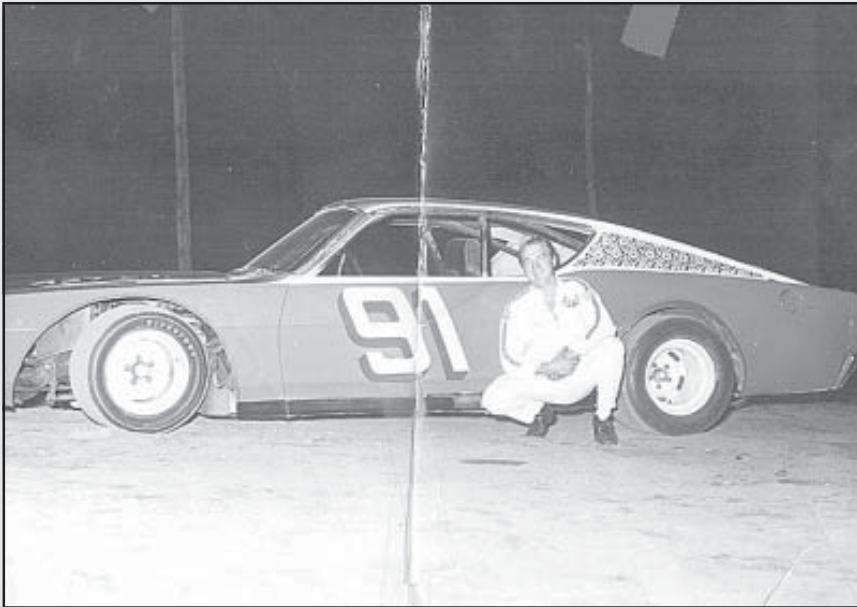
continued on page 19



Mark Mackesy won both CWRA 30-lap feature events at Marshfield Speedway

Dale's pictures from the past

Marv Marzofka racing in 1971 and Lyle Nabbefeldt in the X race car



Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions from page 18

near the top at the end of the year.

2017 CWRA Champion Frank Nitzke served notice he will again have to be reckoned with as he placed 5th and 6th in the two Features. 2018 Champion, Jeff Weinfurter had an up and down day, placing an uncharacteristic 10th in the first 30 lapper, but coming back in the nightcap to finish 4th. According to Weinfurter, "I had a couple two-year-old tires on the car in the first 30, so I decided to buy a couple for the 2nd race. The car ran a lot better."

Harley Jankowski who has been around the La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI., quite successfully I might add, is another driver racing on the Tour this year. A Rookie of the Year candidate, Jankowski after setting fast qualifying time, took on the Race to The Front Bonus sponsored by RMS Contracting, by starting last in the 24 car field and attempting to move all the way to the front and win. He came close, passing 18 cars on the way to a 6th place finish.

The Tour is still getting great support from Upper Michigan as 4 drivers signed in for the opening CWRA show. Interesting, as those drivers have raced on the Towel City Tire, the only allowed tire by CWRA, so experience should pay off!

Mitch Stankowski will be racing for CWRA Rookie of the Year honors and he got off to a good start with 9th and 8th place finishes here in the opener. Of course, I'm from the days of when his Dad, Les was racing so that brings the past into the future as Mitch runs the circuit.

Well, if we can get a break from the weather, CWRA shows coming up that we plan to cover include, June 1st at Marshfield Motor Speedway, and June 14th at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. State Park Speedway, Wausau, WI., will be in the fold for CWRA on June 27th and that should be a great show.

Here and there...The Golden Sands Speedway CWRA event for May 17th was cancelled. The event was to Honor racing great, Marv Marzofka, and hopefully can be rescheduled...Lax. Fairgrounds lost their May 18th Saturday opener as it rained for like 3 days straight! We need rain tires to keep things going here don't we... Had fun at the Dick Trickle Memorial event, Sunday, May 18th in Rudolph, WI. Way too many people there that I haven't seen in years to list but what a great time! Highlight of the event had to be Rich Bickle, Jr., bidding \$7,500 on a door that was on Trickle's record setting 1970 Ford Mustang, when he won an amazing 67 Features in 1972. He got it, and it will be going on display...

In the quote of the column, "I was always fast last year in the races, but too often things would happen, and we didn't finish. That isn't going to happen this year" Mark Mackesy, after winning both 30 lap CWRA Features at Marshfield Motor Speedway, May 4th...

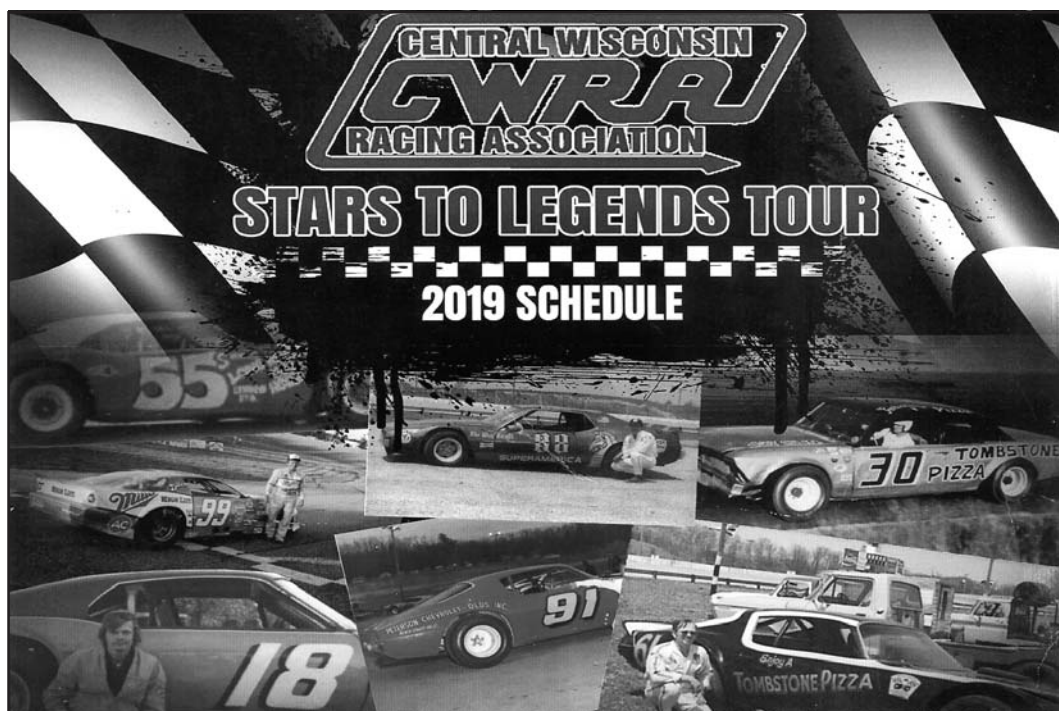
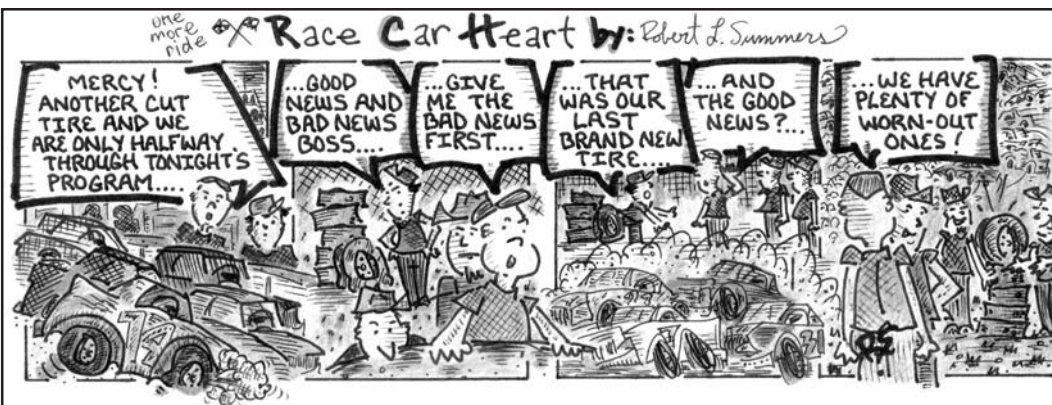
And going back in time, on May 6th, 1971, it was Marv Marzofka winning the Feature race at State Park Speedway, Wausau, WI. Following Marzofka in the Feature was Dick Trickle. heat race winners were Bob Mackesy, (Yes, that is Mark's Dad) in the first, Sonny Immerfaul in the 2nd, and Trickle in the 3rd. On May 14th, 1966, it was Lyle Nabbefeldt winning the 30 lap Feature at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI. Following Nabbefeldt at the finish were Dave Marcis, Dick Trickle, Jere O'Day, John Mc Namara, Tom Reffner, Jim Back, John Morse, Marlin Walbeck and Marv Marzofka.

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

*Jim Kulseth made his Vintage racing debut in grand fashion,
picking up the win at Madison.*



Dan Plan photo



Marshfield Motor Speedway (Marshfield, WI)
Golden Sands Speedway (Plover, WI)
Dells Raceway Park (Wisconsin Dells, WI)
Marshfield Motor Speedway (Marshfield, WI)
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Saturday May 4th (Afternoon Race)
Friday May 17th (Marv Marzofka Race)
Saturday May 25th (Nabbefeldt Memorial)
Saturday June 1st (Dairylest 60)
Friday June 14th (Albert Getzliff Race)
Thursday June 27th
Thursday July 18th (Trickle, Reffner Honor)
Thursday August 8th (Mike Miller Race)
Saturday August 10th (Walbeck Classic)
Saturday August 17th
Friday August 23rd (Championship Race)

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The 2019 edition of the FANS Fund is up and running. The objective is to attract new and upcoming drivers to attend the USA Nationals at Cedar Lake Speedway. Voting is now open. Please check out the website to make your donation and cast your vote for the 2019 drivers.

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The Good and The Bad



The Good - Wendell Kane shows his dad (Nate) how to change the left rear on Billy Mohn's Super Late Model at the Joe Shear Classic.



The Bad - A huge melee during the Joe Shear Classic took out several contenders and saw cars stacked on top of each other.

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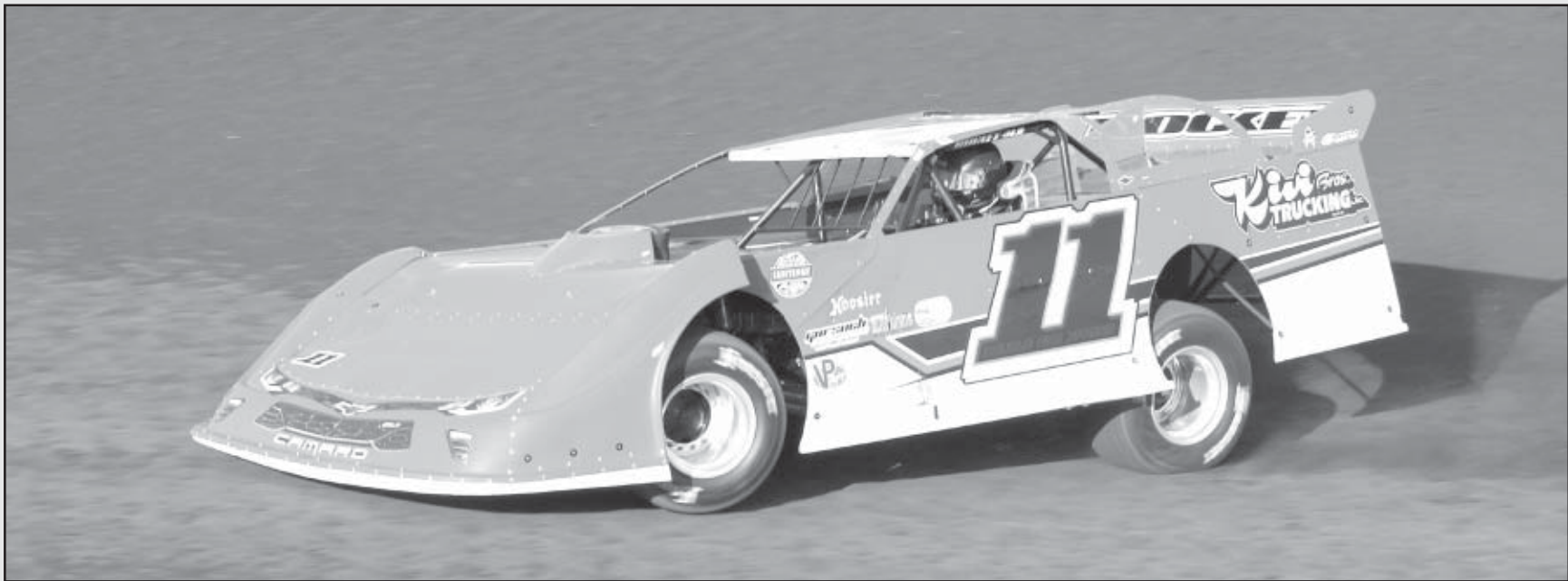
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Doar off to a fast start



Defending NASCAR Dash champion, Pat Doar, is off to a strong start for the 2019 season. Doar notched a win in the NASCAR Dash event at Cedar Lake Speedway in the month of May. In addition to the win at Cedar Lake, Doar also picked up a win at Red Cedar Speedway in Menomonie, Wisc. and a top-10 in the Mississippi Thunder Speedway Dirt Kings Tour event.

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