

# THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

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August 2020

## Inside...



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Time Travel





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## Publisher's Note

### *Racing According to Plan*



### Dan Plan

In this issue Dale Danielski's column focuses on the Larry Wehrs Tribute race held at LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway in the middle of July. When I first saw this event announced on the schedule, I made sure to pencil in the date on my calendar. I've mentioned before, I was pretty darn lucky as a kid to make many Wednesday night trips to West Salem during the Larry Wehrs era of ownership. In the late 70's and early 80's my dad had to work most weekends but had Wednesday nights off.

After years of reading about the Central Wisconsin Racing Association (CWRA) drivers in the local racing papers racing 5-6 nights per week, I was able to see all of them in person on many Wednesday nights. Eventually the Wednesday night program at LaCrosse came to an end in the early 1990's and the CWRA slowly faded away. Since then, there have been a few Wednesday night

## Time Travel

specials at LaCrosse during the county fair or around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, but none involving the CWRA. The CWRA came back into existence a few years ago, and I figured a Wednesday night at LaCrosse would be a great opportunity to re-live the past.

In the past, we would arrive early to watch practice. As kid, I would stare through the fence at the infield pits and check out the cars of Tom Reffner and Mark Lamoreaux. As an adult, I'm actually in the pits and both these guys actually will take the time to talk with me when I stop by. It's one of the great things I enjoy about short track racing. From the other side of the fence, they always seemed larger than life, but in person, they're just regular people.

The other item I enjoyed about the CWRA return to LaCrosse was the speed disparity between the top and bottom of the field. These days there's so much talk about parity and equality but having variance in speed of the cars makes things exciting. They

*Publisher's Note continued on page 4*

### *Tom Reffner's AMC Concord at a Wednesday CWRA show at LaCrosse in 1981*



*The Midwest*

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*Publishers note from page 3*

had a huge invert for both main events. Watching guys like Carlson and Reffner (not Tom, but his grandson Colin) charge through the field made for great racing. You can bet your bottom dollar I'll check out another CWRA show. Hopefully the LaCrosse County Fair takes place next year and a guy can grab a corn dog before the show and see big crowd on hand for some old-school short track racing.

And finally, we are back. Despite this being an extremely challenging year for many racetracks, the restrictions and shutdowns also had an adverse impact on the overwhelming majority of our advertisers. Luckily for me, all of them were willing to participate in print issues for the second half of the season. I can't thank them enough for helping keep this little paper alive during the pandemic.



*Mark Lamoreaux being forced to work by his crew (top photo) Tom and Baird Reffner working on Colin's car with Dale Danielski supervising (bottom photo)*



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Auto Racing Facts,  
Observances and  
Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

With all the historical writing I do, it's only fitting that I would fill you in on a retro racing event held here recently, as CWRA returned to the La Crosse Fairgrounds after an over 25 year hiatus.

The Fair race at La Crosse Interstate Speedway, West Salem, WI., was a popular event throughout the

years. Starting back in 1957 when a dirt track was carved out of the landscape there, and later when Larry Wehrs and others had the track paved for high speed auto racing. The Central Wisconsin Racing Association was an integral part of racing at the track for many years. Wednesday night was the designated night for racing there, (Probably because it was the only night available to host CWRA) and racing was great featuring drivers, Dick Trickle, Marv Marzofka, Rich Somers, Mike Miller, Tom Reffner, Larry Detjens, Joe Shear, Jim Back, Dave Watson, Bob Jusola, Larry Behrens, and so many others. Move ahead to 2020, and you have CWRA returning on Wednesday night, July 15th to the La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, for a race during Fair week. Unfortunately, the Covid 19 situation put the kibosh on the Fair, but it was decided the race event would go on.

What great racing it did indeed provide. As it turns out, it was quite the challenge for drivers, a CWRA vs NASCAR match-up, as a number of the Saturday night group went head to head with the CWRA Tour racers to see who was the best of the best. Adding incentive was the fact the race was the Larry Wehrs Tribute race, with Larry on hand and extra purse money paid out. A strong field of 21 cars turned out for the race and close racing, and last lap heroics were the order of the evening.

CWRA utilizes a twin feature format for their events and the unpredictability of who will win on any given night makes the Tour attractive to drivers and fans alike. It was no different on this night, as Steve

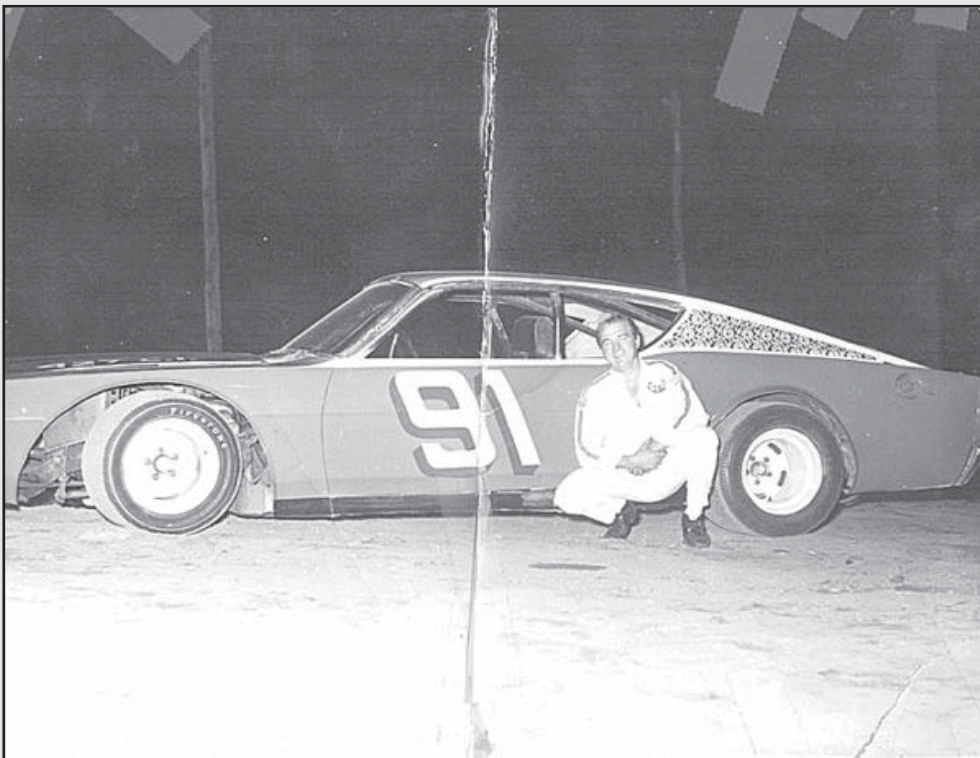
Carlson took the first 30 lap event, while Jesse Pokszyk won the 2nd. There was plenty of action in between as Carlson had to fend off a late race charge by Colin Reffner who came up a few feet short of winning at the finish line. Not to be outdone, Pokszyk used a last lap pass of Nick Clements to win in his feature event. Reffner didn't win either race, but his 2nd and 3rd place finishes made him the Inaugural Larry Wehrs Tribute Race winner and with it a \$500.00 cash bonus from Ultra Force Loading Machines, by Wehrs. Also, of note was the event bringing out 1991 CWRA Champion, Mark Lamoreaux to race. The 69 year old driver didn't disappoint either, as he led a number of laps in the first 30 lapper, ultimately finishing a close 3rd in the end.

Truly a special night of racing, bringing back memories of what was both a weekly Wednesday night racing occurrence and an Annual event with the Fair. Wehrs Machine and Racing Products, Bangor, WI., along with Bentley Trucking, Des Moines, Iowa, and Iron River, MI., made it happen this year, hopefully it can be brought back in 2021 only with the Fair actually going on this time!

Here and there...The first Clason Buick-GMC, 30 lap feature on July 15th, Larry Wehrs Tribute night at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, found Steve Carlson the winner, over Colin Reffner, Mark Lamoreaux, Matt Henderson, Darren Jackson, Paul

*continued on page 7*

Dale's pictures from the past



Dale's pics from the past. Marv Marzofka #91 Ford Torino. Tom Reffner Mercury Cyclone.



### *Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions from page 6*

Paine, John Beale, Jeff Weinfurter, Jesse Pokszyk and Carter Christenson. Clason 30 lapper number two found Pokszyk 1st followed by Nick Clements, Reffner, Henderson, Paine, Harley Jankowski, Christenson, Weinfurter, Beale, and Dave Satorius. Reffner had a good night financially as he was also the Bentley Trucking Fast Qualifier. That earned the 3rd generation Reffner racer a cool \$100 cash from Bentley...It was an epic battle in the first 30 lap race between Carlson and Reffner, and Steve was thankful for how Colin raced him. "My car was getting so tight, he could have got into me a number of times, but he didn't. I like racing with him, he's a good driver."...Matt Henderson who got off to a terrible start to his season decided to bring his other race car out to the CWRA race and see how he'd do. "We just wanted to come out and see what we could do. The way things have gone this year, we just wanted to have some fun, and we did!" Henderson had a strong car all night and was rewarded with two 4th place finishes in the 30 Lap mains...Another great event honoring a former CWRA racer, was the John Brevik Classic at Marshfield Motor Speedway, Marshfield, WI., Saturday night, July 11th. CWRA brought 21 cars to the event and some super racing was seen by the huge crowd on hand. 30-lap feature winners on the night included Jeff Weinfurter and Colin Reffner. Remember seeing John Brevik racing many times through the years. Always competitive, John brought a lot of positives to the sport...

Looking back in time, at La Crosse Interstate Speedway, on July 17th, 1970 it was the Fair 100 race. Tom Reffner took the Feature win, and was followed by, Dick Trickle, Jim Back, Marv Marzofka, and Roy Schmidtke. Dale Pennel won the Consolation and 1st heat race, with John Brevik taking the 2nd and Back the 3rd. Fast time went to Marv Marzofka. A crowd

of 5,200 attended the event. On Wednesday night, July 21st, 1971 it was the Fair Opener 50 at La Crosse Interstate Speedway. Marv Marzofka won the 50 Lap feature in front of Rich Somers and Jim Sauter. The 15lap semi-feature went to Greg Delapp, while heat race victors were Fred Beckler, Warren Droesser, and Larry Behrens. Behrens also won the fast dash.

Questions, comments, opinions and other information welcome at Starmaker Multimedia 701 Indiana Avenue, Stevens Point, WI. 54481 715-344-9072 608-518-2478 or at dale@starmakermultimedia.com



Mary Schill photo

*Colin Reffner picked up the \$500.00 bonus, from Ultra Force Loading Machines, in the Larry Wehrs Tribute Race*

## THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

*Steve Carlson (left photo) and Jesse Pokszyk (right photo) picked up wins in the Larry Wehrs Tribute Race at LaCrosse Speedway*



Mary Schill photo



Mary Schill photo



## Going in Circles



### Charlie Spry

We started off the month of July by celebrating America's independence with, of course, short track stock car racing at the Rockford Speedway, where the Star Spangled 76 brought forth the Big 8 late models for the series opener.

As one might expect, track regulars fared pretty well, with Max Kahler taking the lead early and holding off several advances from varied competitors. Tom Gille came back from several problems to finish a strong second. I think he started in the rear several times after being involved in mishaps, and came back. I have to give a shout out to fifth place finisher Jeff Wakeman. He stayed out of trouble all night, kept making laps, and finished in fifth. He does not have the most modern high-tech equipment, but still finished higher than most. He does this quite often in long races, and it works.

The American Short Trackers were also in action tonight, with visitor Kyle Stark taking the win over Kelly Evink. Visitor Brandon Delacy was present but had his car expire early in the night. Tim Finstad had another good run in finishing third.

Austin Fowler took the win in the Roadrunner "Paul Revere Midnight Ride," A race run in nearly total darkness, with only spotlights on the cars roof numbers. If everyone stays racing, it is usually a trouble-free race, but if someone spins or something, it can get kind of hairy. Austin drove a flawless race to get the win.

We took in a regular Friday night show at the Tomah-Sparta Raceway recently. Promoter Greg Oliver is doing some very good things here. The staff is very friendly and low-key. Veteran racer Scott "Chico" Riedner is the competition director. These guys have been around racing their whole lives, and they know plenty. Dan Deicher does the announcing here, and has a clear and concise voice, knows something about all the drivers, and keeps a great banter going.

It was a night when Steve Parsons was present, handing out huge trophies during his ongoing Kim Parsons Memorial trips to various speedways, promoting organ donors at tracks all over the state. These trophies are HUGE, and the drivers work very hard to win these.

They have a bell planted into the ground here, and each feature winner gets to ring the victory bell

after posing for photos. Modified feature winner Brad Wildes was so enthusiastic that he pulled it right out of the ground. Everyone got a bit of a chuckle out of that one!

The Six Shooter division is very popular, and with Madison International Speedway still not being allowed to open as of this writing, some drivers who would normally race there make some trips to Tomah. Joshua Zacharias comes from the Madison area and runs pretty strong here. Sean Worman has raced nearly every week here, and is often in the top three in feature finishes. Teammates Dan Frye and Matt Moore have won the majority of the features here this year in a very competitive division that is fun to watch. Frye won the feature on this night.

Tyler Sauter looked pretty dominant in taking the sportsman feature very strongly. He used an outside pass to take the lead and checked out a bit.

The four-cylinder Hornet feature was a very interesting affair, with plenty of passing and dicing throughout. Chandler Turner took a very hard-fought victory home tonight. Rockford Speedway regular Steve Putman had a strong race going but got a little high off turn two and ran into and up onto the backstretch wall, nearly going over. He ran back down onto the track and everyone avoided his car, so it could have been much worse. Going over the wall would have surely meant flipping over, and he kept it on the wheels.

Hobby Stock feature winner was Brandon Gallagher, who pulled out from a tight five car pack earlier in the race to get the win

This track reminds me very much of the old Columbus 151 Speedway in so many ways. it is a very inexpensive, fun-filled place to watch some racing, with a very laid-back atmosphere. If you are looking for a fun night out on a budget this is a place to check out The races are run quickly and the show was finished by 9:42 PM.

We returned the following week once again, with the Midwest Dash series making their season debut. Local driver Steve Rozek took the win in a very tightly contested feature race. Mark Dewey made his first ever trip here, and started off kind of slowly, but both he and the car gained speed all night, and he caught back up to the lead pack to finish a strong second and might have won in a couple more laps.

Several visitors from Minnesota were present in the hobby stocks, but it was local driver Alex Rud getting the job done. Bill Schott took the sportsman feature win, while Taylor Dawson won the hornet feature. Taylor has much experience in varied forms of stock cars, and his experience showed tonight. The Sixers were super competitive, with many visitors present, and Dustin McCracken took the win.

On July 11 I returned to Rockford once again, with the season debut of the Sixers division. I came up with some thirty-three cars in the pits for this division, although a couple never made it out to race. The action was as you would expect, very thrilling! Lots of new drivers and some returning veterans make this a division not to miss. David Cavin took the win over Austin Schott, who came down from northwestern

Wisconsin. The "Beerman" Sean Worman took home third. He has been chomping at the bit to race at his home track here, and is also missing his Friday night stop at Madison International Speedway, which still has not been allowed to open. He has found plenty of tracks to travel to, including most Friday's at Tomah, as well as trips to the Dells and Slinger. Best appearing car in this division in my opinion is the sharp looking orange Monte Carlo of Justin Tyler. He won the semi or B-main tonight.

Douglas Nighswonger raced all last year in the Sixer division, and started at the back of the field the whole season. He learned quite a bit and now when he has a front or mid-pack starting spot he is taking it, and looking very racey. His Dad, long time Roadrunner competitor Curt, now has a sportsman car that he debuted with tonight. Overheating woes sidelined him early, but he got some laps in.

Garrett Braden hopes to have put some struggles behind him, as he won his first feature of the season in the Bandit division. "We have had nothing but trouble this year," Said Garrett. "We couldn't get the car to run for more than one good lap. We replaced part after part and even rented the track twice trying to figure it out. We finally got it." It was the WT sensor, which controls the variable valve timing on the engine. Glad to see they found the trouble. That is very frustrating stuff.

Another Bandit driver with troubles this year has been Mike Mahurin. On the opening night he got caught up in a pretty serious wreck."I worked on this car for two weeks, every night to get it fixed. I replaced the tie-rod ends on the left side and just about everything on the other side," Said Mike. This was all done during a stretch of extremely hot weather, which must not have been pleasurable to work in. This driver is very dedicated to the sport and does whatever it takes to get back on track.

Steven Erickson Jr. ran off to the sportsman feature win, looking very strong. With impending storms approaching, the Bandit figure-eight was quickly run off, with Nick Schneider taking the win. They worked very hard to get this show accomplished in a timely manner and beat the rain.

We also took in another show at the State Park Speedway on July 15th. The pure stock division continues to really impress me here. It is simply amazing how competitive this class is here, The numbers are not huge, but this group really races one another hard to the end from front to back. The action literally takes your breath away, and that is just from a fan! Jeff Spatz edged out Mitch Stankowski on this night to get the feature win.

One driver in this division who has made great strides is Brian Plisch. I think this is only his second year of racing, but he has been running real well here and other tracks that he races at. He has definitely stepped up his game by several notches.

The super late models had a couple of visitors tonight, as they likely are preparing for the upcoming Larry Detjens Memorial. Dan Fredrickson made the

*Going In Circles continued on page 13*



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# Quick Time!

Dan Plan photo



James “Nitro” Giossi made the World of Outlaws Late Models take notice when he set fast time at Gondik Law Speedway in Superior, WI. Giossi also had a top-10 qualifying effort during the WoO visit to Cedar Lake Speedway over the Independence Day weekend.



OCT 8-9-10-11, 2020



# B-Shep

Jacy Norgaard photo



Brandon Sheppard continues his domination of the World of Outlaws Late Model Series. At the end of July, Sheppard had picked up 10 wins for the season. Sheppard recently swept the state of Wisconsin with wins at Cedar Lake Speedway, Outgamie Speedway, Plymouth Dirt Track and Gondik Law Speedway in Superior.

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# TUNDRA at Jefferson

*Gabe Sommers battles Casey Johnson for the top spot during the annual visit by the TUNDRA Late Models to Jefferson Speedway. Sommers would go on to win the main event.*



Doug Hornickel photo

# The North Pole Nightmare

*Bill Balog, also referred to as The North Pole Nightmare, is off to a strong start in 2020. Balog sits atop the IRA Sprint point standings with numerous wins to his credit on his way to his title defense. Balog has also had several strong runs with the World of Outlaws this season.*



Dan Plan photo



*Going In Circles continued from page 8*

trip over to try it out, and finished third in the late model feature. Another driver making a showing was Eric White from Indiana.

There is a whole group of hungry young drivers that are coming from this area that you have already heard much about and will continue to do so. Justin Mondeik is one of them, and he took the feature win. Brock Heinrich worked the restart cone to his advantage and took second. Add in other upcoming young drivers Luke Fenhaus, Dillon Mackesy and Gabe Sommers and the future looks bright.

Greg Blount took his first feature win here of 2020 in the mini-mods, in his appropriately numbered "2020" car, and Tyler Custer took the win in the mini-stocks.

I had a chat with long time mini-mod racer John Lietz, intending to do a little write-up on him here. I found out that I cannot contain this story in one part of a column, so in one of the winter issues I will put it all together. There are just too many stories to contain in a few paragraphs! Between he and fellow racer Dale Louze, I have some real interesting stories to write about in future articles about their racing history.

The Midwest Dash series was on tap at the Rockford Speedway on July 18th, the night after their stop at Tomah.

Phil Malouf had the engine expire in his car at Tomah, so left quickly and took the car to his shop in order to change engines and make the Rockford show. They went right to work and got it swapped, putting in a junkyard engine which was even missing a few items that had to be put back together. He went out and set fast time at Rockford and finished the feature in fourth place. Always nice to see and chat with the Malouf's.

Ricky Wilson scored a bit of an upset in taking the feature win. He alluded to the fact that he always races at the Bahama Brackets here each year, and that helped with his knowledge of the track. He started his racing career a few years ago at some of the Chicago area tracks but said he doesn't really have a home track anymore, just races wherever. His Dad, Rick, also has raced at the Brackets nearly every year since its inception.



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*Phil Malouf had the engine expire in his car at Tomah, so left quickly and took the car to his shop in order to change engines and make the Rockford show.*



*Highside Photography*

Jon Reynolds Jr. took control and drove off to the late model feature win. It was nice to see Big 8 racer Hunter Drefahl show up to race with the late models.

Chad Smith avoided problems in the sportsman feature and took the feature win, over Cody Houseweart, who did the same.

Scott Koerner took the win in the midgets feature. Scott races a late

model and races both on dirt and asphalt.

Justin Wagner took the win in the Roadrunner main event. He is having an outstanding season thus far.

The new high school division got their first chance to race tonight. Six high schoolers took to the track to represent their schools. Janesville (Wi.) Parker high school racer Tyler Vincetich took the inaugural feature win. Rockford Harlem student Douglas Nighswonger was the heat winner. Both drivers were absolutely overjoyed with their wins. I think you will see both of these drivers doing a lot of racing in the future.



## Dangerous Dan



### Dan Margetta

Despite what seems to be limited opportunities to go racing this year, the month of July provided quite the smorgasbord of events in Wisconsin and I made sure to take advantage of it.

The biggest event for me was the prestigious SuperSeal Slinger Nationals presented by Miller Lite at the Slinger Speedway and the 41<sup>st</sup> edition of the summer classic drew a very strong field of 29 super late models. A field consisting of Bubba Pollard, Stephen Nasse, Corey Heim, Sammy Smith, and Carson Hoyer taking on Wisconsin standouts Ty Majeski, Casey Johnson, Dennis Prunty, Steve Apel, Rich Bickle, Alex Prunty, Brad Mueller, Luke Fenhaus, and Derek Kraus is completely stacked and they all didn't disappoint.

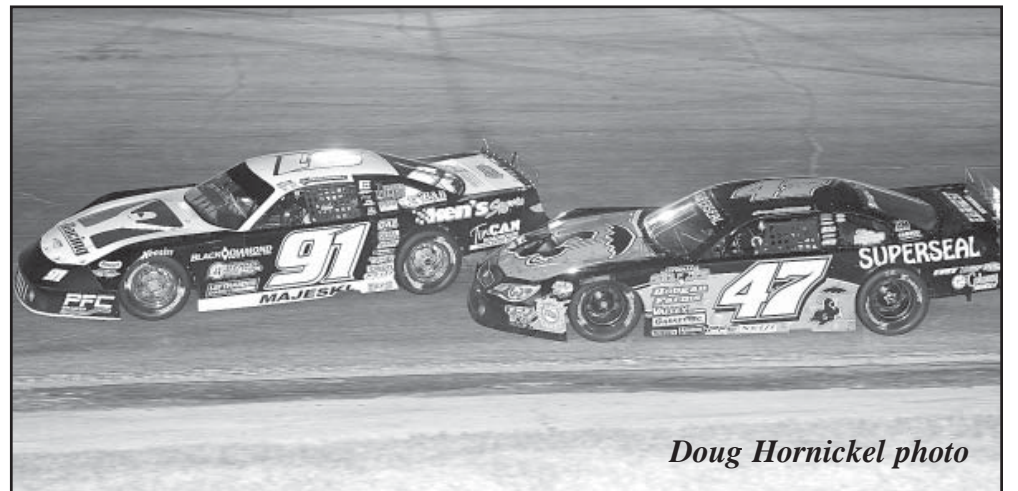
The anticipation and excitement on the originally scheduled Tuesday night was quickly replaced by chaos as a sudden monsoon sent everyone running for cover as tents were wrecked and the track was drenched. A shoulder-deep lake was formed in turn one and a waterfall actually flowed over the turn two wall, postponing the event to the next evening. Like racers do, everyone made the most of the extra night and bright and early the next morning, some special people stepped up to fix the damages to the facility so the Nationals could continue. Ryan Kuhl from Town and Country Lawn Service, John DeAngelis from DeAngelis Construction, and Jerry Mueller from AllPro Asphalt Paving along with Bob's Auto all pitched in to make repairs on the track. In the case of Jerry Mueller, not many people realize he was set to compete in the Nationals but a disputed on-track incident the previous Sunday in the Big 8 race resulted in him withdrawing despite already buying tires and yet in lieu of the disagreement with the track, he still showed up when needed to keep the race going. That's a true racer and he should be commended for his efforts. The race fans themselves also have to be commended as they all showed up the next night and even contributed a record \$12,500 to the lap leader bonus payouts.

Although delayed one night, the Nationals still provided plenty of excitement and Ty Majeski was the man to beat as he scored his second Nationals victory

over Casey Johnson and Luke Fenhaus. With the lap leader bonus payouts added to the winner's share of the purse, the 2020 Slinger Nationals was believed to be the richest asphalt Wisconsin super late model race in history and judging from the positive comments from the traveling drivers and everyone involved, next year's event should be even better.

Just a few days after the Slinger Nationals, I headed to Road America for a pair of IndyCar races as the weekend event featured a double-header for the sleek Indy machines. The Road America events also allowed fans to attend with less limited restrictions and with plenty of room to spread out, everyone did a fine job of safely enjoying the events. Someone had to take the lead on eventually holding a major sporting event with fans and I was proud of Road America to be able to pull it off and I was honored to experience it. Despite the nervousness of some outside observers and officials, the track staff and once again, the Midwest race fans proved they could responsibly attend an event and the weekend was a success with very little problems. The racing was pretty good too as Scott Dixon won the Saturday race and Felix Rosenqvist scored his first career IndyCar win on Sunday after taking the lead from McLaren's Pato O'Ward at the white flag.

In between the IndyCar events I trekked out to Outagamie County Speedway in Seymour and the Plymouth Dirt Track in Plymouth for World of Outlaws Late Model Series events. It was my first trip to Seymour and I was pretty impressed with the facility. A good sized field of 36 dirt late models showed up with the Dirt Kings Tour adding their stars to the World of Outlaws regulars. While the heat races weren't too exciting with little passing, the feature event proved to be much better as Jason Raun and



*Doug Hornickel photo*

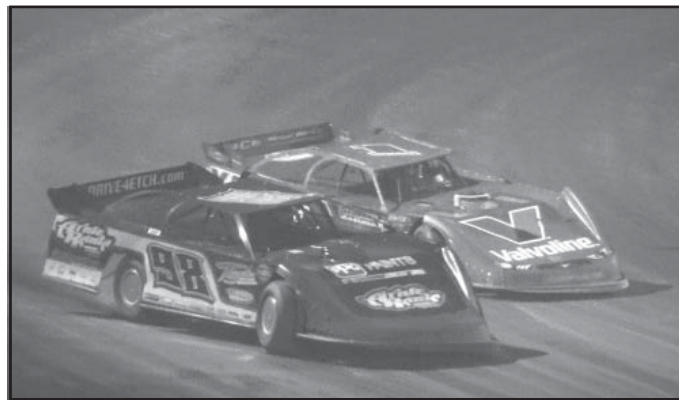
Brandon Sheppard dueled for the win before Sheppard eventually prevailed. The next evening at Plymouth found an impressive 39 late models in the pits even with the Summer Nationals taking place at the same time in Illinois. The strong car counts should go a long way in bringing in future World of Outlaws Late Model events and it was refreshing to see the local drivers support these two events. Once again Brandon Sheppard charged to the victory while Wisconsin

favorite Jimmy Mars kept him honest in second. The drive of the night came from local weekly racer Justin Ritchie who took it to the Outlaws and finished third. Even though he was knocked back a few spots in tech due to a fairly new "droop" rule, the strong run from a local racer should encourage other locals

to participate more in these special shows.

From the dirt it was back to the asphalt at the Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna for the second round White race from the Red, White, and Blue Series for the super late models. The second round traditionally has a longer feature race and this year's main event consisted of 96 laps in honor of Roger "The Bear" Regeth. The field took a scheduled half-way break at 48 laps but there probably wasn't enough adjustments to be made to catch Bobby Kendall who dominated the event en route to the victory. The Series points heading into the final event next month are up for grabs as Red Race winner Brent Strelka and Andy Monday both experienced problems and finished down in the running order.

The month began with the TUNDRA Super Late Model Series opener at the Dells Raceway Park where Dalton Zehr passed Mike Lichtfeld late to win and ended with the series' second round at the Jefferson Speedway. Jefferson has a unique racing groove especially off turn four where drivers can easily run three wide in a charge toward the checkered flag and the super late models always put on a



*Dangerous Dan continued on page 15*

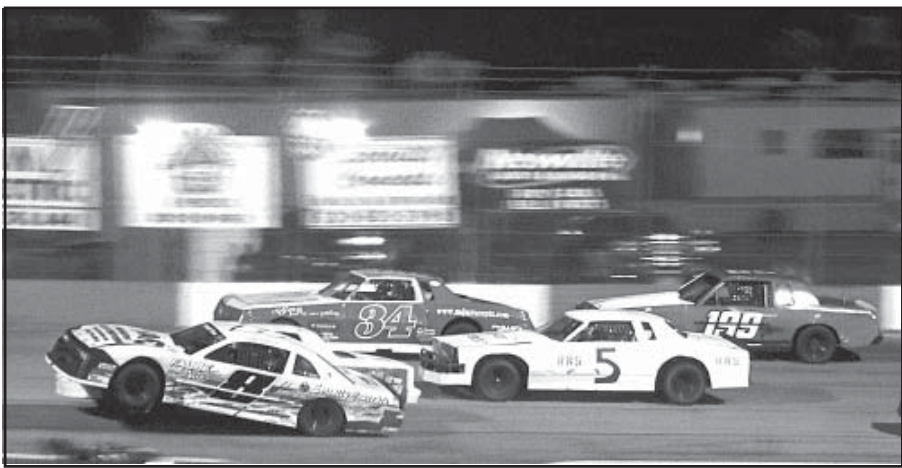


***Dangerous Dan continued from page 14***

show. Jordan DeVoy set a new track record in qualifying but Gabe Sommers turned back all challenges while leading from start to finish to win the 75-lap main event.

The most fun I've had at a race in a long time occurred during the special King of the Ol' Cornfield Sandox 25 contested between six hobby stock drivers and six sportsman drivers on the smaller Jefferson track. The event, dreamed up by track announcer Randy Kamenick, originally paid \$250 to win but the purse soon grew exponentially as sponsors, fans, and crews chipped in. In the end, around \$3,700 in cash and prizes were collected with some of the fun ones being a bottle of Captain Morgan to the second place finisher and a twelve pack of Coke to third place so they could party and \$250 put up by a guy from Illinois to the highest finishing car that sported derogatory comments towards the Green Bay Packers. With all the money on the line as well as the hype, the race was super intense as the big cars tried to navigate around the small track and the racing was physical. In the end, Brandon Angileri muscled Bud Riedner out of the way for the win and honestly with all that was at stake it was no surprise some feathers would be ruffled. Overall it was a fun event that really pumped a lot of excitement into the night and I hope it continues in the future.

August will provide may more opportunities to head out to the tracks as believe it or not, this season begins to head towards its stretch run. Kyle Busch and Bubba Pollard are set to race in the Dixieland 250 August 4<sup>th</sup> at Wisconsin International Raceway and the World of Outlaws Late Model Series return to the Beaver Dam Raceway also on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Road America will hold its IMSA Sports Car event on the first weekend of August and the NASCAR Xfinity Series heads there on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Slinger Speedway has the Carl Wegner Memorial on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and Dells Raceway Park holds some Alive for Five super late model races on August 1<sup>st</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>. I'll be sure to hit as many of them as I can and you should to as this crazy season continues.

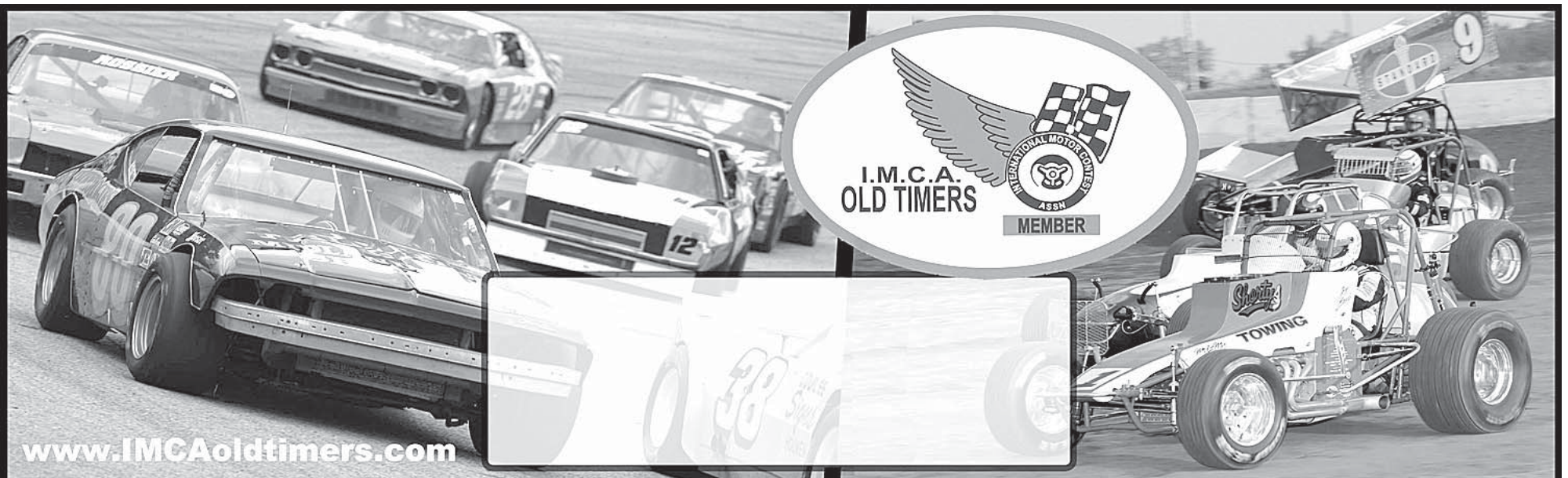


**Dave Noble**  
**February 1, 1934 ~ July 21, 2020**



*While Dave Noble gained most of his notoriety on the South Eastern Minnesota dirt tracks of Kasson, Lansing and others, he also gained many followers in the Twin Cities metro area. For many seasons, Dave would tow up to the cities to run weekly shows at Elko Speedway or at the now shuttered Raceway Park in Shakopee. Dave was also a guarantee to make an appearance at the Minnesota State Fair for many, many years. RIP Dave Noble.*

*Photos courtesy of long-time race fan John Kaufenburg.*





## Racing Nuggets



### PJ "Jacklyn" Nuttleman

There are many crown jewel races that drivers would love to etch their name into the record books as having claimed victory. We're pretty lucky to have a many of these prestigious asphalt races here in the Midwest. One of them is slated for Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna.

The Dixieland 250 has the proverbial "who's who" on the list of winners, with the legendary Dick Trickle scoring the inaugural win back in 1991. It's fitting that Wisconsin's most popular driver was the first to leave his mark on this event, and that certainly elevates the significance of the race as well.

The Dixieland is definitely one that many hardcore racers circle on their calendar to enter. It says a lot when the reigning NASCAR Cup Series Champion also plugs it into his schedule.

Yes, Kyle Busch will be making a return to the unique half-mile, D-shaped oval this year. By all accounts, this facility is a fun and challenging track where many racing greats have battled. It holds a special place in their hearts from back-in-the-day when they ran here. You can bet that many nationally-known retired racers, such as Mark Martin and (the

sometimes retired) Tony Stewart will be paying attention to who nabs the checkered flag at this one.

I imagine Matt Kenseth will perhaps have some interest in seeing what happens at the Dixieland 250 as well, and likely deep in his heart of hearts, he may be wishing he were poised to have an entry as well if it were possible. It's hard to say if Chip Ganassi, the team owner for his current Cup ride would even let him run this event. It's been well-documented how Ganassi didn't want his former driver, Kyle Larson to run any extracurricular racing activities.

This year's entry list is quite the buffet of talent, even beyond Busch, including seasoned veterans, like Rich Bickle, Johnny Sauter, who has won the event twice, and allegedly Dan Fredrickson.

I say "allegedly" because Fredrickson is often like the proverbial flatulence in the wind. He seemingly enjoys keeping an air of surprise to his racing. He's been listed as an entry for events sometimes in the past and ends up not showing. And then there are times when he shows up out of the blue and flexes his muscles.

Case in point: State Park Speedway on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Fredrickson just showed up for their regular race night without much fanfare, laid down the second fastest time in qualifying and went on to post a third place finish in the feature.

I personally hope he does choose to show up for the Dixieland, as he always raises the level of competition and I enjoy his swagger in the pits. For the record, I did try to call him to confirm his plans, but his voicemail was full. He did respond to a text inquiry. It wasn't a "yes," but it wasn't a "no," so we'll just have to wait and see if the Northfield, MN driver shows.

Casey Johnson has been on fire again this year and pretty much a threat to win wherever he shows up. Not only has he won the last two championships at WIR, he looked pretty stout at the Slinger Nationals, posting a second place finish. He'll be looking to become a two-time winner of the Dixieland.

Last year's winner and reigning Slinger Nationals Champ, Ty Majeski will be wedging the race into his NASCAR Truck Series schedule to defend the title. His Truck Series teammate, and reigning Redbud 400 winner, Carson Hocevar has also entered the race. Fellow Truck Series competitor, Derek Kraus, who is in the top 10 in the Truck point standings will also be making the return to Wisconsin for the event.

Former Midwest Tour Champions, Dalton Zehr, Andrew Morrissey, and Jonathan Eilen will all be coming with their best piece to challenge for a win too. Last year's Tour Rookie of

## Dixieland Delight

the Year, Gabe Sommers will be ready for battle, along with other series standouts who are regulars or part-timers: Paul Shafer, Austin Nason, Johnny DeAngelis, Skylar Holzhausen, Dennis Prunty, and Ryan Farrell.

Justin Mondiek has been racking up some substantial wins already this season. He nabbed his first Midwest Tour feature at State Park Speedway for series opener on July 25<sup>th</sup>—the Detjens Memorial. He hopes to keep his momentum rolling into the Dixieland and make it two series wins in a row.

Some of the favorite regulars who run at WIR will also be making a bid for the title, like current point leader, Brent Strelka, reigning Red, White, & Blue Champ, Maxwell Schultz, Bobby Kendall, Jesse Oudenhoven, Andy Monday, Trevor Vandermolen, and Pete Vandermolen.

Of course much of the Midwest is buzzing about Bubba Pollard coming to make his WIR debut. It will be fun to see how he adapts to the track and if he can pull off another win to add to his impressive accolades that he's already been racking up this year.

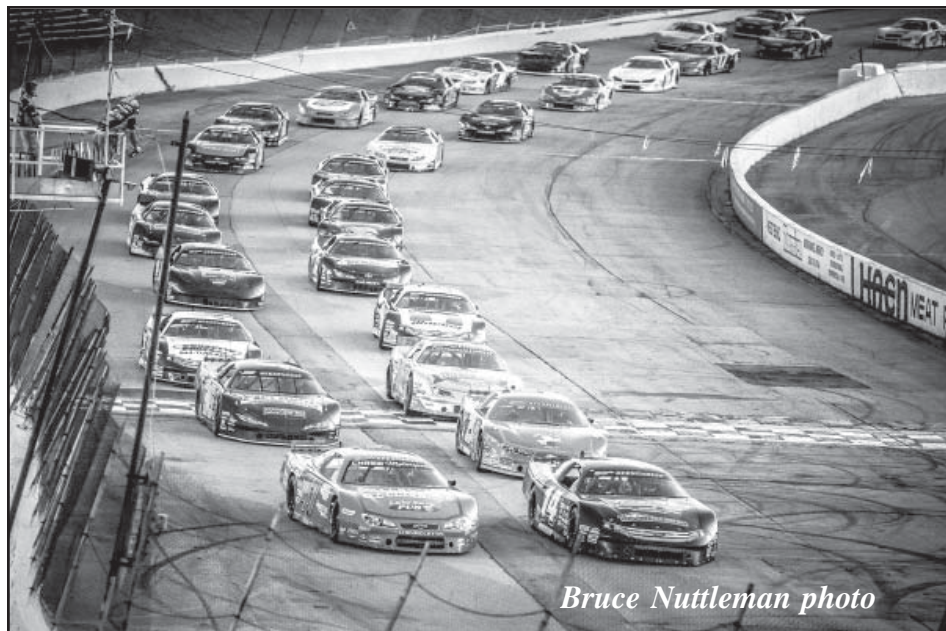
Sammy Smith will be making a bid for the checkers out of the KBM (Kyle Busch Motorsports) stables. And Cayden Lapcevic from Canada will be traveling to Kaukauna and racing in a car prepared by former ARTGO WIR winner, Bobby Blount.

I'm sure I've missed some competitors and there are almost always going to be last minute additions—but surely you can see that the competition will be T-H-I-C-K.

Gates open up at 4pm on Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>. Qualifying begins at 5pm and the first green flag will drop at 7pm. Advance tickets are just \$20 and are available online at [midwesttour.racing](http://midwesttour.racing). And as always, the event is kid-friendly. Kids 12 and under are FREE.

### Dixieland 250 Winners

1991 – Dick Trickle  
1992 – Steve Holzhausen  
1993 – Scott Hansen  
1994 – Joe Shear  
1995 – Bryan Reffner  
1996 – Joe Shear  
1997 – Steve Carlson  
1998 – Steve Carlson  
1999 – Scott Hansen  
2000 – Brian Hoppe  
2001 – Steve Carlson  
2004 – Steve Carlson  
2005 – Stephen Leicht  
2007 – Kyle Busch  
2008 – Steve Carlson  
2009 – Steve Carlson  
2010 – Johnny Sauter  
2014 – Johnny Sauter  
2015 – Nick Murgic  
2016 – Dennis Prunty  
2017 – Casey Johnson  
2018 – Chase Purdy  
2019 – Ty Majeski



Bruce Nuttleman photo



## New Dirt



### Jacy Norgaard

The month of July has been a busy one for me spent traveling from small town to small town, observing an inordinate amount of racetracks. The crazy middle summer month started off at Cedar Lake Speedway for the mega three-day World of Outlaws show. This was the first time outside of the World Finals in Charlotte, NC that both World of Outlaws touring series would be together at a race track. The event offered race fans the best of the Open Wheel world and the best of the Late Model world all together on one stage over one scorching hot weekend. Adding to the excitement of the event for me was the fact that I was also moving into a new place over the weekend coupled with me deciding this would be the weekend I also break in a new laptop for photo editing. Unfortunately, FedEx failed to deliver on time, and I had to make my way to Cedar Lake without the ability to edit photos. Technology is a savior though and I was able to edit photos on my iPhone thanks to Nikon's handy SnapBridge application and Lightroom mobile!

The Cedar Lake event was billed as the first major sports event since the Covid 19 pandemic hit. There were Covid screenings at every entry point surrounding the track, something I'm sure we will see going forward at sporting events or large crowd gatherings. Thursday night's event showcased a rather unique elimination type event following qualifying. They would caution the race every 5 laps and eliminate the last 4 drivers from competition. They did this until the field was whittled down from 20 to 8 competitors. They then competed in an 8-lap shootout for \$3,000.00. This made for some exciting last lap passing in both the Sprint Car and Late Model show-downs. The light schedule on Thursday night was actually quite refreshing as the heat of the day really wore on and it was nice to get off the track. I was able to edit photos on my iPhone and send them into World Of Outlaws, despite the questionable WIFI and cellular connection at Cedar Lake Speedway. Friday evening's races saw an incredible feature event for the Late Models as Georgia Rookie, Ashton Winger held off defending World of Outlaws champion, Brandon Sheppard for his first ever Outlaws victory. His excitement as he climbed out of this car and dropped the steering wheel like a microphone was icing on the cake for a wonderful evening. Brad Sweet swept the weekend in the World of Outlaws Sprint Cars and The Rocket Brandon Sheppard accomplished what he wasn't able to do Friday night and picked up the victory on Saturday Night. The caveat to Saturday night's racing was the live broadcast on CBS Sports Network. It's great to see dirt track racing get a spotlight on live television.

My Outlaw adventures continued the next weekend in the Green Bay area as I made my way to Outagamie Speedway in Seymour, WI. The track was your run of the mill fairground facility with a covered grandstand. Despite lackluster presales on event tickets, the place was filled with fans from one end of the grandstand to the next. Brandon Sheppard made it back to back victories taking home top honors at the track.

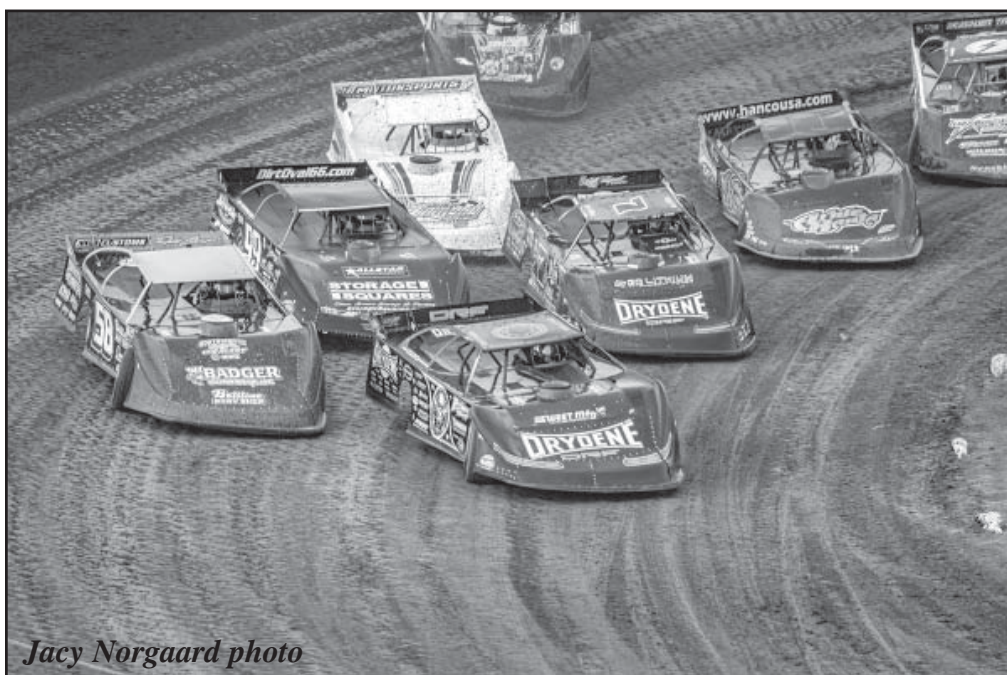


*Jacy Norgaard photo*

The next night we made the 75-mile drive south to Plymouth Dirt Track in Plymouth, WI. I had to laugh at the barn we parked by on the fairgrounds as it had a sign that read, "Sheep/Goat" at the top. Perhaps it was meant for Brandon Sheppard "Sheppy" and Scott Bloomquist "The Goat"? The facility was one of my favorites I have seen this year with homes in the background and people out on their roofs watching the races. A much welcome sight to other facilities that struggle with the neighbors loving living by a race-track. The cars staged between the front stretch and the grandstand and this was a great place to capture photos and listen as the fans cheered before and after the races. Brandon Sheppard repeated as winner and made it three straight in the state of Wisconsin with his victory. The Grand Nationals were my highlight of the evening. The class is almost a hybrid between an asphalt Late Model and a dirt Super Stock.

After being home at my new place for less than 24 hours I made the trip north to Gondik Law Speedway in Superior for a rare Tuesday night race. The event itself was questionable up until race day as the track needed to sell a certain number of tickets in order to make the event happen. Thanks to some great sponsors and resilient race fans they were able to get the show in. Brandon Sheppard dominated the night leading all 50 laps and holding off Lucas Oil Dirt racer Jimmy Owens in the process. We left the state of Wisconsin having witnessed Brandon Sheppard and the Rocket racing team on a hot streak of 4 straight.

I was once again home for a short period of time before heading north west to North Dakota for the final leg of the Northern swing with the Outlaws. Grand Forks and River Cities Speedway was slated for Friday night and the finale at Red River Valley Speedway in West Fargo on Saturday. Mother nature had alternative plans and our Friday race got pushed to Sunday evening. I spent Friday night out on the town in Fargo with friends and geared up for the festivities at West Fargo on Saturday. Red River Valley had



*Jacy Norgaard photo*

*New Dirt continued on page 18*



# The Midwest Racing Connection Directory Page

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## New Dirt continued from page 17

good lighting and good races in a feature that saw Darrell Lanigan absolutely dominate the field and put an end to Brandon Sheppard's streak. I ventured to River Cities Speedway in Grand Forks on Sunday evening and was quickly amazed at the sight lines and shooting opportunities. I always appreciate tracks with multiple vantage points for shooting and staff that allow you to do what you need to do without interruption. The famous bull ring certainly lived up to its reputation with exciting racing. The night seemed to be going along

smoothly until the Sprint Car feature. A race that drug on for what felt like an eternity with endless cautions and red flags. But as my photography pal and adventure cohort Tim Hunt says, "Sprint cars are wild cards". That was certainly the case this night. Their feature finally ended, and the Outlaws fired off the line. Ricky Weiss jumped to an early lead, but Sheppard caught him in lapped traffic around halfway through and sailed away to his tenth victory on the year and his fifth out of six races.

I made the decision to make the trek back to the cities from Grand Forks after the races Sunday night. I had been on the road for what felt like forever and I

wanted to sleep in my own bed for once. Driving down Interstate 94 in the early Monday morning hours, I felt like Brandon Sheppard as I worked my way through lapped traffic. I thought to myself how great it would be to follow a series full time and then I thought about how much work it was just for me to shoot photos of these races, I couldn't imagine having to race like that. I have a lot of respect for the touring folks who take their dirt circus from one town to the next. It's a different way of life and for a few July days, I was able to be an Outlaw with them.



# Midwest Tour at State Park Speedway

*The ARCA Midwest Tour kicked off their 2020 season with the Larry Detjens Memorial at State Park Speedway in Wausau, WI. Justin Mondeik continued his dominance at State Park this season picking up the win in the long-running memorial at the track.*



*Nuttleman family photos*

# Grand Nationals at Outgamie

*When the World of Outlaws Late Models made their visit to Outgamie Speedway in Seymour, WI the Grand Nationals were added to the card. Jacy Norgaard captured this fantastic shot of the Grand National drivers entertaining the crowd.*



*Jacy Norgaard photo*



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