

# THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

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THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

February 2021

## Inside...



WoO Rookie



20,000 Steps to Victory



**Four-legged trophy girls  
and Florida racing**



**Speedtalk Driver of the Year**



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## Publisher's Note Racing According to Plan



**Dan Plan**

Thanks to Matt Bohl, I had the opportunity to attend the Sunshine Nationals at Volusia Speedway in Florida. In the past, my in-person motorsports events in January were limited SnoCross, Monster Trucks or years ago ice racing. This was the first time in my life, I've been able to attend short track racing live and in

## Sunshine State

person in the month of January. I think I've finally got every month of the year covered now thanks to Matt.

As mentioned earlier, my previous in-person motorsports events in January weren't at a short track. I've probably stated this several times in previous columns, but I enjoy all forms of motorsports. If it's got a motor, I'll probably watch it. While staying in Daytona, we found out there was a daily Jet Ski event called the Daytona Free Ride. They had motors, so I was in. These guys were phenomenal to watch, and strikingly similar to short track people. Some of the flips and jumps they performed were out of this world. One guy didn't need any waves to show off his talents. It was a great way to spend part of the afternoon.

Now back to the real reason we went to Florida, dirt track racing. Last year Volusia added the Sunshine Nationals to their schedule. The event filled a gap in the month of January, and gave us Northern race fans another reason to escape the cold and visit Florida. The first event featured the 602 & 604 crate motored cars. This year, they added the World of Outlaws Late Models to the card. Throw in the local

*Publisher's Note continued on page 4*



*Dan Plan photo*

*The Midwest*

**RACING**

*Connection*

February 2021

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# R & R

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*Publishers note from page 3*

Florida Late Models and you end up with 4 divisions of Dirt Late Models and about 170 cars in the pits. Definitely enough racing takes place over this weekend.

On the trip, I also had the chance to meet former USMTS Modified Champion Ryan Gustin. Ryan will be running for the World of Outlaws Late Model Rookie of the Year title. I also had the opportunity to watch one of our local drivers, Brent Larson, pick up a

checkered flag over the weekend. Interviews with both Ryan and Brent can be found later on in this issue.

To close out this column, any racing trip stands the chance of getting rained out. It's just the way it is. I used to get frustrated over rainouts, but realized there's always another day. This year's first rainout found us stopping at the Wing House for a bite to eat on the way back to the hotel. Low and behold Rich Bickle comes walking. Rich was also in town testing for the upcoming ARCA race at Daytona International

Speedway. Even though he had a group of people waiting for him inside, he did stop by our table to chat for a few minutes. That's how racers keep their fan base, and Rich has done well with this.

Now it's time to regroup for a few weeks and get ready to head back down to the Sunshine State for Speedweeks. There's a pretty good list of drivers from our area going this year, and hopefully in the March issue we'll have some stories on their strong runs at Speedweeks.



*Dan Plan photo*



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## Talkin' Racin' with Jason



### Jason D. Searcy

Tim Brockhouse from Shakopee (MN) has been named the 2020 Minnesota asphalt driver of the year by Speed Talk on 1360 radio.

Brockhouse has been racing the motorcycle engine powered Legends cars since 2002 and has accumulated an impressive 213 wins in his career, 14 of those wins occurred in 2020 even through the Covid-19 pandemic which cancelled numerous events. Brockhouse won races at Hawkeye Downs (IA), Dells Raceway Park (WI), Jefferson Speedway (WI), Citrus County Speedway (FL), and his hometown track Elko Speedway (MN).

2020 was a big year for Brockhouse because he had 8 wins and won his first track Championship in the Great North Legends division at Elko Speedway finishing just ahead of rival veteran drivers Baiden Heskett and Jon Lemke. Brockhouse usually has not raced full time at any one track, his only previous track Championships were both in 2004 at the I-94 Raceway sister tracks in Sauk Centre and Fergus Falls (MN), shortly thereafter he began operating the Great North Legends dealership which took him to a variety of tracks in the North.

Brockhouse also excelled in the INEX Legends National standings as he and Scotty Scott from Colorado both scored the maximum points possible and shared the National points Championship in the Masters (ages 40+) Asphalt division. Austin Jahr, another Minnesota driver, was the top point scorer in the Nation in the Asphalt Semi-pro division.

The Brockhouse family had a great season all around, Tim's wife Amanda Brockhouse won the Great North Legends Elko Speedway rookie of the year title in 2020 and their 10-year-old son Ayrton Brockhouse won seven races on the way to his first Championship in the Bandolero division at Elko Speedway. This is the first time in the 55-year history of Elko Speedway that a father and son have both won Championships the same year. Tim's son Jaycen Brockhouse also has the family racing talent, he won the Legends title at Elko Speedway in 2009.



*Martin DeFries photo*

When asked about the most memorable moment of the year Brockhouse said when he, his sons Ayden and Ayrton and his wife Amanda drove their cars around the track at Elko Speedway during opening ceremonies displaying the American flag, "it brought a tear to my eyes and was a huge honor," said Brockhouse.

This is the second time Tim Brockhouse has won this award, he also was recognized as the MN Asphalt driver of the year in 2016. The Great North Legends shop and Brock's Flooring just moved and are now located at 2401 Hwy 13 West in Burnsville MN.

Winners of the MN Asphalt Driver of the year:

2020 - Tim Brockhouse  
2019 - Jacob Goede  
2018 - Baiden Heskett  
2017 - Conrad Jorgenson  
2016 - Tim Brockhouse  
2015 - Jacob Goede  
2014 - Jacob Goede  
2013 - Ricky Martin  
2012 - Jonathan Eilen  
2011 - Chad Walen  
2010 - Brent Kane  
2009 - Adam Royle  
2004 - Dan Fredrickson



*Dan Plan photo*



*GNL photo*



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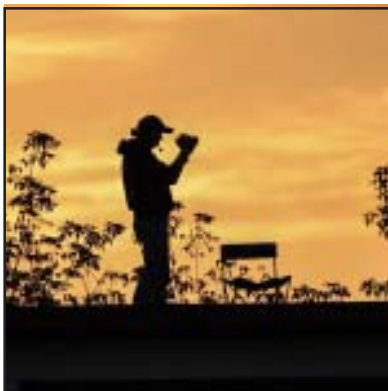
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## Dangerous Dan



**Dan Margetta**

The new racing season is upon us and unlike previous off-seasons, this winter break has left us with plenty to talk about. While the dirt racers have already kicked off their seasons with special events in January in Arizona and Florida, everything really kicks into high gear with SpeedWeeks in Florida. On the national level, the NASCAR schedule has already been modified to move the second race from California to the Daytona road course and most of the early events are being contested in front of limited fans. I know it's frustrating (I've already been shut out of the Daytona 500 and Phoenix race and Vegas is still a big unknown which has created havoc with my travel plans) but limited fans is better than no fans and is a step in the right direction. On the competition side, the Daytona 500 has a large field of cars attempting to make the race which should make qualifying interesting and bring back some drama to the qualifying races. There are already eight open cars entered for the four starting spots up for grabs and as many as ten could show up once they get underway. Those open cars have some pretty good drivers in some good rides too which should make the qualifying races pretty wild. So far the known open cars include Austin Cindric in a Penske car #33, Kaz Grala in the Kaulig Motorsports #16, David Ragan in the Front Row Motorsports #36, Ryan Preece in the JTG Daugherty #37 that apparently lost its charter from last year to Spire Motorsports through some crazy conditions of the original sale, Noah Gragson in the #62 that Brendon Gaughn drove the last few years, Ty Dillon in the Gaunt Brothers Racing #96, and Chad Finchum and Timmy Hill in the #49 and #66 cars respectively. There also could be an entry from the New York Racing team and Tommy Baldwin could enter a car rumored to be driven by a retired Cup driver, which if true, would most likely be announced after this column was written. As far as the cars locked in, there are some surprises there as well with 2010 winner Jamie McMurray returning to run the Spire Motorsports #77 car and 1990 surprise winner Derrike Cope driving the

#15 car (as a side note, I still vividly remember going to class the morning after the 1990 race and having a classmate turn around and ask just two words...Derrike who?). Drivers with new teams like Kyle Larson in the Hendrick Motorsports #5, Bubba Wallace in the new 23XI Racing #23, Chase Briscoe in the Stewart-Haas Racing the Joe Gibbs Racing #20, Ross Chastain in the Ganassi Racing #42, Erik Jones in the Richard Petty Motorsports #43, and Daniel Suarez in the Trackhouse Racing #99 should be fun to watch too. All that along with the usual suspects like defending series champion Chase Elliott, Brad Keselowski, Martin Truex Jr. and Kyle Busch who are seeking their first '500' win and past winners Denny Hamlin, Joey Logano, and Kurt Busch should provide for an exciting "Great American Race."

The short tracks will be busy too during SpeedWeeks with plenty of action on both the asphalt at New Smyrna Speedway and the dirt at Volusia Speedway Park. The sprint cars and modifieds are up first at Volusia and the late models follow later in the week. All the heavy hitters in the dirt world should be there and the events can be viewed online via DirtVision. The World Series of Asphalt Stock Car Racing at New Smyrna Speedway also has strong entry lists for the asphalt crowd with over 40 tour modifieds entered and 30 plus super late models along with pro late models and other support divisions. Some of the super late model drivers from our neck of the woods heading down to Florida include Nick Panitzke, Dan Fredrickson, Justin Mondeik, Jacob Goede, and R.J. Braun while Jeremy Miller and Chad Butz are entered in the pro late model division. The New Smyrna Speedway action can be viewed online on TrackPass on NBC Gold.

The biggest off-season news up in the Midwest had to be the Slinger Speedway landing on the schedule for the new Superstar Racing Experience (SRX) series to be aired live on CBS this summer. Slinger's July 10<sup>th</sup> date will cap off one of the biggest racing weeks Wisconsin has ever seen. From June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 10<sup>th</sup>, fans can see the SummerNationals dirt late models at Beaver Dam Raceway, the IRA Sprint Cars in a big money show at the Plymouth Dirt Track, the NASCAR Cup and Xfinity Series at Road America, the Slinger Nationals, the Red, White, and Blue State Championships second round at Wisconsin International Raceway, and the SRX race at Slinger. The SRX Series bringing Tony Stewart, Helio Castroneves, Paul Tracy, Tony Kanaan, Willie T. Ribbs, Mark Webber, Ernie Francis Jr., Bill Elliott, and



Bobby Labonte to race on Slinger's high-banks on live national television against a few other drivers to be named later, is a huge opportunity to showcase what we are all about in the Midwest short track racing scene. I'm really proud a large national television audience will get to see how special Slinger is and how great the racing is there especially with such high-caliber drivers. We also can't forget the impact the NASCAR Cup weekend at Road America could have on the Slinger Nationals as the trend early this season is for some of the Cup guys to compete in events outside of NASCAR. Chase Elliott has already raced in the Snowball Derby and the Chili Bowl and Denny Hamlin has stated he plans to do some super late model racing this season. The Slinger Nationals this year is already shaping up to have a strong field and if a few NASCAR stars decide to show up it would only add to the prestige of the event. There is a lot of work still to be done for any of that to even come close to happening but it is encouraging to see all the positive talk out there this early in the year.

I don't know about you, but I'm ready to get this 2021 season off and running. I would like to be able to get to some events before the season around here kicks off in mid to late April but like everything now a days, everything is fluid and a work in progress. In the meantime, I'll follow along and watch online and look forward to continuing to write for the Midwest Racing Connection and seeing everyone at the track real soon.





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## New Dirt



### Jacy Norgaard

To say 2020 was very unusual would be an understatement. The year brought constant first-time experiences to the masses, myself included. All hope for a more stable 2021 went out the window in the Arizona desert. Breaking from my traditional season start in April, I ventured to Arizona Speedway for the Wild West Shootout. A round trip ticket on Delta was \$82.00, how could I not go?

The desert race cation destination has been an annual tradition for many Midwesterners for several years now. The 3/8-mile track located just outside San Tan Valley, Arizona plays host to numerous nights of racing. We flew in on Friday night and attended just the Saturday night races. I wanted to get a night of shooting under my belt in preparation for the season. It always takes a couple nights back behind the camera to be in good form for the year.

Prior to the races, my girlfriend Mikalya and I did some sightseeing around the area and took in the views. I can see the attraction of spending a week and a half there for the races and the sights. There is plenty to see and amazing views all around. Speaking of amazing views, Arizona Speedway is surrounded by gorgeous mountain sightlines. As the sun sets on the



*Jacy Norgaard photo*

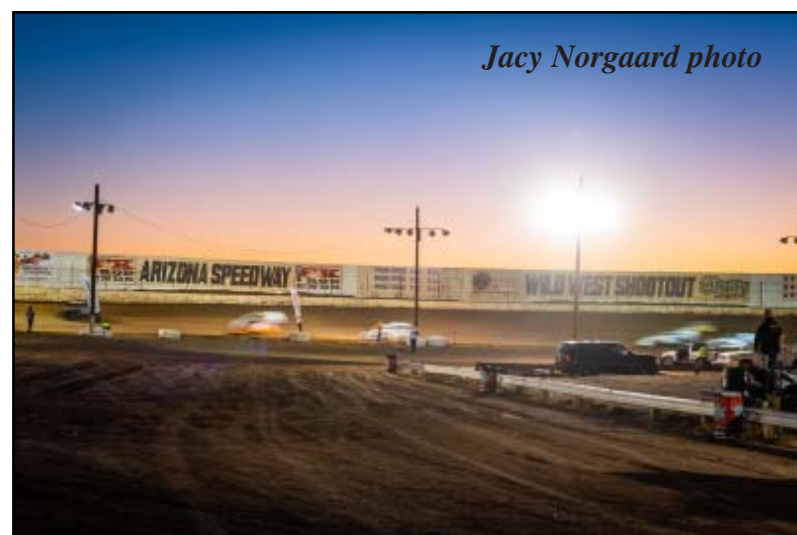
evening, the mountains mixed with the colored sunset make for a vivid moment that far exceeds any on the track. But then the sun fades and the Arizona track blends into the night like so many others. Outside of the sightlines the sheer size of Arizona Speedway grounds is impressive. I spent a considerable amount of time walking the massive complex. The track in many ways reminded me of Dakota State Fair Speedway in South Dakota, a fact that Mikayla also observed. The only downside in my eyes was the lack of great outside shooting locations. But perhaps a few more trips to the track will yield prime shooting locations.

A pair of WISSOTA racers took home victories on the opening night with Dustin Strand and Jory Berg capturing the Modified and X- Mod features. Jonathan Davenport wheeled his Long-

horn chassis to victory lane and was met there by a fitting mascot. Unique to Arizona Speedway and the Wild West Shootout is their rather large and tasty trophy girls. Weighing in at nearly the same amount as a Dirt Late Model they are ferocious bulls. I figured this way a great warm up for my season that would consist of a trip to the DIRTcar Nationals in Florida, where the winners get to hold a live gator. The bulls only added to the celebratory spirit of victory lane. Dustin, Jory, and Jonathan were equally as excited to have won. Sometimes it can be hard to have the same spirit exhibited by each

winner in victory lane on a given night.

Saturday's races ended just after 11:00 P.M. and the flight we booked had a red-eye trip home to



*Jacy Norgaard photo*



*Jacy Norgaard photo*

Minneapolis on Sunday night. We made the decision Sunday afternoon to skip Sunday's races for fear we could miss our plane home. It was a decision we would come to regret as airport security took less than 15 minutes and the races ended an hour earlier Sunday night. Sometimes you take those chances and learn for the next time.

We landed at 5:00 AM on Monday and I had two days to refresh and get ready for the World of Out-laws Late Models season opener at Volusia Speedway Park. I flew down to Orlando, Florida on Wednesday evening and landed around 11:30 PM. It was just over an hour drive to my Airbnb from the airport, time in which I quickly surmised that nearly every state looks the same from the interstate in the middle of the night.

*New Dirt continued on page 10*





Jacy Norgaard photo

*New Dirt continued from page 9*

I was covering my own lodging this weekend and opted to go with an Airbnb over hotels. I normally have no problem with hotels, but I could not find a single hotel at a decent rate that wasn't plagued by cockroach reviews. I went with the Airbnb option which I highly recommend if you are attending any event or gathering near a moderately sized town.

I was looking forward to Volusia and getting the season underway with the Late Model Tour. I had heard all kinds of rumors about the difficulty of shooting at Volusia due to the infield fence. There is a grass berm area in the corners, but no one is allowed out on it. Therefore, you are left with the option of shooting through the fence or over it. I am fortunate enough to have good friends in the industry! Fellow Midwesterner, Nick Zeb, who works with Drydene, purchased a small step ladder for me to use in my adventures. Combined with my 6' 2" height this ladder

came in clutch for the weekend. Much to my surprise I was greeted by several friendly faces at Volusia Speedway in the pits. Dan Plan, editor of *The Midwest Racing Connection* happened to be down with Bruce Nuttleman, Mark Meeks, and Matt Bohl. It is always refreshing to see people you know and catch up. I spent most of Thursday's races scouting the track for good shooting spots and

making mental notes of angles to try. The first 7 nights of the Late Model Tour would be conducted at Volusia, so I thought it important to have the place figured out.

Thursday night's races turned out to be rather long with all divisions of Late Models hot lapping and qualifying. This led to opening ceremonies taking place exactly 2 hours from their originally scheduled time.

The story of the night for the Outlaws was Cade Dillard. After Kyle Bronson ran over the cushion in Turn 4, Dillard inherited the lead and started to check out. The Louisiana native and former USMTS star looked poised to start the season off on the right foot. Fate had other plans as a late race caution brought action to a standstill. On the restart, Darrell Lanigan attempted a slide job in turn 2 and didn't quite have enough room to clear Dillard and damaged both of their cars. This proved fatal to the aerodynamics of Dillard's car as Bronson tried a similar move on Dillard and retook the lead with a handful of laps left.

Dillard was able to hang onto second but was left heartbroken, nonetheless. His demeanor in victory lane is what sets Cade aside from so many others. He wasn't angry or provoked by what had occurred, rather he was human. The disappointment showed in his face and he struggled at times to get out words as he described the moment. Despite

the setback, I know Dillard will have a tremendous season on tour this year.

With the first trip of the year to the **World of Outlaws Morton Buildings Late Model Series** victory lane going to Kyle Bronson, it was time to focus on Friday's show. When I think of racing in January, I never associate the words "rain out" with the two. That seems almost unheard of for a January race, but the Minnesotan in me would think that. They were able to get hot laps started before the Florida skies opened and put a check mark on Night two of the season. I waited out the rain in the makeshift Media Center inside a tech shed in the infield. Nick and I streamed the Chili Bowl as we waited for the rain to quit so we could walk off the track. The advances of technology are certainly something. I'll be 28 in April which isn't much for world experience, but even I can recall a time when to watch another race at a racetrack, you needed a television and a satellite in the infield. I can recall several times at Cedar Lake Speedway when we would watch the Saturday Night Cup Series races from there. Stan Meissner, the former dirt write for this paper can probably recall a few of those occasions. The rainout at Volusia served as a perfect opportunity for me to checkout the beach and get dinner with some of the DIRTvision crew.

The nice thing about working at racetracks in other areas of the country is checking out some of the local scenery and attractions. When I'm by myself though it can be hard to get motivated to go and do anything before the races. Mikayala is just the opposite and would jam pack our days with numerous activities. Perhaps 2021 will be the year I do more on my solo trips!

Since mother nature ruined Friday's races, I had even more work to do on Saturday. There were dozens of shots I needed to get for DIRTcar and the Outlaws. I also wanted to continue to find new shooting angles and vantage points for my return in February for the DIRTcar Nationals. The pressure of having to capture so many shots while also experimenting with different shots can lead to a long night of editing. I believe I took over 1,000 photos and deleted that down to 700 before the night was over. I will delete obvious junk shots right away. I try not to exceed 150-200 shots on any given night, but when you are working for a client you want to provide them with as much content as possible.

Track and series officials seemed to have learned from the long night of racing on Thursday not to hot lap and qualify each division. This made the racing program a little more manageable and we started and ended at a great time.

The luck of the Kyle's continued on Saturday night as The Highside Tickler, Kyle Strickler was victorious in the WoO Late Model feature. His victory lane excitement was worth the price of admission for every fan in the stand. After the conclusion of the Outlaws feature, I also took photos of the Pro Dirt Late Model feature for DIRTcar. I made my way back to the makeshift media center and began working

*New Dirt continued on page 11*



Jacy Norgaard photo



*New Dirt continued from page 10*

on photos. I always appreciate when tracks have an area where I can break out the laptop and edit photos. I normally will utilize my phone to work on photos that are needed for media outlets and the series. I assure you it is way better to have an actual screen to work with on a Macbook. There were two additional Late Model features after the Pro Dirt Late Model feature, so I had time to edit. As I was editing, they begin the tech process for Pro Late Model winner, Michael Page. They had to completely tear apart the engine in his car. I edited all the photos I needed for Outlaws and Dirt on Dirt for their nightly coverage and packed my gear up. The two other Late Model races completed and teched and they still were not done with Page's inspection. I left Volusia and got a Waffle House waffle to go on my way back to my Airbnb. I received the notification shortly thereafter that Page was disqualified for a valve spring instillation height infraction. The win was awarded to Kyle Bronon who walked away with quite a bit of cash on the weekend. I was amazed at the length of the tech inspection, but for \$10,000 I can understand the detailed process.

My flight home was at 9AM on Sunday morning and I made it back to my Airbnb around 2AM. I made the decision to just stay up and finish packing. Once I did that, I edited some photos until it was time to go to the airport. If the first two weekends of the season have taught me anything, it would be to book better flights.

The next races on my schedule are the World of Outlaws Morton Buildings Late Model Series and Super DIRTcar Modified series during the DIRTcar Nationals at Volusia Speedway in February. I'm

looking forward to returning to Volusia and hopefully this time seeing a gator.

*Jacy Norgaard photo*



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## Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



### Dale P. Danielski

I threatened to do it before, and now the time has finally come to calculate how many hours, how many days, maybe how many years, this race chaser has spent at a racetrack!

I knew it would be pretty scary, and as we go here, it might even show I've been at the track more than I've slept. Or, it may show I've spent more time there than the time I was eating! Or, or, or...

Looking at when I actually began attending races, it goes back to the early 1960s. Born in 1957, I obviously don't have recollection of that time period, but I do know my Mother, who would accompany my race fan Dad to races, was holding me at some events, including at the Griffith Park Speedway of Wisconsin Rapids, WI. Griffith opened in 1960, so I was probably there as a crying, whining, 3-year-old. My Mother claims the sound of the cars freaked me out, but it must have been temporary as obviously, all these years later, I've learned to like it!

If you take the 2,251 race events I have at-

tended, divide that by the 62 years of attendance, you get an average of 36.31/year. That average would be substantially higher, if not for 1958-1968, and 2011-2020 being quite lean. Of course, looking at 1958-1968 I was only 1-11 years old, so for the most part it, was difficult to get to the shows. As for 2011-2020, now at 63 years of age, the spectrum tilts, it's tougher to get to the shows because of old age and laziness.!

Now, if we take 2251 events with an average of say, 4 hours at each event, we are at 9004 hours. Divide that by the 24 hours that are in a day and you have 375 days spent at a racetrack. Think about that; Sitting on wood splintered planks for over a year and liking it! Certainly, glad it wasn't a year or so, all at once, as even with experiencing immense pleasure, one needs a break at least now and then.

So now, if we take 2251 days with at least a portion of it spent at the racetrack, we are looking at 6.2 dedicated to racing years. These numbers do not include going to and from events, or working on cars prior to racing, working for racing series', sanctioning groups, pr for tracks, or just plain reading, watching on TV, or thinking about the sport. For sure this would add on at least another several years to the totals.

But really, what else would I have done with my time?

Lots of things!

In reality, it was time well spent. If you take into effect the enjoyment factor, I can't think of anything else that compares. There were many highlights through the 62 years, a couple that stand out, were Tom Reffner, my child hood hero, who I met through my Dad working with him, winning 67 feature races in 1975, and my getting a chance to race a Late Model stock car, a goal I had from my earliest days of viewing the sport in 1977. Running my own racing events/series are in there too, so really, more fun then you could ever ask for!

They say racing gets in your blood. It's an addiction. But there definitely are much worse addictions out there, than the racing bug. Thinking about all this, it hasn't been a bad way to go!

Here and there...2021 is here, where should we start adding to the race attendance total...Looks like we have seen races in 28 States and Canada, at 274

different venues. High water mark was 91, in 1985, (I was shooting for 100, but the wettest August ever put the kibosh on that) with the least being 18 this past year. No wonder I am whipped and needed to retire...1st race car I touched, while in my Mothers arms, which got me wailing, was a John McNamara racer, B's Coupe...

Looking back in time, on Saturday night, July 7th, 1962, at Black River Falls Speedway, Black River Falls, WI., it was Marlin Walbeck winning the feature race, over Dave Froggatt, Dean Spohn, and Everett Fox. Saturday and Sunday, April 23rd, 24th, 1966, at Griffith Park Speedway, Wis. Rapids, WI., it was Dick Trickle and Lyle Nabbefeldt winning the feature races over the two days. In the Saturday feature, Trickle was followed by Rich Somers, Marv Marzofka, Dave Marcis and Lyle Nabbefeldt. The Sunday main had Nabbefeldt first, followed by Jim Back, Ron Beyer, Tom Reffner and Trickle. On Sunday night, August 20th, 1967, at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., it was Dave Field winning the feature race followed by Dick Trickle and Marv Marzofka. On Sunday, May 25th, 1975, it was Tom Reffner winning both 50 lap features at Golden Sands Speedway. In the first, Reffner was followed by Larry Detjens, Neil Callahan, Jim Back and Jim Bohmsach. The 2nd 50 found Detjens, Marv Marzofka, Callahan and Back trailing. In 1986, it was Kevin Cywinski winning the CWRA season Championship. In 1999, it was Gary Back winning the CWRA season Championship. On September 8th, 2006, it was Steve Carlson winning the 100-lap feature at Madison International Speedway, Oregon, WI. On September 26th, 2015, at Dells Raceway Park, Wis. Dells, WI., it was Mark Eswein winning the Jim Back Memorial race. Eswein was followed by Dennis Prunty, Tim Schendel, Alex Prunty and Dan Lensing. On Sunday, October 11th, 2020, it was Colin Reffner winning the 25-lap, CWRA Feature at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI., as part of the Annual Oktoberfest weekend of racing.

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





## Dale's pictures from the past

*Dale's pics from the past 62 years. First track I remember getting to, Griffith Park Speedway, 1960s, #6 Dave Barnsdale, Stevens Point, WI., racer ran there. Early Dirt and Griffith hotshoe, #74 Jere O'Day. #99 early, early, early Dick Trickle. #37 John McNamara B's Coupe. #88 Tom Reffner AMC Javelin record year. It was tough getting Golden Sands Speedway re-opened, but 1989 brought the first full year of racing back to the track and who did we get to show up? None other than Dick Trickle #99 for the paltry sum of \$3,000!*



*Dale's pictures from the past continued on page 14*



# Dale's pictures from the past

#31 Bobby Turzinski, perennial 1990s winner. #7 Don “Thunder” Turner representing racing from the late 1960s to the present.



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## Racing Nuggets



### PJ "Jacklyn" Nuttleman

It's the biggest race of the season in the country for super late models—the Snowball Derby. Every racer would love to have their name etched onto the Tom Dawson trophy and kiss the snowball in Victory Lane.

A lot of drivers have tried their entire careers to secure that win and never succeeded. Some have come painfully close—multiple times, like Ty Majeski; but that all changed this past year. And while I'm thrilled for Ty to finally get that monkey off his back—I'm MORE elated for my husband, Toby to be able to win it as Majeski's crew chief.

Seriously, the long drive home to Wisconsin the previous year was beyond brutal. That year, a horrendous accident on a restart was uglier than grandpa's toenails. And it took Majeski, who was dominating, out of the race.



*PJ Nuttleman photo*

## 20,000 Steps to Victory

Yes, 2020 was a WAY better drive home from Pensacola. Toby even said that to me, as we were bouncing along the interstate through Tennessee in the wee hours after the race.

You have no idea how much I wish I had purchased a new pedometer for Toby after he broke the last one. I imagine he had over 20,000 steps on the day of the Snowball Derby—and likely half of them would've come during the final restart with five laps to go.

As Majeski and Derek Thorn were battling side-by-side, Toby was pacing in the infield. He said all he could see of the track was when they would enter turn one, sweep into turn two, and shoot down the backstretch.

After they took the green on that restart, Majeski pulled ahead of Thorn heading into turn one. They were side-by-side coming off of two. Entering turn three, it looked as if they were stuck together, like a wacky, 8-wheeled car—rolling through turn four perfectly even.

Contact happened between the two on the frontstretch and there was a plume of smoke. Toby says the sight of that smoke had his rear nether region puckered right up tight. His heart sank when he saw Thorn pull ahead through the turn. He thought it was over. Thorn had a really good short-run car and the car he prepared for Ty was much better on a long run.

Regret was swirling in Toby's head. He thought of a million things he should've done to the car; like put a couple of turns across the front, or put packer in the bump stops, or put a little more air in the tires for a short run to keep it from dragging in the turns. But what was done, was done.

When the pair came back around and into turn one, Toby couldn't believe his eyes. Ty was back alongside of Thorn.

"We got a shot yet!" he thought.

With two laps to go, Majeski pulled ahead to claim sole possession of the lead. Thorn continued to dog him from behind, but seemingly had nothing for him.

Toby was pacing a storm at this point, but he knew they had been in this situation before and it hadn't worked out for them. It's racing and it's never over, until that checkered flag drops.

Toby says he thinks he held his breath during those last two laps. He was still pacing and soaking up everything that was said over the scanner.

Spotter, Mike Herman, Jr. was painting the picture with his smooth and even voice. Toby's heart was in his throat and his feet kept creating a rut in the infield. Everything seemed to be moving in slow motion for him—even though the cars were whipping around the track at breakneck speed.

White flag—and Herman continued to bring reassurance over the radio. Thorn was not going to mount another challenge. Majeski grabbed the checkers with about two-car lengths over Thorn, and let out a HUGE yell over the radio—"Yeaaaaahhhhh!"

The joy in Ty's voice was evident. The crew went wild in the pit—Toby stopped pacing in the infield. They had finally won the Snowball Derby. He stood there for a beat before quickly joining the rest of the team—high fives and hugs were exchanged.

Brad Mannstedt, who owns the team with his wife, Nancy said afterward that he had to pop one of his nitro pills during those waning laps.

It WAS intense. If you haven't seen the footage—my brother-in-law (Toby's youngest brother, Bruce Nuttleman) put together an amazing piece with in-car cameras and video from my handheld camera that I had in the stands. You can find it on Facebook if you search on either Ultimate Lap Photo or Racing Nuggets pages.

Toby still watches the video—A LOT, much like a kid who has his favorite bedtime story. And I can't say that I blame him. Because they had found multiple ways to lose the Snowball Derby in previous attempts with a stout car—it made this victory taste even sweeter. It is true; adversity builds character and makes you appreciate your achievements more.

And now for this entire year, Ty and the team wear the title of Snowball Derby Champions. And you'd better believe it—they plan to defend that title come December.



*PJ Nuttleman photo*



## Larson Looking Forward to 2021

Brent Larson will be running the full World of Outlaws Late Model Series schedule again for the 2021 season. The team will start of the 2021 racing season using a new Rocket Chassis and a new sponsor. *The Midwest Racing Connection* recently caught up with Brent following the Sunshine Nationals at Volusia Speedway.

***You have a new sponsor (Motul Lubricants) this year. How did this come about?***

We've been talking to Motul since October. I work with this marketing agency called Drive Motorsports International. Tony Scott heads it up and he thought this would be a good connection for us and my parents company (Hanco.) My parents company will be distributing Motul and will it be a combined effort through the business and the racing.

***Most teams have a tire guy, but it looks like you have a tire girl?***

Yes, Melanie's been doing tires since this time last year. She's been doing it for a whole year now.

***What is the hardest part for Melanie; dealing with tires or dealing with you all day?***

Oh, dealing with me all day. We're husband and wife, but I'm telling her what to do and she's asking what I want, and that gets sticky sometimes.

***It looked like there were some issues opening night to start of the season.***

Yeah, I just had some dumb things happen down there. Mostly, self-induced. Some small engine problems and we didn't make the right tire choices. Just dumb things. It's the first night, get it out of your system type of deal.

***You were caught up in a front stretch wreck Saturday night. How bad was the new car?***

We have to go back to the jig with it, but it's not terrible. It's mostly some parts, some sheet metal and a few small things on the chassis. We just want to have it checked over.



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## Gustin Gunning for WoO Rookie Title



Ryan Gustin has thrown his hat in the ring for the 2021 World of Outlaws Late Model Series Rookie of the Year battle. With a successful USMTS Modified career in hand as the 2011 & 2012 champion, Gustin has moved to the Dirt Late Model world. In 2020 he picked up a couple of regional wins in his Dirt Late Model. The majority of USMTS shows line up the feature events based off heat race passing points. One of the new challenges facing “The Reaper” with the World of Outlaws is time trials. Following the Sunshine Nationals at Volusia Speedway Park, Gustin is leading the WoO Late Model rookie points after a strong run from 21<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> opening night. **The Midwest Racing Connection** caught up with Ryan at Volusia and discussed the challenges associated with time trials.

*We're getting closer. Still just a little tight on entry. You need to rotate when you're on the gas and everybody's been struggling with that. If you can lay down a lap in qualifying, it makes your night a little bit easier instead of fighting for your life all night. When the top-15 cars are all within a couple of tenths of each other, one little shove with the right front and your 15<sup>th</sup> instead of 5<sup>th</sup>. You definitely have to lay down a good lap because that determines your whole night on this deal.*





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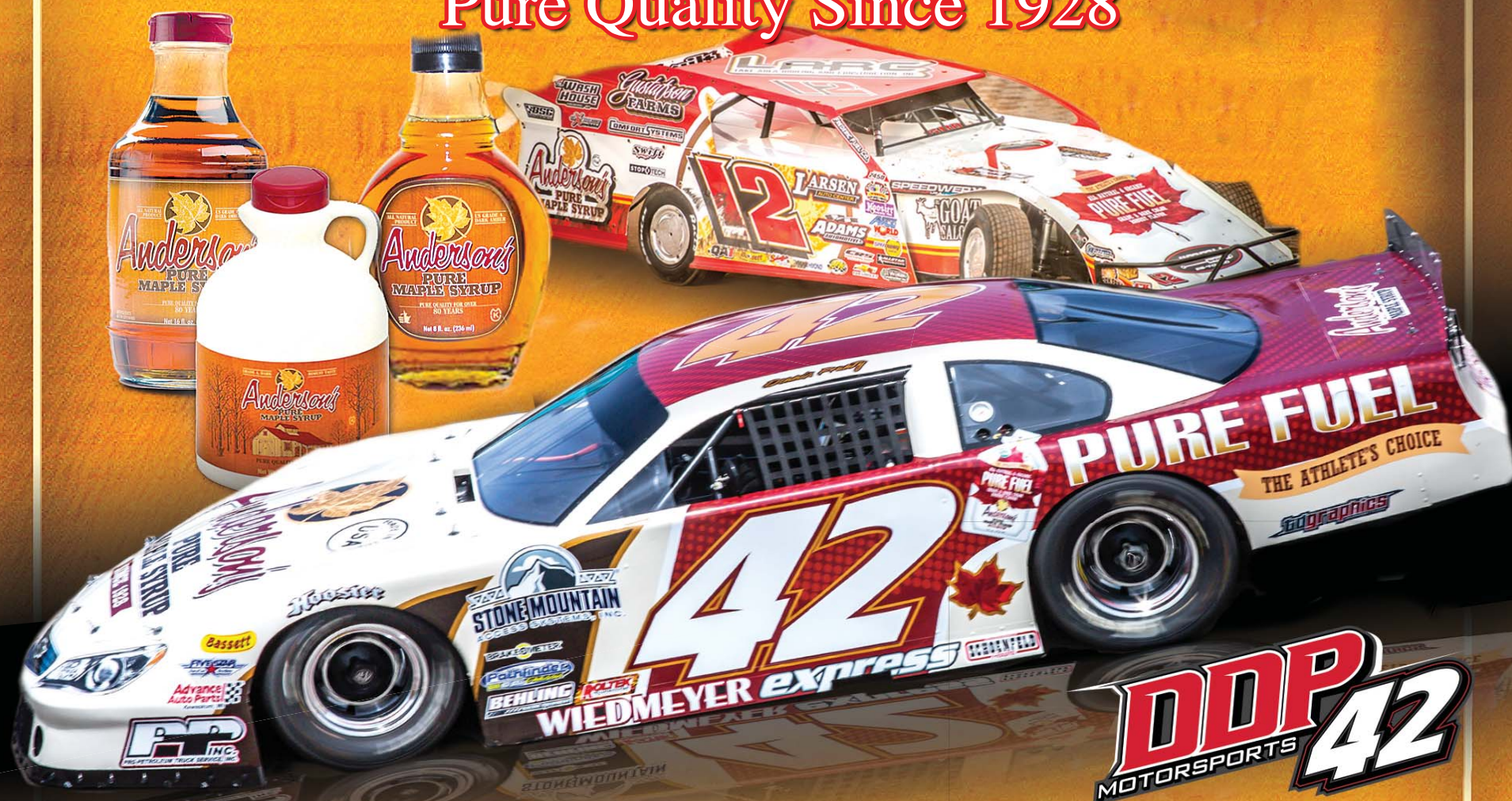
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