

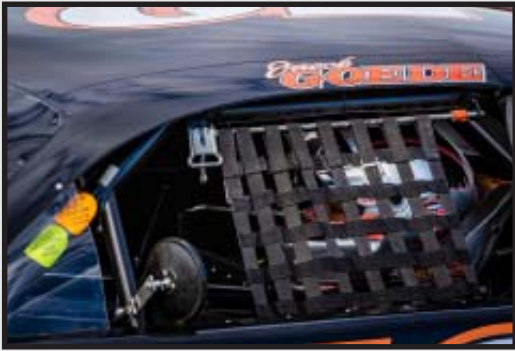
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March 2021

Inside...



The Story of Team Jacoby



Gator lessons



Pictures from the past



Speedweeks 2021



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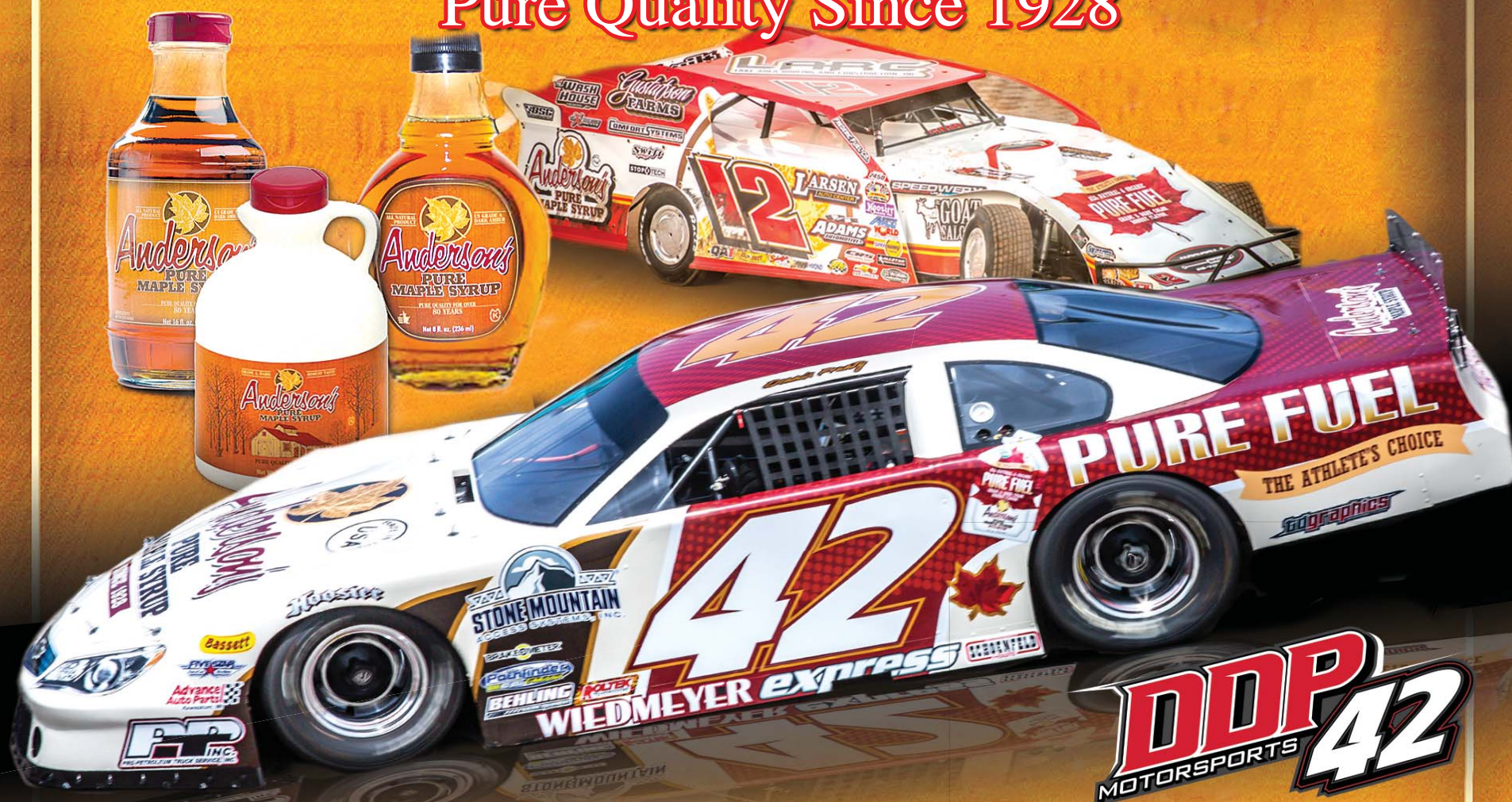
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Publisher's Note
Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan

During this pandemic year, I had seriously thought about skipping Speedweeks this year. As the date of the event drew nearer, and the number of drivers from this area of the country grew on the entry list at New Smyrna, I decided to go once again. I'm

Minnesota Proud

completely fine spending most of my time at the races alone. I'm used it, I've been doing it for many years. Most of my Speedweeks daytime group didn't attend this year, and I started getting pretty bored by Wednesday afternoon. I was walking alone down the beach, the sun disappeared and the fog rolled in. I started to wonder why did I really go this year? I mean everything at Volusia and New Smyrna is available via streaming these days, so I really wouldn't have missed anything. I was starting to think about changing my flight and going home early. Then, later that night, 2 guys from my home of Minnesota won feature races at New Smyrna.

I have to tell you, I've had very few items in my life (and even less in the last year) that made me proud to say I'm from Minnesota. That all changed after Speedweeks. Nick Panitzke and Dan Fredrickson both won on the same night at New Smyrna Speedway. Jacob Goede was near the top of time charts nearly every day, had numerous top-5 finishes and a 4th place finish in the overall points for the World Series. On top of these items, throw in the strong WoO Late Model run at Volusia by Brent Larson with a heat win and a lock on a podium finish

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March 2021

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Publishers note from page 3

(before suffering a flat tire) I was actually proud to say I was from Minnesota for the first time, in a long time.

In addition to my feel-good moments, I also made it through my trip to Speedweeks without getting rained out at a single event. There were a few times during the course of the week I was almost positive there would not be any racing, but the weather broke up and the show went on.

Also, as mentioned earlier, there are now a plethora of streaming services available for short track racing these days. There were several times where I made it back to the hotel from one track (either New Smyrna or Volusia) and had plenty of time to watch the final few events from the other track.

And finally, the 2021 version of Speedweeks marked my 11th visit, and 8th in row. Each of the previous year's visits included at least one day at the big track. This year, I by drove the big track about 20 times, but never went in. The events this year at the big track were all scheduled during the evening. If given option, I would definitely visit both the big track, and the short tracks. This year, everything was at night at the big track. My preference is to be is to be at the short tracks. Hopefully they don't do that again next year.



Dan Plan photo



Jacy Norgaard photo



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THE MIDWEST
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Going in Circles

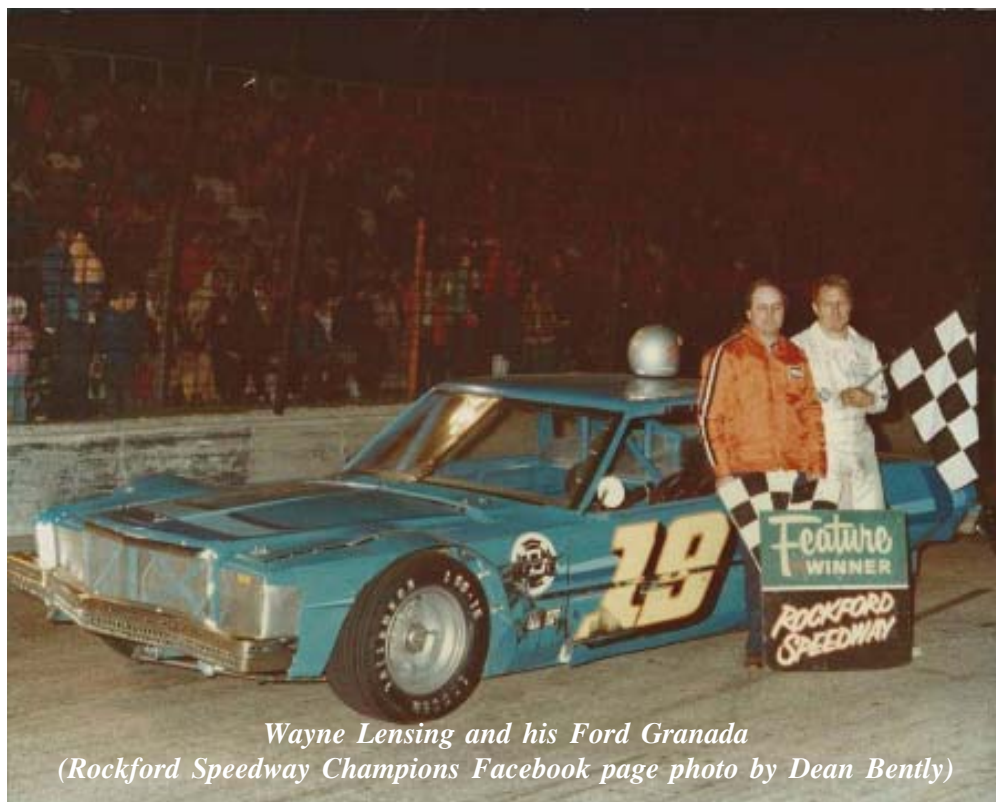


Charlie Spry

Let's go back in time just a little bit this month. Let's say.... 1976. I was ready to embark on my senior year of high school the summer of '76. It was an interesting time.

Of course, it was the Bicentennial year for our country. Long hair was "in." CB radios were all the rage. Bell bottoms and stripes were in vogue. I drove an awesome 1964 Rambler Classic on the street, eight-track blaring some Rock n' Roll, or else listening to WLS in Chicago on the AM dial.

On the racing scene, who could forget how the year started at the Daytona 500, with the famous Richard Petty/David Pearson crash at the end of the event, with Pearson limping his car across the finish line for the win, while Petty's crew tried to push his car across. On the local scene, Madison International Speedway was still called Capital Super Speedway, with the big half-mile being the only track on premises. No quarter-mile of any kind.



Wayne Lensing and his Ford Granada
(Rockford Speedway Champions Facebook page photo by Dean Bently)

A look back at 1976



Top dogs in the late models here that year were Dave Watson, Johnny Ziegler, Joe Shear, and Tom Reffner. More often than not, these four were atop the leader board in some fashion. However, in June Randy Sweet came to town and took the overall win over Reffner in the Pepsi 200. At this race Dick Trickle badly wrecked his Ford Granada when the throttle stuck, with a hard wall impact resulting.

On July 4th, as we all celebrated 200 years of America, Sweet took the win once again, winning a 76-lap feature by a quarter-lap over Reffner again.

It was also the year of the protest. On May 21st Ziegler won the feature but was protested. His car was taken to Bob Ford's garage and torn down, thus finding to be completely legal, with the win standing. Johnny Z would not be the only driver to have a protest filed against him that year.

While Ziegler won many features in the early part of the year, Watson was in the thick of things and came on strong later in the season, taking the points championship.

In the hobby stocks, it was the Rick Smith show, as Rick won the lions' share of the feature events in his '66 Chevelle convertible. Later on, he put a roof on the car to make it a hardtop, but it didn't matter what he did, he was dominant.

Spectator racing was starting to come on big, with Kevin "Ole" Swenson winning many events in his red Camaro. I actually stumbled on to this car in an area salvage yard many years later. There was not much left of it by then, but you could tell what it was. The

owner told me that the 427 engine was long gone, to be used in a speedboat. Jeff Heling and Barb Goudy were two more who did well in these events.

At the Rockford Speedway, the famous "Rockford Rules" late models were becoming very well established, with good fields of cars and many other tracks adopting their rules or something similar.

The season opener was rained out on April 24th, but after that Jerry Lewis (No, not THAT Jerry Lewis) won the opening night feature.

Wayne Lensing would be a formidable presence in

his Ford Granada, as he had better luck with that Ford product than Trickle did. Lensing would go on to win the track championship that year.

On June 26th Bill Venturini would win his first career feature here, while Dana Czach was making some noise as well. Janesville's Jim Kersten came on strong late in the year, winning his first feature on September 4th. Kersten finished second in the points.

Another driver coming on strong late in the year was Don Leach. Don took over the driving chores of Keith Selvog's Camaro, winning a 50 lap feature on July 10th, and again on Sept. 11th. Following that up, he also won the very first "Rockford Rules" feature run during the National Short Track Championships.

The next couple of years he would once again team up with Selvog to win track titles in 1977 and 1978 in a new car. By the way, the car that Leach drove in '76 was formerly driven by Gary Krueger at various Wisconsin tracks, the number Z/28 car.

Roadrunner racing in 1976 was pretty much wide open, with many different drivers winning features. Bill Lapacek would win the season point title.

Columbus 151 Speedway did not even start their racing season until mid-August, with the future up in the air. Late models and sportsman cars were run for the four events that were contested that year.

In the late models, John Ziegler and Larry Nipple won the first two features, while Rick Haase came down from the Wausau area to clean house one day. Steve Lurvey won the other feature. John Speer would end up as the track champion with consistent top finishes getting it done.

The sportsman class saw the emergence of some folks who would go on to do plenty in their racing careers. Pat Schauer ran strong in this division in his four door Ford Fairlane, and would go on to accomplish much in his all too short career. Ron Bishofberger ran strong with his Mustang, and would go on to become a multi-time late model track champion.

So, with this look back in time, I don't think those bell bottoms will fit anymore, and I don't have to worry much about cutting my long hair either, because there is not much there. However, some things never change. I still like 1970's Rock music and I still like racing!

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Racing Nuggets



PJ "Jacklyn" Nuttleman

There are a lot of characters in the racing community. Some are more prominent than others. Some clamor for attention. Some don't seek the attention, but it happens organically. Some aren't heavily involved, but still are connected by rooting for the underdog.

David Amborn was that last guy. Many of you reading this may not know exactly who David Amborn is... was. This is still hard for me to think of him as being gone.

David had a fairly standard surgery and ended up suddenly passing away a few days later. I still don't know 100% what happened. I'm guessing a blood clot. It doesn't matter how it happened. What matters is that David really left an incredible legacy as a human being.

He worked at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, at their Foundation and was an incredible cheerleader for Children's Miracle Network. It was in that realm that I first met David. I had worked for a radio group for 20 years that did an annual

"Radiothon" to raise funds to help kids and their families through CMN.

As a Bangor, WI native, David actually had a past that intersected with my husband, Toby. He used to run around to races back in the day supporting fellow resident, Steve Holzhausen. Toby (also a Bangor boy) got his start in racing by working with Holzhausen as well. And while these guys have found success—it didn't start out that way. They worked hard at their craft and David was right there cheering them on.

David always had strong ties to people from his hometown of Bangor. And he cultivated incredible relationships with people there and beyond in the community. He deftly connected with people from all sorts of backgrounds in an authentic way. He would be perfectly comfortable talking to major donors to secure a six-figure donation for a capital campaign or project he was trying to help. Conversely, he had no problem connecting genuinely with someone who had pig poop on their shoes and a mustard stain on their shirt.

David inspired goodness in everyone. He was a true friend to all who knew him.

In recent years, I was lucky enough to be in a local Rotary Club with him. The man really shined there. He was in his element of doing good works and inspiring others to join in the work as well. He knew how to rally people to pull together to achieve a goal. He made easy work of securing volunteers or finding funding through connecting with others.

He never missed an opportunity to acknowledge people's successes. I can't tell you how many times in the past several years that he would make it a point to congratulate me about a big win that Toby was involved in at any race track across the country. Social media obviously helped keep tabs on things, but David was always quick with heartfelt congratulatory remarks. He was particularly proud of anyone from

Champion of the Underdogs



Bangor who succeeded at whatever they endeavored to do.

I'll miss seeing David every week. I'll miss the times we talked about racing. I'll miss his leadership and passion for the underdogs.

The nugget to take away from this is that we can draw inspiration from David Amborn. We can—and should—find ways to genuinely connect with others, no matter who they are. Shine the spotlight on those who need encouragement and watch them blossom into their passion. Help plug people into a cause that will make their hearts sing. And cheer loud and hard for the underdog.

Godspeed, David. You will be sorely missed.



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Dangerous Dan



Dan Margetta

With Speedweeks, or I guess I should really say Speedweek, in Daytona in the rear view, the 2021 racing season is off and running highlighted by a drama-filled finish in the Daytona 500. Journeyman driver Michael McDowell's emergence from yet another last lap instant junkyard to capture his first victory in 358 starts was a resonating story. McDowell did whatever it took to remain in the game over the last 14 years, including taking a job driving a motorcoach and at times was reduced to a "start and park" driver, so I can't think of anyone who wasn't pleased he finally got to enjoy his moment basking in victory lane. McDowell's inspiring victory helped to overshadow the last lap multi-car melee that once again brought some of the current racing etiquette into question. McDowell and Brad Keselowski worked up a typical drafting run on leader Joey Logano down the backstretch on the final lap and when Logano attempted an instant block, the massive wreck ensued resulting in many serious hard hits, especially to Keselowski and Kyle Busch. Thankfully due to the many safety innovations enacted over the past twenty years, no one was seriously injured but in my opinion while the wrecked race cars may make for compelling television, it comes at a cost to the integrity of the sport. Blocking has been the root cause of just about every major accident in the superspeedway races over the past several years and while I get the attitude of "doing whatever it takes to win", I just don't feel what Harry Hogg called "low-down, blankety-blank racing" should be acceptable in the Great American Race. In his 1986 autobiography King Richard I, Richard Petty lays out some unwritten rules of racing including "If you can avoid a wreck, do it." That unwritten rule has definitely been glossed over through the years as evidenced by the crashes but I give Chase Elliott

credit for pointing out Denny Hamlin won the 500 in 2020 by not throwing a blatant block. In that race, Hamlin realized he was going to get passed on the backstretch and simply re-strategized to find his own run get around the leader off turn four. A major theme all week on the short tracks around Daytona concerned driving



etiquette and needless crashes and it's hard to criticize the lower ranks when the supposed best of the best do the same thing on Sunday.

Speaking of the short tracks, there was also a lot of talk about trying to close the divide between them and the NASCAR scene. The sport as a whole is better when the short tracks and NASCAR are on the same page and not in competition with each other and it's good to see some of the current NASCAR

Speedweek



Getty Images photo

stars making an effort to race on the short tracks again. Chase Elliott and Denny Hamlin have plans to race super late models throughout the year and Kyle Larson, Christopher Bell, Alex Bowman, and Elliott have raced USAC midgets while Kyle Busch will get behind the wheel of a dirt late model at Bristol. A drawback to NASCAR's immense popularity in the 1900's and 2000's was a forgotten appreciation to the role the short tracks played in the big auto racing picture and during that time too many new fans got introduced to the sport from the top down instead of the opposite. I got hooked on racing from the bottom-up having spent my childhood weekends at short tracks like the Slinger Speedway and the now defunct Hales Corners Speedway. There I learned the nuances of the sport hanging with the everyday folks and looking up to local heroes like Al Schill and Alan Kulwicki. Then as those heroes moved up, my racing world expanded following them to farther away tracks and traveling series like the American Speed Association. When Kulwicki advanced to NASCAR, I had a driver to passionately root for and my racing horizon really exploded. Suddenly, the big-time racing I only watched on

television didn't seem so far away anymore and the personal local connection to some of the drivers perpetuated a strong sense of belonging. The drivers also had an appreciation of their place in the sport and the long road to get to the top resulted in them having

Dangerous Dan continued on page 9

Dangerous Dan continued from page 8

less “big-time” attitudes than athletes in other major sports. That’s what drove the racing addiction, to be fortunate to be just a small part of a major sports league where the participants felt more like friends than just players on the field. As the popularity of NASCAR grew along with the financial successes that went with that growth, the new drivers bypassed time on the short tracks and went straight to the top series. They became TV stars and the fans only began to know the stories TV told them and lost out on the opportunity to see them as real people. Sponsor commitments began to force drivers to stay at the track in motorhomes fenced off from the fans and you didn’t run into them at the motels or in the restaurants waiting on a table just like you. The new fans, having been introduced to racing from the top, suddenly weren’t interested in attending a short track race unless a superstar was competing and even then, many left after getting an autograph. Thus a divide developed between NASCAR fans and the short track fans and it took an inevitable retraction on the NASCAR side to start to bring them back together. That’s kind of where we are at now and I’m glad they are starting to get back on the same page. The short tracks are gaining in popularity too and it’s neat to see fans be able to experience the camaraderie and intangible things that make this sport so great. It’s also refreshing to see the NASCAR guys realizing the value of just spending a few moments hanging out with fans at their hometown tracks and how far that goes into changing their participation level from casual fan to hardcore enthusiast.

Staying along the lines of the short tracks, the Kulwicki Driver Development Program announced the list of 25 semi-finalists for this season’s program. Ten new drivers were added to last season’s 15 semi-finalists that didn’t get a chance to compete in the program due to the pandemic. For those of us here in the upper Midwest, we are lucky to be able to see seven of those semi-finalists race around here as six are from Wisconsin and one is from Illinois. Luke



R.J. Braun (above) and Chad Butz (below left) are just 2 of the Wisconsin finalists for the Kulwicki Driver Development Program

Fenhaus turned a few heads last season as he turned some limited Slinger appearances into two victories and a third place finish in the Slinger Nationals. Jacob Nottestad was the 2020 late model Slinger track champion and he won the Futures super late model race at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway during Oktoberfest Race Weekend. R.J. Braun has improved every season at Slinger and likewise Chad Butz did the same at Wisconsin International Raceway. Both raced the World Series of Asphalt Racing week at New Smyrna Speedway this year as well. Riley Stenjem has impressed me wherever I have seen him race and he’s one of the guys to watch at Jefferson Speedway and I’ve seen Nick Egan progress from and win in sportsman, trucks, and late models. Max Kahler races out of Illinois and won the National Short Track Championship super late model main event at Rock-

ford Speedway last year. It’s all setting up for another exciting season up here which is only about a month away. I’ll be there when it begins and in the meantime, I’ll be off to my first NASCAR races in about a year as I head to Las Vegas Speedway and Phoenix Raceway to start the month of March. I’ll see you at the track!




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New Dirt



Jacy Norgaard

The air temperature was a dozen degrees below zero as we made our way to the airport. I was looking forward to being in a place eighty degrees warmer and surrounded by race cars. For the second time in a month, I was heading to Volusia Speedway Park for the World of Outlaws Late Model Series.

Arriving at Volusia Speedway Park for the DIRTcar Nationals was much different than my first trip to the facility in January. I've always had this vision in my head of what an ideal racetrack experience would look like. I've dreamed of grand presentation, activities galore, and all-around fun for all. The type of thing that elevates you from an event to an experience. That is after all what racing should be about sometimes. It's not always about the action on the track or the cars signed into the pits. I've been to many special events and large races and some have been mighty impressive, while others have failed to impress. Anytime I attend a new track or event I like to analyze it on multiple levels. The most important one

Jacy Norgaard photo

being the fan level. I look at the track and event with a big picture mindset. I think to myself, "If I were the casual fan or even if I didn't know racing at all, would I enjoy my experience?"

My judgment certainly cannot speak for the casual or no involvement fan. I don't have all the answers. But I do have a basic understanding of how learning works. Anytime you learn something new whether it be a skill or a sport, you can't just be thrown to the wolves and expect to come out the other side unscathed. You need tools to guide you along the way and someone or something to show you what to do. I try and think how that would look in a racetrack

setting and have this picture in my mind. I analyze tracks and events against that picture. When I was younger that picture was grand, and I thought racing could be anything and was everything. But I had to account for reality. You need a bottomless checkbook if you want to rival others in the entertainment industry. I'm talking about the amenities and many extras

that go along with attending certain events or participating in certain activities.

So local racing can't compete, and we need to just keep doing what we've been doing. We need to just continue relying on generational participation and attendance in this sport. We can't possibly grow or



Jacy Norgaard photo

become something else. If you read those last few lines and believed it, stop telling yourself that lie. The same people who will preach about how trailers don't win races, will quickly abandon their, "pocketbook doesn't matter" mentality to argue that we're just not meant to compete against other entertainment avenues. These same people will then protest positive changes and technological improvements in the sport. They turn their backs to progress only to complain about how racing purses aren't growing and fans

New Dirt continued on page 12



Jacy Norgaard photo

New Dirt continued from page 11

aren't in the stands. It's a never-ending cycle that continues to play out year after year. It's a self-inflicting wound that has held us back for far too long. And it's a problem that we can fix. It's not money, it's mindset. Just because you don't have the resources like Top Golf or the amenities like an NFL game or NASCAR, doesn't mean you can't compete. Stop comparing yourself to places like that because you can't. But what you can do is rival their entertainment value. Ask yourself what's more expensive? A family outing at a Vikings game or a dirt track? You know the answer and it's not even close. So why do entertainment options like that continue to thrive? Because our sport isn't meeting people where they are. We aren't out promoting the sport and the entertainment value enough to outsiders. We need to try harder, we need to innovate more, we need to get creative. Promoters can till a track and make a surface produce great racing. Drivers can handle homebuilt machines at high speeds. We can do all these great things, produce all these great chassis, but somehow, we can't innovate this sport?

There's nothing wrong with generational participation in this sport. It's the backbone of who we are. I'm a generational participator as are many others. But that's not a good long term growth strategy. We should continue to court those already in our tent, but we must reach outside and bring new blood in. You don't have to abandon who you are to do that. We don't have to reinvent the race car or the track. We just have to market our product better.

That's why my trip to Volusia Speedway Park this time around was vastly different. The product hadn't changed from January. It was just presented much different. The facility was filled full of activities, booths, souvenir stands and food trucks. All of these things offered value to the consumer. They offered activities and experiences other than the racing on the track. For the cost of their ticket, fans got to experience all of this. Those experiences are what turn casual fans and first timers into repeat customers. If you don't believe this methodology works, look into the Saint Paul Saints and their history. It's not about the sport itself, but about the experience.

That's all it will take for us to grow this sport. We need to be creative and maximize the resources that we do have. You don't have to do what DIRTcar Nationals did to be successful. You just have to be memorable. You have to create an experience that keeps people coming back. You don't need a big checkbook or fancy video screen to accomplish this. You just need to be creative, lean on others, and use the abilities you do have to get new people to fall in love. And when enough of us do that our sport will be better off.



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Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

Being that we are digging through a bunch of old racing publications, gathering information for the book I am working on, let's just go ahead and turn this column into a "Back on this day" feature. With over 60 years of such news materials, we have plenty to work with!

Back on August 28th, 1959, it was Rodger Ward winning the Milwaukee 150 National Championship Late Model stock car race at State Fair Park, Milwaukee, WI., in a 1958 Ford. Following Ward after 150 miles were Fred Lorenzen, Nelson Stacy, Dick Rathmann and Don Oldenberg. Ward earned \$2,842.00 for the victory...In 1963, 30 year old Rib Lake, WI., hotshoe, Marlin Walbeck, between prelimi-

nary races and main events captured 155 wins. Walbeck accomplished the feat in his Semi-Late Model Chevrolet... On August 9th, 1964 it was Etcher Biertzer winning the 30 lap Feature at Slinger Speedway, Slinger, WI. Following Biertzer's Modified at the finish were Greg Krieger, Bill Johnson, Paul Feldner and Don Schuppel. Roger Regeth won the 15 lap Sportsmen Feature...June 2nd, 1965 found Marv Marzofka winning the 25 lap Feature at the Stratford Speedway, Stratford, WI. Following Marzofka in the main were Ken Pancratz, Lyle

Nabbefeldt and Marlin Walbeck...On June 26th, 1965, Miles "The Mouse" Melius, one of the all-time greats in the annals of Modified stock car racing, took the 25 lap Feature win at Hales Corners Speedway, Hales Corners, WI. Following Melius at the finish were Bill Johnson, Pedro Roehl, Greg Krieger and Fred Zack...June 14th, 1966, found Ken Pancratz winning the 20 lap Feature for Late Model stocks at the Tomahawk Speedway, Tomahawk, WI. Following Pancratz at the line were Marlin Walbeck, Dick Trickle and Jim Back...June 19th, 1966, found Bruce Czarnetzki winning the stock Feature at the Interstate Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI. Squeak Kemp was 2nd with John Wehrenberg, Ralph Bakewell and Gary Maier following. John Scott won the Hobbystock Feature...September 17th, 1966 saw Dick Trickle win the 100 lap Feature for Semi-Late Model stock cars at the Griffith Park Speedway, Wis. Rapids, WI. The race was the last for the Central Wisconsin Speedways Association with all four tracks, (Wis. Dells, Black River Falls, Tomah-Sparta, Griffith

Park) in the group closed for the season after the event. A record purse of \$5,200 was paid out with Trickle earning \$285.00. Following Trickle after 100 laps were Dave Field, Everett Fox, Bob Millis and Jere O'Day. The 50 lap Semi-Feature went to John Wehrenberg. 4,000 fans attended the event...Final point standings for the 1966 Central Wisconsin Speedway's Association season, Class A, found Dick Trickle #99, first with 5710 points, followed by, Marv Marzofka, #91, 5460, Dave Field, #26, 4960, Jere O'Day, #41, 4080, Lyle Nabbefeldt, #X, 3420, Jim Back, #61, 3280, Marlin



Walbeck, #30, 3190, Tom Reffner, #88, 3030, Everett Fox, #19, 2050 and Dave Marcis, #2, 1980. Class B Champion was Gary Kneisley, #9, with 2340 points. Class C Champ was Dale Walworth, #83 with 840 points...On May 10th, 1968, it was Rudy Bandt winning the 30 lap Feature for Semi-Late Models at Capital Speedway, Oregon, WI. Dick Trickle had fast time around the ¼ mile paved oval at 14:05 seconds. Heat race wins went to Wayne Swartout, Tom Reffner, Ron Beyer and Fritz Bishofberger. Reffner won the Semi-Feature as 70 cars participated...Stu Nitzke won the 25 lap Feature in his 1957 Chevy, on the ¼ mile paved track, KK Sports Arena, Kaukauna, WI., May 11th, 1968. Dick Glaser, Bob Schroeder, Willie Shoppenhorst, Bryce Spoehr and Jerry Smith followed...On May 8th, 1968, it was Larry Baumenl winning the Semi-Late Model Stock Feature at North La Crosse Speedway, La Crosse, WI. Baumenl finished ahead of Dave Marcis, Dick Trickle and Jim Back. John Scott won the Hobbystock race...Dick Trickle drove his '67 Ford Fairlane Late Model stock car to his 3rd straight Feature victory, June 22nd, 1968 on the ½ mile KK Sports Arena track. Next in line at the finish were Dave Marcis, driving the same 1966 Chevelle he placed 10th in the NASCAR Carolina 500 in Rockingham, NC., Rich Somers, Jerry Smith, Dave Emmal and Bill Nelson...Mert Williams won the Late Model Feature, June 16th, 1968, at the Tunis Speedway, Waterloo, Iowa...August 25th, 1968, it was Dick Trickle winning the Feature at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. Dave Field was 2nd followed by Tom Reffner and Larry Baumenl. Heat race winners were Trickle, Ed Colby, Don Rodah and Larry Rezin. The 25 lap Semi-Feature went to Dave Marcis, followed by Louie Vetrone. The consolation race was won by Ed "Gunner" Walkush...On a Thursday night, August 22nd, 1968, Neil Sederberg in his Modified stock car beat the Late Model contingent at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI. Sederberg took his 1934 Ford Victoria sedan to the front of the pack in winning the

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Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions from page 14

30 lap Feature event. Following Sederberg at the line were Don Schuppel, Tom Reffner, Dick Trickle and Fuzzy Fassbender. John Brevik won the 20 lap Semi-Feature over Duane Marshall and Dick Severson. The Consolation race winner was Kato Theison. Hobbystock action found Fluff Furo winning the main event...

So are you totally board reading this yet? What if there was a million dollars available if you keep reading?..On May 17, 1969, it was Bob Iverson sweeping the Modified race program at Escanaba Speedway, Escanaba, MI. Iverson set fast time, won his heat race and then captured the 20 lap Feature event...Ramo Stott took the opening Feature win at the new ½ mile paved Capital Super Speedway, Oregon, WI., here Sunday afternoon, May 25th, 1969. Following Stott at the finish in the 40 lap main event were Joe Shear and Jim Back. 6,000 fans were in attendance for the inaugural event at the Sam Bartus owned and promoted track...Butch Hartman, in front of 10,000 fans, won the first ever USAC stock car race at the KK Sports Arena, Kaukauna, WI., here June 1st, 1969. Hartman finished ahead of Jack Bowsher, Roger Mc Cluskey, Dick Trickle, Verlin Eaker and Roger Regeth in the 200 lap event...Dan Prziborowski won both 25 lap Features at the new Twin City Speedway, Blaine, MN., here Memorial Day night, 1969...On July 6th, 1969, CENTRAL WISCONSIN RACING ASSOCIATION Late Model drivers boycotted promoter Sam Bartus of Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., over inadequate insurance and insufficient safety equipment. A meeting was to be held to resolve the differences, but if that did not occur, CWRA was going to return to race at Griffith Park Speedway, Wis. Rapids, WI., with Howard Johnson promoting events...On the night Astronauts landed on the moon, July 20th, 1969, Don Rodah won the 30 lap Feature race at Griffith Park Speedway, Wis. Rapids, WI. Dick Severson placed 2nd with Dean

Spohn 3rd. Tom Jenson won the 20 lap Semi-Feature...July 12th, 1969, it was John Ziegler in a 1964 Ford taking the Feature at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI. Lyle Nabbefeldt was 2nd and followed by Jim Back, John Mc Namara and Tom Reffner. Joe Birch won the Hobbystock Feature...The Minnesota State Fair, St. Paul, MN., was set to run 10 days of racing from August 23rd-September 1, 1969, offering \$68,000 in prize pay-out...Marv Marzofka pocketed \$1,250.00 for winning the 150 Lap Feature on September 13th, 1969, at Capital Speedway, Oregon, WI. Following Marzofka at the checkered flag were Tom Reffner, Rich Somers, Dick Trickle, Tom Torbleau and Louie Vetrone. The 40 lap Semi-Feature went to Norm Bartnick...On June 8th, 1973, it was Fred Bender winning the Feature at Capital Super Speedway, Oregon, WI. Following Bender at the finish was Joe Shear, Tom Reffner, Dave Watson and Jim Back. Dick Hendrickson won the Hobby Stock Feature...MARV MARZOFKA won the 100 lap Feature at La Crosse Interstate Speedway, West Salem, WI., June 5th, 1973. Following Marzofka were Dave Watson, Bob Jusola, Joe Shear, Tom Reffner, Jon Chrest, Mike Miller, Rich Somers, Greg Arenson and Don James. Hobbystock Feature winner was Paul Thicke...Dave Watson won the 30 lap Feature at Rockford, IL., Speedway, June 9th, 1973. Following Watson at the stripe were Joe Shear, Danny Ballard, Dennis Borgan and Ray Para...Roger Guldán won the Feature race at Central State Speedway, Colby, WI., June 6th, 1973. Following Guldán were Tim Lorenz, Hurricane Michlig, Tom Loos and Don



Churdimsky...Bill Oas was the Late Model Feature winner at Golden Sands Speedway, August 4th, 1974. Following Oas were Neil Callahan, Jim Bohmsach, Tom Reffner and Dick Trickle. Roy Bohm swept the Hobby Stock field setting fast time, winning the dash and Feature...On July 27th, 1974, it was Jerry Eckhardt winning the Late Model Feature race at Jefferson Speedway, Jefferson, WI. Following Eckhardt were Dave Watson and Don Leach...M.J. McBride was the main event winner on July 24th, 1974 at Paul's Seymour Speedway. Next in line behind Mc Bride were Roger Paul and J.J. Smith. With the win, Mc Bride collected the \$100 bounty to beat Smith...Steve Burgess took the 40 lap Late Model Feature on Sunday afternoon, September 21st, 1980, as part of the Old Style Invitational at Wisconsin International Raceway, Kaukauna, WI. Following Burgess at the Checkered flag were Alan Kulwicki, Tony Strupp, Ted

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Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions from page 15

Musgrave, Tom Jones, John Ziegler, Willie Goedon, Jerry Eckhardt, Wayne Roffers and Steve Moll...Tom Jones on July 26th, 1974 snapped Tom Musgrave's two win streak, taking the 25 lap Feature at Grundy County Speedway, Morris, IL...On July 24th, 1974, Tom Nesbitt won the Feature race at Central State Speedway, Colby, WI. Following Nesbitt were Tom Loos, Harold Mueller, Tom Merckel and Bill Herr...Jim Back scored a clean sweep, taking fast time, winning the Dash, Heat and 25 lap Feature July 26th, 1974, at La Crosse Interstate Speedway, West Salem, WI. Following Back in the Feature were Bill Oas, and Marv Marzofka. Jim Kendhammer won the Hobbystock Main event...Continuous hassling of the management by drivers and fans, has been given for the closing of River Raceways, Fountain City, WI., here the end of July, 1974. One of the track owners, Elmer Duellman, has announced the track is for sale...Bob Bennett won the Feature at Leo's Speed-

way, Oshkosh, WI., here July 23rd, 1974. Following Bennett in the main were, Roger Regeth, Dave Conger, Dan Kuhn and Jim Luethy...On September 2nd, 1988, it was Wayne Breitenfeldt winning the 30 lap Late Model Feature as the Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., re-opened after nearly 5 years of inactivity. Breitenfeldt was followed by Bryan Reffner, Allen Check, Joe Krzykowski, Steve Carlson and Rich Somers in the main. The 20 lap Semi-Feature went to Chuck Green, while the Sportsman Division winner was Daryl Smithback. Female competitor, Jennie Kind won the Hobbystock Feature race...Ted Musgrave was the winner of the Tony Bettenhausen Classic, September 11th, 1988, at Illiana Speedway, Schererville, IN. Following Musgrave after 100 laps were Tom Jones, Larry Schuler, Bobby Dotter, Tony Hertgo and Rich Kleich, Jr...OK, no million dollars to be had getting to this point reading the Column. But Hey! Maybe next time as we may just have to revisit this, especially since we've barely made our way into the 1980s of my close to 60 years of publications perusing. Here and there...Tracks in this neck of the

woods, are getting their schedules out for the 2021 season which is great to see. Although there is still some skepticism, none are stating opening dates will not happen...

In the Quotes of the Column department, it's Tom Reffner talking about racing at Rockford Speedway. "I never liked racing at Rockford. You almost had to drive the diamond pattern there and that is not how tracks should be designed to be raced." Reffner was in position to have won the NSTC there at least 4 times, but never did. Mert Williams, after winning a Feature at the ¼ mile dirt oval, Hawkeye Downs Speedway, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. "I really don't like to start up front like that, it makes me nervous, so I just go like heck"

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



More of Dale's pics from the past 62 years. #12 Steve Burgess, A gaggle of cars at Golden Sands Speedway, One of those crazy racers out of greater Janesville, WI., area, #81 Steve Arndt, #1 Bob Bennett, #56 Fred Bender, and #93 The Patriotic John Ziegler.



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Speedweeks or Bust: The Story of Team Jacoby

By Joey Prusak

Have you ever wondered what goes into a two-week trip to compete at Florida's New Smyrna Speedway during the World Series of Asphalt Stock Car Racing? Well, we did it this February and it was one hell of a trip.

The days were hot & long, the work was never ending, and the results were hard fought, and frankly quite impressive – I think we represented Upper Midwestern late model racing very well against more heavily funded and full-staffed teams from throughout the country. There were also hurdles to clear — crashes, late-night wrenching sessions and car problems, but also numerous top five finishes. All totaled, I wouldn't trade the memories for anything. I'm not a writer but I am going to try my best and share the experience, so here is our story...

Let's rewind to Oktoberfest

Let's rewind time to Oktoberfest Race Weekend at LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway. It's become an annual ritual for Bryan Wrolstad and myself to help out 2019 NASCAR Weekly Series National Champion Jacob Goede during Oktoberfest. While competing this year the joke became if we win Sunday's ARCA Midwest Tour 200-lapper we would make the trip south for Speedweeks. Well, that didn't happen.

I filled in Friday (at the annual, three-segment Trickle 99) & Saturday (the 38-lap Big 8 Series final) as Jacob's spotter. We struggled with the Super Late Model in the Trickle but came home with a big win in the Big 8 Series event.

With the Midwest Tour race at Fest not going to plan I figured the Speedweeks adventure was dead. But the next week my phone buzzed: Jacob had sent Bryan & I a text asking if we wanted to make the trip to Dells Raceway Park for the Falloween 150. Another small crew made the four-hour trip to Wisconsin, and boy did we struggle once again.

It wasn't all bad as we qualified P4 out of 30 Super Lates but the race didn't really go as planned. In the 150 lapper and came home with a P13 finish, two laps down to eventual winner Ty Majeski.

About a week later, Jacob sent another message to Bryan & I: "So, I think I kinda' want to go to Florida." We had no engine and no real sponsors, but I guess we were going to Florida.

It was mid-November and we still didn't have an engine lined up, but Jacob said he was going to bring a case of beer over to Murgic Automotive in Rosemount and see if he could make a deal happen for an engine that Steve Murgic had sitting on the shelf. By the end of November we finally got the text we had been waiting for: "We finally got ourselves a big-boy engine. This better not get cancelled now."

So it was officially time to get to work on the No.72 Super Late Model. I'm telling you, I don't think anyone could put as much time into a car as Jacob did



Joey Prusak Photo

for Speedweeks. The goal was to go down and learn, but he didn't want to go down and make a fool of himself. The real expectation was to go and compete for wins and a championship.

After countless hours — mostly by Jacob alone — were spent in the shop getting the car ready, we were set to go down to Florida with a setup that was months in the making. On Tuesday we headed out around 6 p.m. — and drove straight through.

Doritos and Monster fuel Jacoby

We made our first stop around Mason City, Iowa — at which point Bryan pulled out this special mattress that fit in the back seat of the truck. I think he was more excited about that mattress than a kid on Christ-

mas Eve waiting for Santa. It was about 9 p.m., and Bryan was ready to sleep. I was the co-pilot for the majority of the drive and was also the only one who stayed awake from beginning to end — something I wouldn't recommend. We struggled with fog in Iowa, but eventually we got through and it was smooth sailing until around 3 a.m.

I caught myself starting to fall asleep and noticed the pilot was catching the rumble strips pretty frequently. Nothing a few Monsters can't fix... and when I say Jacob ate an entire bag of Nacho Cheese Doritos I mean it — this was a family sized bag. If you ask him he will deny it, but I witnessed it. He'll tell you that he only ate about half, but I'm pretty sure all you could find was the nacho cheese dust in the bottom of the bag.

Around 4:30 a.m., I questioned if we were going to make it to New Smyrna alive, but boy did those Monsters and that giant bag of Doritos do wonders for JG72. Wrolstad was sleeping so soundly that we hit the rumble strips for a good 50 feet and Jacob turned around and said, "Whoops, sorry about that Bryan." I said he isn't waking up from that, so we proceed to turn up the volume on one of Erica Goede's custom CDs to attempt to wake Bryan... without success.

Around 5:30 a.m. we were about an hour outside of Nashville, Tennessee, when we stopped for fuel. Jacob had driven the entire way up until this point and, after some coffee rekindled Jacob's fire, he hopped back behind the wheel again until 2 p.m., when we stopped about an hour from the Florida border to get fuel and lunch.

We spent about an hour at Subway thanks to Bryan, I won't go into details but you can ask him why it took so long. Plus I think we visited about 13 gas stations before we finally found one with diesel. Shortly after taking off Jacob had to stop so Bryan could take over.

Looking back, I didn't think we were going to make it through the 3:00 to 4:30 a.m. stretch given



Joey Prusak Photo

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how tired both Jacob & I were, BUT when Bryan took over driving I honestly thought that was going to be the end of us all. If Bryan actually reads this he'll say that I am overreacting, but he made more aggressive moves with that trailer hooked up than I've ever seen him make on the race track.

We pulled into the New Smyrna track around 7:45 p.m. Wednesday. We decided to go out for dinner with my dad and brother but, knowing Thursday was going to be a busy day with practice, we figured we better make it an early night.

Let speedweeks begin

Thursday marked our first day on track. We arrived early, got the car unloaded and headed to tech. One of the officials asked what we were running for a chassis and Bryan shouted, "It's a Jacoby." The official looked pretty confused but I found it to be pretty funny. Fast guys are running a chassis that ends in Y, such as a Fury, Rowdy, or a Toby. So Jacob figured why not call it a "Jacoby".

I think Thursday was the first sign that it was going to be a difficult week — not performance wise but work/help wise. The primary crew was Jacob and Bryan; I tried to handle fuel and tires so they could mainly focus on the more technical stuff but I was also spotting, which left only Bryan in the pit area. It was three guys going up against teams of 15-plus guys — the equivalent of bringing a knife to a gun fight. Thank god we had various help throughout the week, coming from my brother Max Prusak, Car Lot Rob (Krautkremer), Allen & Chuck Decker, and Ethan Angell.

It didn't matter how much help we had, we were still going to be shorthanded compared to these other "super" teams. But that didn't stop us from going out

night #1 and qualifying P2, only missing the pole by .017 seconds. We started P3 in 35-lap feature and actually ended up leading a few laps before settling for a P4 finish. We avoided a huge wreck right out of the gate, and then for the majority of the race we had been running P3 but a caution came out with only a couple laps to go and we got shuffled back to about 5th or 6th before rebounding and passing a couple cars before the finish.

We carried the momentum into night #2, even with qualifying getting rained out we still managed to come home with a P4 finish once again. On night #3 we qualified P3, and up until this point we hadn't made any huge changes to the No.72. We stuck with what had been working for us and it paid off once again in the 35-lap feature. We started P6 and again crossed the finish line in P4 after an intense 20-lap battle with the No.51 of Stephen Nasse.

Following a much-needed day off, we returned for night #5, which consisted of a 50-lap feature. We struggled in practice and couldn't really pinpoint what the issue was. We ended up qualifying P6, which was disappointing for us based off the first couple of nights, however the redraw put us on the pin for the 50 lapper. We led the first 10 laps or so before battling with the No.12 of Derek Griffith for the top spot. Man, that kid is fast... and a clean driver. At the halfway point we had settled into P3 right in front of the No. 51 of Nasse. After another hard-fought battle we settled in behind the No.51 and No.43 of Daniel Dye and came home with another Top 5 (P5). However, we weren't thrilled with the performance.

Up until this point we were the only Super Late Model who had started off the week with four consecutive Top 5 finishes.

Midweek struggles begin for Team Goede

Night #6 saw us continue to struggle, but we weren't going to give up. We tried a



Joey Prusak Photo

bunch of different things in practice in hopes of making gains, but nothing helped. I will say, it doesn't matter how bad the car is, JG72 will go out in qualifying and put it toward the top of the board. We qualified P2, just barely missing the top spot once again. We were pretty giddy but knew we still didn't have the car where we needed it. The 35-lap feature saw us rolling off P1 after an invert of 2 and we went nowhere but backwards... the No.72 crossed the finish line in P8, thus ending our Top 5 streak.

After the race we started talking to see if we could finally figure out what went wrong and Jacob said, "What about the brakes?" On Sunday night the brakes were glowing... real bright.

Story about Sunday night, Jacob came on the radio after the race and said, "I got a fire under the hood." After some back-and-forth talk between Jacob and I, Bryan comes on the radio and yells (and I mean yells),"so is there a f***** fire or not?!" Fast forward back to Wednesday night and Bryan says, "Yeah the brakes are probably worn out, that was probably the fire when Joe started yelling on the radio asking if we actually had a fire or not."

Jacob and I turned and looked at each other and then looked back at Bryan and said, "You do realize that was you yelling, right?" He just stared at us and couldn't believe that it was him. We all erupted with laughter. He was yelling so loud and yet he didn't remember any of it. Then again I don't think Jacob and I remember anything from about 2:30 until 4:30 a.m. on our drive down.

For Night #7 we decided to swap out the brake pads, which were worn out (bad). That seemed to help but right when we started to feel good about where we were at the engine started missing/stumbling. It had to be an electrical issue as the carb was good after checking it. We took off all of the plug wires just to check those and then pulled the plugs out as well. Jacob and Bryan decided to check the spark on each



Joey Prusak Photo

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one, with JG running the switches and BW holding the plug wires.

About halfway through checking them we found our issue, thanks to Bryan getting lit up like a Christmas tree. Just picture a cartoon character getting electrocuted, jumping off the ground with their legs out wide, hands in the air, and their hair sticking straight up — that was Bryan! Jacob & I erupted with laughter. After Bryan got zapped a second time he threw his hands up and said he quit.

He came back about 30 seconds later, ready to swap out the wires but Jacob said we had to finish checking everything. Bryan told him not to hit that switch until he let go of the plug wire, but of course Jacob had to hit it prior to him letting go just to scare him. Bryan ran away...

The boys scrambled to get everything back together as we were already late for tech but we made it just in the nick of time and ended up qualifying P6 for the 35-lap feature. At this point in the week we were still P2 in the World Series Super Late Model standings, roughly 12 points back of the leader.

We rolled off P6 for the feature and avoided a melee on the start. Caution came out after we completed one lap and we restarted in P3. On the ensuing restart we got a good run through turns three and four and ended up clearing the driver who restarted on our outside for P3. However we ended up getting picked up from behind about a 1/4 of the way down the frontstretch which started to turn us. Jacob did a great job trying to save it but it wasn't meant to be and we ended up colliding hard with the No.43 which resulted in the "big one" going into turn one.

The wreck destroyed the left front of the car, breaking the shock in half, bending the spindle, and also bending the rack plate. As the red flag was thrown Jacob was able to limp the No.72 back to pit road and he climbed out. I wasn't sure if we were done for the night or not. We had some amazing crews pitted next to us (on both sides) who jumped in to help Bryan try and fix the car while Jacob threw together a new LF shock and spring. They got it back together and just as the green flag came back out we pulled on to the track.

However, the damage was too extensive to be competitive and we ended up pulling off for our first DNF of the week, this resulted in a P15 finish and dropped us to P3 in the point standings.

The Finale: Orange Blossom 100

We had a scheduled off day on Friday, so we figured we'd work as late as we can so we can still try and enjoy a day away from the track. We worked on that car until 3:00 a.m., however the damage wasn't as bad as it could have been... don't get me wrong, it was still pretty brutal. We need to thank Erica and Angie for bringing us some frozen pizzas and beer around midnight.

We ended up coming back to the track about six



Joey Prusak Photo

hours later to finish up some things but decided after a couple hours that we needed a day off and we would finish the work on Saturday.

Coming into the final night we found ourselves P3 in the points and we wanted to finish strong. Once the rain finally stopped and we got to the track, we scrambled to get the car put back together; luckily Ethan made an appearance, which helped greatly.

We ended up getting about 15 minutes of practice, which was not ideal after rebuilding the entire left front and being forced to put a new shock package as well. We didn't really know what we had going into qualifying but I knew JG72 was going to give it everything he had.

This is how it went: Qualified P8, Started P8, Finished P8. I guess you could say we had an 8th place car. Some positives, we did in fact start P8 but by lap 40 we had worked our way into P3. The car wasn't terrible but we were just missing drive off. Over the course of the race the car just kept fading, which resulted in a P8 finish.

Thankful for the memories

For a small team from Carver, Minnesota, that primarily consisted of three guys working on the car (one driver & two crew) for the majority of the week, I'd say we did damn well. We ended up tied for P3 in the final point standings, which is nothing to hang our heads on. Obviously, we wanted to do better and of course we wanted to find victory lane, but I went home proud of what we did.

I just want to say that I honestly don't know of two harder working guys than Jacob Goede & Bryan

Wrolstad. I tried my best to keep up with them but, c'mon, I think they could fit in one of my shirts together.

I look back and can't help but smile and laugh thinking about the entire week. Just three guys from Minnesota with cut off sleeves & khaki shorts going up against the "super" teams at Speedweeks. It was an absolute sight for anyone to see, ask Dan Plan.

Just as an FYI, I refused to cut my sleeves off and I believe at one point in time it was Bryan who was chasing me around trying to cut them off.

This trip would not have been possible without all the support from the fans that pitched in and the sponsors: The Car Lot, Murgic Racing Engines (that engine had some ponies), Mickey's Sleds, Baby Gowdy, Affinity Plumbing, JD Woodcraft, Northern Racing Products, Refinishers Supply, S&L Transportation, Complete Transport Services, Big Johnson Tires, & Murgic Graphics & Designs.

We had so many people who helped throughout the week: Max, Car Lot Rob, Ethan, Allen, Chuck, and many other guys from various teams.

It was a long week and it was a ton of work, but I am thankful for the opportunity. I am especially thankful for the memories. I can say that I spotted every night at New Smyrna Speedway during the World Series of Asphalt for a national champion in Jacob Goede... and that is pretty sweet.

"This isn't a Rowdy, Fury or a Toby, this is a *Jacoby*. And I'm proud of that." - JG72



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2021 on the beach

Each year, the Historic North Turn Restaurant hosts a tribute to the origins of racing in Daytona Beach. The cars parade South down A1A, hang left a few miles down the road, and then head North up the beach before turning back on to A1A. While the 2021 Living Legends beach parade wasn't as large as past years, the 2021 version still saw plenty of classic cars to view on the beach.



Little Gator - Big Gator



Dan Plan photo

Justin Allgaier was given the nickname “Little Gator” early in his racing career. This year, the NASCAR superstar picked up the DIRTcar UMP Modified portion of Speedweeks at Volusia Speedway Park, and the Big Gator trophy that goes along with the win.

East Coast Mods



Dan Plan photo



Dan Plan photo

Dan Plan photo

Race fans from many parts of the nation have the opportunity to see two divisions of cars during Speedweeks they don’t normally see at their weekly tracks. The East Coast is the only place that offers Tour Mods on the pavement and Big Block Mods on the dirt. During Speedweeks, many of these teams head to Florida, with car counts in the 30+ range for each division at New Smyrna and Volusia.

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