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Racing History



Midwest Young Guns



Vol. 27 Issue 6 October 2023

Inside...



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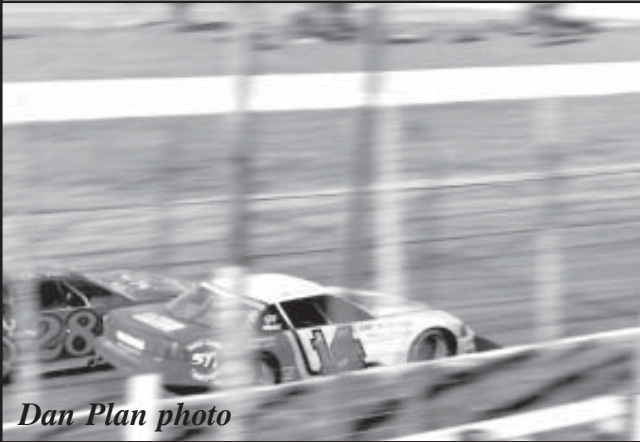
Publisher's Note
Racing According to Plan



Dan Plan

I grew up in an era of time when I would read about guys that had the versatility to race on dirt and asphalt. My first memories were reading the old Checkered Flag Racing news and learning about guys like Al Schill on the Eastern side of Wisconsin racing

Al Schill in action at Rockford in 1992



Dan Plan photo

Versatility

Late Models on both dirt and pavement. I realized some them were talented enough to win not just races, but also win track championships at tracks on both surfaces. Schill is the one I remember picking up several championships on dirt at the now shuttered Hales Corners Speedway in the 1970's, and then following this up with several pavement Late Model championships at Slinger Super Speedway in the 1980's.

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Brad JJ Mueller and Nick Panitzke have both picked up Late Model track championships on dirt and pavement.



Brian Schmitt photo



Dan Plan photo

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THE MIDWEST
RACING CONNECTION



Publishers note from page 3

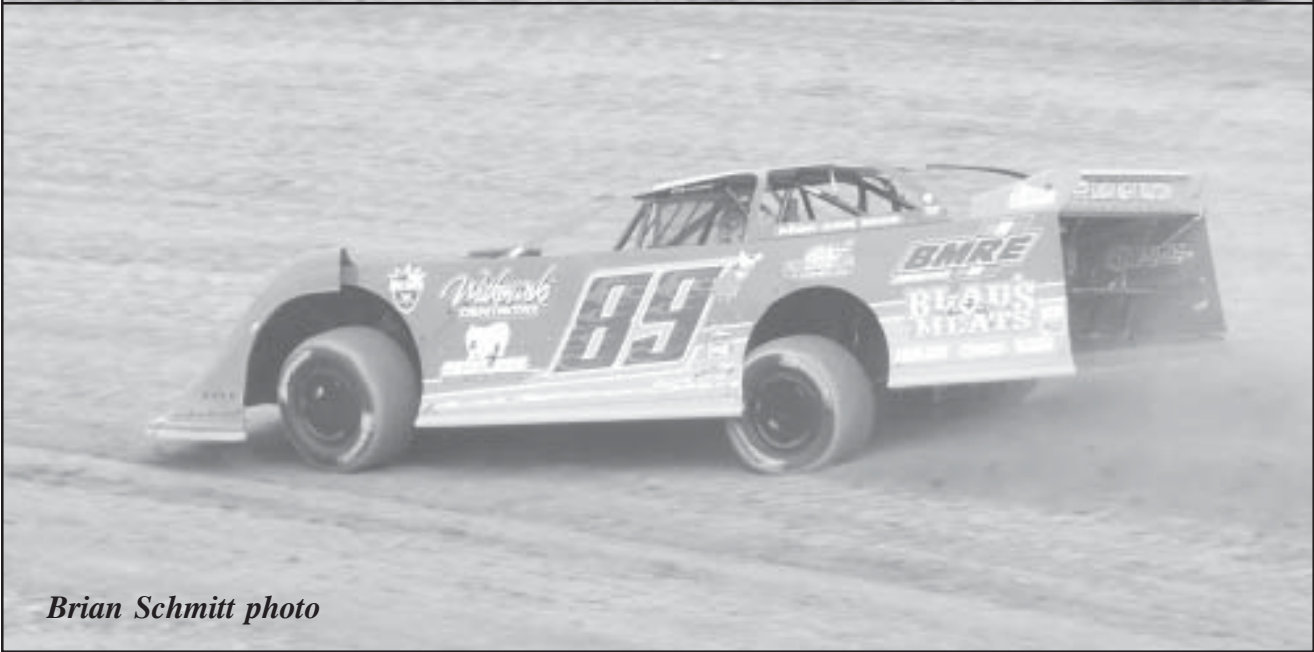
Fast forward about 40 years, and there's another guy that has a few Late Model championships on dirt and pavement on the Eastern side of Wisconsin. Brad JJ Mueller picked up 3 championships in a row from 2003 through 2005 at Slinger. These championships were followed up by his first dirt Late Model championship at Plymouth Speedway in 2011. The 2011 championship was the first of several, including this year's title for the 2023 season.

Over here on the other side of Wisconsin and Eastern Minnesota, I've been told stories of drivers that raced dirt and pavement in Late Models. Early stories I heard were about Bob Jusola or Mert Williams racing and winning on both dirt and pavement. I've also heard stories of guys like Leon Plank and Kenny Mann taking their dirt cars to LaCrosse on several occasions for Wednesday night shows in the 1970's. As I've grown older, I've been lucky enough to witness a long list of drivers from my area of the country that have raced on both surfaces and had great success.

This year, Nick Panitzke picked up the Late Model track championship at Cedar Lake Speedway and capped things off by winning the feature event on championship night. In addition to his first Late Model championship at Cedar Lake, Nick was also the NASCAR Weekly Series track champion at LaCrosse Fairgrounds Speedway in 2017 & 2019. I think this may be the first time in history somebody has won the Late Model championship at these two tracks. Quite an accomplishment considering the talent that shows up on a weekly basis at these two tracks. And to top things off, Nick carries sponsorship on his car from Brad JJ Mueller. That is pretty cool.



Dan Plan photo



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Racing History



Dale P. Danielski

Another race track with early dirt beginnings, that was paved, went through ups and downs, closed, but roared back to life in 1970. Phil Bickley re-opens State Park Speedway.

Note: Many thanks to racing historian Jim Cleveland for the bulk of the information provided here.

Enter Phil Bickley, racer and business owner into the picture for the operation of State Park Speedway, Wausau, WI., in 1970. The track had sat dormant for over a year and Bickley decided it would be viable to get it up and running again.

May 7th was supposed to be the season opener, but results on the event couldn't be found. By Thursday night, June 4th, for certain, operations were ongoing, as Jim Back in a 1967 Ford Fairlane won the 25 lap Feature. Heat race winners were Bill Wirtz and Tom Reffner with Back taking the consolation heat. Dick Trickle won the trophy dash with Larry Detjens setting fast time at 15:02 seconds around the 1/4 mile oval. The new emerging drivers of the time were now in the limelight more often than not as Dick Trickle, Jim Back, Tom Reffner, and Marzofka were doing most of the winning. Tom Reffner was having a stellar year in his 1969, Mercury "Mind Stomper" Comet, while Trickle and Marzofka were winning behind the wheel of '69 Ford Torinos. Trickle ultimately won the season Championship 40 lap feature September 10th. Attendance at the newly promoted venue was steadily increasing as well, with 800-1,000 fans attending/event. Interesting to note, that State Park would not hold races when the Marathon County Fair in Wausau was going on, which also featured racing on the 1/2 mile dirt track there. many of the drivers racing at State Park raced in those events, with Dick Trickle, Rick Haase and Tom Steuding, notables winning.

WISCONSIN RACING HISTORY
Asphalt Racing History - Part 2

1971 brought more of the same as the central Wisconsin gang did most of the winning. The season opening event on May 6th, saw the largest crowd yet, 1,000 plus, of the Bickley reign. Marv Marzofka won the feature on that night holding off Trickle much to the delight of the crowd. Bill Wirtz sneaked in a win over the field on June 3rd, in his Chevy, as most racers were now competing in full sized cars that appeared more and more like what you would see on the road. Chevrolet Chevelles, and Ford Torinos were probably the top choice and with their steam roller tires sticking out the side cool to see on or off the race track.



Rod Dykeman photo

Dick Trickle, king of the pony car era in his Ford Mustangs.



Marv Marzofka Torino wins at State Park. The Marzofka car was lettered by Wausau racer Larry Detjens so he could look under it and see what made it so fast.

The track saw repaving take place just before Mid-Season Championship night and of course, the sticky, new surface produced records in qualifying. A 14:27 lap around the 1/4 mile became the new standard as Dick Trickle was the proud holder of the new mark. Trickle also went on to win the 40 lap feature on the night. August 26th was season championship night, boasting of over a \$4,000 purse. An overflow crowd of 2,500 came to watch Dick Trickle win the 50 lap feature. Trickle was also the track champion for the year, winning the crown in his 1969 Ford Torino.

Changes in rules for the Central Wisconsin racers were set to take place in 1972 and it would also be the year a new high for Late Model Feature wins in a season would occur.

The Central Wisconsin Racing Association at their winter meetings opted for smaller wheel base cars at 108 inches, which would allow for "Pony Cars", Camaros and Mustangs, to compete. A narrower tire, 11 inch, was also voted in which brought up concerns as to how the racing would go. State Park Speedway of course being a member track continued racing on Thursday nights and would have a first hand view of history in the making. With sportscaster and writer, Don Bethmann on the mic calling the action, it was exciting for competitors and fans alike.

The Central Wisconsin guys brought out all new equipment for the racing season with Dick Trickle in a 1970 Ford Mustang, Marv Marzofka in a 1972 Chevy

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Racing History from page 6

Camaro, Tom Reffner in a 1967 Ford Mustang, and Jim Back in a 1968 Mustang. As the season wore on folks in the know could see Marv Marzofka was on the way to his best year ever in the wins department. As it turns out he ended up with 32 total main event victories on the season. What folks thought to be impossible was Dick Trickle winning 67 Features during the year setting a new standard. 99 wins between two drivers from just a few miles from each other. You couldn't even imagine something like that happening and many of the victories for the two came at State Park Speedway.

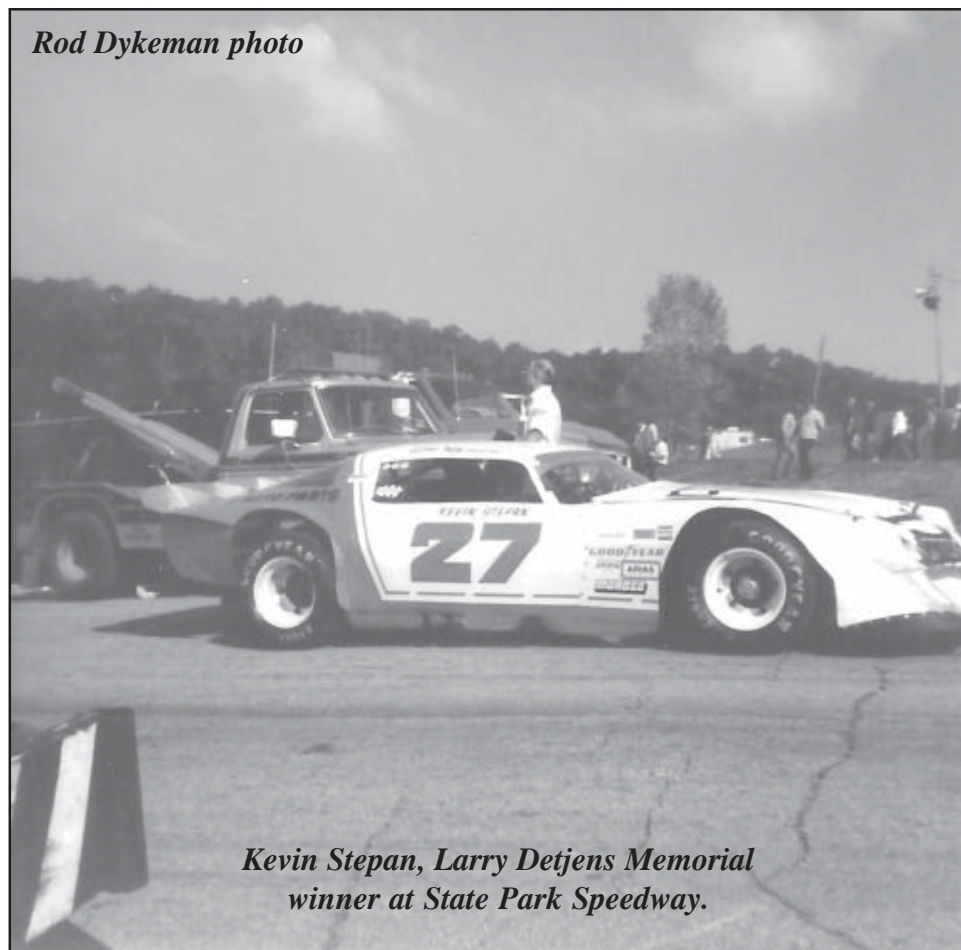
The success continued at State Park, as promoter Phil Bickley became a main stay. The Central Wisconsin gang remained strong but second generation drivers were entering the picture. Larry Detjens, although not second generation established his racing career at State Park, beginning in 1970 and carrying through 1981. Detjens took advantage of the new pony cars by fielding a Dodge Challenger, a sleeker, faster car than the bigger Dodges he campaigned previously. Detjens, from Wausau, WI., eventually took his talents nationally, winning events throughout the Midwest and as far west as California. Mike Miller a Minnesota transplant was another that cut his racing teeth at tracks throughout Wisconsin including State Park. Miller too, took his show on the road winning in far away places such as Florida, California, Nevada and Washington. Kevin Cywinski, Kevin Stepan, Steve Holzhausen, Bryan Reffner, Ted Musgrave and numerous others ushered in the 1980s winning consistently. So well known was the speedway that superstars Bobby Allison, Mark Martin and Rusty Wallace all tried their luck at the venerable 1/4 mile. The open wheel set was represented by Janet Guthrie, the first women to make a splash in the Indianapolis 500. Hollywood was represented as well, with Joy Wilkerson racing a Jim Bohmsach prepared car. The 1990s produced another crop of racers moving up as Wayne Lodholz, Joe Kryzkowski, Kevin Peterson, Mark Eswein, Kevin Stepan, Wayne Breitenfeldt, Kirby Kurth among others became the star attraction.

State Park Speedway has been fortunate in that it has weathered many storms and continues its Thursday night operation. Some promoters have come and gone, although Phil Bickley has been in the fold all through the years and the current regime continues to keep the local racing alive. Ron Wimmer, father of sons Scott and Chris, who in their own right have seen

success in the sport continues as promoter of the speedway. Names of racers have changed through the years but the bottom line is the track remains open even with urban sprawl closing in.

Looking back, on Thursday night, August 20th, 1970, it was Jim Back winning the Feature race at State Park Speedway, Wausau, WI. Following Back were Tom Reffner, Marlin Walbeck and Larry Detjens. On August 12th, 1971, it was Marv Marzofka winning the Feature race at State Park Speedway. Following Marzofka were Bill Wirtz, Marlin Walbeck, Dick Trickle and Larry Detjens. On Thursday night, July 8th, 1971, it was Dick Schultz winning the 20 lap Feature at State Park Speedway. Dick Joss won the semi-feature, with heat race wins going to Sonny Immerfall, Tom Reffner and Schultz. Fast time, a new track record, went to Dick Trickle at 14:09 seconds. On June 1st, 1972, Marv Marzofka won the Feature at State Park Speedway. He was followed by Dick Trickle, Jim Back and Tom Reffner. Marv Marzofka won the rain shortened Feature on June 1st, 1974 at State Park Speedway. Jim Hornung, Jim Bohmsach and Jim Back followed. On June 19th, 1975, it was Larry Detjens winning the Feature race at State Park Speedway. Following Detjens were Jim Back, in his Tombstone Pizza Camaro, Marv Marzofka, Tom Reffner and Neil Callahan. Ivan Fraaza was top dog in the Sport Stock division. On Thursday, July 1st, 1976, it was Marv Marzofka and Tom Reffner winning 25 lap Features at State Park Speedway. Chuck Green won the semi-feature, while Jerry Bohm took top honors in the Sport Stock feature. On June 9th, 1977, it was Dick Trickle, driving Jim Bohmsach's 1972 Chevy Nova winning the 30 lap feature at State Park Speedway. Tom Reffner, 1977 Hornet, Marv Marzofka, 1973 Camaro, Larry Detjens, 1976 Camaro, Jim Hornung, 1973 Camaro, and Rick Haase, 1976 Camaro followed. Ron Beyer

Rod Dykeman photo



*Kevin Stepan, Larry Detjens Memorial
winner at State Park Speedway.*

won the Semi-feature, while Ed Szitta won the one on one spectator race. On July 6th, 1978, it was Marv Marzofka winning the Feature race at State Park Speedway. Following Marzofka were Larry Detjens, Mike Miller and Dick Trickle. During intermission the crowd was entertained by an aerial act, the Flying Bilros. On August 8th, 1985, it was Jim Back beating Rick Haase, Bryan Reffner, Perry Redeker and Greg Holzhausen to the line in the feature at State Park Speedway. On May 26th, 1993, it was Tom Reffner winning the feature race at State Park Speedway. In Sportsman division racing it was Mike Havel taking the main event win. On June 24th, 2011, it was Mark Mackesy winning the ASA Midwest Tour 150 lap Feature at State Park Speedway. Behind Mackesy were Andrew Morrissey, Ross Kenseth, Jacob Goede, Bryan Reffner, and Nate Haseleu. On August 10th, 2017, it was Jake Capek and Mark Mackesy winning 25 lap Feature races at State Park Speedway.

Here and there...There is no denying the excitement created when the World of Outlaws come

Racing History continued on page 14

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Racing Nuggets



PJ "Jacklyn" Nuttleman

Racing is full of many great characters. I'm a bit partial to the ones who work with my husband, Toby. I have enjoyed so many belly laughs with a pair of brothers who are by rights the heartbeat of the race team behind Ty Majeski's success. I'm speaking of the Johnson brothers—Chris and Craig.

These two brothers have been around racing for decades. It all started with their uncle, Rick Johnson at La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway for Chris. For Craig, it was remote control racing, where he garnered many accolades before venturing into helping his good friend, Aaron Hass with his racing endeavors. Ironically, both Rick and Aaron left this world in 2021—but both men left an indelible mark on the Johnson boys and their desire to thrive in the racing world.

Chris and Craig have worked with many drivers and teams over the years, including Steve Carlson through the late 90s into the early 2000s. The first time that Chris worked with Toby was actually in 1995 on Steve Holzhausen's car for the ARTGO series race at La Crosse. The two would eventually be brought back together to work with the Dutch Mill Trucking (DMT) race team owned by Toby's cousin, Tim Jacobs. That developed into quite the powerhouse team of drivers, including Carlson, Kevin Nuttleman, and Emily Sue Steck.

Toby would join DMT Racing after losing his position with Charlie Menard's race team. This would develop into a great friendship with the brothers and



PJ Nuttleman photo

ultimately incredible success together.

Chris has long had a dream of owning a race shop and he's been living out that dream over the past several years near his home in West Salem. His generosity also provides a place for Toby to work during the week. Chris and Craig own one of the cars that Ty Majeski races. Other people own additional cars that Majeski races, and they are either housed at Chris's shop or worked on there. It's a busy hub during race season, without a doubt. Chris keeps his shop pristine—which is no easy feat with a guy like Toby around.

That pride in ownership extends into their workmanship. Chris and Craig are 100% committed to whatever they're working on. Anyone who has been in the pits during a practice session has likely found their jaws on the ground watching how many major changes these guys can accomplish in a short practice session. It is truly poetry in motion with few words spoken. Chris and Craig seem to communicate telepathically—they've been working together for so long



PJ Nuttleman photo

Racing Nuggets continued on page 9



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Racing Nuggets from page 8

now. Toby's life is a lot easier when this "A-Team" is at a race with him.

The Johnson brothers, to quote Ricky Bobby—"piss excellence."

They work hard and play harder. I do not encourage anyone to try to keep pace with the Johnson's after the final checkered flag has flown on any race night and the coolers are cracked open. You will lose. You will also laugh harder than ever as the stories start pouring out of Chris and Craig.

I always get a kick out of Craig when he gets on a roll. I may or may not have peed a little in my pants while laughing uncontrollably. Craig is a stellar storyteller, peppering his tales with the "F" word as a noun, verb, and an adjective. Craig slugs his beer out of the side of his mouth and the later the night gets, the more his ball cap gets twisted to the side. These brothers are beloved by many in racing. They will be a part of the next Racing Nuggets podcast, which will drop on Tuesday, October 3rd and I think you'll enjoy it immensely. They are great guys who would give you the shirt off their backs. They are not just the life of the party, but the life blood of a race team.


PJ Nuttleman photo


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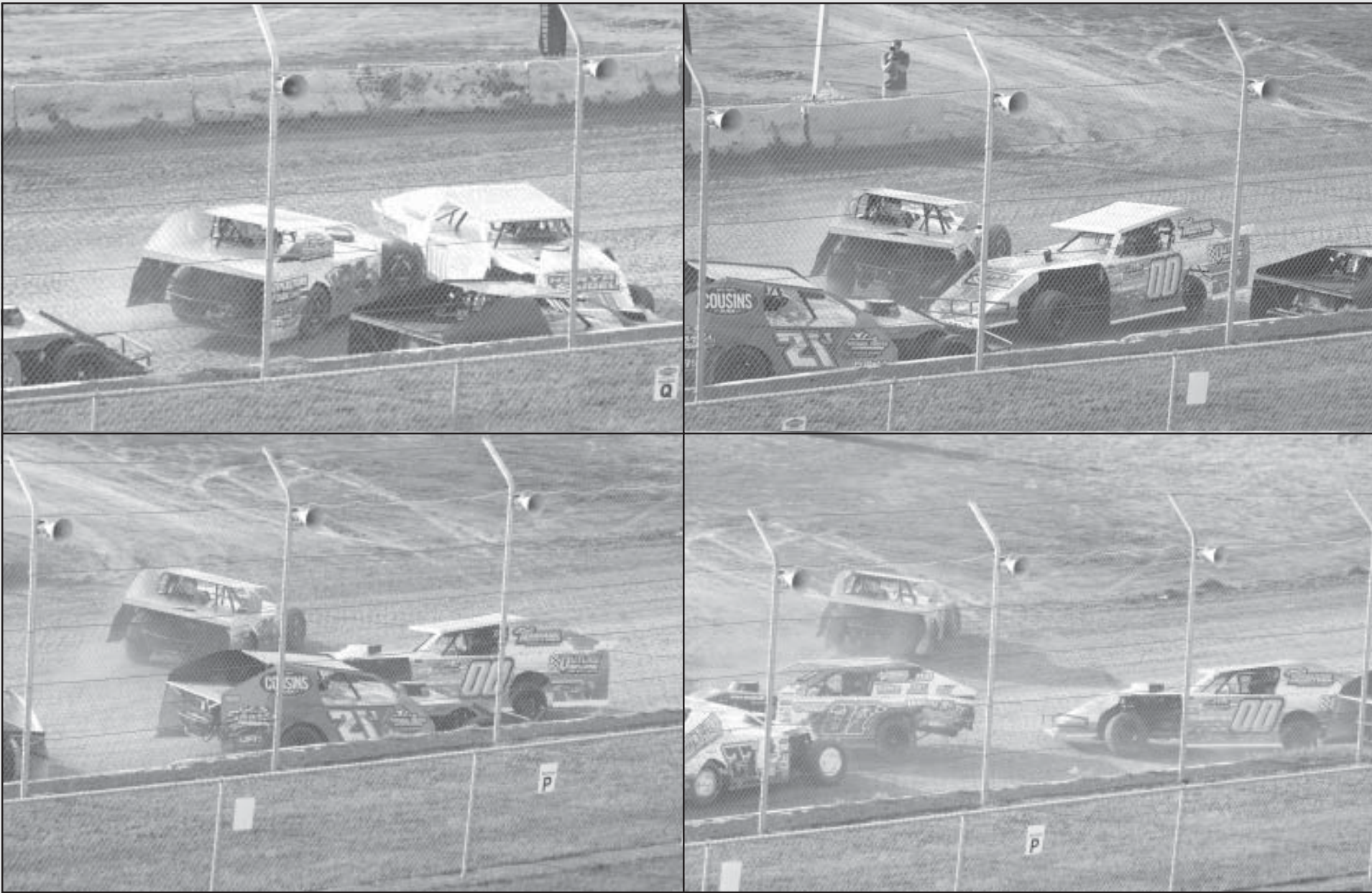
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You're Going The Wrong Way!

The B-Mains on Saturday afternoon of The Legendary 100 can be hectic at times, as racers have one last shot to get into the main event. Ashland, WI driver Ross Furhman found himself headed in the wrong direction battling for a transfer spot in the second Midwest Modified B-Main.



Midwest Young Guns



Nuce Bruttelman photo



Dan Plan photo

It seems like just yesterday Ty Fredrickson and Cade Nelson were following in their father's footsteps and racing against other kids. This year, both have had phenomenal performances in the short track racing world. Ty made his Super Late Model debut and had some strong runs during his initial season. Highlights included his first race with the ASA Midwest Tour Jim Sauter Classic at Dell's Raceway Park, followed up by a podium finish at the TUNDRA race at Golden Sands Speedway on Labor Day. Cade had a phenomenal year in USRA Late Model competition, picking up wins at Cedar Lake, Eagle Valley and Mississippi Thunder. To top things off, Cade picked up the USRA Late Model Championship at Cedar Lake Speedway. The Cedar Lake championship was the youngest track champion in track history.

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Final Season Champions

ROCKFORD
Speedway

Earlier this year, it was announced the historic Rockford Speedway would conduct its 76th and final season during the 2023 calendar year. The following two pages show the final track champions for the history books for the track. Additional events are scheduled through the end of October. (All photos courtesy of Kim Kemperman)



Kim Kemperman photo

Late Model - Jon Reynolds Jr.



Kim Kemperman photo

Sportsman - Patrick Featherston



Kim Kemperman photo

Road Runner - Kevin Memoli



Kim Kemperman photo

Short Tracker - Nick Schneider

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ROCKFORD
Speedway

Final Season Champions

ROCKFORD
Speedway



Kim Kemperman photo

Original Sixers - Jeremy Bingham



Kim Kemperman photo

High School Racing Association - Hailey Frye



Kim Kemperman photo

Powder Puff - Cori Fairburn



Kim Kemperman photo

Bandit - Shawn Bowar



Kim Kemperman photo

Super Stox - Mark Conning



Kim Kemperman photo

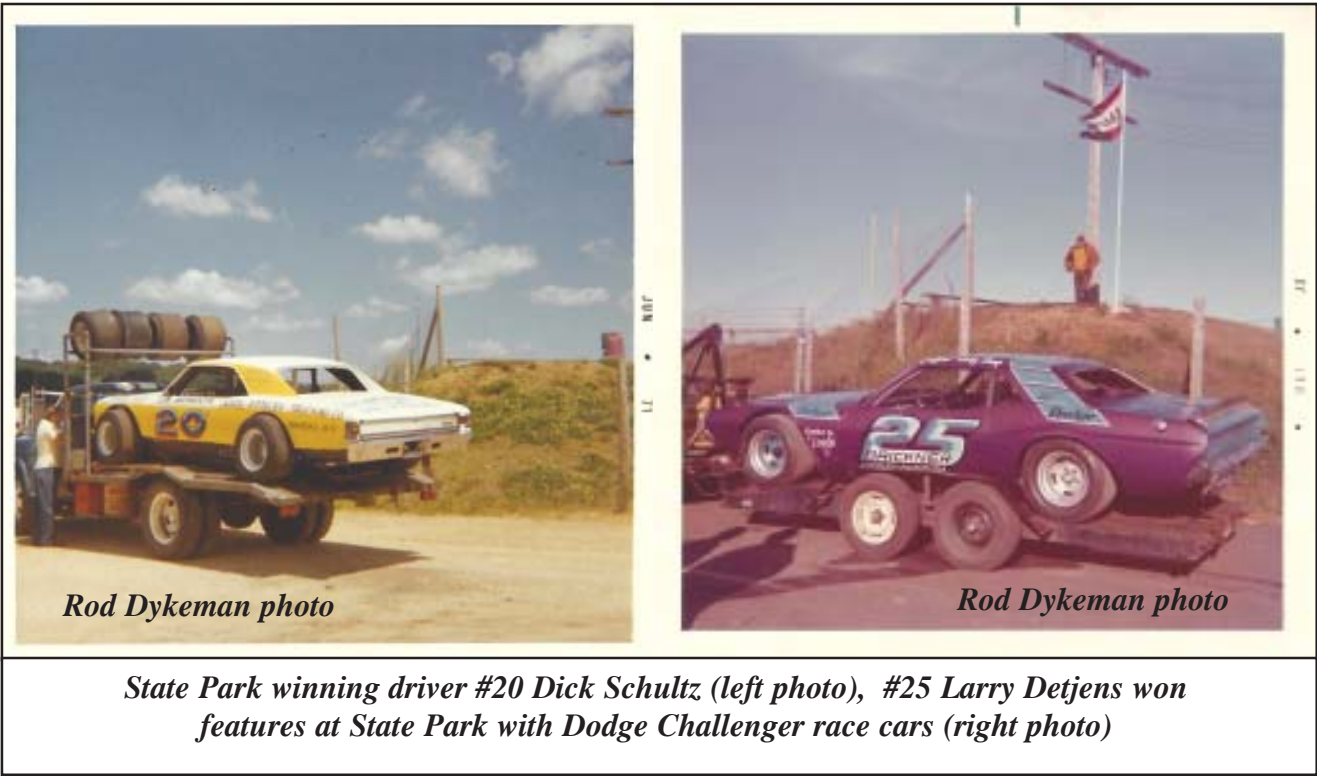
Figure 8 - Wally Thiering

Racing History from page 7

to town. We were able to witness it first hand as the Late Model group appeared at Mississippi Thunder Speedway, Friday, September 1st. Brandon Shepherd survived the wild wall banging, sparks flying action to take the 50 lap Feature win. He fought off the challenge of Short Cool One, Bobby Pierce, for the last 15 laps to cross under the checkered flag first. Pierce, who had been involved in an earlier skirmish came from the back of the pack to put the pressure on, but had to settle for 2nd. Fun stuff to say the least!

Of course, Champions Reunion 15 is set for La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway as part of the Oktoberfest racing weekend. The Reunion will be Sunday, October 8th, from 11am-2pm in the Hospitality Chalet in turns 1 and 2 of the grandstands. Racers can still get in on the deal by contacting Dale P. Danielski at 608-518-2478, dale@starmakermultimedia.com or go to the Champions Reunion 15 FACEBOOK page. Marv Marzofka is the featured guest for the show this year and he will be on hand to meet and greet fans. It will be a really cool event for fans as well as 60 or more drivers will be on hand to discuss strategy with them. Fans with a Sunday ticket for 'Fest can attend free.

In the quote of the column department. "Are you going to spin out if they get side be side or, who's turn is it? I think it's my turn, I'll do it, since I qualified in the back." That was Marv Marzofka and Mike



Miller discussing who was supposed to spin out among the top qualifying feature drivers in the back of the field, if two drivers up front kept running side by side. Spinning out would cause the caution to wave, relegating the field to single file, making it easier to pass and move to the front. Those guys just never missed a thing!

Questions, comments, opinions and other information welcome at Starmaker Multimedia 967 10th Ave N Ste A, Onalaska, WI. 54650. 608-783-5125 608-518-2478 or at dale@starmakermultimedia.com





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Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

Took in the season championship races at the State Park Speedway, where the regular divisions crowned some new names that will go into the record books.

Brock Heinrich added his name to the record books forever as a new track champion in the super late model class. The points race was a close one between Heinrich and Justin Mondeik, who had won the previous three titles in a row. While Travis Volm drove off to the feature win on this night, Heinrich's third place feature finish was enough to garner the title.

In the Pure Stocks, Dave Cabelka had led the points chase pretty much from the get-go, and didn't let off on this night, as he took the feature win, making sure that the title was his. Six feature wins on the season here for Dave, who got his first ever championship in any division here.

Mike Meharg raced very strong at the end of the year, but could not unseat his teammate, Tim Anderson, in the race for the title in the Mini-Mods. Anderson had a mid-year streak that was just too much to touch. Meharg won the feature tonight in convincing fashion, his third of the season.

The Mini-Stock division in recent years has come down to Eric Breitenfeldt and Garret Strachota, and it was no different this year. Breitenfeldt would once again come home the track champion, but the race was not without excitement, as a mix-up on the last lap and final turn of the feature saw the leaders get mixed up, allowing to Ashley Schoone to slip by and nearly pull off the feature win. Breitenfeldt emerged the winner while Strachota got the worst of the deal, with Schoone's on-the-spot reflexes allowed her to take second place and move into second for the final points as well.

Late model rookie Jevin Gurski had a very



Dan Plan photo

good season and took home the rookie of the year. The young driver had some really good feature runs and he will be one to keep an eye on in the future, as this track seems to bring forth a great deal of young talent. Surely, Jevin must be considered part of the "Young Lion" group here. He did mention how much he enjoys racing here and how the track seems to be a good teaching tool. He grew up around the sport as the Gurski name is well known in this area. His Dad is Kurt, who raced here for many years.

Fifteen year old Austin Bohman was putting his first ever laps in while racing in the mini-stock division. Austin is the Son of long time competitor Amanda Rowe, and the Grandson of even longer time veteran Jim Schara. He started in the back of his heat and drove well all night, looked smooth, and put in a great first night behind the wheel.

At the Rockford Speedway, late in the season several more drivers showed up to get in some racing at the storied facility. In the late models C.J. Freimund made it out the last few nights. Keith Busekros also made a return to racing for a few nights. Danny Moffitt made it to the track a couple of times. Danny raced for many years in the Roadrunner class and is a

familiar face at the track, usually helping the Robinson family.

Speaking of the Robinson family, young Waylon Robinson has looked strong here all year. Racing only part-time here, he has recorded two feature wins in the Roadrunner class and has been very fast. The car is an ex-Steve Dobbratz car. His Dad is Jimmy Robinson, who has been a many time feature and championship winner here.

Of note was a very strong run by late model racer Jeremy Bentz. He has had a rough season of bad luck and he finally showed his stuff late in the season. He finished sixth in the feature one night and probably more importantly, raced very smooth without getting caught up in wrecks. "I started back in seventeenth spot and the car just came to me. "I lost a spot late in the race after the last caution, but I wanted to race everyone clean and am very pleased and we will take it. "said Jeremy. Jeremy had a strong desire to run well in honor of his Son, Jax, who was recently diagnosed with leukemia, which is very treatable. Jeremy lettered his Son's name on the top of the windshield, a really nice move. Wishing the best for Jax, and Jeremy!

Making the long haul up from the Tomah area one night was Greg Oliver, who also promotes the Tomah-Sparta Speedway. "I never have raced here before," Said Greg. "I have flagged here before and been here before to watch, but never race. So, we decided to come down one night to race here before it is closed up and gone for good."

Greg is racing a dirt four cylinder Bandit class car that had formerly been raced by Dylan Kuhl at Darlington. Greg was hoping to do some more racing on the dirt with the car before the season ends. His first race was back in the early 1980's at, you guessed it... Tomah-Sparta Speedway. "I didn't even know there was a track there at the time. It was the old Wild Bill's Track and Trail at the time, and they raced a class called the Bombers. They were old V8 rear wheel drive cars, totally stock. I had seen a race car in town that I had never seen anywhere before, so I went home and asked my Dad about it. I was sixteen years old and got the bug to do it. So, the track has a

Charlie Spry photo



Going In Circles continued on page 16

Going In Circles continued from page 15

special meaning to me.” Greg also hopes to race at Lancaster one time. “I remember my Dad raced there one time, so I would like to do it, too.”

Taylor Goldman also made the trip down to race at Rockford. She is the Daughter of longtime racer Dave Goldman, who raced mostly at the old Raceway Park in Minnesota. I got a chance to meet Taylor, and she is a very pleasant person and looks to be a very good racer as well. She was suiting up to race, and she had a busy night, as she raced her sportsman car and a borrowed car to race in the Roadrunner class as well.

She is racing in a program called WIMNA (Women In Motorsports North America, which promotes women in racing. Dave explained, saying, “We brought down two cars tonight, as you get more points if you race more than one car. Taylor is currently in third place in points, very close to second, so we were looking for a track to race on tonight. Our home track of Elko is off tonight, LaCrosse is done with their regular season, and since this is the last weekly race here at Rockford, we decided to make the haul down and try and gain some points and get to race on a new track.”

She started at the back of both her feature races, made good laps with the sportsman car, but did very well with the Roadrunner class car, starting at the rear and coming through the pack to finish sixth in the feature against some very good drivers.

One driver here who has been here throughout is Bandit racer Adam Dlubak. Adam has always had a “Chucky” doll on his race cars, and even has usually

John Beale photo



had him adorn the graphics on his cars. Adam was the 2022 champion in the Sixer division and moved up this year to the Bandit class with a very sharp car, with of course, Chucky on it. I asked how this all came about, and Adam noted, “It started when I was running enduros. I had the Chucky doll on the car, and my car caught fire, Chucky caught fire, and after that it just had to be!” Adam did well this year in the Bandit class, finishing sixth in points.

The final track champions at Rockford include Jon Reynolds Jr. in the Late Models, Patrick Featherston II in the Sportsman division, Shawn Bowar in the Bandits, Nick Schneider in the American

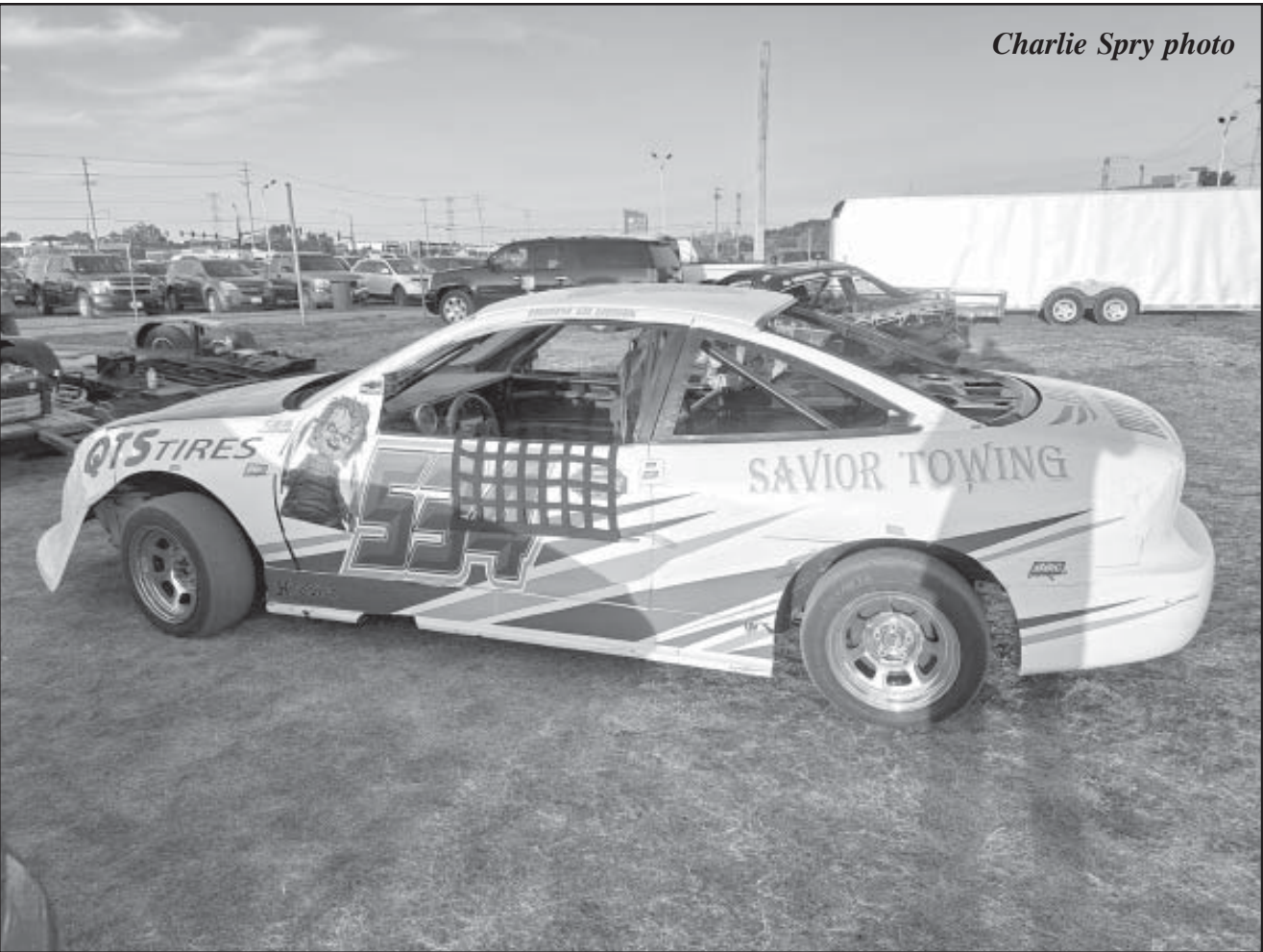
Short Trackers, Kevin Memoli in the Roadrunners.

Took in a show at a track that I had never been to before, the Spoon River Speedway. The track impressed me. I especially liked the way the stands and area were elevated, so that you kind of looked down on the cars no matter where you were viewing from. The dirt surface looked to be groomed well and the track was very racy. People here were very friendly, the show was very reasonably priced. I would be here much more often if it was not such a long drive from home. It is located in the Peoria, Illinois area.

Nice to see Darlington racer Josh Chambers make the trip down to race. It was also good to see a couple of people that I am very familiar with from Rockford Speedway, Jack Williams in his late model, and Jonathan Wirebaugh, who just started racing in the Bmods.

Also took in the Fall Spectacular at the Marshfield Motor Speedway, in honor of Bev Aschenbrenner. This was the TUNDRA series finale, and they put on a good show. It was also nice to see a very good crowd turn out here for this event.

Dalton Zehr was the man to beat in the TUNDRA late models, winning both features. Jason Stark took the Super Stock/Sportsman feature, Tim Anderson the X-treme 4’s, Sam Sheahen the Bandits, and the Upper Midwest Vintage group also was on hand and put on another great show, with Sean Herzog and Jim Kulseth each winning features.



Charlie Spry photo



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Dangerous Dan



Dan Margetta

Is September over already? Man, where did the season go? As it seems to be the case every year, another regular short track season has come and gone way too fast. But in typical race chasing fashion us die-hards transition right into the Fall Specials that will keep us watching cars going round and round almost until the snow flies in November. I know my racing schedule is booked just about every weekend with short track and NASCAR events until then with the final National Short Track Championships in Rockford, Oktoberfest Race Weekend in La Crosse, the South Point 400 NASCAR race in Las Vegas, the Falloween 150 in Wisconsin Dells and NASCAR Championship Weekend in Phoenix. Throw in some possible Milwaukee Brewers playoff games and maybe a World Series (fingers crossed) and I don't see any signs of slowing down.

This month's column content actually begins at the end of August as the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series returned to the Milwaukee Mile for the first time since 2009. I helped out a lot during the NASCAR Milwaukee Mile events from 1993-2009

doing all kinds of things from writing press releases and stories, to conducting pit tours, to being the broadcast liaison assisting in Race Control and I even did some public address announcing that final year in 2009 (the only time Carl Edwards didn't do a back flip after winning). I still remember doing pit tours for Ray-O-Vac Batteries in 1999 when their car that was co-owned by Brett Favre failed to make the race and was nowhere to be found on race day. To make matters more difficult NASCAR closed down pit road to everyone except team personnel due to the massive crowds that flooded the pit area. That meant I had to take my pit tour group to the cars that didn't have enough points to get actual pit road spots and were parked outside the pit fence in the paddock area. Obviously, these cars didn't include Dale Earnhardt Jr. or Matt Kenseth, the top stars at the time that the pit tour group really hoped to meet. They had to settle for the Herzog Motorsports #92 car that was making its debut at Milwaukee and the driver was standing by the car. He gave me one of those I've seen you around but I don't know your name looks and I wasn't going to bust him out in front of the pit tour group but then a kid in the group asked him who drove the car. That kid's eyes got real big when he told him that he in fact was the driver and he signed the basic autograph cards the team had for the group. They were super excited they got to meet an actual driver on the pit tour which saved me from being a bad tour guide. In the years that passed, I often wondered how many of the people on that tour actually read the autograph on their cards because if they did they would read the name

Series ran in support and William Sawalich won over Jesse Love. Wisconsin's Luke Fenhaus finished sixth after being set back by a late-race scrum with Conner Jones while racing for third. I didn't get to see the finish of the Truck race as I had to leave early to get to Slinger but Grant Enfinger was the winner over Carson Hoyer although Wisconsin's Ty Majeski may have passed the most trucks after coming from the back a few times to finish seventh. The team's tech penalty with the bleeder valve set up on one tire didn't help his cause and some pit issues put them in the back again, so the seventh place result really didn't showcase how fast Majeski's truck was. Hopefully everything was enough to draw NASCAR back to the Milwaukee Mile in the future.

As I mentioned earlier, I left the Truck race early to head to Slinger Speedway for the Carl Wegner Memorial which was part of the Elite Eight Super Late Model Series and Alex Prunty picked up his first win of the season in the 75-lap main event to cap off a full day of racing. A cool story developed in the Bandolero division as Penn Sauter (yes..he's Johnny Sauter's son) looked to win his first track championship. Sauter merely had to start the feature



Bruce Nuttleman photo



Bruce Nuttleman photo

Jimmie Johnson who would later go on to be a seven-time Cup champion and be one of NASCAR's greatest drivers. I have to admit I didn't think NASCAR would ever return to The Mile after things went awry 14 years ago so it was really special to see them come back. Plus the race was a playoff race and it was cool to see a good crowd come out to support it. The ARCA Menard's

to claim the title but a hard wreck in the heat race left that accomplishment in doubt. A lot of the fellow crews including super late model legend Lowell Bennett helped the Sauter crew get the car together and Penn took the green flag and was able to make one lap to secure the championship. Watching everyone come together and help the team piece the car together to make the start exemplified just what racing is all about.

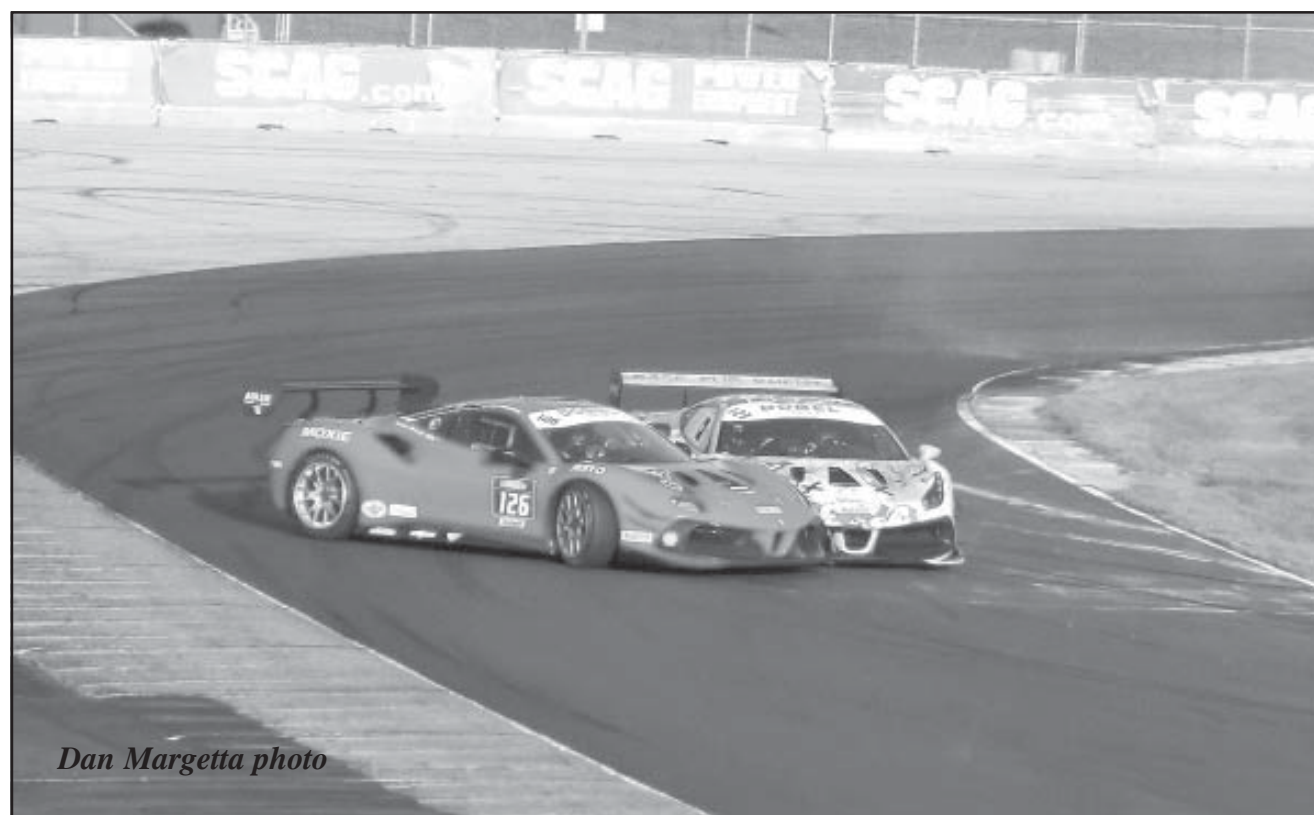
The following Saturday I headed to Road America to check out the Ferrari Challenge as the weather was decent and it felt like a good opportunity to get outside and watch some cars I could only dream about driving tool around America's National Park of Speed. It was a full day of practice, qualifying and

Dangerous Dan continued on page 19

Dangerous Dan continued from page 18

racing and I moved around quite a bit and actually found some new places to watch from. It was the first time I attended the Ferrari Challenge at Road America and it was a pretty good time. Sunday found me back at Slinger Speedway for the final weekly race program of the season. After many second place finishes and leading laps for years, Zach Prunty finally put it all together and got his first Pro Late Model feature victory. First time winners are always fun to watch and when you've seen first-hand how close Zach Prunty has been to that elusive victory in the past, seeing it finally come together was enjoyable. Jesse Bernhagen wrapped up his first Slinger Pro Late Model track championship after a dominating season that saw him in victory lane at least eight times. They even put a bounty on him at one point and of course that ended up being one of the few weeks he didn't win and finished second. Still, it was a memorable season for the Bernhagen racing team and I really hope we see him back at Slinger for years to come.

Finally, the final weekend before the deadline for this column, Brian Schmitt and I headed to Indianapolis for the return of the IMSA Weathertech Series to The Brickyard for the first time in nine years for the Battle on The Bricks. It had been four years since I had been to Indy and I'll admit when I walked into the hallowed ground of Indianapolis Motor Speedway I quickly realized how much I missed it. On Friday night, we made it a point to check out Circle City Raceway which is fairly new dirt track on the outskirts of Indy's city limits. The USAC Non-Wing Sprints were there and 30 of them showed up and point on quite a show. The Circle City Raceway is an impressive facility and the Non-Wing Sprints always seem like they are on edge. The main event didn't disappoint as Logan Seavey edged Shane Cottle in a photo finish with a last lap pass off turn four to secure the win. It was a classic dirt track race with Cottle glued to the bottom groove while Seavey worked the cushion and to have them exit the final corner about even at the checkered flag was perfect. On Saturday the Michelin Pilot Challenge headlined the action at The Brickyard with


Dan Margetta photo

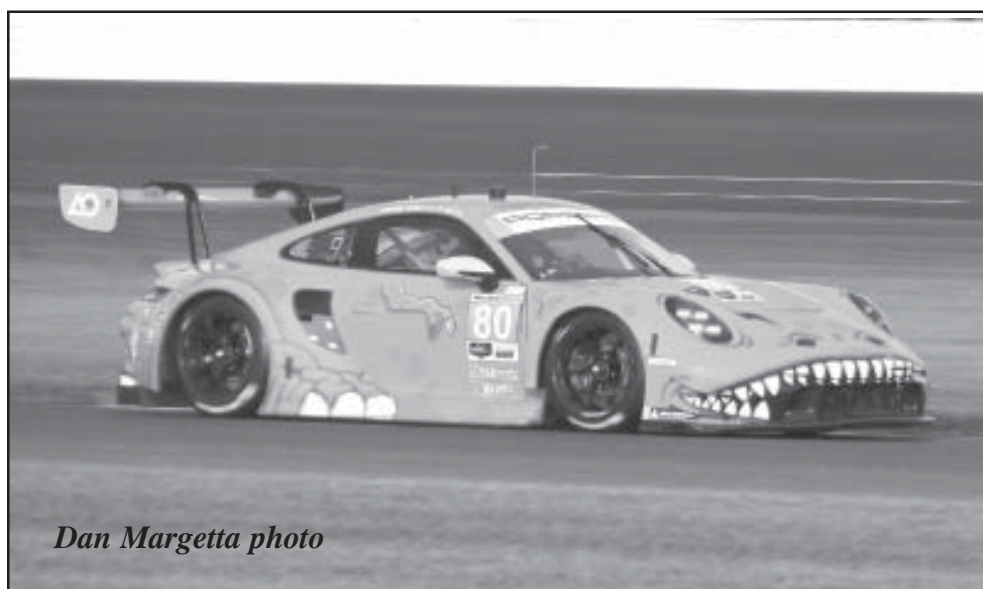
a late afternoon race that ended in darkness. I spent first part of the day in turn one watching IMSA Weathertech practice and the first Lamborghini Trofeo race of the weekend. For the Michelin Pilot Challenge race we spent time in the grandstands outside of turn one for the start then moved to the infield areas as a light rain began to fall. When the race finished four hours later, it was quite the spectacle to see the cars race around in the darkness with minimal lighting and having to rely mainly on their headlights to see. The #57 Mercedes team of Daniel Morad and Bryce Ward emerged victorious in a pretty competitive event. On Sunday, we did the LTN Radio show live from the media center before once again exploring the course for the


Dan Margetta photo

main IMSA Weathertech Series Battle on the Bricks. The Penske Porsche teams quickly established themselves as the cars to beat although the #31 Whelen Cadillac team snuck into the lead under a caution period and paced the middle stages. The Penske cars were too strong however and they finished one-two with the #6 team of Nick Tandy and Matthieu Jaminet won over the #7 team of Felipe Nasir and Matt Campbell. Next

year IMSA comes to Indy with a six hour race which would be pretty cool to check out because I have never been to an endurance race.

And just like that, the month was over and it was full speed ahead to the remaining Fall specials on the October calendar. I'm sure I will see many of you at the Fall events as we wrap up the Midwest short track season. Make sure you say hello and let's wind the season down with some exciting racing action and good times with friends.


Dan Margetta photo

Dan Margetta photo



It's hard to believe it has been 10 years since Raceway Park in Shakopee, Minnesota held its final event. A 10-year reunion was held this year with drivers, crews, officials and fans at Turtle's Bar and Grill, just a few miles down the road from the historic short track. Special thanks goes to event coordinators; Kari Miller, Ann Montour, Ellen Wolff, Robby Carter, Kris 'Jandro' Ostdiek, Amy Ansolabehere and Scotty "Too Hotty" Westphal. The event kicked off with an opening statement from Raceway Park announcer Kevin Busse, followed by the American National Anthem sung by long-time competitor Bruce Bachman.







I.M.C.A.

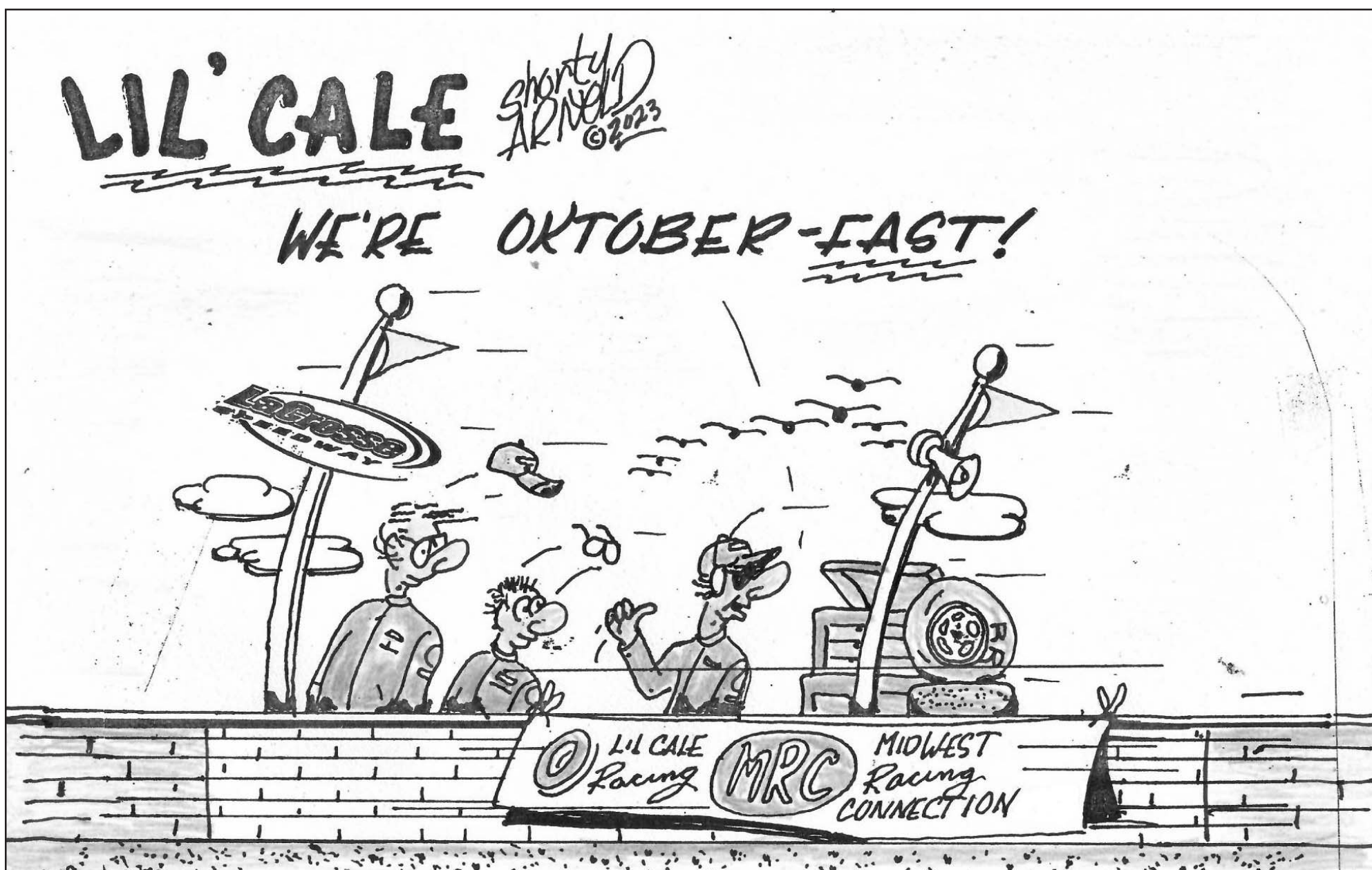
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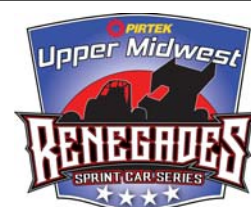
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